



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



The May Work Party was conducted on the upper portion of the Lower Stagecoach Trail. Much was accomplished – including cutting back lots of poison oak. Thanks to Martin DeGoey, David Adams and Mike Kuhn.



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



Volunteers Needed!!



If anyone is interested in volunteering for the **Work Parties Chair** or the **Publicity Chair**

contact Mike Kuhn at:
mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com

Weekly hikes!!



Has anyone ever told you to take hike?

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 so much fun taking photos, talking and just viewing the beautiful scenery like the photo above.

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

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at: Sycamore Drive Community Center 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: June 17, 2015
5:30PM Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

Upcoming Events

June 6th Hummingbird Trail Work Party & Cache In Trash Out Event - National Trails Day 8AM

June 13th Switzer Falls and Bear Canyon* 8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain/loss) 8AM

June 17th Club Meeting
The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1 **Everyone Welcome to attend!**
5:30PM

June 20th Eaton Canyon Park to Henninger Flats* 6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,400' elevation gain/loss) 8AM

June 27th San Gabriel Peak from Eaton Saddle on Mt. Wilson Road* 7 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' elevation gain/loss) 8AM

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



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.

CHUMASH USE OF BLUE DICKS AND MARIPOSA LILIES

The bulbs of blue dicks, often called brodiaea (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), and mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* spp.), both called *shi'q'o* in Ventureño Chumash, were collected by the Chumash in May and June, after the flower stalks had dried up. They were dug up using digging sticks. The bulbs were transported to a communal roasting pit for immediate cooking. A fire was prepared in the pit. After the fire had burned down, the bulbs were placed on the coals – often in a layer several inches thick. They then covered the bulbs with ashes and coals and then covered everything with a layer of dirt. The bulbs were uncovered and eaten when they were done.

Bulbs at different elevations and of different species were ready to harvest at different times. So these bulbs were an important food resource for the Indians over a period of a month or more for each group. In general, they became available after many herbaceous plants had died and were no longer available as food.

Most of this information has been taken from Jan Timbrook, *Chumash Ethnobotany*, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (2007), p. 75.

Mike Kuhn
9-10-08

CHUMASH USES OF CHIA

Most of the contents of this article are taken from Jan Timbrook, *Chumash Ethnobotany*, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History (2007), pp. 188-191.

Chia (*Salvia columbariae*, *itepesh* in Ventureño Chumash) was one of the favorite foods of the Chumash and many other Indian groups in California. The name, *chia*, was given the plant by the Spanish, because it is so similar to *Salvia* species cultivated in Mexico for food. Although the anthropological literature includes many assertions that of the seeds of white, purple and black sages, as well

as chia, were eaten by the Chumash, Timbrook's carefully review of the field notes of John Peabody Harrington indicate that in spite of the fact that many other California Indian groups did eat white, purple and black sage seeds, the Chumash did not eat them. (Timbrook, "Chia and the Chumash: A Reconsideration of Sage Seeds in Southern California," *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology*, Vol. 8, No. 1 [1986], pp. 50-64) Carbonized pieces of seed cakes found in hearths within the Chumash area were interpreted as sage seeds. However, later review of these pieces of seed cakes has resulted in the conclusion that the seeds are from red maids (*Calandrinia ciliata*). I have been telling people for years that the Chumash Indians ate seeds of the perennial sages as well as the annual sages. Chia is an annual plant species.

Early historical accounts indicate that chia seed were collected in large amounts. However, chia is relatively uncommon today. Certainly, it is never seen in such abundance that it could be a significant food resource for any group of people. The same can be said for red maids. Timbrook speculates that the decline in abundance of chia may be due to habitat changes resulting from the introduction of exotic plants and animals from the old world and from the suppression of Chumash grassland burning practices in the eighteenth century. When we do see chia today, it seems to follow fires or other types of disturbance, such as mechanical disturbance. For example, hiking trails are in a constant state of disturbance. The Chumash burned over large areas in the fall of each year to encourage the growth of fire followers. Most grassland areas seem to have been burned off about every three years. Nearly all-native grass species were perennial bunch grasses. After being burned off, the root masses would re-sprout each spring with little competition from other species. Bunch grasses leave ground space between them and tend not to block enough sunlight from reaching the ground surface to crowd out annual

species, such as chia and red maids. The net effect of the burning of grasslands was also a conversion of areas of coastal sage scrub to grasslands and even the conversion of some areas of chaparral vegetation to grasslands. So, the world looked much different than it does now. It was a highly managed environment.

Even when chia seeds were abundant, they were not nearly as abundant in volume as acorns. However, chia was highly valued and nutritious and more important in the qualitative sense than in terms of the quantity actually used.

The Chumash collected the seeds in the spring and summer using a seedbeater and basket. Seeds collected in a small basket were periodically transferred to a larger burden basket and carried to the home village using a net and tumpline. Many seeds were lost in the process, so the annual harvest would not have had a deleterious effect on future harvests.

Chia seeds were stored in people's houses in large, i.e., two feet wide and two and one half feet high, baskets. The baskets were woven from *Juncus* rush and stored on bulrush mats supported well off the ground by wooden frames. This was done to keep out moisture and pests. During the mission period the Indians stored their seeds in baskets on wooden shelves about six feet off the floor in their adobe dwelling. This same practice was followed with grass seeds, acorns, holly-leaved cherries, and red maids seeds.

To prepare it for eating, the seeds were toasted and then ground to a fine flour. Toasting was either done in a basket tray with coals from coast live oak bark or in a steatite *olla*, which was placed directly in the fire. The seeds were ground in a mortar with a pestle.

(Continued in the month of July)

April 12th - Towsley Canyon Loop

10 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. Many other hikers and runners were also enjoying the beautiful day. 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 pleasant 6.9-mile hike with 1,423' of elevation gain/loss.

April 25th - Romero Canyon Lollipop Loop

13 hikers gathered in Simi Valley and then carpoled northwest to the trailhead in lovely Montecito via Hwy 23, Hwy 101, Sheffield Drive, Romero Canyon Road, and Bella Vista Drive. After securing parking, donning our hiking gear, and taking a group photo, the hike began along the east side of well-shaded Romero Creek on a cool overcast foggy morning. As the trail ascended through verdant forested Romero Canyon, the creek cascaded soothingly over boulders on its way to the ocean and there were views of a couple of small waterfalls. The trail climbed steadily and fairly steeply reaching unpaved Old Romero Canyon Road at the two-mile point as a light rain began falling. After a much-needed rest break, we crossed the road and continued up the mountain via a trail that provided limited views of Romero Canyon due to the fog. The trail eventually reached the ridgeline and led westward to Romero Saddle at the east end of paved Camino Cielo (highway in the sky). After taking a lunch break at the colorful graffiti-adorned water tank which shielded us from a chilly wind we headed west on Camino Cielo which was adorned with a surprising display of blooming plants including many varieties of wildflowers. As we hiked the sun came out and we enjoyed views of the Santa Ynez River valley and the mountains of the Dick Smith Wilderness and the San Rafael Wilderness to the north/northwest. When we reached the junction with the upper end of Old Romero Canyon Road, we turned left (south) and continued downhill on the unpaved and mostly single-track road. We then retraced our route downhill along Romero Creek, eventually reaching our vehicles having completed a pleasant 10-mile hike with about 2,500' of elevation gain/loss.

May 2nd - Santa Paula Canyon

On an unseasonably warm spring day 22 hikers began an out-and-back hike in Santa Paula Canyon from the trailhead on Highway 150 a few miles northwest of Santa Paula, a quaint town located in the agricultural Santa Clara River Valley and referred to as the "Citrus Capital of the World" for its orange, lemon, and avocado groves. The initial portion of the hike involved skirting the campus of Thomas Aquinas College, the Ferndale Ranch, avocado groves, and an oil field with mountains

looming in the distance. The vegetation in the canyon has made a striking comeback since the winter floods of 2005 washed out much of the old road/trail along Santa Paula Creek. We followed a heavily shaded single-track trail along the pleasantly flowing creek until we reached the point where the old dirt road (narrowed by erosion and plant growth) rose steadily up the east side of the canyon to the Big Cone Campground which has several nice campsites nestled in a grove of big cone Douglas fir trees. Soon after passing the campground we descended into a ravine created by major erosion and climbed up a fairly steep slope on the opposite side. The trail then continued a short distance before it descended again, this time to a tributary of Santa Paula Creek. From there we followed the main trail a short distance northward to a junction with a steep use trail that we carefully descended to a picturesque waterfall and punchbowl where we rested and enjoyed the scenery. After we climbed back up the use trail, we followed the main trail from which we were soon able to look down at the large pool below the waterfall and into the narrow gorge through which the creek flows before it becomes a waterfall. We then explored the nearby slick-rock slide area above the waterfall which was dry due to ongoing drought conditions. The main trail - now named the Last Chance Trail - continues northward eventually connecting to other trails providing access to the wilderness areas to the north. However, on this day we went no further. We returned to the trailhead the way we came, completing a pleasant 8-mile hike with around 1,350' of elevation gain/loss.



May 9th - East Canyon to Mission Point



11 hikers met in Simi Valley and then carpoled to the "East Canyon, Rice Canyon, and Michael D. Antonovich Open Space" section of the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park via I5 and "The Old Road" in Santa Clarita. Two additional hikers joined us at the trailhead

and we began hiking southward along the non-maintained and somewhat-eroded East Canyon Motorway as it followed the small creek in the canyon bottom. The route was lined with bay laurel, black walnut, cottonwood, sycamore, and oak trees. Soon the dirt road began rising more steeply along the western side of a wooded ridge decorated with a colorful variety of wildflowers including clarkia, cliff asters, Chinese houses, golden yarrow, mariposa lilies, and others. We enjoyed views of the steep slopes to the west and relics of the bigcone Douglas-fir trees that once covered the mountain. An intermittent breeze cooled us as the road led us upward to a junction with Bridge Road (and the Oat Mountain Motorway) which is blocked by a SoCal Gas fence and gate. Having reached the highest point in our hike, we headed southeast along the very pleasant Corral Sunshine Motorway to Mission Point which provides a panoramic view of the San Fernando Valley and beyond. After resting, we retraced our route to the trailhead and returned home having completed a 9-mile hike with about 1,700' of elevation gain/loss on a great day for mountain hiking.



RSTB Calendar June



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	3 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Skyler Harper	4 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	5 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Becky Stewart	6 Hummingbird Trail Work Party - National Trails Day 8AM See Schedule
7 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	8	9 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	10	11 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	12	13 Switzer Falls and Bear Canyon* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Ray Malphrus
14 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule 	15	16 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	17 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Diana Prater	18 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	19	20 Eaton Canyon Park to Henninger Flats* 8AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Richard Webb
21 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule <i>Happy Father's Day</i> <i>Happy Birthday</i> Phil Ankrom Richard Slifka	22 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Linda Mann Alice Buchanan Prescilla Gonzalez	23 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	24	25 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	26	27 San Gabriel Peak from Eaton Saddle on Mt. Wilson Road* 8AM See Schedule
28 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nancy Gardner	29	30 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Paul Stewart James Hanley	   			

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php (Scroll down to map)



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

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, located to the south of Donut Delite, near the NE corner of Madera and Royal.
(Moderate - 4.0 MRT - 600' 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.)

JUNE HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

June 6th Hummingbird Trail Work Party & Cache In Trash Out Event - National Trails Day

This event is being held in conjunction with a geocaching.com CITO event. Meet at **8AM** the Hummingbird Trail trailhead, just north of the 118 and Kuehner Drive. The event will end at noon. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District will provide all that we need. We will pick up trash and paint over graffiti. You must bring your own water, snacks, and sunscreen. Wear old work clothes, gloves, and a hat.

June 13th Switzer Falls and Bear Canyon*

8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain/loss)
Our hike will begin at the lower Switzer Picnic Area parking lot and will follow a shady trail for a mile or so before emerging into the sunlight and rising to skirt a narrow gorge. The trail then drops into the Arroyo Seco a short distance downstream from Switzer Falls. We'll follow the trail downstream to the Bear Canyon junction and then hike upstream in Bear Canyon as far as the Bear Canyon Trail Camp (if conditions permit). Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

June 17th Club Planning Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

June 20th Eaton Canyon Park to Henninger Flats*

6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,400' elevation gain/loss)
Our route will follow the Wilson Toll Road up to Henninger Flats, a forested notch sitting high on the mountain slopes above Altadena. The wide dirt road provides outstanding city views all the way up and Henninger Flats is complete with water, picnic tables, bathrooms, a nature center/museum, and lots of shade. It is also the home of the Los Angeles County Experimental Forestry Nursery. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

June 27th San Gabriel Peak from Eaton Saddle on Mt. Wilson Road*

7 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,800' elevation gain/loss)
We will approach the San Gabriel Peak area by vehicle from the northwest via Angeles Crest Highway and Mt. Wilson Road. The hike will begin from the dirt parking area (5,119') at Eaton Saddle on Mount Wilson Road (about 2.3 miles from Red Box). Our hike will begin on the Mount Lowe [Fire] Road. First we'll hike up to San Gabriel Peak (6,161') offering views of Mt. Baldy, Mt. Wilson, Strawberry Peak, and others. Next we'll visit nearby Mount Disappointment (5,960') which was the site of one of the 17 Nike Missile Defense System locations in the Los Angeles area in the 1950's. Then we'll head over to Mount Markham (5,742') and Mt. Lowe (5,603') [Professor Lowe had originally planned to extend the Mt. Lowe Railway from nearby Echo Mountain all the way to the summit of this peak, but failed to do so] after which we'll return to our vehicles at Eaton Saddle. Meet at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

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
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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 _____

Email Email address _____

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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