



Canyon News

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

January/February 1996
Volume 10 No. 1

Winter Colors Presage Spring

Only had a sprinkle of rain, but spring is on the way. Expect to see Fuschia flowering gooseberry, Winter currant, Shooting stars, and other plants blooming. It's cool weather as much as rain that triggers these species. January is the best time to visit Carmel Mountain and see the controversial and endangered Warty-stemmed, white-flowering ceanothus. It doesn't last long, so don't put off visiting!

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you'd like to help with conservation or other activities call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing animal surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs to name a few. We also need help with organizational aspects of our work.

Directions: please note our new format. We're placing directions for the different walk meeting places at the end of the calendar to avoid repeating them for walks starting in the same place.

November

Full Moon Hike at West End

Friday, January 5, 7:30-9 p.m. A night of full moon hiking, Native American inspired drumming, singing, dancing, and story-telling. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Saturday, Jan. 6, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the SD Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an historic adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Intermediate Tracking Walk

Sunday, Jan. 7, 8 a.m. (3 hours). This walk will be led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A **prerequisite** is having taken the Friends beginning tracking class. **Note:** A *minimum* of 2 intermediate tracking walks is required in order to take the next advanced class. Meet in West-End Parking-Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. Call Lindsey at 276-8735 if you have any questions.

Help Needed! Work Party #2 To Save Historic Site Sunday, January 28, 9 a.m.

Our December work party was very successful (see article this issue), but more remains to be done. To help, call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. Several pickup trucks are especially needed.

Bird Walk in López Canyon

Sunday, Jan. 7, 8 a.m., (1-1/2 hours). Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experience. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet in West-End Parking-Staging Area in Sorrento Valley.

Geology Walk at Caminito Propico

Sunday, Jan. 7, 9 a.m. - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection.

Walden Pond Del Mar Mesa Picnic Walk

Saturday, Jan. 13, 10 a.m. (3 hours, 3-4 miles). Join naturalist Mike Kelly for a general nature walk along the northern rim of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Visit "Walden Pond," acquired in the recent land swap, the waterfall, oak riparian forest and the Del Mar Mesa.

➡ next page for more

Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	1
New Bird List	4
Humming Birds	5
Vernal Pools	7
On Patrol	11
Board Changes	12
Annual Fund Donors	12
Welcome New Members	12
Volunteer Opportunities	13
Friends' Directory	14

Carmel Mountain Continued

Ann Harvey

The City Council hearing for Neighborhood 8A was October 31st at 2:00 in the afternoon, but it didn't start until 4:30. Pardee brought in over a hundred people, mostly from out of town, who began arriving in the morning and took up seats. Few of them spoke; they just sat. 260 people who came at two to speak against the development plan had to sit in a back room and listen over loudspeakers. The Council couldn't see them. The seated Pardee people all had green (!) badges saying "Save the MSCP." We asked a few what the letters stood for; they didn't know.

Dr. Michael Soule, the man who did the [San Diego] Canyon Studies, which showed that species die when they become isolated, came down from Santa Cruz to speak for preservation. He used to teach at UCSD and lived next to 8A for many years. Dave Hogan, who did the scientific field work to help define the endangered Southern Maritime Chaparral plant community and who grew up watching

➡ p. 4 for more

(Calendar cont'd)

See some early flowers. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging Area in Rancho Peñasquitos. You'll carpool a short distance to the trailhead. Bring a snack or lunch and water.

Mystery Tree / Native American Walk

Sunday, Jan. 14, 9 a.m. (1-1/2 hours). Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Led by Vickie Ausen. Meet at the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area at Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa.

Restoration Work Outing/ East End

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1 p.m. (2-3 hours). Join the Friends for an outing in a little visited part of the Preserve. Also a chance to see newly acquired land for the Preserve connecting it to Sabre Springs open space. You'll help remove invasive exotic plants and restore the natural balance of biodiversity. Light to moderate intensity work, mainly with loppers and machetes. No experience needed. RSVP to Mike at 566-6489.

Tamarisk Restoration Outing in Anza-Borrego

Saturday, January 20, 9 am. Join the Friends and the California Native Plant Society in visiting the Fish Creek/Split Canyon area of Anza Borrego State Park. While there we should be able to finish removing the invasive bush Tamarisk from Fish Creek and helping restore the ecological balance of native species. The area is dry and sandy and the work light to moderate in intensity (mainly loppers). Some folks will be coming up late Friday afternoon and camping at the Fish Creek primitive (and Free!) campground. You're welcome to stay over to Sunday and explore the area (The last herd of U.S. Elephant Trees are in a reserve nearby). Beautiful spot to camp and work in. No experience needed! For details call Mike Kelly at 566-6489.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Adobe Ranch House

Saturday, Jan. 20, 1 p.m. (2 hours). Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they

live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Saturday, Jan. 20, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the SD Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an historic adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Night Walking

Saturday, Jan. 20, 7:30-9 p.m. Learn to see in the dark. Develop your night vision and peripheral attention. Please wear a baseball cap, which will be used in some of the exercises. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Nature Walk at East End

Saturday, Jan. 27, 8 a.m. (1-1/2 hours). Join naturalist Les Braund for a general nature walk in the east end of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see flowering winter plants such as fuschia flowering gooseberry. Learn about biodiversity, visit an historic grave site and a mitigation project. Meet at the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area at Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa.

Sensory Awareness Hike

Sunday, Jan. 28, 3:30-5 p.m. Enjoy and appreciate nature more by learning to quiet the mind and experience more through the senses. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Friends' Business Meeting at Adobe Ranch House

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 7 p.m. The Friends' Board of Directors meets to plan out the day to day activities and campaigns of the Friends organization. Members are welcome. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

February**Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour**

Saturday, Feb. 3, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the SD Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an his-

toric adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Bird Walk in López Canyon

Sunday, Feb. 4, 8 am, (1-1/2 hours). Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experience. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet in West-End Parking-Staging Area in Sorrento Valley. If the lot is closed due to rain, meet at Cantina Bike Shop 1/4 mile east on the opposite side.

Geology Walk at Caminito Propicio

Sunday, Feb. 4, 9 a.m - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection.

Moon Goddess Hike

Sunday, Feb. 4, 7:30-9 p.m. A hike for those who seek to "run with the wolves." Includes moon and goddess nature-meditations. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Vernal Pool Del Mar Mesa Walk

Saturday, Feb. 10, 10 a.m. (2-3 hours, 3 miles). Join naturalist Mike Kelly for a vernal pool walk on the Del Mar Mesa. Hike a wildlife corridor, see lots of early flowers. If there's been enough rain the pools should be holding water and sporting fairy shrimp, chorus frog and spadefoot toad tadpoles. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging Area in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Mystery Tree/Native American Walk

Sunday, Feb. 11, 9 a.m. (1-1/2 hours). Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Led by Vickie Ausen. Meet at the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area at Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Adobe Ranch House

Saturday, Feb. 17, 1 p.m. (2 hours). Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted

➡ next page for more

(Calendar cont'd)

in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Night Walking

Sunday, Feb. 18, 7:30–9 p.m. Learn to see in the dark. Develop your night vision and peripheral attention. Please wear a baseball cap, which will be used in some of the exercises. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Saturday, Feb. 17, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the SD Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an historic adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Nature Walk at East End

Saturday, Feb. 24, 8 a.m. (1-1/2 hours). Join naturalist Les Braund for a general nature walk in the east end of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see flowering winter plants such as fuschia flowering gooseberry. Learn about biodiversity, visit an historic grave site and a mitigation project. Meet at the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area at Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa.

Restoration Work Outing/ Northern Parking-Staging Area

Saturday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m. (2-3 hours). Join the Friends for an outing along the riparian oak forest corridor. You'll help remove invasive exotic plants and restore the natural balance of biodiversity. Should see lots of flowers. Light to moderate intensity work, mainly with loppers and machetes. No experience needed. RSVP to Mike at 566-6489.

Sensory Awareness Hike

Sunday, Feb. 25, 3:30–5 p.m. Enjoy and appreciate nature more by learning to quiet the mind and experience more through the senses. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley.

Friends' Business Meeting at Adobe Ranch House

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m. The Friends' Board of Directors meets to plan out the day to day activities and campaigns of the Friends organization. Members

are welcome. Meet at Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos.

DIRECTIONS**Adobe Ranch House Walks/Tours**

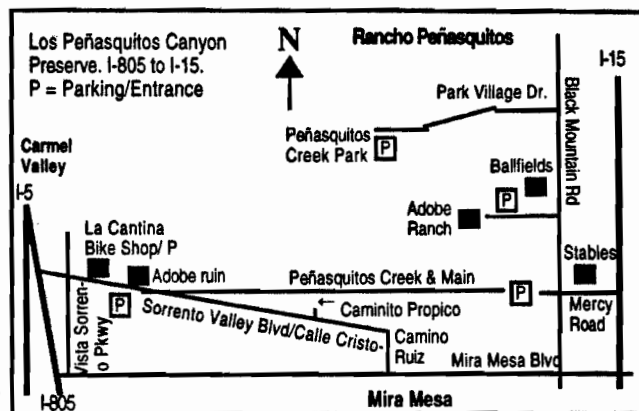
The ranch house is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Ignore the sign for the Preserve at this intersection and turn right on Black Mountain. Go up the hill and make the first available U-turn, come back down the hill and turn right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past the ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Turn left into the lot, park and walk up the path to the ranch house. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 south side of Cristobal. Park legally. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Cantina Bike Shop

Cantina Mountain Bike Shop, which is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe to its intersection with Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Calle Cristobal. Go left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

**East End Meeting**

This is a tricky location to find. Take the Mercy/Scripps Poway Freeway exit off I-15. Go east on the Scripps Poway Freeway up the hill to your first available U-turn. Make the U-turn and come back down the hill towards the I-15 on ramps. Just before the north bound on ramp there's a sharp right turn onto a service road. Be careful of traffic behind you and take this down to the small cul-de-sac.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

This parking-staging area is located at the intersection of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road, near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

This parking-staging area is located at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Go right on Black Mountain Road to the light at Park Village Drive and Adolphia Street. Go left on Park Village Drive about 1 mile to Camino Ruíz. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

This parking lot is located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley near the I-805/I-5 merge, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe to its intersection with Sorrento

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(Carmel Mountain cont'd)

all the land around 8A being bulldozed, came from New Mexico to speak. The Audubon Society, the League of Women Voters, the Endangered Habitats League, the Sierra Club, a whole UCSD environmental issues class on a field trip, the California Native Plant Society, the Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon, the Torrey Pines docents, Earth First — all opposed Pardee's plan.

Prior to discussion Councilmember Scott Harvey addressed "rumors" that he had a conflict of interest over the issue. He said that he had asked the City Attorney to opine on whether the fact that Mike Madigan was the finance manager of Harvey's State Assembly race caused a conflict of interest for him. According to Harvey, the City Attorney told him there was no conflict of interest and he could vote on the Pardee project!

Councilmember Harry Mathis moved to deny the "compromise plan," while Councilmember Juan Vargas moved to continue the matter. The other Councilmembers spoke, and as Councilmember Warden spoke and indicating her support for the Mathis motion, we suddenly realized that the votes were there to deny the plan.

But the Mayor said a move for continuance took precedence over a denial. She said that people should try to negotiate one more time. Mike Madigan, Vice-president of Pardee, responded that they would not negotiate any more. Councilmembers Kehoe, Vargas and Mathis asked in that case what the point of a continuance was.

The vote was 6-3 to continue the project consideration for an indefinite period to give everyone one more

(Schedule/directions cont'd)

Valley Boulevard/Calle Cristobal. Go left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

chance to work it out, including the property owners who are suing the City because they are being forced to provide the open space in Pardee's plan.

Does/should/can one single developer control the fate of the MSCP? The "compromise plan" could be denied simply because it does not comply with the City's 1991 Resource Protection Ordinance. No one is suggesting that their land should be downzoned, only that it should not be upzoned to quite the extent Pardee had hoped for. Most large developers support the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) because it benefits them tremendously; it streamlines the approval process and makes it clear up front which lands should and should not be intensively developed. The City Attorney has said in public hearings that the Council is under no obligation to rezone this land, and that, if the applicants sue, they will not prevail. So who's in charge here? The people of San Diego and their elected officials? Or one single construction company?

It's still important to write or FAX (533-4045) the Mayor and City Councilmembers c/o City Clerk, 202 'C' St, M.S. 2, San Diego, CA 92101. You only have to send one copy to the Clerk's office and ask, in a cover note, that it be circulated to the entire City Council.

Newsletter Submissions

Since we have no paid staffers *Canyon News* depends on our readers for articles. Our articles run the gamut from news about the canyon to poems to animal observations to hard science about a species or habitat and letters. If you would like to submit something for the newsletter here's how to do it.

Ideally we would like to receive your article on a computer disk accompanied by a printout. We can accept either Macintosh or IBM disks, 5-1/4 or 3-1/2 inch. The word processing program you use isn't important.

New Bird List

Our bird list is finally off the press, updated to 1/1/96 and totally revamped and printed on a sturdy card stock. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelop for your free copy to: Bird List c/o Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196.



Want To Be a Walk Leader?

If you hanker to lead a nature walk in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, give us a call at **484-3219** and leave your name and number. We are looking for 2-3 more hike leaders who will initially lead walks along a new nature trail at the east end once a month. We will train new hike leaders in the plants, animals and history needed to lead this walk. Later, new leaders can branch out into other areas if they desire.

Wish List Items

The following are some items that would be very useful in our restoration work in the Preserve. All would be tax-deductible under the Friends' 501(c) 3 non-profit status.

Old (new?) PC or Mac computer systems.

GPS/GIS equipment and software.

Soil and water testing equipment

Self propelling mower for native grass restoration.

Horse drawn mowing, plowing equipment for native grass and tree planting.

Front end loader for erosion and siltation repair work.

Birds of Peñasquitos Canyon

Hummingbirds

Claude Edwards, Biologist/Ornithologist
Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc.

Six species of hummingbirds occur regularly in San Diego County. Two species are year-round residents, three are strictly migratory, and one, the black-chinned hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), is a summer resident and breeder, present in our area beginning in early-April (Unitt, Garrett & Dunn).

Hummingbirds are among the most distinctive and familiar birds that occur in Peñasquitos Canyon. Most species are very small in size, move about energetically, and have glittery, iridescent, plumage which can appear very colorful under the correct light conditions.

Iridescence is one of the two principle sources of color in birds, the other being **pigment**. Iridescence results from the structure of the feathers. The surface of hummingbird feathers are composed of 'barbules' which have minute structures called 'platelets' resembling a mosaic-tile floor with dark places in between. These platelets have air bubbles contained within them. The thickness of the platelet and the amount of air inside them determines the specific color that is seen (Tyrell, Stokes).

Black-chinned hummingbirds are **dimorphic**. This means that the male and female have plumage that look different from each other. They both have glittery-green upperparts, including the crown, back, and rump, and extending onto the sides. The remainder of the underparts are whitish.

Most male hummingbirds have throat feathers of a different color than the rest of their body. This is often referred to as a **gorget** (Peterson, Tyrell). The gorget of a male black-chinned hummingbird is velvety-black from below the bill and below the eyes, with a back of glittering purple below that on the lower portion of the throat.

The whole gorget area can appear black in poor or indirect light, but in good light the purple area may show glints of blue! The outline of the gor-

get is rounded, which is accentuated by a broad white collar that borders below it. The colors on the gorget are best seen when the bird is in close range and in good light. The tail is all black, except for the two green central feathers. The feather-tips are pointed, and the tail appears forked or notched when that bird is perched (Peterson, Farrand).

The females' throat is white, sometimes with small dark spots. Their tail feathers are rounded and the

outer two or three are tipped with white. Sometimes their underparts may have a vague buffy wash.

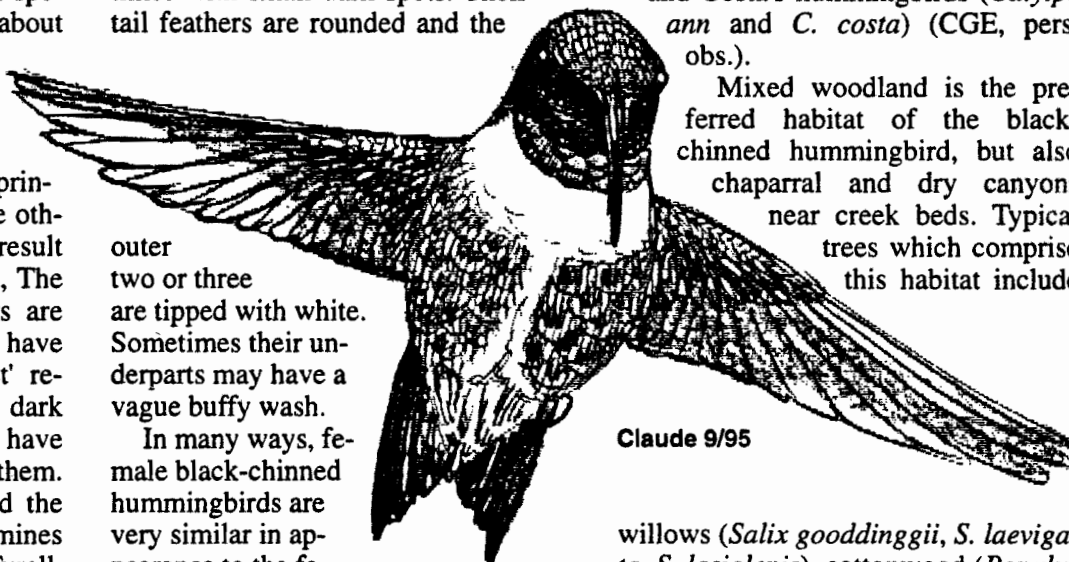
In many ways, female black-chinned hummingbirds are very similar in appearance to the female Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). They are both 3 to 3 1/2 inches in size, and have similar looking plumage. Under optimum conditions the female Black-chinned can appear darker on the head compared to a female Costa's, which has a paler and grayer head, and often has a narrow pale line behind the eye separating the ear-patch from the crown area.

The vocalizations between the black-chinned and Costa's hummingbirds are also different, but it is difficult to find words to describe sounds. Black-chinned hummingbirds have call-notes that are nasal-sounding, with a 'stuffy-nose' quality. The call notes of Costa's are lighter-sounding and more shrill (CGE, pers. obs.)

The male black-chinned hummingbird produces an audible whirring sound with their wings which can be

heard as they move about in their habitat and while they are foraging. The whirring is especially noticeable during courtship, which consists of a back and forth 'swinging pendulum' display (Stokes). The sound is not shrill and metallic as the sound produced by wings of male rufous and Allen's hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufus* and *S. sasin*), but more obvious than the quieter humming produced by Anna's and Costa's hummingbirds (*Calypte ann* and *C. costa*) (CGE, pers. obs.).

Mixed woodland is the preferred habitat of the black-chinned hummingbird, but also chaparral and dry canyons near creek beds. Typical trees which comprise this habitat include



Claude 9/95

willows (*Salix goodingii*, *S. laevigata*, *S. lasiolepis*), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*, *Q. corysolepis*). They also frequent suburban gardens (Beauchamp, Garrett & Dunn). They are very territorial, and the male spends a lot of time chasing other hummingbirds outside of the area he has chosen as his territory.

They forage on a variety of native and non-native plants which bloom during the spring and summer months. Native food sources include fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*), coast bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus auranticus*), California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*), and Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis*) (Tyrell, Stokes). The widespread but non-native tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) is another favorite (Garrett & Dunn).

In garden settings, they visit a variety

(Humming Birds cont'd)

of nectar-producing horticultural plant for an occasional insect treat. Popular flowering plants can include Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Cape honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*), bottlebrush (*Callistemon citrinus*) and various species of Aloe, Lantana, Salvia, and Eucalyptus (Stokes, Sunset). Like other hummingbirds, they visit hummingbird feeders which are maintained and filled with sugary solution to augment their floral menu selections. These are also visited by orioles, as well as bees and wasps. These insects can sometimes become a hindrance to birds when they try to feed.

Their nest is expertly attached to a narrow twig or stem, hidden from view by the use of soft plant fibers bound together with spider webbing, about the size of a walnut broken in half. These are composed of soft fibers from plants including sycamores, willows, and thistles, as well as animal hairs and their own feathers. They are bound together with spider webbing and sometimes decorated with flakes of bark or lichen (Harrison, Stokes).

Inside the nest, the female lays two oval-shaped white eggs which are the size of pinto beans! The babies are helpless when they hatch and require their parents to keep them warm, cozy, and fed. They grown quickly, an din as little as three weeks after thatching, they are fledging and learning to fly.

Between mid-August and the end of September black-chinned hummingbirds leave for their wintering grounds in Mexico.

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Black-Chinned Hummingbird

by Claude G. Edwards

His upperparts are shades of green that glitters like morning dew, and a necklace of fleeting purple lights that sometime can look blue.

His mate and he build a tiny home and always raise just twins, and though his mate is humbly-garbed he wears a black velvet chin!

(Vernal pools cont'd)

When the time is right I think you'll enjoy visiting them first hand.

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Sunset Encounter at Miramar Reservoir

by Brian Swanson

The low hanging sun blinded me each time I turned into it. I was 8-1/2 miles into my 10 mile ride, and I was just about to enter into the last "no motor vehicles" stretch. Then I saw them. They traveled as one. Sleek, she was blue-bodied and orange-winged, and had dragged her unresisting brown victim out of the chapparal and onto the road. Captivated, I stopped both to observe the encounter and to protect the duo from the swirling hordes of bikers, joggers and skaters. Patient and persistent, she determinedly stumbled backwards, occasionally releasing her grip and ambling off in increasing circles, searching, ever searching, perhaps for pheronomes marking her route home.

Once, she was gone so long I began to have thoughts of abandoning my sentry duty. I actually picked up the dark brown, supine figure, and began carrying it towards the spot I had observed the tarantula hawk disappear into the brush. Then she reappeared, frantically walking towards me with a renewed vigor. I didn't want to be holding the trapdoor spider when the wasp found it. Hurriedly, I replaced the spider on the pavement about 5 feet closer to its intended resting place. She soon found her prey and resumed the deliberate dragging towards the previously excavated burrow beneath the chaparral. Some 15 minutes after we first met I parted company with this intimate pair, after they were safely (would the spider agree with this term?) into the brush.

This was the first time I had ever encountered a trapdoor spider as the victim, usually seeing tarantulas. I guess life isn't always cushy in a nice silk lined cavern. I had left my camera at home. Next time I plan on having my camera, and recording the entombment.

— 8/16/95

Vernal Pools: Looking Back, Looking Forward / Part 2

Will Bowen, PhD

The wetting phase

The wetting phase of the vernal pool cycle occurs during the rains of winter and early spring. Much rain pours down and flash floods may rage across the land. Water accumulates rapidly and the ground soaks more and more fully. Water levels build until pools form. Some plants begin to sprout during this time, including non-aquatic plants such as Filaree (*Erodium spp.*). However, these plants are usually short lived, dying off after prolonged submergence.

The aquatic phase

In the aquatic phase the pools have stabilized at a certain depth, size, and volume of water. Above, there is intermittent rain and sunshine. Aquatic insects and zooplankton begin swarming in the water of the pools. The Riverside Fairy Shrimp (*Streptocephalus wootoni*) and the San Diego Fairy Shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegoensis*) begin to hatch from their dead mother's body which was trapped in the drying soils last summer. The Fairy Shrimp are joined by Flat Worms (*Bothronostoma*), Water Fleas, mosquito larva, midges, sowbugs, Waterboatmen (*Corisella*), Backswimmers (*Notonecta*), Diving Beetles (*Aqabus*) and the larva of dragonflies and damselflies.

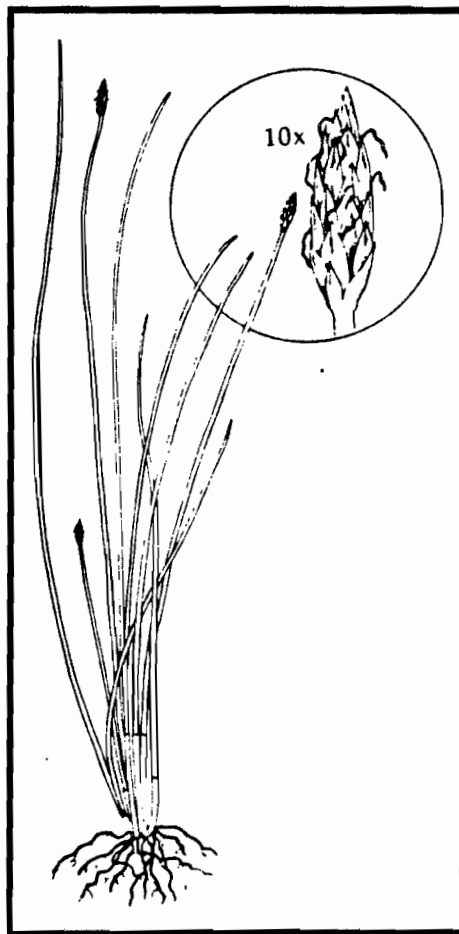
Frogs and toads come to the pools in the evening hours to sing, mate, and lay eggs. Soon we see the tadpoles of the Pacific Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris regilla*), the Spadefoot Toad (*Schaphiopus hammon*), and occasionally the Western Toad (*Bufo boreas*). Snakes, mallards, and many mammals also begin to explore the vernal pools at this time.

Aquatic plants begin to sprout or re-sprout after having died off or died back during the summer months. They include the perennial Slender Spike Rush, the tiny Toad Rush (*Juncus bufonius*), and larger Yard Rush. Small delicate plants, including Pillwort, which looks like a little tuft of green hair, Waterwort or Yerba Fango, and Starwort appear. In time we begin to see the first of San Diego Button-celery, also known as Coyote Thistle.

The drying phase

During the drying phase water in the pools begins to evaporate. The colors of the vegetation begin to turn from simply green to the brilliant colors of showy flowers. Later, the colorful flowers are overtaken by the yellows and browns exhibited by drying plants and grasses.

During this phase tadpoles turn into frogs and toads. Skimmers, dragonflies, Cabbage Moths, and Mourning Cloaks hatch and flit about. Spiders amble about on the water and around



Spike-rush

the edges of the pools. Later, crickets replace the froglettes and toadlettes which were once so dominant. During this, the drying phase, we witness the blooming of Mesa Mint, Downingia, Woolly Marbles, Orcutt's Brodiaea, and the invasive exotic, Brass Buttons (*Cotula coronopifolia*).

The drought phase

The drought phase begins late in

July and extends through the fall. August, September, and October are usually the warmest months and totally dry out the pools. The clay soils of the vernal pools become very hard and dry with cracks.

The Woolly Marbles turn completely gray and only a few Mesa Mint remain until the end of July. Loose-strife is a late bloomer and only takes over when most of the other plants have gone their way. Everything around the pools turns dry beige or gray except some shards of green in the Chamise. The pools become a pretty uncomfortable place to be, at least until a little relief comes with the light rains and cooling of November, which sometimes offers a "little spring in the fall."

The concentric circles of vernal pools

One of the most noticeable things about vernal pools are the rings of colors and textures which seem to expand out from around them. If you approached a vernal pool in the spring it would seem to you that it was ringed with concentric circles of colors and plant species.

The rings begin at the center bottom of the pool, include the mud and mudflats, extend from the pool to the pool margins or edges, to the interbasin mima mounds, and out to the surrounding areas of coastal sage scrub and chapparal.

The vernal pool center or mudflat

In the center of the pools you see certain types of life depending on what phase you are in. You may have aquatic plants or mudflat plants, or plants growing amidst desiccation cracks.

In the aquatic stage you find flora such as the small fern called Pillwort, Pearlwort (*Sagina occidentalis*), Water Starwort, Water Stone Crop (*Crassula aquatica*), and Waterwort or Yerba Fango.

During the mudflat stage you'll notice the re-sprouted perennials San Diego Button Celery or Coyote thistle, the 3-5 inch tall Slender Creeping Spike Rush, or the taller Yard Rush.

(Vernal Pools cont'd)

You may also find Howell's Quillwort (*Isotes howellii*), Orcutt's Quillwort (*Isotes orcuttii*), California Adder's Tongue (*Ophloglossum californicum*), the invasive exotic Brass Buttons, which looks like a tiny sunflower without the petals, and Woolly Marbles.

Later in the drying phase you may notice Mesa Mint, Downingia, the fragrant Skunkweeds (*Navarretia fossalis* or *Navarretia hamata*), and sometimes Common Chaftweed (*Anagalis minima*) and the closely related Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagalis arvensis*), or pink flowered Loose-strife.

Pool rims or outer margins

Near the edge of the pool water you find the tiny Toad Rush, Little Mouse-tail (*Myosurus minimus*), which looks like a tiny plantain, the white-flowered Popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys undulatus*), and Goldfields (*Lasthenia conjugens* or *fremontii*), Thread-Leaf Brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), Orcutt's Brodiaea, and the showy pink Canchagua (*Centaurium venustum*).

Interbasin mounds (mima mounds)

On the mounds some of the plants you may find include, Chamise and Black Sage, Deer Weed (*Lotus scoparius*), the pink and white-flowered Owl's Clover (*Oocarpus densiflorus*), Italian Thistle (*Cardus pycnocephalus*), Sow Thistle (*Sonchus asper*), Wild Radish (*Raphanus sativus*), Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), Chaparral Morning Glory (*Calystegia macregia* spp. *cyclostegia*), Smooth Cat's Ear (*Hypochoeris glabra*), Vetch (*Vicia* spp.), Filaree, Western Ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya* var. *californica*), Green Everlasting (*Gnaphalium cformicum*), and Tarweed (*Hemizonia fasciculata*). You may also find Sky Lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), Blue-Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), and Hedge Nettle (*Stachys ajugoides*).

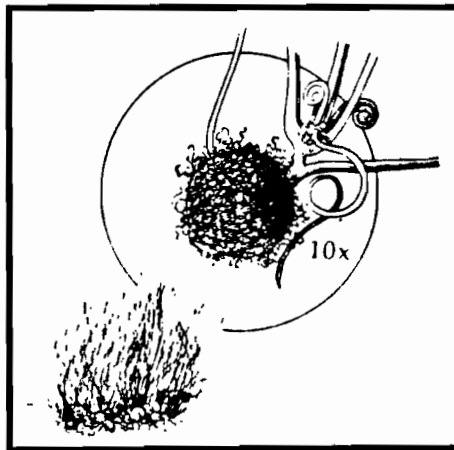
Surrounding areas

Extending back from the pools into the chaparral or coastal sage scrub you can notice many of the same mima mound plants, a great many grasses, and the likes of Tarweed, Bur clover (*Medicago polymorpha*), Curley Dock (*Rumex crispus*), Virginia Rockcress

(*Sibara virginica*), San Diego Golden Stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma pulchellum*), some cactus (*Opuntia* spp.), Lemonaide Berry (*Rhus integrifolia*), Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum nuttalianum*), and Mal-low (*Malva parvifolia*).

Home to many grasses

Many different types of grasses, both native and naturalized can be found in the vicinity of vernal pools. They usually dominate the upper non-flooded areas and are choking some pool complexes, like the one at Sorrento Hills. Like the vernal pool plants, these grasses have to be able to tolerate periods of flooding followed by periods of drought. The native grasses include Salt Grass (*Distichlis*



Pillwort

spicata), Needle Grass (*Nacella* spp.), California Barley (*Hordeum californicum*), California Brome (*Bromus carinatus*), Fescue (*Vulpia bromoides*), Lems Canary Grass (*Phalaris lemmonii*), and Annual Hairgrass (*Deschampsia danthantoides*). The naturalized or introduced grasses include: Italian Ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), an annual from Europe, Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), Wild Oats (*Avena fatua*) brought by in the Spanish colonialists, Ripgut Brome (*Bromus diandrus*) which is from the Mediterranean region, Soft Chess (*Bromus mollis*), Meadow Barley (*Hordeum brachyantherum*), and Alkali Ryegrass (*Elymus triticoides*).

Vernal pool locations

Nearby we have at least five areas where it is possible to view vernal pools. These areas include Calle Cristobal, Sorrento Hills, Del Mar Mesa, Carmel Mountain, and Miramar Road.

Please note that since many of these pools contain endangered species they are protected by state and federal law. Please respect their fragile nature. During the wet season always approach vernal pools cautiously. Stay out of the pools themselves. In exceptionally wet years (such as 1995), even the mima mounds become spongy with water and easy to damage. Stay outside the perimeter. Better yet, go with a guide. The Friends offer guided tours of various vernal pools from march through June.

Calle Cristobal

This complex is near the power lines on Calle Cristobal. It's fenced, posted and has a steep canyon wall on the north. Here we find a small but beautiful complex of pools set in midst of Chamise, Black Sage, Ceanothus and Deerweed. We can also find Spike Rush, Spadefoot toads, the Chorus Frog, and Fairy Shrimp.

Sorrento Hills

This solitary fenced vernal pool complex is located near the SDG&E power station north of the west end of Penasquitos canyon. It was one of the early fenced pools. The fenced area runs north to south with a gentle slope to the south. The main pool is in the southern part of the enclosure. This complex appears to be degrading because it is now choked with non-native grasses. In the pool itself we find Coyote Thistle, Spike Rush, and an abundance of Chorus froglettes.

Del Mar Mesa

The Del Mar Mesa vernal pool complex which is north of the canyon has 6 natural pools and 40 artificial or man-made pools. The artificial pools were built and inoculated with seed material from naal pools in 1986 as a mitigation for destruction of pools near San Clemente Canyon. This is the largest pool complex in San Diego and is the northernmost occurrence of San Diego Mesa Mint. These pools have Fairy Shrimp, Western Toad, Spadefoot Toad, and Chorus Frog.

Carmel Mountain

Carmel Mountain has a set of spread out, irregular pools many of which are disturbed by the road cuts.

➡ next page for more

While it is difficult to find Mesa Mint, Downingia, or Coyote Thistle, Woolly Marbles, Loose-strife, Orcutt's Brodiaea, Chorus froglettes, and Spadefoot toadlettes are present.

Miramar road/miramar mall

The Miramar Road vernal pools were built and fenced in 1981 as a settlement against a developer. Mesa Mint is doing well here after being introduced. This was the first vernal pool restoration project in San Diego. In addition, to Mesa Mint you can find Downingia, and Orcutt's Brodiaea. One set of pools across the street is unfenced.

A Partial Impressionist Chronology Of Vernal Events

Del Mar Mesa March 31, 1995

It's a very hot day for March. I walk amidst the golden sunshine of Goldfields. There are rings around the pools like some French impressionist painter's color wheel. Owl clover is popping up everywhere like puffed up canary miners coming from the mines. Blue-eyed grass is present making its short, but sweet-flowered appearance. I find two Spadefoot toads. There seem to be three different types of tadpoles in the pools. The Mesa Mint is about 2-3 inches high but there are no flowers. It doesn't emit much fragrance yet. In the water swirling vertical mosquito larva abound. I hear a bird call "Foo we ah Foo we ah."

Calle Cristobal March 31, 1995

It's still very hot. The ground is very moist with dark reds, blacks, and browns. In the pools tiny beige Water Fleas are darting about. Fairy Shrimp are present but not in all the pools. I recall someone saying that you won't find Fairy Shrimp in pools that have tadpoles because the tadpoles would eat them. But I see pools with both, although in some they are separate. Away from the road this is a very quiet and meditative place. Just a few feet and you are in another world. Passing cars and passing world just can't touch you.

Dark Water Boatmen and beige Water Fleas, like boiling molecules, are gamboling about under the water. The Water Flea is a crustacean which is an important source of food for larger vernal pool life forms. They're quite hardy and live much longer than the Fairy Shrimp.

Although these are very small life

forms, still each is a unique individual with its own agenda. The Fairy Shrimp has pulsing rapid-fire silky legs, a transparent body, and big black eyes. They're very active, always darting around. It a good idea to take a quart glass jar to look at them close up. Since they are becoming endangered, you must put them back after looking at them. The female's eggs are retained within the body even after she dies. Her body with the eggs — which are like seeds — rests in the dry soil awaiting the rains so her babies can be born.

Many wild flowers are sprouting in the burn areas just east of the pools, including the Orange Fire Poppy, which is a child of fire.

About 3 skimmers buzz past. They have an orange body and translucent wings. This family is the finest aviators in nature. Their wings are both super light and super strong. The occasional Yellow Jacket flies over the heads of the plump Spadefoot tadpoles, which are swimming with mosquito larvae in water which is very muddy.

White Popcorn flowers are in bloom. Other plants present include Black Sage, Chamise, and Deer Weed.

Del Mar Mesa May 3 1995

It's 11 a.m. and a sunny day of about 72°F with a light breeze. There are some clouds off to the west. I find about 10 Western Toads and 3 Chorus Frogs. I make a drawing of the feet and toes of the Toads I find. They do not have the spur like the Spadefoot and their feet are yellow. Their index toe is very long. They have a beige body with black spots tipped with a red dot. Underside the lower belly is much darker than the upper.

Del Mar Mesa is a lot like a desert island. It's a long walk to it over a sea of disturbed red soils and sage scrub. It's usually hot and humid and sometimes the white-gray clay soils, which are very different from the surrounding reddish soils, reflect the light too much and almost blind you. Or you can face a mesmerizing combination of green Rush and sharp water-reflected glare that is dazzling. There are many tumblers of little mounds with a splendiferous assortment of colors. You can get dizzy and sleepy here and if alone become very dreamlike as if caught in a web of fragrance and

color. Be sure you have something to pull you back to the "real world."

Del Mar Mesa May 10 1995

I notice a number of Western Toads in the main road pools. There must be 30 – 40 of them. They like to sit at the pool's edge under the Coyote Thistle, like they were sitting at the beach under an umbrella. There are a lesser number of Chorus Frogs present. The Chorus Frog is a much better swimmer than the Western Toad.

There appear to be two type of Brodiaea. One with dark purple flowers and one with a flower that is a lighter pale purple. The ponds are drying up. It appears as if the Downingia is being pollinated by small bee wasps which hover all about it. I notice a solitary bee on a Brodiaea and take its picture. I bet the Golden Skimmer's are also inadvertently involved in pollination. I catch one and take a close up picture. Rather large eyes! I hear an amphibian call. Its a deep bass "REW! REW!" The large pool is filled up with equal amounts of Western Toads and Chorus Frogs which clamber over Coyote Thistle and Spike Rush.

The Chamise is in bloom as is the Mesa Mint. I try to compose a rhyme to remember what I have seen. It goes: "Its Cinco de Mayo, and I ask why-o, the Chamise is in bloom, the Western Toads start to zoom and the yellow skimmers hum a tune, as they flit above the Chanchalga, and its the hour for the Mesa Mint to flower."

Miramar Road May 23 1995

The five fenced vernal pools are filled with Mesa Mint. There are also quite a few Brodiaea. Across the street in the three unfenced pools there is also much Mesa Mint and a couple of hubcaps. There's also a little bit of Downingia present. There's no Coyote Thistle or Spike Rush. I notice ants walking all over the Mesa Mint. Perhaps they accidentally pollinate it. Many are also climbing over the Brodiaea. There is one bee present and that too is on the Brodiaea. The edges of the pools seem to be where most of the plants have situated themselves.

Other plants present include California Sagebrush, a small Loral Sumac, and Deerweed. A man from the truck rental place next to the unfenced

pools looks at me. Does he stand guard over the pools?

It is difficult to study the pools here because all the noise and cars and people are very intrusive and distracting. It is hard to gather the presence of mind for any deep pondering. Your stays can only be short-lived.

Carmel Mountain May 30, 1995

I'm walking around looking for vernal pools. I reflect that it seems as if each particular natural area has its own "sense of place" — you feel that you are some place special and distinct. That sense of place has a bodily, emotional, and intellectual feeling and a mood that goes with it, It may be subtle but it is discernible.

I find Carmel Mountain to be a very erotic and sensuous place. It's odd but you feel kind of sexy up here. You want to take off your shirt and feel the sunshine on your skin. It's also a bit scary, mysterious. You don't know what you will find around the next bend in the road. You also get some great views. But probably the mesa top dirt roads and trails, the vegetation that lines them, the bluffs, and the odd pulls of gravity on your body that have to do with the changing slopes of the land are the most intriguing things about this place.

Everywhere I look I see dirt roads winding around. Watch out or you'll slide on the small circular iron crustaceans — they're like marbles. On the edges of the roads a tiny white-leafed 5 spotted flower is in bloom. The pink rotor blade Canchalgua is still blooming. There's not much water left. I can't seem to be able to find any pristine circular vernal pools. Anything close to one is generally cut in half by a road. There's plenty of Brass Buttons and Skunkweed present, however, and many pale purple Mariposa Lilies are waving with the Wild Oats in the breeze. There are some large muddy road pools with a few Spadefoot toad tadpoles as you move to higher ground. I can find a few Brodiaea, but not many, and some Loose-strife.

Del Mar Mesa June 1 1995

The Bee Flies are swarming the Mesa Mint and the Downingia. They do not seem to be bothering with the Goldfields. I see a few Skimmers, perhaps it's the Rusty Skimmer (*Paltothe-*

mis lineatipes). I think the Yellow Jackets must be pollinating some plants like the Bee Flies.

Outside the gate of the main complex, in a rut-like pool I find a number of different sized Western Toadettes. They are hiding in a soggy paper coffee cup. This is where Spadefoots were last year. Has the Western Toad displaced them this year?

I think this is the first year that I can say that I am truly and totally able to enjoy the appearance and fragrance of the Mesa Mint.

But I'm not sure. Perhaps I enjoyed it as much last year. One's appreciation of nature seems to grow. You learn to be more there for it. More of yourself can be present to meet nature as you are less in your problems of the people world out there.

Calle Cristobal June 19 1995

The yellow flowered Tarweed is in bloom everywhere. I find some white 5 Spot and many dried up brown and beige grasses. This place is my secret escape. The Mesa Mint is still fragrant and in bloom, as is the Loose-strife. The pools are now desiccated with many cracks to about 2-3 inches deep in the centers of the pools. The Woolly Marbles are all dried up and gray. The Spike Rush still is green near the base of the stalk. I hear crickets, a cicada, and see a Mourning Cloak, about 10 Yellow Jackets, 20 Cabbage Moths, and a few spider traps. The Deerweed is turning red and brown. The Toad Rush and Skunkweed have dried out. There is no water, no bees and no skimmers, no frogs or toads, though they might just come out at night. I hear the sound "Tit tit . . . tic ta tic." I wish I knew my grasses. I see a bunch of gopher mounds. They bring up the red soil. There are about 8 mounds — 10 inches round and 4 inches high. They seem to form a ring as if creating mima mounds. It's windy today but no soil is blown around which seems to destroy that theory of vernal pool formation.

The Linda Vista soil is so red. It feels as if you might be on Mars. There goes a speedy lizard. It's like a fast miniature dinosaur.

Miramar Road/Miramar Mall July 3 1995

A great deal of Mesa Mint is

present and in bloom. It smells heavenly and is really quite beautiful when examined close up. Again I see a solitary bee pollinating a Brodiaea. I worry about the unfenced pools. Will they be damaged?

Calle Cristobal July 12 1995 10:30 A.M.

It's a hot humid day with a light breeze blowing to the southeast. The vernal pool complex is very parched. There are a few yellow Tarweeds on the borders of the pools which are now all desiccated. The Mesa Mint is still in bloom, as is the Loose-strife. I can't find any Downingia left. I can hear the hum of a cicada and notice many gopher holes and their mounds of excavated red earth. Three low Jackets fly lazily by, as well as a number of Bee Flies. There are fewer crickets than last time and an occasional Cabbage Moth. I wonder what they pollinate? I see two specimens of an unusual looking moth or bee-moth or bee fly. It's green/black, about one inch long and has wings that are swept back at an angle. It's on the Mesa Mint. Perhaps it pollinates it. I also see a small red-orange butterfly, about 1/4 inch by one inch and a small white cricket.

The Prickly Pear is in bloom and sports a yellow flower. I have identified seven different types of grasses in the vicinity of the pools. The Deerweed is burnt to a red by the hot sun but there are a few Chaparral Morning Glories still left in bloom. This is about the tail end of the vernal pool season. I feel a sense of loss for the spring. How can one hold onto something that is good?

Conclusion

Aside from their beauty and quickly passing mysteries ruled by the phases of succession, which only the astute and dedicated can hope to grasp, vernal pools have great importance to Peñasquitos Canyon because they are ecologically interconnected with the canyon. Hence, we have more than one reason to be interested in them. I hope that I have conveyed a flavor of what vernal pools can offer the interested observer and that you have experienced some pleasure in visualizing and thinking about their presence.



On Patrol

Flave Pisciotta

The canyon is always pretty after the first rains, when the new grasses start to come up, along with the wonderful fall flowers. Because we got that little bit of early rain this year, the canyon has an emerald floor.

There has been a lot of volunteer participation in the canyon this fall, clearing trails on the one hand, and the Friends and the Archaeological Society working to restore the stream near the adobe ranch house (see article this issue).

I understand from Ranger Bill that the land swap (and its trust fund) is now complete, and we can anticipate more help with all of our projects.

A wonderful time was had by all at the Christmas party at the Adobe in December. Each year the party becomes more popular, and this year they had to expand into the adjoining office in order to make room for all of the wonderful deserts. The white elephant gift exchange is always hilarious. It's nice to be able to meet and talk to other groups that support the Preserve besides our own equestrian volunteers. A special thanks to Rangers Reneene and Bill for putting all that effort into organizing the party.

Several of us from the Equestrian volunteers would like to get together on a quarterly basis with the hiker and biker volunteers to further see what we can do to help both Ranger Bill and Reneene. Call Flave at 759-0636 if you are interested in participating.



Trackers' Corner

Learning Awareness

Barry Martin

In this edition of the Trackers' corner I'd like to discuss awareness. This is perhaps the most important skill an aspiring tracker/naturalist must acquire. Without this skill you are simply not going to develop effectively as a tracker/naturalist.

Unfortunately, we've allowed our senses to atrophy as we continue to trudge in a rut largely imposed on us by the societal expectations we've submitted ourselves to. It's our good fortune that we have the capability to break out of the "rut" and start living as was originally intended. The first step is to recognize the predicament we're in and take corrective action. Many people think everything is just great and there is no need for any corrective action. They tend to be very entrenched in the "rut." They are the ones who may take a walk in the preserve and not see an Alligator lizard laying just off the trail, or the Cottontail watching from under a stand of buckwheat a foot away, or the southern pacific rattler they just stepped over.

Believe me, these are incidents I've witnessed first hand and it's humorous until you realize the potential for danger that exists for "unaware" people. You probably know someone who is considered "accident prone," maybe "unaware" could be a synonym? Have you ever been so focused on one thing you lose all consciousness of whatever else may be occurring around you? Although there are appropriate times for this, development of the ability to absorb and assimilate all that is going on around you will tremendously enhance your effectiveness. This is true not only as you develop in your outdoor abilities but in all aspects of your life. For those who are considered "master trackers" there exists a common characteristic. They share the conviction that tracking and awareness cannot be separated, i.e. tracking without awareness is not tracking.

So how do we go about developing this awareness skill? In the classes we've offered here in the preserve we pass along many of the techniques as taught by Tom Brown Jr. at his Tracker school in New Jersey. One of the first exercises we do relates to expansion of your visual awareness through "wide angle vision." We are a very visual oriented society, tending to focus on things visually first in such a way that all of our senses tend to follow. We tend to spend much of our time in "tunnel vision." No wonder we miss so much! In wide angle vision, we expand our visual perspective and maintain that expansion, opening to a very alive and active world that wasn't apparent before.

The wide angle vision must be practiced all the time until it becomes normal for you. If it isn't second nature, you'll slip back into your old tunnel vision habits and be denied so much! Wide angle vision is also a doorway to other realms of awareness which we learn about in our advanced tracking class.

We teach ways of improving the use of your other senses as well via exercises that you can use daily. By opening and challenging all our senses regularly we become sensitive to the world around us and particularly to the gifts we find in nature.

Finally, we incorporate all these awareness skills into movement exercises such as the "fox walk" and other "stalking" steps. Building self awareness and recognizing how you fit and meld into the environment around you, knowing your "connection" with all that exists approaches the ultimate in awareness. We begin to see this during the "concentric ring" exercises in the advanced class.

This is what we are striving for as members of the tracking team and we invite you to join us. See our flyer in this issue for upcoming training workshops.



Red-legged Frog

Fig. 2. Eggs and tadpoles of frogs.

2 Goodbyes & 1 Hello

Mike Kelly, president

Our November Board of Directors meeting was one of change. Besides welcoming new officers, we had to bid goodbye to two Board members who are moving on. Tom Hopp, PhD has been a board member for about two years and represented the Friends on the Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation. Tom is a chemist who had come from the Seattle area where he had also been active in wetlands restoration. He'll be moving back to Seattle as part of a big career change Tom is making. We wish Tom well in his new career. Our loss will be Seattle's gain.

Alan Pepper, PhD served on the Board about 3 years. He served as the Friends' Conservation Director and helped plan out a number of our activities. He played a central role in developing a comprehensive plant list for the Preserve and regularly botanized in the Preserve. He also helped Dave Hogan, Mike Conrad and I map out wildlife corridors to our north that have become the cornerstone of our conservation efforts and of City planning in the Future Urbanizing Area. He also educated himself in the flora and ecology of Carmel Mountain and helped draft our position on this important area. Alan was a post-doctoral fellow at the Salk Institute in plant molecular biology. He has now accepted a position at Texas A&M University where he will have his own lab and also teach, two pastimes he enjoys. We expect he'll also quickly involve himself in conservation biology issues locally there.

Besides being good resource people and activists, both Tom and Alan were people we all enjoyed knowing and passing time with. We'll miss them.

Helping to balance things out a bit is a welcome new addition to the Board, Erik Noreke. Members active in the wildlife survey efforts will know Erik as an accomplished member of the most active team in the Preserve. He's also a computer whiz who's already putting systems together for the Friends' projects. Welcome aboard Erik.

Welcome New Members

During November and December the following folks joined the Friends. We hope you're enjoying our activities and our newsletter. We, in turn, enjoy your support of our many conservation and other activities to protect the diversity of plants and wildlife in the Preserve and to make it an enjoyable place to visit. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Hedy Aardema, Rebecca Cummings
Chad Flynn, Iria and York Gorzolla,
Eldon Heiser, Donald Kimball,
Vince & Grace Petrucci,
Bob & Nancy Peyton, Joan Raymond
Majorie Taylor, Jeffi Wood

(Volunteers cont'd)

mediately tangible with a noticeably clearer stream that large-mouth bass and crayfish quickly moved into and a clean understory near the aracheo sites. A second well site was cleared of exotic palms during the process, which will allow an aracheological examination of the area for the first time in decades. Since the joint work party City Ranger Bill Lawrence brought a probation crew in to continue the work, while Don Albright and Mike Kelly have been in with their chain saws preparing a new area for the next volunteer crew. This brings the total hours to over 420.

Volunteers participating from the SDCAS were Fred Buchanan, Jim Royal, Ron May, Dale May, Mike Nabholz, Pam Nabholz, Jennifer Guerrazzi, Robert Weeks, Jerry Miller, and Howard Schwitkis. **From the friends:** Don Albright, Mike Kelly, Cathy Buco, Holly Boessow, Paul Micheletti, Erik Noreke, Rick Moyer, Vivian Seymore, and Bill Wiltsie.

Stream Surveys.

We inadvertently left Jim Hannan's name off the volunteer list for September surveys. Sorry Jim. During November and December, Tarja Jacobsen and Mike Kelly conducted a number of water quality surveys. Next surveys

Annual Fund Donors

In answer to our annual fund appeal, as of December 20 the following members generously donated a total of \$2,075, including two \$250.00 donations that were matched by a long-time generous supporter. Donations received after this date will be recognized in our next newsletter.

Gordon Caplan
Charles G. Cochrane
Bruce & Cyndy Collins
Wendy Dallas
Claude Edwards
Marilyn & James Evans
Jim & Karuna Gordon
The Hansens
Rock & Dena Kent
Maurice & Ree Miller
Mike Kelly & Chris Whitten
Edith Monsees
Joanne Odenthal
Diane Sachs
David Seay
Markus Spiegelberg
Judy Swink
Greg Vines
June Warburton
Jacqueline Weatherly
Francisco & Antoinette Wong

will be after the first substantial rain.

Wildlife Survey

Thanks to Mike Guest for months of work spent entering and sorting two years worth of wildlife survey data.

Bird List

Thanks to Carla Scott and Mike Kelly for typing and laying out the new Bird List that was compiled by Claude Edwards, Barbara Zepf and edited by Brian Swanson.

Weed Eradication Volunteers

Thanks to Robb Hutsel, Carey Barton, Holly Boessow, Trinity Gabriel, Cindy Burrascano, and Mel Howe for tough work removing tamarisk. A special thanks to Holly for volunteering so frequently!

Volunteer Accomplishments and Opportunities

Mike Kelly

With this new page the Friends hope to recognize the crucial role volunteers play in the everyday life of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. We'll announce projects you can be involved in and report on the ones just completed. We also welcome your reports, comments and ideas for what we're and you are doing.

1995 Stats = 5,625 Hours

5,625 hours. — that's the total volunteer hours organized by the Friends in 1995 in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This includes the interpretive hikes, wildlife tracking surveys, the exotic weed eradication, restoration plantings, conservation meetings, stream surveys, newsletter publication and more. The total above is conservative since it doesn't count the work many people spend on correspondence, phone calls, finances, and internal organization.

The volunteers included more than 200 different people over the year from Mt. Carmel High School, The National Civilian Community Corps, the Church of the Latter Day Saint, cub scouts, girl scouts and the dedicated core of Friends' members who often turned out monthly, sometimes weekly, to help out. We had fun, adventure, protected the Preserve and helped restore areas. Why not join us this year..

Storm Drainage Maintenance and Enhancement Project.

Nine volunteers pitched in Saturday, Nov. 24 to cleanup and enhance a creek area near their houses, just north of the historic ranch house.

This creek supports a riparian strip that includes willows, cattails, juncus grass, cottonwoods, live oaks, sycamores, blackberry, wild roses, mulefat and more. Deer, rattlers, king snakes, small mammals and birds visit or live in it. As the trees mature, this corridor will help shield the ranch house area from the nearby housing, providing a more aesthetically pleasing vista. Friends' volunteers have previously removed many exotics and planted live oaks in the area.

John Keating, a Friends member who lives with his family on the north rim has been concerned about the area and has sought to educate his neighbors about the impact of what goes down the drains and ends up in the Preserve. He decided to do something about it and organized 8 of his neighbors from the north side of the canyon in a cleanup to restore this portion of the creek. Working only with hand tools they did a great job in restoring the main channel and repairing the crossing. The City Open-Space Divi-

were almost evenly split between the San Diego County Archaeology Society (SDCAS) and the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. In addition, County Ranger Reneene Mowry and City Ranger Bill Lawrence pitched in and also made their pickup trucks available.

The goal of the project is to remove decades worth of exotic palm fronds and whole trees from a section of the creek immediately due south of the historic adobe ranch house. Trees downed in the creek along with the giant spiked fronds have created debris dams that increase flooding during the rainy season. In 1995 this flooding put the floor of the recently restored Victorian era lath shed under a foot of water. Fred Buchanan, a Vice-president of the SDCAS called attention to this problem in a letter to the historic site oversight committee. Fred then joined Mike Kelly and Don Albright of the Friends in surveying the various stream channels in the area and identified a number of blockages contributing to the problem.

The debris dams have also contributed to a stagnation of the water in this area and a buildup of too much organic debris which has led to anaerobic conditions, unsuitable for much creek life.

The joint Sunday session was the fourth work party to restore the area. Prior to this, several teams of the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC, a.k.a., Americorps) helped out on three different days. Mike Kelly and Don Albright of the Friends coordinated two of these sessions, while County Ranger Reneene Mowry coordinated the third.

In the four work sessions, totalling about 363 hours, 67 people (only 2-3 repeats) pulled about 66 pickup truck loads of palm fronds out of the area and took them to a nearby mulch site in the Preserve. The volunteers are to be commended for engaging in some very physical, dirty work punctuated by the occasional — make that more than occasional — puncture of a palm frond thorn! But the rewards were im-

Upcoming Opportunities

Below are several chances to get involved — activities schedule has details.

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1 p.m.: Restoration Work Outing/ East End.

Saturday, Jan. 20: Tamarisk bash in Anza Borrego with Friends and Calif. Native Plant Society.

Sunday, Jan. 28, 9 a.m.: stream restoration continues at the ranch with S.D. County Archaeological Society and the Friends.

Fri.-Sun. Feb. 2-4: Tracking Team training workshops and field work

Saturday, Feb. 24, 10 a.m. Restoration Work Outing/ Northern Parking-Staging Area

Stream Surveys: after the first rain. Call Mike at 566-6489.

sion also helped out a week later. City Ranger Bill Lawrence brought in a probation crew to continue the work. With a future work party he expects to finish installing erosion prevention devices in the area. Helping John were Mike Bouvier, Rob Gilmore, Allan Navarro, Don Rock, Don Eisenhart, Tom White, Toder Vachovski, and William Kahari.

Stream Restoration at the Ranch.

Some 19 volunteers turned out Sunday, Dec. 3 to help restore a section of Peñasquitos Creek and to protect nearby archaeological sites. The volunteers



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
 P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
 619-484-3219

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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.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
 Vice-President: Chris Bader 593-1381
 Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
 Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Trinity Gabriel, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke., Brian Swanson,

Walks and Committees Leaders

Bird Walks & Gnatcatcher Survey: Brian Swanson 695-2209

Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937

Hike Committee: Trinity Gabriel 672-0229

Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen 452-7091

Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen

Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958

Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Carla Scott, Vickie Ausen

Tracking: Chris Bader

Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly

Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly & Tarja Jacobsen

Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007),

Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen,

Lee Kirchhevel, Lindsey Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke,

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10

Family \$15 Sponsor \$25 Patron \$100

Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)

Hikes

Indian Culture

1/96

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.

APPLICATION

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
ZIP: _____
PHONE: DAY: _____
EVE: _____

MEMBER OF FRIENDS OF LPCP(CIRCLE)?
YES NO

CLASS(CIRCLE):
BEGINNING INTERMED. ADVANCED
\$50(40 MBR) \$25 \$40

DATE(S): _____

WORKSHOPS(CIRCLE):

FIRE SURVIVAL HUNTING
\$15 \$15
AWARENESS/PHILOSOPHY
\$15

DATE(S): _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Make check payable to Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Send application with fee to:
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Tracking Team
P.O. Box 26523
San Diego, Ca. 92196



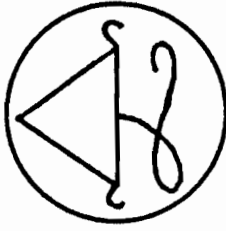
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Hind

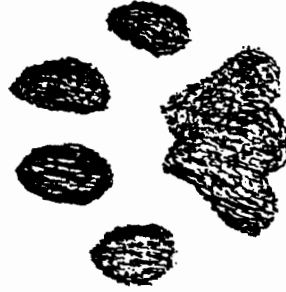
Coyote

The Friends
of
Los Peñasquitos



Canyon Preserve

TRACKING TEAM



Bobcat

1996 Schedule of Classes &
Workshops

**Tracking, Nature and
Wilderness Survival**

Questions? Call 484-3219 and leave a message after the schedule of events tape runs, we will get back to you with answers within two days.

ADVANCED: Saturday and Sunday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm both days, bring lunch. We explore the finer details of tracking on all types of terrain and experience advanced awareness techniques.

PREREQUISITES: Intermediate and minimum of two tracking walks* with tracking team members.

COST: \$40.00

DATE: Sep. 28 - 29

*Tracking walks are conducted nearly every month by members of the tracking team. See Friends newsletter for schedules, times, etc.



WORKSHOPS: Half day classes concentrating on a particular skill beginning at 8:00 am 'till noon.

COST: \$15.00

TOPIC

DATES

- FiremakingMay 4, Nov. 16
Methods of fire by friction are covered, hands on.
- Survival hunting.....May 19
Techniques and strategies for procurement of food in a survival situation. Camouflaging, reading the landscape, hunting tools.
- Awareness/PhilosophyJun. 30
Reading concentric rings, examination of the philosophy of living in harmony with the earth, and related awareness exercises.



All courses require good physical condition, a willingness to learn and a good attitude.

Proceeds cover expenses and benefit the Friends of Los Pefiasquitos Canyon Preserve, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving our local biodiversity.

HIGH SCHOOL AND OLDER PLEASE

BEGINNING: An intensive weekend course which begins Friday evening at 5:30 and runs 'till 9:00 pm. We return Saturday 7:00 am 'till 8:00 pm. Then Sunday from 8:00 am 'till 4:00 pm. We provide dinner Saturday evening, but you must bring a lunch Saturday and Sunday.

This class is designed to give you a "jump start," which will propel you toward becoming proficient in tracking, nature and wilderness survival. The philosophy of living in harmony with the earth is the foundation upon which these native skills are taught. Becoming truly proficient depends upon what you do with the information you learn in this class.

Some of the skills covered include:

- Survival shelter construction
- Water procurement in a survival situation
- Fire making
- Survival hunting
- Awareness techniques
- Movement in the outdoors
- Rockworking
- Cordage making
- Plant uses
- Tracking

COST: \$50.00 (\$40.00 for members of Friends of L.P.C.P.)

DATES: Feb. 2 - 4 Aug. 16 - 18

Mar. 29 - 31 Nov. 1 - 3



INTERMEDIATE: A one day class emphasizing development of tracking and awareness skills. Bring a lunch, 8:00 am 'till 5:00 pm.

PREREQUISITE: Beginning class.

COST: \$25.00

DATES: Jun. 9

Oct. 13

HISTORY OF THE TRACKING TEAM

by Barry Martin

We initially formed the tracking team for the purpose of conducting studies of the wildlife within the Los Pefiasquitos Canyon Preserve. Since the ability to identify tracks is crucial to this effort, I organized several training sessions designed to teach tracking.

Having been drawn to the outdoors and the skill of reading tracks since childhood, I was naturally attracted to the writings of Tom Brown, Jr. several years ago. Anxious to improve my own outdoor and tracking skills, I began taking Tom's courses at his renowned Tracking, Nature and Wilderness survival school in New Jersey's Pine Barrens region.

Eventually I was asked to pass along the ancient knowledge I had been learning at Tom's to the people involved in the wildlife study. Indeed, it is Tom's wish that his students do just that. So I worked up a course based upon what I learned at Tom's and tested it on our core group of Pefiasquitos Trackers.

To my relief and surprise, it was enthusiastically received. We decided to offer it to whomever might be interested and met with success beyond our expectations.

We have gradually expanded since then, offering intermediate and advanced classes. Also some half day workshops have been added so you may concentrate on specific skills. The courses are briefly described in this flyer.

The tracking team is still active with the wildlife studies and other special projects along with the presentation of these classes. There is always room for motivated people on the team. We explain how you can become a member during the beginning class.

Hope to see you soon,

Barry



Canyon News

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

March/April 1996
Volume 10 No. 2

Calendar

Strange — But Fun — Winter & Spring

It's been a strange winter and spring. A mild summer and fall left many of 1995's species blooming into the winter, yet the lateness and paucity of our rainfall has delayed 1996's flowering species. Many species are late in blooming and those that are in flower are fewer in number. Heavy late rains could still bring on a strong flush of spring color. Our area vernal pools have yet to fill and hold water. However, the little rain we have had stimulated tadpole birth in some pools only to deny them enough water for survival, causing die offs.

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed to help with conservation or other activities. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing animal surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs to name a few. We also need help with organizational aspects of our work.

Directions: please note our new format. We're placing directions for the different walk meeting places at the end of the calendar to avoid repeating them for walks starting in the same place.

March

Friends Monthly Business Meeting.

Meeting date is changing what with new Board members joining. Call Mike at 566-6489 if you are a member who wishes to be notified of the date and time.

Faces of Our Neighbors: Citizen participation in Carnivore Habitat Monitoring: talk and slide show at the Ranch House

Friday, March 1, 7 p.m. At Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, between Rancho Peñasquitos and Mira Mesa. Free talk and slide show of North American Carnivores with Susan Morse, tracker, wildlife photographer and habitat specialist. She will describe a citizen volunteer program

of tracking and surveying carnivores in order to develop the information needed to effectively protect wildlife habitat through field research, conservation education and planning. The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve are developing such a program for San Diego and welcome newcomers. The ranch house is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Saturday, March 2, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the SD Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an historic adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, March 3, 8 – 11 a.m. This is a tracking walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A **prerequisite** is having taken the Friends' beginning tracking course. Two intermediate tracking walks are required for beginning class graduates who want to take the advanced course. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Full Moon Frog Hike in Sorrento Valley

Wednesday, March 6, 7:30 – 9 p.m. A night of full moon hiking; learn about natural history and the ecology of anurans (frogs and toads). Look for frogs, toads and tadpoles. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

➡ next page for more

Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	1
Bass Survey	5
Beware Hitchhiking Ticks	7
Welcome New Members	8
Rancho Roundup: County Ranger Report	9
Changes in Park: City Ranger Report	10
Mercy Property Acquired	10
Annual Fund Donors	10
Volunteers	11
Friends' Directory	12

March Lion and Habitat Votes

Mike Kelly

This March you'll find two important issues for conservationists on the ballot. One is Proposition C on our local ballot, involving development and habitat acquisition. The second is Proposition 187, the Mountain Lion Initiative, on the state ballot. We'll summarize each and state our position.

Proposition C: Vote YES

On this March's ballot you'll find



➡ p. 4 for more

(Calendar cont'd)**Vernal Pool and Fire Ecology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa**

Saturday, March 9, 8 – 10. We combine these walks because the vernal pools were in the 1992 fire area. Learn about vernal pools, their interesting plants and animals, some endangered. See the beautiful and aromatic endangered Mesa mint. In the fire area learn about the vital role fire plays in San Diego's ecosystem. See many flowering plants and resprouting vegetation after the fire. The greatest biodiversity of plants in the Preserve is now in the burn area. Wear old clothes, boots and bring water. Led by Les Braund. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Geology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa

Sunday, March 10, 9 a.m. - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Visit an unusual fossil. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Debate: Should Californians Vote to Support Mountain Lion Trophy Hunting? Scripps Ranch Library.

Tuesday, March 12, 7 – 9 p.m. Hear Proposition 187 debated by proponents and opponents at the Scripps Ranch Library, 10301 Scripps Lake Dr. Call Les at 566-3958 for directions or more information. Co-sponsored by KNOAH's ARC, Sierra Club, Save Our Forest and Ranchlands and Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Del Mar Mesa Vernal Pool Walk from Northern Area

Saturday, March 16, 9 a.m. - noon. Join naturalist Mike Kelly for a vernal pool walk on the Del Mar Mesa. Hike a wildlife corridor, see lots of early flowers. If there's been enough rain the pools should be holding water and sporting fairy shrimp, chorus frog and spadefoot toad tadpoles. Wet stream crossing. Meet at the Northern Parking Staging Area in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Saturday, March 16, 11 a.m. and noon (45 min. each), led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. See San Diego's oldest residence, an historic adobe, settler and Indian artifacts. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and

Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, March 16, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, March 17, 9 – 10:30 a.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Bird Walk at Ranch House

Sunday, March 17, 4 p.m., (1-1/2 hours). Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experience. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Spring Equinox Night Walk in Sorrento Valley

Tuesday, March 19, 7:30 – 9 p.m. Learn to develop night vision and peripheral attention. Explore deep states of attunement to nature as we celebrate the transition to spring. Wear baseball cap to be used in night vision exercise. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Native Plant Sale at Tree of Life Nursery in San Juan Capistrano

Saturday, March 23, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sponsored by the San Diego and Orange County Chapters of the California Native Plant Society. Choose from 140 species and cultivars of California natives. Tree of Life is located at 33201 Ortega Highway. Take I-5 north to San Juan Capistrano,

exit at the Ortega Highway. Turn east at the top of the ramp and continue inland 7-3/4 miles (about 10 minutes). The nursery entrance is on the left side of the road. The nursery's gardens will be in bloom.

Sensory Awareness Hike in Sorrento Valley

Saturday, March 23, 4-5:30 p.m. Learn to quiet the mind and dwell in the senses and to directly explore nature and fall in love with the wild. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Tracking, Nature and Wilderness Survival Weekend at the Ranch House

Friday, March 29 – Sunday, March 31. An intensive weekend course beginning Friday evening, 5:30 – 9 p.m., Saturday, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m., Sunday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Dinner is provided Saturday evening, but participants must bring lunch Saturday and Sunday. Cost is \$50 for non-members, \$40 for members. For a free brochure call Rick Botta at 672-0584. Preregistration is required.

April**Friends Monthly Business Meeting.**

Meeting date is changing what with new Board members joining. Call Mike at 566-6489 if you are a member who wishes to be notified of the date and time.

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there will be free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. These tours are led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. Visitors will see an historic Mexican era rancho with its three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Full Moon Frog Hike in Sorrento Valley

Wednesday, April 3, 7:30 – 9 p.m. A night of full moon hiking; learn about natural history and the ecology of anurans (frogs and toads). Look for frogs, toads and tadpoles. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento

➡ next page for more

(Calendar cont'd)

Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, April 7, 8 – 11 a.m. This is a tracking walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A prerequisite is having taken the Friends' beginning tracking course. Two intermediate tracking walks are required for beginning class graduates who want to take the advanced course. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

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Vernal Pool and Fire Ecology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa

Saturday, April 13, 8 – 10. We combine these walks because the vernal pools were in the 1992 fire area. Learn about vernal pools, their interesting plants and animals, some endangered. See the beautiful and aromatic endangered Mesa mint. In the fire area learn about the vital role fire plays in San Diego's ecosystem. See many flowering plants and resprouting vegetation after the fire. The greatest biodiversity of plants in the Preserve is now in the burn area. Wear old clothes, boots and bring water. Led by Les Braund. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

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site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

New Moon Night Walk in Sorrento Valley

Wednesday, April 17, 7:30 – 9 p.m. Learn to develop night vision and peripheral attention. Explore deep states of attunement to nature as we celebrate the transition to spring. Wear baseball cap to be used in night vision exercise. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

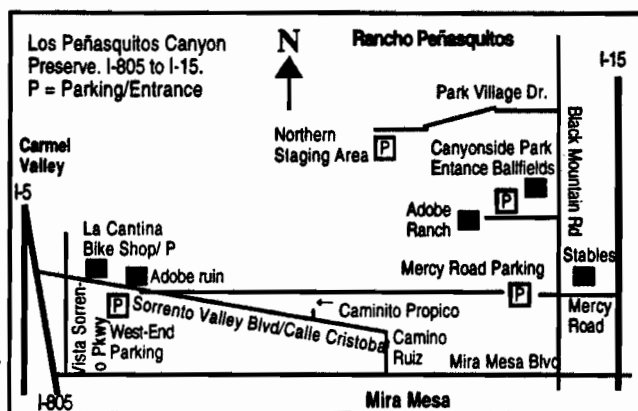
Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House
Saturday, April 20, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Medicinal Plant Walk

Saturday, April 20, 4:30 – 6 p.m. Learn about plants our Indian and settler ancestors (and people today) used for medicinal purposes. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Earth Day Night Walk in Sorrento Valley

Monday, April 22, 7:30 – 9 p.m. Show your love for mother earth. Hike includes songs, stories and earth-nature meditations. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

**Del Mar Mesa Vernal Pool Walk from Northern Area**

Sunday, April 28, 9 a.m. - noon. Join naturalist Mike Kelly for a vernal pool walk on the Del Mar Mesa. Hike a wildlife corridor, see lots of early flowers. If there's been enough rain the pools should be holding water and sporting fairy shrimp, chorus frog and spadefoot toad tadpoles. Wet stream crossing. Meet at the Northern Parking Staging Area in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

DIRECTIONS**Ranch House Walks/Tours**

The ranch house is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Ignore the sign for the Preserve at this intersection and turn right on Black Mountain. Go up the hill and make a U-turn at Truman Street, come back down the hill and turn right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past the ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Turn left into the lot, park and walk up the path to the ranch house. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 south side of Cristobal. Park legally. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Sorrento Valley/ Cantina Bike Shop

Cantina Mountain Bike Shop, which is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile

➡ next page for more

(Vote cont'd)

Proposition C. It asks for voter approval to shift two small parcels in the Future Urbanizing Area from "Future Urbanizing" to "Current Urbanizing" Status. The Friends, along with the Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, the Carmel Valley and Rancho Peñasquitos Planning Groups, Mayor Susan Golding and many others are urging a YES vote.

The measure would allow two resort type Hotels associated with golf course developments to be built. As a benefit to the surrounding communities, the developers in each case would charge a hotel surcharge on all guests that would guarantee \$12.6 million dollars for open-space habitat acquisition in the north city area. It is expected that these monies would be used to purchase land on Carmel Mountain (8A) and in the Black Mountain area (possibly Montana Mirador).

This is a phase shift vote as envisioned under Proposition A, passed by San Diego voters back in 1984. Prop A put some 12,000 acres in the north city area into a category of land use called *Future Urbanizing*. Landowners could develop their land according to the underlying zoning at the time the ballot measure was approved. For the most part this meant the land was zoned for agriculture, low-density residential, churches, schools or other uses. Prop A required that voter approval be sought for any development that involved an *up zone* to higher or urban level densities. That is the case here.

Two developments are involved. One is the Bougainvillea development on Peñasquitos Canyon's northern border. The second is the Black Mountain Ranch development bordering the northern Black Mountain area of Rancho Peñasquitos. Each of the developers here has decided to develop golf course and low density estate properties at the underlying zoning. This does not require voter approval. In fact, the Black Mountain Project is an already approved project. The exception in each case are the small resort hotels each wants to build next to the courses. These require an *up zone* because of the "higher density" the hotel represents and, hence, voter approval.

Each developer has already committed to the city to donating substan-

tial sensitive lands to the City's open-space park system. The funds being promised from the future hotel revenues would be used to purchase additional open space lands from other landowners, lands that can not be acquired through the development process. These funds will not be used to purchase land from these developers.

Mountain lion hunting: vote NO

If passed, proposition 187 would repeal the protections of Proposition 117. This latter initiative, the California Wildlife Protection Act, was approved by the state's voters in 1990. It confirmed an earlier ban on trophy hunting of mountain lions by "sportsmen." It also established a \$30 million annual contribution to a Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) for 30 years. Since passage, over 148,000 acres of wetlands, coastal lands and other endangered habitats have been purchased.

If passed, Proposition 187 would reopen what I call *slob* hunting of mountain lions. The National Rifle Association and the Safari Club, the two principal special interests sponsoring this legislation and financing the campaign for it, call it "Sport Hunting." Many so-called "sportsmen" hunt Mountain lions with radio-collared dog packs. Such packs track lions until they tree it. When cornered this is what Mountain lions, like many cats, do; they climb a tree. Although this saves them from the dogs, it leaves them vulnerable to the "hunter." The hunters, waiting in their vehicles, use radio-directional equipment to track the dogs and move in when the lion is treed. The lion, trapped up in the tree, is a "sitting duck" for the brave hunter who stands below and pulls the trigger. If their guide, a professional lion tracker, hasn't pre-wounded it for the brave-hearted hunter.

True sport hunting of a lion doesn't occur because it's too tough for couch potato hunters. It means tracking without dogs over tough terrain for many hours, perhaps days at a time. You have to actually have outdoor skills such as tracking and survival to do this. You also have to be in shape. It also means you can't be sitting around quaffing six-packs at night after you and your supplies have been ferried about in

your sport-utility vehicle.

Passage of this initiative would also enable the legislature to roll back the habitat acquisition program funded by Prop 117.

(Schedule/ directions cont'd)

east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe to its intersection with Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Calle Cristobal. Go left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

This parking-staging area is located at the intersection of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road, near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area

This parking-staging area is located at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Rufz in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Go right on Black Mountain Road to the light at Park Village Drive and Adolphia Street. Go left on Park Village Drive about 1 mile to Camino Rufz. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

This parking lot is located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley near the I-805/I-5 merge, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway in Sorrento Valley. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Go right on Camino Santa Fe to its intersection with Sorrento Valley Boulevard/Calle Cristobal. Go left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Large Mouth Bass Survey

Will Bowen, PhD

[Editor's note: Fishing is legal in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve with the proper license. It is **not** legal to damage the vegetation in order to create a fishing spot. We ask your cooperation in avoiding damage to the Preserve. Will submitted technical data and pool locations on his fish catches which are on file, but are not included in this article for the sake of brevity and interest! Will's belief that the bass and perhaps other species are stocked at the old cattle pond off Sabre Spring Parkway and Poway Road is correct.]

Introduction

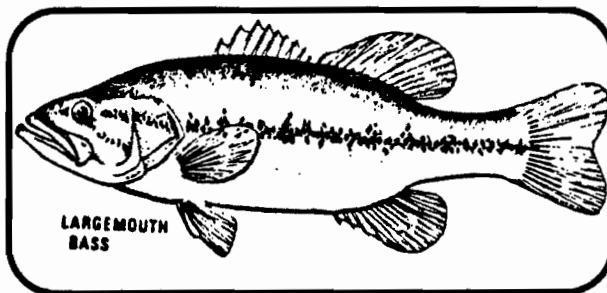
In August 1995 the Friends met to discuss continuing the Stream Survey began in 1994. A number of projects of mapping and cataloging physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of Peñasquitos Creek were proposed. One project called for the capture of a sample of large mouth bass from Peñasquitos Creek. Linda Pardy, of the State of California Regional Water Quality Board, stated that the California Department of Fish & Game were interested in testing the bass of our creek for carcinogens at the state lab. The Friends concluded that the lab results, when used along with water quality testing and benthic organisms sampling, might prove valuable in assessing the ecological health of our creek.

My job was to catch the fish. Since I was already using fishing as a method of learning more about stream inhabitants this was a natural progression. It was decided that I would catch 10 bass from sections of the creek upstream of Sorrento Valley and 10 from downstream. The fish upstream would reflect on the creek running through the canyon. The condition of the fish caught downstream would tell us if anything was coming into the water from the Sorrento Valley business complex. In addition, it was hoped that the downstream fish might also provide State Fish & Game with a measure of the health of Soledad Creek, which converges with Peñasquitos Creek a little past Sorrento Valley Road, near the north west section of Roselle Street — their confluence then

flowing through the marsh into Peñasquitos lagoon.

As it turned out, Soledad Creek was not flowing into Peñasquitos Creek with any full measure. This was due to it being the dry season with only a small trickle coming down the Soledad Creek bed and because dredging for the new sewer line down Sorrento Valley Road had disturbed the normal merging of these two watercourses.

In addition, I discovered from a survey that I undertook by myself and with Terry Waleck, a geology technician, that currently there are no really good bass pools west of Sorrento Valley Road all the way out to the marsh. I concluded that it would be too diffi-



cult to catch ten fish under these conditions. Hence, only one fish — a "beginner's luck" catch — came from west of where they merge, the rest of the downstream fish coming from the big pool by Sorrento Lumberyard. It is important to note, however, that local fisherman Dave Abrams, who has fished this area for over a year and a half and claims to have caught hundreds of bass, claims that prior to the dredging there was a deep bass and bluegill hole west of the Sorrento Valley Road bridge. Incidentally, Mr. Abrams, a Mira Mesa resident, always releases his fish and gives the big ones a "good luck" kiss!

The Species: large mouth bass (*Micropterus Salmoides*)

The large mouth bass is a handsome greenish-black sportfish introduced into California in 1874. It is the top predator in its food chain in Peñasquitos Creek. While normally a solitary hunter, in the compact creek environment, where it can only survive in the infrequent pools, it has come to

tolerate activity within the context of small groups of others of its own kind.

The large mouth bass is a member of the sunfish family and is thus related to bluegill and sunfish with which it shares the creek. Bass feed facing up stream and although they will hit any time of day are most active at feeding right as the sun goes down. Their diet consists of crayfish (especially baby crayfish), worms, mosquito fish, benthic organisms, small bluegill and even their own young.

The large mouth bass is a warm water fish and is very sensitive to dropping water temperatures. Even a 2 degree drop in water temperature can cause them to become much more lethargic and to feed less frequently.

The bass in our creek grow only to a stunted size because of the limited resources and the small pools. However, according to Dave Abrams, they may be more hardy than lake bass. The biggest fish I have caught weighed 2-1/2 pounds and was 15 inches long. Large mouth bass can grow to over 50 inches long, so our big ones are small by comparison. The 2-1/2 pound size is also the largest size fish Dave Abrams has ever caught. He claims to have landed only two this large over the last 18 months.

Historic evidence

The historical evidence seems to suggest that bass have been in the Peñasquitos Creek for a good number of years. John Northrop, a horseman who has been riding the canyon for over 40 years, says that he has observed people fishing in the creek for at least the last 23 years. He remarked that 15 years ago he ran into a fly fishermen who told him that the "fishing wasn't as good as it used to be."

Northrop says that he saw people carrying strings of bass out of the canyon on more than one occasion. He also says that the local security guards that used to be in the canyon would called out to these individuals to, "Save some for the rest of us!," implying they had taken many fish. There

➡ next page for more

(Bass cont'd)

must have been lots of bass in the creek in the past.

I began fishing in Penasquitos Creek in November 1994 and have caught bass year round since then. I find more bass present as I get to know the creek better. Dave Abrams, who usually confines his fishing to around the Sorrento Valley Road bridge has also been taking bass with regularity for about the same length of time.

Apparently the bass in the creek are the descendants of ones stocked in earlier times or have more recently come down from Poway ponds, where Mike Kelly believes they are regularly implanted.

Methods

The project officially began 11-2-95 when I walked behind the Sorrento Valley Dental Associates, crossed the railroad tracks, and slogged down through the lush riparian habitat to the creek. There I plopped my lure into the then muddy water and a bass hit immediately. The project continued until the 20th bass was caught on 2-11-96.

Usually I walked or road my mountain bike to fishing locations. My equipment consisted of a telescoping Shakespeare spin fishing rod and light weight Condor 510 spinning reel. I used 8 lb Berkeley Trilene Ultrathin fishing line. I did not use any live bait but instead carried an assortment of lures, including plastic worms, lead-head feather and skirted jigs. Near the end of the project I added crankbaits which are larger, lipped, crayfish- or shad-looking diving lures. I also carried large ziplock plastic bags, a ruler, measuring tape, and a Sharpie permanent pen. All the equipment was carried in a backpack.

After I caught a fish I would label the ziplock bag with date, time of day, lure used and then record a measurement of length and height (from the tallest place on the fish--usually right in front of the dorsal fin) in my fishing log. I then placed the fish in a ziplock bag and put it in my backpack. At the conclusion of fishing, I brought the fish home, weighed it on a digital scale and then placed it in the cold storage of my refrigerator.

Pools

To catch or observe bass in Peñasquitos Creek you have to know where the pools are. Pools are unique stretches of the creek ranging from 20-50 yards long and 12 to 35 feet across with depths of up to 7 or 8 feet. Some are surrounded by cattail or tules, others are bounded by large rocks. I have given the pools I frequent names for ease of identification and location. [Note: to avoid damage to sensitive creekside habitat we are printing only the locations of several of the well-known and established sites.] Starting from downstream or west to upstream or east the pools I am aware of are:

Sorrento Lumberyard (SL): A large long pool just past and behind Sorrento Lumberyard. It is at least 50 yards long and 5-7 feet deep near the center. It is bounded by cattails and a rocky bank. There are a good number of bass here and they will usually bite. Nine of the ten downstream bass came from this hole.

Cottonwood Hole (CH): This hole is about 10 by 10 yards and is located some 50 yards past the willow line marking the start of Sorrento Valley business complex near La Cantina bike store. It is immersed in a tall thicket of cattails and tules. The hole is almost in a north/south line with one of the large cotton wood trees and can be observed from the sidewalk on Calle Cristobal. The largest bass, a 2 1/2 pounder, came out of this hole.

El Cuervo Hole (EC): This hole or pool is located a little past the El Cuervo ruins. It is about 20--30 yards long, about 25 feet across and 6 feet deep. It is surrounded by cattails save where fishing cuts have been made in the vegetation. In November, this area was teeming with big bass. Although there are bass here, they are often skittish side about biting.

Walden Pond (WP): A substantial pond north and slightly east of the Waterfall. While not a part of the creek this is a part of the canyon and needs to be considered. Apparently the bass here were stocked by a local resident. There are a good number of bass present here.

Discussion

Large mouth bass are a non-native introduced or exotic species. They are

well known to eat and eradicate native species of fish, frogs and turtles. Therefore they are not high on the list of the Friends' priorities except in what they might teach us about the ecological health of the creek. However, neither are crayfish native, yet they serve important functions in helping keep the creek clean and in recycling leaf litter into a hi-protein food source for other species which are native. Hence, we need to know what role bass play in the ecological web of the creek. Are they a hindrance, a help, or a neutral partner?

After the results of the Fish & Game tests come back we will have another measure of the health of the creek. The presence of toxins or cancers in the bass flesh will indicate pollutants in the water. Certain types of pollutants might be evidence of dumping of wastes into the creek.

If the bass are polluted or carcinogenic we would need to post warning signs about eating the fish as is done at the San Diego Bay, where it has been determined that they fish are carcinogenic when eaten in quantity.

My firsthand inspections showed the bass to look robust and healthy. And they are strong fighters. Only one fish, taken from the Sorrento Lumberyard pool, had a black blotch or birthmark (about the size of a quarter). It was hard to tell if it was a sign of sickness.

My impression is that there are more and bigger bass in the creek this year. This could be a phase in some larger cycle and we would need to keep records for several years to know for sure. The bass have also continued to bite longer this year. Last winter both Dave Abrams and I noticed a radical drop off in fishing after the banner bite that characterizes November. Flooding ruined fishing for a long time after that.

Both Abrams and I have also both noticed a significant drop in the presence of bluegill and catfish this season. It may be that the bass population is up and they are eating the bluegills. If there is another reason for the disappearance of bluegill we would definitely want to know about it.

Another interesting question concerns the composition of bass diets. Considering the lures that were pro-

Beware the Hitchhiking Tick

Christine E. Whitten, M.D.,

As an owner of a dog and a husband who both love to crawl through the underbrush, I'm becoming expert at tick-picking. Yes, once again its that time of year when famished ticks out for a quick snack give new meaning to "meal-on-the-run."

The increasing number of cases of Lyme disease being reported in San Diego County highlights the importance of taking precautions against picking up ticks while you're out walking. Starting in the winter and lasting through summer the local tick population is on the lookout for an easy meal.

Ticks aren't insects

Ticks are close relatives of spiders and mites, not insects. There are three different types of ticks. However, hard ticks from the family *Ixodidae* are most likely to parasitize humans and potentially spread disease. The adult hard tick has eight legs and a hard plate on its upper surface. They look fairly flat (prior to eating, that is) and they scuttle when they move. An engorged tick looks like a distended sack or a blister with legs.

Dracula's no match for these guys

There are four stages in the life cycle of the tick: the egg, larvae, nymph, and adult. They moult their shell after each stage —like a crab. The full life cycle takes 2 years in some species and all stages require blood meals. The tick feeds by embedding its head in the skin of the host, often a deer or other large animal. This process is painless because the tick anesthetizes the area before it begins feeding. The tick may remain attached for days until totally engorged with blood. At this point they drop off and begin the next round of waiting.

Ticks of all stages tend to attach themselves to tall grasses and low bushes along animal trails, allowing themselves to hitch a ride as the animal brushes against the plant. Once

full, they drop off and await the next meal. Ticks can sometimes wait for months or years, perhaps even decades for the right host to come along.

Hold your breath?

Carbon dioxide exhaled by the animal as well as the smell of butyric acid from certain animal skins alert the tick to a potential meal. Instantly activated from its long dormancy — even though it may not have moved in years — the tick leaps. Since ticks lay large numbers of eggs and the babies don't move very far, the unlucky traveller may occasionally activate a veritable horde of voracious ticks.

Fortunately, humans are infrequent hosts because ticks can transmit bacterial and rickettsial diseases such as Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Q fever among others. They can also cause loss to industries dependent upon domestic animals such as cattle and sheep by damaging the hides and decreasing the animals weight gain.

The bite

The typical tick bite causes little

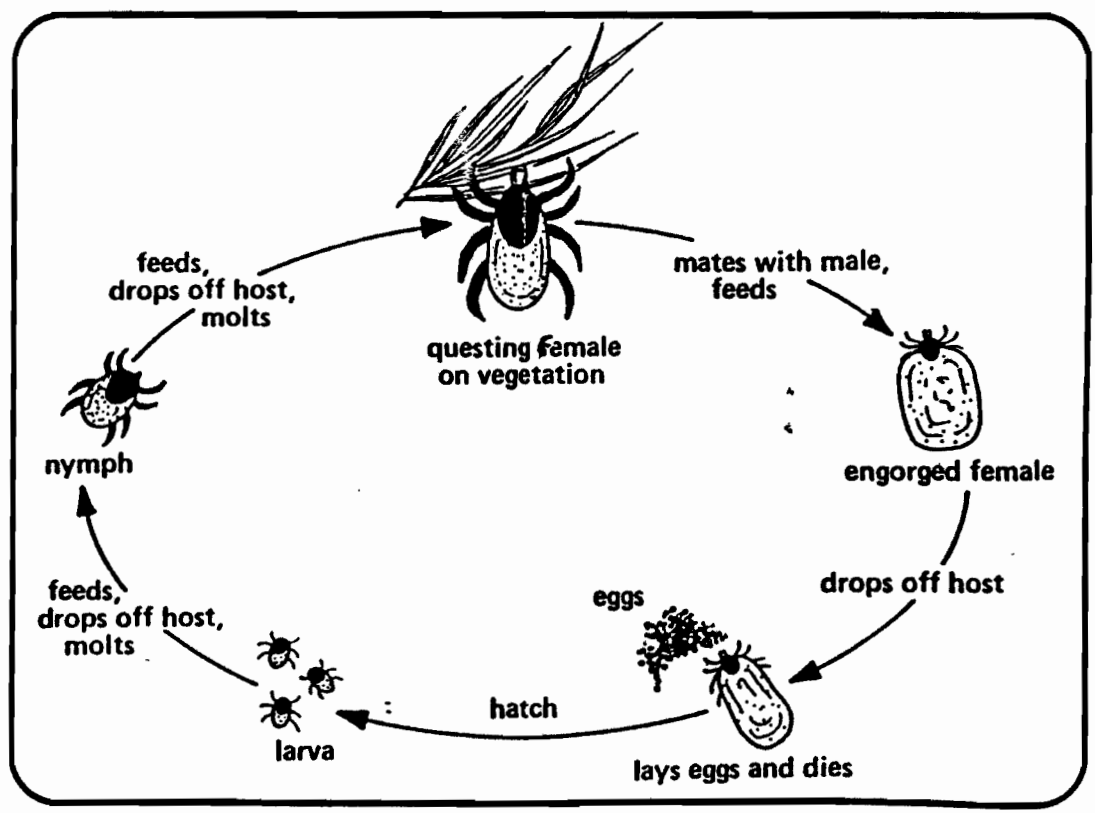
more harm than a slightly raised red mark. If part of the head or other foreign matter is left in the wound a persistent, firm itchy nodule called a granuloma can develop. If this persists it may have to be surgically removed to relieve the itching. Rarely, an allergic reaction causing hives and fever can develop.

Even rarer is the development of paralysis of an arm or a leg which slowly ascends the limb following a prolonged attachment of 5-7 days. Certain ticks secrete a nerve toxin in their saliva. This paralysis resolves after the tick is removed.

Lyme disease spreading

The most common tick-born disease in the U.S. is Lyme disease. The disease effects several body systems. First, in about one in three victims a red papule may develop at the site of the bite. When present, this expands into a ring shaped red lesion with a clear center. The rash is called *erythema chronicum migrans*, — in english — a chronic red rash which moves. Secondary rings sometimes develop

➡ p. 8 for more



(Ticks cont'd)

months later at sites distant from the original bite. The major risk of Lyme disease, however, is involvement of the internal organs with heart, joint, and nervous system. Typical symptoms are headache, malaise, and fatigue. Often there's arthritis-like joint pain and swelling.

Because of the non-specific nature of the symptoms and the fact that the victim may not know he or she was bitten by a tick, the disease can sometimes be hard to diagnose. However, once diagnosed it's simple to treat with either tetracycline, penicillin, or erythromycin providing prompt resolution of symptoms.

Removal must be done carefully

If you find you've picked up an unwanted passenger, remove it with blunt tweezers, or with your fingers protected by a rubber glove, or paper towel. A device called the Tick Nipper© (available at REI) is almost fool-proof. The technique for all of these is the same. Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and pull straight back gently and steadily. This way you're pulling on the nape of its little neck, the best way to get the head out intact. You may need to lift the tick upward and pull parallel to the skin until it's freed. Don't twist or force the tick off as this can leave the head imbedded. Wash the bite thoroughly. Also wash your hands. Don't apply gasoline, alcohol, ether, nail polish or the hot end of a match. These methods don't work and can cause more damage than the tick did.

If your dog or cat picks up a tick, applying a pet-approved tick insecticide to kill the tick makes removal easy. Don't spray your children, however.

Prophylactic treatment with antibiotics after a tick bite is still controversial and currently not recommended. Unless the tick is attached longer than 24 hours the risk of disease transmission is minimal. One study has addressed this issue so far. In it, half of 56 tick-bitten patients received penicillin, half did not. One patient, 3%, developed Lyme disease in the untreated group. One patient (3%) developed penicillin reaction in the treated group. The jury is still out.

On the other hand, all agree that the

longer Lyme disease goes untreated, the harder it is to prevent chronic problems. Blood tests are still unreliable. If you develop a flu-like illness after hiking in a tick infested area make sure your doctor knows.

In the meantime, wear protective clothing when you hike, white or light colored when possible so you can see the darkly colored tick, and tuck your long pants into your socks. Use insect repellents. Repellents containing the insecticide deet don't work as well against ticks — instead use clothing sprays containing permethrin (Dura-non, Permanone). Shower after exposure. Check yourself and your fellow hikers for ticks both during the hike and after. Routinely check your children and pets when they come in from playing in the brush. Pet stores sell a very fine tick/flea comb that works well on our dog. This is one time when picking up hitchhikers is definitely not recommended.

Welcome New Members

We want to welcome the folks listed below who recently joined the Friends. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Steven Apple
Tim Arendel
Carrie & Bill Barton
Paul Davis
Judy Elliot
Lynn & Burt Fieser
Michael Gibbs
Janet Kawakami
Linda King
Rebecca Lee
Susan Levine
Maurizio Mangini
Eric Ostrowski
Roxanna Rapozo
Suzanne & Edwin Ray
Diane St. John

(Bass cont'd)

ductive, it seems that baby crayfish and floating worms are a major part of their food intake. Since some of the pools, like El Cuervo and Talking Rocks, are located downstream of rifles, it is probable that benthic organisms are also eaten.

Walden Pond appears to now have a large population of small and medium sized bass. On 1-9-96 at sunset I caught four bass on a yellow feathered jig in under 15 minutes. To catch this many fish in so short a period of time leads me to infer the presence of a large population of bass. The length/height measurements (25/6.5, 21/6, 27/8, 27/6.5) imply that they are probably small to medium in size.

One of my most interesting observations revolved around a "feeling" I would get as I stood ready to fish before a bass hole. I often "knew intuitively" if I would catch fish or be skunked. Apparently, I was picking up something about conditions effecting bass biting that I was not yet fully aware of. Perhaps it was some combination of sunlight, temperature, or water conditions that make for favorable fishing. For sure, sometimes bass bite wildly, sometimes mildly, other times not at all. The successful fisherman must make use of these hunches and be prepared to switch lures or move to a different pool in search of hungry bass.

If you are a fisherman, please join Dave Abrams and I by releasing all bass not taken for scientific purposes back into their home waters. This may protect the ecological balance of the creek and protect your health against any unknown toxicities.

New Bird List

Our bird list is off the press, updated to 1/1/96, totally revamped and printed on a sturdy card stock. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelop for your free copy to: Bird List c/o Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196.

Rancho Roundup

County Ranger Reneene Mowry

Hold those dates: May 18 and June 2

Mark your calendars now for two major events coming up this spring.

Archaeology Week festivities will be held at the ranch house on May 18. This community-oriented event will include flintknapping demonstrations, archaeological activities for children, docent tours, and a "brown bag lunch" with talks by prominent archaeologists. Also, June 2 has been selected as the date for Park Day '96. We are just beginning to plan for the event, which has the tentative theme "Connections" and will focus on trails and wildlife corridors. Park Day is an opportunity for us to educate the public and gain support for the protection and preservation of the preserve's increasingly threatened animal and plant life. Let us know your ideas for displays, exhibitors, and activities for this yearly event.

Parking fee coming

The San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department has received approval from the LPCP Task Force to charge a parking fee at the east-end staging area. The \$1.00 fee will help offset costs of maintaining the county-owned eastern portion of the preserve and the historic site. Unlike the city, the county does not receive developer fees to generate revenue. Expenses for maintenance, improvements, portable toilet rental, trash disposal, and staffing all come out of the Parks Department's very limited budget. We are installing a self-serve ticket machine and hope to have it operational by March 1. An option for frequent users of the Staging Area would be to purchase a County parking sticker for \$15.00, which is good at all County parks for a one-year period. Senior citizens (62 and over), county volunteers, and members of the LPCP Volunteer Patrol are entitled to a free parking sticker and may pick one up at my office. Other volunteers (hike leaders, tracking team members, etc.) will be issued a parking permit on an as-needed basis.

New schedule for ranch tours

Effective April 1, the SDCAS Ranch House Docents will begin offering ranch house tours every Saturday at 11:00 A.M., rather than the first and third Saturdays, at 11:00 and 12:00. This small but active group is presently planning an excursion to Old Temecula and a train ride to Los Angeles where they will tour the homes of Pio and Andres Pico, two prominent figures in San Diego history. If you are a history buff or are interested in learning more about local history, you are welcome to attend our docent meetings, held on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 A.M., at the ranch house.

Heritage vegetable garden: volunteers welcome

We will soon be breaking ground for a heritage vegetable garden. Live-in park hosts Guy and Aggie Relaford and P.J. Piburn have been busy gathering information for this exciting project.

P.J. found a "recipe" for a deer repellent on the Internet which consists of chili peppers and a commercial product called "Hinder." (If this works, we may be able to remove the cages from our courtyard roses!) P.J. will be using her massive draft horses, "Barney and Clyde," to pull a walking plow, loaned by Bob and Sheila Lofton. If you would like to be here for the plowing or participate in planting or maintaining the garden, give me a call (484-7504). Those who participate will also share in the harvest. We are in need of heritage farm equipment and implements from the 1860 to 1880 time period and will provide a tax donation letter and free veggies to all donors. Financial donations are also welcome.

Xmas thanks

As a final note, I would like to extend a very belated thank you to Jaime Lawrence Mendez for helping setup and decorate the ranch house for the Christmas party and for the beautiful living poinsettias which she and her husband Lee donated for the table centerpieces. Thanks, also, to all the people who stayed on after the party to help with cleanup. You're wonderful!

Mercy Property Acquired

Mike Kelly

Escrow closed on a transfer of about 50 acres from Mercy Hospital to Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This land transfer — in the works for about 4 years — provides a vital connection between Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the Sabre Springs open-space area. This connection ensures that wildlife will continue to pass beneath the I-15 bridge over the canyon. Future plans call for a trail for park users to also pass through the area.

This linkage between two open space parks was the last privately owned land needed to complete a Trans County trail stretching from Torrey Pines beach to Anza Borrego State Park, a true ocean to desert trail that will soon be open to hikers and others.

A special feature of this newly acquired park land will be a memorial oak tree garden. Families of victims of deadly violence will be invited to plant oak trees in memory of their loved ones. The area is already home to a California live oak riparian forest, but has areas disturbed by past construction activities that need to be replanted. The concept for this memorial came from Sam Knott, the father of the late Cara Knott, a young woman brutally murdered on this spot under the I-15 bridge by a Highway Patrolman, Craig Peyer. Since this horrifying crime the Knott family has dedicated itself to promoting the conservation and restoration of endangered Englemann oaks in memory of Cara.

The land transfer was facilitated by the timely and persistent actions of the Miramar Ranch North and Mira Mesa Planning Groups. They arranged for a transfer of density from the Mercy parcel to a parcel in Mira Mesa also owned by Mercy Hospital.

Many Changes Underway in Park

City Ranger Bill Lawrence

Land swap

Change seems to be the theme the last several months. Many projects that have been in the works for years are now being completed. For example, the "Land Trade" was completed in December 1995 almost 10 years after being approved by the voters. The Preserve lost about 150 acres on the western end facing I-5 and gained about 290 acres of prime coastal sage scrub and a pond along the north central border opposite the waterfall. This will be a vital part of our wildlife corridor system going north.

Mercy property transferred

Now the "Mercy Property" east of I-15 has been acquired and will add more than 50 acres to the Preserve. This will preserve a vital wildlife corridor from the Preserve to the Sabre Springs open space park.

Riparian restoration grant

Although much work has already been done on the riparian restoration, the Habitat Conservation Fund grant will begin in March. We are waiting (only on paper) for notice to proceed from the state. When that happens we can purchase the equipment and materials necessary to complete the project. The Friends have now cleared exotics from significant sections of the creek and these new funds are meant to compliment their fine work. In fact, volunteers are expected to take the lead — envisioned in the grant — in finishing the stream restoration projects.

New ranger coming

A new park ranger position has been approved and we are waiting funding from the Land Trade (\$1.9 million). The interest on this newly capitalized fund will finance the new position. Keep your fingers crossed!

Volunteer patrol May 19 celebration

The Volunteer Patrol will celebrate its fifth year of service on May 19. A picnic party is planned with barbecue, music, dancing, hay rides, games, prizes, and awards. The Citizens Advisory Committee (C.A.C.) is sponsoring the event and, if you would like to help out, please call Bill Lawrence at 538-2480.

CPR and First Aid recertification

Patrol members who need to recertify CPR and First Aid can take the course March 12 and 13, 6 – 10 p.m. Please sign up with Bill at 538-2480. No charge.

Wish List Items

The following are some items that would be very useful in our restoration work in the Preserve. All would be tax-deductible under the Friends' 501(c) 3 non-profit status.

PC or Mac computer systems/parts.

GPS/GIS equipment and software.

Soil and water testing equipment

Heritage farm equipment for display at the Ranch

Self propelling mower for native grass restoration.

Horse drawn mowing, plowing equipment for native grass and tree planting.

Front end loader for erosion and siltation repair work.

Fund Donors

Since our last newsletter the following members generously added to our annual Fund Appeal giving us a final total of \$2,920, including five \$250.00 donations that were matched by a long-time generous supporter.

Norman Anderson

Lynne & Larry Carleton

Dale Clark

Elisa Crowder Gittings

Robert & Sharon Greenamyre

Triska & Jerry Seeger

Jeanne & Tom White

Volunteer Accomplishments and Opportunities

Mike Kelly

Stream Restoration Part Deux

Braving the rain (which eventually cleared up), sixteen volunteers turned out Super Bowl Sunday to continue the restoration of a section of Peñasquitos Creek. The volunteers were again split between the San Diego County Archaeology Society (SDCAS) and the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. About 22 loads of palm fronds and other organic debris were hauled away to a mulch pile in another part of the Preserve. This is in addition to the more than 60 loads hauled away in earlier sessions.

The stream has now been cleared of fallen trees for a long stretch. This and the removal of a number of large palms should help prevent flooding that threatened important archaeological sites and historic buildings.

A large number of Canary Island Palms were salvaged and relocated. In addition, a number of diseased Palms have been removed. These palms were carrying a fungus common to palms that is easily carried from tree to tree. Removing these seems to have been in time to save the historic palms that ring the adobe ranch courtyard.

Volunteers participating from the SDCAS were Fred Buchanan, Jim Royal, Jerry Miller, Jennifer and Paul Guerrazzi, and Robert Weeks.

From the friends: Mike Kelly, Cathy Buco, Holly Boessow, Robert Hutzel, Pam Van Atta, Bruce Dougmore, Andrea Comptom, Bobby Comptom. Ranger Reneene Mowry and County volunteer Guy Relaford also helped out. Don Albright helped out with extensive chain saw work prior to the work session.

To date about 480 hours have been put in by almost 70 different volunteers from the Friends, the SDCAS, the Americorp as well as help from several probation crews.

More work needs to be done in the area, both in removing additional palm debris, but also in planting native trees and understory plants. The plan for revegetation is to restore the stream area to the way it was in the 1860s-70s, be-

fore the wholesale disturbances took place. This means making cottonwoods an important part of the restoration. A recently unearthed article on this period described a cottonwood/willow riparian area next to the ranch. Cottonwoods are a species missing from most of the Preserve — except for a few senile specimens at the west end — due to cattle grazing of young ones, wood cutting of mature specimens and alteration of the flood dynamic of the creek system. This work will have to wait for the end of the rainy season. Stay tuned!

Upcoming Opportunities

Because the rainy season makes planning ahead a problem, most volunteer projects are organized with just a few days notice. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489 to put your name on the call list for projects. Upcoming ones:

Endangered Plant Surveys:

March through July are prime months for endangered plant surveys.

Stream Surveys will be a focus in the spring, especially for Benthic organisms.

Invasive exotic plant removal is busiest in the spring.

Wildlife surveys: intensive training programs are listed in our activities schedule starting on page 1.

Water Quality Testing

Thanks to Tarja Jacobsen and Mike Kelly for conducting water quality tests at the west and east ends of the Preserve respectively.

Wildlife Weekend and Tracking

Rick Botta, Erik and Lani Noreke, Susan Potts, Chris Bader, John Fisher, Barry Martin, and Lee Kirchhevel combined their volunteer efforts to make the Tracking, Nature and Wilder-

ness Survival training weekend a big success.

Endangered Plant Surveys

Thanks to Carrie Barton, Ranger Reneene Mowry, Holly Boessow, Mike Kelly, Brian Swanson, Trinity Gabriel, Chris Whitten for removing a smorgasbord of invasive exotic plants from un

Weed Wacking Warriors

Thanks to Robb Hutzel, Carrie Barton, Holly Boessow, Liz Rozwki and Mike Kelly for removing a smorgasbord of invasive exotic plants from under the I-15 bridge next to the newly acquired Mercy property (see article this issue). The job was completed in one outstanding session!

Thanks also to Cindy Burrascano and Mel Howe who pitched in with Mike Kelly on other weed removal projects.



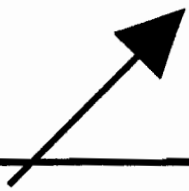


Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
619-484-3219

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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.

Friends' Directory

Officers

- President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
- Vice-President: Chris Bader 593-1381
- Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
- Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Trinity Gabriel, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke., Brian Swanson,

Walks and Committees Leaders

- Bird Walks & Gnatcatcher Survey: Brian Swanson 695-2209
- Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937
- Hike Committee: Trinity Gabriel 672-0229
- Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen 452-7091
- Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen
- Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958
- Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Carla Scott, Vickie Ausen
- Tracking: Chris Bader
- Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly
- Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly & Tarja Jacobsen
- Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007), Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen, Lee Kirchhevel, Lindsey Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke,

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

- Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10
- Family \$15 Sponsor \$25 Patron \$100
- Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
- Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture 3/96
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.

Faces of our Neighbors:

Citizen participation in Carnivore Habitat Monitoring



Friday March 1 7 p.m.

At Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos

(Ranch house in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve between Mira Mesa & Rancho Peñasquitos, map on reverse)

Talk & Slide Show of North American Carnivores with:

**Susan Morse, tracker, wildlife photographer
& habitat specialist**

- Do mountain lions, bobcats, and coyotes have a future in San Diego's open space park system?
- Can people co-exist with large carnivores as neighbors?
- How can San Diegans help protect wildlife and habitat?
- Learn how to become part of a volunteer effort to protect wildlife habitat through field research, conservation education and planning.
- Why community-based volunteers will be vital to the success of San Diego's Multiple-Species Conservation Program.
- Why focus on carnivores? How do they act as an "umbrella" species?

**Learn how volunteers can help protect
San Diego's wildlife**



Sponsored by: The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve

(See reverse side for more information or call 566-6489)

Community-based wildlife habitat protection through field research, conservation education & planning

The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve believe that whatever future wildlife — especially larger mammals such as mountain lion, bobcat, coyote and mule deer — have in San Diego will depend to a large extent on community-based volunteer efforts.

To this end we are participating in shaping the Multiple Species Conservation Plan, an ambitious plan to create new open-space parks and link them up to existing ones such as Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The purpose of this plan is to protect many endangered and sensitive species of plants and animals, while at the same time providing San Diegans a place for nature recreation. To help, our group has been conducting wildlife surveys for a number of years and training volunteers in observing and tracking wildlife.

Deepen and broaden the program

We now feel it's time to become more scientific about our surveys and at the same time to reach out and involve many other conservation oriented groups and individuals. The new system of inter-connected parks will stretch throughout the county and will require the active participation of hundreds of volunteers not only to be established — 1/2 the battle — but to achieve its goal of truly preserving our wildlife.

To accomplish this goal we invited Susan Morse, the executive director of *Keeping Track*®, a Vermont based nonprofit organization dedicated to wildlife habitat protection through field research, conservation education and planning to present her program. Her group is helping to set up similar groups in different

parts of the U.S. to form a network of groups dedicated to these goals.

Keeping Track's® program

1. Identifying and monitoring important wildlife habitat and travel corridors. Local volunteers are trained in track and sign survey techniques. Accumulated data are then used to aid landowners and planners in making informed decisions about wildlife habitat protection.
2. Educating the public about the importance of wildlife habitat conservation through field workshops, track and sign survey training and school and community presentations.
3. Encouraging cooperation among conservation and natural resource interest groups with the goal of unifying the efforts of all who are interested in wildlife.

Keeping Track® wants to empower local and regional planners with an effective structure for discovering, monitoring and conserving our wildlife neighbors and their necessary habitat. **Keeping Track**® offers in-depth track and sign survey workshops at their outdoor research center in Jericho, Vermont, just as the Friends do here in San Diego.

These workshops introduce participants to survey methodologies which must be carefully and consistently practiced so that accumulated data can be both credible and useful as a planning tool. We recommend that local conservation and/or planning organizations administer the surveys, utilizing local adult volunteers.

Year-to-year survey data importantly documents:

- The presence or absence of sensitive, endangered, or other **target species**;

- Repeated uses of specific habitats which could lead to the identification and conservation of critical habitat areas and/or travel corridors;

- Positive or negative changes in the status of wildlife populations inhabiting an area, and corresponding changes in habitat size and quality;

- The need for both immediate and long term **conservation planning**.

Organizations as well as individuals are encouraged to here Susan Morse discuss this exciting program. If you need more information or can't make this meeting but are interested in the program, call Mike Kelly at 566-6489.

Directions to meeting place: Take I-15 to the Mercy Road Exit. Go west on Mercy Road to its intersection with Black Mountain Road. Ignore the sign and entrance for Peñasquitos Preserve opposite this intersection. Instead, go right on Black Mountain Road and up the hill to Truman Street. Make a U-turn and come back down the hill to the **Canyonside Park/Adobe Ranch entrance**. Take a right and proceed past the ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot on the left. Park and walk up to the adobe ranch.



Mountain Lion track and scat (not to scale)



Canyon News

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

May/June 1996
Volume 10 No. 3

Calendar

Late Flower Show Debuts

Sparse rainfall denied us the pleasure of the type of spectacular wildflower show we saw in the last two years. Many annuals didn't come up in significant numbers, preferring to wait for next winter and the possibility of more rain. However, many of our perennial flowers and shrubs are putting on a good show. Flowers you can see on a walk in coming weeks include Fuschia flowering gooseberry, Mexican elderberry, monkey flower, blue dicks, California everlasting, California poppies, Deadly nightshade, Bladderpod, Checkerbloom, Deerweed, Four o'clocks, Adolphia californica, Black mustard, Encelia californica, Goldenstars, Mesa mint, Button celery, Toothed downingia, Popcorn flower, Golden yarrow, Morning glory and others. In addition, we have a good crop of lemonadeberries on the bushes.

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed to help with conservation or other activities. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing animal surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs, to name a few.

MAY

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. These tours are led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. Visitors will see an historic Mexican era rancho with its three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Dream Helper Spirit Guide Hike

Saturday, May 4, 8 - 9:30 p.m. Learn about Native American views of nature and animals. Find your power animal or spirit guide. Includes drumming, singing, and story-telling. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Firemaking Workshop

Sunday, May 5, 8 - noon. Sponsored by the Friends' Tracking Team, this workshop will focus on different methods of making fire with friction. There is a charge of \$15 for this workshop. High school and older. Held at Adobe Ranch in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, May 5, 8 - 11 a.m. This is a tracking walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A prerequisite is having taken the Friends' beginning tracking course. Two intermediate tracking walks are required for beginning class graduates who want to take the advanced course. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call **Erick Noreke at 565-4586** for directions and information.

Geology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa

Sunday, May 5, 9 a.m. - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Visit an unusual fossil. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Carmel Mountain (8A) Walk

Sunday, May 5, 3 p.m. Visit one of the most diverse and spectacular natural settings in San Diego with the Carmel Mountain Conservancy. Meet at Shell Gasoline Station in Carmel Valley, 1 block east of I-5 on the north side of Carmel Valley Road. You need to be in the far left lane to make the turn!

➡ next page for more

Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	1
Volunteers	4
Dream Helper Spirit Guide	5
Welcome New Members	7
Letter to Editor	7
Patrolling the Mercy Extension	8
Volunteer Patrol 5th Anniversary Celebration	8
Friends' Directory	10

Flawed MSCP Advances

Mike Kelly, president

May 23, the San Diego City Council voted to begin the final phase of planning for the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP). The guidelines discussed and passed by the Council at this meeting are seriously flawed, however, a point we'll return to.

The plan represents an attempt by the City and a number of other jurisdictions in the County to respond to implementation of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in San Diego. Several local plant and animal species have been listed as Endangered or Threatened or candidates for these statuses under the ESA. The most not-

➡ p. 4 for more



They are a new species of humans who walk around on all fours. Their scientific name is Barry's Trackell!

(Calendar cont'd)

Stream Restoration Work Party

Sunday, May 12, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to help finish the restoration of the banks of Peñasquitos Creek near the historic Adobe Ranch House. Pickup trucks are also needed. No tools or experience is needed. The ranch house is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Cosponsored by the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the San Diego County Archaeological Society. Call Mike at 566-6489 for more details. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, May 18, 1 - 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

New Moon Night Walking

Saturday, May 18, 8 - 9:30 p.m. Learn to develop night vision and peripheral attention. Explore deep states of attunement to nature as we celebrate the transition to spring. Wear baseball cap to be used in night vision exercise. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Survival Hunting Workshop

Sunday, May 19, 8 - noon. Sponsored by the Friends' Tracking Team, this workshop will focus on techniques and strategies for procurement of food in a survival situation. Camouflaging, reading the landscape and hunting tools will be covered. There is a charge of \$15 for this workshop. High school and older. Held at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, May 19, 9 - 10:30 a.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Volunteer Patrol 5th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, May 19, 1:30 - 8 p.m.

Past and present members of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Volunteer Patrol are invited to enjoy free food, refreshments, and entertainment at the Ranch Peñasquitos Equestrian Center off Black Mountain Road. Celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the Patrol! Call Ranger Bill Lawrence at 538-2480 for details.

Owl and Bedding Bird Walk Sunday, May 19, 6-8 p.m., (1-1/2 hours). Summer evenings are a good time to hear and see owls, bats and bedding birds. Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experience. Bring binoculars and flashlight. Space is limited, so RSVP to Brian Swanson at 695-2209 to reserve a space and to obtain directions.

Medicinal Plant Walk

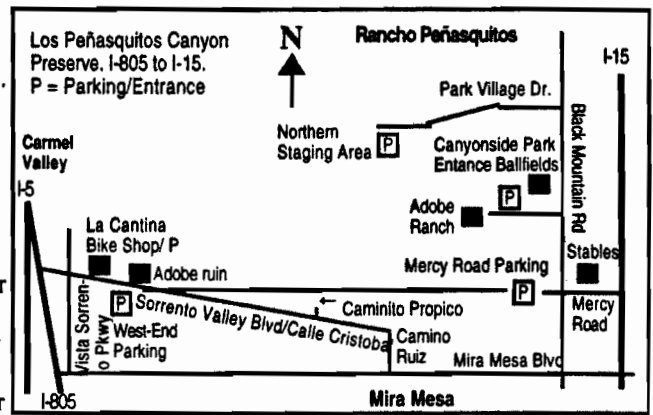
Sunday, May 25, 6 - 7:30 p.m. Learn about plants our Indian and settler ancestors (and people today) used for medicinal purposes. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

JUNE**Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour**

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. These tours are led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. Visitors will see an historic Mexican era rancho with its three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Moon Goddess Hike

Saturday, June 1, 8 - 9:30 p.m. A hike for those who seek to "run with the wolves." Includes moon and goddess nature meditations. Led by Will Bowen, Ph.D. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

**Intermediate Tracking Walk**

This walk will not take place due to the Annual Park Day celebration. It will resume the first Sunday in July, when the location will shift to the Ranch House at the east end of the Preserve (for shade!).

Connections . . . Trails to Special Places: Annual Park Day

Sunday, June 2, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sponsored by the Peñasquitos Canyon Task Force and the Citizens Advisory Committee. A full day of crafts, exhibits, Native American entertainment and other activities. Held at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See flyer with this newsletter.

Old Stage Coach/Sabre Springs Walk

Sat., June 8, 9 a.m. We'll walk part of the historic Butterfield Stage Coach route, visit the Mercy property, a new part of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, walk the new Sabre Springs trail system and more. Several hills and stream crossings involved, about 2-3 mile roundtrip. Led by Naturalist Mike Kelly. Meet on Sabre Springs Parkway, 1 block south of its intersection with Poway Road, 1 block east of I-15.

Intermediate Tracking Workshop

Sunday, June 9, 8 - 5 p.m. Sponsored by the Friends' Tracking Team, this all-day workshop will focus on the development of tracking and awareness skills. A prerequisite for this class is to have completed the beginning class. There is a charge of \$25 for this workshop. High school and older. Held at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

(Calendar cont'd)**Geology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa**

Sunday, June 9, 9 a.m. - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Visit an unusual fossil. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Bird Walk at Ranch House

Sunday, June 9, 5 - 7 p.m. Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experience. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, June 15, 1 - 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

New Moon Night Walking

Saturday, June 15, 8 - 9:30 p.m. Learn to develop night vision and peripheral attention. Explore deep states of attunement to nature as we celebrate the transition to spring. Wear baseball cap to be used in night vision exercise. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Summer Solstice Dawn(!) and Night Walks

Thursday, June 20, 5:30 - 7 a.m. and again at 8 - 9:30 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen, PhD, to greet the rising and setting suns of the summer solstice. Learn about the importance of solstice rites in ancient cultures. Meet in parking lot by La Cantina bike shop on north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Nature Walk from Northern Staging Area

Saturday, June 22, 8 - 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, June 23, 9 - 10:30 a.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Awareness/Philosophy Workshop

Sunday, June 30, 8 - noon. Sponsored by the Friends' Tracking Team, this workshop will focus on awareness exercises, including reading concentric rings and examination of the philosophy of living in harmony with the earth High school and older. There is a charge of \$15 for this workshop. Held at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Full Moon Hike: Native American Traditions

Sunday, June 30, 8 - 9:30 p.m. Learn about the interconnection of the spiritual and ecological in Native American tradition. Includes drumming, singing, and story-telling. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

DIRECTIONS**Ranch House Walks/Tours**

The ranch house is located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain, up hill, U-turn at Truman Street, back down the hill and right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot and walk up path to the ranch. house. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 St. 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 south side of Cristobal. Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Sorrento Valley/ Cantina Bike Shop

Cantina Mountain Bike Shop is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

Located in Mira Mesa. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive

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. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

Located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

(MSCP cont'd)

able of these species is the California gnatcatcher. Under the law, the presence of these species has made it more difficult for developers and others to build their developments.

Faced with the prospect of slower development, City officials and developers decided to explore an option under the ESA that allows for habitat wide conservation planning for endangered species and for an easier permitting or "take" process for property owners who have such species present.

State law also permits such habitat planning under the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) process.

The concept is simple on paper. Conserve large blocks of habitat in a system of core preserves linked by wildlife corridors and you can protect many species at one time and prevent extinctions. Such a system also becomes a system of parks for passive recreation by the public. Once such a system is set up, developers and other landowners are allowed to develop land outside such a preserve through a stream lined process that provides them certainty as to where they can and can't develop their projects.

Five years ago, a number of Cities, the County, State Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, environmental groups, utilities and developers formed a working group to plan such a habitat plan. Funded by the City of San Diego's Clean Water Program, Ogden Environmental, Inc., guided by the working group, developed the Multiple Species Conservation Program. Using state-of-the-art knowledge and techniques they did a good job of developing a habitat system that would protect many dozens of species of plants and animals and whole habitats.

Unfortunately, about a year ago, the developers and their friends on the San Diego City Council, emboldened by the Republic Congress's attack on the environment, tried to scale the whole program back. Mayor Susan Golding intervened and managed to salvage the concept of doing a broader program and pledged to take the lead in bringing back a workable plan for a preserve system. Her plan eventually en-

➡ p. 9 for more

Volunteer Accomplishments and Opportunities

Mike Kelly

Vernal Pool Surveys

Thanks to Mel Howe, Holly Boessow, Cindy Burrascano and Mike Kelly for surveying existing and potential pools. For existing pools the volunteers checked on the status of endangered plants such as the Mesa mint and San Diego Button celery. In several areas they explored for and found new pools. Such information may help save them in the future.

Dudleya brevifolia surveys

Thanks to Holly Boessow and Mike Kelly for their survey efforts for this tiny endangered plant.

San Diego Thorn mint survey

Mel Howe and Mike Kelly began this annual survey with the populations near the waterfall. This is the fourth year of the survey and revealed an astounding "crash" of this plant, from thousands of specimens in previous years to about 16 plants this year. We believe this is due to a normal "boom-bust" cycle for some annual plants such as this one. The deficit of rain this winter is probably the biggest factor in this small showing.

Arroyo toad survey

Thanks to herpetologist Joe Copp, Will Bowen and Mike Kelly for their survey for this rare and elusive anuran.

Exotic Weed Removal

With the advent of spring the Friends volunteers went into high gear against a variety of weeds, including Artichoke thistle, Fennel, Italian thistle, Tocalote, Pampas grass, palms, and others. Volunteers included Cindy Burrascano, Holly Boessow, Robb Hutsel, Mel Howe, Mike Kelly, Doug Fenske, Paul Micheletti, the three members of the Nelson family, Newton Quan, Trinity Gabriele, and Jacob Gould

Interpretive and Educational Programs.

Thanks to our many hike leaders and tracking team members who carry on the ongoing hikes and tracking workshops.

Upcoming Opportunities

Call Mike at 566-6489 to volunteer for any of the following:

Rancho Peñasquitos Spring Fiesta Booth.

Sunday, May 5, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Help is needed to staff a table with information on the Preserve and the new Black Mtn. Open Space Park. We will have giant aerials, maps and flyers on hand. One to two hour shifts.

Stream Restoration Work Party

Sunday, May 12, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Volunteers are needed to help finish the restoration of the banks of Peñasquitos Creek near the historic Adobe Ranch House. Pickup trucks are also needed. No tools or experience is needed. The ranch house is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. Cosponsored by the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and the San Diego County Archaeological Society. Call Mike at 566-6489 for more details.

Endangered Plant Surveys:

Thorn mint, Mesa mint, coyote thistle, Cleveland's Goldenstar surveys currently underway. Monardella survey begins in May.

Turtle restoration will be a focus of our stream survey in the early summer.

Invasive exotic plant removal is still busy.

Wildlife surveys: intensive training programs are listed in our activities schedule starting on page 1.

Dream Helper Spirit Guide

by Will Bowen, PhD

Introduction

Native Americans of North America were highly attuned to nature, probably much more than the best of us. But they were also very interested in the spirit world. For them, the natural world and the spiritual world were interconnected. They found the source of their spiritualness in nature.

Consequently, indigenous spiritual traditions often had an ecological orientation. Since nature was the divine web of life and your source of inspiration, you took care of it and treated it with respect.

Conversely, we grew up learning that the spiritual was separate from the natural. The divine was "up there" and we and the rest of nature were down here — separate. The divine was not in us and we could not become it. And we learned that all of life was not equal. Man was more equal. We were the pinnacle of creation. Even so we were "bad," because we all too often we reverted back to an animal nature.

Our great miracle images were about man conquering or having power over nature. Man was to lord it over the beasts. He parted the Red Sea and walked on water. We were told to pluck out the tree that didn't bear fruit and were punished by being forced to wander in the wilderness (instead of getting to live in cities).

Native American mythic images, on the other hand, are more about transforming into nature or acquiring power by becoming one with nature. Thus you seek to become a bear or an eagle or to have a vision of relatedness or interconnectedness with all of life.

It looks like some aspects of our religious-philosophic background may have contributed to our tendency for a greedy destruction of the natural world in order to serve man. Nature is just not as important as man. Man is what is important; not the web of life. This is why the spiritual beliefs and practices of native peoples are of interest. Just what can we learn from primitive views which interwove religion and ecology? This is called the study of "ecologies of the heart." It may be

possible that if we can see the world through the eyes of the primitives we might just take better care of it.

I'll present one way to do that. I offer here a self-guided nature hike where one can attempt to experience the spiritual and natural hand in hand. With it one can go on a "vision quest."

The spirit world

Native peoples saw nature symbolically. That isn't just a coyote howling out there, but a symbolic being. That is why one Kumeyaay story-teller told me, "If coyote isn't in it, it isn't really a good story."

Ritual, prayer, song, dreaming, visions, and non-ordinary states of consciousness were used to conjure, meet, summon or invoke the supernatural, symbolic, or sacred aspect of the natural world. This realm spoke through dream helpers or spirit guides.

The dream helper or spirit guide is very much like what we call a guardian angel or a guide. The guide serves as an inner resource or a reminder of potentialities or latent powers. For example, a young boy on a recent night hike told me the kids were always picking on him in school. I told him he should put a picture of a bear in his locker. He could call on the bear's powers and fight back. Incidentally, as we were walking back that same boy told me he could now feel the "spirit in nature all around him." If he continues to have that feeling . . . do you think he will grow up with a destructive or nonchalant attitude toward nature?

Some of the typical spirit guides or dream helpers that California Indians called upon included the falcon for help with gambling, the otter to make you a good swimmer, the bear for strength, the hummingbird for agility, the rattlesnake or black widow for witchcraft, and the skunk for invisibility.

Although you are only supposed to tell close friends, I'll reveal that my current spirit helper is River Otter. I chose the otter because, besides conferring swimming ability, it represents playfulness, having fun — something I needed. Originally my guide was the Turkey Vulture, which came to me as

an insight as I was leaving the Wild Animal Park. There was a dead skunk in the road. Up in the sky a turkey vulture was hungrily circling. The skunk was not a problem to the turkey vulture. It was an appetizing meal. As you can see, the turkey vulture represents relishing your problems — turning problems into opportunities.

The purpose of this article is to give the reader a way to find his own spirit guide through a waking vision. This method is safe and promises benefit. It can confer a heightened appreciation of the natural world and help you experience how spirituality and ecology can be interwoven.

The sagebrush blessing

A good way to begin your vision quest for a spirit guide or power animal is with a ritual cleansing or purification with white sage (*Salvia apiana*) or sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*). You can get a smudge stick of it at an Indian powwow or in a New Age book store. You light the stick and brush the smoke over your body with a turkey feather. You can recite a prayer while you are doing it such as: "May this sacred smoke cleanse and purify me. May I be prepared to meet my guide. Ah-ho!"

Koh divination: the cedar knowledge

Intuition was extremely important to native peoples as a way of knowing. They did not have the scientific base of knowledge that we can draw upon in making decisions. This is why guessing games such as "Peon" were so important. Good guessers survive more often. The Navajo way of guessing or divining the future is called "Koh." You use some small leaves of cedar or spruce. You toss the leaves and read their pattern. You may see images that will tell you about what's to come in the future on your vision hike. Once before a hike we threw the Koh and saw a flock of geese in the leaf pattern. Geese teach us about flying in formation, sharing leadership roles, and helping our brothers who fall by the wayside.

➡ next page for more

(Dream Helper cont'd)**Water purification**

Water was thought to have healing and cleansing power which purified and strengthened. You can dip your hand in the creek water to further purify and strengthen yourself to be ready for your encounter with the spirit guide.

Local Indians frequently would take their children out in the middle of the night in the dead winter for an icy dip in the creek. They thought that it would strengthen a child's spirit. Night dips were also used as a way to prepare for a vision. I tested the value of icy dips by going for a swim in the ocean every evening this winter, no matter how cold. This was the first winter that I did not get sick once!

The four directions

Having a good feeling for direction and orientation is an important skill for scouting, hunting, tracking, and finding your way home. One of the most important rituals for Plains Indians involved calling the blessings of the Four Directions. Each direction has a symbolic animal and a type of intelligence. You try to "feel" the particular quality of the direction. This exercise will help you get your bearings for your power quest. You say, "I call upon the energy of the . . ."

EAST: representing the dawn and new beginnings, which is guarded by the golden eagle. I awaken my farsightedness and rational thought.

SOUTH: representing noon, which is guarded by the green field mouse. I awaken my wonder, humor, child-like innocence, playfulness, my sexual and physical self, my self trust and ability to learn.

WEST: representing sunset and completion, which is guarded by the black bear. I awaken my introspection, emotions, and responsible side.

NORTH: representing midnight, which is guarded by the white buffalo. I awaken my wisdom, understanding, and spiritual insight.

EARTH: representing the ground, rootedness, and the nourishment of the mother.

SKY representing the spirit, direction, purpose and the guidance of the father.

Datura invocation

The Indians of California had sever-

al methods to help them get into an altered state of consciousness needed to meet a guide. They included swallowing ants, fasting, prayer, song, cold night dips in the creek, and imbuing *Datura* (*Datura meteloides*). Since *Datura* is extremely dangerous or fatal if eaten in improper dosages, the safe way is to smell the plant's large white funnel form flower or simply touch a leaf. The odor is very fragrant. After you inhale the fragrance say, "Tolva-ache, I call upon you to help me meet my power animal. I want you to give me something to help me." Before you leave you should sprinkle a gift of a little tobacco near the plant as a gift, saying, "I put this tobacco here for you because you give your power to me, now we are friends."

Power animals

At this point we review the animals, birds, reptiles, and insects and their symbolic significance.

ANIMALS

MOUNTAIN LION: Power, leadership, and strength born of solitude and introspective soul searching.

BOBCAT: Independence, self reliance, walking your own path.

DEER: Heightened sensitivity, adaptability, acute awareness.

COYOTE: The Trickster, to laugh at ones self; to see your blind spots and folly.

RACCOON: Curiosity, no stone left unturned.

BIRDS

GOLDEN EAGLE: Connection to spirit; spiritual vision.

HAWK: Passion, desire.

HUMMINGBIRD: Appreciation for life, love of life.

OWL: The dark side changed to good; problems changed to opportunities.

CROW: Value of council, multiple perspectives.

REPTILES

SNAKE: Shed the skin of the past.

LIZARD: If the past has got you by the tail, let it go.

TURTLE: Connection to mother earth.

TOAD: Poison transformed to medicine, weakness to virtue.

FROG: Cleansing the emotions.

Insects

BEE: Give and get the best from peo-

ple

DRAGONFLY: Agility

BUTTERFLY: Transformation and fly to new home.

MOSQUITO: Distractions do not bother you.

SPIDER: Web of life, ecology, interaction.

A song to please wakan tanka

The next step is a song to call the Great Spirit Wakan Tanka (called 'Emaay 'Ehaa by the Kumeyaay). A good one goes:

WAKAN TANKA AH JAY WAN NA YOH
WAKAN TANKA AH JAY WAN NA YOH
WAKAN TANKA AH JAY WAN NA YOH-
HEY O NA HEY NEY OH WAYAAH DA
YAH TI KI HAY TI YAAAA NA
EW GU BU CHEE BEE KA YA YA

Then a prayer:

"Oh, great Wakan Tanka grant me a vision so I may see my power animal."

The vision

When the time is right you will have a vision. Your power animal will stand before you and slap yell, saying, "Hello, son. I will be your guide — I will help you when you need me. I'll help you get well. Use me."

You in turn must promise to never hunt or hurt your power animal.

The name

After your power animal has revealed himself to you, you should choose a secret Indian name. You take the name of the animal and add a descriptive adjective, as in White Eagle or Red Hawk. Only reveal your secret name to close personal friends.

The talisman

Your power animal guide will lead you to find a talisman. He'll say, "I'll give you this." A talisman is a symbolic object such as a feather, rock, oak gall, piece of wood, or horse hair. You can make a necklace out of it or wear it in a pouch. It's the physical counterpart to the power animal. It stands for him. Native Americans would spend many hours stroking their talisman or power object for comfort, well-being, and support.

Your song

Your guide will teach you a song. It just comes to you with words and a melody. You can sing the song when

➡ next page for more

(Dream Helper cont'd)

you want to feel the animal more or call him. River Otter taught me to sing a song to call him. It goes,

TU NA HA LA WE TA
HI YE WU KA NA
WE TA PUKULU NA

Mountain Lion says I should sing the following song when I need power and leadership skills,

NOCI NOCI HATIMA NA
WI WAOHOK GONLONI
MINIMON LEO NEY NOCI
TAHAN MAIYA WE YONINA

My brother the Bear says sing his song for strength and to harness the power of dreams,

HUNAJ AWI
TAWA PU PA NA
HIAN NA MUN
MUN UMSU NA

Your dance

Your power animal may also teach you a dance — a certain way of moving, perhaps imitating that animal's natural movements which can also be used to bring on the state of consciousness associated with his energy.

Calling your power animal

To call your power animal you pray by saying something like,

"Otter, where are you. I need you now. Give me well being. Grant me happiness. Help me to be more playful and have fun. I don't want to take life so seriously. Otter, I see you all the time. Your always on my mind. Help me to have a good life."

You then sing your song and dance your dance.

Pollen blessing

To end your power animal ritual a blessing with cattail (*Typha latifolia*) pollen is appropriate. This is a very high and fine gold colored pollen dust collected from the top of the spike in the spring. You usually carry the pollen powder in a little leather pouch. Put your finger tip in the touch to get a little dust. Touch it to your forehead, each palm, your chest, and your shoe tops. Say,

"May my moccasins lead me down the right path. May I walk the path of heart. May I be lead to what I am looking for."

Then you just get out of the way and follow where your feet lead you.

Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following folks who recently joined the Friends. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Eric Block
Donn Bree
Ralph Carolin
Marie-Anne Decamp
James du Bois
Michael Cather
Kevin Contreras
Richard Falcon
Ellen Feeney
Billie Irene Fuller
Terry Goge
Katherine Goodman
Terry Hayes
Dorothy Jones
Michael Karsh
Tom Komin

H. William Kuni
Kip Kruger
Byron F. Lindsley, Jr.
Andrea Morin
Alison Rolfe
Joy Rutherford
Kelly and Al Sakoi
David Shoemaker
Ginny Silhanek
Ronald and Teresa Spruill
David and Anna Stanton
Carren Stika
Tom Family
Hugh & Millie Van Doren
Terry & Jean Walech
Weidling Family

Letter to the Editor

Re: Riding in Canyon (Bass Article)

March 9, 1996

Editor, Canyon News:

I wish to call your attention to an error in an otherwise excellent article by Will Bowen, "Large Mouth Bass Survey" (Canyon News, Vol. 10, #2, p.5) which reads, "John Northrop, a horseman who has been riding in the canyon for over 40 years, says . . ." I haven't! In fact, nobody has because the canyon was a private cattle ranch right up until 1972 when Genstar, Inc., donated the land to the City of San Diego as open space in return for building rights on the surrounding mesa tops. Before that, the only people who rode there were the cowboys employed by the ranchers. All the access roads and paths were closed by locked gates and the ranch was patrolled. In fact, one of the patrollers was Leo Wilson, who later became the Chairman of the Friends circa 1986.

I have been riding in Peñasquitos Canyon for many years, and look forward to many more, but please, correct the "more than 40 years."

Sincerely yours,

John Northrop, Charter Member



On Patrol / As Seen from the Saddle

Patrolling the 'Mercy' Extension

Flave Pisciotta

The first weekend in April Alex and I patrolled the new portion of the preserve that is east of I-15. This is about a 2-mile stretch that runs from the eastern edge of the I-15 bridge over Peñasquitos Canyon and follows the canyon as it runs east through Sabre Springs to the Poway City line and the Poway open space trail system.

This connection was made possible with the acquisition of the Mercy property, about 50 acres of stream bottom running about 1/4 of a mile from I-15 to the east. It joins the new Sabre Springs open space of several hundred acres. The western portion of this open space, from Springbrook Road west was deeded over to the City last year as part of Pardee's development agreement for Sabre Springs. The eastern portion, from Springbrook Road east to Springhurst Road, is due to be deeded over to the City by Pardee — as part of the same development agreement — this year.

It's very exciting that this portion of the Mercy property and the area around Walden Pond have been recently acquired by the Preserve.

We met Ranger Bill at the adobe, and followed him with our horse trailer east on Mercy Road. We then doubled back and entered a side road within sight of I-15 and Poway Road. We saddled up, and set out to explore the new territory.

We started down the access road, which was very rocky and seriously eroded, to the creek, just east of the I-15 underpass. We then crossed the creek, and rode up the road about a hundred yards where we joined an old trail heading east. At this point the footing for the horses was much improved. This trail is part of the old Poway spur off the Butterfield Stage Coach route. The remains of rock walls and bridges are still evident. Interestingly, on the way back, we followed the old trail which turns south at the point where we had originally joined it only to run into a steep gully about 300 yards down the trail, appar-

ently the terrain has changed since the days of the stage coach.

We got a good perspective of the country from horseback and it was nice to have radio contact with Ranger Bill while we were exploring the new territory. We followed two routes east around the hill. The high route, which now runs into construction for a new business park, and the lower route, which follows the hill around the creek side to the old Poway sewage treatment plant. This lower route includes part of the old stage coach route. At a point just above and east of the 1950's built cattle pond (now fishing hole), easily seen from the trail, the old stage coach road that formerly descended to and crossed the creek can be seen. From this junction on the trail above Pardee was required to cut an extension of the trail that stays level until it descends to the old Poway Sewage Plant, where it links up with the new Sabre Springs trail system.

At this point we rode to the south side of the plant and joined up with the Sabre Springs trail developed by the Pardee Co.

The trail is approximately 8 feet wide, beautifully graded and landscaped with native plants and trees on both sides of the trail, and there is even an irrigation system in place. The plants and flowers were just starting to bloom and in a few years it will be nice to have the shade of the sycamores during the summer months.

We followed the trail as it first passed under the Springbrook bridge, then under the Springhurst bridge and then followed a well planned trail over the hill and then down to the Poway Trail system at Pomorado Road in Poway. There we watched some young boys catch bass out of a pond.

On our way back Alex and I marveled about how close the Poway riders and hikers are to joining up with the Los Peñasquitos canyon preserve. To make that link there is only about .5 miles of trail that has to be developed in the Preserve, between I-15 and the County Water Authority crossing of Peñasquitos

Creek at Ridgewood Community Park in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Ranger Bill says that several agencies are working together and he hopes that by the end of the summer this new trail segment will become a reality as part of the Coast to Crest Trail System. (Trans County Trails System).

I understand that there will be another training program for volunteer park rangers in late spring. Contact City Ranger Bill Lawrence at 539-2480 or County Ranger Reneene Mowry at 484-7504 to sign up. You won't be sorry you did.

For those of you who haven't been in the canyon this spring . . . get out there, its green, the flowers are blooming and its beautiful! Happy Trails

Ranger Report

Celebrate Five Years of the Volunter Patrol

City Ranger Bill Lawrence

Current and past members of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Patrol and the Citizens Advisory Committee for Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve (CAC) are invited to a picnic hosted by the CAC.

- Bring family and friends for BBQ and entertainment, including music, dancing, pony rides, hayride and bonfire.
- Bring your favorite side dish if you like.
- Tell your favorite tale while on patrol.

Sunday, May 19

1:30-8 p.m.

Rancho Peñasquitos Equestrian Center

Call Bill Lawrence at 685-1365 to confirm the number of guests and side dish. Call by May 10, please.

(MSCP cont'd)

visioned a preserve of about 164,000 acres in size, largely based on existing open space parks, adding several more core preserves and connected by linkages or wildlife corridors.

A year of frustrating City Council sub-committee meetings and many other meetings with developers and resource agencies came to a head April 23. Most environmental groups thought that a barely acceptable plan had been worked out that we could — with misgivings — support. The Mayor brought a series of “deal” points that had been negotiated and signed off on by the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, by Governor Wilson’s administration, the developers and their key allies and several environmental groups. However, the deal points were only being circulated among environmental groups in their final form late Monday afternoon, scant hours before the vote. No one on the City Council had seen the deal points before this time either.

Not only were the Mayor’s deal points on the table for approval, but so were amendments from Councilmember Judy McCarty. Both have unacceptable clauses from an environmental point of view. These were barely discussed, however, since there had been no time for environmental groups to hold a meeting where knowledge of the issues could be shared and an analysis made. In addition, the lunatics from the radical right of the property rights movement were present, over a hundred strong, in an attempt to kill any MSCP type program. The result was little substantive discussion of environmental group criticisms of the deal. Much work remains to remedy key weaknesses of the passed MSCP guidelines which include:

- Uses the Army Corps of Engineers definition of wetlands. It doesn’t recognize vernal pools! San Diego’s is stricter, provides more protection and a local review process;
- Provides inadequate protection for Tier I, the most endangered habitats. Too little are in the preserve.
- 8A, Carmel Mountain, was left out of the MSCP;
- Brush management is no longer considered an impact on habitat that must be mitigated and the brush management zone is inside the preserve, causing an effective loss of many thousands of acres of habitat.



Tracker’s Corner

Coyote Lunchtime

Lee Kirchhevel

Our monthly tracking walks are designed to give our tracking class graduates an opportunity to apply some of their new knowledge in the Preserve, what we call “dirt time.” Over the last couple of years our tracking team has developed a fairly good sense of how the animals in the Preserve are doing from reading their tracks. Occasionally we get to see some of the animals who make those tracks. February’s walk was one of those times.

We spent the morning identifying and analyzing tracks, encouraging our students to learn more from each track. We are able to learn many things from an animal’s tracks, but we can learn even more by watching them. We spotted one of our resident coyotes hunting on one of his favorite hillsides. We watched him for close to two hours as he casually made his way from one meal to the next. In the time that we watched him hunt, he caught at least eight rodents and one snake. I was so intrigued by this efficient hunter that I decided to take a closer look. Applying the skills I had learned in the tracking class, I stalked closer to the coyote. The students stayed on the main trail as I crept along one of the coyote’s own trails. I crawled under a bush about 100 feet away, not wanting to risk disturbing the coyote’s lunch by getting too close. What a beautiful animal! This male was probably about 20–25 pounds, very healthy, with a gorgeous coat.

Our coyote friend left the area shortly after finishing the snake and we searched for the remains. We found a snake all right, but this one was alive and had a large rattle. We had one of the Preserve’s Southern Pacific Rattlers (a subspecies of the Western) coiled up asleep right in front of us! We got close enough to take some pictures and the vibrations must have awakened it. It shot straight up and then darted down into a ravine. There’s nothing quite like a rattlesnake rattle to get your heart rate going!

We did finally locate the remains of what turned out to be a king snake. About four inches of tail and some intestines were all that was left. Next time we will remember the lesson taught us by the coyote. Let sleeping rattlesnakes lie!



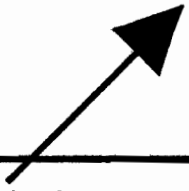
A rare-white coyote in Yellowstone Park. From: *God’s Dog: The North American Coyote* by Hope Ryden



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 P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
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Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
 Vice-President: Chris Bader 593-1381
 Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
 Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Trinity Gabriel, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke., Lannie Noreke, Brian Swanson,

Walks and Committees Leaders

Bird Walks & Gnatcatcher Survey: Brian Swanson 695-2209
 Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937
 Hike Committee: Trinity Gabriel 672-0229
 Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen 452-7091
 Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen
 Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958
 Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Carla Scott, Vickie Ausen
 Tracking: Chris Bader
 Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly
 Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly
 Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007), Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen, Lee Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, Susan Potts.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10
 Family \$15 Sponsor \$25 Patron \$100
 Corporate \$250 Life \$1000
 Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

- Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)
- Hikes
- Indian Culture 5/96
- Educational Workshops
- School, Family, Youth Programs
- Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

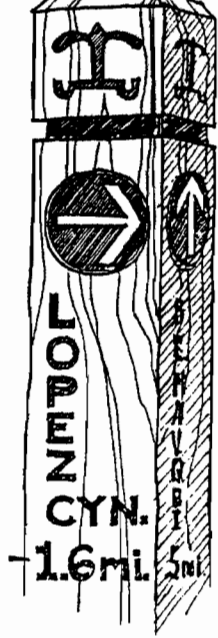
City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.



Park Day '96

Connections...Trails to Special Places

Native Americans & Wildlife of the County Trails
& Wildlife Corridors of Our Heritage
Sunday, June 2, 8 am - 9 pm



Schedule

Admission is Free!

Morning Nature walk: hike to waterfall, and return to ranch (6 miles). Meet at parking-staging area opposite mercy Road

Equestrian walk/ride to Kit Carson Crossing. Meet at RP Equestrian Center. (RSVP at 271-8806)

Exhibits open.

Afternoon Exhibits

Children's Activities

Bar-B-Q / Hot Dogs

Entertainment

Awards

Evening Campfire Program
Music & Storytelling

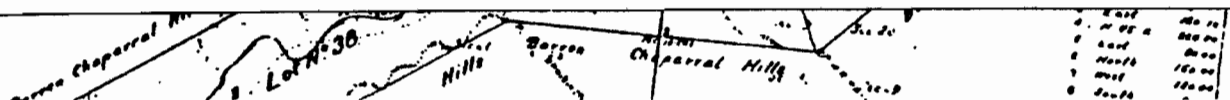
- I Native American Exhibitions
- I Tour nearby animal crossings; watch animal trackers at work
- I Live wild animals from Project Wildlife & others
- I Savor Indian Fry Bread & other foods
- I Animal tracking, native plant, & other field trips
- I Historic adobe ranch tours
- I Wilderness Survival Exhibit

Marisa Ortiz - Tree Illustration

Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Task Force
Task Force Chair County Supervisor Pam Slater
City Councilmember Harry Mathis
City Councilmember Barbara Warden

join with

The Citizen's Advisory Committee to present Park Day 1996



Connections... Trails to Special Places

Schedule

- Black Mountain Open Space Park
- San Diego County Trails Council
- Los Peñasquitos Volunteer Patrol - **5th Anniversary**
- Wild animals from Project Wildlife & Wildlife Center
- San Diego Museum of Man
- *• Native plants (Calif. Native Plant Society)
- Local Indian basket weaving
- Peñasquitos & El Cuervo artifacts
- Animal tracks (Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve)
- S.D. County Archaeological Society
- Wilderness survival
- Historical archaeology
- Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Clean Water Program, People for Trees, County Parks, Cara Knott Oak Foundation, Friends of Rancho Peñasquitos Library & others.
- San Diego Turtle & Tortoise Society
- Watershed Dynamics-Resource Conservation District
- San Diego County Dept. of Parks & Recreation

General Activities

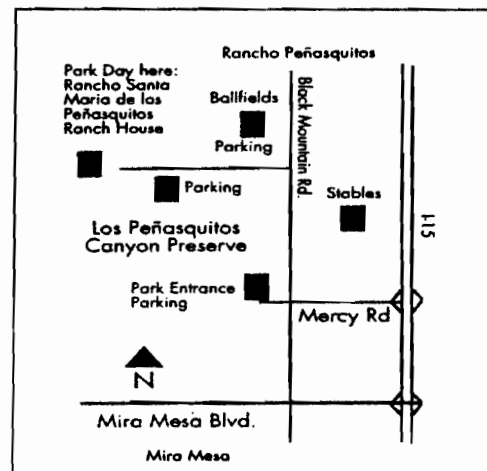
- Learn how volunteers can join wildlife studies in Peñasquitos
- Field trip: animal tracking and how animals are important to archaeology
- Field trip: native plants and how they support wildlife
- Firemaking with the bow drill

Children's Activities

- Lost "proofing"
- Native American storytelling
- Debris hut construction
- Tracking box exercises
- Casting animal tracks
- Pony rides for kids under six (6)

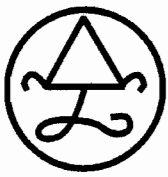
Commemorative T-shirts

Available at reasonable cost.
Proceeds go to Preserve.



Thanks to Our Sponsors

SDG&E, Pardee Construction Co., Walls Cargo, KimCo Graphics, Grape Printing



Summer Schedule: Evening Walks

With the summer heat upon us, we like to shift a number of our walks into the dusk hours when the Preserve provides a cool and welcome respite from the day's heat. It's also a good time to see wildlife.

Speaking of wildlife, please note our special Wildlife Track and Sign Survey, both the training and the survey itself, taking place in late July and early August. This will be both fun and of benefit to

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed to help with conservation or other activities. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing animal surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs to name a few. We also need help with organizational aspects of our work.

July

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. These tours are led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. Visitors will see an historic Mexican era rancho with its three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Bird Walk in López Canyon

Sunday, July 7, 7:30 – 9 a.m. Naturalist and Natural History Museum Canyoneer president Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experienced alike. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd, about 1/4 mile east of Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at East End Ranch House.

Sunday, July 7, 8 a.m. – noon. This is a tracking walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A **prerequisite** is having taken the Friends' beginning tracking course. Two intermediate tracking walks are required for beginning class graduates who want to take the advanced course. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Geology Walk at Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa

Sunday, July 7, 9 a.m - noon. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. Learn where San Diego came from geologically. Visit an unusual fossil. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends' Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, July 9, 7 p.m. The Friends' monthly business meeting takes place at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

➡ next page for more

Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	1
Volunteers	4
Coyote Ecology	6
Tamarisk Workshop	7
On Patrol: Goodwill Ambassadors	8
Letter to Editor	8
Happy Birthday	9
New Ranger	9
Equestrial Moon Light Ride ..	9
Welcome New Members	10
Volunteers	10
Rancho Roundup	11
Friends' Directory	12

\$2 million earmarked for Los Pen Preserve

Polly Stanoch Rix

[This article originally appeared in the Corridor News in May of this year—editor]

It appears patience has paid off in a big way for Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve supporters.

City Treasurer Conny Jamison says she expects to deposit around \$2 million in the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve fund sometime this week.

Originally, only \$1 million was to be placed in a fund for the preserve. However the amount doubled while sitting in an escrow account for a decade.

The \$1 million was part of a park land swap in which the city received the cash, plus 288 acres, for the preserve from a local developer in exchange for a piece of prime city prop-

➡ p. 5 for more



Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Wildlife Track and Sign Survey

The purpose of this study is to monitor the wildlife of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve through the use of periodic track and sign count transects. This study will allow the determination of the following:

- the presence or absence of certain rare species and other target species which can reflect the health of the ecosystem;
- substantial changes in wildlife populations over time;
- the use of different habitats by the target species which could lead to the identification of critical habitat areas and corridors.

It is intended that the information gathered in this study will be used to identify potential restoration and/or mitigation opportunities for important habitats and corridors in support of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Plan.

Volunteers (high school and older, please) are needed to help with this quarterly survey.



Volunteer Training Sunday July 21, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Training will include basic track, sign, and habitat recognition as well as details on the implementation of the survey protocol. Please bring a sack lunch, be prepared to spend much of the day outdoors, and be ready to take notes. Also, please call 484-3219 to confirm that you will be participating in this training and survey. The same number may also be used to get directions to the training or to make further inquiries.

Summer 1996 Survey July 27 through August 4

At the training, volunteers will be asked to sign up for transect teams which will be lead by tracking team members at different times during the survey period.

The transects are segments of trails of approximately one mile in length which are distributed throughout Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve adjacent openspace. These transects will be surveyed four times per year. Each quarter, the transect teams will be given a period of nine days (Saturday to the following Sunday) during which to survey their transect.

If you are unable to participate in this quarter's survey, but would like to participate in the future, please call 484-3219 periodically for an update.



(Calendar cont'd)

Evening Walk with Barbara Moore — López Canyon

Tuesday., July 9, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Join naturalist and author Barbara Moore for an evening nature walk in López Canyon. Meet in the west-end parking lot off Sorrento Valley Blvd, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions. Barbara Moore is the co-author of the book *Walking San Diego*. She often has copies available for purchase and autographs.

Nature Walk from Northern Staging Area

Saturday, July 13, 8 – 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Power Tool (Chainsaw, Brush Saw) Training for Volunteers

Saturday, July 13. This City sponsored training is open to volunteers in City parks such as Peñasquitos Canyon. Volunteers will be safety trained in using chain saws and brush saws, as well as preventive maintenance. These are two tools the Friends' often use in restoration projects. Call Mike at 566-6489 to RSVP a slot and for details as to exact time and place.

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, July 14, 9 – 10:30 a.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

New Moon Night Walk

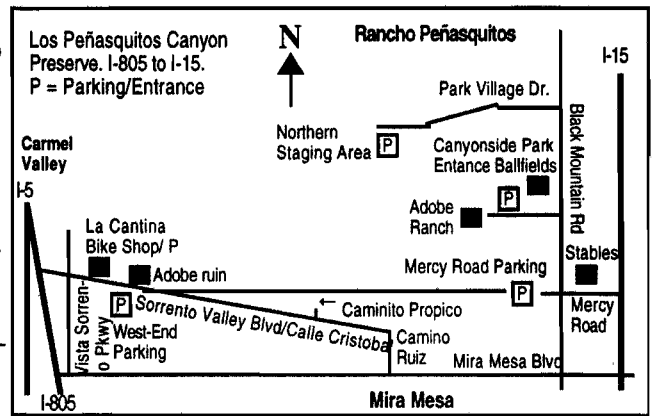
Monday, July 15, 8:30 – 10 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen for a night hike. Delight in and savor the senses of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, and movement as we explore Peñasquitos Canyon. Hike is for those with appetite for nature, experiment, and self-discovery. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Native Plant Society Walk in López Canyon

Saturday, July 20, 9 a.m. - 12 noon. Join Native Plant Society president Cindy Burrascano, botanist Melanie Howe and Friends president Mike Kelly will lead this walk that will highlight Englemann oak hybrids, the endangered Willowly mint (*Monardella linoides viminea*), California spine bush (*Adolphia californica*), *Artemisia palmeri*, and many other species. This is also a good birding area. Much of the walk will be beneath a sycamore canopy. Bring sun protection and water. Meet in the west-end parking lot off Sorrento Valley Blvd, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, July 20, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.



Wildlife Track and Sign Survey, July 21 Training; July 27 – August 4 Survey

The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve are inviting the public, high school age and older to join in a wildlife survey of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The survey will run from July 27 through August 4 and involves reading wildlife tracks and sign along transects in the Preserve. Training will be provided Sunday, July 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the historic ranch house in the Preserve. Bring a sack lunch. Volunteers aren't expected to go out on surveys every day of the survey period, but just to volunteer as much time as they are able to. The surveys will be conducted quarterly and will help develop data on rare species, the travel patterns and wildlife linkages of target species and the health of the wildlife habitat over time. To confirm attendance at the training or for more information call 484-3219.

Dusk Walk in Peñasquitos Canyon (Canyonside Entrance)

Wednesday, July 24, 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. Good opportunity to see nocturnal birds, bats, deer and other wildlife. Bring insect repellent and flashlight. Led by naturalist Mike Kelly. Meet in the County's white-fenced parking lot in the Canyonside entrance to Peñasquitos Preserve off Black Mountain Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

(Calendar cont'd)

August

Equestrian Patrol Moon Light Ride
Saturday, July 27, 8 p.m. All equestrian patrol members are invited to take a moon light ride in the park on July 27. The ride will leave from the ranch house. Sign up in Ranger Bill's office or call Jim Hallam at 748-7815. Space is limited.

Archaeological Evening at the Ranch

Saturday, July 27, evening. This year's annual series of summer evening programs, sponsored by the San Diego County Archaeological Society (SDCAS), will begin with a program held on Saturday, July 27th. The featured speaker will be Dr. Jack Williams, a renowned archaeologist and principal investigator for the San Diego Presidio archaeological project. Bring a picnic lunch and folding chair — most folks arrive between 6:30 and 7:00 p.m. and join us as we sit out in the courtyard and enjoy the evening air and sounds. Come early (6:00) for a docent-led tour of the ranch house. The main program usually starts about 7:45 or 8:00, and SDCAS provides free cake, soft drinks, and coffee for everyone's enjoyment. The second program of the summer series will be held on August 24th and will feature archaeologist Terese Muranaka, who will report on the archeological project at the McCoy House in Old Town. Come out and discover what's happening on the archaeological front in San Diego County! Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Full Moon Stargazing Walk

Tuesday, July 30, 8-10 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen for a night hike focusing on stargazing, moon watching and Native American view of the night sky. Learn of Indian legends of the night sky. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Rancho Santa Maria De Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. These tours are led by docents from the San Diego Archaeological Society. Visitors will see an historic Mexican era rancho with its three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Mid Summer Senses Hike

Thursday, August 1, 7-8:30 p.m. Enjoy nature and the seasons through the senses; reflect on colors, fragrances, textures and the sounds of summer in the canyon. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Evening Walk with Barbara Moore — López Canyon

Tuesday, August 6, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Join naturalist and author Barbara Moore for an evening nature walk in López Canyon. Meet in the west-end parking lot off Sorrento Valley Blvd, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions. Barbara Moore is the co-author of the book *Walking San Diego*. She often has copies available for purchase and autographs.

Dusk Walk to Waterfall from Northern Parking Staging Area

Friday, August 9, 7:15 - 9:30 p.m. Walk about 4 miles roundtrip to the waterfall and back. Good chance to see wildlife. Enjoy the sounds, smells and textures of the Preserve at night. Led by naturalist Mike Kelly. Bring flashlight, insect repellent. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and

Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at East End Ranch House.

Sunday, August 11, 8 a.m. - noon. This is a tracking walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. A **prerequisite** is having taken the Friends' beginning tracking course. Two intermediate tracking walks are required for beginning class graduates who want to take the advanced course. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends' Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 7 p.m. The Friends' monthly business meeting takes place at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

New Moon Night Walk

Wednesday, August 14, 8 - 9 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen for a night hike. Delight in and savor the senses of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, and movement as we explore Peñasquitos Canyon. Hike is for those with appetite for nature, experiment, and self-discovery. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Beginning Tracking, Nature and Wilderness Survival Workshop

Friday-Sunday, August 16-18 at the historic ranch house. An intensive weekend course that teaches the basics of Native American tracking, nature awareness and wilderness survival techniques. Call 484-3219 for a free brochure and details. Cost is \$50.00 (\$40 to members of Friends of LPCP).

(Calendar cont'd)

Dusk Walk from East End

Wednesday, August 21, 7 – 9 p.m.
 Good chance to see wildlife. Enjoy the sounds, smells and textures of the Preserve at night. About 3 – 4 miles. Led by naturalist Mike Kelly. Bring flashlight, insect repellent. Meet at the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area at the intersection of Black Mountain Road and Mercy Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **484-3219** for recorded directions.

Full Moon Hike: Native American Traditions

Wednesday, August 28, 8 - 9:30 p.m.
 Learn about the interconnection of the spiritual and ecological in Native American tradition. Includes drumming, singing, and story-telling. Bring a flashlight and dress warm. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

DIRECTIONS FOR WALKS

Ranch House Walks/Tours

The ranch house is located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain, up hill, U-turn at Truman Street, back down the hill and right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot and walk up path to the ranch house. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 St. 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 south side of Cristobal. Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Sorrento Valley/ Cantina Bike Shop

Cantina Mountain Bike Shop is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

Located in Mira Mesa. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

Northern Parking-Staging Area at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive

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. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189**.

West-End Parking-Staging Area

Located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208**.

(\$2 million cont'd)

erty. The swap was approved by the voters in November 1986.

Because the escrow fund finally closed last November, questions arose from the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve concerning when the first \$1 million would be placed in the preserve's fund and who would receive the interest — the canyon preserve or the city, said Friends' President Mike Kelly.

"As far as I know, the whole amount will be put in the fund," Jamison said. However, as of the Corridor News's Tuesday deadline, the direction had not been given. "I'm hoping it will be placed in the preserve's fund any day now," the treasurer said.

District I Councilman Harry Mathis has asked city staff to disburse the funds and to issue the full amount, the \$1 million plus the earned interest, to the preserve fund.

After waiting nearly 10 years for the money, Nancy Acevedo, deputy park and recreation director, is very happy that the money will be available soon.

"After all these years, it's exciting," Acevedo said about anticipating the arrival of the money.

Once the city transfers the funds, the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Task Force has slated the money for the addition of a park ranger and the purchase of a vehicle for the ranger.

"The ranger will be able to provide more coverage and offer a proactive program rather than reactive," Acevedo said.

Also, the park's volunteer patrol program can be expanded because a ranger will be on site more often. With an additional ranger, maintenance work will be completed on a regular basis too.

"I'm happy to hear that the park fund money (is being deposited) into the Peñasquitos Canyon fund," Kelly said. "We look forward to hiring a second ranger with the installment."

[The money has been transferred and a new ranger hired. See page 9 for a story on the new ranger. — Mike Kelly]

Some Observations on Coyote Ecology

Gene Anderson, PhD
University of California, Riverside

In spite of persecution and habitat destruction, the coyote (*Canis latrans* — which means "barking dog") continues to flourish and succeed. In southern California, coyotes are common everywhere, from the remote desert to the center of Los Angeles. They use such corridors as fenced creek flood-channels and brushy canyons to penetrate virtually all areas that have any natural cover left. A Coyote's map of Los Angeles or San Diego, or of the wild mountains for that matter, would be a maze of wild or semiwild trailways connecting choice feeding sites.

These feeding sites of are two kinds: areas with garbage near good escape routes, an areas with lots of fruit. Coyotes may be classed with the carnivores, but they are thoroughly omnivorous. Especially in summer, when water is scarce and sorely needed, they seem to crave fruit above all else. I find coyote scats every day on the trails I walk (in Riverside). Whenever my neighbors' fruit trees are bearing, these scats are made up mostly of fruit seeds. Often they are made up almost entirely of apricot stones (ouch!). Commercial watermelon raising in Riverside County has proved a failure, in large part because of the total impossibility of keeping the coyotes off the melons.

When fruit isn't in season, the scats are made up mostly of hair, often with small bones. These prove to belong to small mammals — rabbits, ground squirrels, mice— in most cases. Even these are perhaps more likely to be scavenged as carrion than to be caught alive. Coyotes are not mighty hunters.

Moreover, the southern California coyote is one of the smallest forms of the species. They look large because of their long legs and bushy fur, but they are small animals. When fire

swept the canyon back of my house, hawks and owls congregated to eat the rabbits that were left without cover. Coyotes must have gotten a few, but when I found dead rabbits (which I did virtually every day) they were always under hawk or owl perches. The coyotes scavenged what the birds of prey didn't eat: bones, guts, and so on. Coyotes are better at catching the smaller, slower ground squirrels, mice,



Coyote pups. From: *God's Dog: The North American Coyote* by Hope Ryden

and gophers. After the fire, ground squirrels were totally eliminated from the canyon, where they had previously been abundant. Birds of prey and coyotes could catch them too easily.

Extensive studies in Los Angeles, reported in the Los Angeles Times, showed that the above pattern is typical. Rodents and carrion supplied most of the diet. I suspect garbage and fruit really are by far the most important foods of local coyotes, but these do not show up so well in scats. A study in the southern San Joaquin Valley showed

that coyotes there live almost entirely on rodents, rabbits and carrion.

Coyotes have a reputation in California as great destroyers of cats, but the Los Angeles study found very little cat hair in coyote scats, and this hair was suspected to be from scavenged dead cats. Coyotes certainly take the occasional kitten or small dog, but they are unfairly blamed for cat disappearances. Most southern Californians seem to assume that all cat disappearances are due to coyotes. In my extensive experience, cats usually disappear because of cars, dogs, or disease — not coyotes. Our small coyotes are not a match for a big cat, in any case; two coyotes working together might take a slow, fat cat, but an active angry cat is more than a match for far larger and fiercer animals than a local coyote. Coyote families do hunt cooperatively, and a whole family working together will take a large animal like a cat.

In the northern Great Basin, coyotes can be twice the size they are here. Those Basin coyotes are savage hunters (and, sometimes, stock-killers) and terrific animals to watch. In southeast Oregon, I was driving at 50 mph over a deserted stretch of road, when a huge coyote ran up, ran alongside the car for a long time just looking at us through the car window, and then shot on ahead of us and out of sight. I had no idea that a coyote could run so fast. Certainly our little southern Californian coyotes can't touch it.

Often, small dogs are killed when they aggressively defend their territory against a foraging coyote. (Large dogs easily put coyotes in flight, even in their home ranges.) I have heard — and I believe the tale — that cats are sometimes killed when a coyote wants to take over their cat food. Feed your cats indoors. It may be mentioned that poorly-controlled cats kill literally millions of songbirds and wild mammals

(Coyote cont'd)

and lizards in southern California every year, and those animals would no doubt argue — if they could argue — that coyotes deserve some chance to redress the balance.

Coyotes of this area have litters in mid to late winter. They den up in the most remote, unvisited places they can find. They dig large dens, preferably in still larger piles of hugh boulders that offer good protection. The female tries to stay with the pups as much as possible. The male forages, bringing back food. Sometimes he swallows it when he finds it, goes home, and vomits it back up for the family — a fairly common method of food transport in the animal world. Coyotes mate for life (a coyote that has lost his or her mate will remate after a year or so) and seem extremely devoted family animals, models of "family values." (The famous legends of the randy, adventurous he-coyote are the reverse of reality.)

Coyotes do not really form "packs." They normally life in nuclear families: father, mother, and the pups of the year. Pups leave home and disperse in late fall or early winter. they look for unoccupied territory; they will not move in where coyotes already have staked out the ground. However, not infrequently, they settle near the old home, and then they and their mates and pups will sometime join up with their parents—especially, in my experience, if Daddy was a large, tough, powerful animal, a good hunter and hunt-organizer. I have seen such extended family groups (maybe worth the name "packs") with as many as eight to ten animals. These were animals I knew — coyotes are quite recognizable, like individual dogs — so I knew how they were related.

Families maintain contact by sound, as well as scent and sight. Everyone has heard them; they are very vocal animals. To some humans, the sound is chilling and sinister, but those of us who know the field find it much more interesting and varied. A family in full cry will produce the most amazing symphony of howls, yelps, barks, whines, and beautiful musical notes. Often, this seems to be the analog of a human sing-along — they are making music purely for the fun of making mu-

sic with the family. I recently saw five coyotes perched on rocks just like a formal choir, singing to several other coyotes who were answering antiphonally from across the canyon. The concert lasted many minutes. This would have been the entire population of my area — a large extended family of about 10 animals. Coyotes are often prompted to song by sirens, dogs, or low-flying jet planes. One major reason for singing is to define and maintain territory. Coyotes hold family territories, which are very important to them. They defend a large area of wild land, with secure dens and rest sites, varied food reserves, and — ideally — permanent water. Family members may range far afield, but spend most of their time in the secure core of their territory.

One lone coyote giving a few bards and howl, though, is probably just lost from the bunch, or more likely, warning them, such as humans and dogs are in the area.

Coyotes appear to have no natural enemies in the area, though hawks and owls must occasionally take pups. Large dogs can and will kill coyotes, especially young ones, but I know of no local cases.

Coyotes can become friendly with humans and even with pet dogs. However, it's a wary friendship. Coyotes are wild animals, and will react like wild animals when threatened, cornered, or stressed. They have killed at least one child and hurt several others in southern California. Considering that there are million of people and thousands of coyotes, this is a low rate of damage, but beware. In ALL cases, so far as I know, the problems developed in areas where coyotes were actively protected and had lots of food available. The death occurred in an area where people were actually feeding the coyotes by hand! A coyote tried to grab food from a child and mauled her in the process. So, don't feed the coyotes, or any wild animals. Chase them back to the hills if they're getting too familiar.

All in all, the coyote is a lovable, charming, interesting, and musical part of the local scene, and deserves appreciation as such. Considering how large, common, and carnivorous they are, they do very little damage, and that little could easily be prevented.

Tamarisk Workshop

Mike Kelly

A "Saltcedar Management Workshop" was held June 12, 1996 in Rancho Mirage. Saltcedar is another name for various Tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.) species. The workshop was cohosted by the Univ. of California Cooperative Extension, Imperial County and UC Davis and the California Exotic Pest Plant Council.

There were about 155 people in attendance, a larger than expected turnout. *Tamarisk ramosissima* is the member of this genus commonly found in our local ecosystems, an exotic plant that is highly invasive, especially in desert riparian systems. In many places it forms monotypic stands that displace native plants and don't provide much in the way of food or shelter for wildlife. Over 600,000 hectares (1.5 million acres) of land are estimated to be infested with members of this genus. Many wildlands managers are confronting the daunting task of controlling this plant, hence the need for this excellent workshop.

Expert speakers in the morning sessions focused on the history, distribution, identification, biology and ecology of the invasive members of this genus. Speakers also looked at its impacts on water, salinity, fire frequency, soil erosion, native plants and wildlife.

Afternoon sessions concentrated on control tactics and management strategies for tackling these invasives. Mechanical, burning, flooding, biological and chemical approaches to control were all discussed. Examples of both successful and unsuccessful control campaigns were presented. The role of volunteers was touched upon by a number of speakers.

There will be a proceedings. I highly recommend getting it if you are confronting these plants. Write Carl Bell, UC Cooperative Extension Service at 1050 E. Holton Road, Holtville CA 92250. The cost for the proceedings is \$10. Make your check payable to the "Agricultural Extension Trust Fund."

If you can't wait for the proceedings to find out the best way to eradicate this pest, call Mike Kelly at 566-6489.



On Patrol

Patrol Members: Goodwill Ambassadors

Flave Pisciotta

There have been several excuses to have fun lately, the CAC (Preserves' Citizens Advisory Committee) Picnic and BBQ was held on May 19th at the Peñasquitos Equestrian Center, honoring all the park volunteers and was a great success. They BBQed a large roast, and everyone enjoyed telling stories. The evening was topped off with a hay ride through the park with Walls Cargo. There were five, five year volunteers honored: equestrians Mary and Steve Randall, Sheila Loftin and Cory Buckner, and biker and president of the CAC Geoff Smith. All were charter members of the Patrol.

Then on to Park Day on June 2nd, where the new Trans-Country Trail: Public Property Corridor routes were unveiled. The trail is approximately 110 miles in length, and nearly 70% of this route utilizes existing trails. The theme this year was connectivity and soon we will be connected to the Poway trail system and beyond. Pretty exciting.

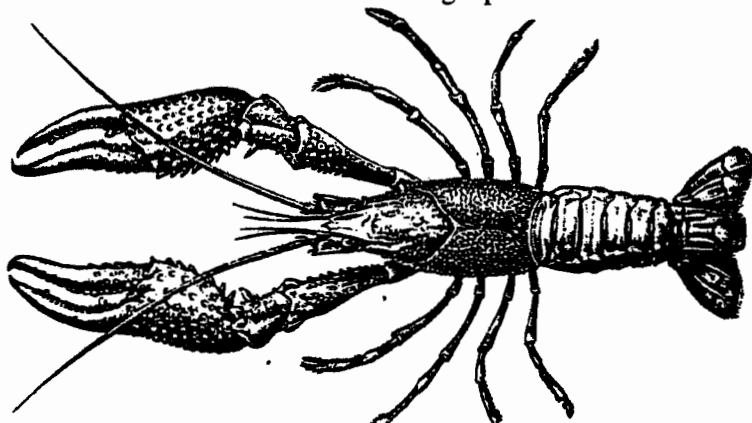
Cara Knott's father and Aunt had one of the displays at Park Day. The new oak park under the Mercy Road overpass was dedicated last week in memory of victims of violent crimes. Jean Thompson, Cara's aunt, had collected Engleman Oak acorns that they were giving to anyone that wanted to grow oak trees. They of course would like them for the new park, but their message was "an oak is a wondrous web of life", and I am excited in hopes that mine will grow and that I will be able to share my oak tree with the park.

The second week in June was new volunteer training. I understand they are combining the training for several of the local parks at one time. Thirty-five people graduated from the training including folks from San Dieguito River Park, Mission Bay, Peñasquitos Canyon, Mission Trails, Marian Bear and Tecolote Canyon Parks.

Alex and I have enjoyed our volunteer time in the park, and heartily encourage hikers, bikers and equestrians to sign up with ranger Bill or Reneene and join in the next orientation classes later in the fall. To sign up call 685-1365.

When we are on patrol part of our job is to keep track of the number of park users by their categories of hikers, bikers and equestrians. I'm the note keeper for our team, while Alex handles the radio. We really are good will ambassadors, and often we stop to talk people that we meet on the trail.

On our way in last time, we came across two equestrians, and on closer look, it was an former neighbor of ours that had moved to Valley Center. We got to talking, and she introduced us to her father who was out with her that day. It seems it was Claudia's birthday, and as a birthday present, she wanted her father to go for a ride with her in the park. He was an awfully good sport, as he said the hadn't ridden for twenty five years. I guess the point of the story is that she wanted to share something special (the Preserve) with her father on her birthday. I think this is the essence of the park and being a part of it.



Letter to the Editor

May 9, 1996

Editor, Canyon News

I wish to congratulate Flave Pisciotta for the article "Patrolling the 'Mercy' Extension (*Canyon News*, Vol. 10, #3, p8). It is nice to know that riders are still using the trails.

About 15 years ago, Horseman's Park used to conduct rides to Lake Miramar every summer. We rode from the stable (now called Rancho Peñasquitos Equestrian Center) up along the stream bed behind the old well, past the "mystery trees," under I-15 and followed the old stage coach road to the east (called the 'high route' in Flave's article) where we had a short rest at an abandoned ranch before riding on over the divide to Miramar Lake. After a snack lunch, we returned to the stable about 4 p.m. Several weeks before the ridge, Cindy, Barbara and I would brush out the lower part of the trail (downstream from I-5) with machetes, pruning saws and cutters. To do this, we simply rode upstream as far as we could, tied the horses to a tree and started cutting the alder, willow and mule fat branches that blocked the trail. At that time, there was a connecting trail to Poway that Councilman Bill Mitchell used to ride.

I believe the trail between I-15 and the equestrian center is now opened because on Sunday, April 2, the Pine Valley Riders rode it from I-15 (where they left their trailers) to the Falls where I met them. Thus, the connecting link was open then, although it may be closed later by construction of the Water Authority crossing at Ridgewood Park. Happy Trails!

Sincerely yours,

John Northrop, Charter Member

Friends of Los Peñasquitos
Canyon Preserve

On Patrol

Happy Birthday Los Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Patrol

Jaime Lawrence

May brought not only flowers this year, but also the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Volunteer Patrol's (LPCVP) fifth anniversary. A celebration was held Sunday May 19th at the Rancho Peñasquitos Equestrian Center. For those newer Friends who may be unfamiliar with the 'good old days' BP (Before Patrol) Let's turn the clock back to May 1991.

Remember when eucalyptus grew at the revegetation site; Eichman's grave was hidden in the brush; the west staging area wasn't; and unregulated recreational use was fast turning the Preserve into an environmental disaster area? This was the Preserve before City Park Ranger Bill Lawrence with the assistance of County Park Ranger Reneene Mowry interviewed the first prospective volunteer patrol members in the spring of 1991.

The infant Patrol graduated two classes that year and the Preserve Rangers gained twenty-five additional pairs of helping hands who on foot, bicycle, and horseback went to work educating and assisting Preserve users. The Patrol grew to an all time high of fifty members by the end of 1992, and has held steady at thirty active members through today. Eight of the original 1991 patrol graduates (4 from the spring class and 3 from the fall class) still regularly patrol.

Patrol recruits complete an intensive training that includes city and county park regulations, an introduction to the history of the Preserve, an overview of Preserve ecology, verbal judo (deflecting and defusing potential user confrontations), and CPR/First aid. After participating in a series of situational scenarios and completing a ride-along with a veteran Patrol member, new recruits commit themselves to patrolling eight hours per month for one year. Patrol members are encouraged to augment their initial training by attending Friends' hikes and lectures, participating in annual training re-

treats, and keeping their CPR/First aid certification current.

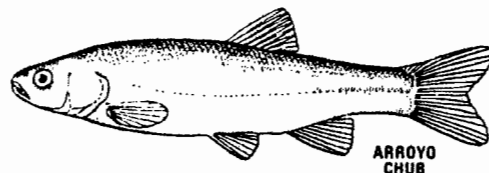
Were you there for the dedication of the newly restored Eichman's grave site, President Bush's speech, Barry Martin's tire tracking adventure, reconstruction of the Carson crossing bridge, the streamside trail project, the arson fire, and Park Days 91-95? LPCVP Members were!

Patrol members have been sighted at the Back Country Ramble in San Marcos and are now listed as one of the sponsors of that event. Even when Patrol members are no longer actively patrolling their uniform may change but their dedication to the Preserve and the environment remains active. Tracking project co-ordinator Barry Martin, and Citizens Advisory Committee Chair Geoff Smith are both former Patrol members. Current Patrol members also patrol with the Cuyamaca State Park Patrol, are members of the Native Plant Society, CAC, and Archeological Society, are county docents and members of the San Marcos Trail Committee. It's obvious that Patrol members contribute not only to the Preserve but to the community at large. Patrol members are involved!

Have you met patrol veterans Steve and Mary Randall, Shiela Loftin, or Terry Thielen (spring class of '91) or Carol Sparduto, Jill McCarty, or Jaime Mendez (fall class of '91)? Ever say hi to Nancy O'Shea, Bill Witzel, or Mark and Debbie Taylor (class of '92)? Why not flag down Jon Korecki or Jerome Jaminet some morning, or stop and chat with the Hallams or Ray and Elena Juarez? Take a moment and discuss trail blazing techniques with the Pisciotas or Ron Hargis. You might even want to track down Barry Martin. These are only a few of your Los Peñasquitos Volunteer Patrol members. It's their dedication and persistence that has helped transform the Preserve into a safe and pleasurable place for all to enjoy!

Equestrian Patrol Moon Light Ride

Saturday, July 27, 8 p.m. All equestrian patrol members are invited to take a moon light ride in the park on July 27. The ride will leave from the ranch house. Sign up in Ranger Bill's office or call Jim Hallam at 748-7815. Space is limited.



Ranger Report

New Ranger on Board

Senior City Ranger Bill Lawrence

After many delays, the Preserve now has a second city ranger on board. **Dion Heller** comes to us from Mission Trails Regional Park. His responsibilities there included trail restoration, Volunteer Patrol Coordinator, eagle scout projects, interpretive school and public programs and natural resources management.

He received his B.S. degree from Northeast Missouri State University in Environmental Science with an emphasis in biology. He worked with the Iowa State Conservation Commission and the Iowa County Conservation Board. He also spent two years at Dixon Lake (Escondido) before moving to Mission Trails six years ago.

The next time you're out on a trail and see an unfamiliar Ranger, say hello and introduce yourself to Dion.

Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following folks who recently joined the Friends. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Shelley Archer
Morgan Benowitz-Frederick
Mari Bispo
Sam Blattner
Claire Blumstein
Esther Broers
Chip Childers
K. Crampton
Dominic Dirksen
George Hellman
John Hepler
Garett Jones
Jeffrey Lehmann
Ann Levin
Shane Marine
Gregory N. Moraros
Tom Nusser
Nick Overfield
Mark Pederson
Nathaniel Spicer
Betty Sterrett
Debra Thomas
Lyn Tomlinson
Cari Verplanck
Dean Woods



Volunteer Accomplishments and Opportunities

Mike Kelly

Thanks to the following volunteers for an outstanding period of volunteer time and energy:

Fish Survey. Will Bowen, Holly Boessow, Bill Lawrence and Mike Kelly helped out the US. Fish and Wildlife Service and State Dept. of Fish and Game in their June survey of the types of fish found in Peñasquitos Creek. The teams used electro shock devices to stun the fish and allow their identification. This is part of a survey of all the significant streams and rivers of Southern California.

Rancho Peñasquitos Fiesta Day, May 5, 1996 proved to be a good opportunity to reachout to this community with information on the new Black Mountain Open-Space Park, as well as Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Thanks to Holly Boessow, Kevin McNamara, Geoff Smith, Laurie, and Mike Kelly for staffing the exhibit.

Friends' Office. Thanks to Lani Noreke and Mike Kelly for cleaning out and up the Friends' office in the adobe ranch house. The office will be more actively used by the Friends' tracking team in the future.

Stream Restoration, Mother's Day, May 11. 17 volunteers managed to fill and move five dump trucks and 15 pickup truck loads of palm debris from the stream area next to the ranch house. This is part of the ongoing stream restoration effort begun last November. The cleanup event was co-sponsored once again by the Friends and the San Diego County Archaeological Society. Among those helping out were Fred Buchanan, Chris Wesson, Jacob Gould, Newton Quan, Robert Hutsel, Linda King, Philip Misiawiec, Don Albright, Mike Kelly, Liz Rozycki, Doug Fenske, Mike Nabholz, Jim Royle, Howard Schwitkis, Bill Lawrence, Reneene Mowry and Guy.

Park Day, June 2: Lending a hand leading walks or staffing exhibits were Lani and Erik Noreke, Lee Kircheval, Chris Bader, Mike Kelly, June Warburton, Holly Boessow, Will Bowen, Kevin McNamara, Newton Quan and

Upcoming Opportunities

Call Mike at 566-6489 to volunteer for any of the following:

Power Tools Training. Ever wanted to learn how to use a chainsaw or brush saw? The City will be providing a safety and maintenance training for volunteers in Peñasquitos Canyon and other open space parks. The date is tentatively set for July 13. Call 566-6489 for details and to RSVP. This is **not** just for men! Some of our best chainsaw volunteers are women.

Wildlife Track and Sign Survey. See the flyer attached to this newsletter.

Hike Leader Training. We will be beginning our training of new hike leaders in July. If you would like to become a hike leader call the above number. No experience needed!

Weed eradication. July 14. 9 a.m. - noon. West end parking-staging area. We'll be working on fennel. Call Mike at 566-6489 for details.

Chris Wesson.

Weed Warriors. Chopping, pulling, or spraying weeds took up many hours on the part of Mike Kelly, Holly Boessow, Mel Howe, Cindy Burrascano, Trinity Gabriel, Mike Curtis, and Vicky Ausen.

Wild Life Transects were laid out and described for the upcoming surveys by Barry Martin, Lee Kircheval, Lani Noreke, Rick Botta, Mike Kelly, Mel Howe, Holly Boessow, and Susan Potts.

Tracking Team volunteers helping out this past period included Barry Martin, Lani and Erik Noreke, and Lee Kircheval.



RANCHO ROUNDUP

by Ranger Reneene Mowry

Park Day 1996

Another Park Day has come and gone. Although attendance was down, it was a mellow and pleasant event; and, as always, the people who came seemed to enjoy themselves. Many thanks to all of the "Friends" who helped out this year, in particular, Mike Kelly, Will Bowen, Chris Bader, Lee Kirchevel, Lani and Erik Noreke, and June Warburton. Lee's scavenger hunt for kids turned out to be one of the day's major successes! This year's Park Day theme was "Connections, Trails to Special Places;" and in keeping with that theme, two new trails were dedicated.

Elberta Fleming Riparian Habitat Trail

The Elberta Fleming Riparian Habitat Trail is the Eagle Scout project of David Sedlak, Troop 6641. A half-mile loop, the trail begins off of the picnic area in the eastern staging area and follows a portion of the south side of Los Penasquitos Creek. At the entrance, you can view an interpretive display featuring the creek and pick up a trail brochure. Will Bowen authored the innovative brochure, which is designed to be interactive and to teach those who use it the unique aspects of riparian habitat as well as the relationship between the creek and the plants and animals that depend upon it. Hopefully, the new trail will be widely used by local schools and serve as a living legacy to "Bert." I recommend you try it! Let us know what you think as we are considering developing similar habitat trails in other areas of the preserve.

Trans County Trail

The Trans-County Trail was officially announced, rather than dedicated, as the entire trail system is not yet complete. What is so exciting about this project is that 70% of the sea-to-desert route encompasses existing trails, while the remaining 30% is all on public land. Therefore, the inherent problems that accompany attempts to gain access through private property (such as experienced by our friends from the San Dieguito River Valley), are avoided. The Trans-County Trail will be about 110 miles long when completed. It begins at Torrey Pines State Park, passes through Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, the City of Poway greenbelt, Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve, San Vicente Reservoir, Oak Oasis Open Space Preserve, El Capital Open Space Preserve, Cleveland National Forest, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and terminates at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. A brochure of the trail is posted on the eastern entrance kiosk, and copies may be obtained from Ranger Bill or Ranger Reneene.

Garden update

We have squash boy, do we have squash — zucchini, spaghetti, acorn, butternut, and crookneck!! The garden has been a true experiment; and, fortunately, Vicky Ausen advised us to start out with the ten™for-a-dollar seed packets that you find at Thrifty and Longs. Our beans, beets, radishes, and heritage black Aztec sweet corn mysteriously disappeared. The deer came in one evening and "cropped" our tomato plants, but we have since enclosed the plants in chicken wire and are expecting a belated but bumper crop. Coming along nicely are the sweet corn, peas, cucumbers, watermelons, and pumpkins. Two of our three special heritage crops — deer tongue lettuce and Agassiz pinto beans — have survived so far, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that we'll be able to harvest seed from them to plant next year. A special thank you goes out to Cathy Buco, who faithfully comes out to weed and water, and to John Northrop for his cash donation to the garden fund. Watch for an announcement of our Saturday morning vegetable stand hours in the next newsletter. Meanwhile, send me your favorite squash recipes!

Summer evening programs at the ranch house

This year's first summer evening program, sponsored by the San Diego County Archaeological Society (SDCAS), will be held on Saturday, July 27th. The featured speaker will be Dr. Jack Williams, a renowned archaeologist and principal investigator for the San Diego Presidio archaeological project. Bring a picnic lunch and folding chair — most folks arrive between 6:30 and 7:00 p.m. and join us as we sit out in the courtyard and enjoy the evening air and sounds. Come early (6:00) for a docent-led tour of the ranch house. The main program usually starts about 7:45 or 8:00, and SDCAS provides free cake, soft drinks, and coffee for everyone's enjoyment. The second program of the summer series will be held on August 24th and will feature archaeologist Terese Muranaka, who will report on the archeological project at the McCoy House in Old Town. Come out and discover what's happening on the archaeological front in San Diego County!



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
Vice-President: Chris Bader 593-1381
Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Trinity Gabriel, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, Brian Swanson,

Walks and Committees Leaders

Bird Walks & Gnatcatcher Survey: Brian Swanson 695-2209

Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937

Hike Committee: Trinity Gabriel 672-0229

Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen 452-7091

Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen

Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958

Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Carla Scott, Vickie Ausen, Christine Ohanian

Tracking: Chris Bader

Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly

Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly

Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007),

Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen, Lee Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, Susan Potts.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10

Family \$15 Sponsor \$25 Patron \$100

Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)

Hikes

Indian Culture

7/96

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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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 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.



November Ballot Measures

Mike Kelly, president

Tuesday, November 5 is election day when offices from the President of the U.S. on down await your decision. On our local ballot are several measures which involve our local north city area. These concern the Future Urbanizing Area (FUA). The Friends Board of Directors voted its recommendations for each of these at its August 20th meeting. See p. 8 for a reference map of this area.

Recommendations

- Prop. H. Vote Yes. Torrey Highlands.
- Prop. F Vote No. Villas at Stallion's Crossing.
- Prop. G Vote No. Subarea II: Village at Stallion's Crossing.

Background: Prop A in 1984

The three projects listed above are all contained within the Future Urbanizing Area. This 12,000-acre area is bounded by Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve to the south (hence our interest), Rancho Peñasquitos to the east, Carmel Valley to the west, and the San Dieguito River Valley's northern edge to the north.

Concerned with proposals for premature development in the area, the voters passed Proposition A in 1984. Prop A put this area off limits to urban levels of development until the voters themselves judged the time was right for development. The ballot measure also required that comprehensive planning be done for the area, including Subarea Plans for each of the five subareas contained within its boundaries. In other words, Prop A mandated that growth in the area should be planned and managed comprehensively. Prop. A, however, did allow developments without a vote if the densities being planned were consistent with the underlying zoning of the parcels. Typically, undeveloped land in San Diego

is zone A-1-10 or agricultural zoning. You can develop agriculturally related businesses or projects (nurseries, farms, equestrian centers, etc.) or build one housing unit per 10 acres. Existing law also allowed 2.5 units per 10 acres if the units were "clustered" in one area, with the remaining area left as open space.

The framework plan

In the early 1990s a Citizens Advisory Committee for the FUA was formed. This broadly-based committee spent several years developing a master plan for the FUA called the Framework Plan. An environmental impact review process was completed and the plan was approved by the City Council. This master plan envisioned urban levels of density, comparable to the surrounding communities, with about 50% of the 12,000 acres to be set aside as permanent open-space parks. With this completed, landowners and developers were free to come forward with more detailed subarea plans for each of the five subarea plans. Under Prop A, once these plans were done, the landowners would be able to place a measure on the ballot requesting voter approval for a **phase shift** of their subarea from **Future Urbanizing** to **Current Urbanizing**. Upon receiving approval from the voters, they could develop their projects.

In 1994, however, the larger landowners in the FUA, led by Pardee Co. got the City Council to place Proposition C on the ballot, to allow a phase shift for the whole FUA — before Subarea Plans were done. The voters didn't like this and rejected it decisively. After this defeat, some landowners decided to simply develop their land at lower densities not requiring a phase shift vote. The Black Mountain Ranch

Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	2
George Johnson's Race track	4
Tamarisk Workshop	7
New Guy on the Block	10
Welcome New Members	10
Volunteers Accomplishments	11
Volunteer Opportunities	11
Rancho Garden Update	11
Friends' Directory	12

Quarterly Wildlife Survey Done

Lani Noreke, Tracking Team

The Tracking Team has recently completed the first quarterly Wildlife Track and Sign Survey in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve with the help of a wonderful group of volunteers. Between the eight Tracking Team members (Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Lee Kirchhevel, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, and Susan Potts) and eighteen volunteers (David Anderson, Gary Bowen, Uli Burgin, Henry Cornejo, Terry Goge, David Gottfredson, Eileen Grier, John Grier, Tarja Jacobson, Mike Kauffman, Mike Kelly, Philip Misiowiec, Joan Raymond, Angel Rivera, Liz Rozycki, June Warburton,



Bobcat track

Bountiful Fall Acorn Crop

Although you and I have been wilting in this hot, humid weather, the canyon's oaks are producing a bumper crop of acorns this year. As you walk the trails take a close look at the Coast live, Englemann and scrub oaks. All have a good crop of nuts this year.

This augers well for the wildlife such as deer, racoons and birds that eat the acorns. This spring and summer have seen slim pickings due to the anemic rainfall, which reduced the annual flower crop. Why not plan on joining the Friends in harvesting these acorns for growing future shrubs and trees for the park. Check the schedule for dates.

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed to help with conservation or other activities. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing wildlife surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs to name a few. We also need help with organizational aspects of our work.

September

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. Tours are led by San Diego Archaeological Society docents. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. The Adobe Ranch House is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Training for New Hike Leaders

Call Mike at 566-6489 for schedule.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, Sept. 8, 8 a.m. – noon. Practice your tracking skills with a training walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. Meet at the West-End Parking Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

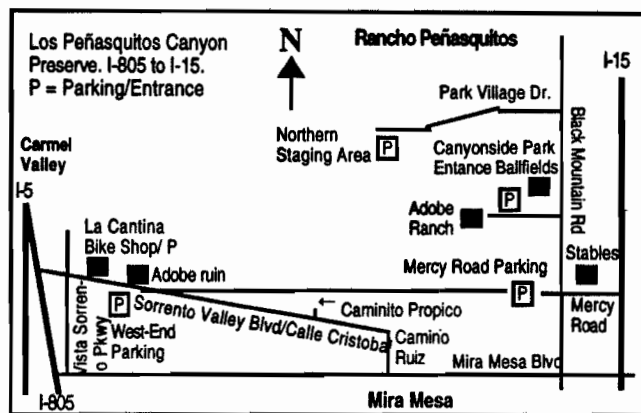
Friday, Sept. 13, 9, 6–8 p.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

New Moon Night Walk

Friday, Sept. 13, 8–9:30 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen for a hike to develop peripheral attention and the ability to see and sense in the dark. Bring a stiff-brimmed hat for use in some of the exercise. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Nature Walk from Northern Staging Area

Saturday, Sept. 14, 8 – 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.



Trash Cleanup, East End Lopez Canyon

Sunday, Sept. 15, 9 a.m. - noon. Help cleanup the east end of Lopez Canyon as it crosses Montongo St. in Mira Mesa. Call Mike at 566-6489 for details.

Bird Walk in López Canyon

Saturday, Sept. 21, 8 - 9:30 a.m. Naturalist and past president, Natural History Museum Canyoneer, Brian Swanson will lead a bird walk suitable for beginners and experienced alike. Bring bird book and binoculars. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd, about 1/4 mile east of Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, Sept. 21, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Volunteer Patrol Training

Sunday, Sept. 22 and Saturday, Sept. 28. Call City Rangers Bill Lawrence or Dion Heller at 538-2480 for details.

(Calendar cont'd)**Dusk Equinox Hike**

Sunday, Sept. 22, 7–8:30 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen to celebrate the Equinox as you explore dusk in the canyon. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends' Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 7 p.m. The Friends' monthly business meeting takes place at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Full Moon Walk

Thursday, Sept. 26, 8–9:30 p.m. Observe the moon from the perspectives of science and mythology. Tonight there is a lunar eclipse! Led by cultural anthropologist Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Dusk Walk to Waterfall from Northern Parking Staging Area

Friday, Sept. 27 6:30-8:30 p.m., Walk about 4 miles roundtrip to the waterfall and back. Good chance to see wildlife. Enjoy the sounds, smells and textures of the Preserve at night. Led by naturalist Mike Kelly. Bring flashlight, insect repellent. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruiz in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Advanced Tracking Class

Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 28-29, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Two day class exploring the finer details of tracking on terrains of variable surfaces. Experience advanced awareness techniques. Prerequisite: Intermediate class and minimum of two tracking walks with tracking team member. Call 484-4007

to reserve your slot. Cost: \$40. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Afternoon Walk with Barbara Moore — López Canyon

Sunday, Sept. 29, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Join naturalist and author Barbara Moore for an evening nature walk in López Canyon. Meet in the west-end parking lot off Sorrento Valley Blvd, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions. Barbara Moore is the co-author of the book *Walking San Diego*. She often has copies available for purchase and autographs.

October**Historic Adobe Ranch Tour**

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. Tours are led by San Diego Archaeological Society docents. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. The Adobe Ranch House is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Friends' Monthly Meeting

October date not yet set. Call 484-3219 the second week in October for date and time.

Calif. Exotic Pest Plant Symposium

Friday, Oct. 4 - Sunday, Oct. 6 this annual symposium will be held at the Handlery Hotel in Mission Valley. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489 for more information.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, Oct. 6, 8 a.m. – noon. Practice your tracking skills with a training walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. Meet at the West-End Parking Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Native Plant Sale at Balboa Park

Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Choose from over 150 species and cultivars suitable for San Diego gardens at the annual Calif. Native Plant Society sale, held in Casa del Prado, Balboa Park (across from Natural History Museum).

Wildlife Track and Sign Quarterly Survey. Training: Oct. 12. Training Survey: Oct. 19 - 27

The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve are inviting the public, high school age and older, to join in a wildlife survey of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The survey will run from Saturday, Oct. 19 - Sunday, Oct. 27 and involves reading wildlife tracks and sign along transects in the Preserve. Training will be provided Saturday, Oct. 12 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the historic ranch house in the Preserve. Bring a sack lunch. Volunteers aren't expected to go out on surveys every day of the survey period, but just to volunteer as much time as they are able to. The surveys will be conducted quarterly and will help develop data on rare species, the travel patterns and wildlife linkages of target species and the health of the wildlife habitat over time. To confirm attendance at the training or for more information call 484-3219.

New Moon Night Walk

Saturday, Oct. 12, 8–9:30 p.m. Join cultural anthropologist Will Bowen for a hike to develop peripheral attention and the ability to see and sense in the dark. Bring a stiff-brimmed hat for use in some of the exercise. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Class

Sunday, Oct. 13, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. One day class emphasizing development of tracking and awareness exercises. Practice positive track identification of basic animal families using knowledge of pressure releases. Prerequisite: Beginning class. Call 484-4007 to reserve your slot. Cost: \$25. Meet at

(Calendar cont'd)

the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, Oct. 19, 1–2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike includes overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Mystery Tree & Native American Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, Oct. 20, 9, 6–8 p.m. Investigate the legend of the Mexican era sign map on trees in the Preserve that describe where the Mission treasure was buried. Visit a Native America grinding site and learn about the plants they used to survive. Should see wildflowers. Led by Vickie Ausen. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Afternoon Walk with Barbara Moore — López Canyon

Sunday, Oct. 20, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Join naturalist and author Barbara Moore for an evening nature walk in López Canyon. Meet in the west-end parking lot off Sorrento Valley Blvd, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions. Barbara Moore is the co-author of the book *Walking San Diego*. She often has copies available for purchase and autographs.

Nature Walk from Northern Staging Area

Saturday, Oct. 26, 8 – 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos.

See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Full Moon Hike

Saturday, Oct. 26, 8-9:30 p.m. Learn about the symbolic meanings of the animals, birds, reptiles, and insects of the canyon from the Native American perspective. Find your own power animal spirit helper. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Halloween Costume Hike

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 7:30-9 p.m. A spooky, scary supernatural walk. Meet the ghosts, goblins, witches, warlocks, and werewolves that haunt the canyon. Please wear a costume and prepare for the unknown! Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Dusk Halloween Walk in Peñasquitos Canyon (Canyonside Entrance)

Thursday, Oct. 31, 5-7 p.m. Enjoy the end of daylight savings time with a dusk walk. Visit the historic grave site. Good opportunity to see deer and other wildlife. Bring insect repellent and flashlight. About 4 miles roundtrip. Led by naturalist Mike Kelly. Meet in the County's white-fenced parking lot in the Canyonside entrance to Peñasquitos Preserve off Black Mountain Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

DIRECTIONS**Ranch House Walks/Tours**

The ranch house is located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain, up hill, U-turn at Truman Street, back down the hill and right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot and walk up path to the ranch house. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 St. 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 south side of Cristobal. Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Cantina Bike Shop Meeting Area

Cantina Mountain Bike Shop is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

Located in Mira Mesa. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Drive

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. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area

Located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

George Johnson's Racetrack

William Bowen, PhD

Introduction

Captain George Johnson, who operated and later owned the Los Peñasquitos Adobe Ranchhouse during the years 1860 to 1880, was a flamboyant individual with several noteworthy and creative projects to his credit, some of which included: whaling at Punta Banda, the dredging of San Diego Bay, planting of False Bay (Mission Bay) oyster beds, and building of Colorado River boats.

Johnson also possessed a keen interest in horses. The historic record indicates that Johnson was himself an excellent and swift horseman who, according to the *San Diego Union* of his day, "swiftly passed other riders on the plank road to San Diego."

Like many other San Diegans of his day, Johnson was an avid fan of the racing of horses. He had ridden and won on his own horse, "Johnson's Bay," at the Mission Course in the late 1850s, and later, as chief of the Peñasquitos spread, brought many fine race horses into his stable, including thoroughbreds, trotters, and quarter horses, all of which gave company to a string of working Mexican ponies. In addition to running his own horses locally, Johnson even booked passage for his thoroughbreds on the steamer "Oriza," taking them up the coast of California to compete.

As the editor of the *San Diego Union* (1869) put it, "The Captain has a great fancy of blooded horses and fine cattle. He has a couple of fine stallions, the pride of his eye, and some of the loveliest colts in the country."

In the latter part of 1869, Johnson was elected President of the 22nd Agricultural District. From this prominent position, Johnson was able to organize and orchestrate the surveying (by James Patterson) and grading (by French and Stone) of a horse racing track at the circular False Bay race course located in the community of Atwood (the present site is a golf course off Garnet in Pacific Beach).

Sometime earlier in the same year, even before the work on the False Bay course, Johnson and his brother-in-

law, Diego Alvarado, appear to have surveyed and laid out a racetrack at Peñasquitos Canyon near Alvarado's house. While they might have had plans for a public competitive course, in all likelihood the one they may have laid out probably would have served only as a "practice course" or was never fully developed. Perhaps they shifted all their attention to the False Bay track which was closer to Old Town.

While there is reasonable doubt as to the actual existence of a canyon race course, there does exist significant evidence pointing to its existence and location.

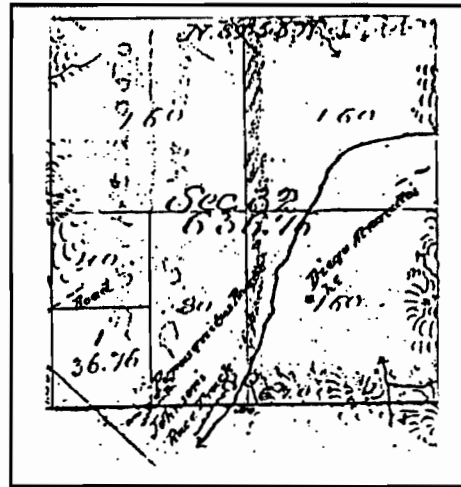


Fig. 1. 1876.

Where is Johnson's race track?

I first learned of the possibility of a horse racing track in Peñasquitos Canyon from John Northrop, a modern horseman-historian of the canyon. While we were discussing the history of the El Cuervo Adobe, Northrop confided that he thought that there once was a practice racetrack in the west end of the Canyon. Northrop was not sure where it was exactly, but he stated, at that time, that he thought it might be somewhere in a flat oval area just southwest of the "Re-vegetation Stream Crossing," which is just west of the canyon "Narrows" — a deep rocky gully a mile or two in from Sorrento Valley (at sewer covers 24 and 25).

Northrop's statements about a racetrack piqued my interest. As I thought about it, many vivid images of horses,

sweaty leather, and flying hooves came to mind. I determined to find the racetrack.

Shortly after, I was reading the first edition of "Rancho de Los Peñasquitos: On the Road to Yuma," by County Historian Mary Ward. I was startled to discover the following statement:

The San Diego Union, 17 March 1869, mentions that [George Alonzo] Johnson surveyed a half-mile race track on his ranch. Contrary to popular belief that Johnson located his race track next to his ranch house, he, instead, laid out his course in the WEST END of Peñasquitos Canyon near the Alvarado house and road from San Diego. (Ward 1984:28 Insertion & Capitalizations mine.)

Filled with adrenalin, I hurriedly raced to the UCSD library and found the newspaper article of March 17, 1869 on microfilm. It read:

CAP. Geo. A. Johnson brought from San Francisco a fine black stallion the other day. He has had surveyed a half mile race track on his ranch and intends devoting time and money to the improvement of his track (San Diego Union 3/17/1869).

Taking the paper at face value, it looks like Johnson had measured and staked out a race course on his land and was planning on investing both his personal time and money into its development.

With a xerox of the Union article in hand, I went back to reread Ward more carefully. Thereupon I discovered that Ward had gone on to prove her contention that the track was at the west end of the canyon by citing a survey map known as: "Township Survey T14 S, R3 W, San Bernardino Meridian, Aug. 14, 1876." Apparently this map showed a racetrack near the El Cuervo Adobe.

If this map was accurate, I thought, the track would have been on Diego Alvarado's ranch, not Johnson's! The article should have read "He has sur-

➡ next page for more

(Racetrack cont'd)

veyed a half mile race track on his brother-in-law Diego Alvarado's ranch . . ." Perhaps Johnson was such a newsworthy big name character that he was associated with all of Peñasquitos Rancho. Then again, if the map was inaccurate, was the race track actually located east near the present day Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos Ranch [formerly Johnson-Taylor ranch house], as some canyon historians have speculated?

In the interests of sorting this out and determining the precise location of the racetrack and thus contributing to the history of the west end of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, which has been shamefully and indecently neglected, resulting in a waste of a precious historical resource [the adobe ruin], I went to Survey Records, San Diego County Department of Public Works, located near the intersection of Ruffin Road and Claremont Mesa Boulevard, to find themap.

The map and related survey materials were easily accessible in microfilm files. I xeroxed a copy of this map, some related others, and samples of the accompanying surveyors' notes.

Soon afterward, Dr. Northrop added to the information I already had at hand by providing me with a 1985 aerial photograph of the west end. The idea, suggested by Northrop and echoed by Dr. Paul Chace, a local archaeologist, was to see if any pattern could be seen in the vegetation of the west end which might indicate a race course had once existed. It was thought that the presence of the course might have altered the subsequent regrowth of the vegetation, and could be seen from the air. I examined both this photograph and an earlier one, dated 1922, also obtained from suvey records.

The 1876 survey map

The 1876 Township Survey Map (see portion, Fig. 1, 2), was confirmed by the Surveyor General's Office in San Francisco, California, August 14, 1876, and later by the General Land Offices of the Department of the Interior in Washington D.C. on February 4, 1907.

The map covers Peñasquitos and López Canyon, as well as Carmel Valley and mesa top. It is laid out in 36

sections, numbered left to right then back right to left. Lugardis Sheep Camp is located in Section 2, John MacGonagol's House in section 21, Johnson's House in 24, and Alvarado's House in 32.

Also in Section 32, at about a 45% angle directly southwest of Alvarado's House, at the distance of about 1/2 a section, slightly west and south of the section midline and continuing slightly into Township 15, are the words "Johnson's Race Track," which are handwritten and underlined with a squiggly line. The words are written at an angle, up to the right, in a fashion similar to the labeling of Alvarado's House, written as "Diego Alvarado's." The words "Johnson's Race Track" are placed on the north side of where Peñasquitos Creek is drawn in.

On first viewing this map I thought that the location of the racetrack must be north east of the La Cantina bike shop near the three old cottonwood trees at the west end because the words had been penciled in north of the creek. Shortly thereafter, John Northrop and I walked this area and imagined where a course might of been. Somewhat later, Northrop suggested that it might be farther northwest, under the powerlines.

However, I soon realized that we were off because we had not considered that the creek had changed course since 1876. In fact, Don Albright (a founder of the Friends and native of San Diego) told me that when they built Sorrento Valley they changed the run of the creek, moving it north of its original lay. I am not sure if this is when they used dikes to move it, but dikes are evident on the 1985 aerial map.

Subsequently, I concluded that the present day location of the race track would be south of where Peñasquitos Creek is now. In fact, if you extrapolate to a modern topographic map (Fig. 3), which has the same sectioning as the early maps, the race course would lie right along the sidewalk and road adjacent to build-

ing complex which includes the La Cantina bike store! Both the race course and the La Cantina building are both slightly west and south of the bottom of the midline of section 32 where they racetrack was penciled in on the 1876 map.

A drawing from 1883

A drawing on page 168 of the "History of San Bernardino County", which was published in 1883, shows a representation of the rancho residence of Diego Alvarado in Soledad, San Diego county. While the county road, house, barns, orchard, and cattle are shown, there is no race track shown. However, neither is Penasquitos Creek shown.

The 1884 survey map

The 1884 Surveyor's Map (Fig.4) was approved on May 20th of that year in Surveyor General's Office in San Francisco. It shows Johnson's house and the Alvarado House but it does not show the race track. Incidentally, this map also shows the Dolores School House in section 7 and Blue's House in section 18, both of which are not on the 1876 map.

Since Johnson had to forfeit the ranch in 1880, the race track would probably have been in neglect by 1884. Indeed, in the early 1870s, Johnson moved his family down to Old Town due to his wife's grief over a lost child and only occasionally checked in up at the ranch house. So he would not have had the same opportunity to race up there. In addition, in August 1874, Johnson's prize race horse, "Phil Sheridan," which I think he bought in San

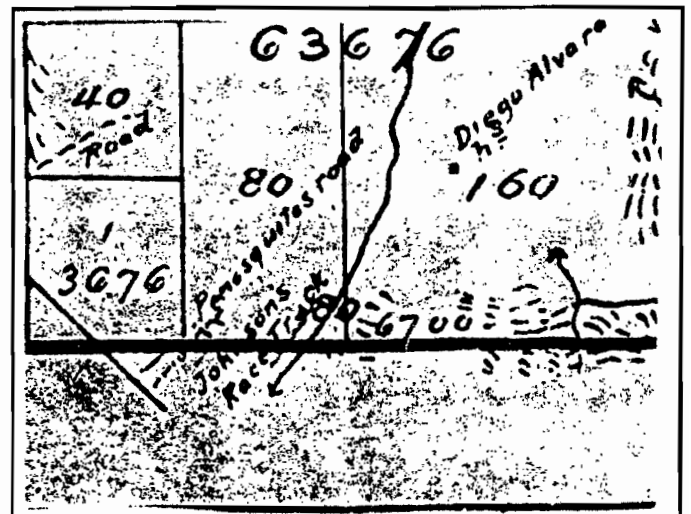


Fig. 2. 1876.

(Racetrack cont'd)

Francisco in 1869, and for whom his personal track may have been built, died (Phil Sheridan is buried at an unknown location in the canyon).

The 1895 survey map #63

This hand drawn map (Fig. 5) shows the county road northwest of Peñasquitos Creek and Alvarado's House. It does not show a race track.



Fig. 3. Modern.

The 1903 topographic map

A topographic map dated 1903 shows no indication of a racetrack in Peñasquitos Canyon.

Township 15 maps

None of the historic Township 15 maps, which is directly south of Township 14, and which according to the 1876 map would contain a part of the race course, show one.

Surveyors' notes

None of the surveyor's notes that were included with maps mentioned a racetrack, although other structural features of the canyon and plants are described.

Aerial photographs

On the 1985 aerial photograph you can see the El Cuervo Adobe, the dikes that altered Peñasquitos Creek, and the remains of several old roads. But there is nothing that looks like an oval 1/2 mile race track. It is very hard to tell anything from the 1928 aerial photograph.

Other archaeological and historical evidence

I talked to geological engineer Lee Bibb, a friend of Mary Ward. He suggested I look for fence posts that might indicate a track. I found some under the

cottonwoods at the west end. But I had no way of knowing how old they were, or if they were to enclose cattle or the old orchard that was once there. One is covered with black tar and rocks, apparently a historic process to prevent weathering. They are labeled B57 and F90, which may offer some clues to those that understand this coding.

According to Mary Ward, Pete Nelson, a volunteer docent in the canyon has found many references to Johnson's racing activities in San Diego in the San Diego Union microfilm files. However, none of these articles mention racing on the Peñasquitos property.

A site survey of the race track area, which was shown on the 1876 map, is impossible now because of Sorrento Valley development. In addition, in the past this area has been at times under up to five feet of flood water.

Still if the track was laid out 1869 and noted by surveyors in 1876 — a 7 year period, it must have had some stable presence.

What the critics say

There is opposition to the idea that the race track was laid out at the west end of the canyon. Reputable critics say that it would be more reasonable to think it was near the main Johnson-Taylor Adobe where the horses were kept. These critics have charged that the old maps of San Diego are wrong. They ask, why would Johnson put the race track so far from his stables at the main residence?

There are two ways for the maps to be wrong. One is due to error or a mistake. Mary Ward, the noted San Diego historian, claims error is unlikely because the old time surveyors took great pains to be as accurate as possible. Fraud is also a possibility. Perhaps George Johnson had the surveyor draw in the race track location, or told the Union a lie, and the race track did not exist at all. Perhaps he was just trying to create an impression.

Mary Ward says that it is not unreasonable to put a race track at the west end. This would make it closer to the main road to San Diego and Los Angeles. As it was, it took 2 hours by horse, and, later, 40 minutes by railroad, to get up to Peñasquitos from Old Town.

Speaking of the railroad, although it

was not built through Sorrento Valley until the early 1880s, it seems likely that such an adroit and entrepreneurial figure as George Johnson must have known of its coming and been planning for it. As it was, the railroad line was laid out very close to the reputed site of Johnson's racetrack. Once the railroad was in, race horses could be more easily transported from San Diego and Los Angeles, and thus not be worn out before they raced.

Note also that Diego Alvarado, Johnson's bother-in-law who lived very close to the reputed track, also raced horses, such as one named "Pumpkins."

Conclusion

At this point in time the existence of a Peñasquitos Canyon race track is not confirmed. We need more evidence. If such evidence was found then a plaque commemorating the site should be placed. This would be something the horsemen of the canyon would particularly appreciate. It would also be a step toward correcting the rapidly developing, almost criminal, neglect of the west end as a cultural resource.

The west end of the canyon, including the El Cuervo Adobe, corral, old roads, orchard, wells, fences, and possibly racetrack, along with the wetlands, are incredibly important and valuable and make Peñasquitos canyon even more of a significant place. We need to put more work into them and not just focus on the Johnson-Taylor [Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos) area. As it is, the El Cuervo Adobe and corral are deteriorating rapidly as the City complacently yawns.

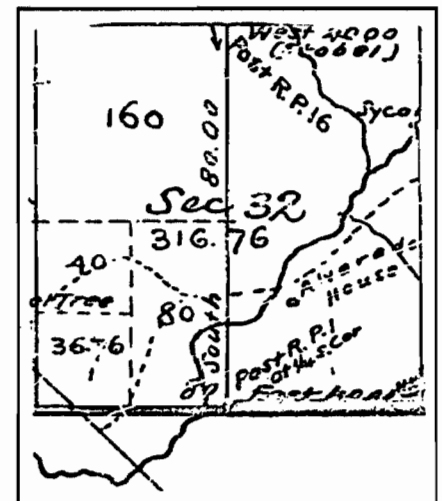


Fig. 4. 1884.

(Racetrack cont'd)

Recently, someone shamefully, though perhaps legally, removed the cattle squeeze gate from the old corral. That squeeze gate was one of the more precious treasures of the west end and those selfish individuals who took it should consider all the children, and adults, who will not be able to have a chance to view something important, up close and first hand, from the old cattle days of the Peñasquitos.

Recommendation

Even though it might be premature to place a commemorative plaque for a race track, I think we ought to consider giving a name to each of the horse hitching posts in the canyon. I think it would be a nice idea to name them after Johnson and Alvarado's race horses. An Eagle Scout could brand the wooden hitching posts or paint the metal ones with identifying names, such as, Phil Sheridan, Pumpkins, Regent, Little Agnes, Pele, Johnson's Bay, Mission Belle, Mountain Boy, Mormon Chief, and Jim Hawkins. This would also be a helpful way to further site identification and help us

remember the colorful history of both the canyon and San Diego.

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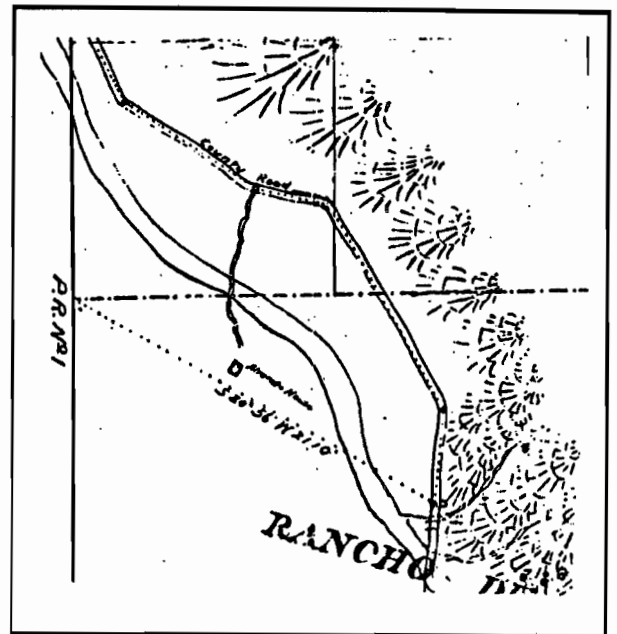


Fig. 5. 1895.

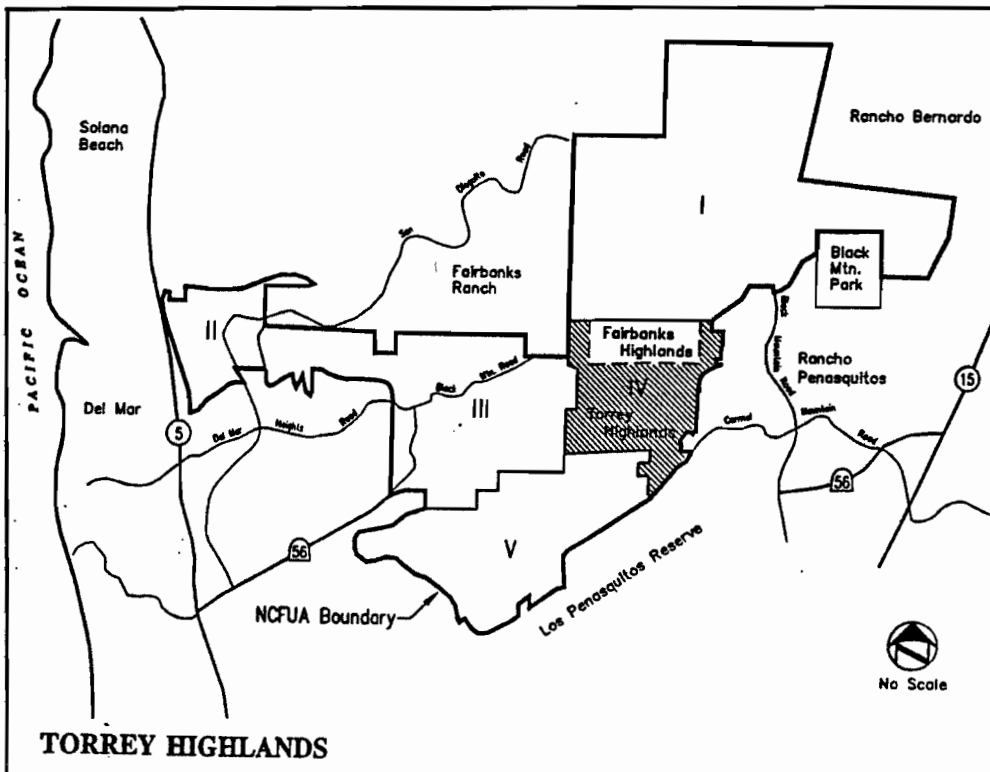
(Ballot cont'd)

project in Subarea I north of Black Mountain did this with several thousand (but not all) of their land. Their golf course/estate home plan was approved by the City Council in 1994.

Subarea V which includes most of the undisturbed Del Mar Mesa, also decided to develop at lower densities. Their plan was approved by the City Council in July of this year. (About 63% of the land will be preserved as open space.)

Torrey Highlands - Subarea IV

The small- to medium-sized landowners of Subarea IV decided to develop a Subarea Plan called Torrey Highlands. They involved many community and environmental groups in the planning process over the last year. The City Council voted to approve the final plan and to place a phase shift vote for Torrey Highlands on the Ballot. It is Proposition H. The Friends, along with the Sierra Club, League of Women Voters, the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Planning Board and many others support a Yes vote on Prop H. We feel the landowners complied with the spirit of Prop. A in developing their plan and produced a workable plan for the area. This plan protects and will enhance the key



The five different subareas of the Future Urbanizing Area are shown in this schematic map of the area. Torrey Highlands, Subarea IV, is highlighted.

Next Quarterly Wildlife Survey: October

Training will be held October 12, and the transects will be surveyed between October 19 and 27. More volunteers are always welcome.

Please call the Friends' voicemail system (484-3219) and leave a message in the Wildlife Survey mailbox to sign up.

Kevin Williamson, and Dean Woods), approximately 20 miles of transects throughout Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve were surveyed over a nine day period. The survey was an excellent opportunity to practice tracking skills and see the canyon in a new light.

This Wildlife Track and Sign Survey was designed to monitor the wildlife of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and to enhance environmental awareness, community involvement, and appreciation for local habitats by encouraging volunteer participation in the study. It's intended that this study will allow the determination of the following:

- the presence or absence of certain rare species and other target species (which can reflect the health of the ecosystem);
- substantial changes in wildlife populations over time;
- the use of different habitats by the target species (which could lead to the identification of critical habitat areas and corridors).

We hope that the information gathered in this study will be used to identify potential restoration and/or mitigation opportunities for important habitats and corridors in support of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Plan.

Wildlife surveys such as this are not new to Peñasquitos Canyon. In the late 1980s, the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve formed a joint field team with the San Diego Biodiversity Project to map existing and potential wildlife corridors to the north. Developments to the east, west, and south precluded the possibility of fully functioning corridors in these directions. This field team developed a set of corridor maps; these maps were presented

to the Environmental Divisions of public agencies such as the City of San Diego and CalTrans as well as before community groups and landowner organizations. After a period of review and refinement, the joint team organized a field trip with noted conservation biologist and wildlife habitat expert Professor Mike Soulé, as well as biologists from several agencies, that validated the wildlife corridor mapping. This mapping subsequently influenced the need for and location of wildlife corridors in the Framework Plan for the Future Urbanizing Area of the City of San Diego, Neighborhoods 10 and 8A (in Carmel Valley) and other areas. Later, these corridors were included in the Multiple Species Conservation Program plan for the City and County of San Diego.

The founding of the Friend's Tracking Team in 1993 led to additional important wildlife survey work in the Preserve, particularly around a wildlife tunnel that was constructed under López Ridge as part of the residential development of this ridge. This work and related work on wildlife corridors east through Sabre Springs and west under the I-5/I-805 merge in Sorrento Valley have added valuable data to the study of what makes for successful and unsuccessful wildlife tunnels and corridors. These tracking surveys evolved into the transect based Wildlife Track and Sign Survey which was initiated in July of 1996.

Before the survey began, twenty transects were designated within Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, and each transect was described according to terrain and habitat type. Much attention was given to the vegetation along the transects so that correlations can be made between animal activity and habitat type. A transect is a section of trail approximately one mile in length, which was walked by teams of three or four people in search of tracks and other animal sign (such as browse, scat, dens, or rubs). For this survey, we have chosen bobcat, coyote, fox, mule deer, opossum, raccoon, and woodrat as our target species, but we are also looking for any sign of the following rare species: badger, black-tailed jackrabbit, cougar, long-tailed weasel, and roadrunner. Transect teams included a tracking team member, a photographer, a

Hold These Dates

Oct. 4-6 Calif. Exotic Pest Plant Council symposium in San Diego. Call Mike at 566-6489 for brochure.

Oct. 12 Calif. Native Plant Society annual native plant sale in Balboa park, Casa del Prado patios. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

navigator, and a data recorder, though sometimes people would fulfill more than one role. Transects through areas with heavy human use were surveyed early on weekday mornings, others were surveyed on weekends or after work so that they could fit a variety of schedules.

Some of the early risers were rewarded with an encounter with a doe and her fawn; others saw tracks of the elusive black-tailed jackrabbit. We were amazed to see turtle tracks along the main trails at the west end for hundreds of yards at a time, and we were relieved to see fresh deer tracks through the wildlife tunnel even with all of the construction on López ridge. Overall, we saw so much that it will take a while to enter all the data into the new database, but we will undoubtedly be pleased with the results.

This quarter's survey was kicked off with a one day training workshop presented by the Tracking Team, and it ended with a BBQ at Mike Kelly's house where we shared stories, pictures, and scat samples.



Mountain Lion track and scat

Ranger Report

Thoughts from the New Guy on the Block

City Ranger Dion Heller

I came to San Diego from Iowa about ten years ago. (We were known for our corn, not potatoes.) Upon arrival here, I found myself in search of the open spaces that I was so accustomed to — and which there were definitely no shortage of in Iowa. It was sometime after this search began that I stumbled across this peaceful place called Los Peñasquitos.

The more time I spent here, the more I appreciated the canyon's beauty and uniqueness: from the once ancient marine terraces of the mesa tops to the ever-changing streambed of Peñasquitos Creek, from the sprawling elder oak tree to the frail mesa mint of the vernal pool, from the black shouldered kite hovering on the wind overhead to the large-mouth bass suspended motionlessly in a pool at the stream's edge.

But wait, then reality returns, you are still within the sixth largest city in the U.S. It's escapes like this that give us peace of mind. The canyon then almost takes the form of a spiritual friend.

For literally thousands of years, people have been drawn to the refreshing water, the cool shade of the trees, the abundant wildlife, and the diverse plant life of this canyon oasis. Why is

it so surprising that in these stressful days in which we live, we are still escaping to this beautiful canyon. That's not surprising. What is surprising is how some of these people care for this spiritual friend, this shelter in which we retreat.

The impacts upon this land are on the rise and accelerating. Maybe it's the confusion of not being able to separate what's going on outside the confines of the preserve with what should be happening on the inside. It doesn't have to be this way. We need to stay focused on the big picture. We need to be able to distinguish between what is beneficial and what is detrimental to the preserve. Make adjustments where they are needed to keep the system as a whole intact — a system that protects *our* cultural and biological resources, allows us to enjoy and observe these precious resources, not deplete them.

Next time, when you are strolling down the trail and you catch a glimpse of a deer nibbling on the grass or are sitting in your backyard on a nice quiet evening and you hear the chorus of coyotes break into song, consider yourself blessed. For how many other people in the sixth largest city have what you have in your backyard?

(Ballot cont'd)

wildlife corridor for Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. This corridor will be a vital link from the Subarea V open space across the Del Mar Mesa to the Black Mountain open-space park to the north, helping protect our wildlife from isolation and decline.

Stallion's Crossing - Subarea II

The two Subarea II ballot measure, Props F and G, the Villas and the Villages at Stallion's Crossing, however, don't deserve your support.

These two projects come from Roy Collins' San Dieguito Partnership.

Both would be situated down in the San Dieguito River Valley, a highly sensitive environment and site of the River Valley Park. These projects were reluctantly placed on the ballot by the City Council as the result of a law suit filed by Collins. For many years this partnership has resisted the voter-induced requirements of Prop A for comprehensive planning, refusing to cooperate with the other landowners in the Subarea or in the FUA. Finally, after years of litigation, the City settled by agreeing to place a phase shift vote

Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following folks who recently joined the Friends. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Gemma Bowden
Coit Family
Doug Hansen
Page Mehlhaff
Peter & Karla Pollich
Karen & Lee Waggoner
Dave White Family

Goodbye to Trinity

After many years of volunteering with the Friends, Trinity Gabriele is moving out of town. Trinity was a member of the Board of Directors, headed up the hikes committee, volunteered on many weed wacking expeditions and led hikes, including the half marathon ones! We'll miss you Trinity.

for these two projects on the ballot for November. However, the City Council has **not** called for a yes vote on these projects. A no vote would force the developer to cooperate with serious planning for this environmentally sensitive area. The Friends, the Sierra Club, the Carmel Valley Planning Board and many others are calling for a **No** vote on these projects. They violate the spirit of Prop A and they would negatively impact the San Dieguito River Valley.

Volunteer Accomplishments

Mike Kelly

Thanks to the following volunteers for their great effort during the hot summer months.

Native Grass Restoration Project: Thanks to Suzanne Jones for organizing volunteers for her Silver Badge project of helping to restore native perennial bunchgrass in the canyon. Her volunteers worked on very hot days to remove an invasive plant, fennel, which is taking over the grasslands in the Preserve (and throughout San Diego). This exotic weed becomes so tall and dense it prevents raptors such as the Black-shouldered kite from hunting in what were once grasslands. Her volunteers included: Debbie and Rachael Carlton, Ray and Eve Jones, Stephen, Jim and Betty Scneider, Rachael Carl, Karen Waggoner, and Mike Kelly.

Weed Warriors. More than 100 volunteer hours of chopping, pulling and spraying weeds to restore native vegetation were put in on the part of Mike Kelly, Holly Boessow, Mel Howe, Joan Stewart, Robb Hutsel, Will Bowen, Liz Rozycki, Randy Reid, Linda King, and Cindy Burrascano.

Endangered Monardella Survey. Renenne Mowry and Mike Kelly did the annual survey for this endangered plant in Lopez Canyon.

Wild Life Surveys. See the article in this issue for the names of the many folks who easily put in more than 100 volunteer hours into the surveys.

Thanks as always to our many interpretive walk leaders: Brian Swanson, Les Braund, Chris Bader, Vicki Ausen, Mike Kelly, Will Bowen, Barbara Moore and Don Albright.

Rancho Roundup

by County Supervising Ranger Reneene Mowry

Rancho Garden Update

Well, folks, there is good news and bad news regarding the rancho vegetable garden. The bad news is that we will not be having the Saturday morning farmer's markets as anticipated. The good news is that we have the healthiest mule deer in San Diego County!

Our local deer families have been feasting on a vitamin-laden repast of acorn squash, crook-neck squash, butternut squash, and zucchini squash. The discerning connoisseurs, however, turned up their noses at the spaghetti squash after sampling it, and also avoided the corn. Other gourmet tidbits enjoyed by these night-marauding denizens were pumpkins, watermelon, cucumbers, and tomatoes.

Not to be left out, the local rabbits also participated in the feast and destroyed a bountiful bed of beets that had been tenderly raised at her home and transplanted by Kathy Buco.

Since the failure of our notorious habenera chili pepper-and-Hinder "brew" to discourage these greedy beasts, we are trying to protect our remaining plants, which include several types of tomatoes (one of which is a heritage plant — the marvel striped tomato — mid 1800s) and a variety of gourds, with increased fencing.

Meanwhile, the Tracking team reports that the Ranch House garden is serving as a superb laboratory for teaching their trainees the nuances of wildlife tracks!

Upcoming Opportunities

Call Mike at 566-6489 to volunteer for any of the following:

Acorn gathering. If you would like to gather acorns for future planting give Mike at call at 566-6489. We can't set a date far in advance since the acorns should only be picked when perfectly ripe. We'll plant about half of these straight into the ground and germinate and grow the remaining half.

Stream side planting. It's almost time to replant the area near the ranch house where the exotic palms were removed. We'll have over a 100 rooted cuttings of cottonwood, willow, and mulefat to put in the ground. We will schedule this after the first saturating rain of the fall season (November?). Call to get on the call list since we can't predict when it will rain!

Stream survey. It's time to do some surveying again. We want to focus on our turtle survey and restoration but have had problems finding turtle traps. We'll also do some more chemical and benthic resting.

Hike Leader Training. We will be beginning our training of new hike leaders in July. If you would like to become a hike leader call the above number. No experience needed!

Wildlife Track and Sign Survey. See article in this issue.

Power Tools Training. This workshop had to be rescheduled. Will probably be held in October. Ever wanted to learn how to use a chainsaw or brush saw? The City will be providing a safety and maintenance training for volunteers in Peñasquitos Canyon and other open space parks. Call Mike for details and to get on the call list. This is **not** just for men! Some of our best chainsaw volunteers are women.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
Vice-President to be filled
Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke,
Lani Noreke, Brian Swanson

Walks and Committees Leaders

Bird Walks: Brian Swanson 695-2209
Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937
Hike Committee: To be filled
Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen
452-7091

Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen

Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958

Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Vickie Ausen

Tracking Walk: Chris Bader

Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly

Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly

Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007),
Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen,
Lee Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, Susan
Potts.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10

Family \$15 Sponsor \$25 Patron \$100

Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)

Hikes

Indian Culture

9/96

Educational Workshops

School, Family, Youth Programs

Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

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 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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619-484-3219

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Canyon News

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

Nov./Dec. 1996
Volume 10 No. 6

Friends' Annual Meeting

Environmental Crime in San Diego

FBI Special Agent David Strange

Friday, Nov. 15:

6:30 p.m. Social. Free refreshments

7:00 p.m. Annual Election

7:15 p.m. Speaker

FBI Special David Strange will speak on the San Diego Hazardous Waste Task Force, the role of the FBI in catching environmental criminals and past cases the Bureau has worked on in San Diego. The talk is free and open to the public. A question period will follow. Beginning at 6:30 p.m. there will be free refreshments. A brief election for officers for the Friends will be held at 7 p.m. and the talk will begin shortly after. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call **484-3219** for recorded directions.

Stream-side Restoration Planting

Saturday, Dec. 7, 12 - 4:30 p.m. and

Sunday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Join the Friends for a two-part restoration project Saturday and Sunday. You will be finishing the stream restoration project begun the fall of 1995. Small tree saplings and shrubs will be planted along Peñasquitos Creek, near the adobe ranch house, to replace the invasive palms removed a year ago. The willows, cottonwoods, and sycamores were grown from cuttings taken from the Preserve! Work involves filling some holes, digging others and planting the trees. Wear old clothes and gloves — prepare to get dirty! Wear water-proof or old boots if you have them. Bring digging bars, posthole diggers and wheel barrows if you have any. Bring water. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489 for more details and to **confirm** attendance.

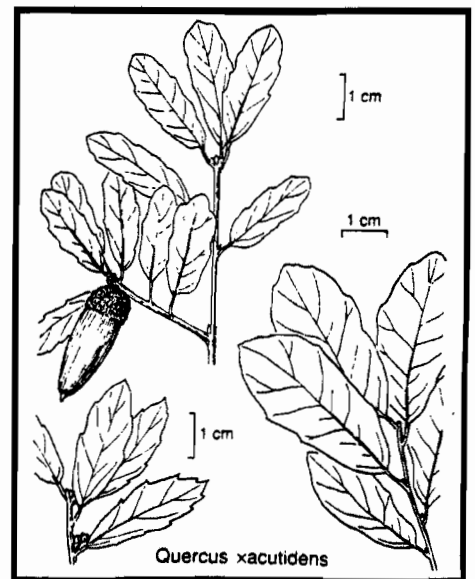
Highlights Inside

Calendar of Activities	2
Wildlife Surveys Producing Useful Data	5
Save the El Cuervo Adobe	6
XMas Party at Adobe	7
Frogs & Toads '96	8
Oaks in the Canyon	9
Welcome New Members	10
Thanks Volunteer	11
Volunteers	11
Friends' Directory	12

Mystery Oak Tree Identified

Mike Kelly

For several years now, we've puzzled over a mystery oak tree found in the Preserve. We first found this tree in López Canyon about a mile west of the Camino Santa Fe Bridge and east of the Old López Trail. It occurs at the toe of the south side, north-facing



Hickman, 1993. *The Jepson Manual*

➡ p. 9 for more

Winter off to Good Start — Flowers Ahead?

The Preserve has already received over 1.5 inches of rain as we go to press, well ahead of last year's pace. If this pace keeps up we should have at least an average, if not above average, rainfall this winter/spring. This bodes well for our vegetation, especially wildflowers. The latter did poorly last year, as did many shrubs. This in turn caused a decline in the food supply for many animals. As we head into the holidays look for mistletoe in the trees and the red berries of Toyon or California Holly as it is known. With the dust washed off the shrubs and trees this is a refreshing time to visit the preserve. Why not join us on one of our walks?

Outings are free. Wear sturdy shoes; bring water. **Rain (not drizzle) cancels.** For details or group hikes, call 484-3219 for recorded information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always needed to help with conservation or other activities. Call Mike Kelly at 566-6489. The Friends have ongoing wildlife surveys, stream surveys, invasive weed removal projects, seed collection and planting programs to name a few. We also need help with organizational aspects of our work.

November

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. Tours are led by San Diego Archaeological Society docents. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. The Adobe Ranch House is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Waterfall Walk from Northern Staging Area
Saturday, Nov. 9, 8 – 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking- Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Ruíz in Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

New Moon Nightwalking

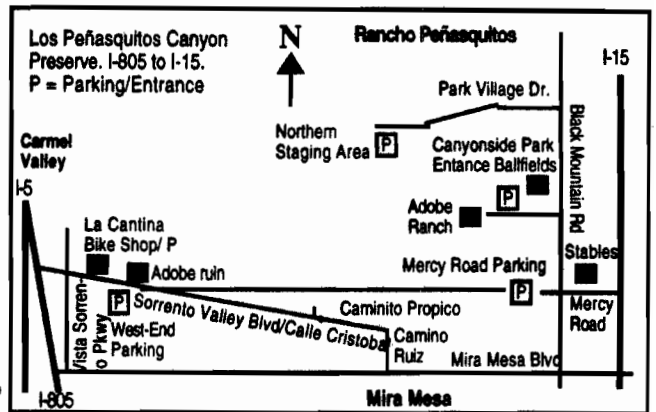
Saturday, Nov. 9, 7:30 - 9 p.m. A hike to tune into the world of nature at night. Learn to better sense and see in the dark. Contrast the night mind with the daylight mind. Please wear a stiff brimmed cap for use in peripheral attention exercises. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, Nov. 10, 8 a.m. – noon. Practice your tracking skills with a training walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. Meet at the West-End Parking Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Bird Walk in East End

Sunday, Nov. 10, 8 - 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Kiosk by the gate for a general bird walk led by Brian Swanson, former president, Natural History Museum Canyoneers. Bring bird book and binoculars. Park in the Mercy Road lot opposite the intersection of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. There is a \$1.00 fee for parking. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.



Nature Walk from Mercy Road

Sunday, Nov. 10, 9 a.m. This 3 - 4 mile round trip, moderately paced walk will introduce you to many of the beautiful trees and shrubs that populate the Preserve. Join Linda King, a member of the Natural History Museum Canyoneers, for this refreshing fall walk. Meet in the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Old Wagon Trail Walk from West End

Sunday, Nov. 10, 9 a.m. Join John Nothrop, PhD., author of "Riding 'Round Peñasquitos'" for a walk up the old wagon trail from Peñasquitos Canyon to Carmel Valley. The walk will begin at Cantina Mountain Bike Shop, cross the creek and climb the steep wagon trail to the top of the mesa top. Great views of the canyon below. About 2 - 3 miles round trip. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208 or call 484-3219** for recorded directions.

Fish Creek Desert Kit Fox Habitat Restoration Project in Anza Borrego / optional campout Friday and Saturday night.

Saturday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. Join the Friends and the Calif. Native Plant Society restore native wildlife habitat by removing tamarisk, a highly invasive shrub from the washes of this spectacular canyon system. Light to moderate work. No experience necessary. Participants can camp over Friday and/or

(Calendar cont'd)

Saturday nights in the Fish Creek Primitive Campground. Previous volunteer work parties have seen the Desert Kit Fox! Call Mike at 566-6489 for details and directions.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, Nov. 16, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike will include an overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Big Morongo Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat Restoration Project North of Palm Springs/ Option campout Friday and Saturday nights

Saturday, Nov. 23, Join Bill Neil, desert restorationist and the Desert Protection Council to help restore the habitat of the Vermillion Flycatcher in this Preserve by removing tamarisk, a highly invasive shrub that is destroying water holes and native wildlife habitat. Light to moderate work. No experience necessary. Free camping Friday and/or Saturday nights if you like. A beautiful area. Call Cindy Burascano at 421-5767 for details and directions.

Full Moon Hike — Living the Sky
Saturday, Nov. 23, 7:30 -9 p.m. Learn about how Native Americans saw the night sky — moon, stars, and constellations. Includes stories, drumming, and signing. Led by cultural anthropologist Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

10-K Walk-a-bout to the Waterfall from Mercy Parking Staging Area
Sunday, Nov. 24, 9 a.m - noon. Cool weather is a good excuse for a walk-a-bout to get fit for the holidays. Recent rains mean lots of water is flowing through the falls. California Holly (Toyon) should be sporting its red berries

and mistletoe decking the sycamores. Join Vickie Ausen for this 6-mile walk to the waterfall and back. Bring sun protection, water and a snack. Meet in the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level,, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Geology Walk

Sunday, Nov. 24, 9 a.m - noon. With cool weather our popular geology walk is back. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the Preserve's waterfall. With recent rains there should be lots of water in the falls. Meet at Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa. From the west take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Blvd. to Camino Santa Fe. Right on C. Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac on south side of Cristobal. Park legally. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

November in the Chaparral

Friday, Nov. 29, 3 - 4:30 p.m. Pioneer San Diego naturalist W.S. Red Bud Head, author of the Elfin Forest used to say that, "November is the nicest month in the chaparral." Enjoy the elements — the warm sun, cool air, and clear vistas on this sensory nature hike. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

December**Historic Adobe Ranch Tour**

Every Saturday there are free guided tours of San Diego's oldest residence, Rancho Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos, at 11 a.m. and lasting for 45 minutes. Tours are led by San Diego Archaeological Society docents. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds. The Adobe Ranch House is located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho

Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Friends' Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, Dec. 4, 7 p.m. The Friends' monthly business meeting takes place at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Waterfall Nature Walk from Northern Staging Area

Saturday, Dec. 7, 8 – 10 a.m. Join naturalist Les Braund for a nature walk to the waterfall area of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Good chance to see major habitats and learn about biodiversity. Meet at the Northern Parking-Staging Area at the intersection of Park Village Drive and Camino Rufz in Rancho Peñasquitos. See **Thomas Guide p. 1189** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Intermediate Tracking Walk at West End

Sunday, Dec. 8, 8 a.m. – noon. Practice your tracking skills with a training walk led by the Friends' Tracking Team. Meet at the West-End Parking Area off Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

New Moon Nightwalking

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 7:30 - 9 p.m. A hike to tune into the world of nature at night. Learn to better sense and see in the dark. Contrast the night mind with the daylight mind. Please wear a stiff brimmed cap for use in peripheral attention exercises. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd., 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. See **Thomas Guide p. 1208** or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.

Tracking/Nature Walk at Ranch House

Saturday, Dec. 14, 1 – 2 p.m. Learn how to track animals and discover the natural environment they live in. Hike includes overview of the animal surveys being conducted in Peñasquitos

➡ next page for more

(Calendar cont'd)

Canyon Preserve. Led by Chris Bader. Meet at the Adobe Ranch House in Rancho Peñasquitos, located off Black Mountain Road near I-15 between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

Nature Walk from Mercy Road
Sunday, Dec. 15, 9 a.m. This 3 - 4 mile round trip, moderately paced walk will introduce you to many of the beautiful trees and shrubs that populate the Preserve. Join Linda King, a member of the Natural History Museum Canyoneers, for this refreshing fall walk. Meet in the Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area, upper level, at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

* **Solstice Hikes**
Saturday, Dec. 21. Morning sunrise: 5:30 - 7 a.m. Evening sunset: 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Watch the sun rise and set. Learn about the importance of solstice rites in ancient cultures. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Winter Solstice Bird Walk in East End

* Saturday, Dec. 21 8:30-10:30 a.m. Look for winter visitors on this first day of winter. A Zone-tail hawk has been seen here the last two winters. Meet at the Kiosk by the gate for a general bird walk led by Brian Swanson, former president, Natural History Museum Canyoneers. Bring bird book and binoculars. Park in the Mercy Road lot opposite the intersection of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road in Mira Mesa. There is a \$1.00 fee for parking. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189 or call 484-3219 for recorded directions.**

* **Geology Walk**
Saturday, Dec. 21, 9 a.m. - noon. Cool weather brings back our popular geology walk. Join Geologist Don Albright for a walk through time, including the waterfall. Meet at Caminito Propico and Calle Cristobal in Mira Mesa.

From the west take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east. It becomes Calle Cristobal as it passes Camino Santa Fe. The next street is Propico. From the east, take Mira Mesa Blvd. to Camino Santa Fe. Right on C. Santa Fe, then right on Calle Cristobal to Propico. Park in cul-de-sac south side of Cristobal. Park legally. Steep trail. Bring water, sun protection. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

* **Holiday Full Moon Hike**
Monday, Dec. 23, 7:30 - 9 p.m. Celebrate the holidays New Age style, with songs, stories and guided meditations. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

* **New Years Eve Hike**
Tuesday, Dec. 31, 7:30 - 9 p.m. Hike and reflect on the past year. Includes ritual plus singing and drumming. Led by Will Bowen, PhD. Meet in front of Cantina Mountain Bike Shop in Sorrento Valley, located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of the I-5 and I-805 merge. **See Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

DIRECTIONS

Ranch House Walks/Tours

The ranch house is located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain, up hill, U-turn at Truman Street, back down the hill and right into the Canyonside Park entrance to the Preserve. Go past ballfields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot and walk up path to the ranch. house. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Caminito Propico & Calle Cristobal

This intersection is located 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 St. 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 south side of Cristobal. Park. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Cantina Bike Shop Meeting Area
Cantina Mountain Bike Shop is located at 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The bike shop is on the right in the first set of buildings. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. The last building on the left houses the bike shop. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area
Located in Mira Mesa. Take the Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Proceed straight across the intersection into the parking lot. Meet on the upper level. **See Thomas Guide p. 1189.**

Northern Parking-Staging Area at Camino Ruíz and Park Village Dr.
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.**

West-End Parking-Staging Area
Located off Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, on the south side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard, about 3/4 mile east of its intersection with Vista Sorrento Parkway. From the east or I-15 take Mira Mesa Boulevard west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Boulevard to the bottom of the hill. The entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5 or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Boulevard east through the business district. As you pass the last building on the right look for the Preserve entrance on the right, just past the curve. **Thomas Guide p. 1208.**

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Quarterly Wildlife Surveys Producing Useful Data

Mike Kelly

The Tracking Team recently completed the second quarterly Wildlife Track and Sign Survey in the Preserve. For those wonder if such tracking data can be useful, here's a good example. With our surveys we hope to show the presence and absence of certain wildlife, especially in wildlife corridors or linkages, and identify problems affecting this wildlife. The "merge" is a case in point.

The merge wildlife corridor: functional or nonfunctional?

One of our 20 transects runs from Cantina Bike Shop west along the south side of Peñasquitos Creek (channelized at this point) to the "merge" where I-5 and I-805 cross the channel. Also crossing the channel farther west are Sorrento Road and the Santa Fe Railroad Bridges. This channel is the only connection from Peñasquitos Canyon to Sorrento Valley and Torrey Pines Lagoon.

The Friends' quarterly wildlife surveys of July and October of this year, as well as earlier surveys by experienced trackers, show heavy use of this corridor between the preserve and the lagoon by coyote, bobcat, mule deer, fox, racoon and other animals. The only major carnivore not detected using this corridor to date is the Mountain lion. This finding contradicts the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) reporting on this corridor. [MSCP Plan Draft EIR/EIS, City of San Diego Implementing Actions. B.1.4.2, p. 4.3-88-90. C6. The Subarea Plan for the City of San Diego also discusses this linkage in the text, p.21]. This report seems to have relied on an otherwise excellent 1992 report "Baldwin Otay Ranch Wildlife Corridor Studies," issued by Ogden Environmental. This report used the Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Torrey Pines Lagoon and Miramar Naval Air Station corridors and linkages as a baseline of functioning and nonfunctioning linkages to compare the Otay project to. Ogden's report found no sign of mule deer, mountain

lion, or bobcat using the merge corridor.

Our surveys gave us the solid data that allowed us to make observations during the MSCP comment period to promote a more balanced view of this linkage. This is important if we hope to keep this corridor — now the only one functioning in the north city area since the old dirt Carmel Mountain Road corridor (heavily used) closed — it's now a 6-lane paved freeway.

Corridor problem identified

Our most recent survey also identified an additional problem challenging wildlife attempting to travel between these park areas: *arundo donax*.

Barry Martin, tracking team leader, told me that he was amazed at the growth of *arundo donax* (giant reed) in the channel west of the merge. In just three months between surveys it had grown enough to effectively block the channel, making it difficult for wildlife to penetrate. It had been cut down the previous year as part of a flood control measure. This up to 32 foot tall grass is known for forming an impenetrable barrier that blocks wildlife movement and promotes flooding — two good reasons to get rid of it.

The latest survey also noted that shrubs that provided cover for wildlife movement had been removed in back of J&W Redwood, just west of the merge.

Based on the team's observations, we have decided to put a special habitat team into the area to study this portion of the merge corridor to map a campaign of improvements we see as needed for this area to promote effective wildlife passage.

We included a series of measures to improve the functioning of the corridor through this area as part of our MSCP comments.

It's easy to underestimate this linkage because it is narrow and dark with rip rap on either side, extensive mud flats along the bottom and runs beneath five freeways, roads and bridges. The noise from the traffic

above makes it impossible to hear anything near or under it. Despite these drawbacks, wildlife use it, including coyote, fox, mule deer, bobcat and many smaller animals. It is a fully functioning wildlife corridor despite its obvious constraints, and will require careful management and enhancement to protect its function as a corridor. It is a vital link to Torrey Pines State Park and Peñasquitos Lagoon.

Fall Wildlife Volunteers

Thanks to the following volunteers who turned out for the tracking surveys, often as early as 6:30 a.m.!

Chris Bader	Reneene
Rick Botta	Mowry
Neil Bouscaren	Erike Noreke
Uli Burgin	Lani Noreke
Henry Cornejo	Joan Raymond
Kevin Crooks	Liz Rozycki
Lisa Ellis	Susan Potts
Terry Goge	Jonathon Starr
Dan Fiske	Spring Strahm
Mike Gibbs	Byron Wachtler
David	Kathleen
Gottfredson	Wachtler
Pat Holland	Karen
John Keating	Waggoner
Mike Kelly	June Warburton
Alan Kiraly	Bill Witzell
Lee Kirchhevel	Dean Woods
Barry Martin	

A special thanks to Lani Noreke for organizing the transects and volunteers as well as participating in them. Special thanks also to Barry Martin and other members of the core tracking team for countless hours spent training new volunteers and honing their tracking skills.

Next survey: late January. Sign up now for easy training. Call Friends' Voice Mail at 484-3219.

Save the El Cuervo Adobe

Will Bowen, PhD

The El Cuervo Adobe is a delapidated adobe structure located at the far west end of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. It's one of three adobes in the canyon and it's the one in the worst state of neglect and disrepair. El Cuervo means the crow or the raven in Spanish.

El Cuervo was once a fine Spanish period hacienda, probably built between 1834-1838. It was home, until the 1880s, of Francisco Maria Alvarado, and later his son Diego Alvarado, and was standing intact until the 1950-60s. The El Cuervo now consists of only two or three partial sections of adobe walls, which are offered protection by a surrounding iron fence and a wooden roof, installed by the city in the early 1980s.

In previous times, when it was thought that the El Cuervo was the original adobe built by Francisco Ruíz in 1824, there was momentum to save and restore it. Now the current city policy toward the El Cuervo, as was told to me in different ways by two knowledgeable individuals, is, (1) to, "let it decay so that we can see how long it takes for an adobe to collapse," or, (2) "to leave it as an example of what happens when you do not care for an adobe."

This policy, in either form, seems to me to be the product of a highly questionable logic. It is somewhat equivalent to saying, "We could save the endangered Red-legged Frog but we are going to let it go extinct, just to see how long it takes for a species to die out." Or, following this same train of thought, we might also say, "We are going to use the dying out of the Red-legged Frog as an example to show people how, if we don't take pains, a species will go extinct." For, don't you see, old Spanish period adobes are about as rare and endangered as Red-legged Frogs.

No one seems to know what to do about this policy: some have accepted it, some think it is reasonable, others are bogged down in indecision and inaction, still others seem to be politically or intellectually buffaloed.

Granted the El Cuervo would need

a major restoration. To accomplish this, what we really need are a few more people in the canyon like Mary Ward, a local historian and senior citizen, who had the gumption to stand in front of a bulldozer to protect some of San Diego's fine old Victorian Houses, which were later restored and moved to Old Town.

We need that same kind of commitment and passion for the El Cuervo and any other remaining abodes in San Diego County. For isn't an adobe, which is older and even more rare than a Victorian House, all the more worth saving?

There is no doubt that the El Cuervo is an important and significant historic structure. At this point we just don't know exactly how important it is. We don't know conclusively when it was built, who built it, what its function was in canyon operations, or even why the land it is on was called El Cuervo!

Granted the El Cuervo may not be quite as important as the Rancho Santa Maria (Johnson-Taylor adobe) site; now considered the original site of the Ruíz adobe; but surely it is more important than the Mohnike adobe. One wonders if it is as important as the adobe at Guayome, former home of San Diego pioneer Cave Couts, which was recently restored?

We can say that the El Cuervo was a fine example of Spanish period architecture (Santa Maria & Guayome are later Anglo-Spanish style), was probably where General Kearney's troops stopped on the way back from the battle of San Pasqual, and was the focal point of canyon operations from approximately 1838 to 1862, when George Johnson spent \$30,000 to rebuild the old Ruíz adobe.

Whatever the case, it's foolish to let the El Cuervo further decay into nothingness. Too many of the fine adobes of the California Rancho days have melted away. Indeed, it's an utter shame that the El Cuervo has deteriorated so far, because it was standing as an intact roofed building until the 1950-60s, when rains first collapsed the roof and then marauding cattle messed up the walls. Indeed, it would

have been much easier to have restored the El Cuervo before the years from 1974 to 1981, when the most radical disintegration took place.

We are now faced with the possibility of making one of two errors. On one hand, we could make the error of wasting money needed elsewhere restoring a relatively unimportant adobe that is too far gone anyway.

On the other hand, we could not spend the money and find out that the El Cuervo was more important than we thought, and thus make a grievous historical error. Of course, the first error is far less serious than the second.

Some of us have tried to care for the El Cuervo and have been stymied. Two winters ago, Mike Kelly and I wanted to sand bag around the adobe to protect it from flood waters. City representatives said, "don't bother, we are going to let it decay." What madness — to let an adobe from the Spanish period decay! Don't you know that there aren't many of them left! Local historian Mary Ward says most of them have gone to the elements.

Ideally, we want to protect, repair, restore, and maintain all three adobes in the canyon — not just the Rancho Santa Maria (Johnson-Taylor adobe). The El Cuervo, in particular, is ideally located to serve as a west end interpretative center focused on the history and archaeology of the western portion of the canyon and Soledad Valley. In addition, with our blossoming west end wetlands and stream so close by it could also serve as a center for wetlands and riparian studies — where we might monitor the re-introduction of the Red-legged Frog or a native fish.

I have heard people tell me, "We have already discussed these issues, Will!" Well, let's keep the dialogue going. For instance, there has been some talk that the El Cuervo could be better rebuilt at another location because the current one is subject to flooding. But the truth of the matter is that the El Cuervo did not succumb to flood waters (in over 140 years) but to a leaky roof, nosy cattle, and neglect! I agree with Mary Ward — it is unacceptable to rebuild on other than the original site.

(El Cuervo cont'd)

We need to keep it where it is!

I have also heard that we can't rebuild in the original site because runoff from development is supposed to make flooding in the canyon far more serious in the future. I think this is speculation. I think we could protect the El Cuervo from washing away.

Some unanswered questions

The precise history and chronology of the El Cuervo adobe is little known and extremely confusing. Many different and conflicting accounts can be found in newspapers, books, and other related historical accounts. Some of the questions that are pressing to be answered include:

1. When was the El Cuervo adobe built? Why was the land on which it was built called El Cuervo?
2. Who built it? Why was it built?
3. Who lived in it? Diego, Francisco Alvarado?
4. Was it inhabited after Diego Alvarado? By whom?
5. What role did it play in canyon operations through the years?
6. What does the archaeology of the site tell us? Do we need to have the excavated artifacts reexamined by experts, eg. the bullet casings? How does the archaeology relate to the known history of the site?
7. How important is the El Cuervo adobe?
8. What is the relationship of the El Cuervo to the Soledad Rancho of Sorrento valley?
9. How did the notion that the El Cuervo was the original Ruiz adobe develop in the first place?
10. Did General Kearney and his troops stop at the Rancho Santa Maria (Johnson-Taylor adobe) (described by George Johnson as "a small thatched-roof adobe hut" or the El Cuervo, a fine Spanish hacienda, after the battle of San Pascual?
11. Did the center of operations of the canyon switch to the El Cuervo from the old Ruiz adobe until George Johnson went about rebuilding it?
12. Could the El Cuervo be rebuilt or restored? Cost? Would flooding be an insurmountable issue?

13. Do we need to change the site markers or do anything to keep the El Cuervo from further deterioration?
14. What should we do about the corral and old barn material lying on the surface? Should we keep the corral up?
15. Could the El Cuervo become an interpretative center for the history and archaeology of the West End and Sorrento Valley? What about a research center for wetlands and riparian studies?

A call to action

Like its history, confusion surrounds the proper course of action regarding the El Cuervo. I would like us to keep the dialogue going and widen it to include more than the just the CAC (Citizens Advisory Committee), Friends Board of Directors, and immediate professionals.

I hope all concerned citizenry and readers of this newsletter will become involved. I trust that all who care about the soul of the past will step forward. Let us know what you think; what you want. Could you commit time, money, materials, thought, some skill or expertise to helping save a rare adobe from extinction? I want to see the El Cuervo restored. I think it is important and should be. I hope you will join with me in seeing this come to pass.

Annual XMas Party

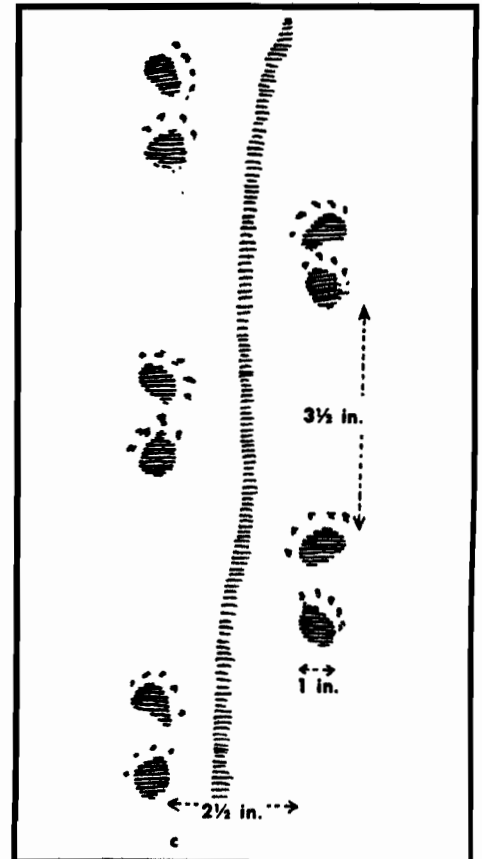
If you're a volunteer in the Preserve with the Friends, the Archaeological Society, the Ranch Docents, or the Volunteer Patrol, you're invited to the annual XMas party.

The dinner is potluck. There will probably be a white elephant gift exchange as in past years. Call Reneene the first week in December at 484-7504 for the date and time and what to bring. The party will be held at the adobe ranch house.

New Members

Welcome to the following folks who recently joined the Friends. Call to let us know (566-6489, Mike) of any suggestions for improvements you might have.

Nancy Acevedo
Elizabeth Billyard
Edward Dibella
Vesta and James Dineen
Minou Djawdan
Elisabeth Ellis
Cheryl Fleenor
Jae Gregory
Doris Nating Browning
Lauren Ostrow
Ron & Joyce Peterson
Darryl Rideout
Gail Samuels



Turtle tracks (Murie, O. 1982. Animal Tracks. Peterson Field Guides.

Frogs & Toads 1996

Will Bowen, PhD

Introduction

According to local anuran (frog & toad) aficionado, Edward Erwin, 1996 was, "Not a good year for frogs and toads." I would have to agree. This past winter and spring were unseasonably hot and dry with very little rainfall. I watched many frog and toad egg masses and tadpoles dry up and die under the blistering heat of a blazing yellow sun. While a few to low-moderate amount of toad and froglets did make it to adulthood in various locations, on the whole, this year's generation was markedly reduced in number. Fortunately, the low maturation level of periodic dry years, like this one, are figured into the overall ecological adaption patterns of our anurans and not necessarily deleterious in the long run. Happily, too, I was able to rescue some doomed eggs and tadpoles and raise them to adulthood.

In this article I'll comment on what I saw occurring in several important locations in regards of various anuran species, report on the Friends unsuccessful attempt to locate adequate canyon habitat for the endangered Arroyo Toad (*Bufo microscaphus*), note a possible Red-legged Frog (*Rana aurora*) siting, and tell a little bit about my personal experiences raising up frogs and toads this past season.

Peñasquitos Canyon

Early on in 1996, I found the first anuran egg masses of the year across the stream from the El Cuervo adobe at the West End of Peñasquitos Canyon in Alvarado's old orchard. In the transparent green gooey jelly-like birth envelope were the tiny black eggs of the Pacific Treefrog (*Hyla regilla*). I monitored their birth puddle, watching them until they all dried up, save a few I saved. I did not see any egg masses or tadpoles in the nearby creek itself, which is not surprising given the depth of the water in the pools, the speed in riffles, and the ever-present predatorial presence of large-mouth bass.

In consulting with Joe Copp, a reptile expert, about the anurans of Peñasquitos Canyon, I noted his expressed surprise that we were not find-

ing Western Toads (*Bufo boreas*) in the canyon on the trails. The fact is, I have never seen a toad in Peñasquitos or López Canyon. I've only seen Spadefoot (*Scaphiopus hammondi*) toadettes on Carmel Mountain and Spadefoots and Western toadettes at or near the Del Mar Mesa Vernal Pools Complex. It could be an important question to determine why this is so. [Editor's note. Mike Kelly observed a Western Toad about 1/4 mile east of the waterfall on the north side in September after dark.]

West end wetlands

Our growing West End wetlands produced a bumper crop of invasive, exotic Bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*) this past year, more than I have ever seen before. I found many giant Bullfrog tadpoles in the water near the mouth of López Canyon and even more westward in the small pond way up under and past the sycamore trees. I noted a large number of Bullfrog tadpoles dried up in the sun in August, but many young Bullfrogs did make it.

One really important finding was that I found several tadpoles, about bullfrog size, with pink underbellies at the West End. They were quite distinct from the usual Bullfrog tadpole which has a white to whitish yellow underbelly. Joe Copp thinks these might have been Red-legged frog tadpoles. This would be a major and significant finding because it is believed that Red-legged frogs may be extinct in San Diego County. Though my finding was not confirmed by experts, Joe Copp was open to accepting it because he thinks that if any place in San Diego still had Red-legs it would be Peñasquitos Canyon.

Unfortunately, by the time the significance of what I had seen had dawned on me, as I did not immediately realize that what I had found might be the Red-legged frog, the pools had practically all dried up. When I went back for confirmation all I could find were bunches of dried up tadpoles lying in the baking mud and a few Bullfrog tadpoles and froglets in the small amount of remaining water.

Copp says that I should have looked around better under the nearby sycamore trees where the Red-legged might have been hiding in and around the roots. He stated that he has noted Red-legs living near Bullfrog populations in other California locations, even though the Bullfrog will prey on Red-legs. It is imperative that we look for Red-legs in this area next season.

López Canyon

The intermittent stream that flows down López canyon was pretty dry this past year. However, there were some areas where water collected and remained. I was not able to find any frog egg masses but I did note a small to moderate number of singing Treefrogs. On our annual Frog full moon hike we had the great pleasure of watching Tree Frogs mating in the big pool out near the Old López house.

Unfortunately, only a small number of Tree Frogs made it to adulthood in López Canyon.

Del Mar Mesa vernal pools

This year I found only a small number of Treefrog tadpoles in the scanty water, all of which had collected in the road pools. Very few Treefrogs must have made it to adulthood, even though there were several staggered egg layings.

I did not see any Spadefoot tadpoles or toadettes like last year at the Vernal Pools. Nor any Western Toad young like two years ago. However, in a large muddy road pool outside the complex to the northeast I did note about 30-50 Spadefoot tadpoles.

Mira Mesa vernal pools

I sadly noted many dried up tree frog adults, tadpoles, and egg masses here. I do not think any made it to adulthood. Neither did I see any Spadefoot tadpoles as in years past.

Carmel Mountain

I was able to identify egg masses of the Spadefoot toad in this location. In fact this is probably the best locale for them I have seen. Their egg masses are very similar to that of the tree frog

Status of Oaks in the Canyon

Mike Kelly

slope and up to 75 feet up on the slope. This particular area was in a fire about 5 years ago and is easily recognized. This small oak tree, up to 18-20 feet tall, was also found in the major finger canyon entering López Canyon from the south side above the Camino Santa Fe Bridge, the Winterwood finger canyon.

This year the Friends surveyed for this tree and found it extending all the way up López Canyon past Montongo Street. We also found it in Peñasquitos Canyon just west of the I-15 Bridge, again on the north-facing slope. We also found it upstream in Sabre Springs.

Alan Pepper, our former Conservation Director, believed it to be an Englemann hybrid. Englemann oaks (*Quercus Englemannii*) are a relatively rare, large evergreen oak common in the foothills and mountains of San Diego. It is known to cross with a variety of other members of the white oak subgenera, including scrub oaks. We believed it to be an Englemann-scrub oak hybrid. We were right — and wrong!

This fall we collected samples of the leaves and acorns from several of these trees. We sent these to Fred Roberts, author of *Illustrated Guide to the Oaks of the Southern Californian Floristic Province*. Fred was kind enough to examine the samples and call me with an identification. These oaks are *Quercus acutidens*.

This hybrid is a cross between *Quercus englemannii* and *Quercus cornelius-mulleri* (Muller's oak). It's a stable, recognized hybrid first described by Torrey and characterized then as a distinct species — but recognized as a hybrid later. These hybrids are fertile and reproducing — apparently for a long time going by the large numbers we've seen.

If you go to visit these oaks, be aware that both Coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and scrub oaks (*Quercus dumosa*) coexist in the same areas.

Fred pointed out that some groups of oaks in California are notorious for cross breeding and forming hybrids. This is probably due to the geological and floristically young age of California — evolution is still proceeding at a fast pace here relative to other areas. All of our niches have yet to be filled!

General decline

In much of California oaks are in trouble. Besides the vast acreages lost to development, agriculture and grazing, oak regeneration has declined dramatically even in areas with lots of oaks. It's thought that overgrazing by cattle — which like young oaks — is a problem. Another cause is thought to be the invasion of exotic annual European grasses which form dense mats under existing oaks and prevent acorn germination.

Progress in Peñasquitos

In Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, however, oaks are doing well. We have excellent oak "recruitment" (establishment) all over the canyon. This process has been accelerated by two processes: removing the cattle from the canyon and combating exotic invasive plants that were crowding out seedlings and saplings in many areas.

For example, in the old Poway sewage ponds located west of the ranch house, we've spent 6 years eradicating artichoke thistle (*Cynara cardunculus*). About 50% of the plant cover in these 14 acres of old ponds were this one weed! Most of the rest was Broom baccharis (*Baccharis sarothroides*). Beginning two years ago I started to notice Coast live oak seedlings and saplings doing quite well in these ponds. These and other natives (a few exotic weeds too) have been "released" by taking out the thistle. They have places to germinate and are released from the competition of this weed.

Volunteer Plantings

Four years ago, some of you will remember helping grow Coast live oak seedlings from acorns and planting them as part of volunteer work parties. We planted in three different sites. We didn't "pamper" them with supplemental water in the summer months.

Fred mentioned that as much as 60-70% of the "Englemann" oaks in San Diego have some evidence of hybridization, but usually only 10-15%. They should still be called Englemann's.

Our conservation director was a proponent of promoting "tough genes!" We've kept an eye on these over the years. Here's how we did.

Nine of 25 seedlings survived west of the riparian strip west of the ranch house, two are getting to sapling stage. Southeast of the equestrian center, 7 of about 25 survived. Southeast of the waterfall none of about 25 survived! Yet the latter area has scrub and live oaks colonizing the same area!

Our goal was to "jump start" several areas where oaks belonged, but had been suppressed or replaced by agriculture, grazing and road construction. In two areas we have succeeded. We will plant more in all three areas this year. It's been a good year for acorns. The trees — and now the ground — are covered with them. We have gathered several hundred, including Coast live oaks, *Quercus xAcutidens* (see article) and scrub oaks. When next we plant oaks in the ground, I expect we will do a bit of "pampering" and do supplemental watering during the hot dry summer months to improve surviveability.

Cara Knott Memorial Oak Park

About 6-7 years ago Sam Knott, father of Cara Knott approached the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Preserve and the Friends about establishing a memorial for his daughter, Cara, on what is known as the Mercy Property. His daughter was slain on this spot just east and under the I-15 Bridge by a California Highway Patrolman. Sam's concept was to promote the planting of rare oaks, grown from local acorns, by the families of victims of violence in this area. Given the place and nature of the crime and since the area has been repeatedly disturbed by old sewer line and now a new sewer pump station we enthusiastically supported the project and worked with Sam over the years to refine it. It became a reality last spring when an official dedication ceremony was held. The trees will be planted in a natural fashion. There will be a modest memorial plaque site where the names of victims of violence will be placed.

(Frogs and Toads cont'd)

accept that each little black egg has its own little sac within the big envelope. The large road pool way up on top of the mountain had probably 50 or more toad tadpoles in it and a very few Treefrog tadpoles. I think some of the toads made it here.

Stalking the Arroyo Toad

The highlight of the year was being introduced to the endangered Arroyo Toad by Joe Copp. On our first outing Joe lead Mike Kelly and I into López Canyon to see if we had the right kind of habitat for the this toad. They are very specific in their need for a shallow water sandy bank environment. Unfortunately, we could not find what we were looking for which dashed our hopes for finding or reintroducing this anuran.

Later on we three met again for a journey up to the San Luis Rey River to continue our search. As night fell we found ourselves walking the banks of the river listening to the trill of the Arroyo Toad call above the louder and more prevalent chorus of the Tree Frog. We spotted about 16 adult toads crossing from the upper terrace over the little road down to the river. Still later in the year, I went back alone and was able to identify small numbers of the very delicate speckled Arroyo toad tadpole hiding under the algae masses in the rivers shallow waters. The wide shallow sandy river habitat, with an upper terrace, of the San Luis Rey is very distinct and different from what we have got in our canyon. In my opinion, I would say the Arroyo Toad has become endangered because there is not much of the unique habitat it needs and because it is fairly delicate, at least in contrast to the hardy Spadefoot toad.

California Tree Frogs

I went up to the area around Sunrise Highway on a relatively cool July day. I walked down into a canyon gorge where I found some pools of water. In it were the tadpoles and froglettes of the California Treefrog (*Hyla cadaverina*), a close relative to our coastal Pacific Treefrog. These little frogs look like the Treefrogs in our canyon except they have do not have an eye stripe and are a gray toadish

looking color. I think they are much hardier and voracious than our Pacific Treefrog.

Raising up tadpoles

I took on the difficult and time consuming task of trying to raise up tadpoles this year because I thought that the Friends needed some experience in doing so. It seemed that the day might come when we might be forced into raising and restocking our anurans. Indeed, it really is not out of the realm of possibility that we might need to begin to raise and restock other species, such as mammals and fish, to insure stable populations in our canyon preserve.

What I found was that some anurans, like the Spadefoot Toad and the Bullfrog are very hardy and easy to bring to adulthood. Others, such as the Pacific Treefrog are hardy as tadpoles, but extremely delicate as froglettes (little frogs). Still others such as the Western Toad are fragile as tadpoles but hardier as toadlettes. Its a "learn as you go" process in raising tadpoles with constant correction to minimize the unavoidable losses.

It's a really powerful and wonderful experience to watch an anuran egg turn into a tiny tadpole and then become an adult. In fact, it is a little hard to believe it is so amazing. I would highly recommend that any one who had the opportunity watch this utter miracle take place.

Currently, I have several adult Bullfrogs, one of which likes to jump up and grab my finger. They, like the California Tree Frog and Spadefoot Toad intimidate each other and vie for the most food. He that gets the most food grows the fastest and has the best chance of survival.

I also have several of the adult California Treefrogs doing well. I could not get any of my Pacific Treefrogs to live more than a few weeks, but I think one could learn to keep them going given enough experience. My first batch of Spadefoot Toads have been dug down under the ground in their home for several weeks now. The second batch is still small so they dig down and come back up ever day to feed. I still have some Spadefoot tadpoles awaiting transformation even now at this late date in October. I think that in the wild the Spadefoot must

gorge and grow rapidly while its still wet and then dig down when they have grown larger and it is dried up. The Spadefoot is a delightful creature with and excellent personality. They are a real pleasure. Joe Copp calls them "outstanding." I had to resort to feeding them with a pair of tweezers because its hard for them to catch live crickets when they are very small but they some how must if they are to survive. They will jump at it and wrestle with it sometimes turning over on their back. You see, they only eat things that move. My first batch used to line up all turned toward the direction I usually feed them. I had the amusing fantasy that they called me "Big Face in the Sky" (how I must have looked to them).

Conclusion

It is well within the realm of possibility to raise up anurans for restocking in our canyon, especially as we get more experience under our belt in this "learn-as-you-go" undertaking. We could raise and then re-introduce frogs and toads as we needed them depending on population survey results.

There is some hope that the Red-legged Frog might still exist in our canyon but the possibility of any Arroyo Toads is really remote. We really need to watch our non-native Bullfrog population, which grew by leaps and bounds this past year. I do not see any problems with the abundant Pacific Treefrog. I am worried about the Spadefoot Toad population on Carmel Mountain and I hope we can insure their survival. Its obvious we should have more Western Toads in our canyon. We need to find out why they aren't there. I hope the ones that were at the Del Mar Vernal Pools two years ago do come back next year.

The Friends have already raised and restocked some plants and trees in the canyon, but not much has been mentioned about other species. I think the raising and restocking of anurans, fish, reptiles, birds, or even mammals is something we now seriously need to consider to insure their future existence in our canyon preserve.

Volunteer Accomplishments

Mike Kelly

Thanks to these volunteers for their great effort during the hot fall months.

Montongo Street/East End of López Canyon Cleanup.

Some 29 volunteers turned out from the Mt. Carmel High School Girls Volleyball Team and the Friends to take out 4 pickup loads of trash from the Montongo Street Detention Basin area of López Canyon and to remove various exotic invasive weeds Sept. 15. They included Volleyball coach Nick Fotias and his team: Alex League, Jennifer Larson, Cassie Piercey, Jaime Piercey, Michelle Acria, Soma Lukens, Christina Lukens, Megan Humphrey, Jennifer Johnson, Mischa Clark, Jamie Schanback, Jaime Sever, Sarah Johanson, Tara Thomas, Cerissa Klein, Jill Talbot, Cynthia Rosello, Joann Dugue, Matt Clinefelter, Roy Arbulus, Michelle Wales; and Friends volunteers: Kathy and Lindsey Crampton, Robb Hutzel, Vickie Ausen, Holly Boessow, Liz Rozycki, Mike Kelly

Ranch Riparian Restoration

Oct. 26 9 volunteers continued the ongoing restoration of habitat for deer and other critters near the ranch house. The team removed more than 157 exotic palm trees that had invaded the area, destroying native habitat. The volunteers included: Gemma Bowden, Holly Boessow, Robb Hutzel, Melanie Howe, Randy Reid, Doug Fenske, Mike Kelly, Matt Perlatti, and Chip. This is part of the same area that December's planting will be helping to restore.

German Ivy Control

Thanks to Bertha McKinley, Joan Stewart, Cindy Burrascano of the California Native Plant Society and Holly Boessow and Mike Kelly of the Friends for their latest contribution to controlling this highly invasive South African vine. This vine has already engulfed the Bonsal Preserve and is heavily impacting the Elfin Forest and areas in Escondido. It is in incipient stages of invasion in Sabre Springs, Marian Bear and Tecolote. It is best known for over running coastal canyons up and down the coast. It is gaining a reputation as the "kudzu of the west."

Acorn Gathering

Vickie Ausen, Mike Kelly, Holly Boessow, Cindy Burrascano, Rick Botta, Liz Rozycki and Reneene Mowry helped gather hundreds of acorns from Coast live oaks, Scrub and hybrid oaks (see article this issue) for growing trees and shrubs for future restoration plantings in the Preserve.

CEQA Workshop

Vickie Ausen and Brian Swanson attended a morning workshop on the California Environmental Quality Act held at Mission Trails in October. This is invaluable for people like the Friends who want to see the Act fairly applied. It's especially useful for learning how to evaluate and comment on Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs).

Exotic Weed Wacking

Mike Kelly, Melanie Howe and Holly Boessow put in over 52 hours (besides projects listed above) removing invasive exotic weeds including tamarisk, giant reed, fennel, Siberian elms, Catalpa, palms, eucalyptus, teasle, castor bean, Brazilian pepper, pampas grass and tree tobacco from Sabre Springs to the "merge."

Monardella Survey

Thanks to Reneene Mowry and Mike Kelly for finishing the survey of the endangered Poway mint (*Monardella linoides viminea*) in López Canyon.

MSCP Meetings

Mike Kelly has been attending what seem like endless meetings of the Multiple Species Conservation Program planning effort. Although the meetings can be frustrating, planning the 171,000 acre future open space is critical for preserving San Diego's habitats and wildlife.

Upcoming Opportunities

Call Mike at 566-6489 to volunteer for any of the following:

Weekday Time? If you're working a night shift, unemployed, part-time, retired or a student, and want to help with plant surveys or exotic weed removal call Mike. He usually goes out 2-3 times a week for short sessions.

Voice Mail System Coordinator.

The Friends need a volunteer willing to coordinate updating messages on our new voice mail system and taking messages off and getting them to the right person. Can be done by telephone from home.

Volunteer Coordinator. We have a long list of folks who want to volunteer, but don't always have the time to call them or to send them postcards when projects come up. We need someone to coordinate our list and call volunteers for appropriate projects.
Stream side restoration. See article first page.

Fish Creek Desert Kit Fox Habitat Restoration Project in Anza Borrego / optional campout Friday and Saturday night.

Saturday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m. See calendar for details.

Big Morongo Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat Restoration Project North of Palm Springs/ Option campout Friday and Saturday nights. Saturday, Nov. 23. See calendar for details.

Hike Leader Training. We will be beginning a new training of hike leaders in December/ January. If you would like to become a hike leader call the above number. No experience needed!

Wildlife Track and Sign Survey. See article in this issue. Next training: January 1997.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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President: Mike Kelly 566-6489
Vice-President to be filled
Treasurer: Brian Swanson 695-2209
Secretary: Vickie Ausen 271-9040

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Don Albright, Les Braund, Barry Martin, Erik Noreke,
Lani Noreke, Brian Swanson

Walks and Committees Leaders

Bird Walks: Brian Swanson 695-2209
Geology Walk Leader: Don Albright 443-5937
Hike Committee: To be filled
Medicinal Plant & Night Walks: Will Bowen
452-7091

Mystery Tree Walks: Vickie Ausen

Nature Walk: Les Braund 566-3958

Newsletter: Mike Kelly, Vickie Ausen

Nursery Director: Liz Rozycki

Tracking Walk: Chris Bader

Vernal Pool, Fire Ecology & other walks: Mike Kelly

Stream Survey Committee: Mike Kelly

Wildlife Survey Committee: Barry Martin (484-4007),

Chris Bader, Rick Botta, John Fisher, Tarja Jacobsen,
Lee Kirchhevel, Erik Noreke, Lani Noreke, Susan
Potts.

Membership Application

Membership category? Circle below:

Senior (62) or Student \$7.00 Individual \$10

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Corporate \$250 Life \$1000

Contribution \$ _____

I/We are interested in the following:

___ Volunteer to help the committee (call me to discuss)

___ Hikes

___ Indian Culture

11/96

___ Educational Workshops

___ School, Family, Youth Programs

___ Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Please make checks payable to:

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Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call 484-3219 or 566-6489 for more information.