

The Clear Print
The San Diego Tracking Team Newsletter



SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 2—VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT—THIS MEANS YOU!

“Are Wildlife Corridors Functioning in San Diego County?”

On Monday, March 14, Shea Valero will answer that question with a presentation of her master’s thesis at the Ranch House in Peñasquitos Canyon at 7 PM.

Shea used the DNA from mule deer scat to identify individual animals and trace the gene flow between six locations in San Diego County: Torrey Pines, Peñasquitos Canyon, Fortuna Mountain, Oak Canyon (MTRP), Hollenbeck Canyon, and Rancho Jamul. Using several different statistical techniques, she was able to estimate long-term historic gene flow and compare it to current movement patterns with surprising results.

We hope you’ll be able to join us for this fascinating presentation followed by snacks and an opportunity to socialize with some of your fellow trackers.

Presenting the Preserve Calavera Tracking Team

By Karen Merrill

The Calavera area is the largest remaining contiguous native habitat in coastal North County. It is considered ‘core’ habitat in the North County regional Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan (MHCP). Some of the natural features found here are an extinct volcano, a lake, the main tributary of Aqua Hedionda creek and Coast Live Oak over two hundred years old! Hundreds of plants, lots of wildlife! What a gem...right in our backyard! Did I mention there are 15 developments in various planning stages that will impact this urban oasis?

Enter Preserve Calavera, whose mission is to preserve and protect as much of the 3,000 acres as possible. While working diligently to help shape the ‘footprint’ of these developments, it became apparent that the linkages or corridors through these projects look good on paper but out in the dirt look tenuous at best. So, the Preserve Calavera Tracking Team was formed and transects set up to monitor movement through the proposed Wildlife Corridors. The data collected over the last four years will be used to assess the viability of the linkages as the projects move forward. In other words, we aim to make sure that line on paper translates to a veritable wildlife highway!

Presenting the Rose Canyon Tracking Team

By Gretchen Nell

Friends of Rose Canyon is dedicated to the protection, preservation and restoration of Rose Canyon, including Rose Canyon Open Space Park. With now over 850 members, we were

founded in 2002 in response to a major threat to Rose Canyon Open Space Park: the proposed Regents Road bridge project. This project would devastate the heart of the park. It would construct a massive cut and fill road plus a bridge right through an area of the park that is used by both wildlife and people. This project would cost many millions of dollars, which could be better spent on projects that bring greater community benefit without destroying our irreplaceable urban open space. Rose Canyon Park is one of the city of San Diego's eight open space parks, along with Mission Trails Regional Park and Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Friends of Rose Canyon is committed to the preservation of all of our open space parks: they are our legacy to future generations.

We founded the tracking team as part of our efforts to document the importance of the canyon to wildlife. Rose Canyon is a belt of green that stretches across the city from MCAS Miramar to Mission Bay. It is in the MSCP and provides important urban wildlife habitat. It also is a wildlife corridor, as it connects to the east to the extensive open space at MCAS Miramar and to the west to San Clemente Canyon.

Calling All Apprentices

An Apprentice is anyone who has completed our Tracker/Naturalist series of classes (beginning, intermediate, and advanced), even if it was years ago. While the Apprentice designation has been ambiguous at best, we are now putting together an Apprentice Program with clear steps and special programs to lead you on your way to becoming a full-fledged Tracker. More information on this program will be available soon, but for now we ask, "Are you an apprentice?" Based on class records from the past few years, Lani has put together an e-mail list, but unfortunately records from years ago are inconsistent. If you are an apprentice, and you have NOT received an e-mail from Lani acknowledging your apprentice status in the past few weeks, please contact Lani at 858-513-0359 or noreke@sbcglobal.net.

Check it Out! The New and Improved SDTT Website

Big thanks to Rick Botta for improving the usability of the SDTT website. Passwords are no longer needed, and there are links to class schedules and sign up forms, transect schedules, and the membership form.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 12: Monthly tracking walks, 8:00 am to 10:00 at the Peñasquitos Preserve Ranch House. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced levels offered. This is a great opportunity to introduce people to tracking, so tell your friends.

Thursday, February 24 and Saturday, February 26: Beginning Tracker Naturalist Class, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Wednesday and 8:00 am to 6:00 pm Saturday at the Peñasquitos Ranch House. Contact Rick Botta (858-672-0584, rmbotta@earthlink.net) to sign up as a student or to help out.

Saturday, March 12: Monthly tracking walks, 8:00 am to 10:00 at the Peñasquitos Preserve Ranch House. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced levels offered.

Monday, March 14: Presentation by Shea Valero—Are Wildlife Corridors Functioning in San Diego County? 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Peñasquitos Ranch House.

Saturday, April 2: Annual Membership Appreciation Party. Save the date, more information to follow.

Saturday, April 9: Monthly tracking walks, 8:00 am to 10:00 at the Peñasquitos Preserve Ranch House. Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced levels offered.

Saturday, April 16: Spring Wildlife Survey Volunteer Training at the Ranch House in the Peñasquitos Preserve, be there by 9:45 to register, class runs from 10:00 until 4:00, bring a bag lunch, water and dress as for a hike. This is an introduction to tracking, essential for transect volunteers. All experienced trackers are welcome to attend and you are invited to come and help set up (look for tracks), assist with instruction or just review. Experienced trackers who do not wish to attend the training may sign up for transects by contacting Lani (858-513-0359, noreke@sbcglobal.net.)

Don't forget, you can help support SDTT in two important ways—volunteer your time and/or contribute financially by becoming a dues paying member. Call our new number 760-715-4102 to volunteer and go to www.sdtt.org for a membership form.

Please send submissions to the Clear Print to Lani Noreke at noreke@sbcglobal.net