

# 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 Penasquitos watershed. Staff at Los Penasquitos 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

Hike calendar	2
Wildlife Surveys	4
Hike & Be Happy!	4
Carmel Valley Road Under Construction	4
Planting with Natives	5
Biological Invasions	6
Jr. Naturalist Program	7
Directory	8

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 Willow 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

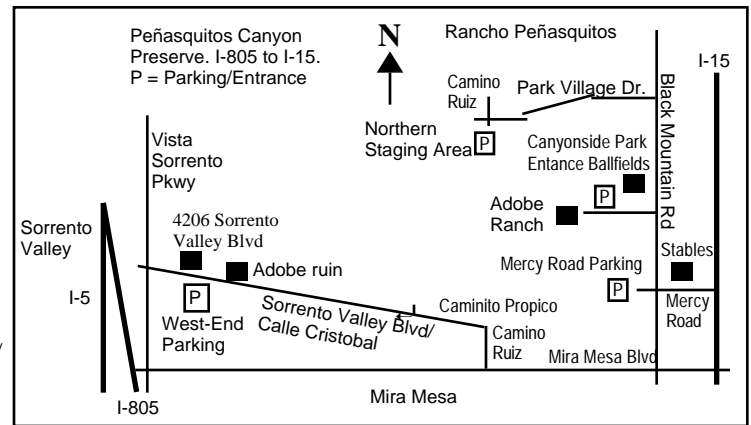
Sat., Mar. 12, 9 a.m. – noon. Join The Friends for this trashin Lopez Canyon. We'll be picking up small and big trash and hauling it out in pickups. Meet at López Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 858-566-6489 or Neil at 858-455-0511 for more details. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (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.<sup>1</sup>

Recent reports by authoritative sources reveal that international oil extraction is now very likely nearing its peak, dubbed "Peak Oil."<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> (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](http://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.**

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

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
San Diego, CA  
PERMIT NO. 286

**Address Service Requested**

### 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: 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

### 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: \_\_\_\_\_ 3/2005

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.