



NORTHERN EXPOSURE Hike and Activity Schedule Northern Rim of the Valley Winter 2004



“Nature does nothing uselessly.” – Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC)

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority
Ed Davis Park in Towsley Canyon
24255 The Old Road, Newhall, CA 91321
Towsley@smmc.ca.gov
www.smmc.ca.gov

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Trail By Fire: We are Open for Business

No, it's not a typo...all parks are open. After the Simi Fire in October 2003, we offered our volunteers Fire Ecology training. This quarter's programs will emphasize the importance of fire in the health of the chaparral habitat. We remind all visitors to remain on the trail and, as always, we ask that dogs remain on leash. Especially now, we don't want to track in non-native plants nor disturb the soil's protective layer of ash. Come join one our docent-led hikes for a once-in-a-generation opportunity to see how our parks respond to the natural cycle of periodic fires.

Congratulations To Our New Volunteers!

I would like to welcome our class of 2003 volunteers: Judy Estrada, Brenda Kardock, Phyllis Bishop, Pamela Veliz, Laurie Krivak, Cosmo Chavez, Esteban Veliz, and Angelica Lopez. They are a determined group. They began Certified Interpretive Host (CIH) training on October 25, 2003. The following week the Simi fire

reached Santa Clarita Woodlands Parks. Training was postponed, the location moved, and all the while our volunteers adapted and responded by completing their training November 15, 2003. As CIH graduates they will assist in the Nature Center, trail maintenance and help with our interpretive programs in our Northern Rim of the Valley parks. Thank you to all of you who stayed the course through the fire turmoil and completed your training, adding your own special touch and inspiration to our volunteer base. For those of you interested in becoming a volunteer, contact us at (661) 255-3606 or Towsley@smmc.ca.gov.

We need your help

We must continue to find ways to be thrifty. For every Northern Exposure subscriber who converts to an e-mail subscription, we can save between \$2.00 and \$3.00 per year. Please take a moment to send us your name and e-mail address at Towsley@smmc.ca.gov. As an anti-spam measure, we will not distribute your address to anyone else. Period.

Schedule of Events by Location

For all hikes in burned areas, heavy rain may cancel due to mudslides.

Towsley Canyon. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. Meet at kiosk unless directed otherwise.

Saturday, January 10, 9:00-11:00 PM. "Out of the fire, into the frying pan." Hike and learn how soils are affected by fire.

Saturday, January 17, 8:00-10:00 AM. Morning Bird Walk: Birds eat breakfast too! Join us for a casual walk. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Saturday, February 7, 9:00-11:00 AM. Photographic Hike. You take the photos; together we'll create the captions. Come observe the canyon with fresh eyes.

Saturday, February 21, 8:00-10:00 AM. Morning Bird Walk: Winter birds in the canyon. Join us for a casual walk. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Saturday, February 28, 9:00-11:00 AM. Morning Hike. "Monty Python or Bambi": What really happens to animals in a fire?

Sunday, March 14, 2:00-4:00 PM. Indoor slide presentation: "Do butterflies have claws?" Learn how these amazing insects protect themselves. Presentation in the Nature Center by guest speaker Dr. Paul A. Levine.

Saturday, March 20, 8:00-10:00 AM. Morning Bird Walk: Did you know that bird's beaks are designed for the food they eat? Join us for a casual walk. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Saturday, March 28, 1:00-3:00 PM. Afternoon Hike. Plant Wars. How do plants compete for resources?

East/Rice Canyon. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. Meet at kiosk unless directed otherwise.

Sunday, January 11, 8:00-10:00 AM. "Scat Cat" – You can identify animals that live in the canyon by what they leave behind! Come see the tracks and scat in the canyon.

Pico Canyon. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. Meet at gate unless directed otherwise.

Saturday, January 24, 9:00-11:00 AM. Morning hike: "Out of the fire, into the frying pan." How are soils affected by fire?

Saturday, March 13, 9:00-11:00 AM. Morning Hike: “Scraping off the burnt toast.” How plants in the canyon fared in the fire.

Saturday, March 27, 9:00-11:00 AM. Morning Hike: “Plants can’t run.” Learn how plants of the chaparral are adapted to fire.

Whitney Canyon. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. Meet at kiosk unless directed otherwise.

Saturday, February 14, 9:00-11:00. Morning *Romantic* Hike. Humans aren’t the only ones: courtship activity among the birds and the bees. Rated PG-13.

Sage Ranch. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. Meet at entrance to Sage Ranch above Santa Susana. Bring your children but not your dog.

Sunday, February 22, 2:00-4:30 PM. Photograph the winter flowers at the peak and identify plants used by our Chumash predecessors. (3mrt, 500ft elev. gain). Meet in the parking lot at the top of Black Cyn. Rd. Call (805) 492-2184 for more information.

Sunday, March 21, 2:00-4:30 PM. Sniff the fragrance of spring flowers and watch for evidence of animal activity along the trail. (3mrt, 500 ft elev. gain). Meet in the parking lot at the top of Black Cyn. Rd. Call (805) 492-2184 for more information.

Happy Camp Call (661) 255-3606 for information unless otherwise noted. Read “Directions” for location.

Saturday, January 10, 9:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Family Activity Hike. “Out of the fire, into the frying pan.” Hike and learn how soils are affected by fire. Moderate 3 mile hike.

Saturday, January 24, 9:15 AM- 3:45 PM. Happy Camp and Beyond (the Fire). A moderate hike (8mi R/T) to see panoramic views of Moorpark to the Channel Islands. Wear boots, bring lunch and 2-3 qts water per person, and binoculars. Call (805) 529-4828 for more information.

Saturday, February 14, 9:15 AM- 3:45 PM. Be Happy Camps Valentine (and Beyond). See above for details.

Saturday, March 6, 9:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Family Activity Hike. “Teflon on the hills.” Hike and learn how soils are affected by fire. Moderate 3 mile hike.

Saturday, March 13, 9:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Family Activity Hike. “What you see and what you get.” Hike and learn how plants adapt to fire. Moderate 3 mile hike.

Sunday, March 14, 9:15 AM-3:45 PM. Happy Camp and Beyond. See what flowers “Spring” up after the fire. A moderate hike (8mi R/T) to see panoramic views of Moorpark to the Channel Islands. Wear boots, bring lunch and 2-3 qts water per person, and binoculars. Call (805) 529-4828 for more information.

Rocky Peak. Call (661) 255-3606 for information. See “Directions” for location

Saturday, January 31, 9:30 AM-2:30 PM. Note signs of recovery and benefits of last November’s fire. Bring lunch, water, and sun protection. 8 mile rt, 500 ft elev. gain. Meet at the trailhead on the north side of the Santa Susanna Overpass. (805) 492-2184 for more information.

Directions

Happy Camp Canyon: (15100 Happy Camp Canyon Rd., Moorpark). From 101 Freeway, take (23) Freeway north, connecting to go on (118) freeway EAST; and from westbound (118) Freeway exit at Los Angeles Ave/Princeton Ave (NOT New Los Angeles Ave.). Turn NORTH on Princeton Ave. (Do not take LA Ave.) Go two blocks to Campus Park Dr. Turn Left, past two more blocks and straight into park at Rustic Canyon Golf Course sign and gate. Follow paved road and park in golf course parking lot where docent(s) will meet you (about 1 mile from park entrance).

Sage Ranch: In Woodland Hills, from Highway 101, exit Valley Circle heading north. From Simi Valley exit Topanga Blvd, west on Plummer to Valley Circle heading south. Head to Woolsey Canyon intersection. Turn and follow the signs to Boeing & Sage. Turn right at the top of the hill onto Black Canyon Road. The entrance to the park is 200 feet from the intersection. Park inside the gate.

Rocky Peak: From the San Fernando Valley, head west on the 118 Fwy, exit Rocky Peak Rd. Meet at north end of bridge. From Simi Valley, head east on the 118 and exit at Kuehner Rd. Go south past three stop lights and up the hill to bridge crossing. Call 805-492-2184 for more.

Towsley Canyon Park: Traveling north through Santa Clarita, take the Calgrove exit from the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5). Turn west back under the freeway and take the Old Road south, proceed to the first driveway on your right. Look for the sign: "Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon." Park in back lot and meet at kiosk for hikes; nature center for campfires.

East/Rice Canyon: Traveling north through Santa Clarita, take the Calgrove exit from the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5). Turn west back under the freeway and take the Old Road south, driving about 1 mile. The trailhead is about 300 yards south of the Church of Nazarene. Look for the sign: "Santa Clarita Woodlands: East Canyon/Rice Canyon Entrance." Park on frontage road.

Pico Canyon: Traveling north through Santa Clarita, take the Pico/Lyons exit from the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5). Go west on Pico Canyon Road. There is road construction on Pico Canyon Road, so directions may change. Contact (661) 255-3606 for the latest information.

Whitney Canyon: Traveling north on the Antelope Valley Freeway (Highway 14), take the San Fernando Road exit. Proceed east to the Park and Ride lot. Meet at gate.

Want to learn more?



Fire Ecology training in Towsley Canyon for our volunteers

Did you know that fires are a natural part of the ecology of Southern California? Scientists estimate that in the past, our land has burned every 15-30 years.

Did you know wildfires are at their most spectacular in the spring after a fire? That some wildflowers, like the Fire Poppy, only bloom the first year after a fire?

Did you know that dry soil is a great insulator? Even though the temperature in a fire can reach 400-670 degrees F, that the temperature a few inches below the surface remains normal when the soil is dry.

Did you know that picture of a gopher on the cover was taken in Towsley Canyon 6 weeks after the fire?

Did you know that the Towsley Canyon Lodge and a baby's disposable diaper have something in common?

Did you know that underground roots could smolder as long as 2-3 months after a fire?

Did you ever hear about the Hydrophobicity phenomenon? No – I'm not going to tell you what it is. You'll have to come to one of our Fire Ecology hikes to find out.

