



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Trailblazers newsletters will be an online blog starting in June.

* Volunteer Hike Leaders Needed

Our bank will no longer accept dues or other checks made out to the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers. **ALL CHECKS must be made out to the Rancho Simi Foundation.**

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. We even enjoy going on overnight events. **Please join us** and see for yourself how much fun we have!

Hikes are every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, and most Saturdays



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.



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



RSTB CLUB MEETING

This month's RSTB meeting will be at:
4201 Guardian Street,
Activity Room #2
Wednesday June 20, 2018 5:30PM
Everyone Welcome to attend!

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

Upcoming Events

June 2nd Ahmanson Ranch: Cave of Munits and El Escorpión *

6.2 MRT – Moderate (~750' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

June 9th Trippet Ranch, Eagle Rock, Hub Junction, and Musch Trail Loop *

7.1 mile loop – Moderate (1,350' of elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

June 16th Hondo Canyon

8AM * 9.6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,700' of elevation gain/loss)

June 20th Club Board Meeting

4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2
Everyone Welcome to attend! 5:30PM

June 23rd Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail **8AM**

The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided.

June 30th Eaton Canyon **8AM** *

6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,400' of elevation gain/loss)

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at www.rsrpd.org

April 21st – Work Party: Long Canyon



The Trail Blazers work party celebrated Earthday a day early this year. We cleaned up the first ½ mile of the trail where erosion cut a groove down the center of the trail. Six new water run-off features were installed and the remaining water cuts were filled.



A big thanks to the five workers that helped us complete our work today!

April 28th – Towsley Canyon Loop

16 hikers met at the “Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon” section of the 4,000-acre Santa Clarita Woodlands Park this morning. It was perfect hiking weather, never exceeding 73 degrees. Our hike began on the dirt road leading to the Sonia Thompson Nature Center, crossing Towsley Creek on a concrete bridge. We began a counter-clockwise hike on the Towsley View Loop Trail.

After passing through The Narrows section of Towsley Gorge, the trail quickly gained elevation, via multiple switchbacks along the well-shaded eastern slope of the canyon. The verdant north-facing slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains rose steeply to the south. The single-track trail passed through sage scrub, stands of California walnut and bay laurel trees, and scattered oak trees as we made our way to the 2,450’ high point on the trail from where much of the Santa Clarita Valley was seen visible. The hillsides were adorned by many blooming wildflowers which begged to be photographed. The trail then dropped

into shady Wiley Canyon, which we followed downstream to a junction with the Canyon View Loop Trail rising along the northern flank of the mountain, before descending to the Sonia Thompson Nature Center. After a brief rest, we returned to our cars at the trailhead. We then headed home, after enjoying a very pleasant 6.7 mile hike, with over 1,450’ of elevation gain/loss.

May 5th – Charmlee Wilderness Park Loop



Nine hikers met at Donut Delite and car-pooled to the Charmlee Wilderness Park, in the Santa Monica Mountains overlooking Malibu. It was a

warm and beautiful Spring morning. The park features a honeycomb network of trails, criss-crossing it in several directions. Our route was a clockwise loop, navigating the outside perimeter of the park. We began our hike at a shaded and over grown picnic area, a short distance south of the information kiosk at the Botany Trail.

We began a counter-clockwise hike on the Towsley View Loop Trail. The trail gradually rose, through an oak grove, to a three-way trail split. We enjoyed a flower filled trail, featuring a plethora of Hummingbird Sage and Canyon Sunflowers. From there we continued on the main trail as it passed between the eastern edge of the grassy meadow, that occupies much of the park on one side and copses of oak trees and rock outcroppings on the other (east) side. Eventually we reached “Ocean Vista” overlooking the Pacific Ocean which lay more than 1,000’ below. Views were relatively good today. We continued as the trail rose through chaparral to an abandoned cistern bordered by eucalyptus trees. The West Meadow Trail led us down to an old well and water pump after which we hiked around the “Black Forest,” partially on the Clyde Canyon Trail which provided views to the west. After rejoining the West Meadow Trail we soon turned left and headed northwest along an unnamed trail through a pleasant oak woodland until we reached Potrero Road which we followed up to a road junction where we turned right and explored the Ranch House ruins before following Carmichael Road and the Botany Trail back to the parking lot. We car-pooled back to Donut Delite, having completed a short-but-satisfying 3.5-mile hike with 680’ of elevation gain/loss in this special park, with an amazing diversity of botany and geology.



RSTB Calendar JUNE



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Ahmanson Ranch: Cave of Munits and El Escorpión * 8:00AM See Schedule
3 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM	4	5 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	6	7 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	8	9 Trippet Ranch, Eagle Rock, Hub Junction, and Musch Trail Loop  8AM See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	11	12 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	13 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Carol Tucker	14 Chumash Trail 6PM June 14, 2018  See Schedule	15	16 Hondo Canyon * 8AM See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule 	18	19 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	20 Club Board Meeting <i>Everyone Welcome to attend! 5:30PM</i> <i>Happy Birthday</i> Lydia Ritzman	21 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Phil Ankrom	22 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Linda Mann	23 Work Party - The Hummingbird Trail 8AM See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Alan Cueba Mike Howard	25	26 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	27	28 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	29	30 Eaton Canyon * 8AM <i>Happy Birthday</i> James Hanley

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_redflagwarning.php (Scroll down to map)



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 1231
Simi Valley, CA 93062

-----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 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS <i>A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation</i>			
Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com
Treasurer:	Santiago Homsí		
Park District Liaison:	Jeannie Liss	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpd.us
Work Parties Chair:	Mike Howard & Cheri Lanier		mike.howard@simitrailblazers.com
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 990-1460	markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com
Vice Hiking Chair:	Les Wilson	HM (805) 522-2642	les.wilson@simitrailblazers.com
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@simitrailblazers.com
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	marty.richards@simitrailblazers.com
Publicity Chair:	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		Contact Mike Kuhn at: 805-583-2345
Newsletter Editor:	Linda Mann	Cell: 805-501-5229	linda.martins.mann@simitrailblazers.com

SOAP PLANT/SOAPROOT

Nearly all of this article has been adopted from Jan Timbrook's Chumash Ethnobotany, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History [2007], pp. 56-57.

The *Ventureño* Chumash name for this plant is *pash* and the Spanish name is *amole*. The plant is very common in the hills around Simi Valley. Indeed, it has a wide geographical distribution in California, Oregon and Nevada. A *Liliaceae*, i.e., lily family, it is characterized by a three to six inch long bulb, which is heavily sheathed in a brown fibrous husk. Most of the year the bulb remains dormant. The top of the fibrous covering is often exposed in trails. The leaves are eight to 24 inches long, with waxy edges arising from the bulb. The stalk appears in the spring. It is erect, free-branching, and from two to six feet tall. The flowers are widely spaced on the branches, white, with what appears to be six narrow petals (actually three petals and three sepals).

The Indians, and later the settlers, used the bulbs as soap. The bulbs were crushed and rubbed on the hands or on clothing in water to make a lather. It was considered an excellent shampoo. Clothing not rinsed thoroughly after being washed would cause skin irritation. Indian women would apply the juice to their bangs to make their hair lie flat against their foreheads. It also made their hair look glossy. The Indians would prepare whole hides, other than from deer, by thoroughly lathering the flesh side of the hide to dissolve the fat and thereby rendering the hide soft.

Crushed bulbs were thrown into dammed pools in streams to stupefy fish. Saponins, soapy chemicals in the plant, coats or paralyzes the gills, so the fish float to the surface where they can be collected by hand. The use of soap plant did not affect the edibility of the fish.

The Chumash made brushes from the coarse, brown fibers sheathing the bulbs. They cleaned the fibers by pounding them on a rock and then separating the fiber with a comb. The small ends of the fibers were tied together with Indian hemp string to make a handle, which was covered with tar. The base end of the fibers were trimmed to make them an even length and then singed. The brushes were used to contain the freshly ground meal on the surface of metates and to clean them. These brushes were critical tools for food preparation. Brushes with particularly stiff

fibers were used as hairbrushes. Men seldom brushed their hair. However, women did. (Never the same brush that was used in food preparation.) Pregnant women only scratched themselves with these brushes, feeling that if they scratched their tender skin with their fingers, they would leave permanent scars.

Some bear shaman made bear costumes by sewing soap plant husk fibers to nets. They would lie in wait to ambush people. They said that the soap plant fiber would prevent them from being wounded by arrows. If a bear could not be killed by arrows, it was said to be proof that the bear was really a bear shaman, who was protected by soap plant fiber armor. Bulbs were roasted in the ashes of a fire for direct consumption. Unlike other Indians, the Chumash did not seem to have roasted bulbs in roasting pits. The bulbs were also dried and stored. While young, the leaves reportedly were eaten raw, and the dry leaves were used by Indians to wrap acorn meal in making bread. The cooked juice was also used as glue, to treat new bows, and to create green tattoos.

IS GLOBAL WARMING CAUSING MORE, LARGER WILDFIRES?

(Summarized from Steven W. Running, "Is Global Warming Causing More, Larger Wildfires?", Science, Vol. 313 [August 18, 2006], pp. 927)

The above-noted news article postulates, based on a number of technical sources, that higher spring and summer temperatures in the western United States has resulted in earlier snowmelt and the extension of the wildfire season and a real extent of wildfires. Most of the article draws from Westerling *et al.*, "Warming and Earlier Spring Increase Western U.S. Forest Wildfire Activity", *Science*, Vol. 313 (August 18, 2006), pp. 940-943. In summary, and largely in Running's own words:

Global warming has had the following effects on wildfires in the western U.S. during the last 37 years (Note that this is not a projection of what might happen in the future, but what has already happened):

Warmer temperatures appear to be increasing the duration and intensity of the wildfire season. Since 1986, longer, warmer summers have resulted in a four-fold increase of major wildfires and a six-fold increase in the area of forest burned, compared to 1970-1986. The same thing

has happened in Canada. The length of the active wildfire season (when fires are actually burning) in the western U.S. has increased by 78 days, and the average duration of large fires has increased from 7.5 to 37.1 days. This is attributed to an increase in average spring and summer temperatures of 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit and a 1-4 week earlier melting of mountain snowpacks.

The hydrology of the west is dominated by mountain snowpacks. Seventy-five percent of annual streamflow in the west comes from snowpack. Snowpack keeps the fire danger low in these summer-arid forests until spring melt is complete. Once the snow melts, forests become combustible within one month because of low humidities and sparse summer rainfall. The early snowmelt, i.e., longer dry summers, years had five times as many wildfires as years with late snowmelt. Higher forests that previously were protected by late-snowpack are becoming increasingly vulnerable to wildfires. Thus, four factors – early snowmelt, higher summer temperatures, longer fire seasons, and expanded vulnerable area of high-elevation forests, have resulted in a massive increase in the area burned in most years. Really great fires (about 5 %) account for more than 95 % of burn areas. The 1988 fire in Yellowstone National Park, for example, burned more than 600,000 hectares, cost \$120 million and resulted in the deployment of 25,000 fire fighters. The fire was only extinguished when snow began to fall in mid-September.

Fire is an important process for recycling dead biomass in the arid west, where natural decomposition rates are extremely slow. Wooden fence posts in high forests are often found to be perfectly sound after 100 years.

According to nearly all climatic models, projected increases in average summer temperatures by 2040 to 2069 are at least 5.4 degrees Fahrenheit, which is more than three times that observed over the last 37 years.



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 HIKE (Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

Meet at **5PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from State Route 118. 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) **(We Meet at 4PM during standard time.)**

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

Meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, located to the south of Donut Delite, near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. (Moderate - 3.07 MRT - 600' 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 north end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

JUNE HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

June 2nd Ahmanson Ranch: El Escorpión Park, Cave of Munits, Castle Peak *

Meeting time is **8AM**. at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots. See a video about the Cave at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDk1UPYvtIE>. Our hike will begin at the entrance to El Escorpión Park in West Hills.

June 9th Trippet Ranch, Eagle Rock, Hub Junction, and Musch Trail Loop

7.1 mile loop – Moderate (1,350' of elevation gain/loss) Meeting time is **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and lunch/snacks. Wear boots. Our hike will begin along the Nature Trail and will then head up the Eagle Springs Fire Road to the awe-inspiring Eagle Rock monolith. **Be sure to pay the trailhead parking fee (probably about \$12.00)** at the Trippet Ranch parking lot (if the entrance booth is closed, fill out an envelope, place the flap of the envelope on the vehicle's dashboard, put the fee in the envelope and seal it, and then put the envelope in the "Iron Ranger").

June 16th Hondo Canyon to Topanga Lookout *

9.6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,700' of elevation gain/loss) Meet at **8AM** near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. This spectacular section of the Backbone Trail in the Santa Monica Mountains includes views of pink-colored sedimentary rock formations. The trail crosses a stream near the trailhead and then climbs steadily through live oaks and a sloping green meadow. It soon reaches a wonderful pink gorge on the right with a side path down to a small waterfall.

June 20th Club Meeting - Everyone Welcome to attend!


Meet at **5:30PM** - Meetings will be held at the District's new offices
4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2

June 23rd Work Party – The Hummingbird Trail

Meeting time is 8 AM. The event will end at noon. All tools will be provided. We will do trail grooming and widening, re-construct water bars, and also cut back some brush. Bring your own water, snacks, gloves, hat, and wear sunscreen. Boots are recommended. **Directions to Trailhead:** Take Hwy 118 to the Kuehner Drive exit. Head north (turn left) 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.

June 30th Eaton Canyon *

6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,400' of elevation gain/loss)
Meet at **8AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

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/index.php/calendar/>