



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Welcome New Members

Colleen Flavin,
Mi Kim,
Armando Caro, Shayla Harper & family (Gio, Kayle, Taylor & Skyler) & Susanne Blessington



Volunteers Needed!!



If anyone is interested in volunteering for the **work parties** contact Mike Kuhn at:

mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com

RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Sporting the beautiful RSTB logo, these are great shirts! Please call Mike Kuhn if you'd like to order at 805-583-2345.

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



Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take a hike?

Well, did you know that in Simi Valley

you can take many hikes with the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers and explore the beauty of Simi Valley and other beautiful locations? We have a lot of fun taking photos, talking and just viewing the beautiful scenery like the one in this photo.

Hikes are every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and most Saturdays



The April work party was conducted on the upper portion of the Chumash Trail. Much thanks to the heroic efforts of Martin DeGoey, John Sabol, Bart Hibbs, Mike Kuhn and Bill Cespedes.

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
Sycamore Drive Community Center
1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1

Wednesday: May 21, 2014 5:30PM
(NOTE: Early Start Time)
Everyone Welcome to attend!

Upcoming Events

May 3rd East Canyon, Corral Sunshine Motorway, Mission Point* - 9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,500' elevation gain) - **8AM**

May 10th Middle Chumash Trail Work Party - 8AM

May 17th Mt. Baldy, Ski Lift, Devil's Backbone, Ski Hut Loop Hike* - 8.7-mile Loop - Strenuous (2,500' of elevation gain and 3,900' of elevation loss) – **7AM**

May 21st Club Meeting 5:30PM - (NOTE: Early Start Time)
Everyone Welcome to attend!

May 24th The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak
4.6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain) or 8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1750' elevation gain) - **8AM**

May 26th – June 1st Yosemite National Park* * TRIP FULL *****

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see www.simitrailblazers.com/activities for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at <http://www.rsrpd.org> to see what is happening next!

VELVET-ANTS

Velvet-ants are really wingless female wasps. Males and, occasionally females, have wings. They are conspicuous for their long brightly colored hair, which can be red, orange, white and yellow - one color to each individual. Little is known about their life cycle. However, it is generally assumed that they are parasitic, feeding on the larvae of other ground nesting wasps, hornets, bees, moths and beetles and they parasitize them in order to raise their young inside the cocoon or pupal casing of the host. Just what selective advantage their bright colored hair provides, other than to perhaps warn potential predators, is not understood.

Female velvet-ants sting when handled. While the pain is said to immediately subside with little swelling or other effects, the level of pain is said to be greater than that of bees or most other wasps. So, they may be cute, but they should not be handled. They are said to emit faint squeaking sounds similar to a dog's rubber chew toy when confined.

Several species of velvet-ants occur in Ventura and Los Angeles counties. Each species may occur in two or more color phases, however, a single color for each species is usually present in one locale. All wasps from one laying of eggs are the same color. So color cannot be used to distinguish species. That requires a hand lens or microscope.

Mike Kuhn
12-7-04

TELEPHONES COME TO SIMI

Another excerpt from R.E. Harrington's *Early Days of Simi Valley* (1961), page 25:

"...In the year 1909 my father [i.e., R.A. Harrington] helped to start a local farm telephone company. I believe there were about four lines...There were several parties on each line. I remember our ring was two longs and one short ring. There were about twelve on our party line. 4 by 4 red-wood lumber was used for posts and

they were put too far apart so that when the east wind blew the wires were almost sure to get crossed. The central was in Mrs. Printz's colony house, the same house that the Post Office was in, and her three daughters helped her with both jobs."

These early telephone services came with problems. You picked up your telephone to make a call. If someone was on the line, you were supposed to hang up and try later. Some individuals would start dialing [rotary phones], thus interrupting the call in progress. Many were tempted to listen in on the conversations of others - and did. As today, some individuals liked to spend prolonged periods talking to friends - which meant that none of the other party line members could make or receive calls. Of course, it was possible to simply interrupt and let the talkers know that you had an emergency - social or otherwise. It is said that everyone "knew" everyone else's business. I can remember that where I lived in northern California we had four-party lines as late as the late-1940s and two-party lines into the 1950s. The party-line system drove my mother up the wall. Of course, her phone calls were always important. We children were admonished to make our calls short, because someone else might need to use the phone.

The Printz Colony House, like the others, was prefabricated in Chicago and then dismantled and shipped to California by rail. They were then carried by ship to Port Hueneme and brought up to Simi by wagon, where they were re-assembled. The Printz Colony House is one of two remaining and is still located in Old Town Simi at its original location. As indicated by Mr. Harrington, it served as the first post office in Simi and the first telephone exchange in the valley. John Peabody Harrington, the now famous anthropologist, and R.E. Harrington's brother, was called to the Printz Colony House to receive the telephone call from the American Bureau of Ethnology offering him the position that he held for more than 50 years. That telephone call resulted in the preservation of much of what we know

today - and it passed through the Printz Colony House.

Mike Kuhn
12-23-04

CASTAC VALLEY AND LAKE

Southeast of the historic Fort Tejon is Castac Lake. Both Fort Tejon and Castac Lake are located in Castac Valley. The names "Castac" and "Castaic" derive from the Chumash Indian village of kastiq. That village was located adjacent to the present lake. The name means "the eye, the face," or more specifically, it derives from ka-s-tiq, which means "it is its eye, face." When first encountered by the Spanish, the current lake basin was a salt-grass flat. Since that time the Tejon Ranch operation has maintained a lake in the basin. The trail to the village of kastiq from the south was called the kastiq trail. As a result, the name became displaced to the southern end of the trail - to the Castaic area. So Castac derives its name from the name of the Chumash Indian village, and Castaic derive its names from that of the trail to the village. (The source for the meaning of the name kastiq comes from Applegate [1974], pages 196 and 203.)

Mike Kuhn
10-15-10 (revised)



March 29nd - Happy Camp Canyon, Middle Range Fire Road Loop



A baker's dozen worth of Trail Blazers met at Donut Delite and carpoled to the Broadway trail head of Happy Camp Canyon Regional Park. It was a cool and clear morning yielding to perfect hiking weather. Only in the

distance to the west, was some fog, that obscured our ocean views, once we gained elevation on the Middle Ridge Fire Road. Today we saw more wildflowers than on all previous trails this season to date. Even in this severe drought, many varieties were in evidence, including Wishbone, Bush Sunflower, Bush Lupine, Bladder Pod, Cliff Aster, Indian Paintbrush, Datura and Santa Barbara Loco Weed. Total distance was 10.8 miles with just over 2,000' of elevation gain. The day was in stark contrast to the last time we hiked this same loop in extremely high winds.

April 6th - Santa Cruz Island (Channel Islands National Park)



Eighteen eager hikers assembled around 7:00 a.m. at the Island Packers facility in Ventura Harbor with their hiking gear, looking forward to exploring Santa Cruz Island, the largest of the five islands in the Channel Islands National Park. Shortly

after 8:00 a.m. our trip across the Santa Barbara Channel began. As a result of a strong wind from the west, we experienced an unpleasant "heaving" boat ride; Anacapa Island was visible to the south. We disembarked at Scorpion Anchorage on the east end of the island, very happy to be on firm ground again. After hiking a short distance toward the nearby campground, we turned left onto Scorpion Road and followed it as it climbed over 700' to a trail (dirt road) junction. At that point seven hikers decided to hike up to El Montanon peak and the remaining hikers headed toward Smugglers Cove. It was a beautiful, if somewhat windy, day - the hillsides were green, there were many blooming wildflowers, and the temperature was perfect for hiking uphill. Smugglers Cove is a lovely sandy bay on the eastern edge of the island with a nice view of Anacapa Island; shade was provided by many large eucalyptus trees and there was an old ranch house (built in 1889) as well as evidence of the olive grove and nut trees that once flourished there. El Montanon (1,808') is the highest mountain on the island that is accessible by the public; the views from the peak are spectacular, including other islands in the Santa Barbara Channel and the coastline of Southern California. It is accessed via Montanon Ridge and High Mount with stretches of narrow trail flanked by pulse-raising drops along the volcanic slopes. It was very windy and cold at the peak; along the way we passed an historic oil well and a cypress grove. The two groups of hikers arrived back at Scorpion Anchorage simultaneously, the Smugglers Cove group having hiked 8.8 miles with 1,818' of elevation gain/loss and the El Montanon peak group having hiked 9.5 miles with 2,547' of elevation gain/loss. The Island Packers boat ride back to Ventura Harbor at 4:30 p.m. was quite pleasant.

April 19th - Matilija Falls

Fifteen hikers carpoled to the trailhead at the west end of Matilija Road a few miles northwest of Ojai on a pleasant spring morning; two other hikers met the group at the trailhead. The hike be-



gan along a road that headed west through the private Matilija Canyon Ranch Wildlife Refuge where we were greeted by several loud, but beautiful peacocks. The stream crossing at the 0.4-mile mark was easy since the water level was relatively low. After a little over a mile our route crossed through a lovely private ranch via a dirt road that hikers are restricted to. At about the 2-mile mark the dirt road became a narrow trail as it wound through a shady poison-oak-paradise stretch. In fact,

since the route closely followed Matilija Creek the rest of the way, poison oak was frequently present [long pants and a long-sleeved shirt are recommended]. After a while we stopped by the stream at a particularly lovely spot and took a short break (and some photos). Continuing upstream the maintained trail ended and we began to scramble and boulder hop, frequently finding short open stretches of trail. Occasionally we were required to cross the stream in order to continue - fortunately this was possible without having to wade. We were rewarded for our effort by beautiful scenery including the flowing creek, several large pools of water, vast expanses of sedimentary rock layers, an extensive riparian oak woodland, towering canyon walls, and many wildflowers. At about the 4.5-mile mark we reached a 30-foot cascade and a beautiful shaded campsite just above it. We took a rest-and-lunch break in this idyllic location. Continuing on upstream we soon reached the two fabled waterfalls, took some photos, and rested briefly. The scrambling and boulder-hopping going downstream seemed considerably easier than going upstream and the scenery was just as beautiful. We made it back to our vehicles with mostly minor scratches, cuts, and bruises. We returned home after a 9.8-mile hike with around 1,300' of elevation gain/loss.

April 26th - Towsley Canyon Loop

17 hikers (plus one dog) met at the "Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon" section of the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park on a pleasant spring morning. We began hiking along a dirt road toward the Sonia Thompson Nature Center, crossing Towsley Creek on a concrete bridge. Soon we began a counterclockwise hike on the Towsley View Loop Trail. After passing through The Narrows section of Towsley Gorge, the trail began rising via switchbacks along the shaded eastern slope of the canyon. The verdant north-facing slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains rose steeply to the south. The single-track trail passed through sage scrub, stands of California walnut, bay laurel, and scattered oak trees as we made our way to the 2,450' high point on the trail from which much of the Santa Clarita Valley could be seen. The hillsides were adorned by many blooming wildflowers which begged to be photographed. The trail then began dropping into shady Wiley Canyon which we followed downstream to a junction with the Canyon View Loop Trail which rose along the northern flank of the mountain before descending to the Sonia Thompson Nature Center. After resting in the shaded grassy area near the nature center, we followed the paved road back to our vehicles, having completed a very pleasant 6.8-mile hike with 1,400' of elevation gain/loss.





RSTB Calendar May



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	2	3 East Canyon, Corral Sunshine Motorway, Mis- sion Point* 8AM See Schedule
4 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	5 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Hannah Kuhn Robert D. Lisenby	6 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Eileen Cohen	7	8 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	9	10 Middle Chumash Trail Work Party 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jim Vandenberg
11 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	12	13 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carol Tucker	14	15 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Ravi Ramnath	16	17 Mt. Baldy, Ski Lift, Devil's Backbone, Ski Hut Loop Hike* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Mann
18 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	19	20 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	21 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>(NOTE: Early Start Time)</i> See Schedule <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i>	22 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	23	24 The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak 8AM See Schedule
25 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	26	27 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	28	29 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	30	31
May 26th - June 1st Yosemite National Park* *** TRIP FULL ***						
		<i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Cueba				



Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/ for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES (Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

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Meet at **5PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead. Take the Rocky Peak exit on the 118 Freeway and head north over the freeway. Park at the trailhead or across the bridge on the Santa Susana Pass Road.

(We Meet at 5PM during daylight saving time.) (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain)

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, to the south of Donut Delite, located on the north east side of the intersection of Royal Avenue and Madera Road. (Moderate - 4.0 MRT - 675' elevation gain)

Thursday Evening - Chumash Trail

Meet at **6PM** at Chumash trailhead. Directions: Take the 118 Freeway to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite and turn right on Flanagan Dr. The trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

MAY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

May 3rd East Canyon, Corral Sunshine Motorway, Mission Point*

9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,500' elevation gain)

East Canyon is located in the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park on the northeastern slope of the Santa Susana Mountains. After cresting the ridge and following the very pleasant Corral Sunshine Motorway to Mission Point, we'll have panoramic views of the San Fernando Valley and beyond. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

May 10th Work Party - Middle Chumash Trail work party. Meet at **8AM** at north end of Flanagan Drive. See Thursday hike description above on how to get there. Bring plenty of water, wear sturdy footwear, long pants, a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Bring a snack. About 3 miles round trip on trail.

May 17th Mt. Baldy, Ski Lift, Devil's Backbone, Ski Hut Loop Hike*

8.7-mile Loop - Strenuous (2,500' of elevation gain and 3,900' of elevation loss)

Our loop will begin by taking the Mt. Baldy Ski Lift (6,480') to Baldy Notch (7,802') where we'll start our actual hike. We'll descend via the Baldy Bowl Trail, passing the Sierra Club Ski Hut along the way and then return to our vehicles via the [San Antonio] "Falls Road" and Mt. Baldy Road. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **7AM**. Bring 3 to 4 quarts of water, lunch, snacks and sunscreen.

Wear boots. **NOTE 1:** "Up only" one-way ski lift tickets will cost approximately \$15/person (\$10 for seniors). There may be a group discount available. **NOTE 2:** A National Forest Adventure Pass (or a Senior Pass) is required for parking.

May 21st Club Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend! (NOTE: Early Start Time)

5:30PM - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1


May 24th The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak

4.6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain) or 8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1750' elevation gain)

Meet at **8AM** at the Hummingbird Ranch Trailhead. You have the option of hiking only the Hummingbird Trail, or continuing on to Rocky Peak. From Highway 118 Simi Valley Freeway, exit on Kuehner Drive and go north. Trailhead is on the right. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

May 26th - June 1st Yosemite National Park* ***** TRIP FULL *****

This very special event is limited to *active Trail Blazer members only*. **Space is very limited**, so please email ynpreservations@simitrailblazers.com as soon as possible, to guarantee your reservation. **Reservations will only be accepted via email**. There will be a waiting list, when the reservations are full. We will tent camp at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/wawonacamp.htm>. There is a non-refundable campground fee, shared equally among all those who sign up. Please plan to arrive the afternoon of May 26th. There is also a \$20 per car park entry fee. Please note that this is the weekend after Memorial Day, so the droves of holiday weekend campers will be gone! <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/national-parks/yosemite-national-park> for a wealth of Yosemite information.

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. No  dogs allowed on trail(s). For additional 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.** Full descriptions of these hikes and activities are available at <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Santiago Homsí		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
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-----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 _____ Birth Month _____ Day _____

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell _____

How do you want to receive the Newsletter? Check all that apply.

Mail Mailing address _____

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How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

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

Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399



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