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September 2013

Wooden columns hold up a forest temple at Palomar



Photo by Dave Robarts

A hiker at Palomar Mountain State Park is surrounded by trees found in the Sierra Nevada including Pacific dogwood and white alder.

Story and photographs courtesy of The Anza-Borrego Foundation (Originally printed in ABF's Desert Update)

Beyond Anza-Borrego, our State Park's Colorado Desert District offers a range of fascinating preserves: Palomar Mountain, Picacho, Indio Hills, Salton Sea and Cuyamaca Rancho. David Robarts, a longtime Palomar resident, tells us what he likes best about this mountain beyond our desert. There are many reasons to visit Palomar: Native American village sites, echoes of early ranching, trout fishing in Doane Pond and wonderfully constructed Civilian Conservation Corps campsites – rock-walled and shady, a welcome relief from the desert's summer heat. Dave's passion is Palomar's majestic trees. Visit the Park, look up, and you'll understand.

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LOG JAM: Notes from the District, sectors

Palomar Mountain State Park

From the desk of Ranger Jessica Murany:

July and August are synonymous with camping, outdoor activities and family adventures. No matter how big or small your park is, you will find the same sights and sounds native to summer at each campground. Whether it's the smell of roasted marshmallows over the open flame or the triumphant cries from kids catching their first fish; these are the sounds of a San Diegan discovering for the first time what natural jewels lie beyond the city limits.

Here at PMSP, it has been no different this summer. Our campgrounds have been full almost every weekend since Memorial Day.

Our amphitheater has been given new invigorating life thanks to funds donated by SDG&E funding that enabled us to hire an interpreter.

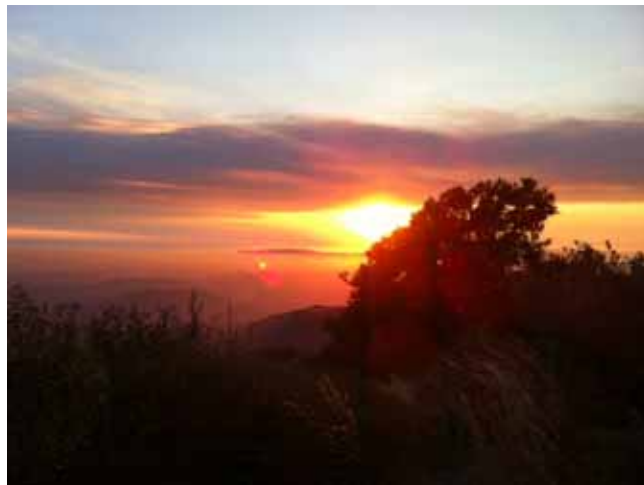
The Boucher Lookout had its first wedding since renovations.

And as active and busy as the humans have been at the Park, so too have the animal con-



Photos by Jessica Murany

Senior Park Aide Daniel Minshew is prepared for summer sunshine while he works at Palomar Mountain State Park.



Beautiful sunset, but tragic loss, the Mountain Fire fills the sky with smoke July 19. Although the fire came close to the community of Idyllwild and Mount San Jacinto State Park, both were spared.

stituents who call the Park home.

We continue to have an elevated visual presence of mountain lions, most recently near one of the employee residences by Cedar Grove Group Camp.

Visitors reported seeing two fully grown mountain lions aggressively playing with one another. When the rough-housing began to encroach the visitors' safety bubble the visitors began blowing whistles and making loud noises. The cats were apparently unfazed by the loud banter but eventually went on their way before any kind of bedlam broke out.

There was also a deer carcass that appeared to have received the business end of an encounter with one of the mountain lions in the Park.

The deer (what was left of it) was found near Doane Pond. Lane Yule of the Conference Center was kind enough to relocate the carcass before the sight and smell became too much of a nuisance to our visitors.

Also this month we received a report of a bear just beyond the upper French Valley. Yes,

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LOG JAM: District, sector notes (cont.)



Photo by Amanda Carlin

Ranger Jessica Murany releases a southern Pacific rattlesnake into the forest after it came a little too close to PMSP visitors.

(Continued from Page 2)



Photo by Sam Webb

A prickly poppy didn't check the calendar when it decided to bloom early near the Paroli Homesite in ABDSP's Culp Valley.

a bear! It seemed to be a genuine report. The reporting party had a visual description of the bear and also stated he had seen a bear in the wild before while camping in Mammoth.

There hasn't been a bear sighted on Palomar for almost 15 years and even that bear wasn't believed to be a resident, but the fires to our north could explain the sighting.



Photo by Jessica Murany

Maintenance Aide Lloyd Rose seems happy to be Palomar Mountain State Park's newest

We would like to welcome another new staff member to the PMSP team. Lloyd Rose was hired as a seasonal maintenance worker. Lloyd grew up in Los Angeles and spent his free time camping, fishing and hunting with his father. He is the vice president of the Electric Vehicle Association of San Diego. He is pro protecting the environment and his background and interest led him to this job.

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LOG JAM: District, sector notes (cont.)

(Continued from Page 3)

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

The Volunteer Potluck will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, September 17, at Astrid and Sam Webb's house at 829 Santa Saba Court.

To get to their home from Christmas Circle, go south on Borrego Springs Road and turn left on Rango Way. Go three streets to Santa Saba Road and turn left. Go to the next street and



Photo by Steve Bier

Rainwater flows into ABDSP's Sandstone Canyon after the July flood. The tinaja, which is usually just a two-foot deep pool that doesn't last long, was nearly five feet deep and overflowed into the main wash.

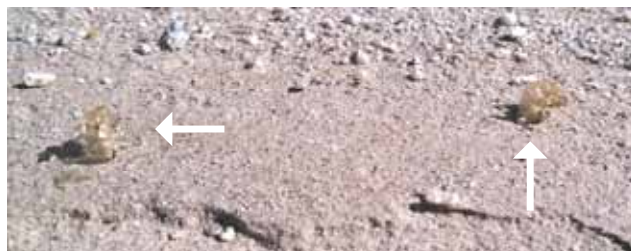


Photo by Eric Hollenbeck

While conducting flat-tailed horned lizard surveys in early August, Environmental Scientist Eric Hollenbeck comes across an unusual sight: the bottom of Short Wash covered with abandoned cicada exoskeletons. Cicadas live underground as nymphs for most of their lives, feeding on root juice. In their final nymphal stages, they construct exit tunnels and emerge, shedding their exoskeletons.

turn right. Their house is the only one on that street.

Bring a complete place setting including silverware, a beverage, a potluck dish to share and a chair. District and ABDSP staff are invited and encouraged to attend these functions which are a chance to interact with and show appreciation to the volunteers who do so much to help keep our parks open and running.

According to Reserve Manager Jim Dice of the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center, July 21 was a quite a day for a small portion of ABDSP. The new weather station (see page 19) recorded 1.97 inches of rain in two hours at District Headquarters. The good news is that although the temperature was 121.6 degrees °F June 29, on that rainy July day the temperature maxed out at 88.9 °F — cool for this time of year in the low desert.

From the desk of Supervising Ranger Sue McLaughlin:

A husband and wife from Corona were in

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LOG JAM: District, sector notes (cont.)

(Continued from Page 4)

the narrow wash between the bottom of the Diablo Dropoff and Fish Creek when rain and flooding began July 21. They attempted to get their 2006 Jeep Rubicon to high ground, but were not able to so they left the car, scrambled to safety, then watched the Jeep float away.

A San Diego Sheriff's ASTREA helicopter picked them up in Fish Creek a few hours later and transported them to Split Mountain Road where Ranger Nicole Van Doren and I were waiting to give them a ride into Borrego Springs.

Perry's Desert Tire Towing recovered the vehicle in Fish Creek the next day approximately one quarter of a mile from the entrance to the Diablo Dropoff (see photo below).

Ranger Don Strampfer received this nice email after assisting a couple who got stuck in Hueso Wash after our last rain event (see photo at right, top of page):

"Hi Don,

"Was that crazy or what? We barely made



Photo by Sue McLaughlin

After being abandoned near Fish Creek, a Jeep shows the effects of being swept downstream in a flash flood.



Photo by Don Strampfer

The owners of this pickup truck are extremely grateful for ABDSP Ranger Don Strampfer who got a tow truck to help them out of the muck they were stuck in after trying to drive in Hueso Wash during a storm.

it out. If it wasn't for you and Dave, Lord only knows what would have happened to us. Words can not even begin to express our gratitude for your help. Your happy demeanor and 'can do' attitude placed our minds at ease and gave us hope that we would get out of there.

"Call us crazy, but we are interested in returning to visit when the weather is bone dry hahaha!! We would love to meet up with you and we will let you know when we are planning a trip back there. Like it or not we've adopted you as a friend. Please forward this message to your superior. Don is an outstanding and knowledgeable park ranger with a whole lot of heart. Plain and simple, no matter how bad it looked with the coming storm he never left us. This man really cared.

"Thank so much for your help you and Dave the tow truck guy (superman move over!!!!)

"Sincerely grateful, Mark & Vilma Arlotti"

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LOG JAM: District, sector notes (cont.)



Photo by Sue Barney

Ysidro L. Mendivil (left) and Imperial County Supervisor Raymond "Ray" Castillo enjoy a tour of Picacho State Recreation Area from the Colorado River with Picacho Peak in the background. In 1862 Ysidro's great-grandfather discovered gold at what is now Picacho Mine.

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Picacho State Recreation Area

From the desk of Ranger Sue Barney:

In July the afternoon desert heat usually sends most people indoors in search of cooler air. Two individuals chose to do the opposite and instead made a trek out to Picacho State Recreation Area.

While both visitors are lifelong residents of Imperial County, this was Raymond "Ray" Castillo's first venture to Picacho.

Mr. Castillo currently is on the Imperial County Board of Supervisors and was first elected as a Supervisor for District #5 in November of 2010.

He had prior public service on the El Centro City Council and was appointed as Mayor in 2003 and 2004. He also had a 34-year career in law enforcement and retired from the California Department of Corrections in 2004.

For the second visitor, Ysidro Mendivil, visiting Picacho is like coming home. He is the great-grandson of Jose Maria Mendivil who at the age of seven was kidnapped by a group of Apaches on a raid in Mexico.

For eight years young Jose lived with his captors until he escaped at age fifteen. The knowledge he gained living with Apaches was not forgotten and was later put to good use when he joined the U.S. Calvary.

Around 1862, as a young prospector from Sonora, Mexico, he discovered gold at what is now Picacho Mine. He staked out five claims but did not immediately work them.

Jose eventually returned with his wife and their first child. By this time there was a new settlement and mining was in full swing. The town was called Rio and it was the first registered town in Imperial County. The town of Rio would later be changed to Picacho.

It was a pleasure to spend a few hours ex-

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Trail camera photograph

Fawns have their lunch time at CRSP in a lovely wooded setting. Deer typically have one or two fawns and only occasionally have triplets.

LOG JAM: District, sector notes (cont.)



Photos by Steve Bier

Seed shrimp (ostrocods) recycle a fairy shrimp as an ephemeral summer pool begins to dry.

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ploring Picacho State Recreation Area with Ray Castillo and Ysidro Mendivil. We talked about the history of Picacho and its evolution



A rock fall about half a mile past the Easter Earthquake blockage in ABDSP's Sandstone Canyon happened during the July 21 flood event. Rockfalls, erosion and boulders carried downstream in floods keep Sandstone Canyon constantly changing. Many visitors to the desert park are surprised to learn how much the landscape is impacted by water in the dry environment.

into becoming a state recreation area as well as the challenges and opportunities it creates.

I know we will see Ysidro Mendivil here again and other members of the Mendivil family as many of them visit the Park on a regular basis.

Mr. Castillo also said he plans to return to explore more of the area and pass along the word about what Picacho SRA has to offer the community.

For more information and some great Picacho photos go to www.desertmagazine.com and look up the March, 1939, edition.

On page ten begins an article titled *Saga of Old Picacho* by J. Wilson McKenney. Photos of the 450-ton stamp mill, general store and mine building are on page 11. Page 13 contains a photo of Ysidro's father and grandfather.

(As a bonus, if you are an Everett Ruess fan, check out page 15.)

Salton Sea State Recreation Area

The Pelican's Nest, the newsletter for the Sea and Desert Interpretive Association, reported that the SSSRA reached 122 degrees °F in July followed by cooler temperatures of 119 and 117 degrees °F later in the month.

Footprints

Cherilyn Molina began working as the District's staff service analyst August 5. She will be working on contracts. Cherilyn comes to us from CAL FIRE and also has worked for the Department of Corrections and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Although the rest of the Resource Crew is off for the summer, **Maintenance Assistant Daniel Aceves** stayed on to work on a special project.

Paleontology volunteers study geology

**By Lou Bahar
Paleontology Society**

Volunteers from the Paleontology Society held their (PS) annual summer field trip in the Bellingham, Washington, area of the Pacific Northwest. Many of the PS volunteers have cool weather homes in Washington. They and others who joined them were treated to an excellent series of trip leaders who have studied the geologic processes that created northwestern Washington.

This trip was organized by PS Volunteer and Emeritus Professor of Geology Myrl Beck from Western Washington University (WWU). Myrl arranged to have four of his university colleagues guide the group during the six days of the tour, which was designed to develop our understanding of the tectonic processes that form western North America, from mid-ocean ridges to subduction of ocean crust to the volcanic arcs formed from magma rising from the subducted ocean floor.

The first two days the group visited Fidalgo and San Juan Islands where Emeritus Professor of Geology Ned Brown introduced them to the geology of northwestern Washington by visiting its margins, places where former ocean floor



Photo by Ted Kawasaki

Paleontology Society Volunteer Myrl Beck, emeritus professor of geology from Western Washington University, hosts other volunteers during their annual summer field trip.

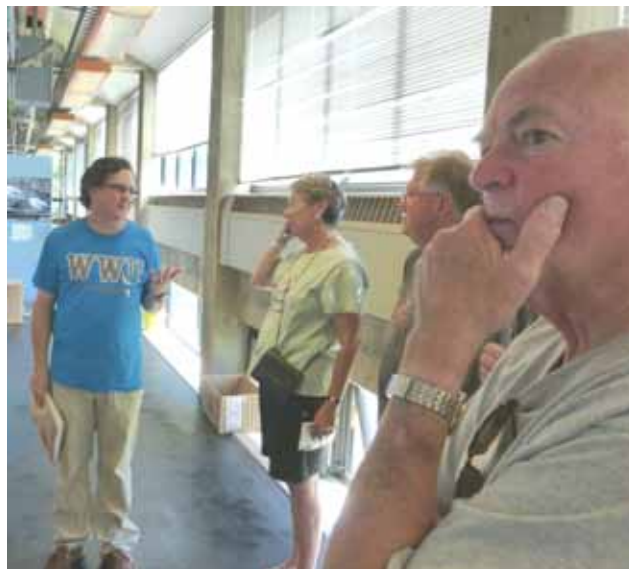


Photo by Lou Bahar

Western Washington University Professor Bernie Housen talks with Volunteers Marilyn and George Gough and Bill Burwell.

has been scraped off or lifted up and deposited during subduction.

Next we visited Western Washington University where University Research Technician George Mustoe explained the fossil record of the area, including the 53-million-year-old three-toed *Diatryma* trackway made by a large flightless bird. George has collected numerous trackways and his techniques were very interesting to many of us.

A highlight of the trip was visiting with WWU Professor and Chair of the Geology Department Bernie Housen, who has spent several years sampling sedimentary rock in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park badlands (and many other areas of the world) and determining the complex geo-magnetic polarity sequences. He explained how "paleomagnetic data" are used to date the 5.5 km deep sedimentary deposits of ABDSP.

During the next two days, WWU Research Associate Dave Tucker led the trip to Mt.

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They travel to Washington state (cont.)

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Baker, an active volcano. He is a member of the Mount Baker Volcano Research Center. He reported that Mount Baker is the youngest volcano in the Cascade arc, which extends from British Columbia to Northern California and was formed by subduction. Our trip took us to the edge of the Easton Glacier.

George Mustoe guided a field trip the last day to an area of the Eocene age



Photo by Neal Langerman
From Artists' Point near Mount Baker, Dave Tucker describes the effects of glaciation on the stratovolcano.



Photo by Gabriel Vogeli

A fossilized palm frond shows as much detail as one just cut from a tree. The palm is evidence of a warmer climate in that region.



Photo by Neal Langerman

WWU Research Associate Dave Tucker pointing out the andesite columns formed by magma from the stratovolcano.

(approximately 54 to <40 million years old) Chuckanut Formation where a large landslide exposed various mammal and bird tracks preserved in the sediment of an Eocene river which bordered a subtropical forest. The forest is preserved as entire fossilized palm fronds and pavement of leaves, twigs and wood.

Approximately 25 volunteers and their guests participated this year. Evenings were filled with wonderful dinners and conversation including potlucks, a seafood dinner hosted by Pat Gerdson and her daughter and son-in-law, Laura and Steve Widman, and a trip to the Acme Café in Acme, Washington, sponsored by Ralph and Nancy Batie.

As is always the case with these trips, valuable contacts were made and each of the guides were presented with a copy of George Jefferson's and Lowell Lindsay's 2006 Franklin-Award winning opus, *Fossil Treasures of Anza Borrego*.

This year the Paleontology Society's annual open house will feature Mammoth Discoveries from 1954 to 2013.

The event will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 26 and 27.

Participants will meet at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park's Visitor Center for the tour.

Treks: Notes from partners, volunteers

The Anza-Borrego Foundation



Ralph Singer

ABF President Ralph Singer reported the Foundation acquired 791 acres for ABDSP last year according to the latest issue of ABF's *Desert Update*.

"While all of the parcels have significant importance to ABDSP, there was one acquisition that is particularly noteworthy," he reported. "The purchase by ABF of the 174-acre Lundberg property provided, for the first time, permanent legal access through that area to Coyote Canyon. In addition to adding a vital gateway to Coyote Canyon for ABDSP, the purchase also protects land on the Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail."

The Lundberg acquisition was shepherded by Vice-President of Acquisitions Delores Lukina in conjunction with the members of ABF's Land Committee. Most of the acquisition work is handled by ABF volunteers.

"I thank all of our dedicated volunteers, whether they're devoting their time and energy to land acquisition, fundraising, program development or any of the many other projects that we are involved with," he said.

Ralph also noted that Paige Rogowski became ABF's third executive director May 25.

"Paige has had many years of experience in the non-profit field and worked with



Paige Rogowski

[former Executive Director] Linda Tandle as development director. Paige received several months of on-the-job training under the supervision of Chuck Bennett, who acted as interim executive director. We are excited to have Paige's energy and knowledge working for, and with, ABF," he concluded.

ABF also announced upcoming programs and trips that are scheduled for 2014.

A Two-week Tour of the Gobi Desert of Mongolia with retired ABDSP Superintendent Mark Jorgensen is planned for the summer of 2014. This adventure will introduce you to the culture, wildlife and varied terrain of Mongolia, including remote desert landscapes and Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar. Mark and a bilingual guide will lead hikes and drives that explore the Gobi Desert's wildlife, history and current research. Participants will visit grasslands, sand dunes and steppes habitat.



A Cultural Adventure will be led by Dr. Dennis Jenkins and Roger Riolo in the spring. Dr. Jenkins is director of the University of Oregon's Archaeology Field School and Lead Researcher for the University's Museum of Natural and Cultural History. Participants will travel through southern Oregon's early habitation sites, visiting Lake Abert, Paisley Caves, Fort Rock Cave, Carlon Village, the Newberry house site and others.

Paul Remeika will lead an *Introduction to the Natural and Cultural Resources of Four Corners, Homeland of the Ancients*. This geologic and archeological visit will follow spirit paths to rock art, buttes and mesas, trading posts and cliff dwellings.

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Treks: Partners, Volunteers (continued)

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And this fall, Friday through Sunday, November 1 through 3, ABF will sponsor the *Colorado Desert Cultural Symposium*. This weekend of events will explore the cultural history of the Southern California desert including a reception, speakers, field trips and poster presentations.

The Colorado Desert Cultural Symposium will include a program of speakers on various cultural subjects including history, ethnography, prehistory and archaeology of the region. The event will provide an opportunity for students, professional and amateur researchers and scientists, Park lovers and desert enthusiasts to come together to learn about the diverse research that has taken place in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and the surrounding Colorado Desert.

For further information or to learn how to submit a poster, look at *Desert Update on ABF's website* at <http://theabf.org>. Posters must be submitted by Monday, September 30.

The Sea and Desert Interpretive Association

By President Bill Meister

In the final quarter of the 2012/13 fiscal year, buoyed by a strong season, SDIA was able to increase its donation under the Partnership Donor Agreement with the Department of Parks and Recreation to keep the Salton Sea State Recreation Area open.

Initially we pledged and donated \$15,000. We added another \$18,000 to that to complete the fourth and final payment of \$30,000, making the total donated from all sources \$120,000!

This amount is being matched dollar-for-dollar by DPR and that will keep the Park open for another year! We are therefore changing direction in our fundraising efforts. We are



Photo by Connie Brooks

Sunrise is usually spectacular at the Salton Sea, but this one takes the cake — just another July morning in Paradise.

seeking grants for revenue-producing projects for the Park in an attempt at making the SSSRA self-sustaining.

Our first move in that direction has been to create a group camping area that will allow us to open our door to groups like the Boy and Girl Scouts, Indian Guides, boating clubs and so on. This also should improve our exposure as a desirable destination to the general public.

Additionally, it will allow us to implement a new program we are calling the Salton Sea Discovery Kids Camp. It will provide educational programs throughout the year to as many as 150 mostly underserved, low-income school age-children.

To that end, the California State Parks Foundation recently awarded us a grant of \$20,000 of the \$50,000 we need. So we are on our way!

The second project we are planning is adding eight more full hook-ups sites at Mecca Beach. Each site has the potential to bring in more than \$6,000 per season. So for all eight it

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Treks: Partners, Volunteers (continued)

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would be more than \$48,000 per season. That really would really help our Park to become self-sustaining, which is our goal. The cost for this project is \$16,000.

The third project is looking for sponsors for T-shirts and caps for the Salton Sea Discovery Kids Camp. We are looking for business owners or individuals who would like their names on the caps and shirts. The total cost for this project is \$3,000.

And, for now, the last project is the repair of the Mecca Beach plumbing and solar. Did you know that the pipes at Mecca Beach are made out of Terra Cotta? Time for an upgrade!

Entries for the SDIA's annual photography contest, Wildlife of the Salton Sea, must be received no later than Sunday, December 1. There are two categories for the contest: Ages 16 and under and Ages 17 and up. Photos must be taken at the Salton Sea. Submit photographs to Connie@seaanddesert.org or mail them to the SDIA, 100-225 State Park Road, North Shore, CA 92254.



Photo by James Ongley

Last year's winner of the Salton Sea State Recreation Area's Photo Contest, James Ongley, captured part of the beauty of the Park in his photograph of a pelican flying above the Sea at sunset.

Photos become property of the Sea and Desert Interpretive Association and will not be returned. All winners will have their photos in the 2014 Wildlife of the Salton Sea calendar and will receive a calendar, recognition and will have their photos displayed in the Visitor Center at the Salton Sea State Recreation Area. Please submit your full name, address, phone number, location and date of the photo. For more information call (760) 289-9455.

The Camp Store is closed through August and September (except for the Fishing Derby) and will re-open Friday, October 4.

CRSP's Interpretive Assistance Unit ***By Chris Jones***

Audrey Spindler and I roved up Milk Ranch Road, across the western part of Black Oak Trail and down Middle Peak Fire Road — a total of about 5.9 miles June 22. We encountered 19 hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders. It was a beautiful sunny day, but fortunately there was a slight breeze for most of the rove and patches of shade here and there.

On Black Oak Trail, we found a dead squirrel in the middle of the path and used a stick to move it off to the side. It seemed odd as we didn't see any live squirrels scampering about. It was also in good condition, so we wondered if it had died from disease or a heart attack—no signs of scavengers attacking it.

This was my first rove in that area since the [Cedar] fire in 2003. With so many trees gone, the view across the mountains west of the trail is fantastic! On a clearer day, we could probably have seen all the way to the ocean. We also could see the top of Middle Peak — or at least, we thought it might be the peak. It's hard to tell which the highest part is. On Middle



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Treks: Partners, Volunteers (continued)

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Peak Fire Road, we saw a lot of the little pine trees that have been planted in the area.

CRSP's Trails Maintenance Unit By Michele Hernandez



Wow, July was definitely not normal; muggy, cloudy, rainy and it was relatively cool, at times. The weather had a true north feel to it. "O, Canada," anyone?

The Hike and Hack mainly hiked the first Saturday of July. It was a warm, cloudy day. Mark Campbell carried the loppers and saw the most action. He cleared buckwheat, black lotus and other plants from around trail signs so people would know what trails they were on. We went up Peak Road, down Conejos, around to Azalea Springs then back to Azalea Glen where we watched the bombers on their way to the Chariot Fire. By the time we got back to Paso Picacho, we were sweaty and ready to finish.

Dave McClure and Ron Robillard cleared trees one day during the week. There was a



Photo by Michele Hernandez

Members of CRSP's Trail Maintenance Unit join Park Maintenance Supervisor Jim Dascoulias after a hard day's work on Cuyamaca's trails.



Photo by Chris Jones

One small example of the restoration effort, a sugar pine seedling grows next to a shade cloth at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.

big one at Cold Stream that had a mind of its own and rolled to the side of the trail that wasn't its intended landing spot. Several horse-women camping at Los Vaqueros were very pleased with the results. No need to back track after our dynamic duo got the big rotten pine out of the way.

I hiked up West Side Trail when we all got back to West Mesa Parking and located an oak tree that was reported down. Ron and Dave went up and took care of that one too.

For those of you who use the Minshall Trail between Office Technician (Typing) Shirley Jones' place and Camp WoLaHi, you can now see the trail (hurrah). A group of Trail Maintenance Unit (TMU) weekday workers went out and brushed the trail in this area. Dave McClure said that it was plenty wide and much safer for trail users.

East Side Trail had a large tree down on it close to Sweetwater parking. Several trail reports mentioned that it blocked the trail for

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Treks: Partners, Volunteers (continued)

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horseback riders. Maintenance Aide John Sproule and Dave got that tree removed so now (hopefully) it's "happy trails" for horses and their riders.

Milo and Janet provided lunch for the TMU and Park staff on the second Saturday of July. Anybody who has ever attended one of their afternoon get-togethers knows how enjoyable and yummy it is. Thanks to the Prodanoviches for their generosity.

CRSP's Mounted Assistance Unit ***By Bonnie Slager***

I just got home from our Benefit Ride weekend. Whoever ordered the weather for did a stellar job. It was as perfect as the weather can be in Cuyamaca this time of year.

We had a smaller turnout this year than some years, but a wonderful group of campers. At least six of the campers had never been in the Park before. They thought it was as great as the rest of us do and I am sure they will all be back. We had one camper all the way from Arizona. We had about 50 horses between the campers and the day riders.

Our raffle prizes this year were outstanding; we had golf and vacations as well as horsey things. Our shoppers did a great job buying the



Photo by Michele Hernandez

With well-maintained trails, running creeks, pine-scented campgrounds and wildlife such as this mule deer buck, who wouldn't love Cuyamaca Rancho State Park?

food. We had perfectly cooked steaks and chicken, thanks to our chefs, as well as great side dishes and lots of desserts brought by MAU members. The trail bosses brought back as many riders as they left camp with and all were happy riders. We got lots of comments on how nice the trails are.

I am proud to be unit coordinator of such a dependable and dedicated group of volunteers. They always pull through on this event. I cannot brag enough about them. This event is very important to our unit and it shows by how hard they worked on it. Thanks to all of you. You make me look good. Enjoy Cuyamaca.

Friends of Palomar Mountain State Park

Palomar Mountain State Park was recently honored to receive trail maintenance assistance from six interns supplied by The Nature Conservancy's



Photo by Steve Bier

Floods cause damage at times, but also leave a blank slate for desert artists such as these footprints left by a frog in ABDSP's Coyote Canyon.

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Treks: Partners, Volunteers (continued)

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Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF) Program.

LEAF provides paid summer internships for high school students and helps educators from environmental high schools share best practices and scientific resources. The six interns who helped Palomar are students of Environment Charter Schools in Los Angeles and were accompanied by mentors and teachers Sophie Korn and Monica Jara. The day spent at Palomar was part of an intensive month-long program consisting of environmental education and practicum.

"I was really proud and pleased with our interns," said Rick Barclay, coordinator of Palomar's volunteer trail maintenance unit who led the group with assistance of long-time crew member Bob Hillestad. "It was a hot day and we had to pace ourselves, but everyone stayed in good spirits and they really applied themselves. I was also impressed with their knowledge about the environment and natural resources."

Carole Bell, director of the conservancy's



Photo by Connie Brooks

ABDSP/SSSRA Ranger Richard Duthaler gives a presentation about the Sea and Park at the Mecca Library on World Ranger Day.

Santa Rosa Plateau Preserve in Murrieta, added, "The girls are amazing in all areas ... hard workers, great personalities and also very joyful which I think I love the most."

Carole and her own trail maintenance unit occasionally assist at Palomar trail maintenance events as well. The day was capped off by a visit to the Palomar Observatory, with a special behind-the-scenes guided tour by Carolyn Heffner, astronomer and engineer for the observatory who also happens to be a member of Palomar's volunteer trail maintenance unit.

How well do you know the parks in our District?

The parks in the Colorado Desert District are extremely diverse with fascinating history, beautiful scenery and many different activities. See if you can answer the following questions about them.

1. Which park used to have a population of 2,500 people?
2. Which park has more than half of its land classified as wilderness?
3. Which park was established in 1951?
4. Which park has a spring named after

a cowboy?

5. Which park's highest point is 5,438 feet?

For the answers to these questions, visit the Stout Research Center Library. Staff and volunteers can find the answers to these and thousands of other questions at the library which is open during office hours. There is a self check out book on the west side of the room. For a faster answer to these questions, see page 18.

Palomar has two kinds of forests (cont.)

(Continued from Page 1)

By Dave Roberts

Retired ABDSP Maintenance Supervisor

To get a true sense of the Palomar Mountains, you must see them either from the air or lacking that, have a look at a 3-D relief map. A flat, two dimensional drawing doesn't show you how abruptly Palomar sweeps up from low lying coastal foothills.

Palomar is not a lone peak, but a series of ridges trending in a northeast to a southwest direction, that is parallel to, but separate from the Laguna and San Bernardino Mountains further inland. Palomar's westward setting defines it as a world apart from its eastern neighbors.

I think of Palomar as a ship, its bow at Boucher Point, parting the southwest flow of moist air off the Pacific Ocean. As this current of sea-born air flows around Boucher, it divides into two equal parts: one going up the San Luis Rey River Valley and the other up the drainage of Pauma Creek.

This moisture-laden air makes the forests of the southwestern slopes of Palomar different



District file photo

Wildflowers make a visit to Palomar Mountain State Park that more inviting.



Photo by Dave Roberts

Doane Pond, in the heart of PMSP, is a wonderful place to go trout fishing with family.

from the northeastern ones. You'll see this as you drive up county road S-6 to Cal Tech's renowned observatory. The big dome of the 200-inch telescope is only about three miles from the State Park as the crow flies, but is much further away in climate. The average rainfall, measured at the State Park office, is 40 to 45 inches annually. The rainfall at the observatory is 25 to 30 inches.

This is clearly reflected in the vegetation of these two areas. The observatory side of the mountain has a chaparral, manzanita, black oak, and Coulter pine mix familiar to the Julian side of the coastal ranges.

In contrast, the Park's slopes have the look of the western-facing valleys of California's lofty Sierra Nevada.

Microclimates within the Park are clearly delineated by their vegetation types. Moist, cool air is funneled up the Pauma Creek drainage and is compressed by ridges bordering the Park's central Doane Valley. Here, slopes abound in big cone spruce, their sparsely foliaged, horizontal limbs reaching to the sky like outstretched arms. And huge white firs grow to enormous diameters; south of Cedar Grove

(Continued on Page 17)

PMSP is not like its neighbors (continued)

(Continued from Page 16)

Group Campground some are more than six feet in diameter at their base and soar more than 150 feet in height.

This grove of ancient trees is a special place to explore. With little undergrowth due to a lack of sunlight, it is an area of sword fern, moss and lichen-covered rock – a perfect place for a quiet picnic on a hot August day. This old growth forest is rarely visited by the casual hiker although it can be readily accessed via the Adams Trail.

Lower Doane Valley (an appealing hike to the north) features a broad flat plateau bordered by two creeks, Doane and French. Here, a large stand of ponderosa pine has survived for millennia. The trees bear scars – ancient and modern – of fire, drought and disease which, to me, makes them all the more majestic as they rise alone in this open, grassy valley. These venerable wooden columns are the supports holding up a forest temple. Their dark green needles and the blue skies are its frescoed ceiling.

Of the four main groups of conifers found on Palomar, the remaining tree is the incense cedar. At the Silvercrest Picnic Area, the trees thrive along the north-facing slopes where morning fogs linger and the snow patches hesitate to melt in the late winter.

An especially wet year leaves the forest floor looking like a green shag carpet of thousands of seedlings dropped by their parent trees the season before. Very few will grow to maturity.

Initially, a crowd-tolerant and shade-loving youngster, the seedlings quickly yearn for full sun and more elbow room. By middle age, they start to lose their straight-stemmed, smooth-barked appearance. In old age, they take a gnarled, furrowed look.

Of cone bearing trees, incense cedar has the most variation in form, with older trees some-



District file photo
Apple trees in the historic orchard are framed by PMSP's forest of much larger trees.

times mistaken for an altogether different species because of their dissimilar features. They often are mistaken for their northern neighbors, the giant Sequoia of the Sierra Nevada.

The woodlands of Palomar Mountain include a number of trees found in the Sierra Nevada. Pacific dogwood is easily recognized in early May by its conspicuous, large white flowers. It is one of the more colorful of mountain trees as its leaves turn from green to a dark wine red in late October. And there is the white alder, its roots favoring wet soil which makes it a dominant tree along the banks of Doane Creek as it meanders through the Park. The alder is a stately tree, reaching heights of 75 feet or more.

To experience these trees, hike the Thunder Springs Trail in the early morning by pools of slowly moving water shimmering with the reflection of the alders' silver gray bark.

In its 1,850 acres, Palomar Mountain State Park offers one of the most varied, unique and welcoming environments in all of Southern California, a place apart from arid foothills coastal development. It is not to be missed.

Ranger Duthaler marries on the moon



Photo by Dede Spates

ABDSP/SSSRA Ranger Richard Duthaler and his bride Melissa smile after their wedding with Cameron and Sophia.

Ranger Richard Duthaler, who works Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and the Salton Sea State Recreation Area, married Melissa Spates July 12. Her children, Sophia and Cameron, attended the wedding.

Richard and Melissa were middle and high school friends who hadn't had contact in 15 years. They reunited about two years ago and the meeting led to the small and low-key wedding at the courthouse in Indio. They hosted a small reception for family after the wedding.

"I joked with Melissa that we would wed on the moon because we were flying so high," Richard reported. "Plus, the moon's much more intriguing than Indio."

When Richard sent the photo to *Tracks*, he wrote, "Melissa's the pretty girl in white with her two awesome kids — my new stepchildren Sophia and Cameron."

West Nile virus is found on both side of Coachella Valley

According to an article in the *Desert Sun*, West Nile virus has been found on both sides the Coachella Valley. Mosquitos transmit the virus by biting humans or animals. Most people don't experience any symptoms or illness and others may have varied symptoms. In less than 1 percent of people who become infected, a serious neurological infection can occur.

To avoid being bitten by mosquitos, use insect repellents and wear long sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors. Spray clothing with repellent as mosquitos can bite through clothing. Spray your skin with repellent, but not the skin that will be covered with clothing.

In general if you find any animal, don't touch it. Note the location as precisely as possible and, if possible, take a photograph to help health officials identify the species and condition in case it is not there when they arrive. If you find a dead bird, call (877) 969-2473.

Answers to the quiz on page 15

1. Twenty-five hundred people lived at Picacho State Recreation Area at the turn of the century when the Picacho Mine was in operation. Now there are three: the entire State Parks staff.

2. More than half of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park is classified as wilderness, meaning no vehicles, including bicycles, are allowed on that land.

3. In 1951, the Department of Parks and Recreation established the Salton Sea State Recreation Area. SSSRA cover 14 miles of the northeastern shore of the Sea.

4. Jim Spring, named for a cowboy who worked for cattleman Alfred Wilson, is in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

5. You can see all the way to the Pacific Ocean from Palomar Mountain State Park's Boucher Hill. With its expansive views, the Boucher Fire Lookout is in operation again.

Weather station works around the clock

**Photo by
Leslie Bellah**

Night or day, rain or shine, the new weather station at District Headquarters is recording air temperatures, precipitation, barometric pressure, total solar radiation, relative humidity, wet bulb and dew point temperatures, photosynthetically-active radiation (PAR), wind velocity, wind direction, soil temperatures at three levels — and all this is done every ten minutes around the clock.



**By Jim Dice, Reserve Manager
Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego
Desert Research Center**

A new weather station in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is in operation at District Headquarters. The station was a cooperative effort between the University of California Natural Reserve System (UCNRS), the University of California at Irvine (UCI), the Colorado Desert District, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the National Weather Service and the Desert Research Institute of Reno, Nevada.

Funding for the station and the installation was provided by a National Science Foundation grant to the UCNRS. UCI and the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center provided funding for the pouring of the concrete base and footings for the station. Greg McCurdy and A.J. Wolff III from the Desert Research Institute and Kevin Browne from the UCNRS installed the tower.

The system began collecting data April 30 between 2 and 3 p.m. It records data on air temperature, relative humidity, wet bulb and dew point temperatures, precipitation, barometric pressure, total solar radiation, photosynthetically-active radiation (PAR), wind velocity, wind direction, soil temperatures at two, four and eight inches below the surface of the ground — all at 10 minute intervals.

Although the system began collecting and recording data April 30, data did not become available on-line until June because of hurdles and hoops to overcome with security in the State Parks IT system, where the data is first sent before it hits the internet.

Thanks to the diligent work of Research Analyst II (GIS) L.Louise Jee and Systems Software Spec II (Tech) Phil Usrey from Sacramento, this was accomplished in early June and Kevin Browne of UCNRS made a return trip to Borrego for the final connection. The data is now available to anyone online at <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/weather/ucab.html>.

Graphs and readouts of current conditions for most measurements are available in real time and the site is updated every 10 minutes. You can also click on the link to historical data and look at all data collected back to the original start of the station April 30 and you can create daily, weekly or monthly summaries back to that time.

There are 38 units within the UCNRS (Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center was the 37th unit accepted into the system).

Currently 16 of the units have weather data from similar stations available online through the Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC). The UCNRS' Philip L. Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center in Palm Desert, the James Reserve at Mount San Jacinto and the Elliot Chaparral Reserve in San Diego are the closest to us.

TRACKS

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