



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



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.**

The June 17 work party was conducted on the upper half of the lower Stagecoach Trail. Thanks to John Sabol, Martin DeGoey and Mike Kuhn, that portion of the trail has been completely cleared.



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



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

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

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 Club Meeting for the month of July is cancelled due to camping event

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

Upcoming Events

July 1 st Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Library
6 MRT – Easy to Moderate (800' elevation gain/loss) **8AM**

July 8th Mt. San Jacinto via the Palm Springs Tramway
11.5 MRT – Strenuous (2,600' elevation gain/loss) **6:30AM**

July 15th Camp Three Falls to Lilly Meadows 7AM

July 17th – 23rd June Lake: Annual Summer Camping and Hiking Event

July 29th Los Alamos Canyon 7AM



May 21st – Wildwood Park Loop



We had 21 hikers on today's hike on a clear, cool day. We followed Mesa trail to Santa Rosa Trail and up Mountclef Ridge over to views of the Santa Rosa Valley. Descending to the Lower Santa Rosa trail led us to the paved road, then to the trail to Box Canyon. Hiking up this road led us back to Mesa Trail.

We then went to Teepee trail and hiked down to Paradise Falls. Following Wildwood Canyon to Indian Creek trail led us back to the parking lot. The hike was just over 8 miles, and we all returned having enjoyed the weather and the rugged scenery.

June 3rd – Ahmanson Ranch: Cave of Munits

24 hikers gathered in the Ahmanson Ranch parking lot at the west end of Victory Boulevard in West Hills on a not-yet-hot late-spring morning for a hike in the Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve which offers a variety of single-track trails and old dirt ranch roads in a landscape of grasslands, rolling hills, and a smattering of ancient oak trees.

Our clockwise-loop hike began on a dirt trail that rose to the northwest quite steeply behind the information kiosk in the parking lot. After reaching the summit of the hill we stopped to catch our breath and enjoy the panoramic view of the surrounding area. Continuing we followed undulating single-track trails bordered by tall golden grass with occasional patches of blooming plants. Soon we reached another ridge from which (if you knew where to look) we could glimpse the opening of the cave that was our destination. We then descended northeast along a somewhat eroded "use" trail toward the cave. The "use" trail eventually joined Moore Canyon (dirt) Road and we turned left (north) onto it and followed it a short distance to the point at which the "use" trail leading up to the entrance to The Cave of Munits branched off to the left. We followed the steeply rising heavily eroded "use" trail to the cave's entrance where we temporarily "installed" a climbing rope and most of the members of our group entered the cave. As described on the excellent Modern Hiker web site, "The walls of the interior fold and undulate into a seemingly endless series of side caves and back caverns ... it's ceiling is very tall and it can feel like you're standing inside a natural rock cathedral ... this area was spiritually important to the Chumash [Indians]. After exploring the interior of the cave some of the hikers exited by

climbing out one of the cave's chimneys and circling around on the mountainside to the entrance; the remainder returned the way they entered the cave. We returned to the parking lot along Moore Canyon Road. By this time the temperature had climbed into the 90's so we decided to abandon the second part of our hike (a loop around Lasky Mesa) and returned home having completed a nice 4.1-mile hike with over 800' of elevation gain/loss.

June 10th – Fish Canyon Narrows

22 hikers took advantage of a nice relatively cool late spring morning to hike the unique and beautiful Fish Canyon Narrows. We began our hike at the gate at the east "end" of Templin Highway north of Castaic Lake. After taking the obligatory group photos, we began by descending northeast along the closed paved road to a concrete bridge at the mouth of Cienega Canyon [which is quite overgrown].



Passing by and continuing southward as the road turned to dirt we soon veered left (eastward) onto the abandoned easy-to-follow Warm Springs-Fish Canyon Truck Trail which passed through a narrow gorge and was bordered by a plethora of blooming buckwheat and lovely (but deadly) datura plants (aka jimson weed) with their large white lily-like blossoms; later there were blooming yuccas and yellow creek monkey flowers. After several paved creek crossings we reached the abandoned Cienega Campground (nearly three miles from our starting point) where one member of our group showed us a very interesting outdoor stand-alone "room" fashioned mostly from fallen tree branches in a shaded alcove. We immediately left the Truck Trail and headed north along a lovely shaded single-track trail for about a mile to "Pianobox" [an old mining claim] where there's a campsite. The single-track trail ended as we entered the Fish Canyon Narrows and we found ourselves rock hopping, pushing through brush, and crisscrossing the creek to follow stretches of "use" trail for the next mile-and-a-half or so. The stream was flowing and provided a musical accompaniment as we hiked carefully through the narrow canyon bordered by very scenic reddish hundred-foot rock walls and populated with oaks and alders. We eventually reached the Rogers Trail Camp in a small oak-shaded clearing on an oak- and sycamore-shaded bench. After we took a much-needed lunch-and-rest break we returned the way we came and then returned home having completed an 11.5-mile hike with a little over 1,000' of elevation gain/loss, a hike described in 2009 by Los Angeles Magazine as the best hike in Los Angeles!



RSTB Calendar JULY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Libray 8AM See Schedule
2 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	3	4 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM  See Schedule	5	6 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	7 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Rita Williams	8 Mt. San Jacinto 6:30AM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Joe Simon
9 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	10	11 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule	12 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Donna Wolfe	13 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	14 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Mike Kuhn	15 Camp Three Falls to Lilly Meadows 7AM See Schedule
16 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	17	18	19	20	21	22
	June Lake Annual Summer Camping and Hiking Event					
		Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule		Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule		
23 June Lake Annual Summer Camping and Hiking Event Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	24	25 Mt. McCoy Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Nick Margolin	26 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Balaji Keshava	27 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Barbara Westrum Randy Sundeen	28	29 Los Alamos Canyon 7AM See Schedule
30 Rocky Peak Fire Road 5PM See Schedule	31					

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)

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

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-----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 _____

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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



U.S. Postage

RSTB
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Simi Valley, CA 93062

THEY SAVED THE OAKS

Eucalyptus trees began being imported into California from Australia as early as the 1860s. They were prized as ornamentals and for possible utilitarian uses such as for pier pilings and later as railroad ties. The railroads invested heavily in them, in part because they had plenty of land on which to experiment with this new crop. Alas, they didn't make good pilings or ties.

Then, in 1905 something dramatic happened which changed the fortunes of eucalyptus and native oak trees in California forever. The United States Department of Agriculture published a paper in which they predicted that eastern hardwood forests would be exhausted by the early 1920s. Consequently, the American hardwood industry, primarily furniture manufacturers, would be severely impacted. Americans rushed to find a substitute for oak, hickory, maple, etc.

Promoters quickly settled on the eucalyptus, which was rumored to be used successfully in Australia for furniture. Eucalyptus trees of many species were imported along with their seeds and were sold to investors. Tens of thousands of acres of eucalyptus trees were planted, especially the faster growing species, i.e., blue, red, and sugar gums. As economic ventures, the whole thing was a bust. The eucalyptus trees that were being used in Australia in the furniture industry were 400-year old specimens with well aged heart wood. The furniture was not very satisfactory by American hardwood industry standard. Eucalyptus of all species tended to warp and to crack. A little judicious investigation would have determined that - but then the promoters were only interested in selling trees.

While all this was going on, people in California continued to heat and cook with wood. By the 1920s wood cutters around towns like Fresno were having to travel 20-30 miles away from the City centers to find oak trees to harvest to satisfy the demand for fuel wood. Before long, native oak trees in much of settled California would be gone and only a memory. Then came

the eucalyptus frenzy and many farmers planted part of their land to eucalyptus. In the end, those plantings made good firewood and were quickly replaced by the rapid growth of stump sprouts. Eucalyptus trees could be had close in to urban areas and every farm had a wood lot.

As it turned out, the Department of Agriculture was wrong. The hardwood supply in the east did grow thin, prices did go up, and because of increased prices, we have yet to run out of hardwoods.

Oak trees continued to be cut to clear the land for crops and for grazing purposes. Frequent fires and livestock generally get seedling oaks. But, the advent of the eucalyptus fiasco slowed the great oak tree slaughter and helped preserve those monarchs of the west.

Eucalyptus trees, both blue and red gums, were widely used as windbreaks in California, primarily on the margins of citrus groves. In the Central Valley of California there are massive plantings of eucalyptus trees on soils that aren't even very good for grazing lands. The trees are being grown for paper pulp.

By the way, the oldest eucalyptus tree in the City - the one with the largest trunk - is located on the Hummingbird's Nest Ranch. It was probably planted by Charles Emerson Hoar during the 1870s or 1880s.

Mike Kuhn
6-27-01

THE BEESWAX WRECK

For the past 300 years, chunks of amber-colored beeswax have been washing up after storms on the shore of Oregon's Nehalem Bay. One chunk weighed 54 kilograms – yes, almost 119 pounds. Those pieces are often impressed with Chinese characters. Pieces of Chinese porcelain have also been washed up on the beach. Occasionally, during exceptionally low tides, a wooden hull has been exposed. Some have long speculated that the wax was from a Chinese junk, which had plied the

trade between Manila to China. The apparent shipwreck has long been shrouded in mystery.

From carbon 14 analyses of some of the wax, it appears that the shipwreck dates from sometime between 1650 and 1700. It is now suspected that the wreck was a Spanish galleon involved in the Manila trade. Churches in New Spain used beeswax for candles – unlike candles made from tallow, beeswax candles burn relatively cleanly with little objectionable odor. Since the New World lacked honeybees, beeswax had to be imported. Chinese porcelain was also in high demand in the New World. It is speculated that the shipwreck was carrying beeswax from the Philippines to the west coast of Central and South America. Those ships sailed the Japanese Current northeasterly and the California Current south along the coasts of the Pacific Northwest and Alta-California. The shipwreck is thought to be that of either the *Santo Cristo de Burgos*, which sank in 1693, or the *San Francisco Xavier*, which disappeared in 1705.

Attempts are now being made to locate what is left of the shipwreck, so that it can be excavated. Any excavation would shed light on the question of whether it is Chinese or Spanish. There may have been survivors along the Oregon coast. There is no record of survivors reaching New Spain during that time period.

Mike Kuhn
1-32-08 (revised 6-16-10)





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 5PM during daylight saving 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.)

JULY HIKES AND ACTIVITIES

July 1st Mt. McCoy and the Reagan Library

Meet at **8AM** 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. Hike up to an isolated knoll in a 200-acre open space region at the western end of Simi Valley. At the summit (1,325') there is a white cross, erected in 1941 and a 360-degree view including Sinaloa Lake, Wood Ranch, the Bard Reservoir, the Simi Hills, and the Santa Susana Mountains. From there we'll hike over to the west side of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

July 8th Mt. San Jacinto via the Palm Springs Tramway

11.5 MRT – Strenuous (2,600' elevation gain/loss)

Meet at **6:30AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

Watch the YouTube video about the hike at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TA50UQTtKEE>.

This outing involves driving to the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway (near Palm Springs), taking the scenic 15-minute vertical lift on the tram (with its rotating cabin providing a 360-degree view) from the Valley Station (2,643') to the Mountain Station (8,516'). We'll exit the upper tram station and enter the San Jacinto Wilderness and State Park where the temperature will be much cooler than the desert floor. We'll hike through a lovely forest of conifers to Round Valley and then climb more steeply to Wellman's Divide (9,700') with its fine views of the desert and the Santa Rosa Mountains to the east. After a lunch/rest break we'll continue hiking until we reach the summit of Mt. San Jacinto (10,834') where we'll enjoy spectacular views. We'll return the way we came.

NOTE: This outing will take all day; we'll arrive back in Simi Valley in the late afternoon/early evening.

NOTE: The cost of a round-trip ticket on the Aerial Tramway is \$23.95 for adults (\$21.95 for seniors 62+).

July 15th Camp Three Falls to Lilly Meadows

Meet at **7:00AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring your camera, water and lunch. Wear boots.

7.5 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (~1,250' elevation gain/loss)

Our hike will start at the entrance (~5,255') to the Boy Scouts of America's "Camp Three Falls" in the Lockwood Valley. We'll return the way we came.

July 17th – 23rd June Lake: Annual Summer Camping and Hiking Event

This special event is open to active Trail Blazer Members only.

View our campground at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxcsyrQk6R0> Make your reservations at

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com/index.php/rsvpmaker/annual-summer-camping-and-hiking-event-2017-07-17/>

July 29th Los Alamos Canyon

Meet at **7:00AM** - Be the first to see and hike the latest long-awaited RSRPD acquisition. The Trail Blazers were only recently authorized to conduct an exploratory hike in Alamos Canyon. The canyon is north of the 118 freeway, between Simi Valley and Moorpark. Please see our website for updates on distance, elevation gain, and trailhead location.

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/>