

	<h1>Rancho Simi Trailblazers</h1> <p><i>A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation</i></p>	
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Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at www.rsrpd.org

~~~~ Welcome New Members Janice Martin, Collette Bertrand and Lorena Lewbel~~~~

**!!! Hiker Alert: Daylight Savings Time begins March 8 at 2AM !!!**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

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



The RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS are looking for leaders for public hikes! If interested, please contact Michael Kuhn at [mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com](mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com). Applicants must be evaluated by the board and would be subject to the park district's standard background check.



***March 7, 2020 – Ahmanson Ranch: El Escorpion Park, Cave of Munits, Castle Peak\****

4.5 MRT – Moderate (~1000' elevation gain/loss)

Our hike will begin at the entrance to El Scorpion Park in West Hills. We'll hike into the Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve (aka Ahmanson Ranch) to the entrance to the mouth of the Cave of Munits, "a cathedral-like cave that was used by the Chumash tribe for spiritual rites ... The cave is reachable via a moderate scramble." After leaving the cave, we'll follow the Hunter Allen Trail westward until it curves to the south; we'll continue westward and then turn north on a well-defined trail that leads steeply up a north-south ridge to the main east-west ridge (with Castle Peak at its east end). Once up on the east-west ridge, we'll follow a well-defined single-track trail eastward (while enjoying wide-ranging views and interesting rock formations) to Castle Peak. The trail ends about 20' below the peak in a jumble of huge boulders. We'll return the way we came. Click [here](#) to see a video about the Cave.

Meet at **8 AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

***March 14, 2020 – Work Party on the Hummingbird Trail***

All tools will be provided. We will do trail grooming and widening, reconstruct water bars and also cut back some brush. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. We will work from **8 AM to Noon**. As always, you are welcome to work for a shorter time period if you desire. Hope to see you there.

**Directions to Trailhead:** Take Hwy 118 to the Kuehner Drive exit. Turn left from 118 eastbound, turn right from 118 westbound to the limited parking area at 2409 Kuehner Drive near the trailhead (just outside the gated entrance to Hummingbird Ranch). NOTE: Pay close attention to the no parking signs in the area. If there's no room to park at the trailhead, you can also park in the small lot at the northwest intersection of Kuehner Drive and Mt. Sinai Drive, about halfway between the 118 freeway and the trailhead.

***March 18, 2020***

**Club Meeting 5:30PM Park District: 4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2** - Everyone is welcome to attend.

***March 21, 2020 – Sulphur Mountain Shuttle\****

10.4 Mile Shuttle – Moderate (300' / 2,200' of elevation gain / loss)

Our hike will begin at the east (upper) end of the Sulphur Mountain Recreation Trail after we drop off our shuttle vehicle(s) near Hwy 33 at the west (lower) end of the trail. The drive to the eastern trailhead will take us through scenic Ojai Valley and a dense oak forest. The trail (actually a dirt road) loses elevation gradually as it passes through the beautiful pastoral countryside on the slopes of Sulphur Mountain providing continuous vistas of rolling hills dotted with oak trees, grassland meadows, and valleys. There are also views of the Oxnard Plain and several of the Channel Islands (visibility permitting). Eventually we'll be treated to views of the Ojai Valley and the distant towering mountains to the north and west and of Lake Casitas to the west. Meet at **8 AM** in the parking lot, to the south of Donut Delite, located on the north east corner of the intersection of Royal Avenue and Madera Road. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch/snack and sunscreen. Wear boots.

## March 28, 2020 – Devil Canyon to Browns Canyon Road\*

9.4 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,300' elevation gain/loss)

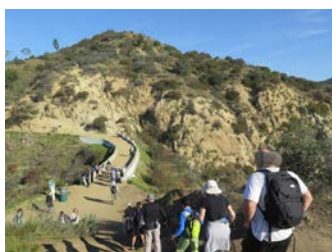
The hike will begin as we drop into lower Devil Canyon just north of Hwy 118 near Topanga Canyon Blvd in Chatsworth. We will follow the heavily shaded course of the long-abandoned Devil Canyon Motorway as the trail heads upstream reaching a large dam in less than two miles. Continuing upstream the canyon soon widens and we'll pass through meadows and then hike through a large oak woodland in the upper section of the canyon. Upon reaching Browns Canyon Road we'll take a break and enjoy the view to the southeast looking back along Devil Canyon and beyond. We'll then return the way we came. NOTE: If the day becomes too hot to continue upstream, we'll shorten the hike.

Meet at the trailhead at **8 AM**

**Directions to Trailhead:** From Simi Valley, take Highway 118 east to the Topanga Canyon Blvd exit. Turn left (north) and get in the right lane as you drive under Hwy 118. Turn left (west) on Poema Place and drive 0.25 mile uphill as the road curves northward to the second driveway on the right into Summerset Village (11500 to 11524 North Poema Place). Park on North Poema Place.

## HIKE REPORTS

### January 25, 2020 – Griffith Park: Ferndell Park to Mt. Hollywood and Mt. Lee

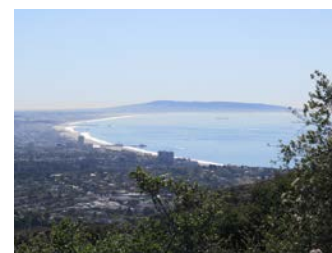
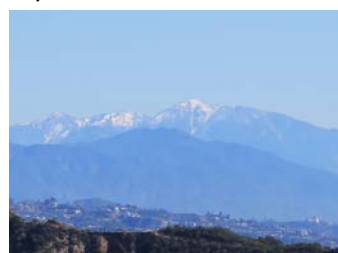


10 hikers carpoled to the Ferndell area (600') near the southwest corner of Griffith Park on a cool winter morning. Our hike began on a well-shaded trail dominated by large oak and sycamore trees, but soon began climbing northward on the busy East Observatory Trail (a dirt fire road), reaching the Griffith Park Observatory (1,131') in a mile or so.

We spent a few minutes just before reaching the Observatory exploring Dante's View, "a shady garden started in 1964 as a volunteer labor of love by Dante Orgolini." After a short break we continued northward on the busy Charlie Turner Trail through the Berlin Forest and then crossed the Mt. Hollywood Drive tunnel and followed another busy dirt fire road as it wound its way uphill to the Mount Hollywood overlook (1,625'), the highest point in Griffith Park. Once there we had a 360-degree view of the surrounding area.

After taking a break, we headed north and then west (passing near Mt. Bell and Mt. Chapel) via a combination of dirt fire roads and a couple of deserted narrow single-track trails toward Mt. Lee (1,680'), the "home" of the famous Hollywood sign. However, shortly after we started hiking on the second single-track trail, we reached a short nearly vertical climb which at least one member of our group couldn't climb. As a result we decided to skip going to Mt. Lee and backtracked to Mt. Hollywood Drive and then followed it and the West Trail back to our vehicles. We then headed home having completed a 7-mile hike with about 1,330' of elevation gain/loss on a nice day for hiking.

### February 1, 2020 – Temescal Gateway Park



13 hikers carpoled via Hwy 118, I-405 and Sunset Blvd to the lower parking lot at Temescal Gateway Park in Pacific Palisades on a beautiful morning for hiking. A lovely refuge from the nearby urban congestion, the park borders Topanga State Park. Our hike began on a shady trail along the streambed in Temescal Canyon and led pleasantly past rustic buildings constructed in the 1920's for the Methodist Church as a west coast center for the Chautauqua movement.

The whole area is shaded by towering sycamore, oak, and eucalyptus trees and a variety of other non-native trees such as palms and conifers. There was a surprising variety of blooming plants, including cliff asters, sunflowers, purple nightshade and ceanothus trees.

The trail began rising (as did the temperature) in Temescal Canyon as it entered Topanga State Park and we soon reached a wooden bridge crossing the (barely-existent-today) stream at a point where there is sometimes a series of cascades (a "waterfall") though they contained almost no water due a recent lack of rain. Continuing westward along the trail as the temperature continued to climb, we soon reached Temescal Ridge and were rewarded by panoramic views of the Santa Monica Mountains, the coastline and the Los Angeles skyline.

## February 1, 2020 – Temescal Gateway Park continued

Since the temperature was well on its way to being uncomfortable, we quickly descended along the Temescal Ridge (aka Viewpoint) Trail to the canyon bottom where we took advantage of the nice bathroom facilities, having abandoned the planned continuation of the hike over to Will Rogers State Historic Park. We returned to Simi Valley having completed a 4.2-mile hike with 1,025' of elevation gain.

## February 8, 2020 – Solstice Canyon - Sostomo Trail



14 hikers carpoled to Solstice Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area near the Pacific Ocean on a cool mid-winter morning. Our out-and-back hike began by following flowing Solstice Creek along the nearly-level, well-shaded Solstice Canyon Trail (a dirt road), taking advantage of two short trails paralleling the dirt road along the way, and reaching the Sostomo Trail junction after about one mile.

Next we followed the Sostomo Trail as it climbed steadily toward a junction with the Deer Valley Loop Trail, enjoying a beautiful day with green mountainsides and several types of blooming plants including sunflowers, ceanothus trees (both white and blue) and morning glories. As the somewhat-shaded trail rose we had clear views of Solstice Canyon and the Rising Sun Trail across the canyon.

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. There were good views of the surrounding land area, but ocean views were limited. We spotted a couple of patches of blooming California poppies near the overlook point, adding to the spring-like feeling of the day. After taking a break we completed the loop and then returned along the Sostomo Trail to the Solstice Canyon Trail (road).

Turning left we walked the very short distance to 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 (but not now!). We took a lengthy lunch/rest break at Tropical Terrace and enjoyed the ambiance of palm trees, murmuring Solstice Creek and water in the nearby waterfall. We then returned to our vehicles via the Solstice Canyon Trail having completed a 7-mile hike with about 1,700' of elevation gain/loss.

## February 15, 2020 – Work Party on Mt. McCoy Trail



The February Trail Blazers trail work party was held on the Mt. McCoy trail. Work was conducted in 3 areas. The first area was at a steep sharp turn in the trail that had been rebuilt with rock on two previous work parties and both times were collapsed by hikers short cutting the turn. This time we installed an 8 foot section of 2 x 8 board. The board was backed up on both sides by rock and then covered with dirt. Brush was trimmed on the turn as well, to encourage hikers to stay on the trail.

Working down trail, the next two areas consisted of fixing sections of steep downhill trail side slopes caused by erosion from rain water runoff from illegal trail cutting paths perpendicular to the trail. Again we installed 8 foot 2 x 8 boards at both locations and leveled the trail with dirt fill.

We worked from 8:00 AM to Noon. On our way out, we also removed some of the cacti growing out into the trail path where the trail passes through the edge of a giant patch of Prickly Pear Cactus at the bottom of the trail. Work was conducted by Martin DeGoey and John Sabol. A special thanks to Martin who on the week before had purchased and hauled up the three 8 foot 2 x 8 boards and hid them in the brush near the work locations.

## February 22, 2020 – Danielson Ranch



## February 22, 2020 – Danielson Ranch continued

13 hikers gathered at the Wendy Trail trailhead at the south end of Wendy Drive in Newbury Park on a cool midwinter morning with a blue sky that was partially filled with towering clouds that suggested the possibility of rain. Our Santa Monica Mountains outing began as we hiked the Wendy Trail over to the Satwiwa Native American Indian Culture Center in Rancho Sierra Vista. We then headed south as the paved upper section of Sycamore Canyon Road descended into the canyon; as we did so we passed large areas covered with lush green grass.

Immediately after crossing the bridge in the canyon bottom, we left the road (and the bicycle riders) and headed northeast on the Upper Sycamore Canyon Trail for a very short distance to a junction with the Fossil Trail which we turned right onto (the former sign at the trail junction that was burned badly in the May, 2013 Camarillo Springs Fire is now gone completely). The Fossil Trail began climbing steeply to the east on a flank of Boney Mountain, gaining 760' of elevation in 0.9 mile. The trail was adorned with lots of blooming ceanothus trees (both white and blue), purple nightshade, and wild cucumber vines; near the trail's upper end we stopped briefly to admire several fossils embedded in rock.

When we reached the junction with the Boney Mountain Trail, we took a break and then turned left and continued on up the mountain with excellent views to the west and after a while to the north and east. We encountered bush sunflowers, California poppies, and morning glories along the way. When we reached the junction with Danielson Road, we turned right and hiked the short distance to the Danielson Memorial and the ruins of the Danielson house (only a chimney remains) where we took a lengthy break in the still heavily wooded (unburned) area. As we continued our hike we descended along the Danielson Road and visited the usually dry waterfall along the way. Fortunately there was a little water flowing in the stream so we saw a small waterfall. A few minutes later we followed the Windmill Trail (where we encountered a lovely display of shooting stars) back to the parking area which we reached having completed an 8.1-mile loop hike with about 2,000' of elevation gain/loss (without being rained on) on another great morning for hiking.

### CALIFORNIA LOOSESTRIFE

In the spring of 1997, the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers made their way down La Jolla Canyon in Mugu State Park. In the bottom of that steep rocky canyon, just above the falls, one lone plant with which none of us were familiar presented itself. Growing in running water, upright and with solitary six petaled purple flowers, we were mystified. (Of course, some of us are mystified a lot.) The plant, it turns out, is the California loosestrife (*Lythrum californicum*), a member of the loosestrife family (*Lythraceae*). Milt McAuley (*Wildflowers of the Santa Monica Mountains*) reports that it can also be found in Topanga Creek and Cold Creek. A few of the plants can still be found there today.

Mike Kuhn

### CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE

The California, or western, sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) is a 40-70 foot tall deciduous trees, 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.

Mike Kuhn

### REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

*(Red Flag Warnings and Rain cancels the hike – No hikes on holidays)*

#### Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

During Daylight Savings Time meet at **5PM** and during Standard Time meet at **4PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from the 118 Freeway. 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 - 4.95 MRT - 1,325' elevation gain).

#### Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

During Daylight Savings Time meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, located to the south of Donut Delite, near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. There is no hike during Standard Time.  
(Moderate - 3.07 MRT - 600' elevation gain)

#### Thursday Evening - Chumash Trail

During Daylight Savings Time 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 north end of Flanagan Drive.  
(Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice.

Please see <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.



## RSTB Calendar March 2020



| Sun                                                                                                                                           | Mon                                                       | Tue                                                                                  | Wed                              | Thu                                                                     | Fri       | Sat                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br>Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM<br>See Schedule<br><br>Happy Birthday Roger Steffen                                                      | <b>2</b><br><br><br>Happy Birthday Martin DeGooley        | <b>3</b><br>No hike during Standard Time<br><br>World Wildlife Day                   | <b>4</b>                         | <b>5</b><br>No hike during Standard Time                                | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b><br>Ahmanson Ranch:El Escorpion Park, Cave of Munits, Castle Peak*<br>8AM<br>See Upcoming Events |
| <b>8</b><br>Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM<br>See Schedule<br>Daylight Savings Time begins 2AM<br><br>Happy Birthday Colleen Janssen Donna Mccarley | <b>9</b>                                                  | <b>10</b><br>Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule                                     | <b>11</b>                        | <b>12</b><br>Chumash Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule<br><br>Nat'l Napping Day | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b><br>Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail<br>8AM<br>See Upcoming Events                            |
| <b>15</b><br>Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM<br>See Schedule                                                                                         | <b>16</b>                                                 | <b>17</b><br>Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule                                     | <b>18</b><br>Club Meeting 5:30PM | <b>19</b><br>Chumash Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule                          | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b><br>Sulphur Mountain Shuttle*<br>8AM<br>See Upcoming Events<br><br>Spring Begins!               |
| <b>22</b><br>Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM<br>See Schedule                                                                                         | <b>23</b><br><br>Happy Birthday Judy Cohen Goldie Parazoo | <b>24</b><br>Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule                                     | <b>25</b>                        | <b>26</b><br>Chumash Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule                          | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b><br>Devil Canyon to Browns Canyon Road*<br>8AM<br>See Upcoming Events                           |
| <b>29</b><br>Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM<br>See Schedule<br><br>Happy Birthday Lilia Alcantara Arthur Espinoza                                   | <b>30</b>                                                 | <b>31</b><br>Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM<br>See Schedule<br><br>Happy Birthday Larry Ribbeck |                                  |                                                                         |           |                                                                                                          |

**SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX** - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map  
<https://fsapps.nwcg.gov/psp/sawti/>

**CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP** - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches  
<https://www.fire.ca.gov/programs/communications/red-flag-warnings-fire-weather-watches/> (Scroll down to map)

\* 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.

*Full descriptions of these hikes and activities are available at* <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/>



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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletters are distributed by email only. Contact the Membership Chair if you require a copy by US mail.

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about the RSTB? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make out tax deductible member donation check for the year to:  
 Rancho Simi Foundation and mail it to RSTB, P.O. Box 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**

| <b>Rancho Simi Trailblazers</b><br><i>A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation</i> |                         |                   |                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Executive Chair:                                                                   | Mike Kuhn               | HM (805) 583-2345 | <a href="mailto:mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com">mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com</a>           |
| Treasurer:                                                                         | To Be Announced         |                   |                                                                                              |
| Park District Liaison:                                                             | Nikki Collier           | WK (805) 584-4453 | <a href="mailto:volunteers@rsrpd.us">volunteers@rsrpd.us</a>                                 |
| Work Parties Chair:                                                                | Cheri Lanier            |                   | <a href="mailto:cheri.lanier@simitrailblazers.com">cheri.lanier@simitrailblazers.com</a>     |
| Hiking Chair:                                                                      | Mark Gilmore            | HM (805) 990-1460 | <a href="mailto:markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com">markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com</a>   |
| Vice Hiking Chair:                                                                 | Les Wilson              | HM (805) 522-2642 | <a href="mailto:les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com">les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com</a>         |
| Website:                                                                           | Mark Gilmore            | HM (805) 990-1460 | <a href="mailto:markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com">markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com</a>   |
| Ways & Means Chair:                                                                | Marty Richards          | HM (805) 526-4414 | <a href="mailto:marty.richards@simitrailblazers.com">marty.richards@simitrailblazers.com</a> |
| Membership Chair:                                                                  | Louise Pomes            |                   | <a href="mailto:louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com">louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com</a>     |
| Publicity Chair:                                                                   | <b>VOLUNTEER NEEDED</b> |                   | <b>Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345</b>                                                    |
| Newsletter Editor:                                                                 | Louise Pomes            |                   | <a href="mailto:louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com">louise.pomes@simitrailblazers.com</a>     |