



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



**RSTB CLUB MEETING**  
 This month's RSTB meeting will be at:  
 Sycamore Drive Community Center  
 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1  
**Wednesday: July 9, 2014 5:30PM**  
*(NOTE: Early Start Time)*  
*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

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

**May 26th - June 1st - Yosemite National Park**  
**FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2014** - Yosemite Valley Floor Loop or alternatives of Group A - This group of hikers got a fairly early start and hiked the Yosemite Valley Floor Loop Trail starting and ending at the Yosemite Falls shuttle stop. The trail skirts the base of the cliffs that surround the valley and is frequently well-shaded. Despite the crowds that frequent the valley, happily the hikers didn't encounter a single hiker until late morning (and then mostly in the Bridalveil Fall area). The trail followed the Merced River for quite a while and there were views of Yosemite Falls, El Capitan, the Leaning Tower, Ribbon Fall, Cathedral Rocks, Three Brothers, Sentinel Rocks, and Sentinel Falls. The hikers left the loop trail at the Four Mile Trail parking area, then crossed the swinging bridge and passed Yosemite Lodge, thus completing a 12.8-mile loop hike with 650' of elevation gain/loss.

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

**New Members**  
 Susanne Blessington  
 Goldie Parazoo

**Weekly hikes!!**



**Has anyone ever told you to take a 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 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



**Upcoming Events**

**July 5th Mt. McCoy to the Reagan Library** 6 MRT - Moderate (800' elevation gain) - **8AM**

**July 9th Club Meeting**  
*(NOTE: Early Start Time) Everyone Welcome to attend! - 5:30PM*

**July 12th Solstice Canyon - Sostomo Trail - Deer Valley Loop + Tropical Terrace \***  
 6.3 MRT - Moderate (1,200' of elevation gain/loss) - **8AM**

**July 14th - 20th North Lake Tahoe Camping & Hiking Event\***

**July 26th Newton Canyon\***  
 7.4 MRT - Moderate (750' elevation gain) - **8AM**

**Volunteers Needed!!**



If anyone is interested in volunteering for the **work parties** contact Mike Kuhn at:  
[mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com)

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

## CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE

The California, or western, sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) is a 40-70 foot tall deciduous tree, which grows near and in creek beds. Its smooth, thin bark peels in whitish and greenish patches, giving it a mottled look. The leaves turn yellow in the fall before falling off. The bristly fruit is called a "button ball". Sycamores are a true humidlands tree, which have survived in the semi-arid west because they always have their roots in the water table. The largest sycamore tree in Simi Valley is in the southern median of Wood Ranch Parkway in Sycamore Canyon.

The California sycamore is used in landscaping in our area, however, the London Plane (European sycamore) is more commonly used. In recent years the Mexican sycamore is becoming more popular because it is resistant to mildew problems.

## CALIFORNIA BUCKWHEAT

California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) is one the most common plants of the Venturan coastal sage scrub vegetation association. It has "fascicled" (bunched together) gray-green leaves. Flowers are small and lack petals, but there are six showy sepals. Color of the flowers varies from white to pinkish.

## SCRUB OAK

Scrub oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*) is the smallest of our native oak trees in the Simi Valley area. This shrub or small tree has thick leathery leaves with spiny margins. It has stout rigid branches and is usually found on north facing slopes in the chaparral vegetation association. It provides shelter and food, in the form of acorns, to animals. Scrub oaks sprout quickly after a fire, and the soft new growth is browsed by deer. There is a substantial stand of scrub oaks along the Chumash Trail just beyond the first rock outcroppings

next to the trail.

## BUSH SUNFLOWER

California Encelia or Bush Sunflower (*Encelia californica*) is a sprawling woody perennial shrub from two to five feet high. It has bright yellow flowers with a dark center. It is a member of the Asteraceae family. What appears to be a single flower is actually a cluster or head of flowers. The petals are each a ray flower and the center is made up of hundreds of disk flowers. The stems are covered with grayish-white fine hairs. It is found in the Coastal Sage Scrub and the Chaparral plant associations.

Mike Kuhn  
11-1-04

## CHAPARRAL BEARGRASS

California and National Trails days (1999) saw the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers, with the help of many people, including Boy Scouts, cutting a new segment of the China Flat Trail. Specifically, the new segment begins on the eastern side of the canyon just east of King James Court and connects up with the original trail about a half mile up the canyon to the west.

Sometime after National Trails Day I heard third or fourth hand that someone had complained that we had destroyed one or more endangered plants. After making further inquiries, I was told that they said it was a "Nolina." The 1993 edition of *The Jepson Manual* lists only one possible nolina in Ventura County, and that is Parry's nolina (*Nolina parryi*). Parry's nolina is quite common in the Peninsular Range and elsewhere, so I was puzzled. At first I dismissed the assertion but had nagging doubts about whether the complaining party might know what they were talking about. Further inquiry suggested the source of the complaint was the wife of Rick Burgess, both botanists in Ventura County. A call to Rick, a longtime acquaintance (I don't know his wife)

proved very interesting. The plant was cut in April during the first day of California Trails Days. At that time it didn't contain a fruiting body and is relatively indistinguishable from our local yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*). By the time National Trails Day came around in June, the remaining plants had flower stalks and could be identified as something other than yuccas.

The plant that was bushwhacked was part of a very small colony of a newly identified species that is known only in a few populations in San Diego, Orange and Ventura counties. One of the populations in Ventura County is on a ranch in the Ojai Valley and the other is on the south slopes of Simi Peak - right where we constructed the trail. The plant is now known in botanical circles as chaparral beargrass (*Nolina cismontana*). Eventually, this new species, which may number less than 1,000 individuals, may achieve "Endangered" status. At present, it is a Federal Species of Concern.

While easily mistaken for the yucca, the two species differ in several significant ways. The yucca usually occurs as a single rosette and never more than three. The nolina, however, often grows in colonies of more than three, often as many as 20 or 30. The tip of the yucca leaf is usually dark green, while the tip of the nolina is darker than the rest of the leaf and is often brown. The yucca leaf is stiff with a very sharp, hard spine on the end, while the nolina leaf is flexible with a not-very-sharp spine on the end of each leaf. The yucca flower stalk is stout, erect and usually straight, while the nolin's stalks are often recumbent. Unlike the yucca, the seed pods of the nolina are papery.

Well, now we know and will avoid the chaparral beargrass in the future.

Mike Kuhn  
11-3-04

## May 26th - June 1st - Yosemite National Park



### MONDAY, MAY 26, 2014 - Arrival and Wawona Meadow Loop

17 Rancho Simi Trailblazers gathered at the Wawona Campground (3,879') in southwestern Yosemite National



Park for several days of camping and hiking in one of the most beautiful areas in the world. After setting up camp, we car-pooled over to the lovely Wawona Hotel (4,011') where we began

hiking the easy four-mile Wawona Meadow loop trail (4,071') which follows a dirt road through a forest of ponderosa pines and incense cedars that encircles the meadow. We enjoyed the cool pine-scented air, the views of the green meadow, the blooming plants (including the rarely seen mountain lady's slipper orchid), and the solitude of the hike. Afterward we returned to the campground having hiked 4.0 miles with a mere 242' of elevation gain/loss.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 2014** - Strike camp and drive home (284 miles) - We had a wonderful time in Wawona and Yosemite Valley. The weather was perfect, the temperatures were mostly pleasant, the scenery was magnificent, and the company was congenial.

### June 14th - Switzer Falls and Bear Canyon Trail Camp

Eleven hikers carpoled to the trailhead at the Switzer Picnic Area (10 miles from La Canada Flintridge along the Angeles Crest Highway) in the San Gabriel Mountains. It was a cool morning as we hiked along a pleasant heavily shaded trail (the remnants of an old asphalt road) one mile downstream along the Arroyo Seco to the remains of the Commodore Switzer Trail Camp which was a bustling

weekend spot around 100 years ago. The Switzer Falls are a short distance further downstream, but the U.S. Forest Service warns the hiker not to continue downstream. Instead, the trail crossed to the west side of the stream and climbed the hillside to skirt the narrow gorge; parts of the hillside trail were fenced in to protect hikers from falling. Soon the trail dropped into the Arroyo Seco gorge downstream from Switzer Falls. We followed the trail downstream to the point at which the creek in Bear Canyon flows into the Arroyo Seco and then began climbing steadily upstream in rugged Bear Canyon. We crossed the gurgling stream many times on our way to the Bear Canyon Trail Camp, our turnaround point, four miles from the trailhead. Although their size was diminished by the ongoing drought, there were many mirror-like pools, cascades, and small waterfalls along the way and tall big-cone spruce trees provided heavy shade; wildflowers (including the Humboldt lily) and ferns made their presence known. The camp is situated in a very nice spot; it makes one want to linger. After a lunch break we returned the way we had come, visiting the lower Switzer waterfall along the way. One advantage to hiking upstream in the Arroyo Seco is that doing so provides much better views of the small waterfalls and pools along the way. Eventually we reached the parking lot and returned to Simi Valley having hiked nearly 9 miles with about 1,700' of elevation gain/loss.

### June 21st - Trippet Ranch, Eagle Rock, Hub Junction, Musch Trail Loop

13 hikers gathered in the Trippet Ranch parking lot in Topanga State Park on a pleasant summer morning. Our hike began along the mostly shaded Nature Trail that wound its way upward to the junction of the Santa Ynez Canyon Trail and the Eagle Springs Fire Road.



We followed the fire road up to Eagle Junction and then on up to the western approach to Eagle Rock by which time the day had warmed up considerably. We snacked and rested atop the imposing Eagle Rock monolith and enjoyed the panoramic inland views. Resuming our hike we headed back down to the Musch Trail (a section of the Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail) junction and followed the partially shaded trail as it descended through interspersed sections of chaparral, woodlands, grassy meadows, and seasonal streams (presently dry). At times we were cooled by sea breezes; there were several varieties of blooming plants though most of them weren't blooming due to the ongoing drought. We reached the parking lot having completed a fairly pleasant 5.2-mile lollipop loop hike with 1,113' of elevation gain/loss.



# RSTB Calendar July



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> <b>Mt. McCoy Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Guillermo Rios	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>4</b>   <b>Independence Day</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Mt. McCoy to the Reagan Library</b> 6 MRT – Moderate (800' elevation gain) <b>8AM</b> See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kelli Hamm
<b>6</b> <b>Rocky Peak Fire Road</b> <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Keith Ferrar	<b>7</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Rita Williams	<b>8</b> <b>Mt. McCoy Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Rafael Zepeda Joe Simon Kaelan Niblett	<b>9</b> <b>Club Meeting</b> <b>5:30PM</b> (NOTE: Early Start Time)  See Schedule  <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i>	<b>10</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>11</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carrie McCline Richard Bradley	<b>12</b> <b>Solstice Canyon - Sostomo Trail*</b> 6.3 MRT – Moderate (1,200' of elevation gain/loss) <b>8AM</b> See Schedule
<b>13</b> <b>Rocky Peak Fire Road</b> <b>5PM</b> See Schedule	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Mt. McCoy Trail</b> <b>6PM</b> See Schedule	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6PM</b> See Schedule	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>North Lake Tahoe Camping &amp; Hiking Event*</b> Please email <a href="mailto:treservations@simitrailblazers.com">treservations@simitrailblazers.com</a> , to guarantee your reservation. View website: <a href="http://www.tahoeactivities.com/north-lake-tahoe-hiking/">http://www.tahoeactivities.com/north-lake-tahoe-hiking/</a> for a wealth of North Lake Tahoe information.						
	<i>Happy Birthday</i> Michael Kuhn					
<b>20</b> <b>Rocky Peak Fire Road</b> <b>5PM</b> See Schedule  <b>North Lake Tahoe Camping &amp; Hiking Event*</b>	<b>21</b>   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alexandra Rios	<b>22</b> <b>Mt. McCoy Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Newton Canyon*</b> 7.4 MRT – Moderate (750' elevation gain) <b>8AM</b> See Schedule
<b>27</b> <b>Rocky Peak Fire Road</b> <b>5PM</b> See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Barbara Westrum	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Mt. McCoy Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule		



Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see [www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/](http://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, located near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. (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.)

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## JULY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### July 5th Mt. McCoy to the Reagan Library

6 MRT - Moderate (800' 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 quarts of water. Wear boots. Meet at **8AM**; located to the south of Donut Delite near the NE corner of Madera and Royal.

### July 9th Club Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend! (NOTE: Early Start Time)

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

### July 12th Solstice Canyon - Sostomo Trail - Deer Valley Loop + Tropical Terrace\*

6.3 MRT - Moderate (1,200' of elevation gain/loss)

This hike begins with a partially shaded walk along the one-mile dirt road in the bottom of Solstice Canyon leading toward Tropical Terrace and the nearby waterfalls. Just before reaching them we'll hike the Sostomo Trail as it climbs steadily up the mountainside to the west to a junction with the Deer Valley Loop Trail. We'll then hike the loop trail in a clockwise direction to an overlook of the Pacific Ocean and then return to the canyon bottom and visit well-shaded Tropical Terrace including the ruins of the Roberts house along Solstice Creek with its nearby waterfalls. After a rest/lunch break we'll retrace our route along the Solstice Canyon Trail to the parking lot. Meet at **8AM**; located to the south of Donut Delite near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

### July 14th - 20th North Lake Tahoe Camping & Hiking Event\*

This very special event is limited to *Trail Blazer members only*. Please email [ltreservations@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:ltreservations@simitrailblazers.com), to guarantee your reservation. **Reservations will only be accepted via email.** We will tent camp in the North Lake Tahoe area. There is a non-refundable campground fee, shared equally among all those who sign up. Please plan to arrive the afternoon of July 14th. View website: <http://www.tahoeactivities.com/north-lake-tahoe-hiking/> for a wealth of North Lake Tahoe information.

### July 26th Newton Canyon\*

7.4 MRT - Moderate (750' elevation gain)

Follow the Backbone Trail along Newton Canyon for about 3.7 miles and then return via the same trail back to the trailhead. Newton Canyon is a heavily shaded oak-filled canyon. Meet at **8AM**; located to the south of Donut Delite near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

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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:	Jeannie Liss	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
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	mlrrdh@yahoo.com
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Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann		linda.martins.mann@simitrailblazers.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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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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