

Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Nov. & Dec. 2004
Volume 18, No.6

Annual Meeting Reminder: Bats Declining Worldwide

Date: Sat., Nov. 6

Time: 7 pm social

7:30 pm annual election

7:45 pm Presentation

Join us for our annual meeting at the Historic Adobe Ranch House in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Enjoy free refreshments. Our featured speaker will be Dick Wilkins of Bat Rescue. He will present a slide show and will probably have a live bat with him. *The program is free.*

Learn why the decline of Bat species and populations worldwide should be a cause for great alarm. Wilkins will describe the different types of bats around the world and here in San Diego. As is our custom, we will have a brief annual meeting and election of our officers for 2005.



Spotted bat on rock. Photo courtesy of Bat Rescue.

Friends Urge Yes on Prop A

The Friends Board of Directors voted to support Proposition A, the TransNet Regional Transportation Plan, on this November's ballot. The Board did this because this plan provides significant benefits for our environment while providing sorely needed congestion relief for commuters.

This November, San Diego voters will have a chance to attack the region's worst traffic congestion by approving Proposition A, delivering over \$14 billion in highway, local road and transit improvements — without increasing taxes.

Proposition A renews the existing local TransNet program that has helped finance every major highway, transit improvement and street repair in San Diego County since 1987. It will generate an additional \$4.8 billion in federal matching funds that will become available for the major highway/transit projects.

Proposition A is a balanced remedy for San Diego's growing traffic congestion crisis

Proposition A means:

- Major upgrades to key arterial routes commuters depend on every day.
- Major improvements to I-5, I-15 and I-805, the I-5/I-8 interchange, the I-8/SR 163 interchange and many more key freeway pressure points to ease congestion for local residents and visitors alike.
- Additional improvements on State Routes 52, 54, 56, 67, 76, 78, 94, 125, and 905.

See p. 7 for more

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Restoration Projects

Mike Kelly

Nov. 6 Restoration Planting in Peñasquitos Canyon

Help plant native plants and remove invasive weeds along the Trans County Trail. Meet at 1 p.m. at the Ranger's Trailer office at Canyonside Stables on the northeast corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. Wear sturdy boots or shoes, sun protection; no experience needed!

Nov. 7 4-S Ranch Street Fair

Call if you can take a shift between 9-4 to help staff a booth at this street fair taking place on the 4-S Ranch just west of Rancho Bernardo.

Nov. 14 Invasive Eucalyptus Removal

Only a few dozen large invasive eucalyptus trees are left in the preserve. This project will target one of these groups. No experience needed. A pretty part of the Preserve to work in. Meet at 9 a.m. at Ranger's Trailer office at Canyonside Stables on northeast corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. Wear sturdy boots or shoes, sun protection.

Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details on any of these projects.

Critters in the Canyon

Paul Kucharczyk

Peñasquitos hosts a rich array of birds, reptiles and mammals known to this canyon. It is always fun to see something new, and add it to our life-list. Regularly, hikers and cyclists come to me describing something they have witnessed. Recently, a bobcat has become quite the celebrity by sauntering across the main trail. Unfortunately, most visitors don't know what they are looking at and report it as a mountain lion. Should we have the opportunity, we ask them to compare what they remember to the San Diego Tracking Team's mounted bobcat located at the ranch house. Once they compare their sighting to the mounted specimen, the "lion" becomes a "cat." Regardless, staff informs them Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is mountain lion habitat and to always hike, bike, or ride with heightened awareness.

Some canyon visitors have had encounters of the exotic variety. During my time here I have personally experienced three different reptile species that either escaped, or were "set free" in the canyon. An eastern box turtle spent a few minutes on my desk as I studied my reptile field guide. On another occasion someone called my office to report a "really big turtle" cruising around the slopes of the canyon. Volunteer Alex Bedoya made a trip out to discover what we later confirmed to be a 50 lbs. African spurred tortoise. Back at the ranch house, "Tank" was all over the courtyard as we waited for a rescue volunteer belonging to the Turtle & Tortoise Society.

Now, are you ready for the third exotic encounter? I received a radio call from our staging area volunteer Dick Stevens on a Sunday afternoon informing us a visitor saw a "10" python" crossing the main trail at Eicher's grave site. Sure enough, there was a 5" wide track in the dirt leading me to the biggest tail I ever did see belonging to something that wasn't from around these parts. We beat the bushes to drive the snake until I could see the head and determine what I was getting myself in to. So, there I was (I always wanted to say that) poised at the ready

waiting for the opportunity to grab behind it's head and reel it in. The next day we identified it to be a red-tailed boa constrictor, over 6' long. Extremely emaciated and showing signs of pneumonia, I ultimately delivered it to an animal clinic where the experienced veterinarian accepted it as a rescue.

The next time you're in the canyon remain aware of your surroundings. You never know what could be seen. And take your digital camera!

Project Wildlife Presents

San Diego Wildlife Day

Celebrate San Diego County's Native Wildlife & Natural Areas

Sunday, Nov. 14, 2004

11 a.m - 4 p.m.

Where: Balboa Park—Corner of Park Blvd and Presidents Way

Project Wildlife's largest environment education festival of the year, San Diego Wildlife Day features appearances by Project Wildlife's education animals, family activities & education booths from environmental and animal organizations

. Enjoy this free community event and learn about our county's wild species & natural places.



Trail crew hard at work on Old López Road Trail.

Volunteers Needed Old López Road Trail Reroute

Ranger Gina Brown

The trail crew is at it again. The first of October found the Los Peñasquitos Trail Crew working on the lower portion of the Old López Road Trail. The existing trail runs along the bottom of the slope in the riparian area. The vegetation is quite lush, growing rapidly, making maintenance difficult. Also, the trail is so near the creek bed, that the slightest bit of rain causes the trail to flood and it remains muddy for quiet some time after the rain has stopped. The Old López Road Trail is highly used by commuters and lunch-time joggers; it's also the link to excellent birding habitat. Many of these users expressed a desire to have the trail repaired or moved. These factors contributed to the decision to reroute the nearly 700 foot section of trail a little higher up the slope through the non-native mustard and thistle. It is estimated that the trail will be completed by the end of December 2004, not bad considering all the work is being done by hand. As of printing of this article the Trail Crew has completed construction of nearly half of the trail, if you would like to join the crew on this exciting project, call the Ranger office at (858) 538-8066.



(Prop A cont'd)

- Pothole repairs and synchronized traffic signals.
- Improvements to bus and trolley transit service including major investments in bus rapid transit routes along the coast, I-15, City Heights, and Chula Vista.
- Construction, improvement and maintenance of bike trails and pedestrian paths including a significant smart growth program that provides incentives to local jurisdictions willing to approve smart growth projects.

Environmental benefits

In addition, Proposition A generates \$880 million for environmental mitigation. The measure commits highway and road mitigation funds for acquisition of key open space areas and to perpetual maintenance of a large and connected network of habitat preserves from Oceanside to San Ysidro and eastward to the desert. By pooling the money that would be used for mitigating highways and roads construction and by committing those funds in advance, Proposition A offers an unprecedented opportunity to ensure implementation of the San Diego region's four regional habitat conservation plans, including the MSCP South County, MHCP, MSCP North County, and MSCP East County programs.

In endorsing Prop A, Barry Martin, president of The San Diego Tracking Team (SDTT) said: "we train community volunteers in how to conduct wildlife surveys, surveys that also document the unfortunate collisions between people, their vehicles, and wildlife. Such collisions cause a tremendous mortality of deer, coyotes and other animals on area highways, as well as expensive damage to our cars and trucks, and sometimes injuries to drivers and passengers. The tracking team has surveyed key area highways, such as Route 67, to identify where future wildlife undercrossings could reduce these human/animal collision. The widening of roads such as Route 67 under the new TransNet will not only provide traffic congestion relief, but it will be also done with retrofitting of safe passages for wildlife,

benefitting public safety and our wildlife. This is why we support passage of TransNet."

Endorsements

As a far-sighted, comprehensive and balanced plan for the entire San Diego region, Proposition A has earned the endorsement of the League of Women Voters of San Diego County, the Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA), the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce,

It's also supported by the San Diego County Taxpayers Association because of its fiscal safeguards and because it requires no tax increase.

It's supported by police and fire chiefs – including the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association – who say it is needed to ensure that gridlock doesn't delay response to emergencies.

Most environmental organizations in the county support Prop A because of its environmental safeguards. A partial list of the supporting organizations, both local and national, reflects the depth of commitment within the environmental community to Proposition A's ambitious goals:

Buena Vista Audubon Society
 The Nature Conservancy
 Conservation Biology Institute
 Endangered Habitats League
 The Conservation Fund
 The Trust for Public Land
 Anza-Borrego Foundation
 Back Country Land Trust
 Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation
 Friends of Goodan Ranch and
 Sycamore Canyon Open Space
 Preserves
 Friends of Hellhole Canyon Open
 Space
 Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon
 Preserve
 Lakeside's River Park Conservancy
 San Dieguito River Valley
 Conservancy
 San Diego Tracking Team
 San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy
 Tierra Miguel Foundation
 Volcan Mountain Preserve
 Foundation

National Wildlife Federation
 California Oak Foundation
 San Diego Conservation Resources
 Network

San Diego Conservation Resources Network (CRN), a coalition of more than 20 community-based, non-profit organizations working to conserve San Diego's natural lands for future generations, enthusiastically supports Proposition A. The coalition has noted Proposition A marks the first time conservation groups were invited to participate in planning the region's transportation projects. "This participation resulted in a good balance between transportation projects and the sensitive lands they pass through," says Mike Kelly, CRN's manager. "Voting for Prop A is a vote for relieving traffic congestion, a vote to preserve our quality of life."

In 1987 it only required a majority to pass the first Proposition A. Now it takes two-thirds voter approval to renew the program. That's a tough hurdle in any election. But local supporters have organized San Diegans for Congestion Relief to conduct the campaign to pass Proposition A.

A two-thirds vote is within reach. Polling shows that if we can let voters know the details of Proposition A – how it affects them in their homes, what projects are planned for their community – we can win in November. We can win, however, only if we can get our message out.

Your support is critical to the success of the campaign and ultimately to the future of our. Get involved. Go to www.sdcongestionrelief.com to see how you can help pass Proposition A. And then Vote Yes on Proposition A on November 2.



Costa's hummingbird

Tracking Classes

Nov. 10 & 13. Beginning Class

Wed., Nov. 10: 7 – 9 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 13: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Sponsored by the San Diego Tracking Team.

AN intensive evening and Saturday devoted to developing the skills of tracking and awareness, with emphasis placed on techniques for recognizing habitat and associated flora and fauna, wildlife physiology and habits, movement in nature, and establishment of a pattern of awareness. This course offers the opportunity for one to acquire the tools to become proficient in the art and science of tracking animals, people, and most anything that leaves a mark on the landscape. Your powers of observation will improve tremendously, as will your overall awareness. Exercises in journaling, track and sign identification, discerning concentric rings, track/sign aging, gait patterns, and awareness philosophy will round out the busy weekend.

Class will meet from 7– 9 p.m. on a weeknight and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Bring a bag lunch. The class will meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve off Black Mountain Road. Be prepared to take notes, do some hiking, and have fun. Bring water, hiking attire, sun protection, something warm for the evening activity, and a desire to learn. Call 858-672-0584 for cost and registration.

New & Renewing Members

Mr. And Mrs. Daniel Allen
 Judy Alvarez
 Janet Anderson
 Jeanie Anderson
 Richard L. Barber
 Carrie & Bill Barton
 Judy Bayer
 Garrett & Leana Beaumont
 Linda & Jonathan Beretta
 Dave Bilak
 Adeline Black
 Ken & Kathy Bowman
 Mike & Sandy Boyles
 John & Dolores Bradshaw
 Leslie C. Braund
 The Burke Family
 Susan Califa
 Lynne & Larry Carleton
 Arthur Casey
 Pamela & Keith Coates
 Bruce & Cyndy Collins
 Edith & Madison Cooper
 Penny Coppennoll-blach
 K. Crampton
 Wendy Dallas
 Dennis Driscoll
 Jeanne & Glenn Dunham
 Teri Egenberger
 The Fraser Family
 Camille Armstrong Geoffrey Smith
 Richard Gibbons
 Pat Gilbert
 Mr. & Mrs. Marc Gittelsohn
 Char Glacy
 Doug Hansen
 Jeannette Hartman
 Ann Harvey
 Chip & Nancy Hatch
 Linda Henning
 Don Hoffman
 Timothy Ann Hunt
 David Jacobson
 Ron & Linda Johnson
 Peter Kasaty

John & Peggy Keating
 Linda King
 Lee & Betty Kirchhevel
 John Knoll
 Fred & Linda Kramer
 Jon Labaw
 Suzann & Bill Leininger
 Rob & Linda Leiter
 Karen Malfara
 Dr & Mrs Herbert Mccoy
 Richard & Ruth Mellen
 Neil & Jill Meyer
 James & Linda Michael
 Paul And Carol Micheletti
 Karen P. Miller
 Maurice & Ree Miller
 Nadine Misiaszek
 Amy & Kent Moser
 John Mullen
 David R. Nagel
 Josh Oliver
 Ralph & Kathleen Paige
 Bill & Christi Papworth
 Harriet Pellar
 Jim & Barbara Peugh
 Ann Pogue
 Jack Pomeroy
 Lynne F. Preisser
 Ann & John Richards
 Scott & Carole Rieker
 Allison Rolfe
 Erwin & Mary Rose
 James W. Royle, Jr.
 Maria Cecilia Ruiz
 Richard Savary
 Linda, Rick & Laura Schneider
 Carrie J. Schneider
 Robert Sewekow
 Walt & Marlene Shaw
 Melissa A. Sherrod
 Loren Spaulding
 Erica J. Specht & Family
 Jeff Storey
 Dave Stout
 Paula & Mike Svoboda
 Melvin & Ellen Sweet
 James & Maria Thayer
 The Tomich Family
 Mary Toomey
 Mario, Nancy, Alex & Tony Trejo*
 Tim & Deborah Tweeten
 Derry & Evelynng Van Nortwick
 Greg Vines
 Mr & Mrs Winfield Wagner
 Robbie Walters
 Pat Watkins & Family
 Kirsten Winter
 Toni & Frank Wong

*also made a donation.



In memory of Barbara Gandolfo Memorial Benches Replaced

Eagle Scout Jason Cooper organized the replacement of the benches you see (and perhaps use) in the County's parking-staging area at Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. The old benches had fallen apart over the decade or so they were in place. They were originally installed in memory of Barbara Gandolfo by her friends.

Barbara was an equestrian who lived in Rancho Peñasquitos and boarded her horse at Horseman's Park (Canyonside Stable). She enjoyed Peñasquitos Canyon's trails on horseback and on foot. In 1991, Barbara suffered an untimely death from cancer at the young age of 42. Donations from her friends paid for the original benches. Some of these same friends, including Marvin Gerst and Sally Waldorf, joined the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve in donating the funds to purchase the materials to replace the benches. A new synthetic wood-looking material was chosen that should last longer.

Raising the funds was the easy part. The tougher part was done by Boy Scout Jason Cooper who organized the project and friends and family to remove the old ones and build and install the new ones.

Besides the donors, thanks go to Tri County Drilling and Sunstate Equipment Rental for their support and to County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk for his help.

**Photos, top to bottom.
Barbara Gandolfo (left) and
friend Clarice getting ready
for a ride.**

**Jason Cooper and helpers
with cement mixer.**

One of the new benches.



Early Rains ‘Clean’ the Plants

Rains are good for plants in more than one way. We’re use to thinking of plants’ need for water at the root level. But, as you hike along our trails notice how clean the plants look. That’s because dust accumulates on the leaves, particularly along the trails where vehicles and park users stir up the dust. This dust also clogs the leaves, inhibiting the transpiration of the plants. Heavy rains do a good job of cleaning these leaves — and the plants look better too.

With the preserve closed during and after heavy rains, be sure to call the park numbers (858.484-7504 or 858.538.8066) to make sure the preserve is open.

All hikes are free to the public. If you’re bringing an organized group please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego’s second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

November

Nov. 6 Restoration Planting in Peñasquitos Canyon

Help plant native plants and remove invasive weeds along the Trans County Trail. Meet at 1 p.m. at the Ranger’s Trailer office at Canyonside Stables on the northeast corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. Wear sturdy boots or shoes, sun protection; no experience needed!

Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details.

Under the Mistletoe Walk

Sat. Nov. 6, 3–5 p.m. Mistletoe, a holiday standby, is commonly found growing near the top of our sycamores. These tall, mottled trees shed their leaves each autumn, effectively pulling “back the curtain” of leaves and revealing hidden treasures such as packrat nests to those willing to venture out in cooler weather. Join Friends’ presi-

dent and naturalist Brian Swanson as we seek out these and other winter treasures. This is a good time of day to see wildlife too.

Meet on the western side of the ballfields of Canyonside Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Bats Declining Worldwide – Friends’ Annual Meeting

Sat., Nov. 6, 7 p.m. Social. 7:30 p.m. Presentation by Dick Wilkins of Bat Rescue. He’ll present a slide show and live bats at the Adobe Ranch House. Learn everything you ever wanted to know about bats! But, especially about why they are in decline worldwide. Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. The whole meeting is free! Free refreshments and free Presentation. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Beginner/Intermediate Tracking Walks

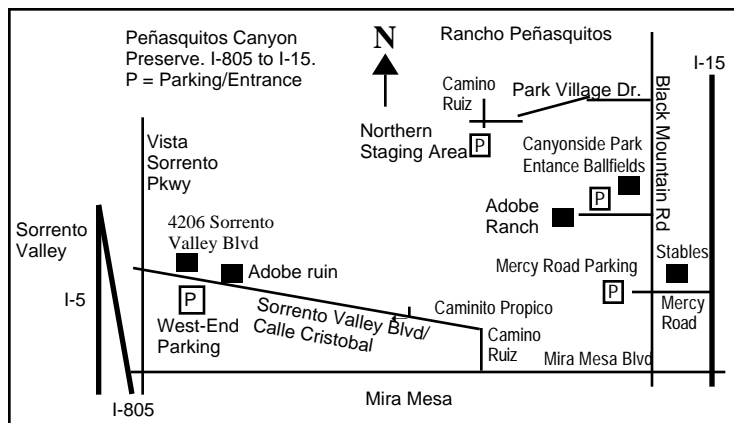
Sat., Nov. 13, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends’ Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Nov. 14, 9 a.m.–noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve’s waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Nov. 14 Invasive Eucalyptus Removal

Only a few dozen large invasive eucalyptus trees are left in the preserve. This project will target one of these groups. No experience needed. A pretty part of the Preserve to work in. Meet at 9 a.m. at Ranger’s Trailer office at Canyonside Stables on northeast corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. Wear sturdy boots or shoes, sun protection. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details.



Shaman’s Holiday Hike

Sun., Nov. 14, 3–4:30 p.m. Help celebrate the holiday season naturally by exploring the healing power of nature in a sacred way. Find presence, inner balance, and your center in the Sacred Hoop. We will take a short walk to a power place for Native American-inspired ceremony, drumming, song, story, ritual, prayer, and healing trance. Bring a drum, rattle, or other musical instrument and a blanket or towel to sit upon. Hike is for spiritually-minded adults. Meet at the west end parking-staging area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/3 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road, **Thomas Guide 1208.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party

Sat., Nov. 20, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

Carmel Mountain Walk with Diana Gordon

Sat., Nov. 20, 9–11 a.m. Visit some of San Diego’s rarest coastal habitats with this accomplished naturalist. Learn about the wildlife that make Carmel Mountain their home. Meet at the Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Small hill to climb. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2.**

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sun., Nov. 21, 2:30–4:30 p.m. Join Linda King for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Mon., Nov. 22, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyon-

side Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board

Tues., Nov. 23, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Nov. 27, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

December

Beginner/Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Dec. 11, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Under the Mistletoe Walk

Sat. Dec. 11, 8–10 a.m. Mistletoe, a holiday standby, is commonly found growing near the top of our sycamores. These tall, mottled trees shed their leaves each autumn, effectively pulling "back the curtain" of leaves and revealing hidden treasures such as packrat nests to those willing to venture out in cooler weather. Join Friends' president and naturalist Brian Swanson as we seek out these and other winter treasures. This is a good time to day to see wildlife too. Meet on the western side of the ballfields of Canyonside Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sun., Dec. 12, 2:30–4:30 p.m. Join Linda King for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party

Sat., Dec. 18, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and

bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Dec. 19, 9 a.m.–noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Shaman's Holiday Hike

Sun., Dec. 19, 3–4:30 p.m. Help celebrate the holiday season naturally by exploring the healing power of nature in a sacred way. Find presence, inner balance, and your center in the Sacred Hoop. We will take a short walk to a power place for Native American-inspired ceremony, drumming, song, story, ritual, prayer, and healing trance. Bring a drum, rattle, or other musical instrument and a blanket or towel to sit upon. Hike is for spiritually-minded adults. Meet at the west end parking-staging area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/3 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road, **Thomas Guide 1208.**

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7).**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa.

From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Canyonside Park Staging

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to parking lot on their (far) west end. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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858-484-3219

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Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

- Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
- Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
- Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
- Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 11/2004

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

- President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
- Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
- Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
- Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

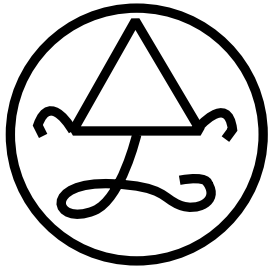
Les Braund, Edward DiBella, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Les Braund, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

- Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly
- Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
- Stream Survey Committee: open
- Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
- Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
- Volunteer Coordinator:
- Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
- Webmaster: open
- Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Sept. & Oct. 2004

Volume 18, No.5

Goodbye to Ranger Rick Trail Changes in the Preserve

Ranger Gina Brown

It's nearing the end of another summer in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Many things have happened; perhaps you've noticed and enjoyed some of the changes. The most significant change is the reclassification of the trails in the northwest quadrant of the Canyon. For many years mountain bikes were prohibited from using the trails on the north side of the creek west of the waterfall. This was a source of difficulty for both the users and the Ranger staff. However, with the renewal of the Trails Committee of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, representatives from all the users groups got together and worked out a

See p. 7 for more



Spotted bat on rock. Photo courtesy of Bat Rescue.

Nov. 6 Hold the Date! Bats Declining Worldwide

Date: Sat., Nov. 6

Time: 7 pm social

7:30 pm Talk

Join us for our annual meeting at the Historic Adobe Ranch House in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Our featured speaker will be Dick Wilkins of Bat Rescue. He will present a slide show and will probably have a live bat with him. The program is free.

Learn why the decline of Bat species and populations worldwide should be a cause for great alarm. Wilkins will describe the different types of

See p. 4 for more.

Highlights Inside

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San Diego Tracking Team Update

[Editor's note. Although the Friends spun off the San Diego Tracking Team (SDTT) as a nonprofit in its own right, the Friends still have a Peñasquitos Tracking Team, which is one of six teams that make up the SDTT.]

Wildlife Corridor Victory for Preserve Calavera

After 2 years of work, Preserve Calavera had a major victory this June when the Rancho Carrillo Homeowner's Association (HOA) approved a wildlife crossing under Palomar Airport Rd. This will provide the critical wildlife linkage from their core area to the south — contributing to the health of the ecosystem and mitigating for the adverse effects of building a high speed road through critical habitat. Diane Nygaard, President of Preserve Calavera, contributed much time and effort to educate the HOA board about the issue. Also critical to the success were LeeAnn Carranza with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Barry Martin with the San Diego Tracking Team who presented findings based on SDTT data to the HOA board, and Preserve Calavera Tracking Team leader Karen Merrill who has led all the transects in the Carlsbad area.

See p. 4 for more



Eagle Scout Andy Steiner and fellow scouts installed two kiosks in Los Peñasquitos Canyon.

Still Hot Out There!

We're heading into our hottest time of the year, so take plenty of water to avoid heat exhaustion and stroke. You might plan your walks for the shadier portions of the preserve, such as the east end and visit during the cooler early morning or early evening hours. And join us on one of our evening walks listed in the schedule below.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

September

Night Wildlife Walk with Mike Kelly

Thurs., Sept. 9, 7–9 p.m. Join naturalist Mike Kelly for this after dark walk. Good chance to see wildlife, enjoy the different smells of the preserve at night. Bring a flashlight and insect repellent. Meet at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1188–1189 (J7).**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Sept. 11, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals

and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on

Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party Sat., Sept. 18, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

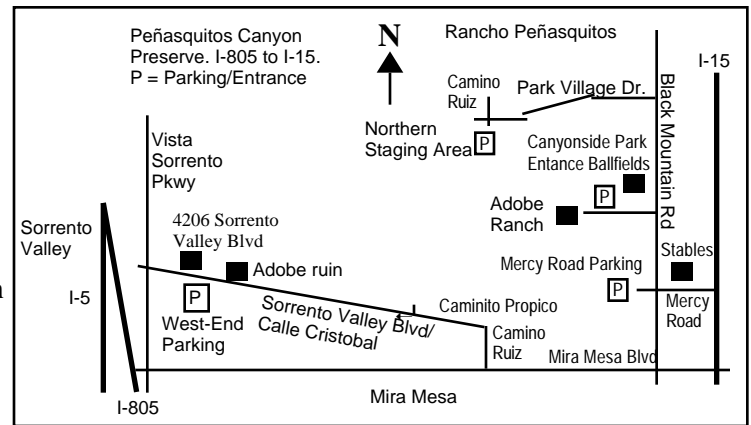
Sat., Sept. 18, 4–6 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Mon., Sept. 20, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Sept. 25, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.



Explore the Riparian Forest from Mercy Road Sun., Sept. 26, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Explore little known trails that take you through the riparian forest. Learn your native trees. Enjoy Peñasquitos Creek. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **858.484.3219** for directions.

Geology Hike with Don Albright Sun., Sept. 26, 9 a.m.–noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Sensory Discovery Walk

Sun., Sept. 26, 4–5:30 p.m. Experiment with discovering the canyon through the senses. An opportunity to explore and experience some of the myriad fragrances, textures, sights, sounds, temperatures, tastes, and feelings that make up the canyon. Bring a flash light. Meet at the west end parking-staging area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/3 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road, **Thomas Guide 1208.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., Sept. 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7.**

October

Night Wildlife Walk with Mike Kelly
Thurs., Oct. 7, 6:30–8:30 p.m. Join naturalist Mike Kelly for this after dark walk. Good chance to see wildlife, enjoy the different smells of the preserve at night. Bring a flashlight and insect repellent. Meet at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive in Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1188–1189 (J7).**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Oct. 9, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk
Sun., Oct. 10, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced walk up on the Del Mar Mesa, then on to Walden Pond and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and water. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Black Mountain Trail Work Party / Peñasquitos

Sat., Oct. 16, 8 a.m. –12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Explore the Riparian Forest from Mercy Road Sun., Oct. 17, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Explore little known trails that take you through the riparian forest. Learn your native trees. Enjoy Peñasquitos Creek. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Black Mountain Nature Walk
Sat., Oct. 23, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call Rangers at 858-538-8082.

Geology Hike with Don Albright
Sun., Oct. 24, 9 a.m.– noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

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Tues., Oct. 26, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Sensory Discovery Walk
Sun., Oct. 31, 3–4:30 p.m. Experiment with discovering the canyon through the senses. We'll have the opportunity to explore and experience some of the myriad fragrances, textures, sights, sounds, temperatures, tastes, and feelings that make up the canyon. Bring a flash light. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road, **Thomas Guide 1208.**

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park, Peñasquitos

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7).**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Canyonside Park Staging

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to parking lot on their (far) west end. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. Left on Camino Ruíz and park. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

(Calendar cont'd)

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

bats around the world and here in San Diego.

Did you know:

- a single little brown bat can catch 1,200 mosquito-sized insects in just one hour;
- that 20 million Mexican free-tails from Bracken Cave, Texas, eat about 200 tons of insects nightly;
- that some bats fish for their food;
- that many imported foods from the wild such as bananas, mangoes, dates, cashews, figs and others depend on bats for pollination and seed dispersal;
- that your Tequila is produced from agave plants whose seed production drops to 1/3,000th of normal without bat pollination;
- an anticoagulant from vampire bat saliva may soon be used to treat human heart patients;
- More than half of American bat species are in severe decline or are already listed as endangered;
- Nectar-feeding bats are primary pollinators of giant cacti, including the famous organ pipe and saguaro of Arizona;
- Bats are not blind, do not become entangled in human hair, and seldom transmit disease to other animals or humans;

As is our custom, we will have a brief annual meeting and election of our officers for 2005.

Volunteers Needed

Quarterly Wildlife Survey Training

Date: October 16

Time: 9:45 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

This free training includes basic track, sign, and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol, and is required for survey volunteers. Bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors and to take notes.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe (Ranch House), located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Purpose of the surveys

These wildlife surveys have provided important data on the presence or absence of certain species of wildlife such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, etc., as well as their frequency in a given area. The data has been used in policy making decisions concerning wildlife tunnels, linkages, undercrossings, road opening/closures and more. Your help is needed to expand these surveys to more places in the county. Join us!

If you have questions, please contact us via email at: barrymartin@san.rr.com or call (619) 892-7620

(Tracking Team cont'd)

SDTT Receives Two Grants

2004's been a busy year for Barry, Ann, and Lani. Besides all the usual activities, we've applied for six grants: two with the San Diego Foundation, one with the San Diego Women's Foundation, one with the Tides Foundation, and two with the San Diego Fish and Wildlife Advisory Commission.

We received the Tides Foundation's California Wildlands Grassroots Fund grant. This was for \$5000 for administration of the SDTT's expansion project. It's been our goal to increase the number of tracking teams active in San Diego County.

We received the "Blasker" grant from the San Diego Foundation for \$18,100 for analysis of our wildlife survey data. This will be performed by a graduate student, Shea Valero, under the direction of Dr. Mike Wells from the Univ. of San Diego, and there are also funds available for data entry, database modification, and administration.

We're very excited about this because it will vastly increase the usefulness of our eight years of wildlife survey data. With this expertise, we hope to be able to examine issues such as trends in population, seasonal variation, and fire induced changes. We also hope to find out if we can streamline our survey (frequency and number of transects) without losing information and optimize placement of future transects. On a broader scale, interpretation of our data will increase the value of MSCP/MHCP monitoring and thus facilitate planning that would improve the quality of MSCP/MHCP protection.

Publication of this analysis will increase the visibility of volunteer-based monitoring and thus increase the likelihood of monitoring being performed

Advanced training date set

Friday, September 24 and Saturday, September 25: Advanced Tracker Naturalist Class, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Friday and 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Saturday at the Peñasquitos Ranch House. This class is open to everyone who has completed our Intermediate class (or equivalent), even if it was a while ago. Contact Rick Botta (858-672-0584, rmbotta@earthlink.net) to sign up as a student or to help out.

Pack Rats on Carmel Mountain

John Northrop and Jayne Haines

Introduction

Carmel Mountain (Carmel Mtn.), an ancient marine terrace about half a mile east of the present Pacific Ocean shoreline (I-5 at SR56), is a unique habitat that supports pack rats as well as some rare flora and fauna. Carmel Mtn. is one of the few marine terraces and mesas in San Diego that hasn't been developed and thus sports a good population of these dusky-footed or large-eared pack rats (*Neotoma fuscipes*).

Many new pack rat dens have been built there adjacent to fire breaks where plenty of dead branches, cut by firemen in 1986, line the edges of the fire breaks. These breaks pass through the rare southern maritime chaparral that is dominated by woody shrubs such as wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), Del Mar Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) and others. This unique assemblage of plants is found in a 5-acre swatch on the north-south trending ridge along the crest of Carmel Mtn. at elevations of between 400 and 427 ft. and affords an ample supply of "lumber" for the 50-plus stick huts we found (Ref 1). Carmel Mtn. is now protected from development and is under the oversight of Rick Thompson, the Senior Park Ranger for Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Environmental setting

Carmel Mtn. is a former shore line that was formed in the Quarternary period about half a million years ago (Ref. 2) and is now an uplifted marine terrace consisting of a hard cap rock (the beach facies of the Linda Vista Formation (Qlb) replete with marble sized iron-titanium (*fe, ti*) concretions which the pack rats "pack" into their stick huts to make a firm flooring. (Indeed, they are called pack rats because they literally pack anything small and/or shiny into their huts.) It is the combination of well drained, iron-rich soil supporting the woody shrubs of the southern maritime chaparral that enables the dusky-footed pack rats to thrive on Carmel Mtn. today, much as they have for thousands of years.

Dusky-footed pack rats

These wood rates are rodents about the size of a gray squirrel or a bit smaller, have a long bushy tail, and belong to the *Vole* family. They have a bluish color but are rarely seen in daylight because they are nocturnal. Their pups return to the parents' huts generation after generation and some stick houses in California are so ancient that they have been examined by paleoclimatologists to find out what kind of vegetation flourished there in the past (the plant remains can be dated accurately by Carbon 14 techniques).

In Southern California, the breeding season lasts all year. Gestation period is 33–39 days so dusky-footed woodrats have several litters a year, usually 2–6 in a litter. They have a rather unusual social order too. Recent research has found that when the female gets pregnant, she kicks the male out by biting and scratching his face (Ref. 3). The male then either goes on to cohabit with a different female or builds a new stick house nearby to attract another female. Pack rats have few natural enemies, although coyotes have been known to tear down the stick huts to get at them or their pups. Rattlesnakes also hunt them. Wildfires are their worst natural enemy because their huts are incinerated when the brush fires go through, as happened in the October 2003 firestorms in San Diego. Carmel Mtn. is in its natural state and has never been farmed, plowed, chained, cultivated, or even grazed (cattle won't eat the woody plants).



Dusky-footed pack rat (*Neotoma fuscipes*) held by researcher. Photo courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey

Stick houses

The dusky-footed wood rates are very good engineers as attested by the rugged construction of their stick houses which range in size from modest brush piles to those up to 5 ft. tall (see photo below). The biggest ones have been there for generations; some with successive generations having their own entrance level.

The huts are made of sticks ranging from finger size to branches over 2 ft. long. The larger sticks are of manzanita and the smaller ones of chamise or ceanothus; the smaller ones being woven into the larger ones to make a very strong, conical shaped hut. The larger huts are usually (on Carmel Mtn.) built around a ceanothus or chamise bush which the pack rats use to support the roof of their huts. Each fall, the in-

(pack rats cont'd)

habitants renew the roof material of their stick houses. They then urinate on the inner walls to form a sort of plaster that makes them waterproof! Since there is no water on Carmel Mtn., the animals have to drag their building materials through the brush and not float them like beavers would.

Types of stick houses

There are basically three types of stick houses we observed: large 5-ft cones with several entrances; medium size 1–3-ft tall; and freshly built huts. We found about fifty-five dusky-footed pack rat huts, or stick houses, in the higher elevations (over 400 ft) in a roughly rectangular area measuring only 220 ft wide by 950 ft. long (about 4.8 acres) on the north-south trending crest mentioned earlier.

The population of the dusky-footed wood rats on Carmel Mtn. appears to be increasing today, perhaps due to their rapid breeding, apparently fewer natural enemies, but also because the surrounding area is being developed and Carmel Mtn. is now a refugia for these interesting nocturnal animals. It would be interesting to test our belief that the density of pack rats on Carmel Mtn. is positively related to the distribution and density of the wart-stemmed ceanothus that dominates this 5-acre area on the ridge.

References

- 1 Northrop, John, Ph.D. 1989. *Geology of Los Peñasquitos Canyon*. Windsor Assoc., POB 90282, San Diego CA 92169.
- 2 City of San Diego. 1988. Environmental Impact Report, Carmel Valley Neighborhood 8A, Development Services Dept., 1222 First Ave., MS501, San Diego CA 92101.
- 3 Thompson's Interactive Encyclopeda. CD ROM



Desert pack rats (*Neotoma lepida*) are also found in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. They are often found in close proximity to the dusky-footed pack rat where their habitat types overlap. Photo courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey



Jack Northrop documenting a pack rat nest on Carmel Mountain, part of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Dusky-footed pack rats are found in coastal sage scrub, chaparral, riparian woodland, and oak woodland habitats, all found in the Preserve! Photo by Jayne Haines.

(Black Mountain cont'd)

solution. Several volunteers spent many hours getting the trails into shape, improving the line of sight and width of the trails so they could be easily shared. It was decided that in a few areas the users would be split allowing for better movement and safety, as is the case in the trails going to Del Mar Mesa near the pond. Horses travel on the east side trails whereas bikes go to the west, joining each other in a few places, of course hikers can use any trail. To aid users in navigating the new system three kiosks were installed at strategic locations. Two of the kiosks were built and installed by Andy Steiner, an Eagle Scout. The other was donated by the San Diego Mountain Biking Association.

New bridges

Creek crossing has always been a challenge with the ever changing stream channel; really the challenge is staying dry. Two gentlemen, frequent visitors to the Preserve, found this to be especially true at Peñasquitos Creek Crossing. They wanted to do something about it so they approached the Ranger staff to find out how they could help. Mike Sockel and Steve Schmidt contributed the funds and their time to help the Rangers and volunteers to build the new bridge at Peñasquitos Creek Crossing. A few improvements were also made at Sycamore Crossing. Plans are being made to install a bridge at Wagon Wheel Crossing in the near future.

Trail closure at I-15

Starting September 7, 2004 the trail east of Black Mountain Road at Branicole to Kara Way will be closed. CalTrans will begin the widening of Interstate 15. This will be an active construction site until December 2005. This project has been anticipated for many years and though it will cause some inconvenience during the construction we are sure everyone will cooperate with the closure for their own safety.

Ranger Rick promoted

Another major change at Los Peñasquitos is that we are losing Senior Ranger Rick Thompson. He has been promoted to the position of City Wide Trails Coordinator. This will ultimately benefit the City and Los Peñasquitos, but we are sad to see him go, he has been a great asset to the Preserve.

New Sign on Black Mountain

Ranger Tom Miller

Earlier this year we were very fortunate to have a new wooden sign installed at the entrance to the staging area parking lot on the north side of Black Mountain. This was accomplished by Eagle Scout Alan Moss along with other 6 scouts and volunteers. The new sign replaced an old, battered metal sign.

Alan took on this project with great enthusiasm. He moved very quickly to get all the approvals, design, materials, and volunteers organized for the project.

Right at the time the sign was to be built and installed, Alan was suddenly called on to leave out of state for several days to help a family member. This meant working long hours to complete the sign before he left, and then installing it as soon as he returned.

We appreciate not only the new sign, but also the act of kindness and consideration for others. He is an excellent example of a true Eagle Scout.

On Black Mountain, we have several projects that are available to Eagle Scouts who are interested. For more information, call Tom Miller at 858-538-8021.



Thanks to Diana Gordon for submitting this recent photo of a mule deer doe that she saw in the north end of Peñasquitos Lagoon.





Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

- Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
- Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
- Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
- Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 9/2004

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

- President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
- Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
- Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
- Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

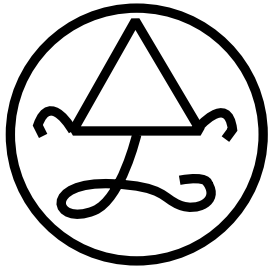
Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

- Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly
- Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
- Stream Survey Committee: open
- Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
- Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
- Volunteer Coordinator:
- Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
- Webmaster: open
- Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan. & Feb. 2005
Volume 19, No.1

Effects of Illegal Dumping in Park

Senior Park Ranger Lori Charett and Park Ranger Tom Miller

One of the biggest problems we have is illegal dumping of household trash, automotive parts/fluids, construction materials and/or landscape trimmings in our parks. These unsightly trash heaps are damaging to the environment and are potentially dangerous to the public and wildlife. Ultimately the city has to spend millions of dollars every year to remove the dumps, properly dispose of them, and prosecute violators. This results in higher taxes for everyone.

We have found dumps with personal information leading us to the origin of the trash. In some cases we have returned the trash to its origin, only to find out that the person hired someone to cleanup and haul it away. Many people don't realize that their hired help is pocketing the money for dump

See p. 7 for more



Illegal dumping at the entrance to Black Mountain Open Space Park

Why is the Preserve Closed?

Senior Park Ranger Gina Brown

It's a gorgeous Southern California winter day. The sun is shining, it's 70 degrees outside everything is green from the recent rain, and you decide to spend the afternoon at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Once you get everyone and their gear in the car you head to the Preserve but the gate to the parking lot is closed. "Why is the Preserve closed, it hasn't rained for days?" you ask yourself.

The answer lies in the primary objective of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, which is "the preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources. Recreational . . . use by the public [is] the secondary

See p. 7 for more



Flooding around the historic ranch house in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve during the October rains. Photo provided by County Rangers.

Highlights Inside

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Restoration Projects

Sat., Jan. 22, López Canyon

Sun., Jan. 30, Peñasquitos

Sat., Feb. 12, Peñasquitos

See Calendar for details.

Rains Often Close Preserve, But Flowers Thrive

Warm weather and the early rains have stimulated many native shrubs to bloom early. Early bloomers include Mountain lilac (*Ceanothus tomentosus*), California spine bush (*Adolphia californica*), Mission manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*), Spice bush (*Cneoridium dumosum*), Winter currant (*Ribes indecorum*), even some Monkey flower (*Mimulus auranticus*) and others. Lots of bulks are pushing their leaves up high, foreshadowing a great flower show this winter and spring.

Since the preserve is closed during and after heavy rains, be sure to call the park numbers (858.484.7504 and 858.538.8066) to make sure the preserve is open for visitors.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

January

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Jan. 8, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the

historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Jan. 9, 9 a.m.–noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party

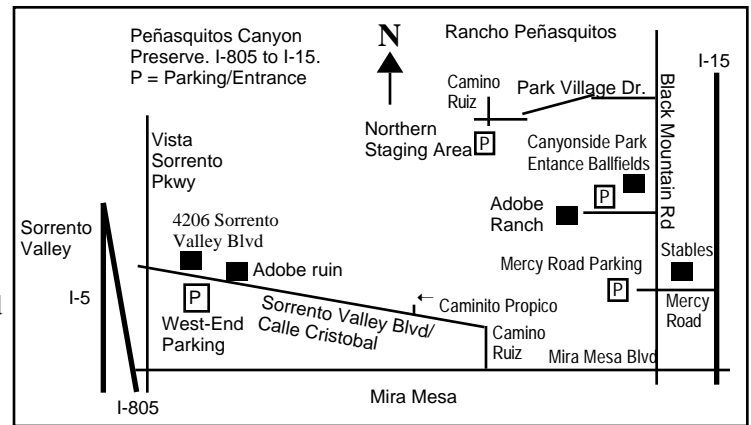
Sat., Jan. 15, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Jan. 22, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

Restoration Planting in López Canyon

Sat., Jan. 22, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Join The Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society in planting the endangered mint plant, the Willowy monardella, grown especially for this project. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details.



Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Mon., Jan. 24, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., Jan. 25, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Restoration Planting in Peñasquitos Canyon

Sun., Jan. 30, 9 a.m.–noon. Help us plant natives along the Trans County Trail. No experience necessary! Meet on Branicole Lane at Mercy Road in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)**.

López Canyon Nature Walk with Barbara Moore

Sun., Jan. 30, 1–3 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

López Homestead History Hike

Sun., Jan. 30, 2–4 p.m. Join Will Bowen for a hike out into the beauty of

López Canyon to learn about the Old López Homestead—a turn-of-the-century dairy farm. Visit the orchard, the Old Road, and the remnants of the barn, house, and milking station. Find out about the importance of the López family in early San Diego history. Meet at the west end parking-staging area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/3 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road, **Thomas Guide 1208**.

February

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Feb. 12, 8–10 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Restoration Planting in Peñasquitos Canyon

Sat., Feb. 12, 9 a.m.–noon. Help us plant natives at the Preserve's waterfall. No experience necessary! Meet at the Parking-Staging area at Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)**.

Black Mountain Trail Work Party

Sat., Feb. 19, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and help restore public trails. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

López Canyon Nature Walk with Barbara Moore

Sun., Feb. 20, 1–3 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its

intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., Feb. 22, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7**.

Black Mountain Nature Walk

Sat., Feb. 26, 9–11 a.m. Join a Black Mtn. Park Ranger and see native flowers, wildlife, and great vistas. Meet at the Parking Staging area above the old dirt Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7** or call the Rangers at 858-538-8021.

Pierre Bovet Adobe History Hike

Sun., Feb. 27, 2–4 p.m. Join Will Bowen for a hike out into the lushness of Carroll Canyon (once known as Soledad Canyon) to visit the ruins of the Pierre Bovet Adobe. Find out about the factors that contributed to the decline of so many such wonderful adobes that once stood in San Diego County. Learn about who Pierre Bovet was and his role in San Diego history. Find out about the relationship, through marriage, of the Bovets to our canyon's Lopez and Alvarado families. Note: Hike may involve a stream crossing or an ascent up an easement. Meet at Fire Station near the corner of Scranton and Carroll Canyon Road. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (E7)**.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)**.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it

passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Canyonside Park Staging

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to parking lot on their (far) west end. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7)**.

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

See p. 4 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5) (D5).**

Tracker/Naturalist Classes

Beginning Training – February 24 & 26, 2005;

Intermediate Training – May 19 & 21, 2005;

Advanced Training – June 24 & 25, 2005;

Each training consists of one weekday evening and a Saturday.

Contact for registration and information: (858) 672-0584

Develop your tracking and awareness skills, learn how to move in nature, and develop techniques for recognizing habitat and associated flora and fauna—all this and more as you become better in tune with our environment in our Beginning Class. The Intermediate Class delves into the finer details of tracking, awareness, and philosophy, and the Advanced Class is devoted to in depth track analysis and interpretation. There is a small fee for each of the three classes. Pre-registration is required.

New Bridges Funded by Donors

A special thanks to Michael Sockell and Steven and Debra Schmidt for their donations to buy the materials used to make the new bridge at the Peñasquitos Community Park creek crossing site.

Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training

Date: January 15
Time: 9:45 a.m. until 4 p.m.
Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Contact for information: (858) 513-0359 or (619) 892-7620

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe (Ranch House), located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Purpose of the surveys

These wildlife surveys have provided important data on the presence or absence of certain species of wildlife such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, etc., as well as their frequency in a given area. The data has been used in policy making decisions concerning wildlife tunnels, linkages, undercrossings, road opening/closures and more. Your help is needed to expand these surveys to more places in the county. Join us!

Prop A Passage Land Conservation Benefits

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Passing by only about 3,400 votes out of more than one million cast, the reauthorization of the Regional Transportation Plan, TransNet "Prop A," the one-half cent portion of our sales tax dedicated to transportation will produce \$880 million for desperately needed habitat protection in San Diego County. This huge amount came as the results of a complex, multi-year negotiation led by the Endangered Habitat Leagues' Michael Beck.

TransNet will fund a mix of highway and transit projects, although no new highways. In addition to the habitat mitigation funds, it will retrofit key roads with wildlife undercrossings, and reduce road kill. The non-profit environmental community is expected to participate in expanded management and monitoring of acquired lands. The importance of these funds for wildlife and San Diego's natural heritage cannot be overstated. Passage means that the Multiple Species Conservation Program can be completed. The funds are also vital for a successful update of the County General Plan, now in progress.

The genesis for this accomplishment lies in years of consensus building by the Quality of Life Coalition. Convened by San Diego Dialogue, it included business and environmental interests, and the San Diego County Taxpayers Association. EHL's Lynne Baker, and many others, played important roles in the process. TransNet was supported by EHL, The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, National Wildlife Federation, California Oak Foundation, Buena Vista Audubon Society and over a dozen local groups from the Conservation Resources Network. The Sierra Club, however, led a misguided effort to defeat the measure.

Black Mountain Open Space is Expecting!

Senior Ranger Lori McBride

Black Mountain Open Space is expecting many additional visitors! A new community park, located directly across from the Glider Port at Black Mountain, will be opening soon, luring many additional hikers and mountain bikers to Black Mountain Open Space Park.

In anticipation of the new comers, twenty five members of the San Diego Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association and other committed volunteers gathered recently to improve a trail that begins at the glider landing zone and leads up to the existing viewpoint and launching area at the top of the 300 foot peak of Black Mountain (Black Mountain has a 300', 500' and an 800' peak). The newly improved trail ties into the existing trail system that allows enjoyment of the spectacular views of San Diego from all three peaks (Definitely worth the hike!).

The improvements to this trail began last summer with the efforts of Arne Johanson and Bill Witzel. They are dedicated volunteers who are often seen on week ends, working to maintain and improve our lovely open

space. Under the guidance of City Park Ranger Tom Miller, volunteers worked to correct and prevent further erosion of the old, existing jeep trail by building water bars, rip-rap dams and drains. They also began the process of habitat restoration. "I was very pleased with the very large and enthusiastic turn out of volunteers. Every one worked very hard and we accomplished more than I had hoped for." reported Ranger Tom. Hang glider pilot Mike Marcott's advice was especially helpful and appreciated. He is a member of the Laguna Mountain Volunteers Association and has a great deal of experience with trail building projects. He is very enthusiastic about working on the restoration of Black Mountain. "Repairing this old trail and others like it, will be a long term, on going project which will require many volunteer hours. But, the end result will be well worth the effort. You can count on my help in the future."

Walter White, a paraglider pilot and resident of Rancho Penasquitos was eager to help with the project, "I have enjoyed the park for years and work-

ing to improve the trail was a way of giving something back. The views and especially the sunsets from the trail up to the paraglider launch are breathtaking, and now with better access more people should be able to enjoy it." Black Mountain Park has been a unique place to hang glide and paraglide for decades and people from around the world visit to fly here. Walter added, "I respect the Sierra Club mantra of 'take only pictures, leave only footprints', in paragliding I get to glide silently like a bird and do not even leave footprints. It is a great way to relax after a days work and makes me feel close to nature. I plan to continue to volunteer and want to help to repair some of the erosion the old jeep trails on the west face have caused. The park is a special place and volunteers can help to keep it special."

If you would like to volunteer, (its fun!) please contact Senior Park Ranger Lori Charett Gerbac at (858) 538-8082 or Ranger Tom Miller at (858) 538-8021. We also need donations of planting and erosion control materials.



Volunteers reworking a heavily eroded area on Black Mountain into a trail and revegetated area.

Fund Results

A big thank you to the 47 members who responded to our annual fund appeal with over \$2,300 in donations. We know this total will climb as others finalize their taxes for the year. And thanks to other members who renewed their membership for another year.

Anonymous (3)
 Nancy Acevedo
 Janet Anderson
 Judy Bayer
 Mark & Kathie Bulley
 Chae-Banks Family
 Charles Cochrane
 K. Crampton
 Bob & Gaye Dingeman
 Paul & Liam Dulary
 Jeanne & Glenn Dunham
 Terry Gaughen
 Sharon & Ben Gebauer/eberle
 Don Hoffman
 Mike Kelly
 Michael & Susan Killen
 Alan & Judith Kiraly
 H. William Kuni
 Simon K Lawrance
 Hans Leenhouts
 Suzann & Bill Leininger
 Rob & Linda Leiter
 Patty Mcfarland
 Richard & Ruth Mellen
 Neil & Jill Meyer
 James & Linda Michael
 Paul And Carol Micheletti
 Maurice & Ree Miller
 Barbara Moore
 Karl & Laura Olsen
 James & Louise Oneill
 Jim Powers
 Erwin & Mary Rose
 Lisa & Bill Ross-woolson
 James W. Royle, Jr.
 Gustav & Irene Segade
 Vivienne Seymore
 Don Steele
 Melvin & Ellen Sweet
 Judy Swink
 Ms. Brenda Terry-hahn
 Mary Toomey
 Greg Vines
 Beth Williams
 Toni & Frank Wong

Biological Invasions

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Longer-term members of the Friends will have noticed that we spend a lot of our volunteer work time on invasive plants, on weeds. This is because we recognized that these weeds are a serious threat to our Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This is the first in a series of articles I'll write on this subject in *Canyon News*.

On a personal note, this issue was an epiphany for me back in the 1980s. Along with many other activist volunteers I fought to protect Peñasquitos Canyon from the threat of developer bulldozers. We won some battles and lost others. But we recognized that you can also lose the battle to save what's special about our canyon to other threats, in this case, invasive weeds. We realized that we had habitats being taken over by monocultures of invasive weeds, including Saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*), Giant reed (*Arundo donax*), Eucalyptus trees, Palm trees, Artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*), Sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), mustard (*Brassica nigra*), and others. We had endangered species of plants and animals threatened with extinction by these weeds. It is now generally recognized by conservationists and biologists that invasive weeds are second only to development as a threat to our biodiversity.

Founding of Cal-EPPC

Recognizing the seriousness of this threat I began to study up on invasive weeds and their impacts. I learned of others similarly concerned in other parts of California and we gathered together in Morro Bay in 1992 at a conference on invasive weeds. There I became a founding member and the first Secretary of the California Exotic Pest Plant Council (Cal-EPPC), later renamed the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC). This group was formed of professionals and volunteers, but especially managers from all levels of the park and wilderness system determined to learn about the impacts of invasive weeds and how to control them. An obscure issue at the time, it is now on the radar screen for the public at many levels, including our daily papers, radio, and TV. I

served on the Cal-EPPC board for about 12 years and served two terms as its president — a measure of how important I consider this issue to be.

Biological Invasions

Invasive weeds are part of a bigger problem, the problem of *Biological Invasions*. Invasive plants or weeds are just one form these invasions can take. Invasive animals are increasingly being found and recognized. These include newsmakers such as the Zebra mussel, the Snakehead fish, or the Brown tree snake. They include reptiles and birds. Many invasive insects are destroying forests. The Glassy-winged sharpshooter is threatening California's vineyards. We even have invasive diseases that have already wiped out entire species such as the American chestnut tree or threatening to eradicate the American elm tree.

Invasive or exotic diseases are here now that threaten our public health and safety — especially the West Nile Virus. This exotic disease from overseas was unknown in the U.S. as recently as ten years ago. Now it is sweeping the country via mosquitos and birds. It's a big threat to certain bird species such as the crows and ravens, as well as horses.

While many of these invaders are alien or exotic in that they originate outside the borders of the U.S., some are simply from another region of the U.S. such as the bullfrog or the Glassy-winged sharpshooter. What they tend to have in common is that they moved across regional or national borders without the natural enemies and other limiting factors that keep them in check in their home region or country.

These invasives come into new ecosystems where they are able to reproduce faster and in greater numbers absent their natural enemies. Local animals that didn't involve with them may find invasive plants unpalatable, even poisonous to them.

Our global economy with its modern transportation system and porous borders has increased the rate of these invasions. **Next: some Peñasquitos examples.**

(Black Mountain cont'd)

fees and dumping their trash in our parks. Please remember that you are responsible for where your trash ends up, regardless of who you hired to remove it. If it's illegally dumped, you may be cited and the fines are far more than if it were to be legally disposed of. A person is guilty of a misdemeanor crime (punishable by jail and/or fines) according to San Diego Municipal Code 63.0102 (b)6 which says: It's unlawful to deposit or dump any garbage, refuse, dirt, ashes, broken glass, crockery, bones, tin cans, or like substances, or any animal or fowl. There are cases when the dumping qualifies as a felony, where hazardous materials are involved. Hazardous materials can consist of car oil, batteries, pesticides, chemicals, etc.

Landscape trimmings are especially troublesome to deal with. Not only do they make a mess that has to be removed, but they introduce seeds from exotic plants into the park. These exotic plants destroy the habitat and create an imbalance in the ecosystem by displacing the native plants and animals dependent on them. It can take years to get rid of non-native species.

If you have a large amount of trash to get rid of, here are some suggestions.

1. Always use reputable contractors, gardeners, and cleanup companies. Insist that they always take it to an authorized landfill.
2. Have a dumpster delivered to your home. This is very convenient for people who don't have access to a pickup truck. This can cost as little as \$79 for a 3 yard dumpster with larger ones available.
3. If you are unsure about the person doing the cleanup, require that they show you a dump receipt before you pay them.

If you see someone dumping, report it to the police immediately. Don't confront them directly but get their license plate number, description, and make and model of their vehicle and notify the Police of the location the dumping is taking place.

With your help, we can put an end to these unsightly dumps and experience our parks as more beautiful than ever.

(Closed Preserve cont'd)

objective." Just a small amount of rain can cause large flows of water through the canyon bottom. This is due to the fact that all the water off the streets surrounding the Preserve flows down into the creek. The creek then rises and covers the trails. This can cause severe washouts, trees fall down, and large puddles of mud are left. Most recreational users do not want to go through the mud, so they find a way around, thus widening the trails and trampling the natural and sometimes sensitive plants.

The Preserve is closed to protect those resources; public safety is also a consideration. Wet roads are often impassable to patrol or emergency vehicles, making rescues difficult. Just because the sun has been shining doesn't necessarily mean the trails are dry. Many of the trails are located at the bottom of the Canyon covered by a lovely oak canopy, the sun cannot reach the trail and the days are too short for the heat to evaporate the water, so it takes a while for the trails to dry out to the point where recreational use is sensible. As soon as it is determined that the trails are sufficiently dry, the Preserve is then opened.

The City and County Park Ranger staff appreciate your cooperation in reaching our objective of preserving the natural resources of Los Peñasquitos Canyon. To find out if the Preserve is open or closed please call the City Ranger voicemail at (858) 538-8066 and listen to the message, it is updated to inform you of trail closures and openings.

Friends' Election

At the Friends' Annual Meeting held Nov. 6 elections were held and the members present voted unanimously to re-elect

Brian Swanson	President
Don Albright	Vice President
Pat Watkins	Treasurer
Rick Botta	Secretary

New Senior Ranger

Gina Brown, Park Ranger at Los Peñasquitos Preserve, has been promoted to Senior Park Ranger at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Gina worked for the Army Corps of Engineers as a Park Guide for 2 years, as a Park Aide for Oregon State Parks and Recreation for 6 years, and has been a Park Ranger with the Open Space Division at Los Peñasquitos since 2001. Due to periodic vacancies in the Preserve's Senior Ranger position, Gina has actually had lots of experience running things out there in the last 3 years!

Volunteer Accomplishments

Thanks to nature hike leaders:

Will Bowen	Pat Watkins
Diana Gordon	Barbara Moore
Brian Swanson	Mike Kelly,
Linda King	Uli Burgin
Don Albright	

for taking hundreds of people on their varied walks.

Other volunteers who worked on erosion control, street fair booths, invasive weed control, or planted native plants included:

Cindy Burrascano	Neil Meyer
Carrie Schneider	Dean Woods
Mike Kelly	Terry Gaughn
Liz Rozycki	Edward DiBella
Erik Noreke	Craig Lorenz
Brian Swanson	Erik Basil
Jas Arnold	Arne Johanson
Bob & Gaye Dingeman	
Lynne & Alex Preisser	
Carol & Ivan Cooper	

2005 Bird Festival

February 9-13. Marina Village at Mission Bay Park. Info: www.sandiegounaturefestivals.org



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219

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Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

- Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
- Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
- Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
- Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 1/2005

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

- President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
- Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
- Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
- Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

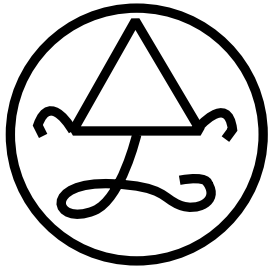
Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

- Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly
- Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
- Stream Survey Committee: open
- Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
- Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
- Volunteer Coordinator:
- Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
- Webmaster: open
- Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Mar. & Apr. 2005
Volume 19, No.2

Stormwater and the Creek

County Ranger Paul Kucharczyk

With all the rain we have received in San Diego County (over 2 times the average, to date!) one could presume our streets and sidewalks have been scoured of dirt and debris. As good as that sounds, one must wonder where all that dirt and debris goes. Stormwater runoff is part of a natural hydrologic process. Human activities such as urbanization and agriculture can alter natural drainage patterns and add pollutants to rivers, lakes, streams, coastal bays, estuaries, and, ultimately, the ocean. The increase in the amount of land that is covered by concrete, asphalt, and other impervious surfaces means stormwater runoff transports oils, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, heavy metals and soil particles downstream.

In recent years, sources of water pollution like industrial waters from factories have been greatly reduced. However, now the majority of water pollution occurs from things like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from lawns and gardens, failing septic tanks, residential car washing and pet waste washing into the storm drains. All these sources add up to a pollution problem. Did you know that storm drains are not connected to sanitary sewer systems and treatment plants? The primary purpose of storm drains is to carry rain water away from developed areas to prevent flooding. Untreated storm water and the pollutants it carries flow directly into the creeks, lagoons and ocean.

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is located in the Peñasquitos watershed. Staff at Los Peñasquitos are doing all we can to keep the staging area and

See p. 7 for more

Press Release

San Dieguito Lagoon Day

The City of Del Mar will celebrate its third annual San Dieguito Lagoon Day on Wednesday, March 30, 2005. An evening program, beginning at 7:00 p. m. in the Powerhouse Community Center, will feature Mike Kelly, land conservationist and well-known member of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, who will speak on the topic "Biological Invaders: Plants and Animals, the Latest Threat to the San Dieguito Lagoon and River Valley." According to Kelly, other than land development, invasive

See p. 7 for more

Highlights Inside

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Volunteer Day
Sat., March 12
9-1

See Page 7 for details



Janice McAlister (Sierra Club), Edward DiBella (Friends), Cindy Burrascano (Native Plant Society), Greg Lambert (SD Mtn. Bike Assoc.), and Mike Kelly (Friends, not in picture) worked with City Rangers and other volunteers to install fencing on Carmel Mountain. The fencing is to protect one of the rarest plants on the face of the earth, *Dudleya brevifolia* and vernal pools from damage by trail users.

Good Flower Show

This is a very good year for wildflowers. When the Preserve is open again after the flood damage is stabilized or repaired, be sure to explore everywhere! Lots of native bulbs coming up. And what's blooming is much bigger and with more blooms than during our drought years.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

March

Restoration Planting & Trash Pickup in López Canyon

Sat., Mar. 12, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Join The Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society in planting the endangered mint plant, the Willowy monardella, grown especially for this project. Also picking up storm trash in Lopez Canyon, same location. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Black Mtn. Park Citizen Advisory.

Thur., Mar. 10, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside

Driveway.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Mar. 12, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Trash Pickup in López Canyon

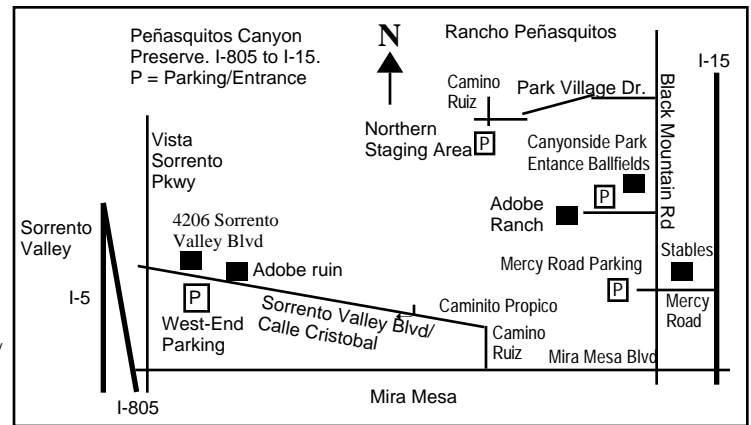
Sat., Mar. 12, 9 a.m. – noon. Join The Friends for this trashin Lopez Canyon. We'll be picking up small and big trash and hauling it out in pickups. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 or Neil at 858-455-0511 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thurs., Mar. 17, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Nature & Flower Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Mar. 20, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.



López Canyon Nature Walk with Barbara Moore

Sun., Mar. 20, 2–4 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., Mar. 22, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Frog Hike with Will Bowen

Sun., Mar. 27, 3–5 p.m. A hike to look for toads, tadpoles, and frogs. Learn all about the frogs and toads of San Diego County; their behavior, habits, calls, current status, and role in the overall ecology of the region. Wear shoes that can get wet. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

April

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sat., April 2, 9 – 11 a.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at

Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2**.

Waterfall Walk

Sun., April 3, 3-5pm. Celebrate the beginning of daylight savings time with Pat Watkins as we explore "Walden Pond," the waterfall, and Carson's crossing – three highlights of the preserve. Meet at the utility gate at the end of Park Village Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1188 J7**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., April 9, 8-10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Vernal Pool and Flower Walk

Sat., April 9, 9 – 11 a.m. Join Mike Kelly for a visit to one of San Diego's rarest habitats, the vernal pool. Learn about the "extremophiles" that populate this tiny ecosystem and see wildflowers. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Nature & Flower Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., April 10, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Frog Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., April 10, 3-5 p.m. A hike to look for toads, tadpoles, and frogs. Learn all about the frogs and toads of San Diego County; their behavior, habits, calls, current status, and role in the overall ecology of the region. Wear

shoes that can get wet. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sat., April 23, 9 – 11a.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2** or call **858.484.3219**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., April 26, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7**.

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7)**.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa

From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Canyonside Park Staging

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to parking lot on their (far) west end. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7)**.

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5)**.

Hike and Be Happy!

Ranger Tom Miller

Over the years, one of the things that I have observed about people that are hike or mountain bike in our open space parks, is generally how they are full of life and have a zest for living. Most of them go out at least every week with their friends, with their dog or just by themselves and enjoy the sounds and sights of the nature. Are they doing this because they feel good and energetic all the time? No, it's the other way around. They feel good because they are getting out every week. People who are active are not only in better physical shape but mentally and emotionally as well.

There's a story about a man who was experiencing great difficulty in his life. His career, personal life, and marriage were all falling apart and he was completely overwhelmed with stress. He contacted a doctor to get some professional help, however he was completely booked up with appointments and couldn't see him for 3 weeks. The doctor told him to take long walk every day until he could see him. Over the next 3 weeks the man faithfully followed the doctor's advice and everything started to change in his life. His stress level went way down, he found solutions to his problems, and there was a new found sense of optimism about the future. His life completely changed just by taking a walk everyday.

We can't always control our circumstances or what happens to us. But if we are in good physical, mental, and emotional health we can take on anything. Along with a good diet, adequate sleep, staying physically active is one of the best things you can do for your self.

Be safe while you are out there, especially if you are alone. Take adequate water and bring along a cell phone in case you have a medical condition that could cause problems.

If you are concerned about security while walking alone, take a dog with you. If you don't have a dog, see if you can borrow the neighbor's dog. The dog will love it and you will feel safe.

San Diego is full of places to go for walks or ride your bike. We have some of the greatest State, County, City Parks, Beaches, and Open Spaces in the country. Many of them are just blocks away from where people live. You don't necessarily have to join a health club to get exercise. Just get out and walk several times a week and it will do wonders for you.

Carmel Valley Road Construction

Ranger Tom Miller

Work has begun on extending Carmel Valley Road east to the 4-S Ranch area on the north side of Black Mountain. The new road will replace the Black Mountain dirt road and connect to Bernardo Center Drive. It will include a bridge with undercrossing that will also provide a corridor for animals and park users to go through. This is necessary to keep Black Mountain linked up with other open spaces. The new road will create a new entrance to the Black Mountain parking area and make it much easier for people to get to the park.

Construction will take about 18 months and accessibility may be limited to the Black Mountain staging area parking lot during the week due to the large trucks and equipment that will be operating in this area. Other access areas, which are on the other side of the mountain, will not be affected and will always remain open.

Our program of trail work on the 3rd Saturday and nature hikes on the 4th Saturday of each month is temporarily suspended due to the problem of access.

For many of us, this is an end of an era on Black Mountain. Because it was so hard to find and the Black Mountain dirt road was always in bad shape, many people who lived in this area didn't even know that there was a park here. But this is all going to change with the new road going right past the park entrance. If you have any questions about access to the park, call Ranger Tom Miller at 858-538-8021 or Senior Ranger Lori Gerbac at 858-538-8082.

Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training

Date: April 16
Time: 9:45 a.m. until 4 p.m.
Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Contact for information: (858) 513-0359 or (619) 892-7620

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe (Ranch House), located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Purpose of the surveys

These wildlife surveys have provided important data on the presence or absence of certain species of wildlife such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, etc., as well as their frequency in a given area. The data has been used in policy making decisions concerning wildlife tunnels, linkages, undercrossings, road opening/closures and more. Your help is needed to expand these surveys to more places in the county. Join us!

Planting with Natives: the Case for Moderation

Edward G. Di Bella

In recent years legitimate concerns about water conservation and ease of maintenance have led some property owners to incorporate native plants into their landscapes. Others, of course, enjoy gardening with natives because of their interesting characteristics and aesthetic qualities. Indeed, a garden filled with fragrant black sage or blooming ceanothus is a wonderful place to be. I have reservations, however, about increasingly frequent suggestions that residents should emphasize natives as the primary species in their residential gardens. The time has come to reevaluate such plans given other looming problems that will soon confront us.

While such gardens aid in lowering water consumption, in a larger sense they are an extravagant luxury. Generally, gardens planted with natives are not food producing gardens. Within living memory, many more Americans traditionally used significant portions of their lots to cultivate fruit trees and vegetable gardens than is now the case.

One has only to visit neighborhoods built several generations ago to see the still-bearing fruit trees that have outlived most of the individuals who planted them and that remind the observer of the old ways. Both of my grandfathers used their backyards as mini-orchard spaces, planting citrus, fig, plum, peach and avocado trees. Culinary herbs and vegetables were planted in side beds. Such use of garden space reflected an ethic of thrift and self-reliance. Every mouthful of food you produced was one you didn't have to buy from someone else. If you irrigated your garden with collected rainwater, so much the better.

Changes in American society and leisure habits have caused an increasing number of Americans, however, to become totally reliant on others for all their food. What has made this situation possible, of course, has been the rise of the fossil fuel-dependent agricultural system that provides us with the abundance that we now take for granted.

Most Americans would be astonished to learn that every calorie of food energy that we eat required up to ten calories of fossil fuel energy to

produce. It is not just the agricultural planting, harvesting, processing and transportation equipment, but also the petroleum-based pesticides and fertilizers using ammonia derived from natural gas that drive up the ratio. This cannot last much longer.¹

Recent reports by authoritative sources reveal that international oil extraction is now very likely nearing its peak, dubbed "Peak Oil."² The issue is not one of running out of oil, but diminishing supplies of easily recoverable oil. Some will no doubt protest that such warnings have been heard before, but some have proved accurate in retrospect. The most notable example is the prediction made in 1956 by the eminent petroleum geologist M. King Hubbert that American extraction of oil would peak around 1970. He was disregarded at the time. Events later proved him correct.³ (We now import from foreign sources more than half of the oil consumed by our country.)

What does this mean for us and how we design our landscapes? The coming decline in industrial agriculture because of fossil fuel scarcity, accompanied by massive losses of topsoil and contaminated water supplies, means that food production, like just about all other economic activities, will have to be re-localized. In essence, individual households are going to have to start growing at least a por-

tion of their own food again.

A transition such as the one foreseen will not allow for total or near exclusive use of native plants in our gardens. Somehow, we need to find a balance, perhaps by combining traditional food crops with natives that have both nutritional value and do not require so much water, such as prickly pear cactus. I invite further dialogue on how we might accomplish this. I am also eager to hear from those already engaged in such work so that we might all profit from lessons learned.

Footnotes

1. Manning, Richard. "The oil we eat: following the food chain back to Iraq." *Harpers Magazine*, February 2004.
2. Campbell, Colin and Jean Laherrere. "The end of cheap oil." *Scientific American*, March 1998, 78-83. The article can be accessed online at this link: <http://dieoff.com/page140.pdf>
Campbell and Associates maintain a website for their Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas, at www.peakoil.net. A graph showing their most updated hydrocarbon depletion profile can be found at this link: <http://www.peakoil.net/Newsletter/NL50/newsletter50.doc>
3. Deffeyes, Kenneth S. *Hubbert's peak: the impending world oil shortage*. Princeton University Press, 2001. Also worth consulting on this matter are:
Richard Heinberg, *The party's over: oil, war and the fate of industrial societies*. New Society Publishers, 2003,
and Julian Darley, *High noon for natural gas*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004.



Volunteers planting the endangered plant, *Monardella linoides* (Willow monardella), a wonderfully fragrant mint, in López Canyon.

Fund Results

A big thank you to the 47 members who responded to our annual fund appeal with over \$2,300 in donations. We know this total will climb as others finalize their taxes for the year. And thanks to other members who renewed their membership for another year.

Anonymous (3)
 Nancy Acevedo
 Janet Anderson
 Judy Bayer
 Mark & Kathie Bulley
 Chae-Banks Family
 Charles Cochrane
 K. Crampton
 Bob & Gaye Dingeman
 Paul & Liam Dulary
 Jeanne & Glenn Dunham
 Terry Gaughen
 Sharon & Ben Gebauer/eberle
 Don Hoffman
 Mike Kelly
 Michael & Susan Killen
 Alan & Judith Kiraly
 H. William Kuni
 Simon K Lawrance
 Hans Leenhouts
 Suzann & Bill Leininger
 Rob & Linda Leiter
 Patty Mcfarland
 Richard & Ruth Mellen
 Neil & Jill Meyer
 James & Linda Michael
 Paul And Carol Micheletti
 Maurice & Ree Miller
 Barbara Moore
 Karl & Laura Olsen
 James & Louise Oneill
 Jim Powers
 Erwin & Mary Rose
 Lisa & Bill Ross-woolson
 James W. Royle, Jr.
 Gustav & Irene Segade
 Vivienne Seymore
 Don Steele
 Melvin & Ellen Sweet
 Judy Swink
 Ms. Brenda Terry-hahn
 Mary Toomey
 Greg Vines
 Beth Williams
 Toni & Frank Wong

Biological Invasions

Artichoke Thistle

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Last month we discussed biological invasions, of exotic plants, animals, and diseases and their negative impact on human health and native ecosystems. This is the first in a series of articles describing some of these invasives.

Artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*) was a major weed infesting many acres in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve until volunteers largely eradicated it in the 1990s. Small numbers can be found scattered in a few locations today. However, in our adjacent Black Mountain Park, there are over a thousands acres of this weed awaiting eradication.

Artichoke thistle is a deep rooted perennial that both clumps out and seeds itself vigorously, eventually forming large monocultures that crowd out other plants, especially native herbaceous plants and bulbs. The endangered San Diego thornmint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*) is found in grasslands threatened by the artichoke.

Cynara cardunculus is a close relative to the Globe artichoke that graces

your dining table, purchased at your local market. It was first introduced into the U.S. by European immigrants, probably in the 1880s. It escaped cultivation and spread into 31 counties in California, including San Diego and Orange Counties, becoming one of the worst ranchland and agricultural weeds in the 1940s and 1950s.

Long spines on the plant, especially around the flower head, protect it from being eaten by cattle, deer, or other animals. Pollinators such as honeybees like the flowers and some birds do eat the seed. Both people and wildlife find it difficult to move through areas that are thick with it. My dogs will do their best to find a way around the plants, as do I!

It is very difficult to control by mowing or plowing, because of the deep rhizomes, any piece of which can produce a new plant. Modern herbicides such as RoundUp or Transline are quite effective on it and we have used both to control, even eradicate the thistle, allowing native plants to fill back in.



A current Artichoke thistle infestation on the Santa Luz extension of Black Mountain Park. Left alone, the thistle plants pictured will fill in and become 100% of the vegetation, displacing other weeds as well as native plants.

(Stormwater cont'd)

the ranch house grounds clean as we implement best management practices. Of course, we depend on the communities upstream surrounding our beautiful Preserve to exercise "good housekeeping" practices as well. Remember, if you wouldn't want to swim with it, then reuse it, recycle it, or dispose of it at the appropriate hazardous materials drop site.

Junior Naturalist Program

Lani Noreke

San Diego Tracking Team

The San Diego Tracking Team's Junior Naturalist Program has a new life. Thanks to a grant from the Reuben H. Fleet Foundation, we are thrilled to offer FREE children's programs for classes, scout groups and such. Your group can choose from Nature Awareness, Sensory Awareness, Environmental Concepts and

Principles, Primitive Skills Demonstrations, Full Moon Hikes, and more. We will customize the program for your group, and we can do it either at Mission Trails Regional Park or at a location you choose. For more information, contact Lee at 619-589-2175 or trackerlee@earthlink.net.

(Closed Preserve cont'd)

exotic plants are considered the greatest hazard to native habitats.

The Powerhouse is located at 1658 Coast Blvd. The event is free of charge, and light refreshments will be served from 6:30 to 7:00 p. m., when there will be an opportunity to enjoy a display of children's art inspired by a visit to the lagoon.

Earlier in the day, two other important activities will take place. At 1 p. m. the annual and very popular children's poetry reading will take place at Earth-Song Bookstore, 1440 Camino Del Mar. At 3:30 p. m., the Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley will dedicate the new interpretive signs installed at the Grand Avenue Bridge, including one created by Alice Goodkind, artist, musician and founder of the Friends.

Lagoon Day is being presented by the Del Mar San Dieguito Lagoon Committee. Since 1974, this citizen's advisory group has pursued the protection, restoration and enhancement of the lagoon, an endangered salt-marsh wetlands habitat, as well as supporting the creation of the San Dieguito River Park, a 55-mile park and preserve following the San Dieguito River from its source at Volcan Mountain to the ocean in Del Mar.

New Ranger

John Garwood is our new Park ranger at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. John has been with the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation since 1996. John likes the change from his last job which was ground maintenance in Mira Mesa.

John grew up in Detroit, Michigan and worked at a State park facility with rangers repairing trails and nature walks. The new Ranger attended San Diego State as an Outdoor Recreation major. He is looking forward to working with the volunteer groups, maintaining sensitive species and habitat, as well as recreational activities.

Volunteer Day

Sat., March 12, 9-1

This coming Saturday, from 9-1 pm there will be two volunteer events in Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, specifically in Lopez Canyon. We will be doing a trash pickup, previously scheduled and postponed (led by Neil Meyer), to get storm debris as well as the big stuff thrown off the Camino Santa Fe bridge. We will also be planting more Monardella.

Last Sunday, a dozen volunteers and one Park Ranger planted 637 Monardellas in Lopez Canyon. We have about 300 more plants to go and this Saturday is a good time to do it since both activities will be in the same area. We will continue planting in the last site we re in and in another site closer to the Camino Santa Fe bridge.

We'll meet at 9 a.m. at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Email or call me if you need directions. Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856.

Photo to left: some of the volunteers who planted 636 endangered Willowy monardellas plants in Lopez Canyon, a joint Calif. Native Plant Society and Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.





Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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858-484-3219

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Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15

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Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

Volunteer to help the committee (call to discuss)

Hikes

Indian Culture

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 3/2005

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.

Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451

Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937

Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527

Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,

Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman

Newsletter: Mike Kelly

Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki

Stream Survey Committee: open

Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins

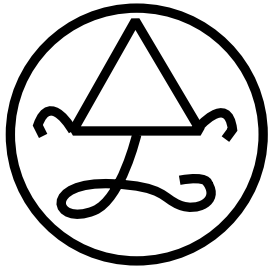
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584

Volunteer Coordinator:

Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489

Webmaster: open

Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

May & June 2005

Volume 19, No. 3

Trails Status

Senior Ranger Gina Washington

As of April 16, 2005 all trails on the north side of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve are open. All trail rules still apply . . . mountain bikes are allowed on designated trails only. (If there is a sign that says “No Bikes” then bikes are not allowed as is the case with equestrian users on Cobbles).

Access to the north trails can be gained from the East Staging area at the corner of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads by taking the main trail to Ranch House Crossing to the north. Limited parking is also available at the rear of Canyonside Recreation Center. There is a trail head at the corner of Park Village Rd and Camino del Sur and also at the end of Park Village Rd. Access can be gained at Vista Sorrento Parkway, however there is no parking.

All other crossings and all the trails on the south side of the creek will remain closed until materials and equipment are acquired and placed on the south main access trail. After the trail is repaired we will begin work on the single track trails on the south side for which we will need many volunteers. If you would like to volunteer or are interested in making donations, please contact Senior Park Ranger Gina Washington at gWASHINGTON@san-diego.gov.

Highlights Inside

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**Senior Ranger Gina Washington
(formerly Brown, recently married!)
and volunteers Terry Gaughen, and
Jim Snyder repairing trails.**



Trails Re-Opening

As we write this note, volunteers and staff are working several times a week to re-open trails on the south side of the Preserve. The south side is currently open only from the Parking-Staging area at Mercy Road and Black Mtn. Road to the Ranch House Crossing. It is hoped that the main south side road trail can be opened by the end of May and then work will commence on the single-track trails off this main trail. Keep your fingers crossed!

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

May

Black Mtn. Park Citizen Advisory.

Thur., May 12, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., May 14, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable

for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

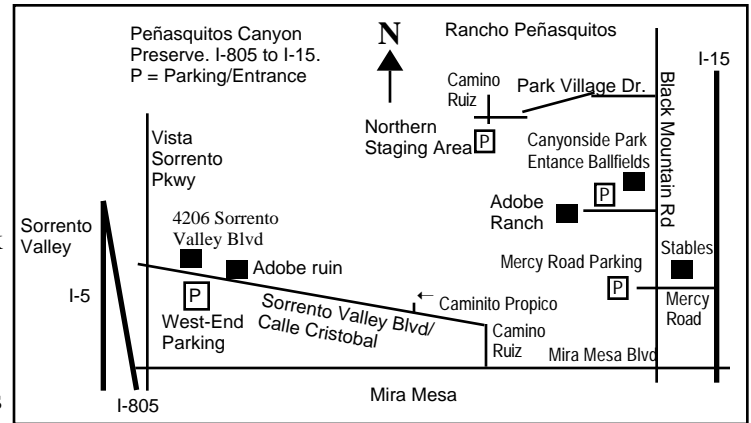
Thurs., May 19, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., May 24, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Plant Photography Hike with Will Bowen

Sun., May 29, 4–6 p.m. Bring along your digital camera for a very slow hike with plenty of time for stops to identify and photograph the different plants, trees, and shrubs of Peñasquitos Canyon. Find out how these plants have been used. We can all share our photographs with E-mail later. Meet in the parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.



June

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., June 11, 8–10 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Night Wildlife Walk w. Mike Kelly

Fri., June 17, 7–9 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for evening walk. Chance to see wildlife and the Waterfall. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bring insect repellent, and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Plant Photography Hike with Will Bowen

Sun., June 19, 4–6 p.m. Bring along your digital camera for a very slow hike with plenty of time for stops to identify and photograph the different plants, trees, and shrubs of Peñasquitos Canyon. Find out how these plants have been used. We can all share our photographs with E-mail later. Meet in the West End Parking-Staging area. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., June 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7.**

DIRECTIONS

Black Mountain Open Space Park

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Road. Go right (north) on Black Mountain Road and follow it all the way until you see the last houses on the right and open space beyond. Look for a dirt road to the right and take it. Proceed about 1 mile, going beyond the bare hangliding area on the right and down a hill to a big curve and a sign for the park and paved road on the right. Proceed up the road to the staging area. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (E7).**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. From the west (I-5/I-805 merge) take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Caminito Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Boulevard to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on either side. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Canyonside Park Staging

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to parking lot on their (far) west end. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Carmel Mtn. Meeting Place

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).**

(Apprentice cont'd)

Instructor: a tracker or senior tracker who has demonstrated the ability and accepted the commitment of presenting tracking or naturalist training for SDTT classes.

Barry Martin, our very own Master Tracker, has awarded the following active volunteers Tracker or Senior Tracker status:

Trackers — Joe Bochiechio, Duane Boney, Patrick Campbell, Dave Cowan, Ann Hunt, Betty Kirchhevel, Karen Merrill, Gretchen Nell, and Phoenix Von Hendy.

Senior Trackers — Chris Bader, Rick Botta, Uli Burgin, Doug Hansen, Lee Kirchhevel, and Dean Woods.

As part of the Apprentice Program, Barry will hold quarterly skills workshops for people at the apprentice level and above. The first one of these will be on the principles of awareness and intensive tracking on May 7th. There will also be quarterly lectures/meetings, ideally hosted by different teams, featuring hikes and/or presentations as well as a social activity. These are open to everyone who participates in SDTT events. (Shea Valero's lecture last month was the first in this series.)

Please contact Lani at 858 513 0359 or noreke@sbcglobal.net if you would like more information on the Apprentice Program.

Southern Pacific Rattlesnake, subspecies of the Western; a mature adult.



Wild Times in the Tunnel of Love

by Judy Lemon

Not everyone may be excited at the prospect of getting up early on a Saturday morning to go crawling around in a tunnel under the freeway. For some hardy souls of the newly formed Mission Trails Tracking Team, this prospect seemed irresistible. What could we possibly be looking for in such a place?

The wildlife access tunnel underneath freeway 52 and a small section of the land located at its south entrance are part of an official transect. A transect is a section of land, usually about 1 mile in length, which also includes the areas extending out to around 15 feet of either side of the main trail. There are currently 3 transects within our park – the tunnel, Spring Canyon, and Oak Canyon, and these form only a small part of a much greater selection throughout San Diego County. The Mission Trails Tracking team has become part of the San Diego Tracking Team, which is based out of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The SDTT performs quarterly wildlife surveys in designated areas – the transects – and we were taking part in one of these surveys.

Why are these surveys important? Briefly, it is because the data that is collected can be used to support conservation, education, and environmental projects around the county. For a more complete answer, please go to the SDTT website (www.sdtt.org).

In order to prepare to help with the transect, we had to attend a one-day class in wildlife surveying. Among those who attended from Mission Trails were the more experienced tracking members such as Judy Alvarez and Joe Bochiechio to a few newly graduated Trail Guides – me, Linda Hawley and Myrna Bateman. We agreed that although most of what was presented to us had already been covered in the tracking segment of our Trail Guide training, it was helpful to have it presented again in a different setting with a very enthusiastic and fun group of people. One of the most memorable demonstrations you can have in a tracking class is that of a full-sized adult attempting to demonstrate how a rabbit moves. Do try this one at home!

At the beginning levels of tracking, the emphasis is mostly on tracks and scat. Since scat is simply another word for poop, the day was full of laughter and giggling as if we'd all suddenly become 5 year olds. We went through the tracks and scat for a range of animals such as the mule deer and mountain lion, and then touched briefly on other evidence which is referred to as 'sign'. For the new tracker, this is a harder area to grasp as it is more subtle. An example of sign might be noticing that a small branch had been nibbled. An expert tracker can tell you what kind of animal was sampling the greenery by the angle of the cuts left by the teeth.

One week later, primed and ready to track, we met up with Dean Woods, our transect leader for the day. Dean is also the Mission Trails Tracking Team liaison with the SDTT. Along with Ranger Luanne Barrett, we all carpooled over to an area of freeway 52, where we parked on the shoulder and climbed down the embankment to the tunnel. Since this transect occurred during a particularly hot spell in July, we decided to look at the surrounding areas first, then save the cool tunnel for the heat of the day.

I would really love to say that we felt like we knew what we were doing, and were instantly able to identify even the slightest disturbances in the soil, but this was not the case. It takes time to develop the tracker's sight, and it was only when one of the more experienced members of the team pointed out something of interest that we were able to see how it related to what we had learned in class. However, every now and then we were lucky enough to find a nice clear print, and identify it correctly. This is quite thrilling!

We did find some mule deer and rabbit tracks, and the occasional sign of a coyote who had ambled through. When we finished surveying the nearby area, we finally got to enter the tunnel itself. It is not a long tunnel, but it does have an important purpose. As man and his developments encroach ever farther into wild lands where many animals live, some areas become like islands, with no access to

Volunteers Needed Tracking Team Training

Intermediate Tracker Training

Thursday, May 19 and Saturday, May 21: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Thursday and 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Saturday at the Peñasquitos Ranch House. Contact Rick Botta (858-672-0584, rmbotta@earthlink.net) to sign up as a student or to help out.

Advanced Tracker Naturalist Class

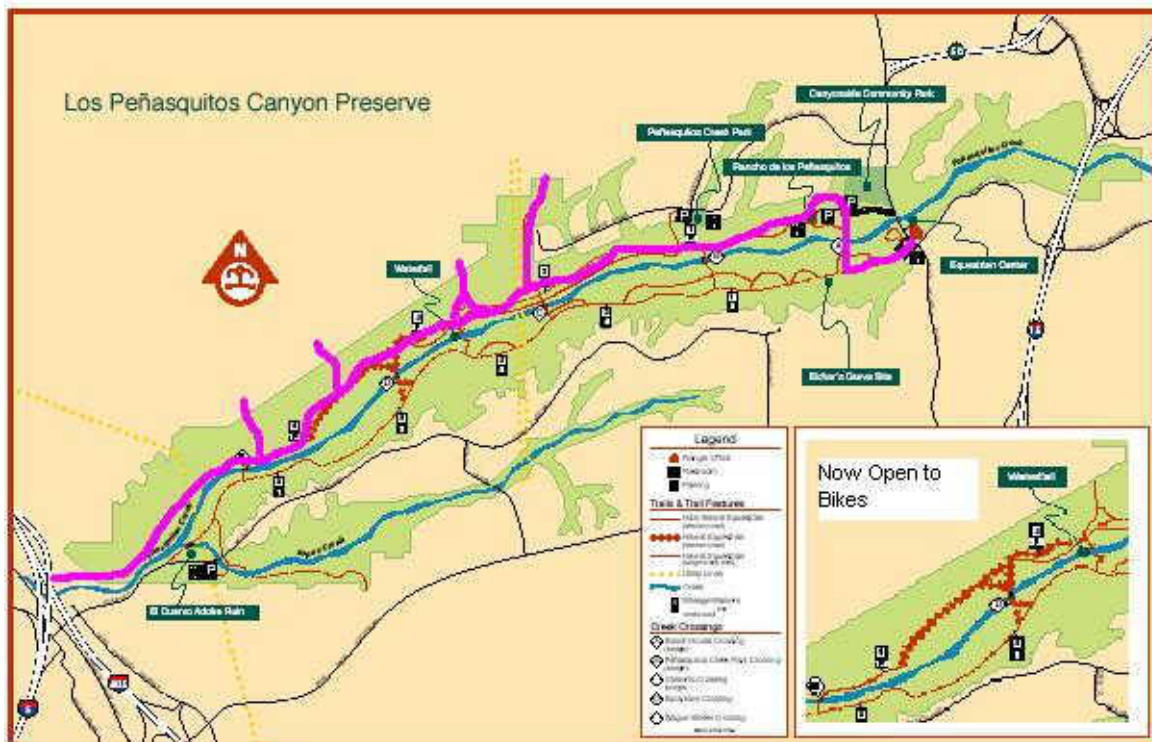
Friday, June 24 and Saturday, June 25: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Friday and 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Saturday at the Peñasquitos Ranch House. Contact Rick Botta (858-672-0584, rmbotta@earthlink.net) to sign up as a student or to help out.

**Friends' New
Website at
www.penasquitos.org
should be up and
running by June 1,
2005**

(Tunnel of Love cont'd)

adjacent land and food sources.

Without tunnels such as these, many animals are forced to cross busy roads to get to the land on the other side, often with disastrous results. While the tunnel did bear signs of activity, it was agreed that there didn't seem to be as much evidence of animal movement as there had been in past transects. After you've spent several hours minutely examining a small area, you can start to get a bit silly. It was during this time that the tunnel became known as the Tunnel of Love. So, why has a plain old cement wildlife corridor underneath a freeway been dubbed "The Tunnel of Love?" Well, you'll just have to come along on this particular transect to find out!



Peñasquitos Trail Map. The thick, gray lines indicate the open trails.

Visit the City of San Diego's web site www.cityofsandiego.com and click on the link "Parks and Open space", then the Los Peñasquitos Canyon link to see a color and bigger version of this map. Or visit the Friends' redesigned web site as of June 1, www.penasquitos.org. You can also download and print your own map from these sites.

Tracking Team Apprentice Program Initiated

The San Diego Tracking Team is pleased to present their new Apprentice Program. The goal of the program is to keep people involved with the team and continue to train transect leaders, instructors, and other active volunteers on an ongoing basis so that the team is self-perpetuating. When a Student Tracker has completed all three classes in the Tracker/Naturalist series, he or she is eligible to enroll in the Apprentice Program. This free program is customized for each participant based on his or her goals, interests, and availability. A mentor is assigned, and participants will be expected to put in at least 100 hours in various tracking activities including transects, assisting with classes, tracking walks, deer DNA study, and continuing education workshops. To clarify the different designations now possible within the tracking team, we have created the following definitions:

Student Tracker: anyone who has completed the Wildlife Survey Training or any of the Tracker/Naturalist classes.

Apprentice Tracker: anyone who has completed the Advanced Tracker/Naturalist class and has enrolled in the SDTT Apprentice Program.

Tracker: anyone who has completed their apprentice program, including 100 continuing education hours, a recommendation by their mentor and a successful evaluation by a SDTT Senior Tracker.

Senior Tracker: status awarded by a master tracker (or a consensus of senior trackers) recognizing a high level of tracking knowledge and skill, or special achievement. Requires a minimum of 5 years experience.

Master Tracker: (Expert level as defined by Louis Liebenberg). Requires a minimum of 10 years experience.

Mentor: a tracker or senior tracker who has chosen to share his or her expertise with an apprentice or fledgling team.

Transect Leader: a tracker or senior tracker who has demonstrated the ability and accepted the commitment of being responsible for one or more transects on an ongoing basis.

Thanks Volunteers!

Volunteers worked street fairs, planted the endangered Willow monardella in Lopez Canyon, counted endangered San Diego thornmints, led nature hikes or built trails included:

Pat Watkins
Brian Swanson
Mel Howe
Peyton Hall
Arne Johanson
Joel Calland
Linda Pardy
Ivan Cooper
Neil Meyer
Edward DiBella
Pat Mock
Carrie Schneider
Jas Arnold
Mike Kelly
Jim Snyder
Terry Gaughn
Cindy Burrascano
Meredith Osborne

Fund Results

Members are still responding to our Fall fund appeal. Recent contributions pushed us up over \$3,000. Thanks for remembering the Friends. And thanks to other members who renewed their membership for another year.

Anonymous
Chris Bader
Mona Baumgartel & John DeBeer
Cheryl Brehme
Uli Burgin
Susan Califa
Bruce Collins
Edith & Madison Cooper
Barbara Cota
Alice Greene
Gail Hanna
Kathryn Heaney
Rick & Diane Hanson
Deborah & Brian Jones
Fred & Linda Kramer
John Labaw
Bill Lawrence
Paul & Michele Micheletti
Mary & Alex Pisciotta
Roy Riblet
David & Jennifer Robinson
Peter Smith
Brian Swanson
Melvin & Ellen Sweet
Kirsten Winter
Paul & Barbara Zepf

New Members

Welcome to the following folks who joined the Friends in these past months. Hope to see you on the trail!

Meryl Faulkner
Margaret Fowley
Diane Greening
Gary Harman
Steve Lister
Della Pratt
David Robertson
Peter Smith

Biological Invasions

Pampas Grass

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Continuing with our series on Biological Invasions, this issue I'll focus on pampas grass. We have two of them here in San Diego, *Cortaderia selloana*, the most common one, and *Cortaderia jubata*, more common in Northern California, but also present here.

Both species of pampas grass are highly invasive. When you fly into San Francisco International Airport that's *C. jubata*, you're seeing surrounding the runways. It's also the one dominating much of the Big Sur coast and spreading throughout the cutover coastal Redwood forests. In San Diego, the one you see so much of in Carlsbad, Batiquitos Lagoon and other coastal areas is *C. selloana*.

C. selloana is native to Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, while *C. jubata* comes from northern Argentina and the Andes of Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. Pampas grass was first introduced to California in 1848, making it one of the early invasive, exotic plants here.

As a tillering grass, pampas grass clumps get bigger and bigger. Prolific seeds fall next to the existing plant while others are caught and distributed

far and wide by the wind. Plants get so thick they can displace native annuals and smaller shrubs. Being a giant grass, they are also a fire hazard. They're a "flashy fuel" where a fire can start, and, with their proximity to houses, carry a fire to them.

In Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve we've reduced the number of pampas grass to a scattered few. Downstream in Peñasquitos Lagoon, however, the willow riparian and one of the meadows still have large numbers in several locations.

Although labor intensive and a bit dangerous to workers (the leaf blades are very sharp), digging out both species is quite effective. The herbicide RoundUp Pro is also effective in killing them, although more than one application may be necessary on the bigger ones.

For more information on these and other wildland invasives, visit www.Cal-IPC.org, the website of the California Invasive Plant Council, an organization I helped form back in 1992.



Pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) infestation in Batiquitos Lagoon. Note how dense the stands can become. These plants were not planted; rather, they "volunteered" themselves.

Celebrate National Trails Day

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve - Ranch House
End of Canyonside Park Drive, San Diego

Saturday, June 4, 2005 —10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

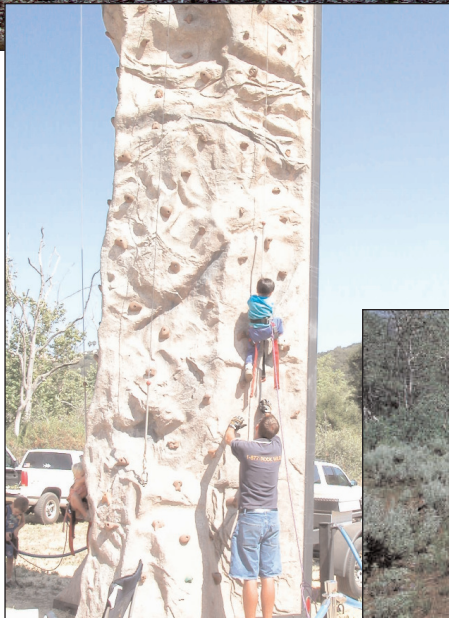
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Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.

Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451

Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937

Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527

Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,

Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman

Newsletter: Mike Kelly

Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki

Stream Survey Committee: open

Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins

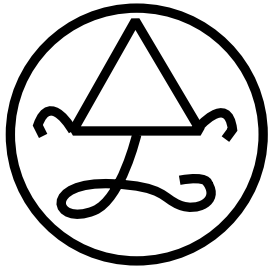
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584

Volunteer Coordinator:

Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489

Webmaster: open

Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

July & Aug. 2005

Volume 19, No. 4

Fawning Time

Rick Botta

If you've been out and about in Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, or other coastal areas inhabited by our Southern Mule Deer, you may have been fortunate enough to notice that it's fawning time again!

The fawning season in San Diego County typically begins in June and can extend into August, with the fawning season starting earlier nearer to the coast. Based upon my previous sightings over the years along with information gathered using our remote sensing cameras, the fawning season in Penasquitos Canyon usually begins in May. My first fawn sighting in Penasquitos Canyon this year was on May 13th near the waterfalls where I sighted a doe and her new fawn drinking from the creek. I ran into this same doe in the same area about a week earlier. She was bedded down, but based upon the way she bolted and the direction she headed, I suspected she had a fawn hidden nearby and was trying to lead any potential threat well away from her newborn.

The spots on this fawn were just beginning to fade, from which I estimated it being born in late April – a bit earlier than normal. In past years, we have evi-

See p. 3 for more

Highlights Inside

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Golden Eagles

An Eye to the Sky

Doug Schanzenbach

It's that time of year again: Spring. The renewal of the life cycle. The desert flowers have been sensational this year thanks to our heavy rains. The rains also translate into a population explosion for small mammals and therefore raptors as well.

We are blessed with many raptors in San Diego county; hawks, owls, and eagles to name a few. I've had the privilege the past couple of years of assisting in banding baby Golden Eagles with Wildlife Research Institute (WRI) in Ramona. May is the crucial month in this banding process.

The number of active Golden Eagle pairs in San Diego county is somewhere in the mid forties. Nests are monitored on a continuing basis throughout the year. Some nests have records of being occupied every year for almost a hundred years; other pairs have multiple nests and they choose between them each year. Generally these multiples are within a few hundred yards of each other.

The mating process starts at the

See p. 7 for more



Rick Botta took this picture of a fawn eating Bristley Oxtongue (*Picris echioides*) near the historic ranch house off Black Mountain Rd. Despite the rough, bristley surface of the plant, it's a favorite of mule deer.

Cool of Evening Best Time for Walks

With the hot weather upon us, you'll find that early morning, late afternoon, and evenings are the best times to enjoy the preserve. And we've scheduled our walks accordingly. Evening walks are a very good time to see wildlife such as deer, coyotes, owls, snakes, tarantulas, and more.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

July

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., July 9, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

López Canyon Nature Walk with Barbara Moore

Sun., July 10, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Thur., July 14, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Del Mar Mesa & Waterfall Walk

Sat., July 16, 6:30–8:30 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the kiosk at Camino del Sur (the old Camino Ruiz) and Park Village Drive in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Night Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., July 16, 8–9:30 p.m. A hike to look for nocturnal critters such as owls, deer, bats, and coyotes. We'll also take time to contemplate the moon, stars, and constellations. Find out how the ancients saw the night sky. Bring a flashlight, insect repellent, and hiking boots. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of the Coaster station. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Night Wildlife Walk w. Mike Kelly

Sun., July 17, 7–9 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for evening walk. Chance to see wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bring insect repellent, and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Map of Preserve is available at www.penasquitos.org or go to www.cityofsandiego.com & navigate to the open space park link & Los Peñasquitos.

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thurs., July 21, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., July 24, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., July 26, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

August

Volunteer Arundo Bash in Peñasquitos Lagoon

Sat., Aug. 6, 9 a.m.– 1 p.m. Join us in cutting down several stands of the giant reed (*Arundo donax*) in Sorrento Valley. Tools supplied. Bring water, wear long sleeves and long pants. No experience needed. Meet at 11230 Sorrento Valley Road. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

López Canyon Nature Walk with Barbara Moore

Sun., Aug. 7, 3–5 p.m. Enjoy the birds, beasts and blossoms of López Canyon with the co-author of *Walking San Diego*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by the author. Meet in West-end Parking- Staging area off Sorrento Valley Road, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento

Parkway in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Aug. 13, 8–10 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Night Hike with Will Bowen

Sat., Aug. 13, 8–9:30 p.m. A hike to look for nocturnal critters such as owls, deer, bats, and coyotes. We'll also take time to contemplate the moon, stars, and constellations. Find out how the ancients saw the night sky. Bring a flashlight, insect repellent, and hiking boots. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of the Coaster station. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Nature & Flower Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Aug. 14, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Night Wildlife Walk with Mike Kelly

Sun., Aug. 21, 7–9 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for evening walk. Chance to see wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots, bring insect repellent, and water. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., Aug. 23, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch

House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7**.

DIRECTIONS

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7)**.

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5)**.

(Fawn cont'd)

dence of fawns in Penasquitos Canyon being born as late as August and as early as the end of April. Twin fawns are common, but this depends on the age of the doe and nutritional factors. You can roughly estimate the age of a fawn from its spots. Spots begin to fade at about 3 weeks and will be completely gone in as early as 6 weeks, 8 at the outset.

So, as you're out and about, look for evidence of these new arrivals to our wildlife community. Remember that fawns will spend a great deal of time bedded down and under cover in their early weeks while the mother is feeding. So if you happen to run into a fawn that is bedded down, remember to leave it alone. You would be surprised at the number of people who find what they believe are "abandoned" fawns and turn them into wildlife rescue agencies.

We will be performing our next deer survey in Penasquitos Preserve in July, so we'll be able to get a better idea of what this years fawn population looks like.

Volunteer Arundo Bash in Peñasquitos Lagoon

Sat., Aug. 6, 9 a.m.– 1 pm

Join us in cutting down several stands of the giant reed (*Arundo donax*) in Sorrento Valley. Tools supplied. Bring water, wear long sleeves and long pants. No experience needed. Meet at 11230 Sorrento Valley Road. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Thoughts of a New Ranger

County Ranger Autumn Acker

As one of the true historic, cultural, architectural, and environmental gems within San Diego County, Los Penasquitos Canyon and the Adobe Ranch House have been a draw to me since I arrived here four years ago from the Bay Area. I couldn't be happier than to be working in such a unique and beautiful environment with such an exceptional staff. This is officially my 2-month anniversary here at Penasquitos, and I look forward to learning more about the canyon every day.

I have a deep love for history, and my background is reflective of this interest. I graduated from Humboldt State University in 2000 with a BA in History, and moved to San Diego with the hopes of finding a career in historic preservation and parks. I worked as both a volunteer and Head Docent for Save Our Heritage Organisation (or SOHO), at the Whaley House and Museum Gift Shop in Old Town San Diego. This afforded me some wonderful opportunities to experience historic preservation first hand and participate in some fabulous workshops. I attended a Conservation and Museum Exhibition Workshop presented by The Getty Center, L.A., and completed courses presented by the Balboa Art Conservation Center on Disaster Response and Preparation, Protecting Collections on Display and in Storage, and Surveying and Evaluation Preservation Needs. I continue to volunteer for SOHO in my spare time.

I was hired by the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department as a Seasonal Ranger at Heritage Park in 2001. My duties included interpretation of a historic site, implementing docent training programs and special events, grounds maintenance, and assisting the Site Supervisor in all aspects of running the park. In 2003 I was hired as a full-time Park Ranger at Heritage. During that time I received my Wilderness First Responder and Peace Officer Standardized Training Certifications.

Here at Penasquitos, I am looking forward to many new experiences. Paul Kucharczyk, Supervising Park Ranger at Penasquitos, is a wealth of information on the native species of this canyon, and I hope to improve upon my interpretive skills from him. I am thrilled to be working with P.J. Piburn, our wonderful live-in volunteer, on the La Vida Del Rancho school program, which brings history alive to 4th graders from all over the County. I am equally thrilled to be working with Lynne Christenson, our County Parks Historian, on implementing a program to furnish the adobe with period pieces. I also have much to learn from the rest of the volunteers and staff at Penasquitos: Alex Bedoya, Kelly Kwast, Dick Stevens, and Gale Withrow.

Most of my fondest memories as a young child involve camping and hiking with my family all over the Western United States. I remember going to "Ranger talks" and being fascinated by all of the information. I feel so lucky to be Ranger today in such a beautiful preserve. It is a absolute pleasure to come to work everyday. Please stop in to say hello and introduce yourself anytime!

**Friends' Redesigned
Website at
www.penasquitos.org**

(Rattlesnake cont'd)

knowing exactly what kind of snake it is.

If your pet is bitten, reactions vary with the size of the animal, where on the body they were bit and how much venom was injected. It's important to get your pet to a Veterinarian immediately; there is an antivenom for pets as well. Know where the emergency clinics are in your neighborhood or the area you may be visiting.

Don't let your fear keep you from enjoying the outdoors. For all their fearsome reputation, rattlesnakes are quite shy and do not come after people. They'll strike only in self-defense. If you can learn to behave in a way that does not frighten snakes, you will greatly reduce your chances of a confrontation. Here are some common-sense suggestions:

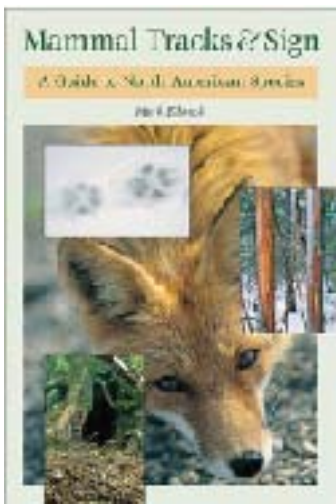
- Stay on the designated trails, this enables you to see where you're walking, preventing you from surprising a snake and/or stepping on one.
- Keep pets leashed (it's the law); Dogs are curious and fascinated with rattlesnakes, they will take every opportunity to put their nose in a hole. If they're off leash, their chances of encountering a snake are greater and the results can be both costly and deadly.
- If you'll be hiking in a remote area, don't hike alone.
- Always wear sturdy shoes with socks when you are out walking in grassy or rocky areas. Don't allow children to run outside barefoot.
- Don't ever put your hands or feet anywhere you aren't looking. Don't put your hands on rocks or branches over your head, and don't put your hands or feet under anything. Snakes usually pick up the vibrations of feet and walking sticks and get out of the way, but sometimes don't.
- If you have to turn over a rock or log, turn it toward you, keeping your hands on your side of the log, not reaching over it. If it's in your path, walk around it; don't step over it (a snake might be lying on the other side).
- Don't try to catch snakes. This may sound obvious, but most snakebites happen this way. Wild snakes do not make good pets and should never be killed. Remember that collecting or harming any wildlife in parks and open spaces is against the law and hazardous.

Common sense is the best defense. Cultivate an attitude of alertness. The more you know about snakes and how they live, the more aware you will be of where you would expect to encounter them.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding City of San Diego Open Space Parks, policies, wildlife, volunteer opportunities, etc., please contact Senior Park Ranger Lori Gerbac at 858-538-8082.

The San Diego Tracking Team

Speaker Series Presents



Mark Elbroch

Tracker, Naturalist & Author

Friday, August 19th, 2005

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

refreshments & books for purchase from 6:30 pm

Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center
One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, 92119

donations appreciated



Mark Elbroch will be presenting a visual and anecdotal account of the emerging field of wildlife tracking in North America. Using images which stir the mind and spirit, and his stories of traveling and tracking with traditional Bushman and Shongaans hunters and professional trackers, he will explore how we, as a country, might move forward in creating a greater recognition for what wildlife tracking might offer today's American communities. Explore Bushman culture, the southern and central Kalahari and meet the real people who live there today. See and feel the Kruger National Park as Mark recounts adventures trailing lions and leopards-of tracking right in on them! Learn of how birds communicate danger and how tracking is being revived in a modern economy where conservation and ecotourism are gaining greater momentum. Learn also of the tracker evaluation, the system recognized by African governments to sift out the most competent native trackers for employment in various jobs, a system Mark works to help bring to North America in the coming year. Please join us as Mark shares his excitement and passion for wildlife tracking with the San Diego community, and better understand how tracking and organizations such as the San Diego Tracking Team might better contribute to science, to people, and to communities such as our own.

About Mark Elbroch

Mark is the author of *Mammal Tracks and Sign: A Guide to North American Species*, lead author of *Bird Tracks and Sign: A Guide to North American Species*, and coauthor of *Animal Tracks of New England*. He has an additional four books on the way, including: Coauthor, *Peterson's Field Guide to Animal Tracks and Skulls: A Guide to North American Species*. Mark has contributed to numerous research projects in North America, from monitoring collared black bears, to capturing and collaring cougar, to live capturing and censusing small mammals. Mark is also providing the Cybertracker Conservation tracker evaluation tests, to certify qualified trackers in North America. In the creation of the first international standards for wildlife trackers, Louis Liebenberg in South Africa and Mark here in the U.S. hope to see trackers contribute more to field research in the future.

San Diego Tracking Team (760) 715-4102 sdtt.org

Rattlesnake Awareness

Lori C. Gerbac, Sr. Park Ranger

[Editor's note: San Diego County is home to one other venomous snake other than Rattlers, a little-known snake named the Lyre Snake (*Trimorphodon biscutatus*). Because its venom is injected through grooved teeth that are at the back of its jaw and it has a small head it's thought to be no danger to humans. Largely nocturnal, this editor has only seen one in 20 years, a dead one at that! – Mike Kelly.]

Rattlesnakes are not as dangerous as most people think. They're actually shy and secretive animals that choose to avoid confrontations with people and are seldom seen. That does NOT mean, however, that you shouldn't be cautious when hiking, back-packing, or exploring open space areas. If you do see one, leave it alone because, if cornered, it will defend itself.

How most people feel about rattlesnakes is based on the fact that they are not "cute and cuddly." Because they are fierce looking and can bite, and because their warning rattle can startle us, we fear them as a threat and a menace . . . to be avoided and, sometimes killed at all cost.

Rattlesnakes, however, have been on this earth quite a bit longer than humans and serve a very important function in the natural cycle of things. Without them, for example, we just might be over-run with rodents. Eighty percent of a rattlesnake's diet is made up of rodents and, in any given year, they might eat as much as 25% of the rodent population in any given area.

In our area the only venomous snakes dangerous to people are rattlesnakes. In the coastal and mountain regions of San Diego County there are three kinds: the Southern Pacific Rattlesnake, Southwestern Speckled Rattlesnake, and the Red Diamond Rattlesnake. In the desert there is the Colorado Desert Sidewinder.

The Red Diamond Rattlesnake (see photo) is one of the largest rattlers in the region. The longest on record measures a little over 5 feet, but most



Red Diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber ruber*). Note the 'coon tail': black and white rings. This species is becoming rare in some areas. Photo taken in Peñasquitos Lagoon by Mike

individuals are in the 2½ to 3½ foot range. Their diet typically consists of rodents, rabbits, and other small mammals, but can include birds.

Its coloration sets it apart from other rattlesnake species in our area, and makes it easy to recognize. The body is a reddish or tan color with a light edged diamond pattern on its back. A distinctive black and white ringed tail finishes the effect, sometimes called a 'coon tail'. The young start their lives gray, and become redder as they mature. Some individuals from the inland valleys develop a striking brick red color.

It's temperature, not time of day that determines how active a rattlesnake is. In southern California, we don't have that much of a temperature differential between winter and summer, so you could see rattlesnakes at just about any time (though they do get lethargic in the cooler months of January and February). Reptiles do not go into true hibernation. The short version is: if it's warm enough (over 50°F), the snakes will be out, no matter what time of day or year it is.

If you think you hear a rattlesnake : **STAND STILL!** Avoid jumping or running blindly. Look carefully until you locate the snake and then make your move. Remember that harmless snakes, moving in dry leaves and grass, can sound a lot like rattlesnakes rattling.

If you, or someone you know is bitten, immobilize the affected area and don't panic. Get the bite victim to a doctor immediately. Don't try any of the old remedies like cutting the bite and sucking out the venom, or using a snakebite kit (research has shown these techniques to be counterproductive). Your best bet is a doctor and anti-venom. If you are unsure if the snake is a poisonous species, treat it as a medical emergency anyway. Don't chase the snake. The antivenom treatment for a rattlesnake bite does not require knowing what species of rattlesnake it is. Therefore, the emergency medical staff should be able to identify the characteristics of a bite without

(Sky cont'd)

beginning of the year and mating takes place in the first quarter. Eggs are laid for the most part in March and incubation averages 41–45 days, both parents taking part (although the female performs over 80% of it). This brings hatching time to the last half of April.

Banding baby Golden Eagles takes place in the nest itself before the eaglet fledges. Eagle nests are generally quite large — large enough for a human to stand in most of the time. Fledging takes place around the tenth week. They're too young until the third or fourth week. Thus the crucial month of May. Forty plus pairs are a load to survey for such a short time frame.

To make the process “easier” the nests are located on high rocky cliffs or in very high trees. Cliff nests can be reached by climbing up the rock faces

or rappelling down. Tree nests require climbing spikes to reach. Of course both types of nests are mostly located in remote parts of the county. Long hikes are needed to get to many of them, although a few can be driven to.

The best news for the hiker, tracker, naturalist —outdoors people of all types, comes after the babies fledge. For the next few months, through mid-fall actually, the parents will be teaching their young the intricacies of hunting — of survival. When being schooled in the fine art of tracking by Barry, Lee, Ann, and Karen each has mentioned the need to keep an occasional eye to the sky. This will be especially rewarding in the next few months — especially in a year of a population explosion of small mammals and raptors.



Photo
courtesy of
Dave
Bittner,
Wildlife
Research
Institute.

Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training

Date: July 16

Time: 9:45 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Contact for information: (760) 715-4142 or visit www.sdt.org.

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe (Ranch House), located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Purpose of the surveys

These wildlife surveys have provided important data on the presence or absence of certain species of wildlife such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, etc., as well as their frequency in a given area. The data has been used in policy making decisions concerning wildlife tunnels, linkages, undercrossings, road opening/closures and more. Your help is needed to expand these surveys to more places in the county. Join us!



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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858-484-3219

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Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15

Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100

Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

Volunteer to help the committee (call to discuss)

Hikes

Indian Culture

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 7/2005

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.

Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451

Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937

Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527

Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,

Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman

Newsletter: Mike Kelly

Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki

Stream Survey Committee: open

Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins

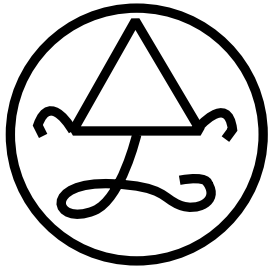
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584

Volunteer Coordinator:

Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489

Webmaster: open

Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Sept./ Oct. 2005

Volume 19, No. 5

Friends' Annual Meeting

Bugs!

Saturday, October 22

7 pm: social. Free food!

7:30 pm: annual meeting
to elect new officers

7:45 pm: Guest speaker

Bugs. They can drive us crazy but we can't live without them! They are also endlessly fascinating. Find out about San Diego's rich variety of spectacular bugs in a powerpoint presentation by Michael Klein, a field biologist with Klein-Edwards Professional Services. Many of you may know Michael from his fascinating talks and black-light

See p. 4 for more

Yerba Mansa

Will Bowen, PhD

Yerba Mansa (*Anemopsis californica*), sometimes called Lizard's tail, is one of my favorite plants of the riparian or streamside habitat of Peñasquitos Canyon. Yerba Mansa is a low growing plant with a creeping rootstock that sends out runners in all directions and will colonize a whole area of the streamside. This plant is known for its beautiful white flower with a snow cone spike. The white flower petals begin to "bleed" or turn red in splotches and speckles as the season wears on. By the heat of early fall the plant foliage also turns red, dries up, and withers to the ground, until its rejuvenation with the return of the following spring.

See p. 6 for more

Highlights Inside

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Picnic Area Restoration	4
Trail Restoration at Black Mountain	5
Puncheon at Black Mtn.	6
Wildlife Survey	7
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Mule deer buck with a nice rack caught in San Diego Tracking Team remote camera at night in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Remote photo by Rick Botta

Mule Deer Spotlight Survey Resumes

Rick Botta

In 1997, the Friend's Tracking Team began a Mule Deer survey, designed to provide data on the deer population within the Preserve and, over time, help us identify trends within that population. Specifically, the study hopes to answer questions such as:

- How many deer are estimated to be in the Preserve?
- What is an approximate ratio of bucks to does and fawns to does?
- Where are the primary use areas at different times of the year?
- Is the deer population being impacted by the surrounding development?

After a multi-year hiatus period and with four years of baseline data for comparison, the survey resumed this July. Since we last performed our survey, there has been

See p. 7 for more

Is It Ever Going To Cool Off?

Since the hot weather shows no signs of abating any time soon better stick to the early morning, and evening walks. If you do go out in the daytime be sure to take extra water, a hat with a broad brim or long visor, and stop to rest in the shade.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds.

La Cocina Gift Shop Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

September

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Thur., Sept. 8, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Sept. 10, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the

historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Volunteer Trail Building at Black Mtn. Park

Sat., Sept. 10, 8–noon. Join the San Diego Mountain Biking Assoc. and Black Mtn. Open Space Park staff to work on new singletrack trails. Take I-15 to the Camino Del Norte exit, go west. Turn left on Bernardo Center Drive and go until it dead ends at the gate. There is a new middle school - park in the parking lot and look for the SDMBA and Black Mountain Bicycles signs. For more info contact Dave Wenk at dave@sdmdba.com.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Sept. 11, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thurs., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sun., Sept. 18, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Sensory Awareness Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., Sept. 18, 3–4:30 p.m. The purpose of this walk is to discover or re-discover the canyon through the sens-

Map of Preserve is available at www.penasquitos.org or go to www.cityofsandiego.com & navigate to the open space park link & Los Peñasquitos.

es. Instead of simply tromping through the canyon, we will slow down and attend to details through experiments with looking, listening, touching, tasting, smelling, and sensing. This will lead to states of inner quiet, openness, presence, and receptivity. We may taste or smell a wild rose petal or feel the weight and smoothness of a stream cobble or listen to the birds and insects or intuit what is in the bush or around the bend in the road. This walk will appeal to those interested in Zen or Taoism and can shed light on the intuitive aspects of Native American tracking. Meets at West End Parking Staging Area. Meet at West End Parking Staging Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of the Coaster station. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Night Walk in López Canyon with Mike Kelly

Fri., Sept. 23, 7–9 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for this evening walk in López Canyon. Chance to see wildlife. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. Wear hiking boots, bring insect repellent, and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., Sept. 27, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

October

Explore Soledad Canyon with Mike Kelly

Sun., Oct. 2, 9–11 am. Never heard of Soledad Canyon? Join Mike Kelly for this exploratory walk in a little known San Diego Canyon. See the wildlife corridor that connects Marine Corps Airstation Miramar with Soledad, Carrol, and Penasquitos Canyons and Torrey Pines State Reserve. Meet on Nancy Ridge Road in Miramar. Take I-805 to Mira Mesa Blvd exit. Go one block

east to Scranton Rd., then left on Carroll Canyon Rd and right up Nancy Ridge Road. Proceed until you see a chain blocked gate road on your right and park. Wear hiking boots, bring insect repellent, and water. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (F7).**

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Oct. 8, 8–10 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Oct. 9, 8:30 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Sensory Awareness Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., Oct. 9, 3–4:30 p.m. The purpose of this walk is to discover or re-discover the canyon through the senses.

Instead of simply tromping through the canyon, we will slow down and attend to details through experiments with looking, listening, touching, tasting, smelling, and sensing. This will lead to states of inner quiet, openness, presence, and receptivity. We may taste or smell a wild rose petal or feel the weight and smoothness of a stream cobble or listen to the birds and insects or intuit what is in the bush or around the bend in the road. This walk will appeal to those interested in Zen or Taoism and can shed light on the intuitive aspects of Native American tracking. Meets at West End Parking Staging Area. Meet at West End Parking Staging Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of the Coaster station. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Native Plant Sale

Sat., Oct. 15, 9:15 a.m.– 1 p.m. This annual plant sale is hosted by the Calif. Native Plant Society and takes place in the Case del Prado courtyard across from the west entrance of the Natural History Museum in Balboa Park.. Visit <http://www.cnpsd.org/plantsale.html#Fall> for more details.

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sun., Oct. 16, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Bugs of Peñasquitos Canyon: Annual Meeting of the Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon

Sat., Oct. 22, 7 p.m. Social. 7:30 p.m. Presentation by Michael Klein, a field biologist with Klein-Edwards Professional Services. Many of you may know Michael from his fascinating talks and black-light adventures at local parks such as Blue Sky and Rose Canyon. He is a self-trained entomologist, with a specialization in lepidoptera (butterflies and moths). He'll talk about insects of San Diego County, and help us learn about some of the smaller creatures which we might encounter hiking in and around Penasquitos Canyon. Arrive early for a good seat. Light refreshments will be served. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., Oct. 25, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7.**

DIRECTIONS

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area
In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours
Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area
Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area
South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).**

Picnic Area Restoration Eagle Project

Hello Friends of the Canyon!

My name is Jason Murray, I'm 17 years old, and a Life Scout and Senior Patrol Leader in B.S.A. troop 622 (located in Rancho Peñasquitos). Ever since I moved to PQ about 7 years ago, Peñasquitos Canyon has been my favorite place to hike, bike, and learn in, using the trails, plants and wildlife to fulfill many of my requirements as I have advanced through the ranks of scouting. When it came time to do my Eagle Project, my first choice was to

tential safety hazards included a razor wire fence running through the brush in the back of the area, and a support cable for a power line stood right next to tables (a tripping or climbing hazard for children).

The picnic area should be a nice place. It has a huge pepper tree growing next to it, providing shade for the entire area, and it's surrounded by the wilderness of the canyon. It's also in a convenient location, at the head of the trail, and should be heavily used. But

planned and dug a drainage ditch to rout rainwater away from the tables and out into the brush. Also, we installed a 64 foot split rail fence along the back of the area, to define and separate it from the undeveloped brush of the canyon (as well as to protect it's users from the razor wire). Also, we had three yards of decomposed granite (DG) spread out on the ground in the main area of the tables. The DG will not only help defend against weeds from growing back in, but, like the fence, also makes the area look inviting, set aside, and cared for.

Finally, on Sunday, after scraping and sanding the old material off, the workers and I re-painted the four tables and pulled the last of the weeds away from the area. By the end of the second day, the project was finished, and the area seemed completely transformed. It had gone from an unplanned and overgrown spot for a few picnic tables to an inviting, planned and cared for area that is perfect for visitors of the canyon to stop by and enjoy. The success of this project would not have been possible without the contributions from the Friends of the Peñasquitos Canyon. I would like to offer them, and everyone who has helped my sincerest thanks for their support of my project!



give something back to the Canyon that I have enjoyed so much.

I met with the Supervising County Park Ranger Paul Kucharczyk, and he told me about a picnic site in the staging area that had become run down and needed some major improvement. For anyone not familiar with the staging area, it's located where Mercy Road meets Black Mountain Road, and the picnic area itself is just below the lower parking lot. Before my project, the picnic area had become overgrown with weeds, the paint had worn off of the tables, and rain water had dug drainage ruts through the area. Po-

because it has been run down, the potential of the area just wasn't being met.

With the help of the rangers, scouts, advisors within my troop and generous contributions from the Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the PQ Town Council, I devised and carried out a plan to redefine and restore the picnic area. The project was carried out on the weekend of August 20th and 21st, and was a great success. We cut down bushes, raked away grass, and pulled out all of the weeds from the ground, and used excess gravel to level out the area. We

Despite some false starts, the Friends' Website at www.penasquitos.org is finally up and running. Test drive it!



Please Help Us Open New Singletrack Trails!

San Diego
Mountain Biking
Association



The San Diego Mountain Biking Association and the staff of the Black Mountain Open Space Park invite you to participate in a volunteer trail maintenance work event.

Saturday, September 10th, 8:30 am - 12 noon
Black Mountain Park

Please join us to help maintain and preserve some of the best hiking and biking trails in North County! We'll supply the tools; all you'll need to bring is a pair of work gloves, water, and a desire to make a difference.

About Black Mountain Park

Black Mountain Park is one of the City of San Diego's open space preserves. In 2001, the park doubled in size from approximately 500 acres to over 1000 acres. Last year, it again doubled in size with the addition of 1300 more acres. Eventually, it will comprise over 3000 acres and dozens of miles of multi-use trails.

For the mountain biking community, Black Mountain Park is important for three reasons. First, it could someday constitute the majority of the trail system linking the 140-mile Sea-to-Sea Trail to the 55-mile Coast-to-Crest Trail. Second, its terrain presents mountain bikers with Cuyamaca-like terrain without leaving the city limits. Finally, it comprises some of the last pristine native habitat in urban San Diego.

Sponsor

Once again, **Black Mountain Bicycles**, 9158 Mira Mesa Blvd, www.blackmountainbicycles.com, is sponsoring our trail work event. Upon the conclusion of trail work, swag donated by Black Mountain Bicycles will be awarded by random drawing - all participants are eligible to win!



STILL TIME TO WIN A HARO Extreme X2!!

SDMBA and Haro Bikes are teaming up to award a new 2004 mountain bike to the individual with the most volunteer hours worked by the end of the year. This event is one of only three regularly scheduled volunteer opportunities remaining on the calendar, and even if you haven't done any trail work this year you can still win!

Directions

Take I-15 to the Camino Del Norte exit, go west. Turn left on Bernardo Center Drive and go until it dead ends at the gate. There is a new middle school - park in the parking lot and look for the SDMBA and Black Mountain Bicycles signs.

More Information

Dave Wenk, SDMBA Black Mountain Park Liaison
dave@sdmba.com

Black Mountain

Puncheon on Canyon Rim Trail

Ranger Tom Miller

On July 23rd and 24th, Eagle Scout Robert Badewitz led a group of scouts to install a puncheon on the Canyon Rim Trail. This is a small wooden bridge (see **photo below**) with no hand rails that crosses a ravine on the trail. It improves the safety of the trail, especially for hikers and mountain bikers.

This project is remarkable in that it was only a few months ago that I presented this idea to Robert. He immediately worked very hard to get all the planning, approvals, and fundraising completed. In addition, he enlisted Bill Witzel (a retired engineer, expert on puncheons, and park volunteer) to help with the design and construction. The result was a well constructed bridge that should stand the test of time and be there for years to come. Bill also was instrumental in facilitating a large donation that helped pay for this project and with funds left over for other future scout projects.

Special thanks to Robert, Bill, Eagle Scouts, and every one who contributed to this project. If you or your organization is looking for an opportunity to participate in a volunteer project, contact Tom Miller at 858-538-8021 for more information.



Scout Robert Badewitz and his crew sitting on their Puncheon, built to improve trail usage in Black Mountain Open Space Park.

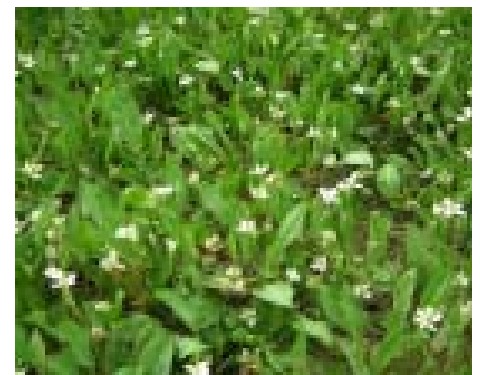
(Yerba mansa cont'd)

This plant was one of the most important to the early inhabitants of California. It was used for many complaints. The fresh leaves were bound into a poultice and placed on cuts and bruises. Leaves, which were purposely "bruised" (tapped with a stone until the inner juice released) were placed on swellings. Hot tea made from the leaves was used as a blood purifier or cleanser and to treat colds. The leaf tea water was also used as a wash for sore feet and muscular pains. The fresh stem was chewed raw for sore throat. Skin disorders were washed with a tea of the roots. The dried leaves were powdered and sprinkled on wounds from knife, gunshot, or barbed wire. **Closeup of a flower is shown to the right.**

If you touch a cut stem of Yerba Mansa to your tongue it will feel slightly numb for a short time. I once used this plant to successfully treat a tooth abscess I was suffering from while walking the canyon. I placed a piece of the stem on the gum next to the infected tooth. Shortly afterward the pain stopped and within about an hour the swelling went down. It was quite effective.

I really like the fragrance of this plant — it has a wonderful pungent spicy odor which is pure delight. The bleeding of the white leaves in many different intricate patterns is also a very pleasing sight.

You can find this plant along Peñasquitos Creek in many places. There is also a nice stand of it under the trees at the opening of López Canyon. See if you can spot this plant next time you are out in the canyon.



Expanse of Yerba mansa.
Photo by Will Bowen

(Deer study cont'd)

significant build-out of the Del Mar Mesa area, significant habitat restoration in various locations within the Preserve and alteration of the flow of Peñasquitos Creek due to flooding and erosion. Whether these events have had an effect on the Mule Deer population will require several more years of data collection to determine.

Based upon an initial analysis, the data collected during the July survey period appears to be relatively consistent with data collected previously. The most observed Mule Deer on any one night during the recent July 2005 survey was 49. This is less than our previously observed one night high of 63 in July 2000, but is more than were observed during other nights in July surveys in the past. Fawn sightings did not appear to be drastically different than in the past. In fact, the wet weather of last fall and winter may have helped the fawing rate for this year. Besides continuing to look at the population trend over time, the July 2005 survey did identify a few areas to keep an eye on in the future:

- At least two areas in the Preserve where deer were previously observed were devoid of sightings during the most recent survey. Whether this continues to be a trend (and, if so, why) or was simply an anomaly will be determined as we collect more data.
- Very few bucks were observed this period as compared to the past, re-

(Bugs cont'd)

adventures at local parks such as Blue Sky and Rose Canyon. He's a self-trained entomologist, with a specialization in lepidoptera (butterflies and moths). He'll talk about insects of San Diego County, and help us learn about some of the smaller creatures which we might encounter hiking in and around Penasquitos Canyon. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.**

sulting in a lower buck-to-doe ratio. It is likely that this is an anomaly specific to this period since recent remote sensing camera photos indicate there are bucks in numerous areas of the Preserve.

So, what's on the horizon for the Mule Deer Study in the near future? Our next survey period will be in the Fall. At this time, we will introduce hand-held computers and GPS receivers as the primary means of data collection. Many thanks to Doug Hansen who modified the CyberTracker program used in the Tracking Team's wildlife surveys for use in our deer survey. Use of the modified CyberTracker software will greatly simplify the entry of the survey data into our database. We are also looking into grant sources to help us expand these surveys to areas outside the Preserve and to assist in a more detailed data analysis.

I would like to express a special thank you to the following individuals who assisted in the July 2005 survey counts: Randy Botta, Lee and Betty Kirchhevel, Mike Kelly and Bill Wittzell. Special thanks also to City Ranger Gina Washington and County Rangers Autumn Acker and Alex Bedoya for their contributions and support of the study.

Tracker/Naturalist Classes Beginning Training September 22 & 24

This combination of a week day evening and a Saturday daytime class will help you develop your tracking and awareness skills, how to move in nature, and develop techniques for recognizing habitat and associated flora and fauna. All this and more as you become better in tune with our environment. Sponsored by the San Diego Tracking Team. There is a small fee for the classes. Visit www.sdt.org for more information on these and other classes.

Fall Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training: Free!

Date: October 15
Time: 9:45 a.m. until 4 p.m.
Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Contact for information: (760) 715-4102 or visit www.sdt.org.

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

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It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Purpose of the surveys

These wildlife surveys have provided important data on the presence or absence of certain species of wildlife such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, mule deer, etc., as well as their frequency in a given area. The data has been used in policy making decisions concerning wildlife tunnels, linkages, undercrossings, road opening/closures and more. Your help is needed to expand these surveys to more places in the county. Join us!



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Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



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I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 9/2005

Name(s) _____

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Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.

Friends' Directory

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- President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
- Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
- Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
- Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

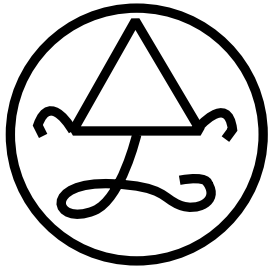
Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly,
Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

- Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly
- Plant Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki
- Stream Survey Committee: open
- Voice Mail System: Pat Watkins
- Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
- Volunteer Coordinator:
- Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
- Webmaster: open
- Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Nov./Dec. 2005

Volume 19, No. 6

Fire on the Mountain

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

Labor Day, Sept. 5, 2005, saw a 150-acre fire burn the southern flank of Black Mountain Open Space Park (see overview photo on p. 4). The fire was reported by the Fire Dept. to have been started by teenagers playing with a "potato gun" next to the grassland where the fire began.

Although understandably frightening to local residents, no houses were burned. As the photo reveals, the Fire Dept. had a series of paved and dirt roads and trails from which to fight the fire, which they did effectively. Of course, Santa Ana winds would have changed the whole situation against

See p. 3 for more

Scout Projects in the Preserve

County Ranger Autumn Acker

On Saturday, October 15th, two Eagle Scout projects went into full swing here at Peñasquitos Canyon. In the staging area, at Mercy and Black Mountain, scout Daniel Riley began installing the first four of ten new hitching posts for our equestrian visitors while scout Connor Poole began the restoration process of the trail from the Ranch House to Ranch House crossing. On Sunday, Connor also tackled the single track trail from Ranch House crossing, to the main south trail. It was a flurry of activity that resulted in some striking improvements for our many park visitors.

A few months back, the hitching

See p. 6 for more

Highlights Inside

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Beginner Tracker / Naturalist Class	7
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Restoration Planting

Sunday, Nov. 13, 1 - 4 p.m.

Join the Friends and local scouts in planting native plants in our multi-year project along the Trans-County Trail. Meet at the Ranger Headquarters by the trailers in the Equestrian Center at the junction of Mercy and Black Mountain Roads. The trailers are located on the northeast corner of this intersection.

Bring your own personal tools and gloves if you prefer, or let us supply them for you. Bring sun protection and water and a snack.

The Trans-County Trail will one day stretch from Torrey Pines Beach all the way to the Anza-Borrego Visitor's Center! The scrub oaks, lemonadeberries, giant wild rye, and other natives will make hiking, cycling, or horseback riding along the trail a more enjoyable experience.

If you need service hours for your school or church be sure to bring your paperwork with you.

Call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 or email him at mkellysd@aol.com for more information.



Scout Daniel Riley installed the hitching post pictured above, one of two recent scout projects in the Preserve.

Cool Weather Fine for Hiking Any Time of the Day!

Cool weather means we no longer have to seek the shade of the forest or cooler times of the day to hike. Enjoy our fall colors, especially in López Canyon or the Sycamore Crossing part of the main canyon.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

November

Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Cte.

Thur., Nov. 10, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Nov. 12, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sun., Nov. 13, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and

back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Peñasquitos Preserve Citizens' Advisory Comm.

Thurs., Nov. 17, 7 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Beginning Tracker /Naturalist Class

November 17th & 19th. (Class is one weeknight, 7 pm - 9 pm and one Saturday, 8 am - 6 pm.) Love wildlife & nature? Learn the art and science of mammal tracking and nature awareness skills! The class is sponsored by the San Diego Tracking Team. No experience required! Cost: \$50.00. Call 760-715-4102 for information and registration. See website for updates and info: www.sdtt.org.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Nov. 20, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Nov. 20, 9 – noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Soledad Canyon: Then and Now Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., Nov. 20, 10 – noon. Take a walk in a beautiful, rarely visited canyon. Learn about habitats, native plants, invasives, and needs for restoration. Find out about the history of the canyon—as pueblo land, the coming of the railroad, and early adobe dwellings. End up at the ruins of the Pierre Bovet adobe and explore around. Meet near the Fire Station at the corner of Scranton and Carroll Canyon in Mira Mesa.. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (E7)**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., Nov. 22, 7 p.m. Members are

Map of Preserve is available at www.penasquitos.org or go to www.cityofsandiego.com & navigate to the open space park link & Los Peñasquitos.

welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

December

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., Dec. 4, 9 – noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Lopez Canyon Homestead Hike with Will Bowen

Sun., Dec. 18, 10 – 12 p.m. Hike out into Lopez canyon to visit the ruins of the Lopez Homestead -- a turn of the century dairy farm. Find out about the Lopez family and their place in early San Diego history. Explore the ruins of the old house, barn, milking station, and smoke house. Learn about how and where they grazed the cattle and how they got the milk to market. Meet at West End Parking Staging Area. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C/D 5)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Dec. 10, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sat., Dec. 10, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

DIRECTIONS

(Fire cont'd)

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).**

the firefighters. Santa Ana winds were the driving force behind the Cedar Fire.

Biologically, the fire did little or no harm and may have helped our habitats. The fields where the fire started were a mix of native and non-native grasslands. The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve have been using some grant money obtained from a toxic spill fine to control invasive weeds in these very fields for the past two years.

The invasive weeds in these fields included Artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*), Sweet fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), Wild oats (*Avena* spp.), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*) and others.

Native species include the perennial bunch grass (*Nasella pulcra*), the beautiful bulb, Blue-eye grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malvaeflora* ssp. *sparsifolia*), the spectacular magenta Canchalagua (*Centaureum venustum*), Blue dicks, also known as Indian potatoes because of their food value (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), Mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendans*), and other species.

Fire impacts

These native species all do well with fire. It clears away thatch and opens up the ground surface for the seed of these species to grow new plants. The bunch grass and bulbs were below ground during the fire and untouched by it. The ash from the fire provides vital nutrients and robust growth for a couple of years after the fire.

But, and it's a big but after fires, when invasive weed seed is present in what we call the "seed bank" in the soil these weeds can explode after fires, swamping native seed. In areas that burn frequently we have seen wholesale conversions of native habitat to non-native weeds. An explosion of weeds after a fire has two negative impacts. First is the loss of native habitat. In Riverside County, for example, we've already seen a significant loss of native habitats to increased fire frequency. Second, and this might surprise our readers, is fuel for subsequent fires.

When weedy species dominate after a fire they increase the likelihood of future fires. How does this work?

Fine fuel for future fires

Weedy species like those listed above die each year and form what's called a "flashy" fuel. Flashy fuels are easy to ignite fuels. Dry grasses are the quintessential flashy fuel. The weedy species listed earlier are bigger and more substantial than the native species found in a grassland. They die each year and stand upright, making a quick to burn fuel. By contrast, the native species also die back, but with the exception of bunch grass, they are in-substantial and lay down flat on the ground and wither away. They don't make a good dry season fuel. Even the native bunch grass stays green longer than non-native grasses and requires a higher temperature to ignite it.

Prevention

The work the Friends have overseen for the last two years in these grasslands has significantly depleted the seed bank of weedy species. And, since the fire, the Friends have sent their contractor into the area twice to spray emerging weeds. This intervention against the weeds should push the grasslands more towards native species and away from flashier non-native weed species.

In the rest of the burn area to the east, most of the coastal sage scrub and chaparral shrub species will resprout from their crowns. New growth is already emerging around the bases of the burned shrubs. From a distance it looks like a wasteland, but up close you can begin to see the signs of rejuvenation, the bright green of new growth in sharp contrast to the blackened stumps.

This winter and spring you'll see lots of flowers emerge in the space between these shrubs, most of them not present in recent years because the canopy of established shrubs prevented their emergence. We may even see some "fire followers," plant species that require a fire to cause their seed to germinate. They bloom for 1 – 3 years after a fire, put seed into the soil seed bank, and may not be seen until decades later! The Friends will organize a hike in this area this spring. Join us!

**To see the Friends'
newsletter in color,
visit
www.penasquitos.org!**



Penasquitos fire of Labor Day, Sept. 5, 2005. About 150 acres burned. The fire began next to the dirt road that runs on the east side of the Mt. Carmel High School playing fields and burned east and north along the southern flank of Black Mountain. Photo by City Ranger Lori Charett

California Wild Rose

Will Bowen, PhD

Most of us enjoy a fragrant showy rose. We plant them in our gardens. We give them as gifts. They are an important part of our culture and an important symbol for us.

I wonder if you know that we have a native rose bush growing right in our own canyon. It is called the California Wild Rose or *Rosa californica* (*rosa* is the ancient Latin name for rose). It has small pink flowers, is very fragrant (pink roses are supposed to be the moist odiferous!), and it produces an abundance of nutritious rose hips.

The California Wild Rose grows below 6000 feet, often in canyons near moist places, through out the state, west of the Sierra. It is a sprawling bush or shrub ranging from 3-6 feet in height. You can view examples of this plant in a long stand near Wagon Wheel Crossing in Penasquitos Canyon or just to the left of the portable restroom at the West End Parking Staging area.

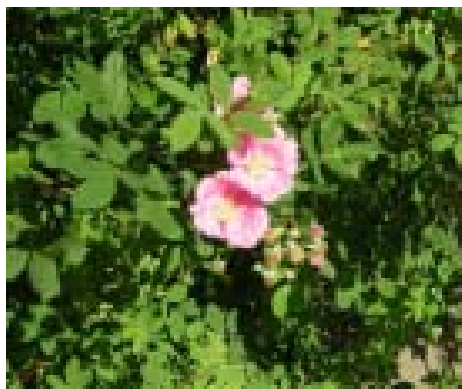
The California Wild Rose bush looks like an amorphous tangle of branches, stems and leaves. It is a favorite hiding place for rabbits and wood rats. The leaves are light to dark green with a reddish tinge on the margins. They are alternative compound, with 5-7 leaflets, oval in shape, and have fine teeth along the edges. The stems are a red-brown with the older thicker branches looking more like wood bark. The stems have down turned thorns which Munz calls "recurved prickles." The flowers resemble the cultivated rose but are smaller and have only 5 petals. They range from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. Sometimes the California Rose has white flowers but I have only seen pink flowers in our canyon. The flowers bloom May thru August with fruit following. The rose hips or seed bearing fruits are a deep shiny red and urn-shaped, about $\frac{1}{2}$ inches long.

The rose has been important to people since ancient times. The Romans associated the red rose with Jupiter, king of the gods, and the white rose with Diana, the goddess of the moon. Returning Roman heroes were often given wreaths of roses to wear. When

Cleopatra invited Mark Anthony to her palace she had the floors covered with rose petals to help create an atmosphere conducive to love.

According to Christian legend, the rose grew thorns only after Adam and Eve were thrown out of the Garden of Eden. Christians associate the white rose with Mary and the red rose with the blood of martyrs. Some believe that Jesus' Crown of Thorns was made from rose stems.

Over the years in western society the red rose as a symbol has evolved to stand for love and devotion while the white rose now means silence and



discretion. Regarding the white rose, the legal profession has the term "sub rosa" meaning under the rose, referring to the white rose that was painted on the ceilings of certain meeting rooms. The meetings or negotiations which took place in these rooms were meant to be kept confidential.

References to the rose are found throughout literature. Do you know who uttered the famous line, "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet" or "My love is like a red red rose..." (Answers at end of article).

The rose has been used throughout the world as an herb. The Romans used rose as a cure for dog bite. Avicenna, father of Arabic Medicine, used rose petals and almonds in almost all of his herbal remedies. In ancient Persia, rose petals were mixed with honey for stomach pains. In China, rose petals were used to blacken eyebrows and for cooling fevers. In Scandinavian, rose hips were used to make medicinal soups.

North American Indian braves gathered rose petals for rubbing on the hair of their brides, making it shiny and black. Rose petals were also used by Native Americans to treat colds as a tea and were made into a salve to sooth sores in the mouth. An eye wash made from petals soaked in rainwater was used for sore eyes. The powder from dried crushed petals was applied to blisters and the inner bark was decocted to make a wash for boils.

The local Digueno Indians made a tea of the seeds for upset stomach or muscular pains, a tea of the petals for babies with fever, and a tea of the tender root shoots for colds. Sometimes they also mixed in elderberry blossoms with the rose petals. The old straight wood was fashioned into arrow shafts and the fiber from the bark was used to make twine.

The early Spanish Californians ate the rose hips raw or made a jelly out of them after the first frost had rendered them soft. Obviously, the early Spanish sailors should have gathered rose hips to treat the scurvy they often suffered from. In modern Mexican folk medicine, rose petal tea is used as a gargle for mouth inflammation and sores and to treat diarrhea as well as intestinal parasites and infections.

In Euro-American folk medicine, rose petals were mixed with peppermint, lemon peels, and linden flower to make a tea for arthritis. Rose petal tea was used to help dissolve gall stones, treat diarrhea, as an eye wash for sore or red scratchy eyes, and as a gargle for sore mouth. Inhaling rose oil was said to help regulate the menstrual cycle and to have calming effect on the mind. Rose water was splashed on rough dry skin because the astringent and cleansing properties had benefit for the skin. Dried rose petals were also used to make potpourri, perfumes, and sachets of a pleasant odor. During WW II, in England, rose hip syrup was used as a substitute for rarely available citrus fruits and helped save the lives of many undernourished babies.

Scientists have discovered that rose

See p. 6 for more

(Scout projects cont'd)

posts in the staging area were found to be rotted out after approximately 20 years of use. Scout Daniel Riley stepped up to the project of replacing the old posts with brand new ones. Digging the ten, three-foot deep holes necessary to begin posed quite a challenge, but ultimately they were dug with the help of a heavy duty excavator. On Saturday, Daniel and his fellow scouts carefully installed four new hitching posts and secured them with four to five 90 lb. bags of cement at each base. On Saturday, October 22nd, Daniel will return to complete the remaining six. These hitching posts will put the icing back on the cake of our equestrian friendly lower parking area.

After our extremely wet rainy season last year, many of our trails were flooded and washed out. Scout Connor Poole set out and completed a major trail restoration project which included both sides of trail from Ranch House crossing. The day before his project, 26 tons of aggregate were dropped off in order to fill the many ruts in the trail as a result of last years rain. Connor's team pruned back the foliage along the trails to accommodate both equestrian use and emergency vehicle use. They also distributed the aggregate with wheelbarrows to the appropriate areas, successfully filling two major wash outs and improving the trails overall usability.

These two projects are successful examples of the hard work and dedication that our local Eagle Scouts put into this canyon. Just in the past few months, the following projects have been completed: new mile markers were installed on both the north and south trails; two scouts each installed 150' of split rail along the entrance to the south trail in order to discourage new trails into the preserve; an equestrian kiosk has been installed in the staging area; the picnic area has been greatly improved with new split-rail, fresh paint on the tables, and a layer of DG on the ground; and an orange grove has been planted at the Ranch House as a symbol of the orchards once planted here. We thank our local scouts for all of their hard work. We will continue to work with and support their projects in the future.



Scout Connor Poole completed a series of improvements to fix flood damaged trails in the Preserve.

(Roses cont'd)

hips contain more Vitamin C, calcium, phosphorus, and iron than oranges. Rose hips also contain Vitamin E, B, and K. We know that Vitamin C helps to prevent cold, strengthens the body's healing function, and is good for the collagen. Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling thought lack of sufficient Vitamin C was behind many heart conditions and other afflictions. Kachina Kutenai, the Apache medicine woman, suggested that rose hips are good for glaucoma and cataracts. The bioflavonoids in rose hips would definitely improve the health of the little capillaries that feed the eye.

It is always amazing to me how many different uses people have found for plants. It seems like we have lost this knowledge, which once was common. I grew up in suburbia thinking plants were for decorating the exterior of homes. As I learned about herbs and went on herb walks, I soon discovered what plants have meant to people throughout the ages. I hope next time you view this plant you will consider its many values to mankind.

[Answers: (i) Juliet in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet (ii) The Scottish poet Robert Burns]



Above. The tractor/ dozer pictured above is a SWECO tractor. Designed for trail work, the SWECO will be shared by the City and County Parks Departments. Funds to purchase it were found due to the great efforts of County Supervisor Pam Slater and City Councilmembers Brian Maienshein and Scott Peters. Trails here we come!

Below. Pictured on the Miners' Loop Trail in Black Mountain Open Space Park are, left to right, with grubby clothes and jaw 'a flappin,'" Mike Kelly, chair of the Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee; City Senior Ranger Lori Charett-Gerbach, Scott Manley, Archaeologist and William Manley, Architectural Historian, the latter two with ASM Affiliates. ASM is providing professional services to develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan for the park. The group had just climbed out of a canyon with an old mine in it that will be a focus of future interpretive plans for the park. Photo by Samir Mahmalji, project planner with the City Dept. of Parks and Rec.



Beginning Tracker/ Naturalist Class

Nov. 17 & 19th

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Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

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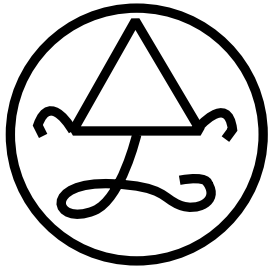
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Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan./ Feb. 2006

Volume 20, No. 1

Enjoy Your Canyon's Oaks

Ranger Autumn Acker

As one walks, jogs, bikes, or rides through the canyon, it's impossible not to notice the beautiful foliage offering shade overhead. One source of that shade is the magnificent Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia.*), which is unique among oaks in its ability to thrive along the coast. Its dense crown and wide-spreading limbs, which often touch the ground, create a welcoming resting place for park visitors as well as for many critters who call this tree their home. The Coast Live Oak is not only a beautiful species to behold, but it's also a critical part of our history,

See p. 5 for more

Soledad Valley

Will Bowen, PhD

Just as Lopez Canyon was once known as El Cuervo, or Crow Canyon, Sorrento Valley was once referred to as Soledad Valley. Soledad is a Spanish word meaning solitude. Hence, Sorrento Valley's historical name would have been Solitude Valley.

Historic Soledad Valley extended south from the salt flats of Penasquitos Canyon and east to include present day Carroll Canyon.

If you go back 100 or more years, Soledad Valley was quite different than it is today. Without the present-day man-made constructions, more of a confluence, interconnection, or

See p. 4 for more

Highlights Inside

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Volunteers Needed

Monardella Planting

**Saturday, January 14,
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Please join the Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa to plant seedlings of the Willowy monardella (aka Poway Mint). These seedlings were grown from seed collected over the years from López Canyon.

Here's your chance to help save one of the most endangered plants in the world, our own Willowy monardella (*Monardella linoides* ssp. *viminea*). There are fewer than 1,000 of these plants naturally occurring in the wild. Their entire geographic range is sandwiched between the Scripps Poway Freeway on the north, SR67 on the east, I-805 on the west, and SR52 on the south. And a major population was just wiped out in Carroll Canyon.

Last year's planting was successful, with over 100 plants surviving the hot, dry summer and fall. Before the planting last year there were only 6 plants left of the López Canyon population.

Call Mike Kelly at 858-566-6489 or email mkellysd@aol.com for more information.



Cub Scout Pack 621 of Rancho Peñasquitos, led by Den leader Ann Daniels and Friends' volunteers Ivan & Carol Cooper, Edward DiBella, and Mike Kelly helped plant another section of the Trans County Trail. They are standing behind a health shrub planted by volunteers in a previous year.

Rainy Season Brings Closures, Flowers

Rainy weather is one of those mixed blessings. It brings up the flowers and the more it rains, the better the flower show — witness last year's show here and in the desert! But rain also means park closures to let the parks dry out. And our first rain of the new year has brought our first closure. To ensure that you don't meet a "park closed" sign call the rangers at 858-538-8066 any time after a significant rain event.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858.484.3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

County Park docents lead free, 45 minute guided tour of San Diego's second oldest residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. Saturdays and 1 p.m. Sundays. See historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

January

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Jan. 14, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team will lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and intermediates. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., go right on Black Mtn. Rd. and take 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Monardella Restoration Planting in López Canyon

Sat., Jan. 14, 9 - 1 p.m. Join the Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society in planting seedlings of the highly endangered Willowy monardella plants. We'll also do some light weeding. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Bring water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sat., Jan. 14, 3 – 5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing, the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Small Things of Nature Walk from Mercy Road w Les Braund

Sun., Jan. 15, 9 – 11 a.m. Join Les Braund, former President of the San Diego Mycological Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, mosses, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Good chance to see native wildflowers. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Black Mountain Park & Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committees Joint Meeting

Thur., Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. There will be a special presentation on the City's proposal to build a Joint Ranger Station at Mercy and Black Mountain Roads. Meeting is at Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Rd and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Jan. 22, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at

Maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Parks are available at www.penasquitos.org.

the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., Jan. 24, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sat., Jan. 28, 9 – 11 a.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trail Head at Fairport and Shorepointe streets in Sorrento Hills. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2**.

Medicinal Plant Hike in Peñasquitos Canyon

Sun. Jan. 29, 3 - 4:30 p.m. Learn to identify plants, shrubs, and trees. Find out how they've been used for medicinal purposes. Meets at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

February

Monardella Restoration in López Canyon

Sat., Feb. 4, 9 - 1 p.m. Join the Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society in weeding and watering the highly endangered Willowy monardella plants. Bring your own hand tools for weeding or use ours. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Bring water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sun., Feb. 5, 9 a.m. Join naturalist Linda King for this moderately paced nature walk. Learn native plants and their uses. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn.

Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Feb. 11, 8–10 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Canyon Favorites Hike

Sat., Feb. 11, 3–5 p.m. Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Good chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rcho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Carmel Mountain Vernal Pool & Flower Walk with Diana Gordon

Sun., Feb. 12, 1 p.m. Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trail Head at Fairport and Shorepointe streets in Sorrento Hills. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2** or call **858.484.3219**.

Carmel Mountain Hike w Will Bowen

Sun., Feb. 19, 3 - 4:30 p.m. Hike up on Carmel Mountain. Learn to identify the plants and shrubs growing there. Look for early wild flowers and road pools or puddles which may contain fairy shrimp and tadpoles. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trail Head at Fairport and Shorepointe streets in Sorrento Hills. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2** or call **858.484.3219**.

Small Things of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat. Feb. 25, 9 - 11 a.m. Join Les Braund, former President of the San Diego Mycological Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Good chance to see native wildflowers. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., Feb. 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

DIRECTIONS

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2)**.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7)**.

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7)**.

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on

Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7)**.

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5)**.

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5)**.

New members

Welcome to these new members; see you on the trail!

Dan Anderson
Jeff & Rose Dillon
Brendan Duggan
Jim & Imelda Maniquis
Thomas Olsen
Sue Schaffner

**To see the Friends'
newsletter in color,
visit**

www.penasquitos.org!

(Sorrento Valley cont'd)

harmony with adjoining areas such as Penasquitos Canyon would be observable. The intermittent streams of Lopez, Penasquitos, and Carroll drained the land and flowed out to Penasquitos lagoon, holding the land together like fingers hold a hand together.

Prior to European contact there was a large Native American village site in Soledad Valley which was known as Yastequay. The central habitation area of this site was located near the east end of Roselle Street. There were subsidiary sites, such a milling stations or shell mounds located throughout the valley. Archaeologists consider the overall site to be of national importance. After contact, the Native American habitation areas begun to shrink, eventually condensing into what the Spanish called a rancheria, located on Roselle Street.

The whole of Soledad Valley was given as a Mexican land grant to Francisco Maria Alvarado in 1838. This land grant was known as Rancho Soledad. Senor Alvarado was the gentleman to whom Capitan Ruiz gave Penasquitos Canyon. Alvarado and his son Diego built the El Cuervo adobe in the West end of the canyon sometime between 1830 and 1850. They utilized both Penasquitos Canyon and Soledad Valley for grazing.

The problem was that there was a conflict about the Rancho Soledad land grant. The City of San Diego would not recognize Alvarado's claim because they said that the Soledad was pueblo or city land and thus belonged to all the people. Yet Alvarado did have legal claim which he pursued a various times.

The pueblo land of Soledad valley was initially meant to be used by the



**Weeds obscure Bovet adobe ruin.
Photo by Bowen**

soldiers and residents of the Presidio for small farming plots and grazing. In 1842, Bonafacio Lopez received permission to build a corral in Soledad Valley. Lopez, nicknamed "The King," was a member of the well-known Lopez family that built Casa de Lopez in Old Town. He was a rotund flamboyant horseman who served as "regateor" of the Presidio (arbitrator of disputes about cattle), substitute Presidio commandante, and member of the first grand jury empanelled in San Diego.

In 1853, Alvarado sold his claim to Rancho Soledad to Cave Coutts, a military scout and Old Town luminary, who later built Rancho Guajome in Vista. The very same day, Coutts turned around and sold his claim to Bonafacio Lopez for the same price he bought it for! No one seems to understand the nature of this transaction.

Bonafacio Lopez built an adobe on this land. It no longer exists but we do have a historical photograph of it confirming its existence. Lopez also had a house on the hill at the Presidio. He used the Soledad adobe as a base for grazing and as a get-a-way. According to historical accounts, the Lopez adobe was located near the confluence of Penasquitos and Carroll Creek or somewhere near the present day trolley station.

Bonafacio Lopez had several children. We should be very familiar with his son Ramon Lopez, Sr. because he built a wooden house and barn in Lopez canyon and ran a dairy farm there. Ramon Lopez, Sr. acquired ownership of his land of 160 acres under the US Government Land Grants program in 1895, but was settled on this land before this time.

The elder Lopez also had a daughter named Providencia who married

Pierre Bovet in 1854. Pierre Bovet was a Swiss immigrant who ran a bakery in Old Town. It appears that Bonafacio gave some land located to the southeast of his adobe in present day Carroll Canyon as a wedding gift to Bovet and his daughter.

Shortly after that, Bovet built an adobe on this land. By 1870, Bovet paid taxes on a 100 sheep which he grazed on the land. He also paid taxes on "Improvements" to his land which was probably his large grape vineyard.

The Bovet adobe had 5 rooms and was thus somewhat smaller than the El Cuervo adobe in Penasquitos Canyon. It had three large cypress trees in front of it and was surrounded by grape vines. Many people stopped by Bovet's adobe home to buy wine or to have dinner, as he was known as an outstanding chef. The foreman of the Cassidy ranch told San Diego historian Winifred Scott that he often road his horse up the valley to have dinner at the Bovets.

After Bonafacio Lopez died, his widow and children remained on the land in Soledad but soon ran into difficulties paying the land tax. Lopez's adobe and surrounding land was sold at auction and went through a string of owners. Eventually it was bought by Andrew Cassidy, who was probably the most famous Irishmen of early San Diego.

Cassidy eventually sold his land to a man named Baker. The pepper trees around the I-5/ 805 merge were planted by Baker, on the eastern part of his land. A German gentleman by the name of Diffendorf used to admire the Baker ranch land whenever he traveled north on the El Camino Real. He eventually bought it. His daughter Grace Diffendorf wrote a book under the pen name Booth Vandercook about her life on the ranch which was entitled "The Long Lane."

The railroad was built through Soledad Valley in November 1886. The effect was to immediately double land value in San Diego. The railroad was built by Chinese workers. who worked with pick axes, shovels, and dynamite. They dressed in baggy white shorts and rolled up long sleeve shirts. They had a pyramid-shaped straw hats and



Dead cypress trees mark the old Bovet adobe site. Photo by Bowen

straw sandals. Their attire was quite practical but also quite distinct from their Anglo overlords who wore long pants, vest, jacket, and boots. As elsewhere, the Chinese never really got the credit they deserved for their contributions to the building of the American West.

The Diffendorf family stayed in old Bonafacio Lopez adobe until they built a more suitable dwelling. Their ranch specialized in two money making occupations. One was dairy farming and the other was lima beans. They also sometimes took horses in for boarding. Grace Diffendorf mentions that they often had to flag the train down so they could get their horses off the track and says that their cattle were sometimes hit by it. When the railroad built their trestles, she says, "they changed the course of the stream... tules and cattail crept inland and good bean land turned into marsh and topsoil was washed out to sea." I wonder if this helps explain the tules, *Frankenia grandifolia*, and pickleweed (salt marsh plants) growing so out of place right next to the El Cervo adobe!

Lima beans were the most profitable crop of Soledad Valley. Several years ago John Northrup took me out to see Deer Lake in Carmel Valley and on the way we traversed Knecktle's bean field where lima beans were still grown.

Water has always been a problem in Soledad Valley. The streams provided water for washing clothes and watering stock but dried up in the summer. The Diffendorf's dug holes in the creek bed to bring up water and sunk wells, but they had to pump all day

long to barely water their cattle sufficiently. Hence, they sometimes had to move their cattle to the nearby mountains or as far away as Imperial Valley when it got really dry. On the other hand, when it rained hard the whole valley was "a lake from hill to hill."

Diffendorf mentions that they often saw enormous mountain lions, wild cats (bob cats) and coyotes on their ranch. Deer also often got into their lima bean fields.

She says that they went on picnics up to present day Torrey Pines State Park before it was a park. Since there was no road they had to take a long steep windy trail up the hill near where the park entrance is now. They would also go down to the lagoon mouth where they would throw out nets and catch more fish than they could use.

Diffendorf explored other nearby areas; she says, "We used to climb the hills to see brodiaea, violets, and cyclamen that carpeted the mesa." It appears they were looking at vernal pool plants. Her brodiaea would be *Brodiaea jolonensis* and the violet would be *Downingia*, both indicator plants of vernal pools. Unfortunately, I could not find cyclamen in Munz's book of California plants. She continues, "The mesa was very beautiful after a rain. Where there was no bush it was carpeted by low-growing wild flowers of every color."

Next time you are on I-5 or I-805 driving over Sorrento Valley or perhaps driving down from Mira Mesa on Sorrento Valley Road, you might ponder how Sorrento Valley once looked. . . when it was Soledad or Solitude Valley.

(Your canyon cont'd)

and of our environment.

The Coast Live Oak has been an integral part of human history. Native Americans harvested and consumed its acorns as a dietary staple, and mission builders used its wood for charcoal to make adobe mortar. Later on, pioneers used its wood for "construction, wagon parts, and farm implements," (Pavlik 1991). For thousands of years humans have used these trees for shelter, food, and as a general resource.

There are many species aside from humans which rely on the Coast Live Oak for food and shelter. "Oaks produce a cornucopia of wildlife foods including acorns, leaves, twigs, sap, roots, and pollen," (Pavlik 1991). The importance to our environment is undeniable. Mule deer and California Quail thrive under the cover of oak woodlands, and acorn woodpeckers and western gray squirrels forage for its acorns. The list of amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, and plants associated with the Coast Live Oak is immense.

But beyond the history and the importance to our wildlife, these magnificent trees also bring a feeling of magic back into our hectic everyday lives. The sun filtering through the canopy, the soft rustle of the leaves in the wind, and the awareness of the history these trees have endured release built up stress. Suddenly one feels small in the greater scheme of things.

So take some time out to enjoy the beautiful trees in the canyon, especially the Coast Live Oak. Stop and listen to the life happening around you: the babbling of the creek; the calls of the birds; the hum of the insects; and hopefully the footfalls of a mule deer. It's important to enjoy the stillness of the canyon, not just the experience of traveling through it.

Pavlik, B., P. Muick, S. Johnson, and M. Popper. 1991. *Oaks of California*. Los Olivos, CA: Cachuma Press.

Eagle Scout candidate Nicholas Woo-Hoogenstyn with his buddies who helped him complete a planting, irrigation, and fence project inside the Mercy Road entrance to Peñasquitos Preserve.



Date: Tuesday, January 24, 2006

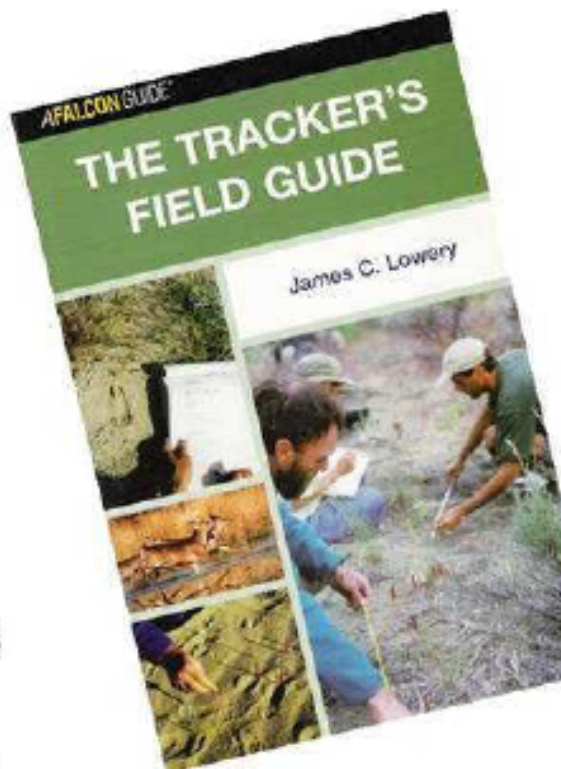
Time: 6:30 to 8:30 PM

San Diego Tracking Team

Speaker's Series Presents:

Jim Lowery on Tracks as Windows

In this presentation specially designed for trackers, author Jim Lowery emphasizes that there should be no separation between track identification and track interpretation. Using examples from field research, Lowery will show how track identification can include measurements, habitat, time of year, time of day and behavior—yielding many surprises. Lowery will also cover some “biology for trackers”—interesting facts about behavior and biology for Southern California mammals gleaned from extensive research for his new book.



Tuesday, January 24th

- ◆ Refreshments & book signing from 6:30
- ◆ Lecture 7:00 to 8:30 PM
- ◆ At the MTRP visitor center
- ◆ Donations gladly accepted

Jim Lowery has taught tracking, wilderness survival and plant uses at his school, Earth Skills, in Frazier Park, California, for the past 19 years. Having been introduced to tracking by Tom Brown, Jr. in the mid 1980's, Lowery has conducted many special trainings for teachers, field biology professionals and nature center docents. He has also led "Dirt Time Workshops" to specifically track badgers, bighorn sheep and mountain lions.

Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor Center Theater
take Mission Gorge Road to Father Junipero Serra Trail
mtrp.org

RSVP: 760-715-4102 or noreke@sbcglobal.net

San Diego Tracking Team

San Diego Tracking Team

PO Box 502345
San Diego CA 92150

Phone: 760-715-4102
Website: sdt.org
Email: info@sdt.org



Fund Appeal Tops \$5,000!

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

A big thank you goes to the many members who made this fund drive the best ever! To date we've received \$5,225. I expect we'll receive more donations as we get into tax season.

What will these monies buy? We'll be outfitting the Friends Tracking Team with new digital remote sensing cameras for filming wildlife as they move (we hope!) through critical linkages between open space parks. Your donations will also buy hand held PDAs (Personal Data Assistants) to run the new Cybertracker program for capturing data in the field during wildlife surveys. These will be paired with GPS (Global Positioning Systems) to accurately pinpoint where different species of wildlife were observed. New GIS (Geographic Information System) software will store, display, and report the captured data. Finally, new high powered spotlights will allow better mule deer night time counts. Articles and photos in future newsletters will report – to you who made this possible — how this equipment is used to further our conservation goals.

Especially generous contributions (over \$100) were received from:

Norman Anderson
Ivan & Carol Cooper
Diane Greening
Linda Johnson
Richard & Ruth Mellen
Geof Smith & Camille
Armstrong
Greg Vines
Beth Williams

A big thank you also goes to:

Nancy Acevedo
Mary & Gerard Antekeier
Chris Bader
Luanne Barrett
Dave Bilak
Mark & Kathie Bulley
Mrs. Uli Burgin
Jim & Pat Daley
Jeff & Rose Dillon
Jeanne & Glenn Dunham
Lenore Edidin
Terry Gaughen

Sharon & Ben Gebauer-Eberle
Kathryn Heaney
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David Robertson
Erwin & Mary Rose
Lisa & Bill Ross-Woolson
Kelly & Al Sakoi
Ernie Schnepf
Robert Schmidt
Vivienne Seymore
Jeanne & Tom Simpson-White
Don Steele
Paula & Mike Svoboda
Melvin & Ellen Sweet
Kirsten Winter
Toni & Frank Wong
Anthony & Rebecca Wood

Winter Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training: Free!

Date: January 21
Time: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Location: Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Contact for info: (760) 715--4102 or visit www.sdt.org.

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House, located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Intermediate Tracker/ Naturalist Class Feb. 23 & 25th

Love wildlife & nature? Learn the art and science of mammal tracking and nature awareness skills! The class is sponsored by the San Diego Tracking Team. No experience required! Cost: \$50.00. Call 760-715-4102 for information and registration. See website for updates and info: www.sdt.org.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219

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Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.



Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 1/2006

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

March / April 2006
Volume 20, No. 2

Sunrise Powerlink Threatens Preserve

Geoffrey D. Smith, Chair,
Citizens' Advisory Committee

A proposal by SDG&E to construct an electrical power transmission line from Imperial County to the Ramona area and beyond, has significant implications for Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve as well as state and federal public lands in San Diego and Imperi-

See p. 4 for more



New fast-growing sycamores dot the Mercy Road parking-staging area of the Preserve. These replace the high-maintenance and highly invasive eucalyptus recently cut down by the County.

Volunteers Needed!

López Canyon Cleanup Sunday, April 2: 9 - 1 p.m. López Ridge Park (7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa)

Join the Friends in cleaning up the trash, big and small in Lopez Canyon above and below Camino Santa Fe. Pickups with 4x4 needed. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike for more info at 858-342-8856. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3).**

Creek to Bay Trash Clean- up in Peñasquitos Canyon Sat., April 29, 9 - 12 p.m. Peñasquitos Community Park at corner of Park Vil- lage Dr. and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos

Join I Love a Clean San Diego, the Friends, and City Parks in cleaning up the trash, big and small in Peñasquitos Canyon. Meet at Peñasquitos Community Park at the corner of Park Village Dr. and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos. Call Ranger Gina Brown at 858-538-8066. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Peñasquitos Fiesta Day Sun., May 7, 10-5 p.m.

Help staff our booth at this annual fair. Call Mike at 858-342-8856 for details.

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Del Mar Mesa Archaeology

[reprinted with permission from the newsletter of the San Diego Archaeological Center — www.sdac.org.]

In 2004, the Environmental Conservation Foundation (ECF) established by the Pardee Corporation funded the curation, rehabilitation, and interpretation of archaeological assemblages from sites in the Del Mar Mesa area. These assemblages were collected by

See p. 5 for more



Quartzite pick-chopper from Del Mar Mesa site.

Finally, some rain . . . but some closures

Our belated rainy season means the park is closed during and just after significant rain events due to flooding of the trails, so be sure to check with the rangers at 858-538-8066 or 858-484-7504 to see if the park is open.

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

For maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Park, visit www.penasquitos.org.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds.

La Cocina Gift Shop Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

March

Frogs, Toads, & Tadpoles of Peñasquitos with Will Bowen

Sun., March 26, 3 – 4:30 p.m. A hike to look for and learn about the different frogs, toads, and tadpoles of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., about 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road in Sorrento Valley. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., March 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch

House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Archaeological Society Monthly Talk at Peñasquitos

Tues., March 28, 7:30 p.m. Hear archaeologist Diane Shalom present "Climate Change and Cultural Response: A Study of Fish Remains from Pitas Point (Santa Barbara). This was a Chumash site during the late Middle Period through early Late Period (AD 1000-1550). Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

April

Small (& Big) Things of Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sat. April 1, 9 - 11 a.m. Join Les Braund, former President of the San Diego Mycological Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Volunteer Trash Cleanup in López Canyon

Sun., April 2, 9 - 1 p.m. Join the Friends in cleaning up the trash, big and small in Lopez Canyon above and below Camino Santa Fe. Pickups with 4x4 needed. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Bring water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (H3)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., April 8, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn.

Maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Parks are available at www.penasquitos.org.

Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Frogs, Toads, & Tadpoles on Carmel Mountain with Will Bowen

Sun., April 9, 3 – 4:30 p.m. A hike to look for and learn about the different frogs, toads, and tadpoles of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Trail Head at Fairport and Shorepointe streets in Sorrento Hills. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2**.

Small (& Big) Things of Nature

Walk from Mercy Road Sat. April 22, 9 - 11 a.m. Join Les Braund, former President of the San Diego Mycological Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms or lichens. Meet in Mercy Road Parking-Staging area, upper level at the junction of Mercy and Black Mtn. Roads in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., April 25, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7**.

Archaeological Society Monthly Talk at Peñasquitos

Tues., April 25, 7:30 p.m. Hear archaeologist Trish Mitchell present "Paying the Price of Royalty: the Pathological Conditions of a Royal Lineage from the Classic Period Maya in Belize." She will discuss the pathological conditions she observed on the royal bodies from the two Classic Period (A.D. 250-1050) Maya

sites of Buenavista del Cayo and Cahal Pech in Belize. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Creek to Bay Trash Cleanup in Peñasquitos Canyon

Sat., April 29, 9 - 12 p.m. Join I Love a Clean San Diego, the Friends, and City Parks in cleaning up the trash, big and small in Peñasquitos Canyon. Meet at Peñasquitos Community Park at the corner of Park Village Dr. and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Directions

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 - 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).**

Hike Ideas Needed

Some of our hikes are getting long-in-the tooth and we need fresh ideas. If you have ideas for new hikes and/or places to visit in the Preserve contact Gaye Dingeman at gmding@san.rr.com. Come to think of it, so are some of us hike leaders. We will train new hike leaders.

Advanced Tracker/ Naturalist Class March 24th & 25th

Love wildlife & nature? Learn the art and science of mammal tracking and nature awareness skills! The class is sponsored by the San Diego Tracking Team. No experience required! Contact Rick Botta at 858-672-0584 or rmbotta@earthlink.net to sign up as a student or for more information.

To see the Friends' newsletter in color, visit www.penasquitos.org!

Environmental Conservation Foundation

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

The Environmental Conservation Foundation mentioned in the Del Mar Mesa article was set up as a side agreement to a ballot measure, Proposition M, passed by the voters in the late 1990s. Prop M allowed the Pardee Corporation to build urban level density on its property in Carmel Valley now known as Pacific Highlands Ranch. A vote of the people was required because of a growth management ballot measure passed by the voters way back in 1984. That measure required comprehensive planning of undeveloped land in the Future Urbanizing Area, basically much of the north city area.

A coalition of conservation groups, the Carmel Valley Planning Group, the City of San Diego, and Pardee Corp. spent two years negotiating the footprint and land uses of Pacific Highlands Ranch. In return for supporting the Pardee financed ballot campaign, conservation groups asked for Pardee to donate its most valuable property, Carmel Mountain, to the City to be preserved as open space land. It did so shortly after the ballot measure passed. Carmel Mountain was and is considered to be some of the most sensitive habitat lands in the City. In addition, Pardee was asked to donate \$500,000 to fund projects on Carmel Mountain, the Del Mar Mesa, and Carmel Valley that protected or helped to manage the precious natural and cultural resources there. They did so.

Mike Kelly of the Friends of los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve serves as the CEO of the foundation, while Dave Hogan of the Sierra Club serves as Secretary, and Len Franks of Pardee serves as Treasurer. Pardee has acted in good faith to implement the foundation's work. Besides the Del Mar Mesa curation project, other funded projects include the Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Management Plan, a Mule Deer DNA study under Dr. Andy Bohonak of San Diego State, and the upcoming Pacific Highlands Ranch Management Plan.

(Sunrise Powerlink cont'd)

al Counties. The proposal includes a 500KV (thousand volt) line from the Calexico area to Ramona. From there a number of 230KV lines would radiate outward, extending northward and eastward — to the SDG&E substation on Carmel Mountain. The exact routes of the so-called Sunrise Powerlink have not yet been published, but one thing is certain — the 230KV section would traverse Park Village and portions of the Preserve. The power poles for this line would in many places reach 7 stories in height. The visual and health implications are obvious.

Power distribution is an incredibly complex process — and as we have seen with Enron, sometimes corrupt. The power is generated by a private company, in this case SDG&E, which is owned by Sempra Energy. The power generation and distribution is governed by the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and ultimately by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). When private industry profit motives are involved, as they are in this case, the citizenry must be aware of their rights and responsibilities as both energy users and responsible stewards of the environment.

Among the many issues in play with the Sunrise Powerlink are whether in fact the power line is needed. Advocates would say that it is. However, there is significant and compelling information to suggest that it's not needed for energy reliability or redundancy in San Diego. Instead, many would argue and studies are expected to show that the Sunrise Powerlink is more likely an effort by Sempra Energy to furnish a means to distribute 'dirty' power produced by inefficient fossil-fueled power plants in Mexico to communities in Orange, Riverside and Los Angeles Counties and beyond.

A 'NIMBY' (not in my backyard) issue this is not! The Sunrise Powerlink must be exposed for what it is: a power grab by a major utility company. There are numerous alternatives to the proposed power line too numerous to describe in detail here. They include alternate routes in Mexico and eastern Imperial County; The state of California's 'One Million Rooftops' solar power campaign; Retrofitting and re-firing existing power plants already in existence in San Diego County; and, that seldom-mentioned word, conservation. Turn off that air conditioner

For more information on the potentially damaging power line corridor, visit these web sites:

<http://www.sdge.com/sunrisepowerlink> — SDGE's own website

<http://www.peoplespowerlink.org> — A group of back country citizens opposed to the power line

<http://www.ucan.org> — The Utility Consumers' Action Network, leading consumer advocacy group

<http://www.parkvillageconcernedcitizens.org> — Rancho Peñasquitos -based citizens group

<http://www.raasp.org/> — Ramona Alliance Against Sunrise Powerlink

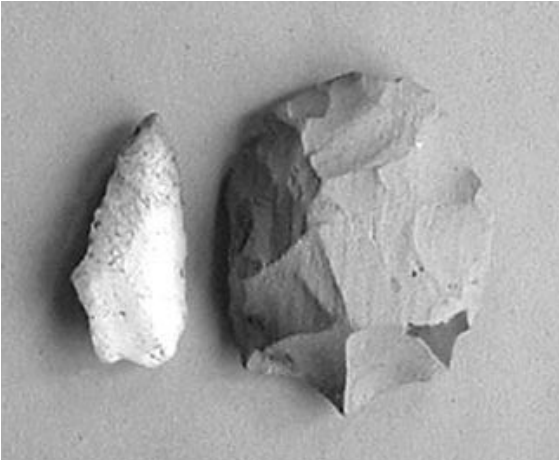
<http://www.borderpowerplants.org/index.htm> — advocates for the development of environmentally sustainable energy facilities in the US-Mexico border region

<http://www.calwild.org> — The California Wilderness Coalition



Wildlife at Risk

Pictured is the new Carmel Mtn. Rd. bridge crossing a small canyon off Peñasquitos northern rim. This wildlife corridor to Carmel Valley already sees a lot of wildlife movement. Unfortunately, deer and other animals go up to the road and cross this 4-lane road and occasionally get killed. Concern over this led Ann Harvey and Mike Kelly of the Friends' Board, and Laura Copic from the Carmel Valley Planning Board to ask the Pardee Co., builder of this neighborhood, to work together to prevent this mortality. Pardee has been very cooperative and visits to this site and to the successful wildlife undercrossing under Lopez Ridge have led to some proposals for short- and long-term fencing and landscaping, some already planned, to be reviewed.

(Del Mar cont'd)

Quartz point and felsite scraper-burin, Middle and Early Holocene tools from Del Mar Mesa.

Cultural Resource Management firms (Affinis, Brian F. Smith & Associates, EDAW and Gallegos & Associates) prior to development as required by CEQA. The surveys and excavations were conducted between 1989 and 2000. Related assemblages, comprising 18 collections, were delivered to the Center between December 2004 and March 2005. The final report on these collections, completed in January 2006, clearly indicates their significance for understanding the prehistory of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon drainage system as well as the San Diego County region.

The 18 collections from the Del Mar Mesa area consist of artifacts and ecofacts from 44 archaeological sites. Materials in the collections include chipped stone, ground stone, pottery, various historical artifacts, shell, bone, botanical samples, soil samples, mineral samples, and charcoal. All of these materials provide evidence of past settlement and subsistence strategies related to coastal wetlands environments in the County. Of particular importance is that this group of collections includes sites radiocarbon-dated from 8600 to 1550 RCYBP, spanning San Diego County cultural trajectory from the Paleo-Indian period through the Late Prehistoric period. Furthermore, the sites geographically transect the San Diego County coastal plain from the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon to the inland mesa physiographic zone. Future study of the Del Mar Mesa

Grant archaeological collections may help to clarify several regional research issues including (1) the timing and nature of the transitions between the Paleo-Indian, Archaic, and Late Prehistoric periods, (2) environmental and climatic change during the last 9000 years, (3) evolution in chipped stone and ground stone technology and function, and (4) temporal and spatial patterns in the adoption of pottery within the region.

The artifacts and information gained through continued research of the Del Mar Mesa collections will be used to create interpretive exhibits to be featured at the Del Mar and Carmel Valley public libraries. Third grade students in this area participate in historic tours of Del Mar during the months of April and May. These exhibits will be highlighted during the student's visit to the Del Mar library. The exhibit will also be presented on our website.

As residential, commercial, and infrastructure development increasingly destroys evidence of the early inhabitants of the San Diego County area, the Del Mar Mesa collections take on great significance as a unique material data base which contributes to our understanding of long-term patterns of human-environment interaction prior to European contact and 20th century urbanization.

Thank you to the Pardee Corporation, Environmental Conservation Foundation, Michael Kelly, Dennis Gallegos and Dr. Lynne Christenson for their support in making curation a reality for these important collections.



City Ranger John Garwood working the new Sweco trail building tractor on the "Upper Cobbles" trail north of the waterfall in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Raising the Roof at Black Mountain Glider Port

Lori McBride

On a clear, sunny, Sunday morning in February, a dedicated team of paragliding and hang gliding pilots along with citizen volunteers led by Senior Park Ranger Lori Charett-Gerbac and Ranger Tom Miller, took the field at Black Mountain Open Space Park. They had a common unwavering commitment, “to raise a new kiosk and still get home in time to watch the Super Bowl.”

With a team of 19 willing volunteers to choose from, Ranger Lori coordinated an offense that was unbeatable! The big players were drafted to “dig in” and dig out post holes while the quicker, wiry participants kept things moving toward the goal by assembling the kiosk on the run. Pilot and BMOSCAC member Victor McBride’s post hole digging was inspirational to the whole team. Rarely is such concentration and determination seen before lunch time. According to Victor, “The key to winning the war with a gas powered auger is to really put your weight into it! Also, I could smell pancakes and sausage cooking.”

After the project was tackled, pilot Carl Hixon treated all the players to a “tailgate breakfast.” San Diego Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association President Steve Rohrbaugh blurted “Pancakes and sausage, man . . .” and tucked in with gusto!

Charlie Chau and his son Greg were unanimously voted MVP’s for their excellent pre-game construction of the kiosk. The father and son worked shoulder to shoulder for weeks to pre-construct the kiosk, a monument to team effort (at almost 600 lbs, it weighed as much as a monument).

In the near future, visitors to Black Mountain Glider Port will be able to look between the “uprights” for park rules, safety requirements, a History of Soaring in San Diego, Open Space and Glider Port News and Upcoming Event schedules.

Unlike the Super Teams that played later that day at Ford Field in Detroit, Michigan . . . there were no losers . . . only winners at Black Mountain Glider Port!



The new kiosk is located at the new Glider Point Trail which goes up to the launch point on “Little Black.” This trail was also built by volunteers from the hang gliding community to offer a safer way to get to the launch point. It consists of switch backs that follow in the foot print of an eroded area. As result, we have been able to close off other steep, rocky trails to allow for habitat restoration.

The kiosk was in 2 pieces and had to be carried by hand about a 1/4 mile to the site. In addition, the water, 7 bags of cement, and also numerous tools had to be brought in. The roof assembly was especially heavy, requiring 7 people to carry it. At the site, the holes were drilled as the roof was attached to the frame.

— Ranger Tom Miller

Peñasquitos Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Preserve Joint Ranger Station Proposed

Geoffrey D. Smith, Chairperson,
Los Peñasquitos Canyon
Preserve CAC

For over 5 years our wonderful team of City of San Diego Rangers have been sandwiched into two portable trailers situated at the equestrian center. As the staff has grown, the trailers have not, and the trailers are wearing out. But there is good news for Rangers Washington and Gerbach and their crew!

The City has identified close to \$500K in funds to be used for establishing a new ranger station facility, to be located in plain view northeast of the intersection of Black Mountain Road and Mercy Road, on the triangular-shaped graded dirt area there. This new facility would house staff for both preserves, as well as provide a small amount of space for interacting with the public users of the two preserves.

At a joint CAC meeting held on January 19, 2006, members of the two advisory committees met with city staff to discuss needs and desires for this new facility. Based upon these needs and certain funding constraints, the decision was made to proceed with a pre-fabricated permanent building design, to be located on concrete slab. With proper architectural treatment and landscaping this facility would be an aesthetically pleasing, functional and durable resource for years to come.

To facilitate a proactive and open design process, an ad hoc facilities committee was formed consisting of 3 members from each of the preserve CACs, and one member each from the Rancho Peñasquitos Planning Board and the Mira Mesa Community Planning Group.

For more information on this exciting project, contact Rangers Gina Washington or Lori Gerbach, or Geoffrey Smith, Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve CAC Chair, at 858.442.1425.

A San Diego Wildlife Tracking Milestone Trackers International Certification Program

Karen Larsen Gordon

[Reprinted from The Clear Print, newsletter of the San Diego Tracking Team.]

The San Diego Tracking Team hosted a certification event for wildlife trackers based upon an internationally recognized format on February 4th & 5th. All 10 of the attendees earned certificates designating skill levels ranging from Tracker 1 to 3, a US record for competency.

Mark Elbroch, author of two award winning books on wildlife tracking, conducted the testing. Elbroch has earned a Senior Tracker Certificate in Kruger National Park, South Africa and offers the only rigorous system in North America for certifying field tracking skills and observer reliability. The Wildlife Tracking in North America program operates under guidelines of CyberTracker Conservation, a pro-

gram developed 15 years ago by Louis Liebenberg in South Africa. The primary benefit of certifying trackers is raising the standards of research in conservation. By verifying observer reliability in data collection, sound recommendations for planning, monitoring and managing of native habitats can be made.

Martin and Kresky achieved the highest level of tracker certification, Tracker 3, Kirchhevel, Richards, Hendricks and Pietsch received Tracker 2, and Betsy Brack, at age 72, holds title to being the most senior holder of Tracker 1 certification in the world. Rowe, Seiser and Von Hendy also earned Tracker 1 certificates. Elbroch reported that the youngest Tracker 1 is Makai, age 14 and a member of the // Uruke Tracking Group in the Southern Kalahari.



Pictured are, from left to right, top row: Jesper Pietsch, Lee Kirchhevel, John Richards, Mark Elbroch, Gary Seiser, Barry Martin (founder of the San Diego Tracking Team), Don Rowe and bottom row: Bonnie Hendricks, Mike Kresky, Phoenix Von Hendy, and Betsy Brack.

Winter Volunteers Needed Wildlife Survey Training: Free!

Date: Sat., April 22
Time: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Location: Los Peñasquitos
Canyon Preserve

Contact for info: (760) 715--4102 or visit www.sdtg.org.

Take part in a countywide track and sign survey to monitor the wildlife of major open space areas and other critical habitats. Learn basic track, sign and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol. This training is required for transect volunteers. In exchange for this free training, it is expected that trainees will also participate in at least one transect. Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups.

The training will be at Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House, located behind Canyonside Community Park near the intersection of Black Mountain and Mercy Roads. If you have participated in last quarter's survey and do not wish to participate in the training, you may come by between noon and 2 p.m. to sign up for your transects.

It's expected that trainees will also participate in at least one wildlife survey in the weeks following the training. A survey usually averages 4 hours at locations around San Diego County. Trainees will be paired with experienced surveyors for the transects.

Note: Pre-registration for the training class is not required. You can just show up.

Used PCs Needed

If you have a Pentium level PC, laptop or desktop in good working order, that you aren't using or are about to discard, consider donating it to the Friends for our surveys. Contact Mike at 858-566-6489.

This is just as deductible as a cash donation!



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219 www.penasquitos.org

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Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672-0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell, 760.471.9197

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 3/2006

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

May / June 2006
Volume 20, No. 3

SDGE Transmission Lines Would Impact Preserve

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

After months of speculation Sempra Energy / SDGE, revealed their specific proposals for routes for their giant Transmission lines coming from the Imperial Valley to Rancho Peñasquitos. At a community meeting they sponsored that I attended, SDGE showed detailed maps of three possible alternative routes through Peñasquitos for their transmission

See p. 5 for more

Camino del Sur Wildlife Tunnel?

Mike Kelly, Conservation Chair

The Friends, the Sierra Club, and the Endangered Habitats League (EHL) are spearheading a campaign to raise the funds to build a wildlife tunnel under the future extension of Camino del Sur. This extension would begin at the current stub of Camino del Sur at Park Village Drive in Rancho Peñasquitos and extend to SR56 where it already extends north from the freeway. The problem is this extension will cut off a heavily used wildlife corridor that allows

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New Ranger for Black Mtn.

The newest ranger to the Black Mountain, Crest Canyon, Mt. Woodson and San Pasqual Valley Open Space Parks areas is Joel Tracey. Joel comes to us via Mission Trails Regional Park where he spent the first year of his employment with the City of San Diego. During his tenure at Mission Trails Joel was instrumental in the areas of emergency response, trail reconstruction and the restoration grant for Kumeyaay Lake.

A native to San Diego, Joel was born in 1965 and graduated from Mission Bay High School. Most of his free time from childhood through present day has been concentrated in outdoor activ-

See p. 3 for more



Graduate student researchers are pictured as they surveyed for Spade-foot toads, which can be found in and around vernal pools such as this one on Carmel Mountain. They joined Will Bowen's "Frogs, Toads, and Tadpoles of Peñasquitos" walk to learn of the toad's possible locations.



Ranger Joel Tracey

Rains Bring Late Flowers

Our late spring rains put enough water into the soils to stimulate many of our shrubs and other plants to flower much later than usual. California spinebush (*Adolphia californica*), for example, is in full bloom now. It's on the northern side of the Preserve, especially east of Black Mountain Road and west of the utility corridor just east of the waterfall. Enjoy its pungent odor! Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) is up in grasslands such as those at the top of the "Old Man Lopez Trail" in Lopez Canyon and other sites. Our oak trees have a robust, glorious bloom going. It's that golden glow you see as you stand back and look at our Coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*).

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds.

La Cocina Gift Shop Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

May

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens' Advisory Committee – special joint meeting with Black Mtn. Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Thurs., May 11, 8 – 9 p.m. Public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the

Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

Thurs. May 11, 7 – 8 p.m. A report on the cultural resources management plan for the park will be presented at this special meeting. The public is welcome to attend this business meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Driveway, past the Canyonside Rec Center. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., May 13, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Waterfall and Walden Pond Hike w Linda King

Sat., May 20, 4 – 6 p.m. Join Linda King for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing, the waterfall and back. Good chance to see flowers and wildlife. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Camino del Sur and Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water, and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7)**.

Flower Walk in Sabre Springs with Mike Kelly

Sun., May 21, 9 – 11 a.m. Join Mike Kelly for this easy walk to see the San Diego thornmint and other flowering plants. See the restoration on the site of the former Sewage Treatment Plant (now removed!). Meet at the corner of Sabre Springs Parkway and Springbrook St. in Sabre Springs. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189, J6**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., May 23, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7)**.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., May 28, 4–5:30 p.m. A nature walk to learn to identify the various plants, shrubs, and trees of the canyon. Find out how they have been used in magic, medicine, and shamanism by ancient and modern people. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

June

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sun., June 4, 9 a.m.– noon. Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., June 10, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7**.

Waterfall and Walden Pond Hike w Linda King

Sat., June 10, 4 – 6 p.m. Join Linda King for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing, the

waterfall and back. Good chance to see flowers and wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Full Moon Wildlife Walk with Mike Kelly

Sun., June 11, 7:30–9:30 p.m. Join Mike Kelly for this full moon evening walk. Chance to see wildlife. Bring a flashlight. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Camino del Sur and Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water, and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun., June 18, 5–6:30 p.m. A nature walk to learn to identify the various plants, shrubs, and trees of the canyon. Find out how they have been used in magic, medicine, and shamanism by ancient and modern people. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Bd. of Directors

Tues., June 27, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189-C7.**

DIRECTIONS

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain

Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. **Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).**

(Sunrise Powerlink cont'd)

A few people asked questions after the lengthy presentation. Dominick Colamussi, a 66-year-old truck mechanic who said he lives a block and a half from the proposed route, however, wanted to make a statement.

"This is too dangerous for our lives, for our future, for our kids, for our grandkids," Colamussi said, as he urged the audience to get behind the opposition effort.

Utility officials maintain the line is needed to head off an electricity shortfall that they say will hit San Diego County by 2010, but conservationists say there are other, less damaging ways to fill the gap.

(New Ranger cont'd)

ities. In one fashion or another Joel's main interests: rock climbing, surfing, mountaineering, scuba diving, and the martial arts have played a crucial role in his development as a ranger.

Throughout college Joel employed himself as a professional rock climbing instructor, certified Advanced Open Water Scuba Instructor, and an Open Water Ocean Lifeguard for the City of San Diego. As a byproduct of his ocean duties Joel became certified as an Emergency Medical Technician, later certifying as a Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician. Volunteer pursuits involve over eight years as a member and instructor in Mountain Search and Rescue, and the past five seasons as a snow board bound Ski Patrol member of the National Ski Patrol.

As a father of two lovely children, Joel has passed on much of his love of the outdoors and an active lifestyle to his children. From a very early age (six weeks for his daughter) both children have grown up hiking and camping all throughout the Western United States. They have climbed in places like Joshua Tree National Park, boarded the slopes of the Sierras, kayaked along the Colorado River, caved in the moon-scape of Idaho's Craters of the Moon National Park and have dove with the sharks in La Jolla. Both participate regularly in team and individual sports.

A long time lover of animals, Joel owns a single cat and dog. On a good day, you can catch his dog surfing with him. Joel enjoys horseback riding with friends, but can occasionally be found riding solo. He says it stems back to those summer vacations as a child where he got to ride on his cousin's farms, through huge fields of grass and pine. Joel's mother is Native American – Ojibwa. His mother's people originated in what is present day Southern Alberta Canada and Northern Minnesota. His relatives now live in the Northern States of Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota, and yes, all of them had horses. Joel's father was born in Colorado, raised in Texas and became a man during his 22 years serving in the United States Navy. Joel's mother and father met in Point Loma, and that is where the little ranger first lived as a child.



Carmel Mountain Preserve Fencing

Picture are Ranger Gina and volunteer Jim Snyder installing some of the 500 plus linear feet of fence, that the Friends of LPCP purchased, on Carmel Mountain Preserve around one of the remaining populations of dudleya brevifolia. The fencing project is in accord with the soon to be approved Carmel Mountain Preserve Resource Management plan and the fruit of the labor of the Pénasquitos Canyon Trails Sub Committee, The fencing on the eastern part of the Preserve is now complete.

On May 7 at 10:00 am Council President Scott Peters will unveil three interpretive panels designed by environmental artist Ruth Wallen to be installed in various locations on the Preserve.

On April 29, 2006 65 volunteers from I love a Clean San Diego came to Los Pénasquitos Canyon and picked up 250 lbs of litter as part of the 2006 Creek to Bay Cleanup.

For more information on the potentially damaging power line corridor, visit these web sites:

<http://www.sdge.com/sunrisepowerlink>" — SDGE's own website

<http://www.peoplespowerlink.org> — A group of back country citizens opposed to the power line

<http://www.ucan.org>" — The Utility Consumers' Action Network, leading consumer advocacy group

<http://www.parkvillageconcernedcitizens.org> — Rancho Pénasquitos -based citizens group

<http://www.raasp.org/> — Ramona Alliance Against Sunrise Powerlink

<http://www.borderpowerplants.org/index.htm> — advocates for the development of environmentally sustainable energy facilities in the US-Mexico border region

<http://www.calwild.org>" — The California Wilderness Coalition

(Camino del Sur cont'd)

deer, bobcat, coyotes, foxes, and other critters to pass from Pénasquitos Canyon Preserve north across Park Village Dr. (with occasional animal mortality from vehicle collisions) up the canyon that parallels Darkwood St., and up a side canyon to the Del Mar Mesa open space park (and, of course, for return trips!).

Initially, the City of San Diego and its biological consultants argued this corridor wasn't very important. However, a focused study of the corridor by the highly regarded San Diego Tracking Team and its leader, Barry Martin, was received by the City, its consultants, and the Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game, which put this argument to rest (see www.penasquitos.org to read the full report).

The Project was set to be approved without the wildlife tunnel at the Planning Commission in March 2006 until Mike Beck of EHL, Mike Kelly of the Friends, and Dave Hogan of the Sierra Club combined to register opposition to the project. The City, the developers whose project depend on completion of Camino del Sur, and their consultants crafted a deal with Kelly et al that allowed the project to be approved with the tunnel by the Planning Commission, provided the funds to be paid for it could be raised by 12/31/06 (recognizing the City is broke). Mike Kelly of the Friends and Mike Beck of EHL agreed to fundraise the approximately \$1.5 million [!] required to build a tunnel. To date we have raised \$250,000 (\$125K from Environmental Conservation Foundation, see *Canyon News*, March 2006), with a tentative commitment for \$500,000 more, leaving a deficit of \$750,000.

The tunnel design is in hand from Latitude 33, consultants on the road project. The design copys the successful format of the wildlife tunnels under Sorrento Valley Blvd. on López Ridge and the one under the Scripps Poway Freeway. This road project and the wildlife tunnel are linked to the passage of the new Traffic Phasing Plan for Torrey Highlands.

If you would like to help on the fundraising for this project, or have ideas on obtaining the funding, please contact Mike Kelly at mkel-lysd@aol.com.

(Sunrise Powerlink cont'd)

lines. Two of the alternatives show their new, above ground line arriving from the east to a single point, Dormouse and Darkwood streets in Peñasquitos (use the links to see the maps). From there there are three possible routes they say. Their "officially preferred" route would cross west from this intersection across the "Darkwood" Canyon, across the path of the Camino del Sur extension, and then proceed west through publicly owned open space that includes vernal pools, California's most endangered habitat. They would be placing about 6 of their giant towers in the watershed of some of the best vernal pools left in San Diego. In addition, they would be building a road alongside these towers to service them.

One of their alternative routes would cross the "Darkwood" Canyon at the same point, but would take a more southerly route close to the Vista Alegre houses, but still through vernal pool habitat.

The third possible route would arrive in Peñasquitos but not cross the "Darkwood" Canyon. Rather, it would go underground at Park Village Drive and follow under this road until it entered Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve where Park Village Drive curves west to pass the elementary school. At this point, the line would be placed underground in the Preserved and extend about a mile west to the existing utility corridor, where it would again come above ground. Although underground, it still would require above ground entry points and a road to service them.

The Friends Board of Directors voted to oppose all three alternatives because they would be destructive to the Preserve.

The following article appeared in the North County Times. It includes remarks by this writer on behalf of the Friends.

Group rallies community against power line

By: DAVE DOWNEY - Staff Writer [North County Times]

RANCHO PENASQUITOS – About 400 people jammed into a school gym Thursday night to hear community activists outline why they believe the proposed Sunrise Powerlink would jolt property values in Rancho Penasquitos and shock what's left of a nearby preserve known for its vernal pools.

Organizers for the Rancho Penasquitos Concerned Citizens group that sponsored the meeting at Mesa Verde Middle School, also painted a vivid picture of how they intend to fight San Diego Gas & Electric Co.'s \$1.4 billion transmission line that would run from Imperial County through Ramona and Rancho Penasquitos to Carmel Valley.

SDG&E powers 1.2 million homes and 100,000 businesses in San Diego County and southern Orange County.

Harvey Payne, chairman of Rancho Penasquitos Concerned Citizens, said the group has hired an attorney to challenge the 120-mile project from desert to sea, and he urged people in the audience to write checks to help bolster the cause. Metal boxes were placed at the entrance to collect contributions.

Payne and others made a two-hour presentation on the community and environmental effects they contend would occur, while people in business clothes and blue jeans, many of them with children, patiently listened. A sign on the back wall of the gymnasium read: "No power lines through PQ."

"Every day that goes by, there is more opposition to this project," Payne said, as he spoke of new groups forming in areas such as Carmel Valley.

The project is a power line that would be strung from 130-foot, erector set-like towers that would bring in 1,000 megawatts from Imperial County to metro San Diego. SDG&E has filed an application with the California Public Utilities Commission to begin building the towers and wires in 2008 and bring the system online by 2010.

In a bid to quell swelling opposition, SDG&E has proposed to bury seven miles of the line, including two in Rancho Penasquitos. Even so, group members suggested that underground lines would erode property values in the neighborhood of homes worth several hundred thousand dollars, and pose a potential risk to children.

The line would run underground for two miles along the south side of Highway 56, running west from Rancho Penasquitos Boulevard and crossing under Black Mountain Road, then veering southwest at Texana Street.

Upon reaching Park Village Road, the line would do one of two things.

Either it would pop up just west of Darkwood Road and head due west, or, the wires would continue southwest, underground, along Park Village for another two miles. The line would pop up just west of the end of Park Village Road, near Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Payne said there is no guarantee the wires would be buried, and, even if they were, the construction impact would be severe.

Either way through the neighborhood, there would be a critical effect on the nearby Del Mar Mesa area, with its rare vernal pools and plants found nowhere else in the world, said Mike Kelly, conservation chairman of Friends of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Kelly said that, upon learning the proposed route last week, he asked an SDG&E employee about the vernal pools, and the employee emphasized that the seasonal ponds would be avoided.

"I said, 'Thank you very much. But what about the watersheds that feed them?'" Kelly said, suggesting the damage still be overwhelming.

Kelly noted that many such pools already have disappeared from California. "Ninety-seven percent of them are gone. Lost forever. They can't be brought back," Kelly said.

See p. 4 for more

Celebrate National Trails Day

Experience Your Outdoors

Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve - Ranch House
End of Canyonside Park Drive, San Diego

Saturday, June 3, 2006 from 10 a.m to 4 p.m.

Bring the family and join in the Fun!:

- Nature Walks
- Mountain Bike and Equestrian Rides
- Children's Activities
- Trail Fair with Vendors and Live Music
- Pony Rides, Wall climbing, Astro Jumps
- Opportunity Drawings and More!



National Trails Day



June 3, 2006

Free Parking and Admission

SAN DIEGO COUNTY



Parks Society



For event information, please call 858-484-7504 or visit www.sdparcs.org
For vendor information or sponsorship opportunities, please call 858-694-3969



Top: Lopez Canyon trash pickup. Three pickups and one stake-bed truck were filled to overflowing with trash from two squatter camps, under the [Camino Santa Fe bridge](#), and in the streambed. Top: City Ranger John Garwood and volunteers including Edward Di Bella, Neil & Jill Meyer, Carol Cooper, Mike Davis, Marc Lawrence, Trung Huyanh, Erik Noreke, Jeff Codling, and our youngest volunteer, David Codling, seen flexing his muscles.

Bottom: Red diamond rattler curled up near the bridge (can you spot the head and the 'coon' tail?) is crawling around in broken beer bottles and other trash tossed over the bridge railing by idiots with no sense of civic pride.





Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219 www.penasquitos.org

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Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739.5451
Vice-President: Don Albright 619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538.2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672.0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen, Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King and Barbara Moore.

Committees:

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta, 858.672.0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.566.6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Lani Noreke, 760.715.4102

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____ 5/2006

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.566.6489** for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park · Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

July / August 2006
Volume 20, NO 4

Datura: The Shaman's Plant

Will Bowen, PhD

One of the most unusual and mysterious plants of the canyon is *Datura*. We have at least two varieties growing in the Preserve. *Datura meteloides* is the native plant and *Datura stramonium* is introduced from Tropical America. Although they look very similar the way to tell them apart is to note that the fruit capsule of *meteloides*, which looks very much like a small prickly green ball wearing a pleated dress, nods downward while that of *stramonium* stands erect. The tubular flowers of *meteloides* are also larger, ranging in size from 15-20 cm (6-8 inches), while that of *stramonium* are somewhat smaller, ranging from 6-12 cm (2 ½ to 4 ½ inches).

The *Datura* plant looks like it belongs in the rainforest, not our canyon preserve. In actuality, it's a common plant with many varieties growing throughout the

world in the warmer parts of all the continents. This plant grows from 1-5 feet high. It has purplish stems and contorted "evil" looking alternate leaves, dark green above, and lighter below, with an ovate shape and irregular incised and toothed leaf margin. When crushed the leaves smell just like peanut butter. The flowers are large and funnel shaped, white with a purple tinge. They bloom June through September. The flower, in contrast to the leaves, smells divine, like sweet perfume. The flower is usually closed during the day, only to trumpet open at night when it's subject to pollination by a large Hawk-winged Moth.

Under the moon light the flower appears to glow as if it

See *Datura* p. 6 for more



Datura - One of the most unusual & mysterious plants found in the Canyon.

Highlights Inside

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Carmel Mountain Trails Dedication

Dr. John Northrop, PhD,
Charter Member,
Friends of Los Peñasquitos
Canyon Preserve

The Carmel Mountain Preserve trails system, just north of Peñasquitos Canyon, was dedicated on Sunday, May 7th, alongside the trail behind Clews Horse Ranch in Carmel Valley. Scott Peters, President of the San Diego City Council, was the featured speaker along with Rick Thompson, the City's Trail Manager, and Senior Park Ranger Gina Washington. After the ceremony, attendees received a brochure showing the trails that wind through the nearly 400-acre preserve.

The trails map shows five categories of trails:

- All Purpose Trails
- Equestrian Only
- Hike Only
- Hike/Equestrian
- Bike/Hike

Each trail's designation is coded

See *Trails* p. 7 for more

Upcoming Hikes/Events

May gray is finally gone and June gloom is behind us. Remember, however that the Preserve is hot during the daytime so it is best to ride or walk during cooler hours in the morning or early evening. All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group, please call (858) 484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail!

For maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Park, visit www.penasquitos.org.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Ranch Santa Maria de Los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds.

La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturdays, 12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m. Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

July

Waterfall and Walden Pond Hike with Linda King

Saturday, July 22, 4 –6 p.m. Join Linda King for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing, the waterfall and back. Good chance to see flowers and wildlife. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Camino del Sur and Park Village Dr. in Rancho

Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water, and wear hiking boots. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).**

Tamarisk Bash

Saturday, July 22, 9 a.m. There will be a Tamarisk Bash in Black Mtn. Open Space Park. Tamarisk is one of the worst invasive shrubs in the southwest. No experience is needed! Meeting place is obscure, so call Mike at 858-566-6489 for details. It will be hot so wear sunscreen, good hat, and bring plenty of water.

Boots and Hoot Hike in Peñasquitos Canyon

Saturday, July 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Join Friends' president and naturalist Brian Swanson as we explore the natural history of one of San Diego's most beautiful canyons. Bring water, a flashlight and sturdy shoes. We often see wildlife such as snakes, owls, bats, and deer. No strollers or pets, please. Park in the paved lot at the west end of Canyonside Park.

Board of Directors

Tuesday, July 25, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

August

Night Walking with Will Bowen

Saturday, August 12, 8 - 9:30 PM A dusk into dark walk. Experience the canyon at night. Look and listen for nocturnal animals and birds. Observe the moon, stars, and constellations. Learn about how the ancients saw the night sky. Meets in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Sat., Aug. 12, 8–10 a.m. Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two

walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and 1st left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.

Nighttime Wildlife Walk with Mike Kelly

Fri., Aug. 18, 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Join Mike Kelly for this after dark walk. Very good chance to see wildlife. Bring a flashlight. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Camino del Sur and Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water, and wear hiking boots.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (J7).

Boots and Hoot Hike in Peñasquitos Canyon

Saturday, August 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Join Friends' president and naturalist Brian Swanson as we explore the natural history of one of San Diego's most beautiful canyons. Bring water, a flashlight and sturdy shoes. We often see wildlife such as snakes, owls, bats, and deer. No strollers or pets, please. Park in the paved lot at the west end of Canyonside Park.

Waterfall and Walden Pond Hike with Linda King

Saturday, August 19, 4 –6 p.m.

Join Linda King for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing, the waterfall and back. Good chance to see flowers and wildlife. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging area at the intersection of Camino del Sur and Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water, and wear hiking boots.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (J7).

Directions

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots. Bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (C2).

Mercy Rd Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (D7).

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (A7-B7).

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance.

Thomas Guide p.1189-1188 (J7).

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ball fields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (C7).

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Blvd in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, Take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. East, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

New Trail Connects Carmel Valley to Peñasquitos Preserve

Jack Northop

At Large Member Emeritus
Citizens Advisory Committee

Pardee has just finished work on a new trail that connects Peñasquitos Canyon to Carmel Mountain via the "Old Cow Path"/ wildlife corridor through the Carmel Mountain Road underpass.

How to get there...

- ◆ Go up the North wall of the canyon from Wagon Wheel crossing to the SDG&E power lines.
- ◆ Turn right on the narrow, former cow path to the Carmel Mountain Road underpass.
- ◆ Follow the new trail alongside the wildlife corridor to the large open area (a proposed school site).
- ◆ Follow the old trail to the Carmel Mountain Open Space Preserve.

Happy Trails!



Will Bowen's Herb Hike

This hike drew more than 15 participants, pictured here on the trail into Lopez Canyon.

Ceremony unveils wildlife panels for Carmel Mountain Preserve

Suzanne Evans

[This article is reprinted from the Carmel Valley News Online]

In a fantasy world of flowering California wild lilac, fairy shrimp, black-tailed jackrabbits and Southern Maritime Chaparral, known as the Carmel Mountain Preserve, where hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians are encouraged to enjoy the trails and wildlife, on Sunday, May 7, city officials held a ceremony to unveil environmental artist Ruth Wallen's pictorial interpretive panels highlighting the Preserve's beauty as well as new signs delineating the trails plan.

"This should be a city built around trails; it makes San Diego special," said staunch trails advocate, San Diego City Council President and District One Councilman Scott Peters of the 400-acre Preserve, bounded roughly

by SR-56, Carmel Country Road, Carmel Mountain Road, and El Camino Real, welcoming a small group of visitors. Among them were Gina Washington, senior park ranger (with the city since 2000), Rick Thompson (retained as trails manager by mayor Sanders), Brian Swanson, chair of Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, and Penasquitos Citizens Advisory Committee member Guy Ravad. Also present was Peters' staff representative, Tyler Sherer. "Ranger Gina Washington and crew of volunteers put in a lot of hard work," Peters said.

Also present was fierce trails advocate and Carmel Valley Community Planning board member (since the mid-1990s) Anne Harvey, whom Peters praised as "always turning out," Del Mar Mesa board member Jill McCarty

and Del Mar Mesa trails representative Marvin Gerst, mounted on "Scout," his 33-year-old black and white Appaloosa. McCarty, whose A-1 Fire Protection company built and donated the standards for Wallen's interpretive panels, said "This is exciting; the signs look really beautiful." Peters said McCarty "also made generous cash contribution."

Harvey has commended Thompson for having "walked with us for many tough, argumentative miles as we have both learned. He explained about user groups and their preferences and where trails are needed and how to site and design them so they will require less maintenance . . . Carmel Valley is fortunate to have a Facilities Benefits Assessment surplus, and we have proven that we are willing to fund trails." Thompson called a meeting of interested trail users: hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians, to identify which trails should be open, improved, or closed, or new trails created to prevent impromptu criss-crossing of trails and creation of unauthorized trails that would damage the sensitive habitat.

Ranger Thompson praised the "keen eyes and astute citizens who threw themselves in front of development and protected this piece of real estate. These are the last remaining stands of Coastal Chaparral," Thompson said, describing the federally endangered Dudleya and horned lizards in the "well loved" area.

Thompson told this newspaper there has been "much gnashing of teeth and pulling hair about the Preserve's preservation, for 10 to 15 years. Anne (Harvey) is at the front of the pack and Diana Gordon, a local resident has also



Diana Gordon, ecological artist Ruth Wallen, Brian Swanson, Ranger Gina Washington, and Councilman Scott Peters

So far the signs and Ranger Gina and her volunteers' fences (funded by the Friends) and rock and branch arrangements seem to be working. For the first time, most of the people walking, biking, and riding horseback on Carmel Mountain have a way to understand that the very small plants and animals who live here are hard to see (and avoid), extremely rare, and fragile.

done a lot of work to keep people on the trails [and off the vegetation and sensitive areas]. [Gordon] even gathers twigs and places them near sensitive areas so people won't walk on them."

Wallen unveiled her three colorful interpretive panels, of short-leaved *Dudleya* (it lives in only five locations around Del Mar and La Jolla), fairy shrimp (adapted to live in puddles) and a spadefoot toad (with a vanishing habitat) nestling near a vernal pool.

Wallen commended Council president Peters as "a driving force [for the Preserve]," observing she's been coming to the Preserve for almost 20 years when "You could walk almost to I-15. "I wondered where the [about 100] vernal pools were. It's amazing to see how rain brings out the fairy shrimp, tadpoles, and tiny 'pinhead' fish. Then the pools dry up and all the tiny white dots of life under the surface are just waiting for the next rain. I'm glad to preserve these areas, integrate trails and preserve wildlife."

"It's wonderful for me to get to know the mesa well and hope everyone can get to know it. We are really lucky to have it as a part of our resources," said Wallen, a local resident and graduate of UCSD, who has shown solo exhibitions in San Diego, San Francisco, and New York City and whose work has included photographs and artists books.

Also present was Wallen's next door neighbor, Sarah Axford, who noted that [now impeded] "development has been a long story."

Included in the panels is a legend showing trails designated for hikers only, equestrians only, mountain bikes only, and a combination of hike/equestrian trails, as well as bike/hike trails. At the entrance to the Carmel Mt. Preserve is a sign with regulations, such as prohibition of destruction of plants or animals, littering, amplified

noise, motorized vehicles and overnight camping.

Vernal pools look dull in dry seasons, but they shimmer in the springtime after winter rains leave them full of water. These "ephemeral wetlands" have been nearly decimated across the state. The pools are home to two fairy shrimp species and at least six plant species that are either protected or proposed for state or federal endangered species protection, Harvey said.

"Unfortunately, people and animals have gone right through the vernal pools that become mud pools as the rains stop. Critters like fairy shrimp and tadpoles then hide in the mud and 'hibernate,'" said volunteer ranger Bill Witzell, who works on the trails three or four times a week, helping to put in fencing to close off trails where there are endangered species.

Rangers showed visitors the way to the dedication site, a 15 minute walk up winding dirt paths,

made easier for this newspaper's reporter and photographer by a free ride on the Rangers' "Gator," a small all-terrain jeep that bounced over the paths on the way back down the hill.

Volunteer ranger John Garwood, who has been working on the project for a month and pointed out recently installed split-rail fences (for hitching horses), made of "blonde" wood that turns darker with time, said the Preserve connects to Penasquitos Canyon through a wildlife corridor. He said from one high point on the Preserve, visitors can look down and see Clews Horse Ranch in both its new and former locations.

Carmel Mt. Preserve, woven together from 1984 to 1998 from some 25 ownerships, encompasses land acquired as exactions and as mitigation for devel-

See **Ceremony** pg 6 for more



Jill McCarty in foreground, LPCPCAC members Marvin Gerst, Jack Northrop, and Bunny Clews

Jill and Kent McCarty fabricated the bases for the new interpretive signs at their company on Mira Mesa, A-1 Fire Sprinklers. Jill, a long-time equestrienne, also contributed \$500 to the Friends for signage on Carmel Mountain. Jill believed that the equestrians who ride Carmel Mountain and Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve were likely to ride "off trail" because they had no way to know where the approved trails were. She and Bunny Clews believed that if all trail users understood why some areas needed to remain undisturbed, they would be happy to cooperate in conservation and restoration efforts.

(Datura cont'd from pg 1)

were illuminated by a Haight-Asbury black light. The spiny green fruit sac hangs under the leaves and is filled with black seeds.

Medicinally, this plant is classed as a painkiller, antispasmodic, hypnotic, and hallucinogenic. It's a very dangerous plant in inexperienced hands. An overdose could be fatal. It's hard for even an expert to determine proper medical dosage because the potency can vary a great deal, depending on various factors such as location. The primary alkaloid in the plant is scopolamine, with smaller amounts of atropine and hyoscyamine present.

Some of the other names for Datura include Toloache or Tolva-che, Jameson Weed, Jamestown Weed, Devil's Apple, Devil's Trumpet, Devil's Weed, Thorn-apple, Stinkweed, Mad-apple, and Estramonio.

In India, Datura is known as dhatura and has been used since ancient times by cults such as the Thugis, who were portrayed in "Indian Jones and the Temple of Doom". Legend has it that the Gypsies brought Datura with them from India when they migrated to Europe.

In the Middle Ages, in Europe, Datura was part of the pharmacopoeia associated with witches and warlocks. In Mexico, Datura has been used as an "ally" by brujeras, curanderos, and shamans, such as Don Juan Matus, who was made famous by the books of Carlos Castaneda, for millennium..

In Puritan New England, Datura was a power plant used by the witches who were continually persecuted by the good people who walked the straight and narrow. There is a interesting story about how a regiment of British troops on the way to Jamestown to battle the American patriots during the Revolutionary War in-

advertently ate the plant and became too crazy to fight, thus saving the day. Hence the name, Jamestown Weed.

Various tribes of American Indians used Datura to help them have visions and to communicate with the spirit world. Several tribes of Southern California Indians such as the Digueño, Luseño, Cupeño, Cauhilla, and Gabrielino used Datura as a sacrament for initiation into the Toloache Cult, which performed its own ceremonial dances.

In the medicine of the early American West, a tincture made from the leaves and seeds of the plant soaked in alcohol was used to treat spasmodic coughing, chronic laryngitis, and asthma. Some people just lit up the leaves and inhaled the smoke like a cigarette for asthma treatment. "Asthma Powders" was a professional preparation that combined saltpeter with Datura leaves. It too was smoked for asthma. Apparently, it was very effective and served to numb the bronchial nerves, relax the chest muscles, and dry up excessive mucus. Just a little smoke had a local effect on the lungs without going into the blood stream to produce the more severe psychic effects. In addition, the leaves were used externally as a poultice or fomentation to treat arthritis or the leaves were cured in alcohol with a pinch of cayenne to make an arthritis liniment. Some people just put the leaves in their bathwater to ease their sore joints and make them drowsy. In South America the leaves were infused to make a tea that had aphrodisiac properties.

This plant is very interesting to look at, smell, and ponder. However, it's also potentially very dangerous. We should all learn to recognize it and warn children and young adults about it just as we warn them about poison oak.

The Friends will be having Night Walks in the Preserve in July and August and hikers will be

able to see and smell this unusual plant shimmering under the moonlight. Come join one of our night hikes and have a look-see.

(Ceremony cont'd from pg 5)

opments in Carmel Valley and Torrey Hills, SR-56, Pacific Highlands Ranch, and the Del Mar National golf resort, according to Harvey, who, along with Peters has been an avid trails advocate.

"It also includes parcels of land purchased outright by the CA Coastal Conservancy (\$4 million and the city of San Diego (\$1.5 million)," Harvey said.

Carmel Mountain is home to more different kinds of plants and animals than any other piece of land in San Diego County. It is the largest remaining stand of the plant community Southern Maritime Chaparral, which once covered coastal southern California but is now 97 percent depleted, according to Harvey, who received her degree in landscape architecture from UC Irvine in 1998.

"Plant species protected on Carmel Mountain include our local white CA wild lilac (now blooming), Del Mar manzanita, coast barrel cactus, and the federally endangered short-leaved Dudleya. Animals include the San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, the San Diego horned lizard, the orange-throated whiptail lizard, spadefoot toads, SD fairy shrimp, tarantulas and velvet ants, kites, mule deer, bobcats," and, Harvey added, "once every few years a mountain lion."

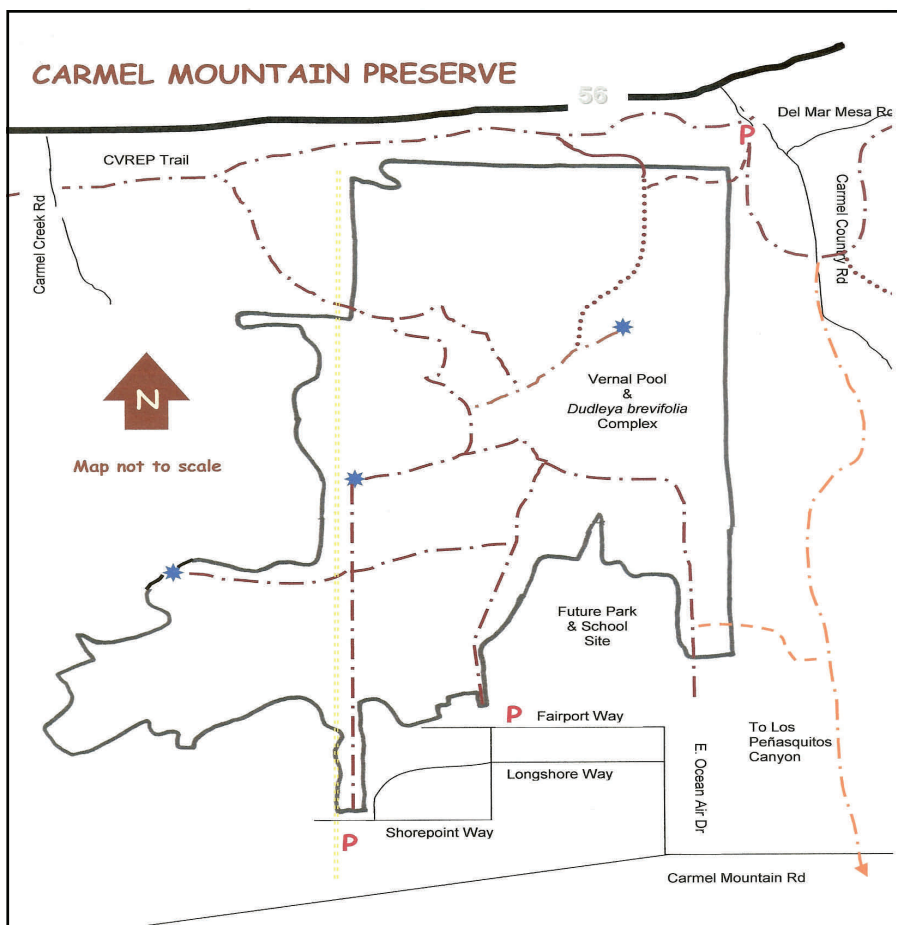
(Trails cont'd from pg 1)

on the map and signs have been posted at the trail heads. Most of the trails are covered with small, red, iron concretions (called "pisolites") that were deposited there about one million yrs ago when the climate was a lot wetter than it's now and supported a stand of pine trees, many of whose fossil roots can be seen on the trails that have been scraped and/or bulldozed. (They have been mineralized and appear as white marks in the red roadbeds). Now there is only one Torrey Pine growing there.

The Preserve is home to the greatest variety of plant and animal life in San Diego County and is the largest stand of Southern Maritime Chaparral in the world. Numerous, large (up to 5' high) pack rat dens (or stick houses) of the Dusky Footed pack rats (or wood rats) dot the eastern part of

the chaparral where the wart-leaved *ceanothus* plants grow. The preserve also has many vernal pools that fill with water after spring rains and support a community of tadpoles (Western Spade Foot Toad and California Chorus frog), as well as San Diego Fairy Shrimp, an endangered species. Another endangered species found in the preserve, the short leaved dudleya (*Dudleya brevifolia*), grows near the eastern edge of the preserve and its habitat has been fenced off. Park Ranger patrol the Preserve from Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

The figure below is a map of the Preserve showing the designated trails on Carmel Mountain. A more detailed map with legend and rules can be found at www.penasquitos.org.



Letters to the Editor

Subj: Ruiz Adobe

Ref: Soledad Valley by Will Bowen

First of all, I would like to congratulate Will Bowen on his history of Soledad Valley. I used to ride my horse there from Norwood Brown's stable about 20 yrs ago and am familiar with many of the things he mentioned, including the railroad tracks, which made pasturing horses there very hazardous. However, there a couple of items regarding Penasquitos Canyon that, in my opinion, should be modified.

For example, as far as I know, the term "El Cuervo" has always been used in reference to Captain Ruiz Hacienda at the west end of Penasquitos Canyon, rather than to Lopez Canyon. Also, contrary to the statement that "Alvarado and his son built the El Cuervo adobe in the West end of the canyon sometime between 1830 and 1850" (Canyon News, V.20, No 1, Jan/Feb, 2006, P.4) the Ruiz adobe, El Cuervo, was built by Capt. Francisco Maria Ruiz, Commandant of the San Diego Presidio. This fact is documented by San Diego County Historian, Mary Ward, (1) as follows. Ruiz built an adobe house in the western end of the long Penasquitos Canyon (1)." She goes on to say, "In 1837, two years before he died, Capt. Ruiz transferred title of his Rancho Penasquitos (the 1823 land grant from Luis Antonio Argüelles, Mexican Governor of California) to his friend Francisco Maria Alvarado "in compensation for board and care when his health failed".

That is why the old adobe at the west end of the Canyon is called the Ruiz Adobe.

Sincerely yours,
Dr. John Northrop. PhD
Charter Member,
Friends of Los Peñasquitos
Canyon Preserve, Inc

(1) Ward, Mary, "Rancho de los Peñasquitos, on the Road to Yuma", County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation, P.1. (1984).



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219 www.penasquitos.org

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Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739-5451
Vice President: Don Albright 619.443-5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538-2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672-0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen,
Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King, and
Barbara Moore

Committees

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta,
858.672-0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly,
858.566-6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell,
760.471-9197

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I / We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

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Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call 858.484.3219 or 858.566.6489 for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park · Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Sep/Oct 2006
Volume 20, No 5

A New Look for the Nighthawk Trail Head

Lori Charett, Senior Park Ranger

Anybody that knows me will tell you that I do not like guardrail in open space parks. In fact, I vehemently detest it. I cannot think of a more unsightly, unwelcoming entrance to a beautiful open space park. With that said, admittedly, it does serve a purpose and that is, it has effectively kept off-roaders from destroying our parks natural resources over the years. However, today- there are better and more aesthetically pleasing alternatives that are effective. Since I was assigned to Black Mountain Park nearly five years ago, I have thought of the guardrail at the Nighthawk trailhead to Black

Mountain Open Space from the Hilltop Recreation Center as an eye sore. The guardrail was installed many years ago to keep unauthorized vehicles/off-roaders from entering. Today, this area is a popular access point to the network of trails Black Mountain offers for hiking and biking.

The idea of removing the guardrail and installing peeler pole fencing came to me many years ago. However, many of our projects on our "wish list" inevitably have to wait until a volunteer group or Scout contacts us and offers to

See *Nighthawk* p. 7 for more



Sr. Ranger Lori Charett with Rotary Club and Westview High School volunteers in front of their newly installed peeler log fencing at Black Mountain Open Space Park.

Highlights Inside

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Updating History	
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Friends Annual Meeting	7
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How are bats doing in PQ?

Bats in the Night Sky

Mike Kelly

[All of the facts in the following article are gleaned from the publication: Bat Inventory of the Multiple Species Conservation Program Area in San Diego County, California, 2002 - 2004. Published in late 2005, this study was prepared for the County of San Diego and the California Dept. of Fish and Game by the San Diego Field Station of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Photos can be found at <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/bats/batstudiessouth.html>, the U.S.G.S. web site. Visit this site to see more pictures of other species of bats. Visit the Friends' site to see photos of all 7 species studied in our Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.]

As we approach Halloween, there will be many images of bats appearing in the popular media. Old horror films with bats will resurface. Once again, stubborn, untrue myths about bats will be uttered. In truth, there are only two species of

See *Bats* p. 5 for more

Fall is upon us

As we get deeper into our fall season, we can expect gradually cooling days and evenings, but punctuated by the occasional Santa Ana winds, sometimes called the "devil winds". Santa Ana conditions, of course, bring high fire conditions, as we all know from the Cedar Fires. However, fall will also bring colors to some of the canyons, especially as we get deep into October. López Canyon with its mighty California sycamore trees is a good place for fall colors. Also the portion of Peñasquitos Canyon about 1/2 mile west of the waterfall, around the aptly named Sycamore Crossing. We might also see our first rainfall in October, as we did in 2004.

All hikes are free to the public. If you are bringing an organized group, please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

For maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Park, visit www.penasquitos.org.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three-foot thick adobe walls, settler, and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 AM - 12:30

PM Saturdays, 12:30 - 2:30 PM
Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

September

Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committees

Thursday, September 21

7:00 PM

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. There will be a special presentation on the Draft Carmel Mountain & Del Mar Mesa Resources Management Plan. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Canyon Favorites Hike

Saturday, September 23

3:00 - 5:00 PM

Join Pat Watkins for a moderately paced to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots.

Thomas Guide p. 1188 (J7).

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday September 26

7:00 PM

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

October

Arch in the Park

Saturday, October 7

10:00 - 3:00 PM

The *San Diego County Archaeological Society* presents an educational day of Archaeology and Fun at the Ranch House in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy in the shade. Fry bread, snacks, and sodas will be available for purchase. For more information, call: 858-538-0935 or e-mail us at: sdcas@email.com

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, October 14

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and first left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.

Friends Annual Meeting & Social Reptiles in San Diego

Saturday, October 14

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Bradford D. Hollingsworth Ph.D., Curator of Herpetology, SD Natural History Museum

Join us for an ice cream social and brief election of Friends' officers from 7- 7:30 p.m. From 7:30 - 8:30 PM meet some live reptiles under the care of Brad Hollingsworth, Reptile Curator at the SD Natural History Museum. He will also give a talk on the status of reptiles in San Diego County. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn.

Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and first left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch.
Thomas Guide p. 1189 C7.

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Thomas Guide p. 1188 (J7).

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday, October 24

7:00 PM

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway.

Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Halloween Evening Sensory Walk w Will Bowen

Sunday, October 29

4:00 - 5:30 PM

Halloween always signals some unique changes in the Canyon. Early falling darkness, cool air, eerie orange sunsets, clear starry nights, and the feeling that ghosties are afoot always makes for a pleasant and tantalizing evening walk. Come for a stroll and savor the qualities of this special seasonal juncture. Meets at West End Parking Staging Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

Directions

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots. Bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (C2).

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (D7).

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Thomas Guide p.1189 (A7-B7).

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Thomas Guide p.1189 (C7).

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Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Blvd in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

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Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).



Updating history Will the Real Ruíz Adobe Please Stand Up?

New book will shed light on mystery

Mike Kelly

Readers read a letter from Dr. John Northrop in the last issue of this newsletter (*Canyon News* V. 20, No. 1, July / August 2006) criticizing Dr. Will Bowen's article on the history of Sorrento Valley that appear in an even earlier newsletter (*Canyon News*, V. 20, No. 1, Jan/Feb. 2006). Northrop quoted Mary Ward, the late County Historian to the effect that the adobe ruins in the west end of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve had been built in by Comandante Francisco Maria Ruíz, Commandant of the Presidio, after he received the first San Diego County land grant in 1823. In fact, there is a sign to this

effect in front of these very ruins. Bowen said the adobe had been built by Francisco Maria Albarado and his son between 1830 and 1850.

Northrop cited Ward's "Rancho de los Peñasquitos, on the Road to Yuma", County of San Diego, Department of Parks and Recreation, p. 1. (1984). I have this out-of-print document on my own shelf. It is still an excellent reference for matters concerning the history of our Preserve.

However, what is not yet widely known is that Mary Ward and other researchers, principally archaeologists, after the publica-

tion of her book, found evidence that her own book and our common wisdom about who built which adobe in the Preserve and when were wrong! I have in my possession an unpublished manuscript authored by Mary Ward that reveals the findings of new historical research, indicating that the first adobe in the Preserve was built close to what we now know as Black Mountain Road. About the same time as Ward's discovery, Dr. Susan Hector and a team of archaeologists were monitoring the tear down and extensive restoration of the ranch house we always called the "Johnson-Taylor Ranch House". This ranch house was believed to have been built in the 1850s by Captain George Johnson and his bride, Estefana Alvarado, then later added on to by Jacob Taylor, better known as the founder of Del Mar. Hector and company made an astounding discovery in the ranch house. They found evidence of an older adobe inside the bigger adobe, buried within its walls! This older adobe dated to the Mexican, not the American settler period.

To readers who yearn to learn more about these and many more historical and archaeological discoveries, I have the following exciting news to share. I am currently editing and producing a book describing the fruits of the research by Mary Ward, by historian Steve Van Wormer, Ph.D, and three archaeologists who have led digs at the ranch House: Susan Hector, Ph.D., Lynne Christenson, Ph.D (the current County Historian), and Steve Bouscaren, Ph.D. I hope to have this book to the printer before the end of the year. The County has graciously made a grant that will cover the printing of the book, complete with illustrations.

ARCH in the PARK

Saturday, October 7, 2006 • 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

The **San Diego County Archaeological Society** presents an educational day of **Archaeology and Fun** at the **Ranch House in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve**

- ⇒ Find out what archaeology is all about; dig in a mock excavation; play games
- ⇒ Discover the history of the Ranch House on a tour of the adobe
- ⇒ See archaeology exhibits, demos on stone tool making, basket making, and more!



Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy in the shade. Fry bread, snacks, and sodas will be available for purchase.



For more information, call: 858-538-0935
visit our website: www.sandiegoarchaeologicalsociety.com
or e-mail us at: sdcas@email.com



DIRECTIONS: From I-15 take Mercy Rd. west; turn right (north) onto Black Mountain Rd. Take the first left onto Canyonside Park Driveway. Follow the road all the way to the end (past ball fields) to Ranch House. Park in the Visitors lot on the left side of the road. Walk the pathway to the ranch complex.

(Bats cont'd from pg 1)

blood sucking (i.e., “vampire” bats) in the world, and they’re both in South America. The rest of the hundreds of species of bats eat fish, insects, fruits, or nectar. Did you know they’re mammals, giving birth to live young as we humans do? It turns out we know relatively little about bat species, particularly our local species. Even as five of these species are listed as “of concern” by the regulatory agencies, we find so much we don’t know about them.



©Merlin D. Tuttle, Bat Conservation International

Big brown bat
(*Eptesicus fuscus*)

Research questions abound

How many of our 23 species in the County are migratory? Where do they go? Where are their roosts? Are they reproducing here? Are their numbers declining, increasing, stable? What are they eating? What’s happening with their food supply? When compared with surveys of 20, 30, or 50 years ago, what trends do we find? What are the threats to these local bat species? What can we do on behalf of bats? Do bat boxes work?

In 2002, the USGS began a series of bat inventory studies in San Diego County to begin to answer these questions. The studies were funded by several federal, state, and local agencies including the National Park Service, United States Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and the County of San Diego.

Four study areas were being



©Dick Wilkins, Bat Rescue

Western mastiff bat
(*Eumops perotis*)

surveyed including the Cabrillo National Monument, Descanso district of the Cleveland National Forest, Santa Ysabel Ranch Preserve, and the Multi-Species Planning Area (MSCP) of southeastern San Diego County. The latter includes open space parks, including Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Mission Trails Regional Park, Boden Canyon, and others. Two sites were studied intensively in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, a woodland site and a riparian, open-water site.

Survey methods and timing

Several survey methods were utilized to conduct these bat inventories including 1) use of mist-nets to capture bats at foraging and roosting sites, 2) use of hand-nets to capture bats at day and night roosts, 3) use of acoustic techniques including Anabat bat detectors and audible listening to detect bats at foraging and roosting sites, and 4) use of artificial lights to visually inspect for bats at roost sites and to visually observe foraging bats. Most of the survey effort occurred from May through September, however, surveys are being conducted year-round with a reduced but consistent, almost weekly, effort throughout the fall, winter, and spring.

As of February 1, 2003 a total of 16 of the 23 bat species known from San Diego County had been

detected during the USGS bat inventory studies in the study area. Thirteen of these 16 species have been documented by capture at roosting and/or foraging sites, with the remaining species having been detected only acoustically.

The U.S. Geological Survey report referenced above begins to answer some, but not nearly all, of these questions. For example, are the 7 species of previously identified species of bat not found during these surveys extinct in our County? Or, are they to be found in the parts of the county not in these study areas. The latter is quite probable, at least for several of the species, but perhaps not all.

The researchers noted that species might have escaped detection if they arrive later in the night at the



©Merlin D. Tuttle, Bat Conservation International

Western red bat
(*Lasiurus blossevillii*)

survey sites, when the researchers weren’t present, beyond their 3-hour monitoring period. They could be commuting from inland roost sites to bigger open space sites.

The five bat species of concern were all found in the study area. Those species are:

California leaf-nosed bat
(*Macrotus californicus*)

Western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*)

Townsend’s big-eared bat
(*Corynorhinus townsendii*)

Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)

Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis*)



Yuma myotis
(*Myotis yumanensis*)

Peñasquitos Canyon Findings

Seven species of bat were detected in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. They are:

- Big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
- Western red bat
- Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
- Mexican free-tailed bat (*Tadarida brasiliensis*)
- Western mastiff bat
- Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*)
- California myotis (*Myotis californicus*)

How does our Preserve compare to other areas? We have only a moderate level of diversity with seven species. Mission Trails Regional Park has greater diversity, with nine species. Boden Canyon has 10 species. But the Otay, Tijuana River Valley, and Sweetwater open space areas have the greatest diversity with 13 species. The authors of the report see two factors driving these differences in diversity: the total size of the open space left in a given area and the diversity of habitat types found within each. For example, Mission Trails is perhaps a third bigger than Peñasquitos, but it has more important differences. It has bigger ponds, the bigger San Diego River, and more rocky outcroppings, cliffs, and caves for roosting.

Do bat boxes work?

Yes. The authors found bats in two of the bat boxes in Peñasquitos Canyon. This came as a surprise to this writer, who believed bats weren't using the boxes. The

study authors found one California myotis in one of the brown boxes and 10 California myotis in another brown box. None were found in the white boxes.

The authors believe that a different design of bat boxes might attract other species. They advocate building more bat boxes in our open space areas, making sure they're in appropriate habitat, but as far from possible human intervention (houses, trails) as possible.

They also advocate the construction and experimentation with concrete structures for crack /



California myotis
(*Myotis californicus*)

crevice dwelling bats that mimic cliff, rock, and cave type roosting sites.

Recommendations for improved conservation

Besides the bat box and concrete "cave" recommendations, the study makes a number of other recommendations:

- Saving the biggest blocks of land possible in the habitat plans still coming forward;
- Protect existing roosts, especially those in people structures

identified in the study;

- Educating the public about bats and their useful role in the environment is important;
- Reduce bat mortality due to pest control operations by teaching homeowners and pest control companies how to humanely exclude bats from buildings
- Study the relationship between bats and fires. The Cedar and Otay Fires swept through prime bat habitat, but little is known about the effects of this burned landscape on bat species.
- Establish long-term monitoring of bats and the impact of land-use change.

A personal recommendation from this writer is to recommend having the Bat Rescue folks (www.batrescue.com) come to your organization and make a presentation on bats. They'll also bring live bats with them. It's an eye-opening experience.

(All photographs are by Merlin D. Tuttle of Bat Conservation International.)



©Merlin D. Tuttle, Bat Conservation International

Mexican free-tailed bat
(*Tadarida brasiliensis*)

Friends' Annual Meeting

Local Examples of the Global Amphibian Decline

Bradford D. Hollingsworth, Ph.D.

Curator of Herpetology, San Diego Natural History Museum

7 – 9 p.m., October 14, 2006
Adobe Ranch House,
Peñasquitos Preserve



Rana draytonii. Photo by Bradford D. Hollingsworth, Ph.D.

7:00 p.m. Social. Free ice cream and cookies.

7:30 p.m. Brief business meeting to elect Friends' officers and vote on proposed changes to Friends' Bylaws.

7:45 p.m. Presentation by Brad Hollingsworth, Ph.D.

Global amphibian extinctions have swept across tropical hotspots over the last 5 years. These declines are not limited to remote places on the globe, but are also occurring in our local habitats. From Red-legged Frogs to Arroyo Toads, amphibians serve as indicators to the health of freshwater ecosystems. This presentation focuses on the biodiversity of amphibians from coastal Southern California to the Sierra San Pedro Mártir in Baja California.

Hollingsworth is an expert on San Diego and Baja "herps" (snakes, frogs, toads, salamanders, toads, skinks . . .) and has been on recent collecting expeditions to Baja, California. Expect to see some excellent pictures of our regional "herps" and what's happening to them. See **Thomas Guide, p. 1189 (C7)**.

[Nighthawk cont'd from pg. 1

adopt a project. In this case, San Diego North Rotary Club and Westview High School students came to our rescue.

On April 29th, about 20 Rotarians and several Westview students installed a peeler pole (split rail) fence stretching about 192 feet at the trail head to replace the unsightly guard rail; they also removed invasive mustard plants and litter. This was truly a team effort and great collaboration of resources! The City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department purchased the peeler pole fencing and the City staff provided the equipment and training to carry out the tasks. The volunteers started at 8:00 am and finished by 1 pm. The volunteers saved the City of San Diego approximately \$2,584.00 in labor. Not only that, we have an absolutely beautiful entrance to our open space now and have plans to complete more enhancement projects, such as a kiosk so park patrons

can learn about the local flora and fauna, park rules, trail conditions and safety precautions. The Rotarians and Westview students definitely made a difference to the park and community that will be enjoyed for many years. If it was not for their altruistic ways, hard work and dedication to community service, we could have not accom-

plished this great enhancement project. We are very appreciative of their efforts!

If you are interested in volunteering at Black Mountain Park or know a group that would like to adopt a project, please contact me at (858) 538-8082. Our wish list is long; we welcome your assistance!



The new peeler pole fencing installed at Black Mountain Open Space Park.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

858-484-3219 www.penasquitos.org

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Check Your Label

Take a moment to examine the address label on this newsletter. Check to see if your expiration date has come and gone. If so, please take the time now to send in a renewal check for your membership dues. This will enable you to keep receiving our newsletter, recognized as one of the best conservation newsletters in San Diego. That way you'll keep learning about the family walks; the plants and animals that inhabit the Preserve, and the many conservation projects open to you and your family or friends.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Brian Swanson 760.739-5451
Vice President: Don Albright 619.443-5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538-2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672-0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen,
Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King, and
Barbara Moore

Committees

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Carol Cooper
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta,
858.672-0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly,
858.566-6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell,
760.471-9197

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
Contribution \$ _____

I / We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call 858.484.3219 or 858.566.6489 for more information.



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park · Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Nov/Dec 2006
Volume 20, No 6

Friends call for Yes Vote on Prop 84

SAN DIEGO LEADERS SUPPORT PROPOSITION 84

San Diego Endorsements Demonstrate Need to Protect and Preserve California's Water and Land Resources

A diverse, bipartisan group of San Diego leaders and organizations has come out in early support of Proposition 84 - the Clean Water, Parks, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. Mayor Jerry Sanders, one of California's most respected, big city mayors, is among a number of San Diego supporters that also includes: San Diego County Water Authority, San Diego Coastkeeper, San Diego Natural History Museum, the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon, the Alliance for Habitat Conservation (a coalition of large landowners and home builders), State Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny, State Senator Christine Kehoe, and San Diego City Councilman Benjamin Hueso,

The \$5.4 billion bond measure, slated for the November 2006 statewide ballot, would provide critically needed funds to ensure the availability of safe drinking water, improve local water supply reliability, strengthen flood protection, and preserve California's natural landscapes, including parks, lakes, rivers, beaches, bays, ocean, and coastline.

"San Diego is one of the most beautiful cities in America, and its leaders clearly recognize that to stay that way, the city must make critical investments into its natural resources. I commend San Diego and Mayor Sanders for their leadership on this critical issue," said Michael Mantell, Campaign Chairman for Proposition 84.

These San Diego leaders are an important part of the rapidly growing bipartisan coalition of more than 250 statewide leaders and organizations that support Proposition 84, including: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, League of California Cities, Western Growers Association, Association of California Water Agencies, California Business Properties Association and the California Coastal Coalition.

Specific benefits of Proposition 84 for the San Diego area include:

- \$27 million to clean up and protect the San Diego Bay and its watersheds;
- \$91 million for integrated water management efforts in San Diego;
- \$36 million for the All-American and Coachella Canals Lining programs;
- \$7 million to implement the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species plan; and
- \$47 million for the Salton Sea Restoration.

In addition to these dedicated funds, San Diego area interests can also apply for additional funding within the Integrated Regional Water Management category (total of \$1 billion), Safe Drinking Water funds (total of \$240 million) and

See Prop 84 pg 4 for more

Highlights Inside

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REI Awards \$10K Grant to Friends

Mike Kelly,
Conservation Chair

The Friends are excited to announce receipt of a \$10,000 grant from REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.), the well-known outdoor recreational equipment store. We are using this grant as a match for another grant from a local San Diego Foundation. We'll report on this other grant in our next issue (once the check is in our hands!).

These grants will fund our "Technology Capacity Building and Training of San Diego non-profit Conservation Groups" project. The Friends have always been a regional leader in natural resources volunteer-based stewardship, an example emulated by many other groups. This project will take this to a whole new level.

We have made an agreement with the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Dept., the San Diego Conservation Resources

See REI Grant pg 4 for more

Fall is upon us

All hikes are free to the public. If you are bringing an organized group, please call 858-484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail.

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three-foot thick adobe walls, settler, and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. **La Cocina Gift Shop Hours:** 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM Saturdays, 12:30 - 2:30 PM Sundays. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

November

Black Mtn. Open Space Par Citizens Advisory Committees

Thursday, November 9
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. There will be a special presentation on the Draft Carmel Mountain & Del Mar Mesa Resources Management Plan. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday Nov. 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, November 11
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Tracker/naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and first left into Canyonside Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Wildlife & the Small Things of Nature

Saturday, November 11
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Join Les Braund, former Pres. of the SD Mycological (think mushroom) Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, mosses, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms and lichens. Meet in the Mercy Road staging parking area, upper level. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).

Canyon Favorites Hike

Saturday, November 12
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Join Naturalist Linda King for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Dr. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and

wear hiking boots. Thomas Guide p. 1188 (J7).

Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committees

Thursday, November 16
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. There will be a special presentation on the Draft Carmel Mountain & Del Mar Mesa Resources Management Plan. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday Nov. 28, 7 p.m. Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Sabre Springs Nature Hike

Saturday, November 18
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Join naturalist Mike Kelly to tour the Sabre Springs Wildlife Refuge. See the old Stagecoach Road and its 100+ year old freestanding walls. Meet on Sabre Springs Parkway at Creekview. From I-15, take Poway Road east to Sabre Springs Parkway. Right on Sabre Springs Parkway about 1/3 mile to Creekview. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (H6).

Shamanic Traditions Hike

Sunday, November 26
3:00 – 5:00 PM

Join naturalist Will Bowen on a short hike to a "power spot" to learn about and practice some of the shamanic traditions of the Americas that integrate self-healing, spiritual work, and ecological awareness. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. Meets at West End Parking Staging Area

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday, November 28

7:00 p.m.

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyon-side Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

December

Tamarisk Bash at Black Mtn. Park / Santa Luz

Saturday, December 2

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Join Mike Kelly to eradicate the invasive shrub, tamarisk. Wear boots suitable for outdoor work, bring water, and sun protection. We will provide the tools. Meet at the parking-staging area off San Dieguito Road, about 1/2 mile from its intersection with Camino del Sur in Santa Luz. See Thomas Guide p. 1168 (J6) -1169 (A6). Take SR56 east from I-15 or west from I-5 to Camino del Sur. Go north on Camino del Sur about 1.5 - 2 miles to intersection with San Dieguito Road. Left on San Dieguito. Look for small turnout and kiosk on the right. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 for more info.

Geology Hike with Don Albright

Sunday, December 3

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Join geologist Don Albright for a walk through geological time, including the Preserve's waterfall and a rare fossil. Meet at the intersection of Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa, in the cul-de-sac on the south side of Calle Cristobal. Wear good boots for steep trail and bring water and sun protection. Thomas Guide p. 1208.

Beginner & Intermediate Tracking Walks

Saturday, December 9

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Tracker / naturalists from the Friends' Tracking Team lead two walks, one suitable for beginners (children welcome!) and an intermediate. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Wear shoes that are good in mud. Meet at the historic ranch house. Take Mercy Rd. exit off I-15 west to Black Mtn. Rd., right on Black Mtn. Rd. and first left into Canyon-side Dr., proceed to white-fenced parking lot. Park, walk west on trail to ranch. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Canyon Favorites Hike

Saturday, December 9

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Join Naturalist Pat Watkins for a moderately paced hike to Walden Pond, Carson's Crossing and the waterfall and back. Chance of seeing wildlife. Meet at the end of Park Village Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring insect repellent, water and wear hiking boots. Thomas Guide p. 1188 (J7).

Wildlife & the Small Things of Nature

Saturday, December 16

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Join Les Braund, former Pres. of the SD Mycological (think mushroom) Society for this nature walk emphasizing the small things of nature such as mushrooms, liverworts, mosses, and lichens. Learn about the interactions between wildlife and mushrooms and lichens. Meet in the Mercy Road staging parking area, upper level. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).

Shamanic Traditions Hike

Sunday, December 17

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Join naturalist Will Bowen on a short hike to a "power spot" to learn about and practice some of the shamanic traditions of the Americas that integrate self-healing, spiritual work, and ecological awareness. Bring a drum or rattle and a blanket to sit on. Meets at West End Parking Staging Area.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

Directions

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. **Thomas Guide p.1189 (D7).**

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. **Thomas Guide p.1189-1188 (J7).**

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyon-side Park Dr. Go past ball fields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch house.

Thomas Guide p.1189 (C7).

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Blvd in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, Take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. East, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right.

Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

Friends urge No on Prop 90

[The following article is from the Center for Biological Diversity, a well-known defender of endangered species. The Friends Board of Directors voted to recommend a NO vote on Prop 90.]

Lurking on the November ballot is an initiative that would pave over wildlife habitat, raise costs for taxpayers, impact family farms, and hurt the quality of life for western communities. Please VOTE NO on Proposition 90 to defeat this extremist plan.

Prop 90 would require state and local governments to waive laws that protect wildlife habitat, farmlands, and neighborhoods – or else compensate developers for the alleged financial impact. Prop 90 would raise taxes by forcing the state to defend against frivolous lawsuits from developers or pay to settle these claims.

Paves Over Wildlife and Hurts Our Natural Resources

State and local laws are crucial to protecting wildlife, open space, clean air, and clean water. Communities should not be forced to pay developers or corporations to not pollute or to protect endangered species.

Costly to Taxpayers

A similar measure has resulted in \$5.6 billion in claims against Oregon taxpayers and forced public agencies to waive regulations for developers. Like the proposition now on California's ballot, the Oregon initiative allows developers to sue state and local governments to pay them to follow the law. This is a terrible precedent. Should we pay people to obey traffic laws? Of course not!

California's former legislative analyst, William G. Hamm, warns that "Prop. 90 could require billions of dollars in new taxpayer costs each year, if communities and the state continue to pass or enforce basic laws."

Impacts Family Farms

Family farmers and Farm Bureaus from across the West oppose the proposition because it would increase taxes and remove protections for prized farmland. Protections for farmlands would be waived if a developer claims that future agricultural zoning hurts the ability to subdivide the land.

Hurts Our Quality of Life

Neighborhood associations oppose the proposition because it would undermine protections against the effects of harmful development and provide no compensation for reduced property values that result.

Deceptive Developers Seek Profits at Your Expense

Similar ballot initiatives are cropping up across the West as part of a well-coordinated, nationwide scam funded by an extremely wealthy New York real estate magnate, Howie Rich. These ballot initiatives are the dream of large-scale, out-of-state developers that are looking for nothing other than short-term profits. Either taxpayers pay developers to follow the law or the community pays for the long-term damage. It's a lose-lose situation for communities.

Proponents are deceptively telling voters that these initiatives are simply about "eminent domain reform". Don't fall for the bait and switch. Eminent domain is just a cover to give developers a green light for profits and our leave our communities high and dry. Hidden in the text of these initiatives are far-reaching provisions that would cost taxpayers billions of dollars annually and erode basic laws that protect our economy, environment, and communities.

For more information about the problems with Prop 90 visit <http://www.noprop90.com/>

Volunteers Needed for Mapping

If you would like to join the Friends Invasive Mapping Team to help map invasive plant infestations in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Black Mountain Park, and areas in between, contact Mike Kelly at mkellysd@aol.com or call 858-566-6489.

Volunteers will receive free training in how to use the hardware and software involved. They will also be exploring parts of our lands off the beaten track!

(Prop 84cont'd from pg 1)

would indirectly benefit from investments made in statewide water planning (surface storage planning & feasibility), water quality and flood protection/levee improvements in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta.

"Proposition 84 is timely, as it provides much-needed funding to help protect our beaches and ocean, including coastal storm water and contamination cleanup programs," said State Senator Christine Kehoe. "San Diego can benefit from these funds, and also be eligible to receive new funding to help pay for mandated programs to improve and ensure drinking water quality and reliability."

Proposition 84 will provide much needed investments into these natural infrastructures, while providing strict fiscal accountability provisions, such as yearly independent audits and a citizen's oversight committee.

A non-partisan coalition of broad interests, Californians for Clean Water, Parks, and Coastal Protection, has been created and mobilized to support Proposition 84. To obtain more information or join as a supporter, please visit www.YesOn84.com.

(REI Grant cont'd from pg 1)

Network (www.SDCRN.org, and the Sierra Club's Canyonlands Committee for this project. SDCRN is a coalition of all the land trusts and conservancies in San Diego County and the Canyonlands Committee has organized more than 30 "Friends of" groups in inner city canyons in San Diego and in other cities in the county in recent years. The land trusts and "Friends" groups are either actively involved in natural lands management or in doing so and rely on volunteers to do it. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is making its Weed Information Mapping System (WIMS) available for free along with technical advice for this project.

Our project has four goals:

1. Provide modern technology to member groups of our partners to map habitat, rare plant species, invasive weeds, and wildlife through a technology loan program. Friends will loan out the necessary hardware and software. The hardware will include Mobile PC Tablets and handheld PDAs with GPS units for electronically collecting data in the field. GIS (Geographic Information Systems) software will be used to collect data and generate maps.
2. Train volunteers and staff from these groups in the use of the hardware and software to gather field data to be used for managing the natural resources in their preserve, parks, or canyon. We estimate 6-8 groups can be trained each year, beginning with 2006.
3. Train these groups in how to develop and implement management plans for their preserves, parks, or canyons. The WIMS software is used to not only house field data but to allow subsequent management of the mapped weed infestations to be tracked. It's management oriented software.

4. Develop habitat and rare mapping programs along the model of the Weed Information Management Software for future training programs.

Two volunteers, Mike Kelly of the Friends of los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, and Larry Klassen of the Sierra Club, have volunteered to be the trainers for the different groups. They each expect to donate at least 100 hours. Kelly is an expert on invasive weeds and their management, having served two terms as president of the California Invasive Plant Council (www.Cal-IPC.org). Klassen is an expert in control of the highly destructive tamarisk and has been leading volunteer control efforts for many years on this invasive weed.



To Our Special Friends

District 3 County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price and the Department of Parks and Recreation cordially invite you to a celebration at Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House to commemorate the restoration of Wing C of the historic adobe.

**Tuesday, November 7
2 p.m.
Los Peñasquitos Adobe**

The adobe, which dates back to the 1800s, serves more than 800 school children each year with the La Vida del Rancho school program. The restoration of Wing C will enable docents to interpret a 19th century kitchen and teach children what life was like on a rancho. Public is welcome to attend the event. Guests will enjoy docent led tours of the adobe, including the recently restored section, wagon rides, and light refreshments.



Coastal Cleanup Day: 3 Tons!

Brian Swanson, President

Thanks to our many members who turned out September 16 for our Coastal Cleanup Day. The Friends joined with I Love a Clean San Diego and Coastkeeper in organizing more than 160 volunteers to cleanup much of López Canyon and several areas in Peñasquitos Canyon.

On this same day, volunteers worked up and down the state of California, cleaning beaches, creeks, lakes, and watersheds. I Love a Clean San Diego County provided a huge dumpster while Sempra Energy acted as site sponsor in providing refreshments.

Beginning about 8:30 a.m. volunteers converged on Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve at the López

Canyon parking lot off Calle Cristobal for muffins and orange juice. Water, gloves, trash bags, and litter gitters were handed out. Sr. City Ranger Gina Washington was in command, and had previously mapped out a half dozen locations for cleanup, including former migrant camps and dumpsites.

Ranger Gina was ably assisted by Friends conservation chair Mike Kelly and volunteer Dick Erwin. Sr. Ranger Paul Kucharczyk had mapped out a location for volunteers on the county portion of the preserve, between Black Mountain Rd. and the lower paved county lot. He assisted Friends President and Sempra employee Brian Swanson in supervising a team of

about 15 Sempra/SDGE employees.

We scoured the floodplain for our quarry. Initially it seemed like we wouldn't find much, but pretty soon our bags were filling up. We kept consolidating our trash at the rally point, and ended up with several heavy tires with rims, dozens and dozens of balls (baseballs, softballs, Wiffle balls, super balls, golf balls, etc.), several metal chairs, lots and lots of pieces of Styrofoam (we are thinking that those cheap 99 cents ice chests should be banned . . . they fall apart and are discarded after one or two uses, and then seem to end up in the streams and ocean), countless plastic and glass bottles, and beverage cans, and a number of clothing items.

While cleaning we had to watch out for poison oak and rattlesnakes. Some of us saw deer and coyote scat and tracks, and a number of lizards scurried out of our way. With our "litter gitter" tools we probably looked to them like herpetologists. Scrub jays, woodpeckers, and gold finches flitted about the bushes and trees as we went about our business. Our youngest volunteer was middle schooler Aaron Conde, son of Al Conde. I think he was a little perplexed that so many adults got enjoyment from picking up someone else's trash.

After a vigorous effort that team collected a couple hundred pounds of Styrofoam, plastic/glass and aluminum drink containers, several tires with rims, construction materials, paper, plastic and dozens of baseballs, softballs, Wiffle balls, tennis balls, etc., which filled two large pick ups. The east end team's trash was estimated at 200 lbs. (remember, plastic bottles and Styrofoam don't weigh much!). Adding in the López Canyon teams' efforts, altogether the



Trash Team Volunteers. Pictured are Sempra/SDGE volunteers Aaron Conde and his dad Al, John Finley, Dave Siino, Ali Yari, Paul Szymanski, Greg and Barbara Barnes, Lisa Urick, Brian Swanson, Ranger Paul Kucharczyk, county park aide Kelly Kwast. Picture taken by county

teams collected about 3 tons of trash, including one dishwasher, two mattresses, and a sofa. About a dozen hypodermics were carefully collected in a sharps container from one site!

I don't know about the rest of the volunteers, but I was pretty tired after the cleanup. All the bending, stooping, lifting, etc., which is not a part of my office job. But I hope you'll agree that it was a good sort of tired. I look forward to helping on the Coast Cleanup Day next year.

The "hero" on the west end was Poway High School teacher Ryan Moccock and his girlfriend, who came early and stayed until the last pickup came in, long after most volunteers were gone. He also offered his Poway High School biology class students extra credit for coming and more than 20 did so! He lives near López Canyon and his local knowledge of the Montongo Street Detention Basin was invaluable. Another stalwart was Neil and Jill Meyer, another neighbor near López Canyon, whose local knowledge of the mid-section of the canyon greatly facilitated the cleanup. Some 12 pickup truck loads, overflowing loads, of trash were pulled from the canyon, filling the large dumpster to the brim. Edward DiBella led a large group of volunteers in cutting down invasive weeds in habitat for the Northern Harrier (Marsh Hawk). Two groups of volunteers painted out graffiti in two different sites.



Unique Iron Pisoliths (Concretions) on Carmel Mountain

Dr. John Northrop PhD

Charter member,

Friends of Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve

The round, red marble sized pellets (1/4 – to 1/2 - inch-sized) found on Carmel Mtn. are iron pisoliths (also called concretions, see Fig.1.) They are thought to have been formed during the Pleistocene ice age about half a million years ago when the climate was a lot cooler and wetter than it is now.¹ They are made of iron-titanium oxide (illmenite) when clay elements, like limonite (which has a negative valence), are attracted to free iron radicals (which have a positive valence), and accrete in situ to form the round pebbles we see today. They were also formed on Claremont Mesa, Kearny Mesa, Linda Vista, Torrey Pines State Park, and Pt. Loma.

Pisoliths are believed to have been formed under a forest of conifers "when pine trees were far more extensive along the coast and conditions were more similar to those of central California today"¹ in a habitat similar to the pine barrens of New Jersey where iron rich bogs are found today.

The iron Pisoliths on Carmel Mtn. are unique not only because they are the best preserved samples in San Diego but also because they contain the densest concentration of illmenite cemented concretions known to exist in North America * (about 5 lb/cu ft).

They are found throughout the 10 to 60 ft. thick Linda Vista formation of Quaternary age which was deposited there about 500,000 to 70-0,000 years ago when the area was a near shore habitat extending North-South along the coast. The reason they vary in age is because the shoreline receded westward slowly when the sea level dropped and the ancestral coastal mountains rose. When this elevated and exposed ancient shore became exposed to the elements, sand dunes were formed. On Carmel Mtn. the Linda Vista formation varies in thickness, because it was an Aeolian (wind blown) deposit composed of sand dunes along the coast. The Pisoliths on Carmel Mtn. are found throughout the formation and are exposed at the surface because finer particles, like sand and clay, are blown or washed away leaving the "carpet" of round, red concretions we see there today (Fig 1).

*Personal communication from Mr. Anders Rindell, SDSU.

Abbot, Patrick and Thomas K, Rockwell (2004). "From Sea to Shore" in Understand the life of Pt. Loma, " Cabrillo National Monument, 1800 Cabrillo National Monument Rd, San Diego, CA 92106.

Northrop, John (1997) "Geology of Penasquitos Canyon", Windsor Associates, PO Box 90282, San Diego, CA 92169.



Iron Pisoliths on Carmel Mtn.

Left, Pisoliths in context on mesa top. **Right**, close-up of individual concretions. You can see these unique little stones on Diana Gordon's walks this coming winter and spring.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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President: Brian Swanson 760.739-5451
Vice President: Don Albright 619.443-5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins 858.538-2527
Secretary: Rick Botta 858.672-0584

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Edward DiBella, Ann Harvey, Mike Kelly

Walk Leaders

Brian Swanson, Don Albright, Will Bowen,
Mike Kelly, Pat Watkins, Linda King, and
Barbara Moore

Committees

Hike Scheduler: Gaye Dingeman
Newsletter: Mike Kelly
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta,
858.672-0584
Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly,
858.566-6489
Webmaster: Beth Williams
Wildlife Surveys: Patrick Campbell,
760.471-9197

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$10 Individual \$15
Family \$20 Sponsor \$30 Patron \$100
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I / We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer** to help the committee (call to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

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