

Photos by Mina Qubaisi



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MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

YOUR DONATION SUPPORTS

- PURCHASING HABITAT-RICH LAND
- RESTORING LAND TO ITS OPTIMUM NATURAL STATE FOR WILDLIFE AND VEGETATION
- RESEARCH PROGRAMS TO STUDY PRESERVATION, CONSERVATION, POPULATION IMPACT AND WILDLIFE
- ACTIVITIES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS
- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

**MAIL TO: MOUNTAINS RESTORATION TRUST
3815 OLD TOPANGA CANYON ROAD
CALABASAS, CA 91302**

You can also go to www.mountainstrust.org and donate online

MOUNTAINS EXPERIENCE

A Publication of Mountains Restoration Trust

Inside this issue:
P1 SHRUB Campaign
P2 Congregation or Ami:
13 Years of Restoration
Youth Naturalist Programs
P3 Event Calendar

S.H.R.U.B. Students Helping To Restore Unique Biomes Wild Walnut Park Headwaters Corner at Calabasas

Our natural parklands are under attack! Urban sprawl and non-native invasive plants and animals transform the globally-rare mediterranean ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains into a wasteland of weeds.

Mountains Restoration Trust has a solution to bring back the native plants. A unique program called "Students Helping Restore Unique Biomes" (SHRUB) combines environmental education, community service learning and getting kids back to nature. Now in its seventh month, SHRUB is a resounding success with teachers, 4th to 6th grade students and their parents. Many of these children are from the urban areas of Los Angeles and from families that don't have opportunities to get out into the parks.

We need your help! MRT needs funds to continue the program next year, but budget cuts by school and transportation districts make that impossible for them to pay for it. With the new school year quickly approaching, MRT needs to raise \$24,000 to bring 7 classes to Headwaters Corner. That's \$3,428 per class or \$15/child per visit.

Restored habitat supports functioning ecosystems which in turn supports healthy individuals and their communities. The SHRUB program has approximately 16,000 sq. ft. (0.37 acres) under restoration in Wild Walnut Park. The ecological benefits of restored native plant communities (oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, grassland and chaparral) is significant in counteracting the pressure of urbanization. Development has greatly reduced species diversity.

In its first year, MRT's SHRUB program taught 42 fourth graders, 143 fifth graders, and 38 sixth graders serving a total of 223 students. Of these students, 92 came from inner-city schools and 71 from Title 1 schools. Students have gained a better understanding of the environment, scientific methods, and how they are a part of the natural earth systems. The SHRUB program offers a positive impact on the community by addressing the need to give children experiences in nature which they then share with their families and fellow students.

Everyone in the community benefits from the work done by SHRUB. Visitors to Wild Walnut Park can witness the restoration process and see first hand how an ecosystem is rebalanced. The ambiance of the park is improved with more vegetation. More people will enjoy the surroundings. Students happily bring their families to the park to share all they have learned and show how they have made a difference.

Unfortunately, the program is at risk for lack of sponsors. You can sponsor a class, help create a healthy environment, and provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the children of the SHRUB program.



Please donate to the SHRUB fund or call to learn about adopting a classroom to participate in this year-round program.

Create a wildlife habitat...

You can incorporate sustainable gardening practices to help restore wildlife habitat in your own backyard:

- Provide a place for wildlife to raise their young.
- Create cover using native vegetation or shrubs.
- Supply food and water.
- Let your garden go green by reducing chemical use, mulching, composting and reducing turf grass.

EVENTS Rattlesnake Avoidance Training Clinic For Dogs

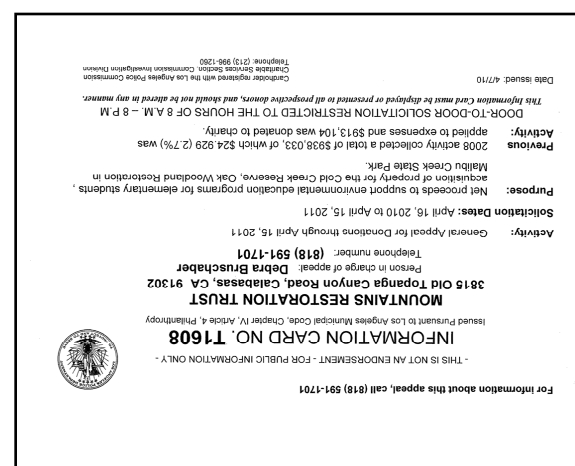
MRT is pleased to announce the 2010 Rattlesnake Avoidance Training Clinic for Dogs with Tracy Jenson-Presson of High on Kennels, San Diego County. Tracy has many years of experience training dogs to avoid rattlesnakes. The training is conducted in a safe, humane, and controlled environment ensuring the safety of your dog, as well as the safety of the rattlesnakes. The training process is repeated several times to insure that the dog understands the sight, smell and sound of a rattlesnake. (Rattlesnakes have a distinctive odor that dogs can discern from other snakes.) The trainers tell us that some dogs seem to forget over a period of time and recommend annual training for all dogs. Each dog is trained individually at a time-certain appointment.

Rattlesnake avoidance training is cost-effective and time-saving for the owner and may mean life or death to your dog.

**When: May 15 and 16, 8 am to 5 pm
Where: Tapia Park, Calabasas**

Reservations required. Register your dog now!

Go to www.mountainstrust.org or call 818-591-1701 x2
Sign up to volunteer your time helping at the clinic.



**Savings all around...
The Mountains Experience is digital! If you would prefer to receive your newsletter only by email, please contact us at: mrttrust@mountainstrust.org**

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Congregation Or Ami: 13 Years of Restoration

Since 1997, Congregation Or Ami of Calabasas has participated in Mountains Restoration Trust's Commemorative Oaks Program by planting oak trees and removing plants known to inhibit their growth. Members celebrating Mitzvah Day or Tu B'Shevat have planted hundreds of trees, grasses and shrubs, transforming the look and dynamics of Malibu Creek State Park.

In 2005 when high waters closed the back roads, 150 people joined in "The Great Mustard Pull" and then used the mustard for mulch! During those 13 years, the planting groves have survived through the normal pattern of small disasters common to the mediterranean ecosystem in which we live: fire, flood, drought, and the perpetual presence of weeds.

This year, 35 families planned to celebrate Tu B'Shevat by adding trees to a Mitzvah Grove that partially burned in 2007. However, high waters dictated again, and 35 trees were planted elsewhere.

Oak trees are survivors and, thanks to friends like members of Congregation Or Ami, the oaks are coming back as the keystone species of Malibu Creek State Park. Once a month volunteers gather at Malibu Creek State Park to nurture the return of the lost oak woodlands.

Cold Creek Preserve: Update

The successful and enjoyable Fall Fundraiser in November 2009 featuring speaker, Dr. Jared Diamond, has now raised a total of \$46,780 as of 2.20.10 towards the acquisition of 78-acres of the 98-acre addition to the Cold Creek Preserve.

Dr. Diamond said that the environmental value of the Cold Creek Preserve makes it "the most valuable piece of real estate in Los Angeles." Mountains Restoration Trust has already acquired 20 acres and has \$1.978 million from grants and other funding toward the purchase of this precious piece of land, but still needs \$572,000 to complete the acquisition of this incredibly beautiful addition to the Cold Creek Preserve.

WE NEED YOUR HELP. The property owner has been working with us but would like to close escrow this year.

Go to www.mountainstrust.org to donate funds to help us purchase this property or call Debbie or Jo at 818-591-1701 for more info.

PROGRAMS

PROPAGATION WORKSHOP

MRT Headwaters Corner April 22, 2010 9:30am-12 pm

Tom Hayduk, Restoration Specialist, will lead a seed propagation class, discussing seed collection and cleaning methods, seed sowing and transplanting. We will be propagating restoration plants for the Cold Creek Valley Preserve. Class will be held outdoors near the new propagation greenhouse.

Limited space only.
Registration Fee: \$5

Contact:
Tom Hayduk, thayduk@mountainstrust.org
Jo Kitz, jkitz@mountainstrust.org

MARCH STATS

Cold Creek Docent Environmental
Education Programs

Our Biggest Numbers Ever!

We had 12 programs.
We taught 628 kids!
We taught 110 parents!

PROGRAMS

YOUTH NATURALIST PROGRAMS

Headwaters Corner at Calabasas April - June 2010

Paleontology

May 8, 2010 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

What did a dinosaur do all day? What colors were they? A craft and an excellent guest speaker can answer your questions. Bring lunch, water; wear sturdy shoes. **Pre-registration required.***

Insects and Arthropods

June 5, 2010 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Under microscopes you will see how insects are put together. We'll look for insects and arthropods on our hike to learn how they survive, find food and fit into the food chain. A craft and guest entomologist from the Natural History Museum is included. Bring lunch, water; wear sturdy shoes. **Pre-registration required.***

Discovery Nature Camp: Session I

Mon-Fri June 21-25, 2010 9 am - 3 pm

A summer nature camp for children ages 8-12 offers activities with a strong science and environmental focus. Campers hike, create nature crafts, experiment with scientific equipment and have creative hands-on activities and games. Each session has a field trip, a guest speaker and a new theme is featured each day. Session II and Session III will be on July 26-30 and August 23-27.

***For information or to make a reservation, please call Susan Haugland at 818-591-1701 ext. 212.**

PROGRAMS

RESTORATION PROGRAMS

Volunteers welcomed!

Malibu Creek State Park

May 2 - June 19 - July 17

Return of the Lost Oak Woodlands: MRT's Commemorative Oaks Program volunteers have planted thousands of oak trees and native bunch grasses to restore habitat along Las Virgenes and Malibu Creeks. Your help is needed to continue these vital habitat restoration projects to provide a home for the birds and animals of Malibu Creek State Park.

Cold Creek Preserve Habitat Repair

May 16 - June 6 - July 24

Volunteers are continuing the restoration of MRT's Cold Creek Valley Preserve where land mis-use destroyed the life-sustaining habitat for the animal community. Non-native invasive plants are being replaced by oak trees, shrubs and bunch grasses that feed and shelter the animals and birds.

La Sierra Restoration Day

May 15 - June 12

After meeting at PSR, we caravan to La Sierra Preserve to halt the invasion of weeds that destroy the floral beauty of the preserve in wetlands and along the trails.

Lower Topanga State Park

May 1 - June 5 - July 10

Topanga Creek was returned to its historic channel in 2008. Now, volunteers are restoring the creek-side native vegetation by planting, watering and weeding native plants.

Weed Wars at the Santa Monica Mountains

May 9 - June 13 - July 11

Each month, the weed war engages non-native invasive plant species (weeds) where a native plant community is most threatened - along a trail, by a stream, in a grassland, in a restoration site.

Solstice Canyon with California Native Plant Society

June 27

Canyon Caper: Explore along the trail to discover the fire-following recovery of native wildflowers and grasses in natural and restoration sites; enjoy a gurgling stream meander under a canopy of alders, and check out the Solstice Creek waterfall.

No experience necessary.
Bring water, snack; wear sturdy shoes and layers;
bring sunscreen and hat. Tools provided.

Gourd Society Meeting at Headwaters Corner

April 27 - May 25 - June 29 7pm - 9pm

Join an out-going workshop of gourd artists. Experience new techniques and ideas.

Beginners welcome. Gourds available.

Info: Dorie 818-702-8020

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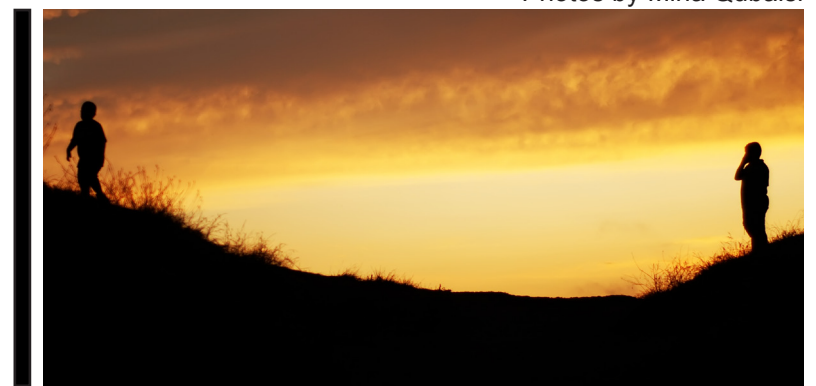
Co-Executive Directors:
Debbie Bruschaber
Jo Kitz

MRT Board of Directors
Robert K. Wayne
Steve Hess
Nancy Helsley
David Frith-Smith
Marika Erdely

MORE INFO:

Restoration and weed war programs sponsored by Mountains Restoration Trust, TreePeople and California Native Plant Society meet 8:45 am. Receive 3.5 hours of community service credit. Reservations required. 818-591-1701 x203 or online at volunteer@treepeople.org - for meeting place.

NATURE WALKS



Photos by Mina Qubaisi

WALKS BY COLD CREEK DOCENTS

Cold Creek Valley Preserve

Meet at Lower Stunt High Trail on Stunt Road, one mile from Mulholland Highway

First Saturday Walk

5/1, 6/5 9:30 - 11:30 am

A glorious spring walk-about along a streamside trail, through oak woodlands to a rolling chaparral basin set amidst craggy sandstone peaks.

Cold Creek Canyon Preserve

Meet at the Lower Gate 1.2 mile from Mulholland Highway on Stunt Road

Canyon Reverie

5/16 9:30 - 11:30 am

Descend through the pristine Cold Creek Canyon Preserve marveling in lush vegetation, a boulder home, a fern grotto and a delightful gurgling marsh.

Sierra Club Hikers

Cold Creek Preserve

5/18 9:15 am - 1:15 pm

Moderate Hikers: Stunt High Trail Join an 8-mile, 1800-foot gain hike via Cold Creek Preserve, with wonderful vistas from Saddle Peak. Bring lunch, water. Rain cancels.

Info: 310-391-5004

6/10 8 am - 12 pm

Thursday Hikers: Cold Creek to Saddle Peak Moderately-paced 8-mile 1500' gain hike. Bring 2 qts water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen.

Info: 310-457-9783

WISHLIST

MRT'S WISHLIST

- Large rugs for the Masson Homestead
- Small refrigerator to store seed
- GPS and laptop computer for monitoring easements and restoration fieldwork
- Solar hot water heater to run existing office radiant heat system
- A pc compatible projector
- A plumber to connect the MRT offices to natural gas

CONTACT US

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