



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Volunteers Needed



If anyone is interested in volunteering, for either the **work parties** or the **publicity chair**, please view the last page of the newsletter or email Mike Kuhn at: mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com

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, and 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



Mt. McCoy TRAIL

Mt. McCoy is the hill with the white cross, at the western end of Simi Valley. The trail begins at the western end of Washburn Street. To get there, take Royal Avenue west of Madera Road, next take a right at the "T" intersection with Acapulco Avenue, and immediate left onto Washburn. The trail begins where Washburn curves and becomes Los Amigos Avenue.

Please do not disturb the animals.

The Mt. McCoy Trail was built under the supervision of, and is maintained by, the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers a volunteer organization under the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Please stay on the trail, don't cut switchbacks, and leave the park cleaner than when you started.

RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at: Sycamore Drive Community Center 1692 Sycamore Drive – Room B-1
Wednesday: January 15, 2014
5:30PM (NOTE: Early Start Time)
Everyone Welcome to attend!

Upcoming Events

- January 4th Sage Ranch**
3.5 Mile Loop - Easy (400' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**
- January 11th Sisar Canyon to White Ledge**
9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (2,000' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**
- January 15th Club Meeting**
5:30PM - (NOTE: Early Start Time)
Everyone Welcome to attend!
- January 18th Work Party - Mt. McCoy**
8AM - The event will end at noon
- January 25th Big Sky Loop Simi Peak via China Flat**
6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

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!

MOUNTAIN LION ACTIVITY PATTERNS

(Adapted from Paul Beier, Seth P. D. Riley and Raymond M. Sauvajot, "Mountain Lions [Puma concolor]," Stanley D. Gehrt, Seth P. D. Riley, and Brian L. Cypher [eds.], Urban Carnivores, Ecology, Conflict, and Conservation, The John Hopkins University Press [2010] pp. 151-152)

Mountain lion activity patterns are best known for near urban populations - based upon GPS collar studies. On the basis of those analyses, mountain lions travel about 36 percent of the night, averaging 5.5 km per night, and 9 percent of daylight hours, averaging about 900 m, when they are not feeding on a kill. Peak activity period occurs during the twilight periods. When hunting, they stalk or sit in ambush for about 40 minutes at a time, then move about 1.4 km over 1.2 hours to another area - repeating this pattern about six times on nights when they do not make a kill. When they make a kill, this pattern is suspended until the carcass is consumed (a few hours for small mammals and 2-3 days for mule deer).

Mountain lions are strictly meat eaters. Locally, mountain lions feed primarily on mule deer. In other areas they also prey on elk and other large ungulates. However, lesser prey includes bobcats, coyotes, skunks, rabbits, hares, gray foxes, raccoons, opossums, and small rodents. They also are known to kill and consume domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, colts, geese and ducks, cattle and dogs and cats.

They minimize loss of deer carcasses to scavengers and heat spoilage by dragging their kill for as much as 80 m to a cache site, burying the carcass under leaves and debris during the daytime and feeding only at night. I have encountered such mountain lion kills several times in my life. During the daylight period they rest - an average of 0.4 km from a kill on which they are still feeding. They do not feed on about 40 percent of days. They will feed on a large deer for two to three nights, which results in a feast or famine pattern. Mothers with young hunt from dusk to about midnight, then returning to their young for the rest of the day.

As their young grow, the mother extends her hunting range farther and farther from the den. Mountain lion fathers do not share in the rearing of their offspring. Mountain lions are usually solitary except when raising their young or short mating periods. When young adults are driven away by their mothers, two or more mountain lions, often of both sexes, often remain together until their instincts to seek their own territory results in the dispersal of the young adult groups. The two mountain lions that the Trail Blazers encountered together during a hike on Sulphur Mountain during November 2012 were, no doubt, pre-dispersing adults.

Mating associations last from 2-5 or more days during which the lions travel little, vocalize frequently and apparently do not feed.

Mountain lions, like most mammals, spend much of their waking hours looking for their next meal, females caring for their young, and resting. Even though they do range into the fringes of our urban areas, they usually remain undetected.

Mike Kuhn
11-29-13

CHUMASH RELIGIOUS IDOLS

Pedro Fages was second in command during the 1769 Spanish expedition to Monterey under Gaspar de Portola. He later served as governor of Alta California. The following description comes from his travel through Chumash territory in the Santa Clara River Valley and westward to the area of Santa Barbara. It provides a brief view of religious idols that were observed around Chumash settlements and conveys a somewhat different impression of one aspect of Chumash life than is generally provided in later accounts. As far as I have been able to tell, it is the only account that refers to painted stones as shrines. This account is the earliest description that we have of the inland Chumash area.

It is not hard to imagine the zeal which the first padres put into suppressing the creation and worshipping of "idols."

Other forms of religious practice, such as the vestiges in our own culture of pagan beliefs, were more subtle, so were less a focus of religious suppression. By the time that ethnologists and archaeologists started systematically collecting relics of the Chumash culture, such practices as the manufacturing and the honoring of idols were long gone and nearly forgotten.

It must also be recalled that what the Spanish described was filtered through the bias of their own cultural milieu. Now from page 32 of A Historical, Political, and Natural Description of California (1775), translated by Herbert Ingrams Priestley:

They are idolaters like the rest. Their idols are placed near the village, with some here and there about the fields, to protect, they say, the seeds and crops. These 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.

These references to "shrines," to painted rocks, to fields, seeds and crops are intriguing. One painted rock has been found on top of a small hill not far from Bard Reservoir. I have examined a photograph of another painted rock from the Ojai Valley. Those rocks are some of the few examples of what was being described by Pedro Fages. The reference to fields, seeds and crops suggest that the Chumash were involved in at least a type of proto-agriculture. It is possible that the culture of the Chumash that we have been led to believe was the norm in California at the time of first contact and Spanish settlement is really an end product of the complete cultural disruption that accompanied the Spanish and the diseases, which came with them.

Mike Kuhn
9-28-04 (revised 1-6-08)

November 23rd - Happy Camp Canyon, Middle Range Fire Road Loop



7 intrepid hikers met on a very windy Saturday morning in Simi Valley to carpool to the dirt parking lot at the east end of Broadway Road north of Moorpark. The wind was particularly ferocious as we hurriedly hiked one mile to the entrance to Happy Camp Canyon, "a lush riparian oak woodland with an intermittent stream." Largely protected from the wind, we followed an old ranch road eastward as it rose gradually in the canyon bottom between Oak Ridge and Big Mountain. At 4.5 miles we took a break in an oak grove with picnic tables and hitching rails. We then climbed steeply for 0.5 mile up Big Mountain to the Middle Range Fire Road via an abandoned, partially eroded dirt road. Once we reached the ridge we were treated to unusually clear distant views to the south and west including the Santa Monica Mountains and two of the Channel Islands. We were subject to intermittent strong gusts of wind during our return trip along the ridge. We eventually made it to the parking lot, having completed a 10.9-mile hike with 1,200' of elevation gain/loss.

November 30th - Stony Overlook via Chivo Canyon



19 hikers met on a pleasant fall morning near the mouth of Chivo Canyon in the Marr Ranch Open Space in northeast Simi Valley. After we descended into the canyon bottom, we followed the trail (now a recently bulldozed wide dirt road) 0.7 mile northward until the old road again became a more-pleasing single-track trail along the eastern slope of the canyon. Upon reaching the upper end of lower Chivo Canyon

we continued carefully through a narrow gorge into upper Chivo Canyon and its large oak woodland. Eventually we climbed out of the canyon and made our way to a rocky promontory on the west side of lower Chivo Canyon where we enjoyed sweeping 360-degree views of the entire surrounding area. We then returned via the same route to the parking area having completed an 8.25-mile hike with 1,650' of elevation gain/loss. **NOTE:** The effects of the continuing multi-year drought in southern California on both the vegetation and the wildlife in the area were quite evident.



December 7th - Christmas Holiday Party

Again this year, Ursula graciously opened up her beautiful home and hosted our annual Christmas Holiday party. We all enjoyed the live music, super tasty food, and great conversation.



December 14th - Vasquez Rocks - Pacific Crest Trail

6 hikers met at the Stearns Street Park-and-Ride lot in Simi Valley on a sunny, unseasonably warm, and windy morning. We carpoled east Vasquez Rocks



County Park, where we left a shuttle vehicle and then drove to the Soledad Canyon Road trailhead access point of the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). Unlike past years, trailhead access was quite easy, apparently to a good deal of work completed by trail maintenance volunteers. Crossing the dry Santa Clarita River, via a new bridge, shortened our hike perhaps a quarter of a mile. We soon passed the Golden Spike Monument marking the completion of the PCT on June 5, 1993. The trail then began a gradual and relentless climb reminiscent of terrain in the Simi Hills area. Temperatures remained warm, but the constant, and often very gusty Santa Ana winds, kept us from overheating. There were some exposed points on the trail where the gusts made it difficult to walk a straight line. Finally arriving at the high-point of the climb, we were encouraged by the expansive view of Highway 14 and the tunnel passing under the freeway. Once passing through the tunnel, we took a lunch break, before continuing on into Vasquez Rocks County Park, the site of a multitude of movie and TV sets through the years. Continuing on the PCT, we reached our shuttle vehicle, having completed a 9.3 mile hike with 2,600' of total elevation gain.



RSTB Calendar January



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 	2 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	3	4 Sage Ranch 3.5 Mile Loop - Easy (400' of elevation gain/loss) 8AM See Schedule
5 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	6	7 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	8	9 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	10	11 Sisar Canyon to White Ledge 9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (2,000' of elevation gain/loss) 8AM See Schedule
12 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	13	14 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	15 Club Meeting 5:30PM <i>(NOTE: Early Start Time)</i> See Schedule <i>Everyone Welcome to attend!</i> <i>Happy Birthday</i> Emily Carroll	16 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	17	18 Work Party - Mt. McCoy 8AM See Schedule
19 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Floyd Martin	20 	21 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	22 <i>Happy Birthday</i> John Quinn Marlene Bradley	23 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	24	25 Simi Peak via China Flat 6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' of elevation gain/loss) 8AM See Schedule
26 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	27	28 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	29 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Emma Prentke	30 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Anand Janev Daniel DeGoey	31 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joanne Sulkoske Aileen Vandenberg Kerrie Stiles Katie Martinez	



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 **4PM** 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 **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 - The 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 - 1,210' total elevation gain.)

JANUARY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

January 4th Sage Ranch

3.5 Mile Loop - Easy (400' of elevation gain/loss)

This 625-acre park is located in the Simi Hills just north of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) (aka Rocketdyne/Boeing) at an elevation of 2,000'. Meet at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots. **DIRECTIONS TO THE TRAILHEAD:** In Simi Valley, take Highway 118 to the Kuehner Drive exit. Take Kuehner Drive 0.9 mile south to Katherine Road. Turn right (west) on Katherine Road and drive 0.5 mile to an intersection at which Katherine Road makes a 90-degree turn to the left (south). Drive 0.2 mile south on Katherine Road (crossing the railroad tracks along the way) to a junction with Oak Knolls Road. Turn right (west) on Oak Knolls Road and drive 0.1 mile to a junction with Black Canyon Road. Turn left on narrow Black Canyon Road and follow it 1.9 miles as it winds steeply uphill to Sage Ranch Park. Turn right at the signed entrance to the park (and then immediately left) into the parking lot.

January 11th Sisar Canyon to White Ledge

9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (2,000' of elevation gain/loss)

Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

January 15th Club Meeting - *Everyone Welcome to attend! (NOTE: Early Start Time)*

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

January 18th Work Party - Mt. McCoy

Meeting time is **8AM**. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will be removing rocks, doing some lopping to increase trail clearance and some trail trimming. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. Meet at western end of Washburn Street at trailhead.

January 25th Simi Peak via China Flat

6 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' of elevation gain/loss)

Meet at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots.

DIRECTIONS TO THE TRAILHEAD: Head west (toward Moorpark) on Highway 118 and continue on the same road as its name changes to Highway 23 when it curves to the south (toward Thousand Oaks). Upon reaching the junction of Highway 23 and Highway 101, head south (toward Los Angeles) on Highway 101. Drive 3.75 miles south (toward L.A.) on Highway 101 to the Lindero Canyon Road exit. Turn left (north) on Lindero Canyon Road and then drive 3.8 miles north/east to King James Court (on your left). Drive past King James Court 0.1 mile to Wembly Avenue (on your left). Turn around and park on the north side of Lindero Canyon Road [NOT on King James Court]. **More information on all hikes at:** <http://www.simitrailblazers.com/activities/index.html>

* 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:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
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:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
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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