

# 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).

**Closed:** Nature Center

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

Spring is my favorite time to hike. The wildflowers are blooming, the air is fresh and the temps mild. Perfect for a hike or ride at Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon Preserve.

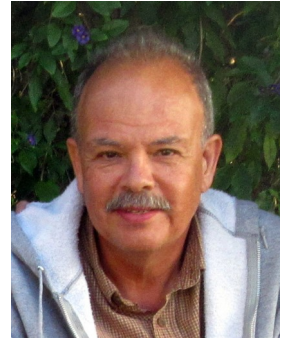
I would like to remind trail users who access Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon via points south to obtain a Stowe Trail permit.

Former Vice-President of the Friends, the late Robert Coates was instrumental in obtaining federal recognition for the Old Stowe Trail, which received an official Millennium Trail dedication by former first lady Hillary Clinton in 2003. The Millennium Trails Program recognized routes of significant historic or cultural value.

Now simply known as the Stowe Trail, it connects Sycamore Canyon with Santee and Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP). This route requires a permit from the Marine Corps to legally travel the trail as it passes through MCAS Miramar. Here is the link:

<https://www.miramar.marines.mil/Resources/StoweTrail/>

Speaking about Mission Trails, did you know that West Sycamore Preserve is part of MTRP and abuts Goodan Ranch? You can extend your visit by accessing Goodan Ranch via West Sycamore or vice versa. Here is a link to West Sycamore: <https://mtrp.org/west-sycamore/>



Robert Laudy

In January several members of the Goodan family visited the Ranch. It was a lovely day for a hike and a socially distanced picnic. The two youngest enjoyed the "stage" beneath the oaks to the amusement of the others. Hearing "that's the room where I slept" and other family references made me wish I had been running a tape recorder. We look forward to another visit in the spring. They were pleased with the improvements, especially all the new trees and the bicycle repair station. ~Carol Crafts~



## IS IT A RAVEN OR A CROW?



As you may know, for many years, Carol Crafts has been giving informational lectures about Ravens for Project Wildlife using Moki.. Moki is truly remarkable as he talks quite well and is a beauty. In the wild, how can I tell a Raven from a Crow. To me they look the same. I decided to do some research and share my results with you.



Carol Crafts & Moki

Both species are members of the highly intelligent Corvidae family of perching birds that also includes jays, nutcrackers, and magpies. This group of birds fascinates me because of their interesting behaviors and intelligence.

So, how do you tell them apart?

### They look different –

Ravens are the size of a red-tailed hawk and much larger than crows. They have larger wings and heavier bills than crows. Their tails are

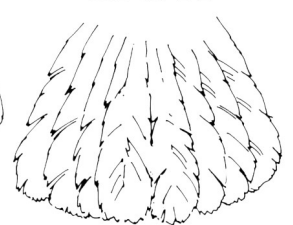
tapered at the end giving them a diamond or wedge shape compared to a crow's shored squarer tail. A crow's beak is slimmer and straighter than a raven's, which is much fuller, curvier, and shapelier. . A raven has long fancy throat feathers. A crow has smooth throat feathers.

### Raven



Wedge - shaped

### Crow



Fan - shaped

### They sound different –

Crows and ravens can be tricky to tell apart by sight, but their voices are distinctive. From the territorial "caw, caw" of the American Crow to the guttural croak of the Common Raven, each species has a range of sounds that helps it survive and thrive. The calls of crows and ravens are individually distinct so family members and neighbors can recognize birds they know well even if they are out of sight. Just remember – Crows caw and Ravens croak.

Another easy thing that you can notice to solve the mystery of crow versus raven is that when a crow starts making a sound, usually the group members also join in. However, you will hear the croaking sound of a raven alone and not in groups.



## **They walk differently -**

On the ground ravens walk confidently, sometimes with a swagger, sometimes sidling. A couple of two-footed hops between steps accentuates their walk. Crows traditionally walk like other bird species.

## **They fly differently –**

Ravens fly more gracefully and agile than crows, riding thermals and soaring. Crows do more wing flapping, often appearing to be swimming across the sky. Ravens often perform aerobatics, including sudden rolls, wing-tucked dives, and playing with objects by dropping and catching them in mid-air.

## **Their social behavior is different -**

Both species are highly sociable birds, with close-knit family structures. However, ravens will often travel in pairs while crows are more likely to be in larger groups.

Crows have bigger families and tend to be louder. They roost and forge in numbers, known as “murders”. These roosts can be of a few hundred up to two million crows. Some roosts have been forming in the same general area for well over 100 years.

Ravens, on the other hand, are much more introverted and quiet. They often travel in pairs. Large groups of ravens are probably young birds that have yet to pair up



## **There are differences in their nesting habits -**

Ravens and crows usually do not breed until they are 2 to 4 years old. Although they are both monogamous, they are very different in their habits.

A group of crows is called a “Murder”

American Crow family groups may include up to 15 individuals and contain young from five different years. Offspring from a previous nesting season will usually remain with the family to help rear new fledglings. Crows will only use a nest once. Sometimes they will build *on top* of an old nest if trees are sparse.

Ravens are usually only found in pairs roosting near one another at night. Ravens build their nests on cliffs, in trees, and on structures such as power-line towers, telephone poles, billboards, and bridges

Ravens will re-use a nest for many years. The male feeds the female on the nest and helps her brood the young when they first hatch. The young leave the nest after 4-7 weeks. At this time, they can fly short distances and usually stay close to the nest for another week or so. Then they are on their own.

**Despite their many differences, crows and ravens have a number of similarities.**

## They eat similarly -



Crows eating

Both crows and Ravens are omnivores who also scavenge and sometimes hunt. Although, ravens are more likely to hunt and crows more likely to scavenge. Both scavenge for garbage and carrion and also hunt small insects and mammals, and they both love to pilfer the eggs and nestlings of other birds. However, ravens tend to eat more meat than crows do.

## They are both very intelligent –

Both can recognize and remember specific faces for weeks or months. They are especially good at remembering faces that have been associated with disturbance or harm. In other words, they can hold a grudge. They also seem to be able to communicate to each other when a particular human has done them harm.

They are among the few animal species that use tools, and they use clever strategies like throwing nuts onto the ground to break them open. They are both smart at puzzle solving like figuring out how to unlatch containers to steal food.



A French Theme Park Taught Crows To Pick Up Trash



Carol Crafts & the Raven Master at the Tower of London. Superstition says that the kingdom and the Tower of London will fall if the six resident ravens ever leave the fortress. There are seven ravens at the Tower today — the required six, plus one spare!

## They both mate for life -

This does not mean they never, ever split but that, in general, they stick to one partner. If one mate is killed or maimed or if a couple is unable to breed successfully, they might find new partners.

## They both can talk, but ravens do it better -

In captivity, ravens can learn to talk better than some parrots. (Moki can talk up a storm!) Ravens also mimic other noises, like car engines, toilets flushing and animal and bird calls. Ravens have been known to imitate wolves or foxes to attract them to carcasses that the raven isn't capable of breaking open. When the wolf is done eating, the raven gets the leftovers!

Both crows and ravens are among the world's smartest birds.

**Now can you tell if that black bird you see is a crow or a raven?**





**Official Mascot of Covid- 19**

**Wears mask  
Washes hands constantly  
Stays away from humans**

**Be like a raccoon!**



Outside the old Goodan Ranch house, there is a new Deluxe Public Work Stand with tools for all the bicyclists out there. This fantastic stand provides cyclists with all the tools to make a quick repair. Attached to the stand by retractable braided stainless steel cables are tools for repair of bikes. The first photo is of the actual stand and the second photo is by the manufacturer and shows how it is used.

## Board Meeting

**POSTPONED**  
**To Be Rescheduled Soon!**

Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch County Preserve  
16281 Sycamore Canyon Road, Poway, CA 92064

**Hours: Pedestrian access is sunrise to sunset.**

**Open: Staging areas, outdoor amphitheater,  
trails, benches, picnic tables**

**Closed: Nature Center**



★ Renew ★  
your  
membership  
**TODAY!**

**The membership year  
started in January. Please  
renew your membership  
if you have not done so.  
Thank you.**

# Ranger's Report

## SYCAMORE CANYON/GOODAN RANCH COUNTY PRESERVE

**Staff Report – March 2021**

Supervising Park Ranger Louis Chertkow

Park attendance and trail usage, especially on weekends and holidays, continues to increase.

Park staff added new toad caution signs to the Martha's Grove Trail and Cardiac Hill trailheads to help educate trail users about toads in the preserve. Informational signs about toads found in the preserve were also added to park kiosks. Park Rangers continue to monitor areas where toad activity was previously observed.

Park staff continue to support the departments Comprehensive Tree Program by planting native trees and shrubs in the preserve. The Agricultural Scientist for our department consults with staff prior to any plantings about good locations and proper planting techniques. Staff are also caring for newly planted trees and shrubs by removing weeds and through temporary drip irrigation lines that were installed to help generate tree and plant growth.

D&D Wildlife Habitat Restoration, in coordination with the department's Resource Management Division, is currently targeting and removing invasive plants in the preserve. They are concentrating on removing eucalyptus trees and other invasives in the riparian area of Sycamore Creek. This work is part of a 2-year grant funded through the San Diego River Conservancy.

Park staff continue to patrol and monitor the new preserve properties along SR67, and around the Clark Canyon area to deter unauthorized uses in these areas. Staff continue to maintain fencing, signage, and natural barriers in areas where unauthorized trail use is observed.

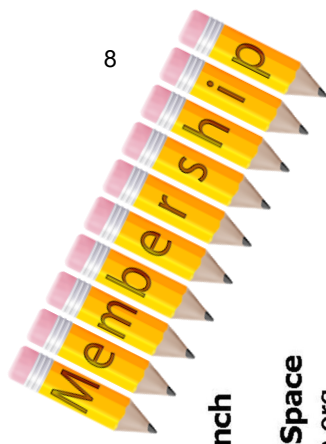
Park staff continues to be very busy with the COVID-19 related duties: Cleaning the Visitor Center, vault toilets, drinking fountains, the bike maintenance station, picnic tables, and park benches daily. The Visitor Center is still closed to the public, but all preserve trails, staging areas, and public restrooms remain open.

Park staff recently sealed a crack that had formed on the fireplace inside the former Goodan family home and park office.

Richard and Gail, new live-on volunteers for Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch, moved in recently and began assisting park staff with daily operations and projects. They are enjoying their new assignment at Sycamore Goodan Ranch.

Park Attendant Brandon Botticelli recently accepted a promotion to Park Maintenance Worker. Brandon's new assignment will be with the South Locals Community Parks work group. We're excited for Brandon and really enjoyed working with him during his brief time at Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch!





**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.**

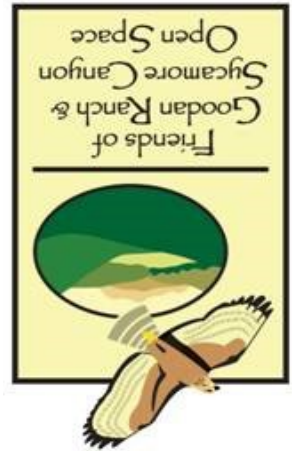
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Please select your membership level**

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

**Friends of Goodan Ranch & Sycamore Canyon  
Memberships**  
14753 Carlson St.  
Poway, CA 92064



The Sycamore Sage  
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