



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



## JULY WORK PARTY

Eight Rancho Simi Trail Blazers and 2 mountain bikers turned out to work on the Hummingbird Trail. There were multiple trail paths caused by both hikers and bikers trail cutting the switchbacks. We installed Carsonite (fiberglass) trail markers with "Please Stay on Trail" and "Closed for Re-vegetation" signs. We also blocked off smaller paths with rocks and cut brush. Some lopping and tread work was done, and an area with a collapsed trail edge was widened. A photographer from the Simi Valley STAR was there taking pictures.

We worked from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM and met at Chuy's on our way home. Many thanks to the following workers who did a great job:

Arlene Altshuler, Fred Ansaldi (CORBA), Al Bandel, Bill Cespedes, Alan Cueba, Tom Frye, Mike Kuhn, Chuck Portoghesi, Eric Thomas (Mtn. Biker) and John Sabol.

There will not be a work party in August.

Work Parties Chair

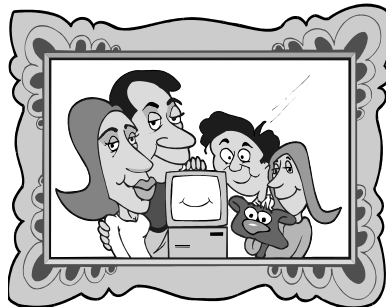


## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We can use some new hike leaders. Any volunteers? Some of our old standbys are getting burnt out. Please contact either Mike Kuhn, John Sabol or Arlene Altshuler.

## BYERS JOHN DOWNEY BENCH DEDICATION

There will be a bench dedication ceremony in memory of Byers John Downey, on Sunday, August 11th at 8:30am. The ceremony will take place on the ridge south of Mt. McCoy, near the top of the Mt. McCoy trail. John died in an accidental fall while hiking on August 10, 2001.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gary Hartung

## RSTB CLUB MEETING

The monthly club meeting will be held at the  
 Community Center  
 Room B-1  
 1692 Sycamore Drive  
 At 7:00 PM  
 On  
**Wednesday, August 21st**

## SATURDAY MORNING HIKE TIME CHANGE

During July and August, we'll be meeting at **7am** for our Saturday morning hikes (unless otherwise posted).

## THE TRIPAS

North of Whiteface and south of Oak Ridge, i.e., the ridge that marks the top of the Santa Susana Mountains, is a large valley that is tributary to Tapo Canyon and west of the historic Chumash village of *Ta'apu*. In our very first references to the valley, dating back to the middle of the last century, it is called "The Tripas."

When I first encountered the name, I assumed that it referred to the intestines of a pig. Being familiar with the valley from the air, the meaning made sense. From the air, the fields of grain on the tops of the truncated and dissected alluvial fan, looked like intestines. However, since the name is old and predates grain production, and the Chumash Indians, the Spanish and the later Anglo-American settlers did not have airplanes, the meaning of the name, if it does refer to intestines, is puzzling.

We now understand that most of the people who lived here during the Hispanic period, and those who actually worked the land, were Chumash Indians and their descendants. They were bilingual. The name *tripas* is probably translated from the Chumash name for the valley. So what does it mean?

A very common meaning for the word *tripas* in Spanish is the interior or insides of anything. This meaning makes more sense for the valley, deep in the interior of the Santa Susana Mountains. This meaning conveys a sense of place - a special place of some importance to the

## MOUNTAIN LIONS

Mountain lions, like coyotes, are perfect generalists in California in that they are present in every county in the state. They are most abundant where the deer population is greatest and good cover is present to allow them to ambush their prey. They are, in fact, an ambush predator.

Adult mountain lions tend to avoid each other except when breeding. Indeed, a major cause of death is one mountain lion killing another. Waste not! They eat those they kill. This "social regulation" is thought to limit populations. However, newer research suggests that mountain lion populations are more closely correlated with prey densities.

Their range varies greatly, but in good habitat an adult male requires between 100 and 125 square miles and an adult female requires between 20 and 25 square miles. Their range often varies seasonally, especially in the Sierra Nevada or other high country where both the deer and the lions are seasonally migratory. The home range of adult males does not usually overlap with other males but may overlap with several adult females. In the Sierra foothills during the winter months as many as ten mountain lions have been found within a 100 square mile area.

Mountain lions may be encountered any time during the day, however, they are most active during dusk, darkness and dawn when their prey is most active. This works well when feeding on deer and rabbits, but where squirrels constitute a major part of their diets, they become daytime hunters. Mountain lions are ideal hunters of large prey. They have powerful hind legs for short spurts of great speed, have sharp claws, powerful front legs and shoulder muscles to hold their prey and powerful jaws with long canine teeth to hold on with. They usually attack from behind, gripping the back of the neck, and killing by suffocation.

Their diets include most large and small

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Cont. from Col. 1

mammals, depending on habitat. Besides wild mammals, they have been known to take equines, cattle, sheep, goats, cats, dogs, ducks, geese, chickens, llamas, pigs, emus and ostriches. Rarely have they attacked people - but it does happen.

Mountain lions breed any time during the year, however, most young are born during the summer months. They give birth to litters of from one to six kittens, but three is normal. Their is high mortality among the young, with one kitten normally reaching the age of two years. Males take no part in rearing the kittens - usually killing and eating any kitten encountered. Kittens stay with their mothers for one and a half to two years. Female lions tend to breed about every two years. Dens are normally under thick brush, in logs or among tree roots. Those dens provide both thermal protection and escape routes.

Mountain lions generally live no more than 12 years in the wild and about 25 years in captivity. They fall victim to accidents, bears, motor vehicles and man. Most people are unaware of their presence except when they are killed on our roads - usually at night. They seem to be a poor judge of fast moving vehicles with headlights.

[Source: Summarized and expanded from Steven G. Torres and Vernon C. Bleich, "Mountain Lions - California's Elusive

**CONTINUED COMMENTS OF  
PEDRO FAGES  
ON THE CHUMASH  
FROM THE  
1769 PORTOLA EXPEDITION**

In our last newsletter I began a summary of the comments of Pedro Fages on the 1769 expedition of Gaspar de Portola through Chumash territory, specifically from the Santa Clara River Valley to Carpenteria. As you may recall, Fages was second in command to Portola on that

Cont. in Col. 3

Cont. from Col. 2

expedition. Fages remained in California through 1772 and traveled widely. He served as Governor of California during much of that period, but was recalled to Mexico, where he wrote his "Continuacion". In 1782 he was again appointed governor, in which capacity he served until 1791. He is generally considered to have been the best of the Spanish governors. Now, more of his observations.

*"They are idolators like the rest. Their idols are placed near the vilage, with some here and there about the fields, to protect, they say, the seeds and crops. Their idols are nothing but sticks, or stone figurines painted with colors and surmounted with plumage. Their ordinary height is three hands, and they place them in the cleanest, most highly embellished place they can find, whither they go frequently to worship them and offer their food, and whatever they have".*

Fages' reference to crops may reflect the bias of a representative of an agrarian society or it may represent a recognition of some form of proto-agriculture being practiced by the Chumash involving the tending and sowing of native grass seed. "Shrines" appear to have been ubiquitous, and he implies that they involved functions other than astronomical events. About ten years ago a painted stone was brought to my attention that was found on top of hill in the Sunset Hills portion of the City of Thousand Oaks. It may be an example of the type of painted stone describes by Fages. More comments:

*" Although in this district the captains commonly enjoy the privilege of taking two or three wives, and putting them away at will, the ordinary men have only one, and may abandon her only in case of adultery. The Indians of either sex who wish to marry a second time, may do so only with another widow or widower...."*

Fages seemed to think that these practices made some sense.

## A CHUMASH SHRINE AT VENTURA

The Chumash had many shrines. These sacred spots were where both private and public ceremonies would be performed. A known shrine in the Ventura area was located atop of the hill where the large cross is located north of the San Buenaventura City Hall. One of John Peabody Harrington's Chumash informants (Simp.) may have given the only first hand account of what went on at the shrine. The following description provides some insights into what might have gone on at some of the shrines in the Simi Valley area. The following is taken from Harrington's notes written in his own hand:

*"Inf. (informant) once went to ... shrine on the cuchilla (i.e., edge) of the point above Ventura. As soon as they reached the spot they started around it in a counter clockwise motion and went around 3 times. They wanted Simp. to go around with them but he objected. Then they tossed on the ground the frijol (kidney-beans), trigo (wheat), maiz (corn) and also the cuentas (beads) that they brought.*

*Where the shrine was level, not a slope, though the slope up which they had come was steep. Just as soon as they dura mas. nesc. washiko But thinks it must be the o.k. name. The sticks were not painted and of various diameters of 2" or so. The feathers were black and formeda (a drawing of the shape of the feathers) bunch 8" or 10" in diameter and very pretty. At center they pointed up. At sides drooped prettily. On some of the poles below the feathers bunch .... were hung by tying a string to the edge. The old ladies that went up there were 3 in number. They were Juliana and he forgets the other two. He went just that one time. It must have been at least 30 years ago. Expects you would find nothing left of it now.*

*Arrived they started around taking*

Cont. in Col. 2

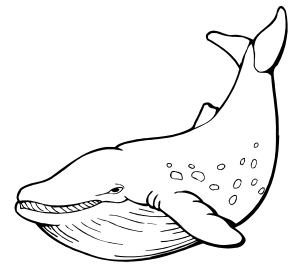


*Thursday evening Chumash Trail hike, from left to right: Roger Peebles, Diana Peebles, David Newman, Alice Comer, Alan Cueba, and John Sabol. Mike Kuhn took the*

Cont. from Col. 1

*great care to go around it in a counter clockwise direction. Inf. forgets just how many plumeros there were. But they were arranged so as to form a circle. This circle was 15 feet across and marked only by the palos (poles). All inside and around outside was clear of weeds.*

*The palos were about 11 feet tall and inf. imagines they were of palo colorado....In the cleared space inside the circle were other areas hiadas (?) (in any position) and pieces of cloth, handkerchiefs, etc.,*



## A WHALE WASHED ASHORE AT VENTURA

One of John Peabody Harrington's Venturoeno Chumash informants early in this century described a small dead whale being washed up on the beach just north of the mouth of the Santa Clara River many decades before. He said that the whale was in a state of decomposition. However, the Chumash rush to the site with their knives and began cutting strips of meat off of the whale and eating it on the spot. This description probably reflects the "old ways." A beached whale, alive or dead, or even long dead, represented a food resource of gigantuan proportion which had to be exploited - it's an acquired taste!

Mike Kuhn



# August

2002



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>2</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Elfriede Cespedes</i>	<b>3</b> <b>Wildwood Park</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>4</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>5pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Solstice Canyon</b> <b>See Schedule</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Bob Altieri</i>
<b>11</b> <b>John Downey</b> <b>Bench</b> <b>Dedication</b> <b>See Page 1</b>  <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>5pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Cheesebro</b> <b>Canyon to</b> <b>Sulfur Springs</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>18</b> <b>Rocky Peak</b> <b>5pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Tom Frye</i>	<b>21</b> <b>RSTB Meeting</b> <b>See Page 1</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Marty Richards</i>	<b>22</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>23</b> <b>Dinky Lakes</b> <b>Backpack Trip</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Dinky Lakes</b> <b>Backpack Trip</b> <b>See Schedule</b>
<b>25</b> <b>Dinky Lakes</b> <b>Backpack Trip</b> <b>See Schedule</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Dinky Lakes</b> <b>Backpack Trip</b> <b>See Schedule</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Laura Altieri</i>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Chumash Trail</b> <b>6pm hike</b> <b>See Schedule</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Kimberly Collins</i>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <b>Pt. Mugu</b> <b>State Park</b> <b>See Schedule</b> <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Cathy Verga</i> <i>Jack Archibald</i>



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

## Hiking Schedule



- August 1 Thursday Evening Hike**  
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. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- August 3 Wildwood Park**  
Moderate 4 - 6 MRT. Check out the new growth that has sprung up since the last rain. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 qts. of water and snack, wear boots.
- August 4 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 8 Thursday Evening Hike**  
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. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- August 10 Solstice Canyon**  
Part easy, part steep 6 MRT with 600' elevation gain/loss with a great view of Point Dume and the ocean from the ridge of the canyon. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Bring snack and 2 - 3 qts of water, bug juice. Wear boots. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.
- August 15 Thursday Evening Hike**  
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. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- August 17 Cheesebro Canyon to Sulfur Springs**  
Easy to moderate 6 MRT hike. Walk among the oaks and follow a stream to Sulfur Springs. Bring two quarts of water and snack, wear boots. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 -3 qts. of water and snack, wear boots.
- August 18 Sunday Evening Hike**  
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 22 Thursday Evening Hike**  
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. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- August 23-26 Dinky Lakes Backpacking Trip**  
This backpacking trip is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. For more information, call 805-581-9735.
- August 29 Thursday Evening Hike**  
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. (moderate, 5 MRT)
- August 31 Pt. Mugu State Park – Danielson Memorial**  
Moderate 6 MRT hike with approx. 1000' elevation gain/loss. Visit a waterfall and the Danielson Memorial, view the Oxnard Plain and Channel Islands from Old Boney Road. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 - 3 qts. water and snack. Wear boots.

**For more 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. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains.

**RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS**

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345, WK (805)583-6776
TREASURER:	PETER ELY	HM (805) 523-1409
SECRETARY:	KRISTA SMITH	HM (805) 404-2352
PARK DISTRICT LIAISON:	COLLEEN JANSSEN	WK (805) 584-4453
WORK PARTIES CHAIR:	JOHN SABOL	HM (805) 583-2541
WORK PARTIES VICE CHAIR:	BOB ALTIERI	HM (805) 526-6749
HIKING CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735
WAYS & MEANS CHAIR:	MARTY RICHARDS	HM (805) 526-4414
WAYS & MEANS VICE CHAIR:	CONNIE ANKROM	HM (805) 526-2747
COMMUNICATION / PUB.CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735

-----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 \_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone wk/hm \_\_\_\_\_

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 630399, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



U.S. Postage

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