

Sycamore Sage

The President's Message

Due to Covid-19 there are changes to the opening of the Parks. Also, the Preserve may be closed during and after heavy rains. For your safety, please observe all closure notices.

Hours: 8 a.m. –5 p.m. .

Open: Staging areas, Outdoor amphitheater, trails, benches, picnic tables, and visitor center (when staff is present).

For more information, call the

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Friends of Goodan Ranch
&
Sycamore Canyon Open
Space**

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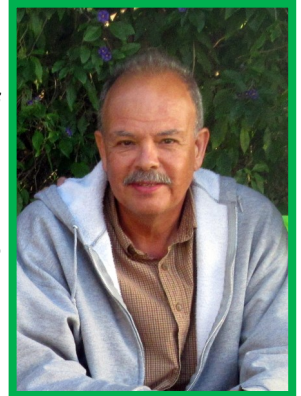
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Newsletter

Rita Lee

I hope you have had an opportunity to get out and enjoy nature. It's beautiful out there! Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon Open Space is a great place to see wild San Diego County and many of our native species that certainly deserve protection.

The last time I was driving on SR-67, I was thinking about how this highway bisects the county's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) lands, of which our Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon Open Space is a vital part. The MSCP was created to protect, preserve and expand corridors for threatened, sensitive and endangered plants and animal species in our region.



Robert Laudy

Well, now Caltrans is proposing the State Route 67 Improvements Project between Lakeside and Ramona. The focus is on safety for the traveling public, recreational access, and wildlife connectivity. To promote this connectivity, Caltrans' scope includes potential wildlife culverts, bridges and/or tunnels, allowing wildlife to more safely cross the highway. Currently, there are no dedicated crossings for wildlife. This causes vehicle collisions with animals, which has proven unsafe for animals and humans, alike.

Wildlife crossings would increase the success of the MSCP and should be a high priority for the SR-67 improvements.

You can support this vision by sending Caltrans an email: D11.SR67Improvements@dot.ca.gov

Be sure to read Jean Staver Wick's "Memories" on page 5 of this newsletter. Jean is the granddaughter of May Goodan and spent time at Goodan Ranch as a child. She was recently able to revisit the ranch with some of her friends. I think you will enjoy sharing some of her memories.



Why Leash Your Dog on the Trails?

One question often heard about walking your dog on the trails is why they need to be leashed particularly if there is no one else around.

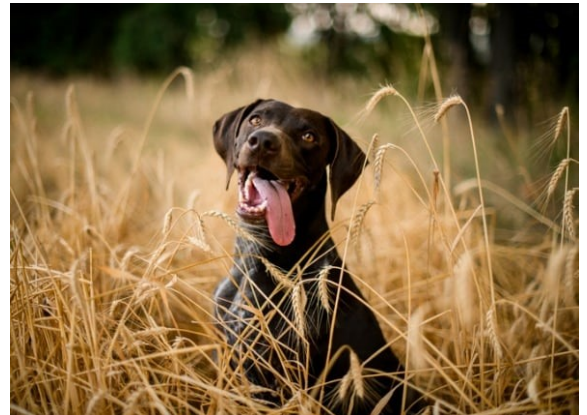
One of the reasons is Dog Bites. Even dogs that would never harm another dog or a human could do so, which is why leash laws exist. Unless you are in a designated off-leash area, it is illegal to walk your dog off-leash. Even if you are sure that your dog will remain by your side without a leash, it can cause discomfort to other dogs and put your dog in danger.

Another very important reason is to protect THEM from wildlife while you are hiking. There are so many dangers to your dog.

Rattlesnake bites on the nose account for 80% of all snake bites on dogs. Unleashed dogs will walk straight into rattlesnake habitat, even if they've been "rattlesnake trained." If your dog is bitten, it will need immediate medical care, and the cost of treatment will be thousands of dollars.

Many plants you come across on your walk will harm your dog.

One of the most troublesome plants you'll encounter on a trail is the Foxtail. The seed heads cling to everything, including your furry companion. Because these tough seeds don't break down inside the body, an embedded foxtail can lead to serious infection, even death to your dog. The hooking design that allows the seeds to burrow in the soil also keeps them moving forward inside animals. Some seed heads might enter a paw and eventually pop out the elbow. Some are inhaled by dogs detecting scents, and others are sucked in by a panting dog running full speed with its nose to the ground. These seed heads will end up in their lungs. They also burrow into dogs' eyes, noses, mouths, hands, tails, and armpits, particularly those with long hair. So, as soon as your dog shows symptoms, run, don't walk him to your vet.

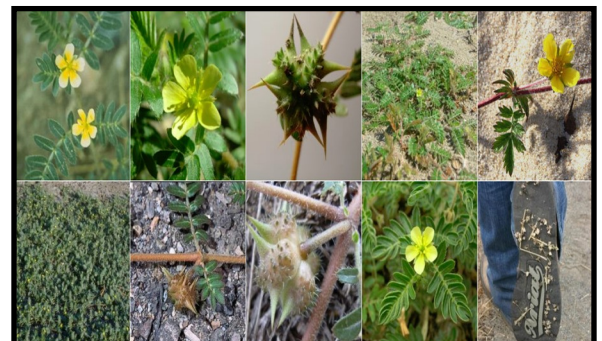


Hedge Parsley

Another plant to watch for is the **Hedge Parsley**, aka "the Velcro plant" because it produces burrs with little barbs that can seemingly stick to anything. The burs can even harm animals when they stick to ears and nostrils or around the eyes.

Puncture Vine (*Tribulus Terrestris*), also known as goat-head or caltrop, has a high

ouch value. The Puncture Vine would be a lovely plant if it weren't for the threatening, jagged fruits that appear after the flowers. These fruits shrivel and fall off the plant in five pieces as they dry. Each piece has four protruding spikes arranged so that when three of the spikes are on the ground, the fourth points upward. These spikes are extremely sharp and strong,



Puncture Vine

causing injury to cattle, humans, and pets when stepped on, as well as puncturing bicycle tires.

The Castor Bean is a lovely plant that can be found growing wild in our hiking and woodland areas. It was originally cultivated for the manufacture of Castor Oil, a potent constipation remedy. The scent of the pods of this lovely plant attracts animals, especially dogs. The poisonous seed, which is high in ricin, sticks to the animal's hair. The animal may try to eat the fruit to get rid of the poisonous seeds from its fur, or it may simply eat the seeds out of curiosity. Eight beans are enough to kill a medium-sized dog.



Castor Bean



Stinging Nettle

Along the leaves and stems of Stinging Nettle are many hollow, stinging hairs. You'll know if you brush up against this weed! Unlike Poison Oak, which causes allergic reactions through its oil, stinging nettle causes painful reactions through tiny spines on the plant's leaves and stems. The acetylcholine injected thru the nettles can poison your dog, especially if it is a short or fine-coated dog. Tremors and respiratory problems are two severe symptoms that can occur. Although there have been few reported cases of death caused by this plant, serious poisoning is a possibility. If your dog has been exposed to stinging nettle and is showing signs of discomfort and toxicity, seek medical help right away.

Another important reason to keep your dog on a leash while hiking is to keep **YOU** safe.

Poison Oak is everywhere. My parents used to tell me, "Leaves of three, let it be." An unleashed dog running through poison oak can be covered in plant oils that cause an itchy rash. Your dog is protected by his thick fur coat but can spread the oils to you, your car seats, furniture, carpets, and whatever else he brushes against. These oils can stay potent for up to one year.



Poison Oak

Only in Southern California can you find the Poodle Dog Bush (*Eriodictyon parryi*). If there has been a fire in the region in the last ten years, the poodle-dog bush is most likely to be present. In recent burn areas, the fast-growing shrub helps to avoid erosion while other native vegetation recovers.

Its leaves grow in clumps resembling a poodle's head and are covered in tiny oily and sticky hairs that cling to clothing, skin, and dog fur. Touching the plant or its hairs can result in anything from a minor rash to blisters and serious respiratory distress. Unlike poison oak, the compounds that make up the toxin are not water-soluble so simply washing your clothes won't help. You may simply have to throw them out.



These are only a few instances of things your pet might encounter if it is unleashed on your walks. So leash your dogs and stay on the trails. Not only for your safety but theirs.

Leave No Trace

By Rita Lee



The Leave No Trace Principle of “Leave What You Find” not only means that you shouldn’t take something from our public lands, but that you shouldn’t leave anything that doesn’t belong there as well. No one walking thru our wild areas should be able to tell that someone has been there before them. Painted rocks, and boulders marked with paint, are an obvious sign of a previous human being there.



When we enter wilderness areas, we do so because we want to have the wonderful experience where we can feel like we are the only one who has been there. Painted rocks and boulders take away that experience. If you’re trying to spread kindness, leaving a painted rock, or spray painting a boulder does not spread the joy that you think. Not only is it illegal, animals can be poisoned by licking those painted rocks and boulders. So, be good to the wildlife and your neighbors. Leave the spray can and paint at home



Photo of Goodan Ranch circa 1950 provided by
Jean Staver Wick, Granddaughter of May Goodan

Memories

On a recent visit to Del Mar I took some friends for a visit to the Goodan Ranch. I had previously described to them my early memories of going there with my grandmother, May Goodan. She would drive my sister, Sue, and I there when we were young. We would stop at Knott's Berry Farm for pies and jams. We would spend the days riding horses, tramping through the creek in rubber boots and milking the cows so we could have fresh whipped cream on our oatmeal in the morning - a real treat!!

While at the ranch with my friends I walked them through what is left of the house. We saw the hearth with all the names of the family who helped build the house. I showed them my grandmother's bedroom which held three beds. She would sleep in the middle bed, Sue and I on the other two. I do remember Sue and I laughing that "Grandma May" snored, but we were afraid to tell her.

I also showed my friends the porch where when we would stand in a line and take turns riding Sunny "down to the barn and back." This would go on for hours when we would visit with family friends. We would also build forts out the hay bails in the big barn - of course we were told not to, but.....

As my friends and I were driving down from the top gate I pointed out "witches" hair, actually *Cruscula californica*, a parasitic plant. When Sue and I were riding around the ranch and saw witches hair we would say that Roy Rogers had just passed by on Trigger. We did want to be cowboys and have adventures with Roy and Dale!!

After a delightful walking tour with Carol, Terry and the ranger we sat at the tables and had a picnic lunch. All and all it was a great day, fun to be able to share a part of my childhood with my good friends.

Jean Staver Wick



Plate made by May Goodan for granddaughter Jean Staver Wick

Ranger's Report

1. Park attendance has been steadily increasing in all county parks over the last two years. Our busiest times continue to be during the weekends and holidays.
2. Park staff continue to support the County's Climate Action Plan through the planting of native trees and shrubs in the preserve, and installing irrigation to help support them. The Department's Agricultural Scientist helps staff determine the best planting locations and utilize proper planting techniques.
3. The structure that was used to house the educational raptors has been converted into a seed propagation area for seeds collected in the preserve. It also has an overhead irrigation system on a solar timer to keep plants properly watered. A composting area was also recently constructed behind the ranch house. Both of these projects help support the County's Climate Action Plan.
4. The San Diego County Parks Society donated two new outdoor wildlife cameras. These cameras provide a great opportunity to share footage and monitor the wildlife that live in the preserve. If you're interested in seeing some of the pictures and videos of wildlife, please reach out to Louis Chertkow.
5. The county continues to maintain the Visitor Center and vault restrooms. New rain gutters were installed, the hot water heater was replaced, and the vault restrooms now have new jumbo toilet paper roll holders and hand sanitizer dispensers.
6. Cal Fire and Poway Fire have provided vegetation inspections around the Visitor Center. Cal Fire has also inspected the fire suppression system for the facilities.
7. Two Eagle Scout Projects were also completed at the preserve. Five bat boxes were installed next to the old growth oak grove near the lower Martha's Grove Trail and a new information kiosk was constructed near the south gate entrance.
8. The Friends of Sycamore Canyon and Goodan Ranch donated much needed supplies to the preserve. These donations included a work bench, shelving units, a flammable storage cabinet, aluminum water troughs, and spin trimmers. BIG thanks to them for their continued support.
9. Members of the Goodan family have also visited the preserve on two occasions. Family members were able to tour the remaining historical structures and enjoyed a picnic lunch in the amphitheater.
10. Volunteer Roy is the preserve's new day volunteer. He was formerly volunteering at Mission Trails. His duties include trail maintenance and vegetation management.
11. Staff plan on making more improvements to the greenhouse including structural improvements, new high-quality vinyl, gravel for the bays, and cosmetic fixes.

(Continued from page 6)

12. An Eagle Scout Project to construct a new shade structure along the Main Road will also be completed. This structure will cover an existing picnic table that is just below the Goodan Staging Area. It will provide much needed shade for hikers while they rest before finishing their hike back to the staging area.
13. We will continue the planting of trees and native plants to support the County's Climate Action Plan goals. We have already started to strategize the areas for next year's planting season. This includes additional 60" Oak tree boxes.
14. We will be offering a variety of interpretive programs and bringing back our special events.
 - a. Park staff will be hosting discovery tables to teach families about the native plants, wildlife, and history of the preserve.
 - b. Staff will also be hosting a Composting 101 class to teach composting techniques that people can incorporate into their own home gardens.
 - c. The preserve will also be hosting Star Parties with the San Diego Astronomy Association to provide the public an opportunity to view and learn more about the night sky.
 - d. The Board of Supervisors recently approved fee waivers for public event organizers during FY21/22. We look forward to working with organizers of the trail running and bike races that are hosted here each year.

Goodan Ranch JPA Meeting

The annual meeting of the Goodan Ranch Joint Powers Authority Policy Committee took place on Thursday, May 13 in the Outdoor Amphitheater near the Visitor Center. The Policy Committee consists of representatives of the Cities of Poway and Santee, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the County of San Diego.

- On March 3rd, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved a new 25-year Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) for Goodan Ranch.
- For the safety of both travelers and animals, the need for separate wildlife crossings was emphasized in Caltrans' Highway 67 Improvement Plan.
- Recreation Ecology (the scientific study of the environmental impacts of recreational activity in protected natural areas) was suggested as a component of all future development plans at Goodan Ranch and other County preserves. There is not much info on E-bikes and their impact on County parks and preserves
- With new leadership on the Board of Supervisors, the County has placed a greater emphasis on sustainability. Parks Director Brian Albright announced Mertaza Baxamusa as the County's new Sustainability Officer. Ranger's Report was presented to the group.
- Due to funding priorities, the Public Access Plan project has been postponed until 2022.



**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.**

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Please select your membership level

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**JOIN OR
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The Sycamore Sage
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