



Sycamore Sage

The President's Message

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.

**Board members of
Friends of Goodan Ranch
&
Sycamore Canyon Open
Space**

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Newsletter

Rita Lee

March 2020

Has spring arrived? The fields are a lovely green right now. It is a great time to visit Goodan Ranch and see all the improvements.

Now is also the time to renew your dues as everyone renews in January.



Carol Crafts

I want to thank Cathy and Mike Overy for their years of serving on the board and support at the ranch. They are stepping down. Their frequent rides on their horses kept our finger on the pulse when I couldn't. We could use more of our members to serve on the Board. If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact us.



Joe & Laura Mossuto

We are most grateful that Joe and Laura Mossuto, the live-in volunteers, are joining us on the Board now. They have been instrumental in many of the improvements and we know will bring a lot of wisdom to us.

We still haven't seen the Public Access Plan but we expect to see it by late spring. We will let you all know when the public review is set.

Mean while, if you have wanted to ride your bike down there but were not able, e bikes are now allowed on the trails.

Please see our last newsletter for more information on the requirements and restrictions.

Carol

What is the American Badger?

The shaggy fur of the American Badger is streaked with grey on its back.



The fur is black around its feet.

Sharp claws are used to dig out prey from burrows

I have been seeing a lot on the San Diego internet about Badger studies. This got me thinking that I don't know ANYTHING about the American Badger and why it is so important to the San Diego ecosystem. So I did a little research and thought I'd share what I learned.

The American Badger is a large, tough and ferocious animal from the weasel family. Many consider them ugly, but I think they have their own kind of beauty. American Badgers are close to the ground with long bodies with short legs. They have brown or black fur with long, pointed, tipped-up noses and a long white strip running from the point of their noses all the way up to the backs of their bodies. However, there is no way you could mistake them for a skunk. Ranging between 24 and 35 inches in length, and weighing in between 8 and 26 pounds, the American Badger is slightly larger than its southern cousin, the Honey Badger.

Sadly, the American Badgers is a "**Species of Special Concern**" in California. American badgers prefer open scrub or grassy areas that are undisturbed and treeless. They move up to 6 miles a day in search of prey. Because they have large home ranges, researchers can use badgers as indicators of habitat connectivity for conserved lands in San Diego. If a badger is successful moving through lands constricted by urbanization or roads, and able to find a mate or obtain food, it

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

might indicate the landscape connects for smaller species that use these same habitats. This makes their conservation important to the health of San Diego's amazing ecosystem.

Badgers are largely solitary and nocturnal, foraging at night and then remaining underground during the daylight hours. They typically enlarge foraged out homes of their prey, or other animal burrows. The badger does not hibernate and forages all winter long. During very cold weather, a badger will partially plug the den with soil to keep out water and help retain heat. Abandoned badger burrows are "recycled" and occupied by mammals of similar size, such as foxes and skunks, as well as animals such as the burrowing owl.



American Badger hunting with Coyote

Badgers are digging machines. Their very life depends on their ability to move soil rapidly as

their primary food source are small burrowing rodents like ground squirrels, rats, gophers, chipmunks and mice. Coyotes will often stand by while badgers are burrowing, in order to catch fleeing

rodents as they try to escape. Badgers have a third eyelid that protects their eyes from all the flying soil, and thick guard hairs in their nostrils and ears to keep them clear of debris.

Badger Facts - animalstats -			
MALE	FEMALE	YOUNG	SOCIAL UNIT
boar	sow	cub	group
GROUP	HOME	HABITAT	FAVORITE FOOD
clan, cete	N.America, Asia Europe, Africa	grasslands	mice, snakes
ENEMIES	ENDANGERED	TOP SPEED	GENDER DIFFERENCE
coyote, eagle	no	19 mph	Males larger
CLAW LENGTH	AVG. HEIGHT	AVG..LENGTH	AVG. WEIGHT
2 - 3 inches	12 - 16 inches	20 - 36 inches	15 -40 pounds
ESTRUS	GESTATION	BIRTH LENGTH	BIRTH WEIGHT
1 -3 x year	7 months delayed	6 inches	6 - 8 ounces
RAISED BY	# OF YOUNG	AT BIRTH	EYES OPEN
mother	2 - 5	blind, fine hair	3 - 4 weeks
WEANED	INDEPENDENT	MATURITY	LIFESPAN
8 weeks	6 months	1 year	8 - 12 years

Animal Facts Encyclopedia.com

While the main staple of a badger diet is rodents, they will also eat snakes, birds, insects, carrion, eggs, lizards, insects and beetle grubs. They are considered a "Significant Predator" of rattlesnakes.

Badgers lead a nomadic life because they are such efficient eradicators of rodents that they can deplete local populations rather quickly. A badger can travel five to eight miles a night, leaving behind it a trail of freshly dug burrows that will later be used as dens by coyotes, tortoises, snakes, skunks and owls.

A female American Badger creates 2 to 4 burrows close together with a connecting tunnel to hide her babies. Displaced soil from digging out the burrow is in front of the burrow entrance with

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

the living space created underneath the mound-like raised-roof. Their dens range from about 4 feet to 10 feet in depth and 4 feet to 6 feet in width.

Badgers mate in late summer, but the fetus does not begin to grow until February, and the pups are born in March or April. Between one and five pups will be whelped, each covered in light fur. The pups grow quickly, and are weaned at about eight weeks of age. By



American Badger and prey

August, they will be on their own. Badgers have lived to be 26 years old in captivity. The average lifespan in the wild is between 4 and 10 years, but some badgers may live up to 14 years.

When pursued by a large predator such as a wolf or mountain lion the American Badger can dig backwards, fangs facing out for protection and disappear beneath the soil in a matter of seconds. That is not all the tricks it has to protect itself. Like a skunk, when threatened, the Badger will also release a strong musky odor as a warning. This musky smell permeates its flesh, which makes them taste terrible to most animals. With their low-slung bodies, powerful jaws and tough claws, they are almost impossible to knock over and are quick to inflict bone-crushing damage to anything that tries. The badger also hisses, growls, squeals and snarls when attacked along with releasing that unpleasant musk. Their thick skin is difficult to pierce, and is so loose that even when grabbed, they can easily turn to deliver a powerful bite to their opponent. Dogs that move in to tackle a badger head-to-head will be lucky if they live to regret it.

While the American badger is an aggressive animal with few natural enemies, it is still vulnerable. Birds of prey, coyotes, bobcats, and wolves are its main predators. Humans trap them for their pelts to use their fur for shaving brushes, paintbrushes and trim on clothing. The main threats facing American Badgers, however, are road-kill and decline in habitat due to housing development, forest in-growth and encroachment, orchards and vineyards, and cultivation (row-crop) agriculture. Rodent and predator poisoning pose a direct threat through secondary poisoning and reduction in prey.

The American Badger is important to our ecosystem in many ways. They help to control rodent populations, kill venomous snakes, and eat insects and carrion. Their burrows provide shelter for other species and their digging activity helps in soil development. And last but not least, they are indicators of habitat connectivity.

For a little weasel, the American Badger has a lot of responsibility.

Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon Open Space, Inc. - Board Meeting

Board Meeting Monday, February 10, 2020 Meeting start time: 6:59 pm

Meeting Location: Poway Historical Society

Attending: Carol Crafts, Phoenix Von Hendy, Terry Callan, Maureen Abare-Laudy, Robert Laudy

Not in attendance: Mike Overy, Cathy Overy, Barbara Lerma, Ann Tipps

Guests: Louis Chertkow, Nick Romero, Matt Sanford, Laura & Joe Massuto

Reports:

Secretary's report

Minutes from Nov 4 meeting published in December Sage. Minutes were approved as published

Treasurer's report

All memberships are due for renewal as of January 1, 2020

Membership dues received from Phoenix Von Hendy at start of meeting

2020 to date expenses \$180 web hosting, \$14.55 for horse watering trough, No significant income yet this year. Checking - \$6341 Savings - \$10,917 Total - \$17,258

Ranger's report

Louis reports that we have a new ranger, Nicholas Romero and Mike Ambrose is back. Patrick is still there, as is Justin, so we are good with staffing. Sycamore Canyon Road gate was repaired, batteries were out. Bat boxes and kiosks were put in. Eagle Scout projects are coming up. DPR has *Women in the Wild* hiking Martha's Grove Trail this weekend. Mountain bike races went well, along with Dirty Feet marathon with another coming up soon, so trails are being used for special events. Invasive plant group will be removing non-natives around the Visitor's Center. Ebike signs are posted on trail heads, no incidents yet. Louis is seeing about 1 per week so far. Right now, Ebikes are allowed on all trails in Sycamore Canyon OSP. Staff is still out patrolling, protecting sensitive habitat by adding signage, blocking trails, and using patrols to discourage illegal use of Clark Canyon, the new 67 properties, etc.

Tracking Report

The Sycamore Canyon survey was done on for Friday, January 24, with 5 volunteers. We found lots of deer sign this survey period, throughout most of the transect, although there was none found in Sections 6 & 7. Section 6 is from Cardiac to the staging area and Section 7 is the staging area itself. We found a small amount of sign from both Bobcat and Coyote, but we did find Grey Fox tracks in Sections 2 & 3. The north facing slopes were still quite moist from recent rains and tracks from the deer and fox showed up well on the damp hillsides. We also found several new Woodrat nests, recording a total of 38 nests on the entire transect, and we recorded sign from Striped Skunk, Raccoon, Black-tailed Jackrabbit, and Kangaroo Rat. Normally, we find much more scat than tracks. The reverse was true for this survey, where we found very little scat.

Unfinished Business:

JPA had last meeting last May. The agreement expires this November, so Matt has been working to get a new agreement drafted. The agreement is mostly the same as the existing and Matt hopes to have the new one ready for signing by this May's meeting.

New Business:

PAP has no update. Carol requested one, but has not heard back. Matt talked to Deb Mosley about an update. Deb hopes the MND will be finalized by late spring. The CEQA review is nearly done.

Cathy & Mike Overy let Carol know that they need to resign from the Board.

Carol had sent out a request to review ideas to handle the money in our accounts, with regard to investing some of our funds. Terry's son made a recommendation for investing in bonds. Robert and Phoenix both recommended a Vanguard fund, such as the Wellesley account.

Next Newsletter will be out on March 1, 2020 Next Board Meeting is Monday, May 11, 2020
Membership dues are due the first of 2020

Are you an IDO – Irresponsible Dog Owner?

While walking the trails with my beagle, I noticed just how many people don't clean up their dog poo. Yuck! One day I saw a guy that watched his dog poo and then simply walked away from it. I asked him if he needed a bag as I had plenty. His answer was "No! It is biodegradable and good for the soil"

Well that is wrong on so many levels.

Over 80 million dogs live in the US. Did you know that 40% of dog owners do not pick up after their dog? That is over 32 million dogs. American dogs alone create more than 10,000,000 tons of waste per year. The average dog excretes three-fourths of a pound of waste per day — or 274 pounds of waste per year

Now let's look at the idea that dog poo is biodegradable. Yes, it does disintegrate eventually. However, dog waste does not decompose like wild animal waste and it DOES NOT make a good fertilizer. Unlike cows, a dog's carnivorous diet makes the end result radically different from cow manure. While livestock waste is used as fertilizer, dog waste can take months or years to break down, and when it does, it can deposit loads of toxins and bacteria into the soil.

Picking up your dog's waste isn't just a common courtesy, it's a health imperative. Dog poop is an environmental pollutant. It is estimated that a single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria, which are known to cause cramps, diarrhea, intestinal illness, and serious kidney disorders in humans. It can also contain campylobacteriosis, E.coli, giardia, parvo, tapeworms, roundworms, salmonella and coccidia. Unless scooped up, some of these bacteria can hang around in the soil for years. Two to three days of dog poo from 100 dogs has enough bacteria to close a bay or a 20 mile stretch of coastline to swimming or shellfishing. And dog poo can be an air pollutant also. A study of air samples in Cleveland, Ohio and Detroit, Michigan found that 10-50% of the bacteria in the air came from dog poo. YUCK!

And don't forget that it is against the law!

SAN DIEGO COUNTY CODE OF REGULATORY ORDINANCES RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL

Sec. 62.670. COMMITTING NUISANCE. No person shall allow a dog in his/her custody to defecate or to urinate on any property other than that of the owner or person having control of the dog. It shall be the duty of all persons having control of a dog to curb such dog and to immediately remove any feces to a proper receptacle.



(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

So, next time, you're on the trail:

- ◆ Don't leave it for someone else to pick up. If it is your dog, it is your poo. Contrary to popular belief in some areas, the Dog Poo Fairy does not exist.
- ◆ Always carry at least two poo bags with you. You know your puppy is more than capable of doing it at least twice on a walk or you may just be able to help out another dog owner caught short.
- ◆ Once you've conscientiously scooped your poo in your poo bag, put it in a bin! Do not hang the bag on a nearby bush or lay it on the ground. Nothing spoils a lovely walk more than having to stroll through a trail decorated with colorful bags of dog poo.

It's a *no-no* to leave it on the ground whether if it looks like a pellet or if it looks like an elephant did it.. ALWAYS pick up your dogs poo. No matter what size it is.

Scooping poop comes down to more than being a good neighbor! It is imperative for the health of those you love, and it is the law. We all want to live in a beautiful place with our wonderful pets.



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.

For your safety, please observe all closure notices.

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



The Sycamore
Sage



**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
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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

Fill out the requested information & mail it with your check to:

**Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon
Memberships
13030 Birch Lane
Poway, CA 92064**