



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



## New Members

Gary Hartung  
Rheann Roman  
Don Brown

## Weekly hikes

Come with us on more of our weekly hikes! We have so much fun, taking photos, talking and just hiking and taking in the beautiful scenery. Below is an example of a view that you may see if you come!

**There are hikes every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.**



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.



## 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



## CALIFORNIA LAUREL

The California laurel (bay tree) (*Umbellularia californica*) is the sole native representative of the laurel family (*Lauraceae*) in this neck of the woods. Exotic tropical representatives include avocados and camphors. The tree is evergreen and pungently aromatic. It grows 30-40 feet high in deep canyons and shaded areas and requires abundant ground water. One in my backyard has grown to about 20 feet over the last ten years. It grows in coastal regions up into southern Washington. "Mrytlewood" refers to the bay laurel.

The Chumash Indians used its crushed and rolled up leaves as a nasal decongestant. Today, it is a wonderful addition to Italian cooking, camper's stew, and that pot roast. Locally, it is present above the caves on the middle portion of the Hummingbird Trail and near the "rock house" on the Rocky Peak Fire Road. It is also present in some obscure areas in Santa Susana Knolls Park.

Mike Kuhn  
11-1-04

## RSTB CLUB MEETING

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

**Wednesday: August 21, 2013  
7:00PM**

*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

## Upcoming Events

**August 3rd - Newton Canyon\***

7.4 MRT - Moderate (750' elevation gain) - **8AM**

**August 10th - Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp\***

10.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation change from 8900' to 8250') - **7AM**

**August 17th**

**Carpinteria Bluffs, Tar Pits Park, and Bates Beach\***

4.5 miles MRT - Easy (elevation gain 140') - **8AM**

**August 21st**

**Club Meeting - 7PM**

*Everyone Welcome to attend!*

**August 24th**



**Westward Beach to Paradise Cove\***

6 MRT - Easy (425' of elevation gain/loss) - **8AM**

**August 29th - September 2nd**

**Backpack Trip - Cottonwood Lakes\***

**COST OF TRIP** = \$10.00 each. The **DEADLINE FOR PAYMENT** is **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2013.**

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

## CALIFORNIA GRIZZLIES VERSUS THE BLACK BEAR

When Spanish settlers first entered California, the rule-of-thumb was that black bears were the bears of needleleaf forests and grizzly bears occupied chaparral, oak woodlands and marshy areas. Of course, there were exceptions to the rule-of-thumb. Still there were vast portions of the state where there were no grizzlies or black bears and major areas where there were only grizzlies. Along the coast, black bears extended as far south as northern Sonoma and Napa counties, north into the Eureka Mountains, across the northern portion of the state along the western fringes of the Modoc Plateau and south through the coniferous forest areas of the Sierra Nevada into southern Kern County. Black bear were not present in Ventura, Santa Barbara or Los Angeles counties or in counties to the south. Neither black nor grizzly bears were present in the Colorado or Mojave deserts, the Great Basin or the greatest portion of the Modoc Plateau. (One firm report of a grizzly does come from the Warner Range in the northeastern corner of California.) The grizzly bear was present through the rest of the state except for the very northwestern corner and those areas without grizzlies or black bears. The original range of these two types of bears has been reconstructed from historical accounts and by archaeological evidence. (For example, I worked on an archaeological dig on the Tejon Ranch where a grizzly bear claw was found – pretty good proof that grizzlies had roamed the area. Of course, there are many historical accounts of grizzly bears in the same area.) However, where grizzly bears were abundant, black bears were not plentiful. By the same token, where black bears were plentiful, there were few grizzly bears. For example, there are many accounts of grizzly bears in the high country of the Sierra Nevada – there were just fewer of them.

Grizzlies were the ecological dominant where they roamed. They were avoided by the Indians. Because of their size, prowess and temperament, they could preempt any available food before other large animals, including man. Weighing up to 1,000 pounds, their food requirement, especially in terms of meat, meant that they were the tail that wagged the rest of the ecological

community. The decline and ultimate extermination of the California grizzly must have had enormous ecological ramifications for plants and animals all the way down the food chain. The nature of California changed forever.

Kroeber, in 1925, estimated that in 1769 California contained approximately 133,000 Indians. Most of those Indians were concentrated along the coast and inland estuaries, as well as the marshlands of the Central Valley. The Indians of California had little defense against grizzly bears. At times, grizzly bears would attack and kill Indians. Sometimes they simply saw Indians as part of their food supply. The Indians' survival strategy was to stay clear of the great bears whenever possible. Avoid encounters! Convert chaparral to grasslands through annual burning. Keep villages and temporary camps in open areas. Don't wander around at night. Stay away from mature chaparral. Of course, a big problem came when it was time to gather acorns. Grizzly bears depended on masting on acorns to fatten up for the fall and winter scarcity of food. A good example of this strategy was the big village on the coast where Santa Barbara is today and the general paucity of villages where Montecito is today. The Indians stayed out of the oak-forest areas whenever possible. They gathered acorns in number, i.e., family groups. Hopefully, the grizzlies were more interested in eating their fill than in disputes over the crops from individual trees.

Grizzly bear numbers increased during the mission and rancho periods of settlement. The grizzlies viewed cattle, sheep, hogs and equine species as a new and expanded food supply. It simply was easier to take livestock than wild food. The vaqueros did their best to minimize predation on livestock, but they were few in number and had few firearms. A muzzle loading musket was poor offense against grizzlies.

Early American travelers encountered grizzlies. However, with the gold rush, which was focused in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada – prime grizzly bear habitat – the battle became intense. Bear meat was food, and bear robes were used as beds. Gold miners and farmers, who had livestock, and farmers whose crops were eaten by the bears, could not tolerate so large a

carnivore in their midst. Anglo-Americans came better armed and in greater number than their Spanish and Mexican predecessors. Indeed, bear meat was standard fare in market places – often selling for 20-30 cents a pound in Ventura. In the end, the mere presence of a California grizzly – anywhere – was not tolerated. They were gunned down and poisoned out of existence.

As the number of grizzlies declined, the number of black bear increased, and black bears expanded their range into what had originally been exclusively grizzly territory. In northern Ventura and Santa Barbara counties they extended their range out from the Tehachapi area. Now they are found throughout the National Forest areas of those counties and occasionally show up in Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Camarillo, Ventura, and the northern fringe of the San Fernando Valley. Black bears have historically been released into Monterey, San Bernardino and San Diego Counties. I remember some years back when a substantial number of Yosemite National Park "problem bears" were released in the Lockwood Valley of northern Ventura County – without first notifying local residents, or the Boy Scout or Girl Scout camp personnel in the area, or, I was told later, National Forest personnel in the area. They are now present in the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains.

Mike Kuhn  
6-30-07 (revised 12-2-12)



## July 6th - Mt. McCoy to the Reagan Library



## July 20th - Solstice Canyon - Sostomo Trail - Deer Valley Loop & Tropical Terrace

12 hikers carpoled to Solstice Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area on a fairly cool but humid overcast morning. The out-and-back hike began by following barely flowing Solstice Creek along the easy well-shaded Solstice Canyon Trail (a dirt road). Taking advantage of two short trails paralleling the dirt road along the way, we reached the Sostomo Trail after about one mile. We then followed the Sostomo Trail as it climbed steadily toward a junction with the Deer Valley Loop Trail. As the trail rose we had good views of Solstice Canyon and the Rising Sun Trail across the canyon. Our shirts were soon soaked due to the high humidity, but the marine layer shielded us from direct sunlight (making the hike more pleasant). The well-maintained trail crossed Solstice Creek twice. After reaching Deer Valley, we followed the loop trail in a clockwise direction as it ascended the mountainside to an overlook of the Pacific Ocean. After enjoying the view, we completed the loop and then returned along the Sostomo Trail to the Solstice Canyon Trail. Turning left we walked a short distance to shady Tropical Terrace, the ruins of the Roberts house built in the 1950s and destroyed by wildfire in 1982. At one time there were giraffes, camels, buffalo, African deer, and exotic birds in the canyon. We took a break at Tropical Terrace, read the signs describing it, and enjoyed the ambiance of palm trees and trickling cascades in the adjacent Solstice Creek. We then returned to our vehicles (parked



along Hwy 1) via the Solstice Canyon Trail completing a 7.5-mile hike with over 1,600' of elevation gain.



## July 27th - The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak





# RSTB Calendar August



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	2   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Elfriede Cespedes	3  <i>Newton Canyon*</i> <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
4 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Betty Cameron	5   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Chelsea Carroll	6 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	7   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cassie Simon	8 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	9	10 <i>Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp*</i> <b>7AM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Hank Povinelli Dave Prentke
11 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	12   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kevin Gallagher	13 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Kurt Godden	14	15 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthda</i> Rita Zepeday	16   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Katy Cueba	17  <i>Carpinteria Bluffs, Tar Pits Park, and Bates Beach*</i> <b>8AM</b>  See Schedule
18 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Cheri Lanier	19   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Christine Porter	20 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mark Scheele	21 Club Meeting <b>7PM</b>  See Schedule  <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> <i>Happy Birthday</i> Jinell Becker Al Richards	22 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	23	24  <i>Westward Beach to Paradise Cove*</i> <b>8AM</b>   See Schedule
25 Rocky Peak Fire Road <b>5PM</b>  See Schedule	26   <i>Happy Birthday</i> Dave Peters	27 Mt. McCoy Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	28	29 Chumash Trail <b>6PM</b>  See Schedule	30	31
				<b>August 29th - September 2nd</b> <b>Backpack Trip - Cottonwood Lakes*</b> <b>COST OF TRIP = \$10.00 each.</b>		



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 **5 PM** 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. (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain.)

### Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6 PM** 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 - The Chumash Trail

Meet at **6 PM** 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 - 1,210' total elevation gain.)

## AUGUST HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

### August 3rd

#### 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 **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

### August 10th

#### Mt. Pinos to Sheep Camp\*

10.5 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (elevation change from 8900' to 8250')

There is a spring box with year-round water at the camp. The water does need to be filtered. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water (and/or a water filter), and lunch. Wear boots. Meet at **7 AM** the Stearns St. Park & Ride. The drive is 1 1/2 hours each way.

### August 17th

#### Carpinteria Bluffs, Tar Pits Park, and Bates Beach\*

4.5 miles MRT - Easy (elevation gain 140')

Rincon Park to Tar Pit Park and return via Bates Beach. Meet at **8 AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

### August 21st

#### Club Meeting

**7 PM** - The Sycamore Drive Community Center - 1692 Sycamore Drive - Room B-1

### August 24th

#### Westward Beach to Paradise Cove\*

6 MRT - Easy (425' of elevation gain/loss) The return hike follows the beach back to Point Dume where there are observation points for whale, seal, and dolphin watching. Meet at **8 AM**, near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Wear boots and/or good beach shoes. Bring 2 quarts of water and lunch. To read more: <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>

### August 29th - September 2nd

#### Backpack Trip - Cottonwood Lakes\*

This special event is limited to Trail Blazer members only. We'll be driving 225 miles to the Horseshoe Meadow area (10,040') southwest of Lone Pine, CA at the southern tip of the John Muir Wilderness in the eastern Sierra Nevada where we'll car camp the first night only at one of the two walk-in campgrounds.

**COST OF TRIP** = \$10.00 each. The **DEADLINE FOR PAYMENT** is **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2013**. To make your reservations, email [Mark](mailto:Mark). **Space is limited, so it's best to sign up early.**

\* 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.** <http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

## RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

*A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation*

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@me.com
Treasurer:	Craig Malin		
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	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
Publicity Chair:	<b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b>		<b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>
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



U.S. Postage

**RSTB**  
P.O. Box 630445  
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399