



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

Volume 38 Issue 2

A Non-Profit (4) Organization
Incorporated August 31, 1971

February 2008 Newsletter

Public Notice - February 28-29, 2008

Agenda of the 2-29-08 meeting
Susana Pass State Historic Park general plan
State Park & Recreation Commission will
meet on Friday, 2-29-08 at 9:00am in the
Education Bldg at the Church at Rocky Peak,
22601 Santa Susana Pass Rd.

Agenda items include, among other items,
consideration and action on the Department
of Parks & Recreation's recommendation
to approve the preliminary general plan &
environmental impact report for Santa Susana
Pass State Historic Park.

Copies of the general plan for Santa Susana
Pass State Historic Park are available for
review at these locations: California State
Parks Southern Service Center,
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270,
in San Diego; California State Parks
Angeles District Headquarters,
1925 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas;
Chatsworth Branch Library,
21052 Devonshire Street, Chatsworth;
Simi Valley Library, 2969 Tapo Cyn Rd,
Simi Valley.

The Commission will take part in a briefing
on the Santa Susana Pass State Historic
Park general plan in the park on 2-28-08.
The briefing will begin at 1:00 p.m. at
Chatsworth Park South (aka Chatsworth
Recreation Center), 22360 Devonshire St,
in Chatsworth. No deliberations will take
place and no action will be taken by the
Commission during the briefing.



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING February 18, 2008 at 7:15PM

There will be 2 speakers & 2 topics:

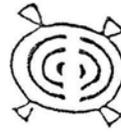
Topic 1 - Santa Susana Field Lab Joint
Powers Authority (JPA) presentation by
Jerrord Degonia from State Senator
Cameron's Smyth's Office.

Topic 2 - A Fire Safety presentation by
Captain Daum, from the Los Angeles
County Chatsworth Lakes Manor Fire
Station 75. The discussion to include
how to protect homes and prevent fires,
as well as brush clearance and the
types of plants best suited for the area,
how to spot arsonists and types of develop-
ment homes that should be avoided.

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



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.



February Bird Report by Jack Unger - Are You a Birdwatcher Yet?

Rather than present a list of birds this month - I'd like to ask a question - are you a "birdwatcher" yet? I'm going to guess that you wouldn't be reading this newsletter if you didn't enjoy the outdoors. When you are outdoors, being able to identify a bird or two now and then is a very satisfying experience - and it's easy. Looking through a pair of binoculars is not always necessary but binoculars do allow you to see a lot more when you are out for a stroll around the block or up on a hill. Binoculars give you a much closer look at the birds (and other sights) that you encounter. It's not necessary to spend a lot of money on binoculars. Inexpensive pairs are available for less than \$15. These will work just fine for casual viewing. Get a pair without too much magnification. A magnification of 7 or 8 times works well. Higher magnifications (for example, 15 times) will result in a narrower "field of view" making it harder to "find" the bird when you look through the binoculars. The first number (for example, the "7" in "7x35") of the binocular rating tells you the magnification. "7x35" (pronounced "seven by thirty five"), "7x50", "8x35", "8x50" are all very good birding binoculars.

Binoculars and Bird Book

Next to binoculars, having a bird book with good pictures is extremely helpful. A book lets you match up what you are seeing through the binoculars with the correct name of the bird. My personal favorite bird book is Kenn Kaufman's "*Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America*". This book is available used (online) for as little as \$8.00. Another excellent book is National Geographic's "*National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*". A third excellent book is the National Audubon Society's "*The Sibley Guide to Birds*".

Identifying Birds

The key to identifying birds is simply to look at the bird and see what makes the bird unique or different from other bird.

Body Color - Note the color of the back of the body. Is it brown, blue, red, or some other color? Most birds are brown so if you see some other color, it will be easier to identify the bird.

Distinguishing Marks - Many birds have "distinguishing marks" for example, a peak on their head (stellers jay, oak titmouse) or two white bars on each wing (flycatcher) or a yellow spot that's easily visible above the tail (yellow-rumped warbler), or a tail that sticks up at a 45-degree angle (wren). When you first spot a bird, immediately look for a few distinguishing marks to help you identify the bird when you look at the pictures in your bird book.

Size - Is the bird small or large? For example, sparrows are usually found on the ground and are about six inches long. Towhees are also usually on the ground but they are about nine inches long. Knowing about this size difference, you will never mistake a sparrow for a towhee or a towhee for a sparrow.

Location Seen - Where did you see the bird? You won't generally find ducks perched on the top of an oak tree. You won't find a hawk swimming on a pond. The location where the bird "hangs out" will give you a very good clue to the species.

Bill Shape - Birds get their food by eating it with their bill. Observe the shape of the bill and compare that shape to the pictures in your book. Is the bill short and thick like the seed-cracking bill of a House Finch or is the bill long and narrow like the bill of a nectar-sucking hummingbird?

Interactions - How does it interact with other birds and with insects? Does the bird fly off a favorite perch, catch a bug in the air then fly back to the perch like a Black Phoebe? Do you see all the other birds suddenly all fly away when a medium-size long-tailed hawk (like a Cooper's Hawk or a Sharp-Shinned Hawk) appears? The other birds are fleeing in order to survive. These hawks catch and eat a lot of smaller birds.

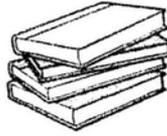
With a glance through your bird book plus a little looking around at the birds in your backyard, on your street or up a nearby trail, you'll be amazed at how easy it is to start having fun identifying your birds.

QUESTION: DOES ANYONE IN SSSMPA HAVE GRANT WRITING CAPABILITIES? IF YOU DO, PLEASE CONTACT JAN MILLER @ 818-702-0854, OR YOU CAN SEND AN E-MAIL TO: mail@ssmpa.com. As a reminder, if you wish to submit to the Newsletter (i.e. poems, photos, etc) send them to this E-Mail also.

The Friends of the Chatsworth Branch Library

invite you to join the program on
Wednesday, February 20, 2008
6:30 p.m.
when author, storyteller and poet
Joe Herrington

shares stories of the Old West. Be spellbound
by stories of goodness and honor and justice in
the comfort of the library's multipurpose room.



Photos by: Henry Bollinger, 1/28/08

Woolsey Canyon Boulder Waterfall

Woolsey Canyon



This program is free and is sponsored by the Friends of

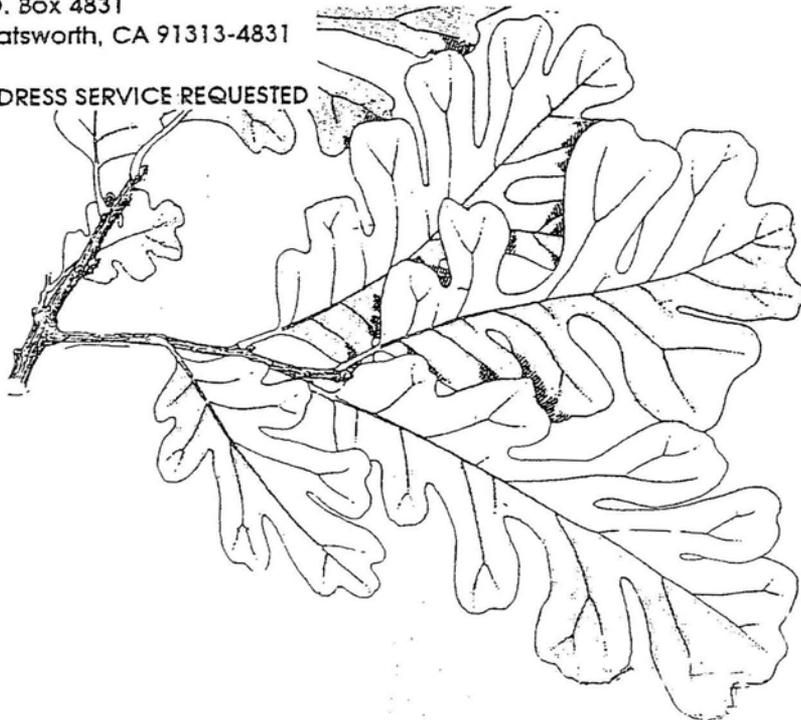
Los Angeles Public Library
Chatsworth Branch
21052 Devonshire Street
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818)341-4276



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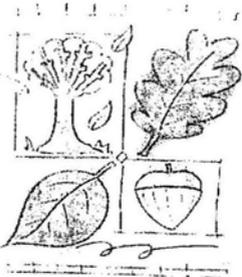
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UPCOMING HIKES

Bring water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen.

RAIN, CANCELS



THERE IS AN E-MAIL WITH TERRIFIC GRAPHICS THAT DETAILS HIKES THROUGH DECEMBER 2007
 Zuliebear@aol.com
 ATTN: Dianne

Regularly Scheduled Hikes

(Hikes are canceled if it rains. There are no hikes on holidays.)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet at 4 PM at the Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Road on the Santa Susana Pass.

(Meet at 5 PM during daylight savings time.) (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30 PM in the Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Parkway. (Easy to Moderate - 3.0 MRT)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

Meet at 6 PM at Chumash trailhead. Directions: Take the 118 Freeway to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite and turn right on Flanagan Dr. The trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Drive. (Moderate to Strenuous - 5.2 MRT)

February Activities

February 9th

Sisar Canyon to White Ledge*

9 MRT - Moderate (2000' elevation gain)

Follow a creek up to the California Bay Laurel trees of the White Ledge campsite in the Topatopa Mountains. Bring 1 to 2 quarts of water, water purifier, layered clothing, and lunch. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal.

February 16th

Work Party - Upper Hummingbird Trail

Meet at 8:00 AM at the Rocky Peak trailhead. We will drive up the Rocky Peak Fire Road in a minimum number of vehicles to access the upper trailhead. We'll work from 8:00 AM until noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

February 23rd

Placerita Canyon - Los Pinetos Trail*

9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1800' gain/loss)

Great views from the top of the canyon. Bring lunch, 2 - 3 quarts of water, bug juice, and sun screen. Wear boots. Meet at 8 AM at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride.

STAGECOACH TRAIL



STAGECOACH TRAIL - 9:00AM. INTERPRETATIVE HIKE INTO HISTORY OF SANTA SUSANA PASS STATE HISTORIC PARK. MEET AT 9:00AM FOR A 2 1/2 MI (400' GAIN) LOOP UP THE STAGECOACH TRAIL. FROM TOPANGA CANYON BLVD., TURN W. ON DEVONSHIRE STREET, DRIVE INTO CHATSWORTH PARK S. TO PARKING LOT NEXT TO THE AUDITORIUM. LEADER: LEE BAUM (818-341-1850/SIERRA CLUB-SANTA SUSANA MNTNS TASK FORCE OUTING). STAGECOACH TRAIL HIKES WILL BE ON THE 3RD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, STARTING OCTOBER.



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: _____

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City / State / Zip: _____

Special Interest / Expertise: _____