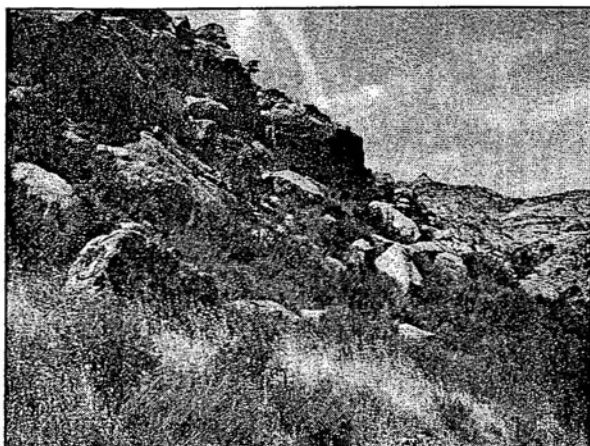


November 2006 Newsletter



View of Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park

BREAKING THROUGH

by: Carla L. Henry

Duncan, Spanky and I drive through the Santa Susana Mountains: at the precipice of dawn when stretched shadows of scrub oak, chaparral and road signs reach across the snaked road hazardously marred with potholes and stones as Duncan's nose poised through the sunroof catches wind currents while Spanky stares ahead only to whimper at squirrel and rabbit sightings and I wince as Duncan presses his paw into my leg and the warmth of him pushes into my side so I reach over to rub Spanky behind his lopping ear just before we ascend the earth glazed in cadmium orange glow bursting through the backdrop of evening's wrap to twist the gristmill of fate that prevented us from finding dog bones and praise of others.

The Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains periodically assists in the acquisition of land that is being acquired or may be acquired by federal or state agencies that have funding shortfalls. Contributions to the Foundation are tax-deductible; please consider the Foundation while making year end contribution decisions. Donations should be made payable to The Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains, and sent to P. O. Box 4831, Chatsworth CA 91313-4831.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING Monday, November 20, 2006 – 7:15 p.m.

Geology and Tectonics of the Santa Susana Pass Area: How Earthquakes Built the Hills

Jim Shirley is a Planetary Scientist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory who is currently working on the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter Mission to Mars. He has lived in and around the Simi Hills for more than 20 years. Jim obtained his Masters degree from the Department of Geosciences at Cal State University Northridge in 1995. He edited an award-winning Encyclopedia of Planetary Sciences that appeared in 1997. He is a long-time environmentalist and member of the SSMPA.

Jim's talk will describe the origins of the sandstones and other rocks that form the Simi Hills and surrounding areas, and will show how plate tectonic motions and earthquakes have produced the interesting landforms of the Santa Susana Pass area. The presence of geologically young fossil beds lying atop the sandstone rocks in Rocky Peak Park shows that the hills have "punched the up button" on the tectonic elevator quite recently.

Please come, and invite your friends and neighbors to this fascinating lecture and visual presentation.

Fighting the Good Fight

At our general meeting on November 20th, we will discuss the prospect of SSMPA donating \$1,100 of its monies to a fund being set up to support the defense of members in a lawsuit who have been fighting to save our hills.

PLEASE NOTE:

Due to the coming holidays, November 20th will be the last SSMPA general membership meeting of 2006. Our first membership meeting of 2007 will be held Monday, January 16, 2007, at which we will hold our election of SSMPA Board of Directors. On November 20th, candidates will be given an opportunity to express their willingness and reasons to serve on the Board. Our Election Committee is comprised of Carla Henry and Warren Stone.

SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday September through November and January through June at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire St., Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South. Meetings begin at 7:15 p.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m.

Help the Condors!

Come participate with Mike Havstad and SSMPA members at the next "Micro Trash Cleanup Day for the Condors" in the great outdoors. Here are the details:

DATE: Saturday, November 25th

TIME: Meet at 10:00 a.m. - Ends at 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Turnoff to the Bear Divide Ranger Station, where Sand Canyon and Little Tujunga Road come together, just above the Hansen Dam.

DIRECTIONS: From the intersection of the 118 Freeway & the 405 Freeway, head north on the 405 to I-5 north. From I-5, take Highway 14 north. Travel approximately 3 miles to Placerita Canyon Rd. Turn right when you exit. Placerita Canyon Rd ends at Sand Canyon Road. Turn right on Sand Canyon Rd. Continue to the sign "Sand Canyon, Little Tujunga Rd & Bear Divide Ranger Station". Meet at the parking site at this turnoff.

BRING: Hat, gloves, kneepads or old towel, snacks/lunch, water, sunscreen, sunglasses, first aid kit, layered clothing, long pants (no shorts), and binoculars.

Help our remaining wild condors by removing micro-trash from the areas they habituate. Adult condors are very curious and playful, and ingest a lot of small trash (bottle caps, bits of plastic, rubber, etc.) in the process. Unfortunately, this trash is then inadvertently regurgitated in food for their nestlings and has been a factor in the mortality of many condor chicks in the wild breeding program. In 2004, the Sespe Condor Sanctuary had its first successful fledgling in the wild breeding program. It is hoped that there will be many more nestlings on the sanctuary this year, and that these clean-up efforts will continue to reduce the threats posed by micro-trash.



What's Up With The Trails?

Devil Canyon. The access to this much-loved trail was fought over (2000-2002) by folks from Save Chatsworth, Inc. and SSMPA. Beautiful chalk dudleyas can be found along the canyon, as well as an old raptor nest and marvelous and varied spring and early summer flowers. The coolness there makes for a perfect summer hike. There is access to many other canyons up the way. You can even go to Simi Valley this way (a few of us came through from Simi Valley to Devil Canyon a couple years ago on a very long and special SSMPA hike). At the present time, there is no access to the Devil Canyon trail at the old trailhead. While the land is being prepared for condos, now a hiker turns left on Poema, the street just north of Topanga, and drives up Poema to the left until you approach the locked private gate for the home development there. Park along the street. Approach the gate and advise the gatekeeper you wish to use the public hiking trail access that happens inside their development. You are to be allowed in. I've been told the trail access is on the right side (toward the canyon), in about 2-4 houses. I haven't gone in this way yet.

If you ever are just a bit "lost" on a trail in the northwest valley, you have a good chance of reaching civilization by walking on trails in the same direction as the water flows - if you exit Devil Canyon as the streambed turns toward the east (a natural place to exit as the trail no longer follows the streambed in this area), you will be near the Topanga/Poema entrance to Devil Canyon.

In the future, after the 379 homes in the Deerlake area are built, there will be alternative access from Poema about 1/4 mile to the east of Topanga, so then you would go east on Poema. This won't be built until the Deerlake project is graded.

Teena Takata

Dayton Canyon. Dayton Canyon remains closed to hikers. I have not talked to the developer in a few months. He closed the trail because he believes someone put perchlorate on the site. *Judy Garris*

Dear Chatsworth Trails Park Supporter:

Please join us on **Monday, December 11th at 11:00 a.m.** for our Park Dedication Ceremony (Canoga Ave./118 Freeway underpass). We will be celebrating the end of our first year of restoration work in Chatsworth Trails Park - we will have a new sign installed by then! Los Angeles County Supervisor Mike Antonovich will be in attendance, as well as representatives from the City of Los Angeles and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The success of this project has been made possible by your support. Thank you!

Visit www.savechatsworth.org or call (818) 464-3472, for more information. *Vanessa Watters, Save Chatsworth, Inc.*



SIERRA CLUB HIKES

Sun., 11/19 - Stagecoach Trail - 9:00 a.m.

Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., turn W on Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Ldr: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850. *Sierra Club, Santa Susana Mtns Task Force Outing.*

Tues., 11/28 - Devil Canyon: 8:30 a.m.

Moderately-paced 5 mi, 300' gain nature hike through a steep-sided canyon in the Santa Susana Mtns, among a mosaic of plant communities with fire recovery along the upper slopes. Some boulder hopping over the stream. Meet N end of Topanga Cyn Blvd (N of 118 Fwy, L on Poema Pl to park). Bring water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldr: Pixie Klemic. Asst: Steve Rudolph. *Sierra Club, San Fernando Valley Hike*

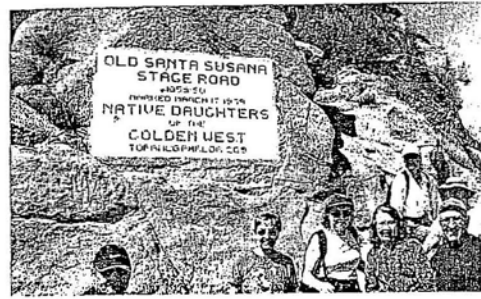


Thu., 11/30 - Towsley Canyon, Santa Clarita Woodlands 8:30 a.m. Moderately-paced 7 mi, 1400' gain (optional 6 mi, 1100' gain) hike with great vistas, a chilly narrows, diverse plant life and tar seeps. Meet Ed Davis Park, Newhall (take Calgrove exit from I-5, W under fwy, take The Old Rd S 1/2 mi to Ed Davis Park entrance on R, park inside gate at dirt lot on R before fee area). Bring 2 qts water, lunch, lugso-les, hat, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldr: Bob Galletly. Asst: Nancy Krupa. *Sierra Club, San Fernando Valley Hike*

Thurs., 12/14 - Cheseboro Canyon - 8:30 a.m. Moderately-paced 10 mi hike in Agoura Hills, first through ridge grasslands, then along an old ranch road following a streambed with lovely oaks, and continuing into chaparral to Shepherds' Flat. Optional return along ridge with great canyon views or retrace steps. Meet at trailhead (from 101 Ventura Fwy take Cheseboro Rd exit, N on Palo Comado Cyn Rd, R on Cheseboro Rd, N 1 mi to park entrance, R, follow road to parking lot at end). Bring 2 qts water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldr: Aurelio Albaisa. Asst: Bob Galletly. *Sierra Club, San Fernando Valley Hike*

Sun., 12/17 - Stagecoach Trail - 9:00 a.m. Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stagecoach Trail. From Topanga Canyon Blvd., turn W on Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Ldr: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850. *Sierra Club, Santa Susana Mtns Task Force Outing.*

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership: Helen Murphy, Leona Ward, Patricia Jump, John Palmer & Troy Palmer-Hughes, Greg Dubiel, Audrey Hedlund, and Michael McIntyre.



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

invites you to JOIN / RENEW (circle one).

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Return this cutoff with your contribution lend your support. Make your check payable to SSMPA and send to SSMPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

- Senior or Student ((\$10.00) Individual (\$15.00) Family (\$20.00)
- Life Member (\$150.00) Business / Organization (\$30.00)

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Street Address: _____ E-mail: _____
 City / State / Zip: _____
 Special Interest / Expertise: _____

The purposes of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association are the protection, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills as open space lands and wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, including the Angeles National Forest, to the Santa Monica Mountains; as habitats for plants and animals native to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills; as locales of unique geologic formations; as sites of ethnological, archaeological and historical interests; to provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental education opportunities; and, to support the acquisition of new public parks, open space and conservation easements, the expansion of existing parks, participate in the planning of park infrastructure and programs, and support said programs.

Many Californians know autumn as the season when deer begin their courtship. By early October, the large bucks have sharpened their impressive racks of antlers and are dueling among themselves or guarding chosen females in preparation for mating. Dosed up with hormones, the males are particularly edgy, ripping up small trees and bushes to vent their energy, constantly sniffing the air for the scent of rival males and scarcely eating as their ceaseless vigilance takes its toll. At the same time, females that are being guarded by males relax and fatten up in preparation for winter. Sometime in October or November, the doe becomes receptive to the buck's attention and they mate. The fawn is born seven months later.

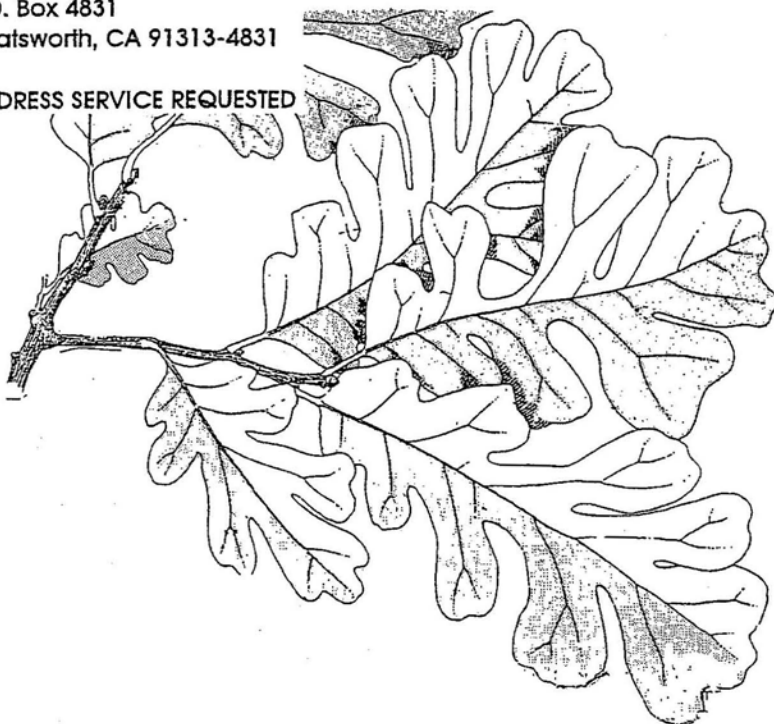
Antlers are formed by solid bone that grows within a sheath of living skin over the course of the summer. In preparation for courtship, the skin sloughs off as the buck "polishes" his antlers on branches. Males with the largest racks are the most successful breeders but don't live as long because they deplete their energy fighting.



Mule deer

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Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains
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