

Sycamore Sage

The Preserve may be closed during and after heavy rains. For your safety, please observe all closure notices.

Park hours are: April - Sept
(8 a.m. - 7 p.m.);
Oct- March (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
For more information, call
the Visitor Center at
858-513-4737.

The Friends of Goodan
Ranch/Sycamore Canyon
are on the web:
GoodanRanch.Org

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Newsletter

Rita Lee

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you for renewing your memberships. We have been able to provide some needed materials for our park.

The unusual weather of this year continues with rain nearly every day in May. In between showers, several Friends have been able to support Environmental Science Associates biologists who are leading the S.D. Thornmint surveys for 2019. The plants seemed to get off to a slow start but by mid May were abundant and healthy. Also presenting well were Dudlea Varigata plants, another rare species.

According to the Poway Chieftain, The Poway Days Parade will be 7 Sept 2019. We hope to participate. Details will be worked out at our 12 August meeting. If you are able to help with the parade, let us know.

Have a great summer.

Carol



Congratulations are in order to Ranger Louis Chertkow for 35 years with the SD County Parks. Thank you for all you do for our Parks!

Do all skunks have stripes?

If you think all skunks have stripes, let us introduce you to the Western Spotted Skunk. Boy are they cute.

The Western Spotted Skunk (*Spilogale gracilis*) is smaller than the Striped Skunk and can be found right here in our own area. Except for a white spot between the eyes, their spots are actually a series of interrupted stripes running down the back and sides. They are about the size of a tree squirrel and are the smallest skunks we have.

The Western Spotted Skunk is more nomadic than other species; it rarely makes a permanent den. Instead, a Spotted Skunk is more likely to hole up temporarily in a safe spot such as a rock crevice, woodpile, or an abandoned burrow and, since they are adept at climbing, in the attics of houses. Skunks are not true hibernators but females often den up in groups and sleep for weeks at a time during the winter. Males stay alone and move about all winter.



In the fall, the male will go looking for harems of females that are living together. The males will go on a quest to find as many females as possible during the fall mating season. The male will be very skinny and tired by the time that is over because he will rarely even stop to eat.

Born in April or May, the newborn skunks have fine hair that shows the adult color pattern. Each skunk's pattern is unique. The eyes open in about 30 days. The kits start solid food at about 42 days, are weaned

at about two months, and reach adult size at about four months. After they have been weaned, the mother brings her young live prey, and eventually teaches them to hunt for themselves. The males do not help in raising the young.

All skunks are good rodent hunters, but spotted skunks are especially good at capturing rats and mice. Spotted skunks are faster than other skunks, and because they are smaller, they can get into small holes and tunnels where rodents may hide.

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Spotted skunks, like all skunks, protect themselves by spraying a strong and unpleasant scent. However, spotted skunks typically perform a unique "hand stand"—the back vertical and the tail waving before spraying. Skunks store about 1 tablespoon (15 g) of the odorous oil and can quickly spray five times in row to about 15 feet. It takes about one week to replenish the oil. Young skunks don't have as much spray and their scent is weaker. The odor of this liquid is enough to discourage most enemies, but in addition to the awful smell, it also burns and stings when it touches the skin. A direct hit in the face causes painful but temporary blindness and severe inflammation of the eyes, nose, and mouth. Choking, coughing, some degree of nausea, and possible fainting also may result. The secretion of the spotted skunks differs from that of the striped skunks in its chemical makeup. The odor of the musk is considered somewhat more pungent or acrid but is less spreading than that of the Striped skunk

Even with their potent defense, there are predators who can attack swiftly enough to carry off a young skunk before a mother can spray. Great Horned Owls strike from above and without warning. Other

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Fun Facts about The Western Spotted Skunk

- ◆ Western Spotted skunks are very good at catching rodents.
- ◆ Despite being stung many times, skunks sometimes knock down beehives to get the honeycomb.
- ◆ This is the only skunk that is able to climb trees.
- ◆ Skunks roll caterpillars about on the ground in order to remove the hairs prior to eating them. They also roll stinky beetles causing the beetle to use up its scent before it is eaten.
- ◆ Western Spotted Skunks seem to be more nocturnal than the striped skunk; rarely being seen out and about during daylight hours.
- ◆ Skunks can swim, but they swim only when their life is threatened.
- ◆ A skunk's spray odor can be detected up to 1.5 miles.
- ◆ Skunks are Immune to snake venom, and are known to eat poisonous snakes like rattlesnakes.
- ◆ A group of skunks is called a surfeit.





Before they spray, Spotted Skunks do a handstand to warn off predators!

major predators of the Western Spotted Skunk are humans, dogs, cats, bobcats, foxes, coyotes and owls.

Living skunks are very valuable to our environment. They are also useful in destroying rats and mice that commonly infest farm buildings and eat crops. Spotted skunks are particularly efficient hunters because they are quick and are able to follow rodents into smaller spaces than can larger skunks.

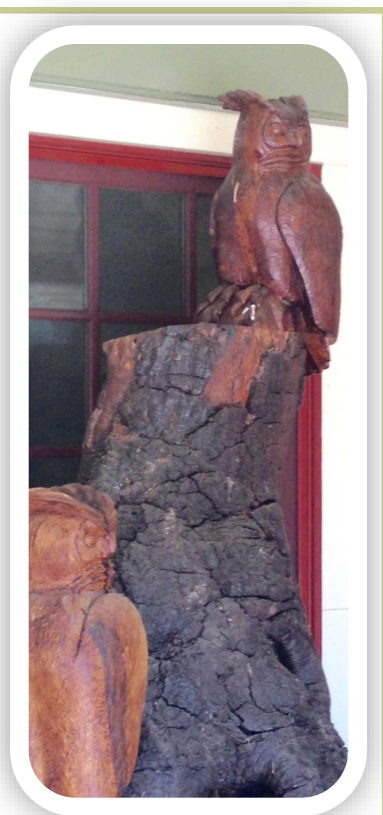
If you happen to meet a skunk in the woods, stand as still as possible for a few minutes. As soon as the animal feels you are no threat, it will go about its business, and you can quietly slip away without being sprayed.

The best advice to follow is leave skunks alone – baby ones included. Don't let the sight of a cute little skunk tempt you into trying to pick it up.

Young skunks are able to spray by the time they are seven weeks old, and they won't hesitate to spray. Also, they can and will bite. Be especially wary of “friendly” skunks, since one of the characteristics of rabies in wildlife is a loss of fear of humans.



**New Statute
at
Visitors Center
donated by the
City of Poway**



Before & After

Daniel Quinn's Eagle Scout project was to build new Amphitheater benches. He and his Scout Associates did a great job. What an improvement!!



BEFORE



AFTER



FRIENDS OF GOODAN RANCH & SYCAMORE CANYON OPEN SPACE, INC. - BOARD MEETING

Meeting Location: Poway Historical Society
Meeting start time: 7:08 pm

Attending: Carol Crafts, Phoenix Von Hendy, Terry Callan, Maureen Abare-Laudy, Robert Laudy, Mike Overy, Cathy Overy, Barbara Lerma

Not in attendance: Shawnie Williams, Ann Tipps

Guests: Louis Chertkow

Reports:

Secretary's report

Minutes from February 9 meeting published in March Sage. Minutes were approved as published

Treasurer's report

All memberships are due for renewal as of January 1, 2019

Barbara Lerma paid her dues at this meeting.

\$205 donations - all memberships

\$1.34 interest

\$196 expenses

Checking - \$7038

Savings - \$10.913

Total - \$17,952

\$303.35 requested for purchase of a new saw. Louis said it's a nice high-powered gas saw that will be highly useful for the revegetation projects that are going in in the park. Rangers are also doing a lot of weed abatement this year with all the rain. Terry will pay with our debit card and Louis will pick it up. He currently has it on hold.

Ranger's report

Lots of rain, with lots of wild flowers. Use by the public is up in the Preserve, hikers, bikers and horseback riders. Rangers have been patrolling trails, blocking illegal trails and watching the sensitive areas. Jeff Sobilo has been promoted and moved to a different park. Roads are being repaired following the rains. Sycamore Canyon Drive is mostly complete and Cardiac will be started on next. An Eagle Scout has replaced a number of the benches in the amphitheater and the wedding arbor is in place there under the oak trees. Staff is looking to increase use of the amphitheater and the Visitor's Center. Staff will be working more with local schools and libraries, and get more involved with children's programs, as well as Eagle Scouts.

Tracking Report

The Sycamore Canyon survey was scheduled for Friday, May 3, but had to be cancelled due to a lack of volunteers. The survey will be rescheduled for a Friday in June.

Last quarter's survey, done on March 1, went very well. We found lots of deer tracks, several new woodrat nests, kangaroo rat tracks, scat and dens. We also found Spotted Skunk tracks. We know the spotted skunks are in the Preserve, but we seldom see their tracks. We also found Long-tailed Weasel scat. We had not seen weasel sign in the Preserve since the 2003 Cedar Fire. Weasels do not stay in one place very long so we don't expect to see sign regularly, but it was nice to see signs of them again after all these years.

PAP

There was a public information meeting in Poway last month, attended by Carol and Phoenix. Comments were due by end of April and many of us submitted comments.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Thornmint surveys have been rained out most days. Surveying has been done one day, where they got three plots completed. Additional days scheduled for May 14 & 15. Carol helped out the first day and will be there on the 14th, and Phoenix will help out on the 15th. Additional days will be scheduled as needed. Maureen will be available Saturday May 18 if a survey is scheduled that day.

The next JPA meeting Thursday May 30 at the Visitor's Center, starting at 10 am.

The San Diego City Council is voting on the MTRP Master Plan on May 21. Public comment period has been done and CEQA documentation completed.

The City of Santee had a public meeting on the proposed Fanita Ranch development, with speakers on both pro and con sides. Current plan calls for 3000 houses, with large patches of open space that are situated to preserve wildlife corridors. The nearby Castle Rock housing project has been approved on a scaled-back plan. It is in the east Elliot area, between Oak Canyon and the City of Santee. A large part of the land is being set aside as open space. The land/houses will likely be annexed by the City of Santee because that is who will need to supply all services.

Poway Days Parade is on September 14 this year. We may participate, pending a decision by Louis.

Next Newsletter will be out on June 1, 2019
Next Board Meeting is Monday, August 12, 2019 6 pm at Goodan Ranch Visitor Center
Membership dues were due the first of 2019



Goodan Ranch Staging Area

16281 Sycamore Canyon Road, Poway, CA 92064

Hours: 8 a.m. – 7 p.m., April – Sept.

8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Oct. – March

Pedestrian access is available from sunrise to sunset, daily.

The Goodan Ranch staging area is accessed from Poway Rd. east on Garden Rd, then south on Sycamore Canyon Rd. Sycamore Canyon Rd. ends at parking lot.

Highway 67 Staging Area

13920 Highway 67, Lakeside, CA 92040

Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., daily

Pedestrian access is available from sunrise to sunset, daily

The Highway 67 staging area is accessed through SOUTHBOUND Highway 67 only, half a mile south of Scripps Poway Parkway.

(Please see county web site for more information)

ALLOW ½ HOUR TO PARK AND WALK TO THE VISITOR'S CENTER.

No vehicular traffic is permitted in the Preserve. Transportation for those with disabilities can be arranged, by calling the **Ranger** at **(858) 513-4737**.

The Park's website is www.sdparks.org.

SDAA Stars at Sycamore Canyon @7:15 pm on Fridays, June 28th, July 26th, August 23 & Sept 27th

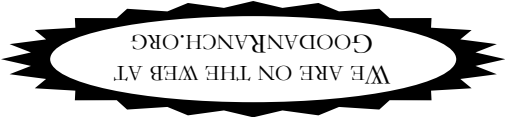
Join San Diego Astronomy Association (SDAA) volunteer astronomers and County Park for a night with the stars. Come experience the chance to view our galaxy using the same technology used by the professionals. Viewers get a chance to see many amazing sights, depending on time of year, that they wouldn't normally see without the trained eye of the astronomers.

Coordinates from Google Earth for the viewing area are: 32°55'47.76"N, 116°58'10.89"W

Please see San Diego County website for more information on events.



**Friends of Goodan Ranch
&
Sycamore Canyon Open Space**
Webpage—GoodanRanch.org
Facebook—Goodan Ranch
Email—FriendsofGoodanRanch@gmail.com



Please enroll me as a member of Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon Open Space.

Date _____
Name or Business _____
Contact Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Please select your membership level

- ☐ •\$ 25 Individual
☐ •\$ 20 Student /or/ Senior -62 and above
☐ •\$ 40 Family
☐ •\$ 50 Small Business
☐ •\$ 100 Patron
☐ •\$1,000 Lifetime Member

The Sycamore Sage
103030 Birch Lane
Poway, CA 92064



Fill out the requested information & mail it with your check to:
**Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon
Memberships
13030 Birch Lane
Poway, CA 92064**