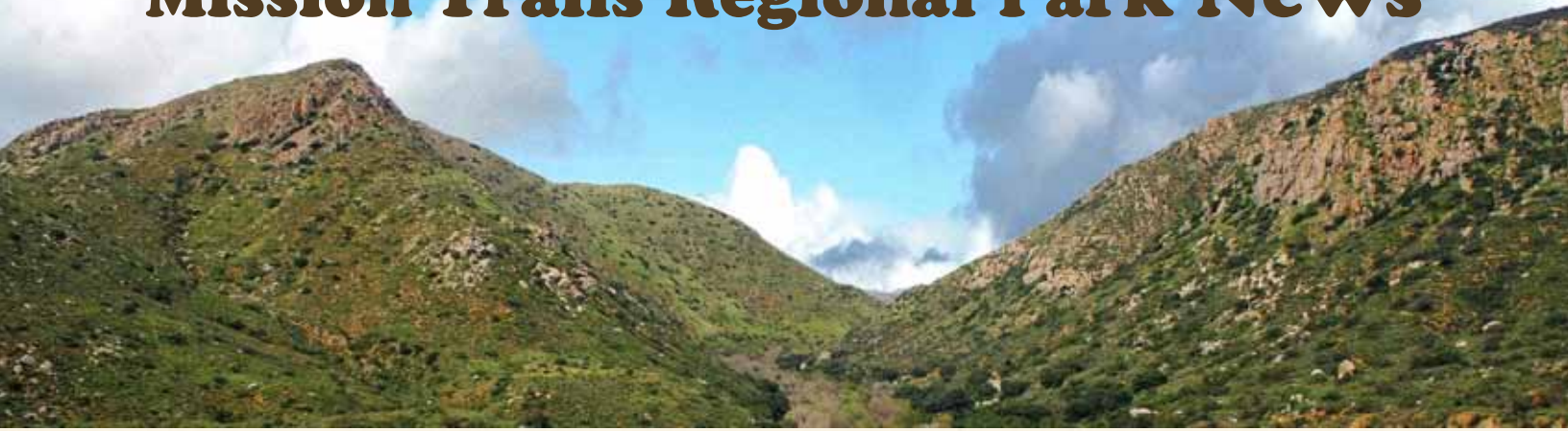


Mission Trails Regional Park News



Volume 24, Number 2

-- A Publication of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation --

Spring 2013

Explore Mission Trails Day

Come join the fun!

Join Park staff and volunteers on Saturday, May 18, 2013 for an all day celebration highlighting everything Mission Trails has to offer. This popular free event will feature guided nature walks, talks and programs throughout the Park, including live animals, pony rides and special programs for children.

For more information about this popular annual event, access this link: mtrp.org/EMTday.asp.

Trail Guide Graduation

Mission Trails had another successful Trail Guide Training Class this year with 21 new Trail Guides graduating on Saturday morning, March 30. Congratulations to all the students. As usual, they studied hard, completed the walkthroughs and written final exam and, most of all, enjoyed the class. They will be great additions to the Trail Guide program and the Park.

Special thanks to the training team for their outstanding efforts that made this year's class a success. Team members are: Bill Howell, Wendy Esterly, Judy Alvarez, Bill White, Fred and Linda Kramer, and, of course, Ranger Heidi Gutknecht.

BUTTERFLIES OF MISSION TRAILS

By Audrey F. Baker, Trail Guide

It's a true Cinderella story! From worm-like critters, caterpillars metamorphose into enchanting creatures adorned with unique colorations, eye-catching patterns and charismatic appeal. The grace and agility butterflies exhibit captivate us. Heads turn!

Poet William Wordsworth characterizes the aerial beauties as the "historian of my infancy." They herald a universal message, reminding us of the simple pleasures and the intricacy of nature.

In the butterfly world, mysteries abound. Take our Acmon Blue. It has no blue pigments. What you are seeing is

the illusion of color. Like all butterflies, its tiny overlapping scales and pigments absorb and refract light. The dazzling, famed blue color truly is in the eye of the beholder.

Fixating on the flight of these elusive beings can send you in circles. Although aficionados hope for the "optimal view" (the spread-winged dorsal surface), many butterflies have magnificent markings in the closed-wing position (ventral or underside) that make for easier identification. Remember, while our preoccupation is with aesthetics, theirs is with an essential flower.

Butterflies, Continued on p. 5



Visitor Center Butterfly Garden



**A Message
From
Executive
Director
Jay Wilson**

It is estimated about ten percent of the visitors to Mission Trail Regional Park (MTRP) tour the Visitor Center. That calculates to approximately 790,000 people setting foot or bicycling in the Park last year. That is equivalent to the Chargers Football Team selling out eleven games at Qualcomm Stadium. That is a lot of foot traffic, no matter where you are. MTRP has that amount of foot traffic every year, and it is growing. David Cooksy, one of our key volunteers at the Visitor Center, avid hiker in the Park, and exceptional photographer, mentioned his concern for the increased amount of trash he sees as he hikes the trails in the park. I asked him to share his comments.

“Mission Trails Regional Park is a 5,800-acre recreational paradise within the city limits of San Diego. It is less than ten minutes by car from Qualcomm Stadium. As a volunteer for MTRP, it is not uncommon for me to hear first-time visitors exclaim, ‘I had no idea this was here!’ Indeed, we are so very lucky to have this treasure of native ecosystems remain in our densely populated urban jungle. The Park is truly an opportunity to walk away from the daily routine in exchange for the great outdoors: leave it all behind for a few minutes.

“As with anywhere, the Park has changed over time, but perhaps never so much as in the past three years. It seems more and more people have discovered the beauty of ancient volcanic cliffs, historic Old Mission Dam, magnificent majestic oaks, peaceful Kumeyaay Lake, or the stunning vista from the Visitor Center. Unfortunately, as we have learned from the National Park

System, an increase of visitors creates greater physical impact; the more we love nature the more it ‘suffers.’ In fact, the increased number of visitors to MTRP has created parking impacts and physical damage as hikers forge off-trail short cuts. But a more significant impact is trash. Nothing ruins the great outdoors experience faster than selfishly discarded trash.

“Daily evidence can be found of visitors who have carelessly tossed aside empty water bottles, fast food and candy wrappers, cigarette butts, and disgusting reminders of dogs. Dogs are welcome in MTRP providing they remain leashed at all times (there are several very good reasons for this), and you clean up after them. It does not end with collecting their waste. Cleaning up after your dog also means putting the plastic bag in the trash. Please DO NOT leave your dog’s waste by the side of the trail.

“It is no secret that economic conditions have resulted in reduced public services, including park maintenance. MTRP has a total of only four rangers and two Grounds Maintenance Workers on duty to cover the Park seven days a week. They cannot begin to address the volume of trash dumped within the Park. And their duties certainly should not include cleaning up bags of dog waste. Very simply, if you brought trash into the Park, take it out; trash cans are available throughout the Park. You are never more than a few moments away from the proper disposal of trash and recyclable materials.”

David Cooksy’s commentary is worth everyone’s attention, and I hope you will lend a hand to help keep the pristine landscape that abounds in Mission Trails clear of trash and debris.

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Mission Trails Regional Park as an Educational Institution

When most people think of Mission Trails Regional Park, they think more about the recreational activities available to them than the opportunities to learn about the local history and natural environment. From the beginning, the Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center - with its exhibition hall, library and video programs in the theater - was designed not only to aid our patrons in finding their way along the 40+ miles of trails, but also to give them an overview of the natural and cultural history they may encounter within the Park. Hence, the word "Interpretive" was added to the building's name. The Park itself - with its flora, fauna, geological formations, and archaeological and historical sites - is a living classroom.

The City offers educational school programs, led by Ranger Heidi Gutknecht, which allow students to visit the Park for a first-hand experience in discovering the wonders of nature, and to understand the varied history of the region. Not only are the children introduced to different habitats, plants, and with luck, elusive wildlife, they also get to visit a former Kumeyaay "kitchen" at the edge of the San Diego River, to learn about another early culture.

Ranger Mika Shimada-Cicirelli offers two other wonderful educational programs for non-school field trip children: Nature Club (for children ages 8-12) and Trail Explorer (for children ages 10-12). Nature Club is designed to provide children with the opportunity

to spend time outdoors, connecting with nature through hiking and various fun-filled, nature-related activities. Trail Explorer provides young adventurers with the opportunity to discover the secrets of nature and earn recognition as an official "Trail Explorer." Both of these programs enable children to be immersed in the sights and sounds of nature, as they build friendships and share memorable experiences.

Also supported by the City is our excellent Volunteer Program, which includes our Trail Guide Program. During the first three months of each year, an extensive Trail Guide Training Class is held by veteran Trail Guides and local scientists to educate a new set of interested individuals about the natural, cultural, and historical wonders of what is now Mission Trails Regional Park and the surrounding region. Many

Education, continued on p. 6

One of numerous school groups who visit the Park being led by Ranger Heidi Gutknecht



Mission Trails Honors Its Outstanding Volunteers

District 7 Councilmember Scott Sherman presented a special District 7 proclamation to Terry Gaughen as part of the 17th annual Volunteer Awards on Saturday, Feb. 2. Over the past two decades Terry logged thousands of hours pruning native vegetation, removing non-native plants, establishing a butterfly garden at the Visitor Center, and improving and reconstructing miles of trails throughout Mission Trails.

Senior Ranger Matt Sanford presented Tom Thompson with the Volunteer of the Year Award for countless hours of volunteering at the Visitor Center and in the park leading trail walks and as a member of the Park Patrol. Also honored for 2012 were: Gerry Tietje for the Visitor Center, Linda Hassakis for the Gift Shop, Stacey Miller-Meehan for Trail Guide, Andrew Aman for Trail Restoration Crew, Doug Fenske for Park Beautification Crew and Silvie Plesim for Park Patrol.

Ranger Mika Shimada-Cicirelli, presented special awards to her two interns from SDSU, Julie Aeilts and Lisa Miller.

In 2012, volunteers at Mission Trails volunteered a total of 12,356 hours. Congratulations and thank you to all the Mission Trails volunteers!



Volunteer of the Year Tom Thompson and Senior Ranger Matt Sanford

Summer Twilight Walks

Join MTRP Trail Guides for free special interpretive walks at twilight this summer. Come and enjoy an evening walk in the park and learn about the changes that occur during dusk and as the sun goes down.

These third Saturday walks last for approximately 1.5 hours and begin at the parking lot on the corner of Bushy Hill Drive and Father Junipero Serra Trail, across from the Kumeyaay Lake Campground.

Don't forget to bring along a flashlight and an extra layer of clothing - it cools down quickly after the sun sets!

For more information, call (619) 668-3281.

June 15th, 7:15 pm

July 20, 7:15 pm

August 17, 7:30 pm (Owl Prowl)

September 21, 6:00 pm

Butterflies, continued from p. 1

Clever characters these butterflies! They locate flowers by color, and “taste” host/food plants for their caterpillars using receptors on their feet. If not a species-correct menu item, they move on! While caterpillars are great consumers (chewers), nectaring adults are important pollinators who delicately sup through a straw-like tongue, the proboscis.

They readily detect movement and associated dangers. Experts at camouflage, a closed winged Mourning Cloak looks like tree bark. Painted Lady caterpillars shelter in folded leaves avoiding prey. Swallowtail larvae protrude their osmeterium (a unique gland located behind the head) to fend off predators. The Common Buckeye is ablaze with false eyes to scare off predators and is even known to bully butterfly enthusiasts who enter its territory! Some Gossamer Blue caterpillars exude sugary honeydew, and in turn are “ant attended,” – a further protection from predators.

What a life! Basking in the sun is important business, necessary to raise body temperature to warm flight muscles. There are also puddle parties, especially in afternoon on hot summer days. This activity allows males to collect nutrients (salt, nitrogen, amino acids, etc.) from the soil and, through insemination, transfer these to the female (and ultimately the larvae). The resourceful California Sister might alight on you to ingest that salty perspiration you're wearing!

The adults are on a mission – to reproduce. Each species has its own distinctive odor and color for attracting a mate. It is the butterfly antennae that register the female scent. Techniques for finding a suitable mate include patrolling (scanning an area), perching (waiting it out locally) and hilltopping (congregating on hilltops). Whites and sulphurs are near-constant pursuers.

Hairstreaks “check each other out” while flying.

Here's a sampling of the over 100 species to be found at Mission Trails:

The **Western Tiger Swallowtail** (2¾-4”) is one of the largest butterflies in North America. Its black tiger-like stripes, emblazoned on yellow forewings, and forked tail are trademarks.

Gossamer-Wings are mostly small butterflies with intricate patterns. Three subfamilies make up this group – Coppers, Blues, and Hairstreaks.

The **Western Pygmy Blue** (3/8-¾”) is one of the world's smallest butterflies. Chiefly brown and orange, ironically, the blue is not noticeable.

The **Hermes Copper** (1”) sparkles in flight. Its orange/yellow patch on forewings and its mostly brown hindwings transition into a yellow antennae-like tail.

Hairstreaks feed from a downward facing position. Their tails resemble antennae and large spots on hindwing corners look like eyes.

Multiple food sources have created a

wide-spread distribution for the **Gray Hairstreak** (1-1¼”). Caterpillars will eat almost any plant.

Characterized by direct, fast and constant flying, **Whites and Sulphurs** land briefly and often closed winged.

The **Pacific Sara Orangetip** (1¼-1¾”) is one aviator who rarely alights. It patrols road- and stream-sides, foothills, cliffs and canyons throughout MTRP.

Metalmarks are strictly a “New World” genus. Most are tropical. Four species call Southern California home.

Most familiar are **Brushfoot** butterflies. This large and varied group shares one familial trait – a reduced set for forelegs not used in standing. Its poster child is the **Monarch**.

Mimicking the Monarch's coloration helps others species avoid predation by posing as unpalatable. MTRP's “lady” butterflies (the American, Painted and West Coast Lady) all take advantage of the Monarch's “bad rep.”

Like the Monarch, the **Painted Lady** (2-2¼”) is a famed traveler. In 2005 mass

Butterflies, continued on p. 6

Save This Special Date



“Art in the Park, 2013” will be a Wine, Cheese, & Chocolate, Art Fund Raising event in support of the MTRP Foundation and Art Program on the evening of October 5, 2013. More information for this popular annual event will be forthcoming.

Butterflies, continued from p. 5

migrations literally stopped traffic on Interstate 15.

The dietary needs of another brushfooter, the unique and beautiful **Mourning Cloak** (2¼-3-3/8”), are decidedly “hearty.” Its maroonish-brown wings are skirted in cream. Above this is a ribbon of black with blue oval spots. The wing top is dusted with red dots and golden edging.

May is the best month for butterflying. Activity is strongest in the later morning (9:00 - 12:00 am.) Learning habitats, flight times and distinguishing between host/food (caterpillar only) and nectar (adults only) plants will enhance the experience and clue you into where and when to look. Enjoy your flight of imagination!

Education, continued from p. 3

of the graduates become volunteers for Mission Trails, while others take their new knowledge to their respective environmental organizations. Many City Park Rangers also take this renowned training so they can, in turn, educate visitors at other City Parks.

Our Trail Guides lead numerous interpretive walks throughout the park. There are regularly scheduled guided walks every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. from the Visitor Center, and every 2nd and 4th Saturday at 8:30 a.m. from the Kumeyaay Lake Campground. For more information check our on-line events calendar (<https://mtrp.org/events.asp>). Special walks may also be scheduled (with ten days advance notice) for your group or organization by contacting Ranger Heidi, at 619-668-3279 or hgutknecht@mtrp.org. In addition, Trail Guides educate the public on various Saturdays at “Discovery Tables” in the Visitor Center lobby. Visitors are able to “discover” specific natural, cultural, or historical aspects of Mission Trails at these different tables in a fun, interactive way. These are just a few of

the activities our dedicated Trail Guides perform, making them invaluable to the educational experience at the park.

In addition to the City-sponsored educational programs, the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation has also instituted three very popular educational programs. Instructor Linda Hawley, Ed.M., delights children with the animated enthusiasm she brings to her entertaining two-hour program at the Visitor Center, “Nature Adventures.” Factual information is introduced about San Diego’s native wildlife using songs, puppets, real pelts, skull replicas, scat, tracks, and taxidermy specimens. The lesson is followed by an easy trail walk and a return to the classroom, where children make a related, take-home craft. Lessons about the Kumeyaay and the flora of the Park are also included. For more information and to download a registration form, go to our web site (www.mtrp.org) and under the Nature Study link, choose Nature Adventures.

Instructor Alicia Berg, with funding from an SDG&E grant, visits local area schools to present an educational program for children, which includes live animals and discussions about animal and plant adaptations, and protecting the environment. After this pre-trip program, the students visit the Park on a field trip, and then receive a post-trip visit by Ms. Berg to their classroom.

Recently instructor Nora Kearney-Johnson has been holding Nora’s Art Workshops for Children, on Saturdays at the Visitor Center. Nora is a painter, as well as a jewelry and cloth doll maker. She holds degrees in both Fine Art and Child Development, and has been guiding young children through art exploration in San Diego and East County for several years, as both an Art Instructor and a volunteer Art Docent. Nora’s love of art is surpassed only by her love of children. For more information and to download a registration form, go to our web site (www.mtrp.org) and under the Nature Study link, choose Art Classes.

Notable Donations

January 1 – March 31, 2013

Steward - \$5,000 - \$9,999

City of San Diego Special Promotional Programs

Patron - \$2,500 - \$4,999

Olive Garden Restaurants
San Diego Gas & Electric
Superior Ready Mix

Founders - \$1,000 - \$2,499

Starbucks Coffee House
Family and Friends - in memory of
Ed Heidig
Family and Friends - in memory of
Judd and Beulah Payne

Trailblazer - \$500-\$999

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Phil Schey
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Steve Thompson
Tom Walters

In-kind Services Provided by

Cloak Systems
Starbucks Coffee House

City staff, volunteers and Foundation personnel are proud to be able to offer this variety of educational experiences, especially to the numerous children who visit the Park. The Park is a place of discovery and amazement, as those of us who work here have seen in the faces of our youngest visitors. Mission Trails is just another avenue where these young adventurers can gather knowledge to become better informed about their place in nature and society.

Mission Trails Regional Park Donor Opportunities

By donating to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, you are preserving the past and investing in the future.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation provides opportunities for individuals, businesses, community organizations, and foundations to support a variety of programs and projects within the park. Community support is important to ensure adequate funding to maintain the award winning Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center and the multiple amenities the park has to offer.

Special event and project sponsorship are also available. Sponsorships for Explore Mission Trails Day, an annual event held each May, range from \$500 to \$5,000. Exhibit sponsorships begin at \$2,500. Bench and table sponsorships range from \$1,500 to \$4,000 depending upon the item and its location in the park. Contact Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation at 619-668-3280 or mtrp@mtrp.org for additional information.

Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be engraved on the donor board displayed at the Visitor and Interpretive Center. Yearly donations of \$100 or more are accumulated from year-to-year for donor recognition purposes.

Become a Business Friend of Mission Trails

Business Donors making contributions of \$100 to \$500 are eligible for a web site link from the Mission Trails web site for a period of six months. Business Donors making contributions of \$500 and above are eligible for a period of one year.

Our Funds ... You may designate your donation for one or more of the following funds.

- Friends of Mission Trails* - General support for all Park programs.
- Trail Maintenance*
- Tree and Habitat Maintenance*
- Education Programs*
- Library Books and Supplies*
- Lake Murray*
- Endowment Funds*
 - General Endowment Fund*
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Other ways you may donate ...

- Memorial or In Honor Of gifts** - Honor a friend or family member with a donation.
- Matching funds** - Identify Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) Foundation for a matching funds contribution if your employer has a policy of matching charitable gifts.
- Gifts of Securities** - To allow donors to realize full tax deductions for appreciated stock, MTRP Foundation accepts gifts of stock. Contact us at 619-668-3280 or mtrp@mtrp.org for further details.
- Wills** - Remember MTRP Foundation in your will.
- 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 the donor's beneficiaries for life. Contact your financial advisor for information.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc.
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Roland Roberge, Editor.

A COPY OF THIS AND PAST NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE: mtrp.org/newsletter.asp

Meet our 2013 Trail Guide Graduates

Top row (l to r): Gilbert Herrera, Jill Cooper, Taylor Good, Dan McKirnan, Linda Bethel, Gail Welch, Linda Hassakis, Jack Keane; Middle row (l to r): Patricia Simpson, Dale Guadagno, Al Treadwell, Alicia Hall, Larry Banks, Julie Scarborough; Bottom row (l to r): Pauline Priest, Jacob Larson, Barbara Drews, Joanne Fagnani, Rosalie Newberg-Fisher. Not pictured: Julie Aeilts and Wanda Reid Wedemeyer. Photo by Wendy Esterly. Article on front cover.

