



# Canyon News

Black Mountain Park • Del Mar Mesa Preserve  
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Jan., Feb., Mar  
Volume 24, No. 1

## Scar Repairs on Black Mountain

Sr. Ranger Ed Christensen

In early November Park Rangers worked with Urban Corps staff to cover the highly visible scars near the glider port with Jute netting. This habitat destruction is a remnant of off road vehicles driving up the slopes. The scars have remained for years. The thin topsoil in the area was disturbed before the netting was laid down. Local seed will be spread over the netting and hopefully will take root with winter rains. The goal is for the jute netting to better hold seed, topsoil and organic material on the steep slope and allow plant communities to repopulate the area. If this method proves to be successful, Rangers will continue using it for future restoration projects in Open Space Parks.



Urban Corps and City Rangers place jute netting over major scar.

## Volunteer Restoration Projects

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

Cooler, rainy weather means it's the ideal time for planting native plants. This is the second of our five-year Cactus wren restoration project. We're taking degraded agricultural land in five sites in Santa Luz part of the City of San Diego's Black Mountain Open Space Park and restoring it to native habitat.

We're planting cactus, California sagebrush, Black sage and other plant species to create a type of coastal sage scrub that will provide a suitable home for the endangered Coastal Cactus wren (see below). This songbird needs dense patches of cactus to provide a safe nest for its young and other coastal sage scrub plants for its foraging.

We can accommodate both individuals and groups. Contact Mike Kelly at [mkelly1@san.rr.com](mailto:mkelly1@san.rr.com) or 858-342-8856 for more information or to sign up. Projects will be every second Saturday, weather permitting, through May 2010.



## Highlights Inside

Hike calendar	2
Ranch Hands & Chickens	4
Pat Watkins Profile	4
Mating Mantids	5
Fund Appeal Results	5
Docent Profiles: Grays	7
Membership App. Form	7
Directory	7
Photo Gallery	8

## Volunteer Dates/ Times:

**Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Jan. 30,**

**Feb. 13, Feb. 27,**

**March 13, March 27,**

**April 10, April 24,**

**May 8, May 22.**

**Meet** in the northeast corner of Black Mtn. Ranch Community Park (NOT the main Open Space Park parking lot) at 14700 Carmel Valley Road in Rancho Peñasquitos, one block east of its intersection with Black Mtn. Rd. **Thomas Guide, p. 1168 (J5).**

## Free Hikes & Volunteer Opportunities

Although it's winter, such as we know it here in the temperate coast, it's still the time for flowers. This is the best time to see the bountiful and delicate flowers of the Mission Manzanita. Locally there are two good places to see them. One is Carmel Mountain Preserve (access opposite 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way, San Diego) and the other is Black Mountain Park, along the East Rim Trail (accessible from Ave. Maria or Ave. Lob Lobos in east Rancho Peñasquitos. Alternatively, you can hike to the East Rim Trail from the South Point View Trail or Little Black Trail from either Sundevil Way or Hilltop Community Park). For a downloadable map of Black Mtn. Park visit [www.penasquitos.org](http://www.penasquitos.org). White flowering Winter Currant can be encountered on the Trans County Trail under the I-15 Bridge or off the south side of the main road/trail on the south side of the Preserve, about 1 mile in from the West End Parking-Staging Area.

Hikes are free. Be sure to wear good trail sneakers/boots, sun protection, and bring plenty of water as the weather heats up. **Call 858-484-3219 for more information.**

### Repeating Events

#### Every Saturday and 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. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Drive off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Bros. p. 1189 (C7).**

#### Quarterly

##### **Wildlife Survey Volunteer Training:**

**Sat. 9:15 a.m. – 4 p.m.: Jan. 23, Apr. 17, July 17, Oct. 16.**

Wildlife survey volunteers are invited

to attend a free one-day training conducted by the experienced tracker/naturalists of the San Diego Tracking Team. Training includes basic track, sign, and habitat recognition and details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Following the training, volunteers are expected to accompany a transect leader on at least one survey transect. After completing this training or equivalent (including any of the LPTT's Tracker/Naturalist classes), volunteers are welcome to practice their skills by assisting with future surveys.

Pre-registration is not required for individuals but requested for groups. Please bring a sack lunch, water, and be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors. Also, please bring your calendar so that you can sign up for transects. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

#### Every two months:

##### **Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee:**

**Thurs. 6:30 p.m.: Mar. 11, May 13, July 8, Sept. 9, Nov. 11.**

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meet in the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mtn. Rd. and Canyonside Driveway. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

##### **Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee**

**Thurs. 6:30 p.m.: Jan. 21, Mar. 18, May 20, July 15, Sept. 16, Nov. 18.**

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the historic Ranch House off Canyonside Driveway at Black Mountain Rd. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

##### **Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors**

**Tues., 7 p.m.: Mar. 2, May 4, July 6, Sept. 7; Nov. 2. 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).**

**Maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Parks are available at [www.penasquitos.org](http://www.penasquitos.org).**

#### Every month:

##### **Tracking Walk**

**Sat. 8 a.m.: Feb. 13, Mar. 13, Apr. 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11.**

Everyone is invited to join us for a free, easy tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Beginner and Intermediate levels. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).**

##### **Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain Open Space Park**

**Sat., 8 – 10 a.m.: Feb. 20, Mar. 20, Apr. 17, May 15, June 19.**

Hike the Miner's Loop Trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Meet at the Parking Staging area at 14850 Carmel Valley Rd., about 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. **Thomas Guide p. 1169 E7.**

##### **Volunteer Trash Pickup**

##### **Lopez/Peñasquitos Canyons**

**Sun., 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.: Jan. 24, Feb. 28, Mar. 28, Apr. 25, May 23, June 27, July 25, Aug. 22, Sept. 26, Oct. 24, Nov. 28, Dec. 26.**

Trash pickups in Lopez & Peñasquitos Canyon.

Volunteers needed! Community service credits available. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. Call Ranger John Garwood at 858-538-8066 for more info. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (J3).**

#### Other events:

### January

##### **Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain**

**Sat., Jan. 30, 9 – 11 a.m.** Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See last of the spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C2.**

### **Lopez Canyon Homestead Hike with Will Bowen**

**Sun., Jan. 31, 3 – 5 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).**

## **February**

### **Vernal Pool Walk on Lopez Ridge Sat., Feb. 6, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Join naturalist Mike Kelly and explore rare vernal pool habitats. Meet the ‘extremeophile’ plants and animals that live in this challenging environment. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (J3).**

### **Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain w Diana Gordon Sat., Feb. 13, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Tour one of San Diego’s newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See last of the spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C2.**

### **Black Mountain Peak Hike**

**Sun., Feb. 21, 8 a.m.** Join naturalist Linda King on this moderately paced hike from Laurentian Dr. Enjoy early wildflower show, great vistas. Meet at 9600 Laurentian Dr. at Mediatrice Lane. **Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D2).**

### **Vernal Pool & Flower Walk on Carmel Mountain w Diana Gordon Sat., Feb. 27, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Tour one of San Diego’s newest nature preserves with Diana Gordon. Learn about rare Southern maritime chaparral. See last of the spring flowers and learn about vernal pool lifecycles. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C2.**

**Pierra Bovet Adobe Tour with Will Bowen / Sun., Feb. 28, 3–5 p.m.** Hike out to explore the beautiful riparian habitat of Carroll Canyon. End up at

the ruins of the Pierra Bovet Adobe. Find out how and why it deteriorated. Learn about Bovet, his extended family, and their place in San Diego history. Find out how the Bovet homestead is related to our own Lopez Dairy Farm and El Cuervo Adobe. Meet at Fire Station near the corner of Scranton & Carroll Canyon Road. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (E7).**

## **March**

### **Vernal Pool Walk on Lopez Ridge w Mike Kelly**

**Sun., March 7, 9 – 11 a.m.** Join naturalist Mike Kelly and explore rare vernal pool habitats. Meet the ‘extremeophile’ plants and animals that live in this challenging environment. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (J3).**

### **El Cuervo Adobe History Hike with Will Bowen**

**Sun., Mar. 7, 3 – 5 p.m.** Hike into the west end of Peñasquitos Canyon for a close-up look at the ruins of the El Cuervo Adobe. Learn about its history and the Alvarado family who once lived there. Includes a short side hike to examine Norwood Brown’s old roundup corral and to discuss the impact of cattle grazing in the Preserve. Meet at parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (C/D 5).**

### **Frogs, Toads, Tadpoles, & Fairy Shrimp Hike with Will Bowen**

**Sun., Mar. 21, 4 – 6 p.m.** Hike out to look for and learn about the frogs, toads, tadpoles, & fairy shrimp in the road pools and puddles of Carmel Mountain. Learn to identify different types of tadpoles and tell the male and female fairy shrimp apart. Wear shoes that you can get a little wet! Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C2.**

### **Carson Crossing to Sycamore Crossing Loop Hike**

**Sun., March 28, 8 a.m.** Join naturalist Linda King on this moderately paced loop walk to the waterfall, Sycamore Crossing & Kit Carson’s Crossing. Meet at the kiosk near 7107 Park Village Rd. at Celome Way in Rancho Peñasquitos, San Diego. **Thomas Guide p. 1188 J7.**

## **April**

### **Vernal Pool Walk on Lopez Ridge Sat., April 3, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Join naturalist Mike Kelly and explore rare vernal pool habitats. Meet the ‘extremeophile’ plants and animals that live in this challenging environment. Meet at Lopez Ridge Park at 7245 Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. **Thomas Guide p. 1208 (J3).**

### **Herb Walk with Will Bowen**

**Sun., April 25, 4 – 6 p.m.** Learn to identify different plants & shrubs of Carmel Mtn. Nature Preserve. See plants such as the colorful Bush monkey flower, fragrant Black Sage, and nutritional Chia. Find out how the plants here were once used for food & medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo American settlers, and end up with a grasp of the native flora. Meet at 4730 Fairport Way at Shorepoint Way in San Diego. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208 C2.**

## **Trail Repair Volunteers Needed PQ Trail Closures**

Senior Ranger Gina Washington put out an official notice closing Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve due to storm damage to the trails. She expects the closure to be a long one due to the volume of rain that fell in our area. Our core valley is low, the water table high, and the soils will be saturated and shedding water for weeks to come. Trail use by any means – bike, foot, horse – on saturated trail soils.

The Rangers were forced to evacuate their trailers due to flooding! She also said “. . . check out this website to see how the creek flow changes: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?11023340> This newsletter (January 2009) printed hydrographs showing previous storm driven flow changes. In a matter of hours during major rain events Peñasquitos Creek can easily rise 8 or more feet!

If you are willing and able to help, Ranger volunteer crews work Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. They meet at the Ranger office next to the Canyonside Stables (equestrian center) on the east side of Black Mountain Road.



# Ranch Hands Welcome Chickens to Los Peñasquitos Ranch House

County Ranger Rusty Rodes

On a balmy, late November afternoon, county park staff and our newly established Ranch Hands welcomed a flock of eight chickens to Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch House. After months of planning and organizational breakfast meetings, our Ranch Hands are finally in full operation and nestling in.

These hybrid chickens (a mix of Leg Horn and Rhode Island Red) were donated by the County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health. They immediately brought a lively and productive energy to the otherwise tranquil historic ranch house barn yard. In the first 24 hours, our haughty hens laid 5 large brown eggs.

The flock can be viewed daily at the ranch house from 8 am to 4:30 pm. The



chicken coop is located near the north entrance of the historic red Mohnike barn. Last summer, county park attendants Felipe P. Franco, Sr. and Dave Kaufman completed an expansion of the existing chicken coop. The original structure was constructed as an Eagle Scout Project in 2006 by Nicholas Joseph Sowa, Boy Scout Troop 680.

Ranch Hands currently include four local residents (Ranch Hand Ann is pictured) and their children ranging in ages from 3 to 18. Care and maintenance of the chickens takes about an hour each day and is completed according to a daily volunteer schedule. Ranch Hand duties include checking the

chicken feed and water supply, cleaning the coop and, best of all, collecting freshly laid eggs for safe keeping in a near by refrigerator. Ranch Hands also share in the chicken feed costs which was approximately \$40 in the first month.

As a reward, participating volunteers receive a distribution of eggs on a monthly basis. In the first full month of operation, Los Peñasquitos chickens have laid approximately 12 dozens eggs- or 3 dozen eggs for each volunteer. In addition to communicating via email, Ranch Hands conduct a monthly breakfast meeting to share stories, concerns and the bounty of eggs. The December Ranch Hand breakfast also featured an added benefit – a fresh spinach quiche made with our fresh eggs. As Ranger Paul remarked, “the chicken feedback was “egg-ceptional.”

For interested parties or to request a volunteer application, please contact Cheryl Wegner DPR Volunteer Coordinator at 858 966-1335 or Cheryl.Wegner@sdcounty.ca.gov

## People to Know Pat Watkins

*[Another in a series of our short profiles of long-time Friends' volunteers – editor.]*

Pat Watkins is a Midwest/East Coast transplant, arriving at her present home in the Park Village area of Rancho Peñasquitos in 1994. She began volunteering for the Friends in 1997, starting with restoration activities and leading hikes, which led to serving on the Board of Directors as Treasurer.

This past January 2009, she became the Outreach Coordinator, which is the Friends' first paid position due to funding from a grant through the San Diego Conservation Resources Network. In this position, she has worked to widen connections with local school volunteer groups, update outreach materials such as brochures and trail maps, and increase hike publicity. You may have seen a hike announcement signs at trailheads around the preserve and at Black Mountain Open Space Park. These, as well as upcoming new brochures and trail maps are tangible evidence of the improvements this grant has allowed the Friends to accomplish.

In addition to her volunteer and paid work with the Friends, Pat also enjoys spending time with family, hiking wherever she goes, and vegetable gardening (ask about her wicked homemade hot sauce!). Her three daughters all graduated from Mt. Carmel High School and attended California Colleges.

**Below**, Pat (on the right!), is pictured with her husband Paul on a recent hike in Lapland.



# Fund Appeal Results

Pat Watkins, Treasurer

A big thank you to the following Friends' members for their generous contributions for our projects in 2010. We'll let you know how the money is spent!

Nancy Jo Acevedo\*  
 Norman Anderson\*  
 Luanne Barrett  
 John and Linda Bradley  
 Shirley Bruno  
 K. Buco  
 Yunhui Chae-Banks\*  
 Jeffrey and Christine Codling  
 Carolyn Cooper\*  
 Charles and Kathleen Crampton  
 James and Patricia Daley  
 Robert and Gaye Dingeman  
 H.G. and Jeanne Dunham\*  
 Lenore Edidin  
 Josan Feathers  
 Alex Fleming (in memory of Bert and Bill)  
 Paul Gaughen\*  
 Marvin Gerst\*  
 Charlene Glacy\*  
 Benita Gray  
 Harmon Greening  
 Gail Hanna  
 Sinclair Hatch  
 Leo and Patricia Holland\*  
 Linda Johnson  
 Peggy Keating\*  
 Mike Kelly\*  
 Alan and Judith Kiraly  
 Suzanne Leininger  
 Robert and Linda Leiter\*  
 Patricia McFarland  
 Neil Meyer\*  
 James and Louise ONeill  
 Harvey and Cyndy Payne  
 David and Jeanette Poole\*  
 Jim Powers  
 Roy and Edwina Riblet\*  
 Robert Schmidt and Faith Barnett\*  
 Harry Schnepf  
 Barry Snyder\*  
 Jeffrey and Pam Stevens  
 Melvin and Ellen Sweet  
 Mary Toomey  
 Paula Pullenza and Greg Vines\*  
 Francisco and Antoinette Wong  
 \*contribution of \$100 or more.

# Monday Morning Mating Mantids

Story by Jeanne Raimond, photo by Wendy Esterly,

Mission Trails Regional Park Trail Guides

[We reprint this article from the newsletter of the Trail Guides. Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is also home to this species of Mantid – editor.]

As we returned to our cars after a morning bird walk at the Old Mission Dam, one of our members spied an interesting insect creeping along a willow twig. At first we thought it was a walking stick, but on closer inspection the large, spiny front legs revealed this to be a praying mantis (order: *Mantodea*, family: *Mantidae*, species: *Stagmomantis californica*). This slender male soon mounted a nearby female mantis with a rather bulbous abdomen, and soon the creation of a new generation was underway.

Although we wanted to see if the occasional behavior of the female biting the head off of the copulating male would occur, we let our discretion dictate that we allow them their privacy. Even if the male's head is bitten off, copulation continues due to special ganglia located in the male's abdomen. When mating is complete, the female may finish eating the male. This cannibalistic behavior is more prevalent if the insects are in a confined space.

Mantids may be green, brown, or a combination of both and blend in with their surroundings. They are generalist ambush predators that can be viewed as either helpful or harmful. They are polyphagous predators meaning they eat more than one type of living thing, being efficient at capturing and eating a wide variety of insects (flies, aphids, moths, butterflies) and other small prey including small tree frogs, lizards, small mice, and unsuspecting hummingbirds. In the wild, mantids get all the water they need from their diet or from dew collected on leaves.



The two front legs are highly specialized. When hunting, mantids assume a "praying" posture with their muscular, spiny front legs folded under their head. The spines fit into a groove on the lower parts of the legs when not in use. They lie in wait and patiently stalk their prey, then strike out and capture their victim faster than the eye can see. The impaled prey is held firmly in place while being eaten, usually the head first.

Nearly 2,000 species of mantids are found in many tropical, subtropical and temperate regions of the world. Over 20 species are found in the U.S. One species, the California mantis, is native to the West coast. Several species of mantids have been introduced into the U.S. from Europe, Africa and Asia as biologic control agents. Being an indiscriminate hunter though they will take helpful as well as harmful insects.

Being in the Insecta class, mantids have 6 jointed legs and 2 antennae, a 3 part body (head, thorax and abdomen) and a hard exoskeleton. An elongated prothorax that looks like a neck increases their head mobility, which can rotate up to 180 degrees. Mantids are usually 2 to 6 inches in length from head to wing tip, with females being larger than males and having heavier abdomens. Two large compound eyes on their triangular shaped heads are capable of seeing images and color and movement up to 60 feet away. Additionally, three simple eyes are

See p. 6 for more

# Update on North City Parks

Mike Kelly

## Budget news

The budget news is grim. The City is requiring that the Parks and Recreation Dept. cut another 27%, \$14.5 million, from the Fiscal Year 2011 budget. The Dept. doesn't expect to have to layoff Rangers, but it does mean several Ranger positions will remain unfilled. Despite this grim picture, the City Rangers at Black Mountain Open Space Park are carrying off a large variety of projects.

## New parks added . . .

You may not know it, but Rangers Ed Christenson and Joel Tracy aren't just responsible for Black Mountain Park. They have also been in charge of the City's portion of Crest Canyon in Del Mar, Mt. Woodson, and Clevenger Canyon Open Space. As if that wasn't enough they recently had Gonzalez Canyon (north of Del Mar Heights Road, south of San Dieguito River Valley), Battle Mtn. (San Pasqual), McGonigle Canyon (south side of SR56), and some isolated parcels on the north side of SR56 in Peñasquitos. Wow! Almost all of these parks have trail systems to maintain, fences that need mending, invasive weeds to control, endangered species to protect, and the list goes on!

## Erosion repairs

Ranger Joel Tracy is heading up a project (see picture and story on page 1) to repair the giant scars on the face of Black Mountain, working with the Urban Corps.

The current rains will do erosion damage to trails and drainages in several of the parks, requiring Ranger attention in the coming months.

## Invasives control in Crest

Crest Canyon is home to an exceedingly rare type of habitat called Maritime succulent scrub. One of the rarest plant species in the world, *Dudleya brevifolia* (short-leaved Dudleya), lives there. If it gets as big as your thumbnail, it's a big one for this species! The San Dieguito River Park also

## (Mating Mantids Cont'd)

arranged in a triangle between the antennae and perhaps tell the difference between light and dark.

Mantids are mostly diurnal, but winged adults, especially males, will sometimes fly to porch lights at night to prey on insects attracted there. Since mantids are territorial, only one mantis will be on a single plant. The mantis may re-main on the same plant as long as food is available.

The breeding season is in the summer. After mating, the female lays 12 to 400 eggs in the fall. The eggs are surrounded by a frothy liquid called an "ootheca" that turns into a hard, styro-foam-like protective shell. This allows the eggs to survive through the winter, with the young emerging in the spring. Mantids go through incomplete metamorphosis. They do not have a larval stage, and newly hatched mantids look like small ants or small, wingless mantid adults.

Often the first meal of a young mantis, or nymph, is a sibling. They also eat leafhoppers, aphids and small flies. It takes an entire summer for mantids to mature to adulthood. With each molt the wing buds increase in size. When the wings are fully developed, the mantid becomes an adult.

The lifespan of a praying mantis in the wild is short, often a year or less. They in turn are preyed upon by birds, bats and spiders. Some species of mantis have hollow chambers in their bodies that allow for the detection of certain frequencies such as from bats, their most feared predator. The mantis will drastically alter its flight path to avoid this predator.

Historically, praying mantises are associated with diverse pharmacologic and religious beliefs. The name "mantis" comes from the Greek word for 'prophet' or 'soothsayer.' The Chinese believed that the mantis could cure anything from impotence to goiter. They believed that roasting the egg cases and feeding them to their children would cure bed wetting.

Mantises are relatively easy to raise in captivity from an egg case collected in the field or purchased from biologic supply companies. They are kept in terrariums and their feeding behavior observed as a classroom activity. Some people have gone so far as to put them on leashes, using a thread tied around the thorax. How undignified! We chose to just enjoy them in the wild when we are lucky enough to encounter them along the trails.

## References

- Eaton, Eric R. and Ken Kaufman. Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America. 2007, Houghton Mifflin Co.  
[www.insecta-inspecta.com/mantids/praying](http://www.insecta-inspecta.com/mantids/praying) Praying Mantis: *Stagmomantis californica*. 2007, Oregon State University Extension Service  
 Praying Mantids: University of Kentucky Entomology.  
[www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef418.asp](http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef418.asp)

owns land there of course and has been quite active with volunteers in removing trash and invasive weeds. More of this invasives work is planned for the coming year. Crest is also home to perhaps the rarest tree species in the world, *Pinus torreyana* (The Torrey Pine).

## Migrant camps

Migrant camps continue to require a lot of attention from the Rangers. I've helped clean up some of these illegal camps and can testify to their negative impact on fragile habitats. Illegal trails through sensitive habitats, trash, including feces, strewn about, fires in tinder dry brush, harvesting of rare barrel cactus to sell on the side

are some of the impacts on the habitat.

## Patrolling

Security patrolling is a core function for the Rangers, making sure park users are safe and stopping violations of important regulations such as dumping. Recently, Ranger Joe caught 2 guys illegally dumping at the glider port on Black Mountain, a recurring problem around Black Mtn. Park. They were issued 'commercial dumping citations.' A few months ago, the Rangers found a dump site, sifted through it and found a name and address where the trash came from! They visited this person and identified and cited the individual and hauled and dumped the trash. Way to go!



Los Peñasquitos Rancho Adobe  
**Docent Profile:**  
**George and Benita Gray**  
 County Ranger Rusty Rodes

George and Benita Gray are long time Rancho Peñasquitos residents and have been docents at the Los Peñasquitos rancho adobe for over 10 years. As a true history junkie, George specializes in early California history and is a member of the Los Californianos, an organization created for the purpose of preserving the heritage of the early Hispanic Californians.

The Grays also volunteer at the Old Town State Park. Currently, George is in training to portray the role of George Washington Eayres, an early 18th century adventurer who sailed throughout Baja and southern California. Benita and George are pictured (right) in period attire as worn in Old Town. The photo was taken by rancho docent Hank Beck on the west porch of Wing "B" at the ranch house.

Visitors can meet George or one of our other docents for a tour of the ranch house. Docent lead tours are conducted twice a week: Saturday at 11 am and Sunday at 1 pm.



### 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: \_\_\_\_\_ **4/09**

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 **858.342-8856** 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:

Newsletter: Mike Kelly at 858-342-8856.  
 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



**Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196  
858-484-3219      www.penasquitos.org

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

**Address Service Requested**

## Check Your Label

If your expiration date has come and gone please take the time to send in a renewal check for your membership dues and save us the postage of reminder mailings!

## Photo Gallery

**Left:** October 31, 2009 volunteers from the Mt. Carmel High School Key Club and Mira Mesa Troop 642 Boy Scouts weeded, mulched, and planted a variety of native plants at waterfall restoration site. In the bottom row, right most is pictured Friends' Outreach Coordinator Pat Watkins.

**Bottom left:** Nov. 21, 2009 work party featured Troop 642 again and long time Friends' volunteers.

Right: Restored Springhouse is framed by Canary Island date palms on spruced up grounds. *Have you visited the historic ranch house recently? Dozens of new exhibits and period plantings are been added to the buildings. Why not take one of the free weekend tours offered by County docents?*

