



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's club meeting will be at the Community Center, Room B-1 1692 Sycamore Drive, 7:00 PM May 20, 2009



RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out? We still have short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweat shirts in assorted sizes and colors. Prices are as follows:

- short sleeve \$12
- long sleeve \$14
- sweat shirt \$18



Please call Marty if you'd like to place an order: 805-526-4414

RATTLESNAKES

The southern pacific rattlesnake, a subspecies of the western rattlesnake, is commonly found in our area. They have a diamond-shaped head and one or more rattles at the ends of their tails. They are pit vipers and very poisonous. They can vary in color (Continued on Page 2)

May 30th & 31st

San Antonio Ski Hut - Mt. Baldy

It doesn't get much better than this! The Hut is at the base of Mt. San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) at 8,200'. It might be listed as strenuous, but it's really not that bad. We'll only do 3 miles the first day and we have all day to do it. Returning the next day is all downhill.

Even the view from the outhouse is spectacular. We'll spend the night in the hut. As the event draws near, we'll make plans to cook a group dinner using the hut's wood-burning stove. We have some fine gourmet cooks in our club, so this is always a treat. There will be plenty of good stories shared by the Hut custodian around the wood-burning stove on Saturday night.

The Hut was built in 1937, by the Sierra Club Ski Mountaineers. Nestled in a pine forest, the Hut is a large one-room cabin, complete with a sleeping loft, wood burning stove to keep us toasty at night, comfortable foam mattresses, running water, a full kitchen and toilet facilities. It's a picturesque and serene setting; views from its picture windows are spectacular. It only takes about 1 1/2 hrs. to drive to the trailhead, which is at about 6,000ft. It's a beautiful hike, passing by San Antonio Falls on the way. On the trail, you'll think you're hiking in the Sierras. If you're looking for a real challenge, you can hike to the top of Mt. Baldy (10,064ft), using the Hut as your Base Camp.

For more info, visit this website: <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/lodges/lodges/sanantioskihut.html>



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit the website for details on any of the following hikes and events.

April 28th - May 3rd
Las Vegas Hike-A-Palooza*

May 9th
Sisar Canyon to White Ledge*
Moderate 9 MRT (2000' elevation gain)

May 9th
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Street Fair
Something fun for everyone!

May 16th
Malibu Creek State Park
Moderate 6-8 MRT (600 - 900' elevation gain)

May 20th
Club Meeting Not strenuous

May 23rd
Mt. McCoy Trail and the Reagan Library

May 30th & 31st
San Antonio Ski Hut - Mt. Baldy

More information on these events can be found at

<http://simitrailblazers.com>

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

(Rattlesnakes, cont. from Page 1)
 from very dark to very light. They are born live, as opposed to coming from eggs. Newborns are blind, 3-4 inches long and do not have rattles - because they have not yet shed their skin. They are still dangerous. When rattlesnakes are encountered, they may or may not rattle - so don't count on a warning. While they are usually "out" during moderate to warm weather, they can be encountered any time of the year. I once encountered one in February, while backpacking, which was trying to escape by crawling uphill over an ice-covered slope. So, if you are hiking or running in dim light, use a flashlight. During moderate weather, rattlesnakes are active during the day. During warm or hot weather, they are active during the cooler part of the day - that is at night. During any weather you can encounter a rattlesnake under rocks, shrubbery, logs, etc.



March 28, 2009 – Backbone Trail

Never try to handle a rattlesnake. No matter how fast you think you can react to a strike, people are usually bitten twice before they can react. About half of rattlesnake bites of people occur when someone is trying to handle one, half of the people that are bitten are males between the ages of 14 and 25, and half of those bitten are legally drunk. So if you are a young male and drunk, you are at high risk. The snakes are just trying to defend themselves. Once they feel that the initial threat has past, they will usually crawl away.

If you encounter a rattlesnake on a trail or anywhere else, avoid it. If

hiking, I use my hiking staff to move them well off the trail in order to keep them from being injured, such as being run over by a bicycle or stepped on by a hiker. If you don't have a nice long staff, go around. Don't throw rocks at them or kill them. They are in their home habitat - you are the visitor. They play a vital role in ecosystems by keeping the rodent population in check.

Alert other hikers or trail runners that you have encountered a rattlesnake, so that they are watchful. Rattlesnakes are rarely aggressive. They recognize that you are too big to eat.

Rattlesnakes usually range over an area of about an acre and a half, so it is common to encounter the same rattlesnake again and again in the same area on your hike or run. I have had people tell me that a particular spot along a trail "is just infested with rattlesnakes" because of their repeated encounters. They of course have been running into the same rattlesnake.

During my lifetime, I have encountered four or five hundred rattlesnakes in the wild. I have never been bitten. So, don't have a phobia about rattlesnake encounters - just be alert.

Mike Kuhn
 4-12-09

NATURALIZED EXOTIC PLANTS

Many of the plants that we encounter in the "natural environment" have been introduced from outside of California, more than often originating in Europe or Asia. In other words, they were not present before European settlement of the new world. The annual grasses of our valley are all introduced, for California had only perennial grasses before European and Mexican settlers arrived. Red brome, ripgut brome, foxtail, wild and slender oats and soft chess are the more common weedy grasses. The seeds stick to the coats of our pets and to our socks.

Other exotic plants which have become naturalized include the California (Peruvian) pepper, Russian thistle (tumbleweed), which came to Canada with Russian red wheat and arrived in Southern California with railroad-borne cattle in the 1880s in the Palmdale area. Horehound was brought by early settlers as a sore throat remedy. Among the dozens of others include sweet fennel, common yarrow, field bindweed, poison hemlock, chicory, bull thistle, prickly lettuce, common groundsel, prickly sow-thistle, dandelion, oyster plant, shepherd's purse, sweet alyssum, wild radish, water cress, London rocket, oriental mustard, windmill pink, Australian saltbush, Mexican tea, French and Spanish brooms, bur-clover, sweetclover, winter vetch, Bermuda buttercup, common plantain, curly dock, scarlet pimpernel, moth mullein, puncture vine, and tree tobacco. Some of these plants are of economic benefit. Long-beaked and red-stem filaree present a high protein browse for cattle. Other plants, such as black, field and Mediterranean mustards, Russian thistle, milk thistle, castor-bean, and yellow star-thistle, present economic problems for ranchers. All crowd out native species and profoundly affect ecosystems. Many weedy species have naturalized in our city, where we have created a humid land environment with irrigation. They are bothersome, since we have to constantly weed them out of our gardens. Common purslane, for example, invaded my roses in 1998. Prickly lettuce and dandelions are bothersome in the same way.

Mike Kuhn
 11-11-04

March 28th 2009 - Backbone Trail Part 7: Saddle Peak (Stunt Road) to Trippet Ranch Shuttle

Thirteen Traiblazers began at Stunt Road, hiked down Hondo Canyon and up the Dead Horse Trail, finally arriving at Topanga State Park Trippet Ranch. We were treated to expansive views and a warm day peaking in the mid-seventies. Soon after the hike began, we saw a good many fossils. A bit past the halfway point in Hondo Canyon, we were suddenly alerted by a large rattlesnake, just

off the trail on the right. This particular snake was rattling for all he was worth, but showing no signs of aggression. There was a fine showing of flowers today, including California Buttercup, Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry, Woodland Star and Large Flowered Lotus.



We're looking forward to the last segment of the Backbone Trail next Saturday and also the safe return of our Costa Rica travelers.

April 4th 2009 - Backbone Trail Part 8: Trippet Ranch to Will Rogers State Park Shuttle

Seventeen hikers gathered at the Simi Valley car pool point for the opportunity to hike the eighth (and final) section of the Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail.



After a lengthy car shuttle, the hikers left the parking lot at Trippet Ranch (in Topanga State Park) and followed the Musch Trail as it climbed the heavily shaded mountainside, passing several meadows, scattered wildflowers, and seasonal stream beds to Eagle Junction. After a short break, the hike continued along the dirt fire road below Eagle Rock, climbing to "Hub Junction" to the east affording distant views to the north and the south. Continuing mostly uphill to the east on the dirt fire road, the route passed Cathedral Rock. Eventually the road headed south toward Temescal



Ridge, but we turned left onto an actual trail and soon began the long descent toward Will Rogers State Park, catching brief glimpses of the Los Angeles basin along the way. After

a short lunch break, we reached "Chicken Ridge," a well-named narrow isthmus with dangerous drop-offs on both sides made navigable by two bridges; the bridges



provided excellent views. Continuing downhill, we reached the end [or beginning] of the Backbone Trail in Will Rogers State Park having hiked 11.6 miles with 1,859' of elevation gain.



After resting briefly on the broad green lawn in front of the ranch house and reflecting on the successful completion of the eight Backbone Trail-segment hikes (a total of 72 miles with about 11,000' of elevation gain) over a two-month period, we headed home, perchance to dream of the John Muir Trail.



RSTB Calendar May 2009



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>1 Las Vegas Hike-A-Palooza (Apr 28-May 3) See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Curtis Ball Julie Szende</p>		<p>2 Las Vegas Hike-A-Palooza (Apr 28-May 3) See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Sudershan Nunna</p>		
<p>3 Las Vegas Hike-A-Palooza (Apr 28-May 3) See Schedule</p>	<p>4 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jennie Nguyen</p>	<p>5 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Hannah Kuhn Robert D. Lisenby</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>8 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Melanie Ashen</p>	<p>9 Sisar Canyon to White Ledge Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Street Fair See Schedule</p>
<p>10 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jim Vandenberg</p>	<p>11 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Fran Atkins</p>	<p>12 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nancy Lawson Carcione</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 Malibu Creek State Park (No Work Party this Month)</p>
<p>17 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>18 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lisa Poley</p>	<p>19 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kief Adler</p>	<p>20 RSTB Meeting 7:00 pm See Page 1</p>	<p>21 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 Mt. McCoy Trail and the Reagan Library <i>Happy Birthday</i> Luke Michaelson</p>
<p>24 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>25 Memorial Day</p>	<p>26 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>27 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Cueba Alisha Michaelson Larry Derrick</p>	<p>28 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule</p>	<p>29 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Phyllis Tewfik</p>	<p>30 San Antonio Ski Hut - Mt. Baldy <i>Happy Birthday</i> Bonnie Bouley</p>
<p>31 San Antonio Ski Hut - Mt. Baldy See Schedule</p>						

Yellow Monkey Flower

Notable Penstemon

Mustard Evening Primrose



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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)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take 1st Street heading 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)

MAY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

April 28th - May 3rd Las Vegas Hike-A-Palooza* Valley of Fire, Red Rock Canyon, Mt. Charleston, the Stratosphere Hotel & More! This special event is for the entire family and for Trailblazer members only. The Stratosphere Hotel will be our base camp, as we take in some of the best hikes in the Vegas area. See the website for all the details!

May 9th Sisar Canyon to White Ledge*

Moderate 9 MRT (2000' elevation gain)
Follow a creek up to the California Bay Laurel trees of the White Ledge campsite in the Topatopa Mountains. Bring 2-3 qts of water, layered clothing, and lunch. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite near the corner of Madera and Royal.

May 9th Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Street Fair

9:00 am-5:00 pm
The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District will have a booth at the annual Street Fair, scheduled for Saturday, May 9, on Cochran Street between Galena and Sequoia. The Rancho Simi Trail Blazers will have trail brochures, maps, and newsletters at the park district booth, along with a member to answer questions for fair visitors. Stop by and see us!

May 16th Malibu Creek State Park*

Moderate 6-8 MRT (600 - 900' elevation gain)
Hike to the old M*A*S*H site. Countless movies have been filmed in this park. Several options on the way, depending on the desires of the group. We'll see Century Lake and the Rock Pool. More information about Malibu Creek State Park is available on the website. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

May 23rd Mt. McCoy Trail and the Reagan Library

3.6 MRT - Moderate (700' elevation gain)
Hike up to an isolated knoll in a 200 acre open space region at the western end of Simi Valley. At the summit (1,325') is a white cross, erected in 1941, and a 360 degree view. From there it's about another half mile to the Reagan Library. Bring a snack and 2 to 3 quarts of water. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

May 30th & 31st San Antonio Ski Hut - Mt. Baldy*

6 MRT - Strenuous overnighter. (2,200' elevation gain)
See article on Page 1. All you need to bring is food, your sleeping bag, good boots and 2-3 qts of water. Space is limited. The cost is \$10 if you are a Sierra Club Member, and \$15 for non-members, payable to the Sierra Club host. You must make your reservations no later than May 16th. Space is limited! Email Mark to make your reservations. We'll meet at **7 AM, at the Stearns Street Park & Ride**. We'll cancel if there is bad weather, so please be prepared for a substitute hike.

* 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:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@roadrunner.com
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	
Publicity Chair:	Carrie McCline		
Newsletter Editor:	Kelli Ham		simitrailrunner@gmail.com

-----cut out and return with your payment-----

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:

“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399



U.S. Postage

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