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Mission Trails Regional Park News

Volume 18 Number 3

Summer/Fall 2007

Open Space Classroom

MTRP Senior Ranger Tracey Walker

Were you aware that, when a Ranger asks you to please put your dog back on leash, the Ranger actually has your dog's safety in mind, as well as the health of the local fauna? Guess who frequently finds the rattlesnake first? That's right, man's best friend.

Rangers sometimes are perceived as one-dimensional rule enforcers. Quite the opposite is true. A Park Ranger is basically the Jack or Jill of many trades. We offer input on a variety of subjects in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, interviews with college students, speaking engagements with many local community groups, TV and radio presentations, and a wide selection of interpretive presentations in a variety of venues. During these presentations, we stress the Park Ranger's role in the maintenance of that delicate balance that exists between Man and

Mother Nature. While large audiences are at times necessary, the primary "nuts and bolts" informational exchange of our profession takes place during numerous one-on-one contacts in the field. The open space environment is, in effect, our classroom.

One of the more frequent questions we receive is.... "Just exactly what is a Ranger and what do you do"? The usual conception of what a Ranger is generally centers on something akin to an eco-policeman, that is, a badge-carrying officer who enforces all park rules and regulations. Actually, we're far more than just that. While enforcement is important, it is only one part of our large reper-



Rangers, continued on p. 6

Featured Park Fauna

Rattlesnakes

Rattlesnakes are truly amazing reptiles that have an important role in helping to keep the ecosystem in balance. Ranging from Santa Barbara County south to mid Baja California, Mexico, the Southern Pacific Rattlesnake is the most common type of rattlesnake in San Diego County and the most commonly sighted snake here at Mission Trails Regional Park. Its aver-



age length is between 30 and 41 inches, but it can reach lengths up to 54 inches. Another commonly sighted rattlesnake here is the Red Diamond Rattlesnake, which can reach lengths up to 65 inches!

Rattlesnakes are known as "pit vipers," as they locate their prey by using infrared heat-sensing pits located between their eyes and nose. Their prey is subdued by being injected with venom through two large, hollow fangs. Unlike most other reptiles that lay eggs, rattlesnakes give birth to live young, and, contrary

Continued on p. 3

Summer Twilight Walks from Kumeyaay Lake Campground

Join MTRP Trail Guides for free special interpretive walks at twilight this summer. Walks start from the Kumeyaay Lake Campground entry station and last approximately one and a half hours. Come and enjoy an evening walk in the park and learn about the changes that occur during dusk and evenings. Participation in these very popular walks will be limited to maximize your enjoyment, so sign up by phone or in person at the Kumeyaay Lake Campground Entry Station, 619-668-2748.

Saturdays: August 18, 6:45 pm and September 15, 6:15 pm

Fifteenth Annual Photo Contest Winners

Awards for the Fourteenth Annual Mission Trails Regional Park Photography contest were presented at a reception held at the park's Visitor & Interpretive Center on Sunday, June 25th. The Leonard Butterman Best of Show Award was presented to Ola Olsson for his "Solstice Fog #3" photograph. Andrea Boiani received the People's Choice Award for "Murderous Plans."



The Leonard Butterman Best of Show Award was presented to Ola Olsson. Seated is Mrs. Leonard Butterman.

Other winners include:

Black and White: Bill Howell, 1st place; Bill Howell, 2nd place; Julie Amanda Kitterman, 3rd place; Caroline E. Brown, Honorable Mention.

Youth Division: Erik Funk, 1st place; Yotam Boiani, 2nd place; Miranda Chrislock, 3rd place; Jessica Vlahos, Honorable Mention. Color – People, Flora & Fauna: Andrea Boiani, 1st place; Stuart Allison, 2nd Place; Nancy Varga, 3rd place; Cameron Yelley, Honorable Mention.

Color – Scenic Views: Ola Olsson, 1st place; Cameron Yelley, 2nd place; Stuart Allison, 3rd place; Andy Kho, Honorable Mention.

The photography contest, reception and awards ceremony are an annual event sponsored by Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation in cooperation with the City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department.

Thank you to our Photography Contest Committee members: Betty Ogilvie, chair; Don Steele, Connie Wood & Roland Roberge.

This year's winning photographs as well as those of previous contests can be viewed by going to mtrp.org/photo_contest.asp.

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Citizens' Advisory Committee

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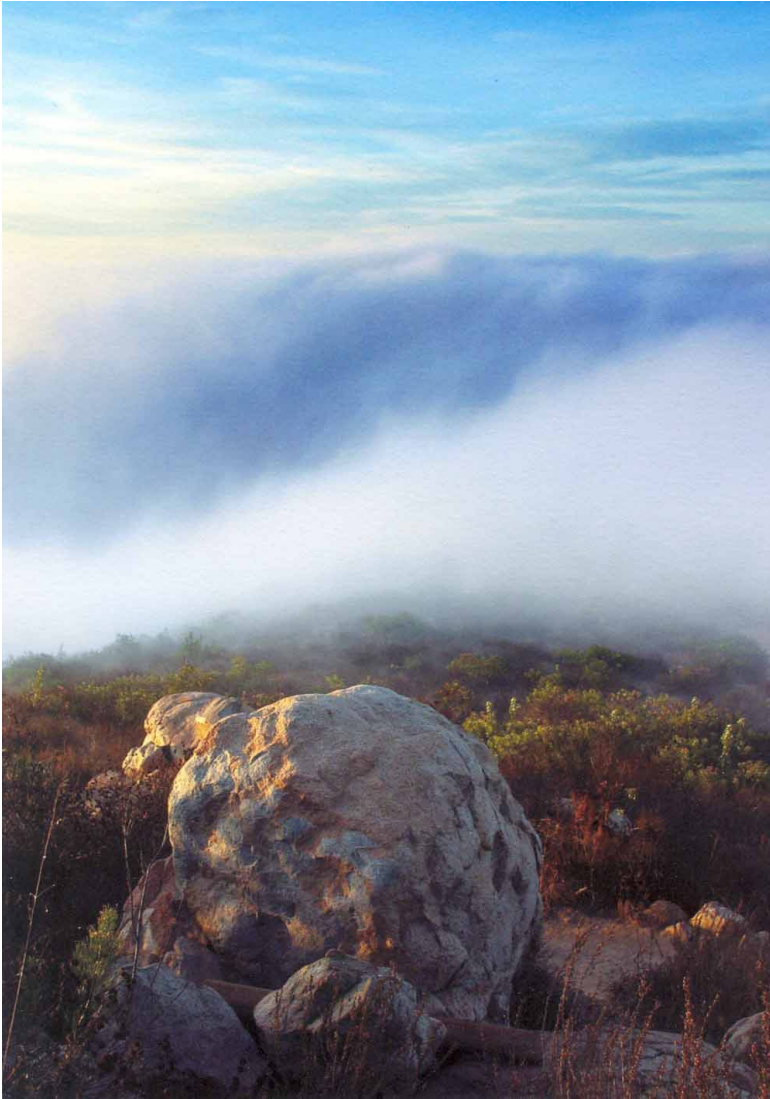
California State Senator, retired



Recycle your glass, plastic and aluminum at Kumeyaay Lake Campground. Containers are located in the day-use parking lot.

Proceeds go to MTRP Foundation.

Best of Show and First Place - Color (Scenic Views)



Ola Olsson - Solstice Fog #3

New Campground Hours



The Campground is now open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, with check-in time at 2:00 pm, except Thursday, when campers may check in at noon. Check out time is noon every day.

For more information and to make an on-line reservation, go to mtrp.org/campground/ or call the campground at 619-668-2748.

Rattlesnakes, Continued from p. 1

to popular belief, baby rattlesnakes are NOT more dangerous than the adults. Many adults will give “dry bites,” to avoid wasting venom, whereas less-experienced babies may inject all of theirs at once. A rattlesnake’s rattle is made of *keratin*, the same material which makes up your fingernails and a new segment of the rattle is formed every time it sheds its skin.

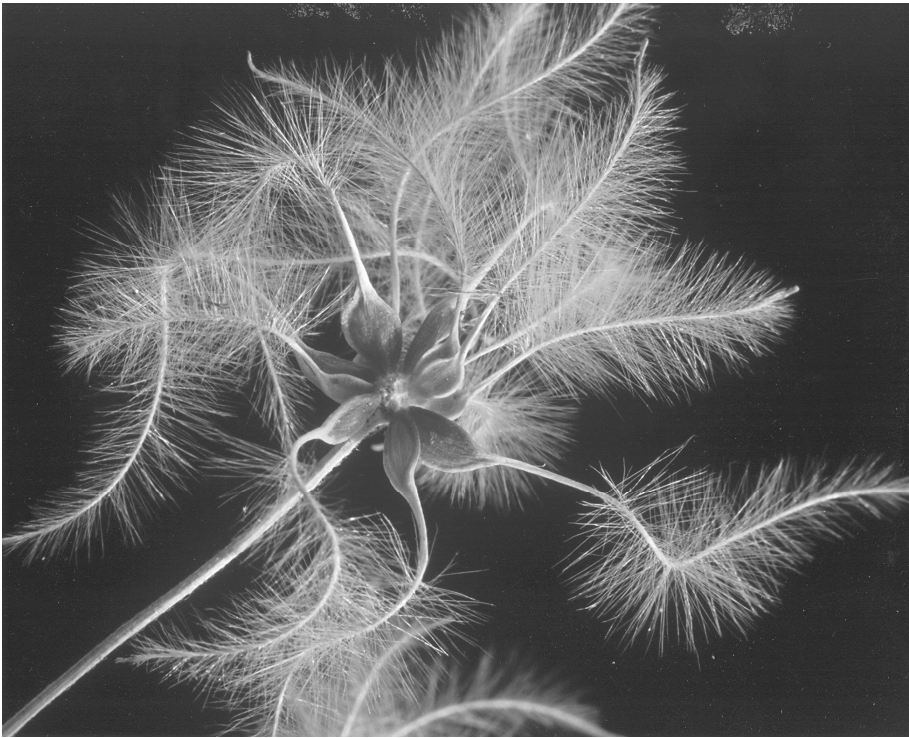
If you come across a rattlesnake while hiking here at the park, there’s no need to worry; since you are much too big to be eaten, the snake is more afraid of you than you are of it! Besides, it doesn’t want to waste its venom on you. When threatened, a rattlesnake’s first line of defense is to remain still so that it is camouflaged into its surroundings. If that doesn’t work, then it will usually hiss and rattle its tail as a warning. Only as a last resort will a rattlesnake actually strike in defense.

If you are lucky enough to see a rattlesnake during your visit here, just be sure to give it its space, leave it alone, and it will leave you alone. Remember, YOU are a visitor in ITS home. NEVER try to pick up or move a rattlesnake with a stick! If it will not move out of the trail on its own, you can encourage it to do so by gently tossing a handful of sand at it from a safe distance. If you ever are bitten by a rattlesnake, the best first aid is to remain calm (which is easier said than done) and rush to your nearest hospital for an anti-venom shot. Do NOT attempt to cut and suck the venom out like the cowboys do in the old western movies; this can cause more harm than good. Of course, if you remember to simply **stay on trail**, wherever you hike, you can avoid such accidents from occurring in the first place!

Ranger Heidi Gutknecht



First Place - Black & White



Bill Howell - Ropevine

San Diego - Member of a Unique Club

What do San Diego, California; Rome, Italy; Perth, Australia; Cape Town, South Africa and Santiago, Chile have in common? Besides being oriented on or near a large body of water, they all have a Mediterranean climate. Also known as Dry Summer Subtropical climate, Mediterranean climate is characterized by wet winters and dry summers. It is referred to as Mediterranean because it is similar to the temperate climate found bordering most of the Mediterranean Sea.

Besides the Mediterranean Sea, this climate covers a relatively small area, 2.2% of the earth's land surface but has 20% of the its plant species. It can be found along the coasts of South-

Climate, continued on next page

Cowles Mountain Trail Work Complete

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation and Park staff want to extend sincere appreciation to the California Conservation Corps (CCC) team who worked diligently to repair and restore the upper portion of the Cowles Mountain trail. This organization has continually brought a high level of professionalism to numerous trail and park restoration projects. Without the help of these dedicated individuals, trail erosion repair would be beyond the resources of Park staff and volunteers, and the quality of the visitor experience would be greatly diminished.

A special thank you goes to Ranger Mel Naidas for coordinating this important project.



The CCC prepares for another work day on Cowles Mountain

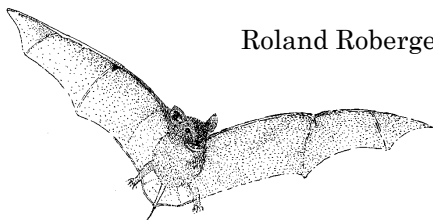
Climate, continued from p. 4

ern California, central Chile, the Western Cape in South Africa, and along areas of southern and western Australia. These regions are located on the west side of subtropical continents and are on or near Latitudes 40° S or 40° N. These regions are generally situated between Dry Mid-latitude climates toward the equator and wet Oceanic climate toward either pole.

Mediterranean climates are noted for some of the most temperate weather on the planet. In the Winter, temperatures rarely fall below freezing and generally only in low lying areas. In the summer, with the exception of the occasional heat wave, temperatures hover around 80° F with low humidity. In the summer, the regions are dominated by subtropical highs, which suppress cloud formation and precipitation. Rain finally arrives in the winter when the subtropical highs subside and are replaced by sub-polar lows with associated cyclonic circulation.

Such weather conditions create the primary habitat of these regions, the chaparral biome. Shrubs and other low growing vegetation, which have adapted well to long drought conditions, dominate the landscape. Larger plants and trees are also present but are generally found in riparian areas along rivers and streams.

Because of the lack of rain and the dry heat, many locals grumble about living in a "desert," but in reality, San Diego is the next best thing to living on the Riviera!



Roland Roberge

Art exhibits

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation is proud to present "**California Sensibilities**" an exhibition of fine art by local artist, Argento, from July 1, 2007 through August 10, 2007, followed by "**For the Birds**" an exhibition of fine art by award-winning wildlife artist Shandel Gamer from August 11, 2007 through September 21, 2007.

ARGENTO

A native San Diegan, Argento appreciates the colors and textures of the local landscape. The artist holds a Master's degree in Applied Arts from San Diego State University and has made a career in the design field. Argento's works have been juried into exhibitions by the Clairemont Art Guild and the Pastel Society of San Diego. Additionally, Argento's paintings have been exhibited in the San Diego County Fair where the artist has won several awards.

SHANDEL GAMER

Ms. Gamer has been painting in pastels for over thirty years. She is a member of several art organizations including the Wildlife Artists Association, San Diego Pastel Society, San Diego Museum of Art Artists' Guild and the La Jolla Art Association. Several of Shandel's images are available through Rich Pelletreau's Wildlife Art Gallery and Studio. She is represented on the internet by Golem Art at: www.golemart.com

A reception in honor of the artist will be held in the Visitor and Interpretive Center on Saturday, August 25, 2007 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. The public is cordially invited to the event where Shandel will be discussing her art.

All art work is for sale. Artists donate a portion of their proceeds to the MTRP Foundation for park related projects.

First Place - Youth Division



Eric Funk - Cowles Mountain Above the Fog

**People's Choice and
First Place - Color (People, Flora & Fauna)**



Andrea Boiani - Murderous Plans

Rangers, continued from p. 1

tory. Rangers are teachers who must design programs for all age groups, along with being environmental guardians, historians and resource managers. Over the years, Park Rangers have offered more information and services to wider audiences than most professions. Many times the specific agency one works for dictates the general nature of the Ranger's primary mission. Many of these agencies shuffle Rangers into specialize units such as Park Police, Interpretive Specialists and Resource Managers. The City of San Diego prefers that Rangers

be generalists, wearing a variety of hats. Here at Mission Trails, Rangers are required to handle educational programming for all ages, rule and regulation enforcement, interpretation, special projects, non-native plant removal, native plant revegetation, grant administration, maintenance management, and are usually the first responders to fire and other emergencies in the park.

In the next installment of this column, I'll be introducing our Ranger staff and their primary missions.

Senior Ranger Tracey Walker

Notable Donations

April – June 2007

Steward - \$5,000 to \$10,000
San Diego Gas & Electric, A
Sempra Energy utility

Patron - \$2,500 - \$5,000
Patagonia, Inc.
San Diego Landfill Systems

Founder - \$1,000 - \$2,500
Nancy and Joe Acevedo
Thomas McCubbin – *In memory of
Miriam (Jetty) McCubbin*
Dick and Jan Murphy

Trail Blazer - \$500-\$1,000
Chipotle
Lawrence and Suzanne Hess
Johnnie, Leslie and Lorne Perkins
Red Bull

Path Finder - \$100-\$500
Ron and Nancy Anderson
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garet C. O'Neill*
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Simply go to www.escrip.com access the "sign up" link near the top of the page and follow the simple instructions.

Ways you can donate to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation

The Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation Board of Directors extends sincere thanks to our many donors. It is because of your continuing support that we are able to fulfill our Mission - *In partnership with the City of San Diego, to preserve and protect the natural environment of Mission Trails Regional Park and to provide and promote educational and recreational opportunities.*

In addition to traditional cash donations, there are other ways you can provide short and long-term financial support for park programs and projects.

Memorial or In Honor Of gifts

Honor a friend or family member with a donation.

Matching Funds

Identify Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation for a matching funds contribution if your employer

has a policy of matching charitable gifts.

Wills

Remember Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation in your will.

Gifts of Securities

In order to allow donors to realize full tax deductions for appreciated stock, Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation accepts gifts of stock. Please call (619) 668-3280 for further details.

Charitable Remainder Trusts

With a CRT, highly appreciated assets are placed in an irrevocable trust. Those asset proceeds provide income to the donor and/or to his/her beneficiaries for life. Contact your financial advisor for information.

The Foundation's Special Funds include education and library funds, trail and tree/habitat maintenance funds, education and library endowment funds. Call (619) 668-3280 for further information. - MTRP Foundation Federal Tax ID number 33-0285093.

Mission Trails Regional Park Donor Opportunities

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation provides opportunities for individuals, businesses, community organizations and foundations to support a variety of programs and projects within Mission Trails Regional Park. Thank you to our many friends who make annual contributions to Friends of Mission Trails Regional Park. A variety of donor opportunities are available as indicated below. All contributions are tax deductible. Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be engraved on a plaque permanently displayed at the park Visitor and Interpretive Center. Donations of \$100 and above will accumulate from year-to-year for contributor recognition purposes.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Donor Levels

| | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| \$25 Individual _____ | \$1,000 Founder _____ | \$25,000 Benefactor _____ |
| \$50 Family _____ | \$2,500 Patron _____ | \$50,000 Trustee _____ |
| \$100 Path Finder _____ | \$5,000 Steward _____ | \$100,000 Director _____ |
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| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
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| Tree & Habitat Maintenance | _____ |
| Trail Maintenance | _____ |
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Make check payable to MTRP Foundation and send to:
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 One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008

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 GO TO <http://www.mtrp.org/newsletter.asp>

**Looking for challenges & opportunities?
 Join our Mission Trails Volunteer Family**

If you enjoy meeting people and interacting with the public, consider becoming a Mission Trails Regional Park volunteer. We currently have openings at the Visitor and Interpretive Center and the Kumeyaay Lake Campground.

At the Visitor and Interpretive Center – Volunteers are needed to assist Park staff keep the Center open to the public from 9 am to 5 pm, seven days a week. Visitor Center volunteers make a commitment for either a morning shift (9 am to 1 pm) or an afternoon shift (1 pm to 5 pm), twice a month.

At the Kumeyaay Lake Campground – Volunteers are needed to assist Park staff at the Campground Entry Station on Friday and Saturday afternoons between 1 pm and 5 pm. Responsibilities include giving out information about the Park and the Campground.

Mission Trails Volunteers

- Receive on-the-job personalized training which includes information about the park.
- Have an opportunity to interact with highly motivated and skilled professional staff.
- Become part of the Mission Trails family, working with enthusiastic and dedicated individuals.
- Receive recognition at the February Volunteer Awards Ceremony and attend the December Holiday Party.

To learn more about becoming a Mission Trails Regional Park Volunteer contact Center Director David Lee, at (619) 668-3278 or dlee@mtrp.org. Or visit the Mission Trails web site at www.mtrp.org.



Visitor Center volunteer, Elaine Bonk helping Park guests.