



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



APRIL 22: EARTH DAY



MARCH WORK PARTY NEWS

The March Work Party was on the Lower Stagecoach Trail, on March 15th. Trails were cleared and repaired. Many thanks to Bill Cespedes, Dan Savage, Bart Hibbs, Mike Kuhn, Candy Dembesky and John Sabol for their efforts. We also received help from 2 local church members. Thanks to all for your efforts!

It would be great to have more people join us for the work parties. The work is quite rewarding.



NEW "TRAILS OF THE SIMI HILLS" MAPS AVAILABLE

Mike Kuhn has acquired copies of the new "Trails of the Simi Hills" map. It covers the Conejo Valley, San Fernando Valley, Simi Valley, Agoura, Calabasas and Oak Park. The map is waterproof. The price is \$10.70. Contact Mike for a copy!

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be held at the Community Center

Room B-1

1692 Sycamore Drive
at 7:00 PM

on

April 16th, 2008

PREHISTORY OF THE SANTA BARBARA & VENTURA AREA

The earliest people in the Santa Barbara Channel area were nomadic hunters. By about 8,000 yrs ago, the inhabitants of this area were practicing a semi-sedentary food-gathering way of life.

Over thousands of years the population increased, and the community became larger and more stable. The people made more use of the rich variety of food and other resources available to them.

One way in which the channel people culturally adapted to this environment was by development of technology - bow and arrow, basketry, fishing equipment, and boats. Increasingly complex social structure, religion, and economic systems were other forms of adaptation.

To describe changes in cultural patterns, archaeologists divide prehistory along the Santa Barbara Channel into three general periods. Though the transition was gradual, approximate dates can be assigned to each period.

Though the North American continent was nearly the size and shape it is today, during most of the Tertiary period much of Santa Barbara & Ventura County was under the sea. For this reason the majority of local fossils are marine.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April 5th, 2008:

Wildflower Walk-Antelope Valley
Please see the website for more info.

April 12th, 2008:

**California Trail Day Work Party-
Upper Section of the Lower
Stagecoach Trail** Pls. see the website
for more info.

April 12th, 2008:

Simi Peak via China Flat
Please see the website for more info.

April 13th, 2008:

Flower Walk (The Chumash Trail)
Please see the web site for more info.

April 19th, 2008:

Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Library
Please see the website for more info.

April 19th, 2008:

Mountain Lion Presentation
Please see the website for more info.

April 26th, 2008:

**Marr Ranch/Chumash Trail to
Northridge Trail (Loop)**
Please see the website for more info.

More information on these events
can be found at

<http://simitrailblazers.com>

To make reservations,
please email Mark Gilmore at
markinthepark@sbcglobal.net

LOST RANGE OF CALIFORNIA CONDOR

The California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is the last remaining giant vultures in North America. For most of the last one and one half million years, i.e., the Pleistocene Epoch, there were several giant vultures, including the California condor, in North America. Bones of the California condor have been found in caves and kitchen middens throughout the Pacific northwest, in New York, in central Florida, Nevada's Great Basin, cliff faces in Texas's Great Bend and in Colorado's Grand Canyon. The Pleistocene Epoch was our last ice age. The vegetation in North America, south of the continental glaciers and below the mountain glaciers was a much different matrix of vegetation types than we can now imagine. In addition to the faunal species now supported, there were many more megafaunal species than we now have. Giant ground sloths, mammoths, mastodons, giant bison, camels, odd goats, three-toed horses and more species of deer roamed North America. All vultures subsist on carrion. Animals die, either due to natural causes or by the predation of other species. The vultures are quick to follow. The end of the last ice age resulted in massive changes in vegetation and the added onslaught of human hunters. Many of the available carrion species died off along with all but one of the giant condors.

The condor of California became well recognized during the period of Spanish, Mexican and Anglo-American settlement of parts of California, so it became known as the "California condor". However, while it continued to thrive in southern California, it was lost to much of its range during the historic period. Well into the 19th Century the condor was present throughout Pacific Northwest, and there is much evidence for its occasional presence east of the crest of the Rocky Mountains onto parts of the Great Plains – well beyond what we Californians would generally believe.

Lewis and Clark encountered numerous condors on their voyage of discovery beginning in 1805. They killed their first specimen north of the mouth of the



RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out?

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short sleeve \$12
long sleeve \$14
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Columbia River. It was feeding on a dead whale. It weighed 25 pounds; its outstretched wings measured 9'6" – three feet greater than the turkey vulture. From the point of the bill to the end of the tail was 3'10 1/4". A single flight feather was 2 1/2' long. Its middle toe was 5 1/2" long with an inch long nail. Its yellowish orange bare head graded to fleshy pink at the neck. The white stripe under the wing was approximately 2" wide. Its short whitish legs had feathers only to the knees. It had blunt nails. It also had a feathered ruff midway down its otherwise naked neck. Lewis wrote, "I believe this to be the largest Bird of North America". Indeed, they were astounded by the size of the condors, especially when compared with turkey vultures and eagles with which they competed. On their return trip, just downstream from present-day Portland, Oregon, an advance hunting party killed six deer on an island in the Columbia. They had piled brush over the carcasses to keep scavengers away. Upon their return with the main party the same day, they found that condors had eaten four of the deer, having uncovered them and drug one buck about 30 yards from the cache and skinned the animal. It was George Vancouver, who brought one from California to London, which resulted in it being named, i.e., its genus and species, for its bald head and home province.

In 1839 naturalist John Townsend described the condor as ranging 500 miles inland from the mouth of the Columbia River into the Snake River country. He reported that they were most numerous in

the Columbia Cascades and Falls, where they fed on dead salmon on the shores. He also reported concentrations near Indian villages – presumably attracted by fish remains. In 1841 an U.S. Exploring Expedition didn't report seeing any condors except along the Willamette River. In 1854 a naturalist sighted one on the Columbia and noted that they were normally further south. No further sightings were reported along the lower Columbia River. C. Hart Merriam, a California biologist with much condor experience, reported seeing a single condor in sagebrush east of Coulee City, Washington, in the fall of 1897. Occasional sightings were reported in British Columbia into the 1890s. Most sightings occurred during the Spring and Fall. In 1841, 1903, and 1904 condors were reported in the Umpqua River drainage in west-central Oregon. All of the reports suggest that condors home range in the Pacific Northwest was along the coast, the Columbia, Willamette and Umpqua rivers and that they may have migrated south during the winter months.

For whatever reason, the condors disappeared from the Northwest quickly after European contact. The number of condors shot or otherwise taken for scientific purposes seem to have barely amounted into the double digits. Just how many were taken by curious furmen or other hunters is not known. Perhaps the advent of rifles and buckshot are to blame.

We do know that the tribes in the Columbia River Gorge and elsewhere in the northwest had names for condors and oral tradition relating to them. One tribe had a name which translates as "breaks down the weirs". Yakam Indians used words for "crooked beak" and "rough-looking bird".

The California condor, by nature, is a fragile species. Its very reproductive cycle leaves it on the brink of extinction. It doesn't breed until it is six years old, then lays only one egg per year – a small increase in mortality could have tipped the balance for an isolated population – as we have seen in California.

Mike Kuhn 9/17/07

February 23rd 2008 - Placerita Canyon - Los Pinetos

On a cool cloudy Saturday morning, eight eager Rancho Simi Trail Blazers assembled in the parking lot near the Placerita Canyon Nature Center (elevation 1,550'). The 7.5-mile loop hike began with a 2-mile jaunt east along the pleasant gurgling canyon stream to the Walker Ranch area. It then climbed steadily to the south along the heavily shaded Los Pinetos Trail until it met the Santa Clara Divide Road at Wilson Saddle (elevation 3,100') -- a pleasant spot for a lunch break. A short walk to the southeast led to an overlook with a now sunny panoramic view of the San Fernando Valley. The trail then headed west on the Whitney Canyon Road to a steeply undulating firebreak trail (with no switchbacks!) that provided magnificent views of the southern Santa Clarita Valley and distant snow-capped mountains as it led the group inexorably back to the Nature Center.



March 1st 2008 - Los Robles Trail System

Nine of us hiked the Los Padres - Los Robles Loop this morning. It was a cool and foggy day. Wildflowers are coming back this year, due the recent rains, in sharp contrast to last spring. We were treated to dew covered Purple Nightshade, Bush Sunflower, Fiddleneck and Prickly Phlox.





RSTB Calendar April 2008



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Mt. Everest-from Base Camp HAPPY APRIL FOOL's DAY!	2	3 <i>Happy Birthday Mike McCrary</i>	4 <i>Happy Birthday Anne Guibor</i>	5 Wildflower Walk Antelope Valley See Schedule
6 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	7	8 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Louise Pomes</i>	9	10 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Allison Cameron</i>	11 <i>Happy Birthday Alice Comer</i>	12 Simi Peak via China Flat California Trails Day Work Party See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Oliver Grimsley</i>
13 Flower Walk (Chumash Trail) 9:30am Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	14 <i>Happy Birthday Cliff Cameron</i>	15 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday John Sabol</i>	16 RSTB Meeting See Page 1 <i>Happy Birthday Melanie Gnad</i>	17 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	18	19 Mt. McCoy and Reagan Library Mountain Lion Presentation 1pm See Schedule
20 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	21	22 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule EARTH DAY <i>Happy Birthday Barbara Hoff</i>	23	24 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	25 <i>Happy Birthday Shasha Tan Cody Frank</i>	26 Marr Ranch/Chumash Trail to Northridge Trail (Loop) See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday Gary Cremeans</i>
27 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	28	29 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	30 <i>Happy Birthday Sharon Hamilton</i>			



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

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Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 5 pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 4.8 MRT)
(Meet at 4pm during daylight standard time)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. (Moderate, 3.0 MRT)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (Strenuous, 5.2 MRT)

APRIL HIKES

April 5th Wildflower Walk - Antelope Valley* - It's flower season again, in Antelope Valley. This will be an ALL DAY event. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at 8 AM. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

April 12th Simi Peak via China Flat 6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1000' elevation gain) Bring 2 qts of water/snack. Wear boots. Take 101 to Lindero Canyon; follow LC to King James Court. Meet 8 AM near the arroyo/trailhead (park on the side streets).

April 12th California Trails Day Work Party - Upper section of the Lower Stagecoach Trail - Meet at the eastern end of the Corriganville Parking lot at 8:00 AM. We will carpool to the upper trailhead near Lilac Lane. Bring 2-3 quarts water, a snack, sturdy boots/shoes, gloves, hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Tools will be provided.

April 13th Flower Walk (The Chumash Trail) - 9:30 AM. Meet at the Chumash Trailhead. Directions: Take the 118 to Yosemite; exit north on Yosemite and turn right on Flanagan Dr. The trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Drive.

April 19th Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Library - 3.6 MRT - Moderate (700' elevation gain) (Summit: 1,325') Hike up to a 200 acre open area at the west end of Simi Valley including a 360 view; continue to the Reagan Library. Bring 2-3 qts. of water/snack. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

April 19th Mountain Lion Presentation - 1 PM - **Oak Park Community Center & Gardens** - 1000 North Kanan Road, Oak Park. Want to get up close to a mountain lion and other wildlife you might encounter on the rural/urban fringe? This program is a **live animal** presentation on wildlife/human conflict, with some solutions to these encounters. **Pls. see the RSTB website, for more info.**

April 26th Marr Ranch / Chumash Trail to Northridge Trail (loop) - 5 MRT - Easy (400' elevation gain) / 9 MRT - Moderate (1200' elevation gain). Hike through a beautiful local canyon. Bring a qt of water/snack. Wear sturdy shoes. Meet at 8 AM at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Option: continue on past the gate at the end of the Marr Ranch Trail and hike the Chumash Trail out. Once we arrive at Flannigan Rd, we'll walk a couple of blocks, through the neighborhood, and take the Northridge Trail back to our cars.

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

 No dogs allowed on trail(s).

For information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.

Special Note: - On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots.

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@roadrunner.com
Treasurer:	Peter Ely		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:		*** OPEN ***	
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Vice Hiking Chair:	John Sabol	HM (805) 583-2541	jtsabol@sbcglobal.net
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
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MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a New () or Renewing () member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of:

Single.....\$10

Family..... \$15

Name(s) _____ Birth Mo. _____ Day _____

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone wk/hm _____

Would you like to receive periodic email announcements about club activities? Yes () No ()

How did you find out about the RSTB _____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:

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