



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



BEARS IN THE SANTA SUSANAS

In the 27 years that I have lived in Simi Valley, I can think of only one occasion when a black bear has shown up within the City - and that was many years ago - perhaps the late 1970s or early 1980s. That bear first was spotted at the Simi Valley Land-fill early in the morning, worrying some garbage. Later in the day it was spotted by an elderly resident who lived on what is now the northwestern corner of Alamo Street and Jasmine Glen. Since the bear appeared to be headed towards Atherwood Elementary School, she ran it up a deodar cedar in her front yard - with a broom. (The tree was later removed due to the widening of Alamo Street.) Fortunately the bear knew, as all bears know, that it was supposed to flee a white haired grandmother with a broom.

Over the years an occasional bear has shown up in Granada Hills or Camarillo, usually deep into the urban area, and had to be relocated to gentler climes or put down. I believe it was in 1997 that a bear wandered through the lobby of a hotel or motel in Camarillo. It didn't want a room with a view rather,

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HELP NEEDED SIMI VALLEY STREET FAIR

The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District needs help to man a booth at the Simi Valley Street Fair on Saturday, May 19. The fair will held on Tapo Street between Cochran and Valley Fair streets. Help is needed for the hours of 8:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Past experience suggests that the most frequent questions asked are about swimming lessons, trails and the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers, so it's important for Trail Blazers to be there. Trail brochure packets will be available. Volunteers for time slots of one or more hours are needed.

So if your not busy, would like to give some time back to the community, like friendly people, and are not planning to help us brush a new trail in Oak Park, give Colleen Janssen a call at (805) 584-4453.

RSTB CLUB MEETING

The monthly club meeting will be held at the Community Center
In the B-1 Room
1692 Sycamore Drive
At 7:00 PM
On
Wednesday, May 16th.

MISHE MOKWA

One of the Trail Blazers' favorite hikes is the Mishi Mokwa, Sandstone Peak loop hike in the Circle-X Ranch area. When we would ask what the trail name Mishi Mokwa meant, we were told it was just a nonsense name made up by scouts from a Boy Scout Camp that existed in the area years ago. That information may have even been printed in a hiking book.

However, Mishi Mokwa is not a nonsense name but the name of a legendary bear. Chippewa Indian Legend tells of the mother bear, Mishe Mokwa, who fled a great forest fire in Wisconsin with her two cubs. Mishe Mokwa reached the Michigan shore and climbed a steep bluff to wait for her cubs. The cubs, exhausted by their long swim, never reached land. The mother bear waited day after day to no avail. Finally she died. The Great Spirit Manitou marked her resting-place with the Sleeping Bear Dunes and raised North and South Manitou Islands from the spot

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one with a den!

During April of 1997 John Downey and I observed (and photographed) bear tracks in upper Happy Camp Canyon. In 1998, Jim Riley observed bear tracks in the same area. Now Mark Keppler reports seeing really big bear tracks on the Brown's Canyon trail below the Rocky Peak Trail on several occasions. In spite of a hot summer in 1998, the bears seem to have stayed in the hills and forgone the pleasures of the urban environment.

It's possible that the effects of that El Nino year with its 37+ inches of rain had enabled our furry friend to remain in the hills. Reportedly, there still is a bear roaming the Simi Hills and two to three in the hills north of Simi Valley. It would be interesting indeed if black bears are establishing a more permanent presence in them thar hills.

Mike Kuhn



JUNE BACKPACKING TRIP

A backing trip to Cedar Creek/ Fish Bowls is scheduled for June 8th.- 10th.. Please call Arlene for more information (805)581-9735

where the cubs perished.

Another reference, this to a male Mishi-Mokwa bear, can be found in the poem "The Song of Hiawatha Part II: The Four Winds" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. This poem, which is over 300 lines in length, relates the story of an Indian warrior, Mudjekeewis who slew Mishe-Mokwa, the Great Bear of the mountains and was honored by being named the West-Wind and chosen Father of the Winds of Heaven.

John Sabol

CALIFORNIA TRAIL DAYS WORK PARTY

Eight scouts and two scout leaders from Girl Scout Troops 111 and 451 joined the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers on the Upper and Lower Stagecoach Trails for California Trail Days. The two-day event started out cool and cloudy as it had rained on Friday night but Sunday was clear and sunny. We lopped brush, filled in ruts, repaired rain-damaged trail sections, re-routed a trail section and repaired two switchbacks. We worked from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM both days and as usual met at Chuy's on our way home. Many thanks to the following workers:

Scout leaders: Deanna Schubert, Troup 111 and Karey Muller, Troop 451

A SUDDEN STOP

Back in the late-1970s I was on a site inspection for the City of the then vacant property astride Katherine Road where it then curved south to cross the railroad tracks into the Susana Knolls. On the outside of the curve was a very large blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) tree. In that tree was impaled the hood ornament of a 1953 Ford - with new growth engulfing about half of the ornament. I thought, what a spectacular and tragic accident that must have been. Perhaps the accident had happened at night. Perhaps the driver had simply tried to take the corner too fast and had lost control. Perhaps alcohol had been involved. What was certain was that that tree had not yielded even one bit, retaining the hood ornament as a trophy of that event.

Some years later, that tree was the first in Simi Valley, as far as we know, to succumb to the Eucalyptus longhorned borer, which had invaded southern California the year before from its home in Australia. The tree died and eventually was removed. Since then hundreds of Eucalyptus trees have come to the same fate - none, however, with the hood ornament of a 1953 Ford impaled in it. The land itself has now been developed for new homes. I will always remember that tree and its "trophy."

THE BIG CAT

In-late November of 1999, my wife and I went to the Korean Barbecue near the southeastern corner of Sequoia Avenue and Los Angeles Avenue for dinner. We encountered a pickup truck with an open shell on the back with two beautiful and relaxed caged mountain lions in the back. The cats did not seem to be paying much attention to the attention they were getting from the several families that were gathered around. The owners of the cats were having dinner in the restaurant. The animals are movie cats, are well cared for and loved. Their parents are also owned by the same folks. The cats were not what I expected to see in the back of the truck. I had expected to see some cute puppies or something of that order.

Mountain lions had been generally thought to include a menagerie of 32 subspecies, which are confined to the western hemisphere. The 32 subspecies had been thought to exist based on where they lived and differences in coloration. The endangered Florida panther is probably the best known of the presumed subspecies. Now, extensive genetic analysis has turned up just six subspecies.

Researcher collected genetic samples from 209 mountain lions in zoos and in the wild across North and South America, including from the Florida panther, and from 106 of the

animals from South America. They looked for sequence differences in three mitochondrial genes and 10 microsatellites, short bits of repetitive DNA sequences that lengthen and mutate through time and thus indicate the relatedness of organisms.

The researchers concluded that only one subspecies of mountain lion inhabits all of North America, rather than the 15 subspecies previously thought, another inhabits Central America and four (4) subspecies inhabit South America. The most genetically diverse subspecies inhabit Brazil and Paraguay south of the Amazon River, indicating that population is the oldest and that cougars originated there and spread north from that area starting about 250,000 years ago. So, they are relatively recent arrivals in North America.

All of this suggests that if you want to rejuvenate the Florida panther, you can just send in some California mountain lions and release them in the wild or use them for breeding programs in that state. We probably have a few to spare at this time.



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Troop 111 Scouts: Christina Malloy, Lauren Murvin, Julia Plowman, Rebecca Schubert, Brianna Stafford and Rachel Yuengert

Troop 451 Scouts: Aimee Muller and Natalie Raffaelli

Trail Blazers: Arlene Altshuler, John Downey, Tom Frye, Mike Kuhn, Louise Pomes, John Sabol, Carol Tucker, Tim Veazey and Shelly Veazey

The next Trail Blazers work party will be held Saturday May 19 in Oak Park. This work party will consist of clearing a 10-foot wide path for a new 3/4-mile long trail, which has been flagged by the National Park Service. Work will consist of clearing brush as well as stump removal. Once the path has been cleared, the NPS will come in and actually cut the trail bed. Meet at the trailhead in Oak Park at 8:00 AM. Directions: Take Kanan Road 1 1/2 miles East of the intersection of Kanan and Lindero Canyon to Doubletree Road. Turn left (north) on Doubletree. The road will go uphill and then curve east and parallel Kanan. Trailhead is on the left, across from the Latter-Day Saints Church. We will work from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair

John Sabol



MAY

2001



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Happy Birthday Jeane Haining	3 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm. Read Schedule	4	5 Happy Birthday Hannah Kuhn & Robert Lisenby La Jolla Valley Loop Read Schedule
6 Hummingbird Creek Hike Meet at 5pm Read schedule	7	8	9	10 Happy Birthday Jim Vandenberg Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm. Read Schedule	11	12 Arroyo Sequit Hike to Leo Carrillo Meet at 7am Read Schedule
13  MOTHER'S DAY Hummingbird Creek Hike Meet at 5pm Read Schedule	14	15	16 Club Meeting will be held At the Community Center, 1692 Sycamore Dr. In the B-1 Room at 7 PM	17 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm. Read Schedule	18	19 Oak Park Work Party Read Schedule 8am to Noon
20 Wildflower Hike in Corriganville Park Meet at 2pm Read schedule	21	22	23	24 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm. Read Schedule	25	26 Latigo Canyon to Castro Peak Meet at 8am See schedule
27 Hummingbird Creek Hike Meet at 5pm Read schedule	28	29	30	31 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm. Read Schedule		

