



the griffith reporter

the newsletter of friends of griffith park/summer 2016



Celebrating the 240th Anniversary of the Anza Expedition through Griffith Park

plus Traffic Snarls in Griffith Park • Settlement Announced on GP Ballfields
Latest on Repairs to the Fern Dell Pedestrian Bridge



FoGP Boardmember, Felix Martinez and Griffith Park Ranger Russ Brown make last minute preparations before the Anza Historic Expedition celebration begins in the Crystal Springs Picnic Area.

When Friends of Griffith Park was formed six years ago, little did we know that a drought of unprecedented intensity and duration would continue to challenge us in protecting the extraordinary natural gift bequeathed to the City in 1896. The Park's habitat is stressed; some wildlife may be, as well. To a large extent we are all at the mercy of Mother Nature.

Pine and redwood die-off is widespread in Griffith Park, not surprising since they are not indigenous to our Eastern Santa Monica Mountains. More concerning is the loss of some magnificent coast live oaks lately, our flagship native species. These are also largely casualties we cannot control. Yet, other factors we can.

In managing the current crisis state of natural parklands, the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks starts out with multiple handicaps. While there have been ongoing discussions about hiring a staff ecologist, to date, this is still in the works. And while an increase in the number of Park Rangers has been approved by LA City, training times are long and will result in the new hires simply replacing those Rangers who are retiring, or serving in parks other than Griffith Park.

It's ironic that at a time when our scrub and chaparral habitat is less dense with vegetation, it's now possible to walk right over it, thus impacting it further when it's already stressed. FoGP and other park activists concerned with negative impacts are seeing too many new paths popping up, astray from established trails. These resultant compacted paths make flora less likely to regenerate, and predispose areas to erosion. In fact a zig-zag network is occurring in some areas, especially in areas where park usage has increased, such as near the Griffith Observatory. The significant new factor is tourists who now enter the park more than ever.

Emergency rescues have sky-rocketed in number, largely due to poor judgement, inexperience, and often basic bad park behavior. While a challenging task, human behavior in the park is something we must begin to manage, through enforcement and education.

We worked hard with the LA Rec and Parks in their formal plan to mitigate traffic around

the observatory. We are pleased the City has made a firm commitment to never reopen the remote roads in the park, closed since 1992. However, we are not satisfied in any manner with commitments made by Rec and Parks to protect habitats from environmental damage. Please see what Sierra Club's Carol Henning has to say about the plan in her opinion article on *page 3*.

While our work is cut out for us on some issues, we are ecstatic about other accomplishments. Our Crystal Springs ballfield litigation has been settled with a compromise to be celebrated. We have accomplished our goals for park science with the soon to be announced results of an important study on the genetics of pockets of western gray squirrels within the park, versus populations outside the park. And our work with kids to introduce them to the park continues. Adults, too!

This fall we welcome your participation with two extraordinary events relating to protecting our wildlife. Nordic Noir: A Greek Theatre Benefit Concert is scheduled for September 25th and P-22 will be presented larger than life on the Greek's New jumbotrons, as his story will be told, followed by a performance by Danish composer Jacob Groth and The Danish Film Harmonics.

On Saturday, October 22nd, wildlife connectivity will be the focus, as we embrace our partners, National Wildlife Federation, in putting on an educational/entertainment celebration for P-22. It will be held in Griffith Park, with four days of connecting P-22's footsteps preceding Saturday's grand event.

I hope you'll plan to participate and thanks for your ongoing belief and support for our work in Griffith Park.


Gerry Hans

Traffic in Griffith Park: Mitigating the Urban in This “Urban Wilderness”

Carol Henning

“Griffith Park was originally envisioned as a natural escape from urban pressures,” says a press release from the office of LA City Councilmember David Ryu, whose 4th Council District includes the Park. But the urban pressures Ryu mentions are increasing apace in our city, and some of them reach relentlessly into Griffith Park.

Attempting to drive almost anywhere in L.A. at almost any time of day is a trial by traffic that leaves many of us honking our horns, grinding our teeth, sighing, muttering and contemplating a move to the interior of Alaska. (Some of us also vow to limit our trips to places to which we can walk, bike or take public transportation.) L.A.’s motor vehicle-clogged streets are not limited to those outside Griffith Park. Traffic snarls afflict the narrow roads in the park too. Is driving to the observatory on a weekend an “escape from urban pressures”? Hardly.

In an effort to mitigate the traffic problem in Griffith Park and to improve public safety and preserve the park’s “urban wilderness identity,” the L.A. City Department of Recreation and Parks, along with Councilmember Ryu’s office, announced a “Griffith Park Action Plan.” At a public meeting at the Chevy Chase Rec Center on March 9th, the plan was outlined and explained by Joe Salaices, Superintendent of the Griffith Region; Kevin Regan, Assistant General Manager; Mike Shull, Recreation and Parks General Manager; and Councilmember David Ryu.

One announced change is that East Observatory Road and West Observatory Road will become a one-way loop which will feature diagonal parking. This parking, in the words of Joe Salaices, will be “monetized.” Pay stations are planned, and the parking fees collected will help pay for free shuttle service. The fee amounts are yet to be determined. There will be no charge for parking before 11 am. Early morning hikers will be able to score a free parking spot, but “premium parking” at or near the observatory will be available after 11 am only for

those willing to pay. This will in some respects mimic the two-tier parking system at the L.A. Zoo. Visitors arriving late on a weekend morning are usually forced to park in the fee section of the lot. The zoo, however, is a bit of a special case in that it is partly managed by GLAZA, a private entity, whereas funding for the observatory was provided in Col. Griffith’s trust.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, speakers expressed concern about monetizing the park (Is this the top of a slippery slope?) and about dividing park users into premium class and peasant class. (“This flight will now begin the boarding process, starting with our Sky Master passengers”). That access to the park be free of charge was a desire of Col. Griffith, but probably he could not have imagined 21st century traffic jams. Kevin Regan assured us plenty of free parking would remain available in the Greek Theatre Lot and in Lot #9 at the north end of Fern Dell.



Western Canyon Road during Christmas through New Year, Spring Break and other holidays offers little respite from visitors in vehicles. A portion of the new traffic mitigation plan to implement paid parking and one-way flow on Western Canyon Road has been temporarily halted pending further Los Feliz area traffic studies at Fern Dell Canyon and Vermont Ave.

Parking fees might discourage some drivers from joining the crawl up to the observatory. What might really get people out of their cars, however, and help those without cars, is an enhanced fleet of buses. Rec and Parks will “work with relevant agencies” to offer DASH service seven days a week, every 20 minutes. The schedule on Saturday and Sunday will extend from 10 am to 10 pm. Buses or shuttles will leave from the Vermont-Sunset Red Line station, stopping at Franklin, at Los Feliz, and at the Greek Theatre before ascending to the observatory. There will also be shuttles to the observatory from the Merry-Go-Round and Fern Dell parking lots. DASH service from the Red Line began in March. Check websites for updated information (<http://www.ladottransit.com/dash/routes/LosFeliz/losfeliz.pdf>).

The Action Plan does not offer a solution to congestion on city streets leading into the park. An example is Vermont Avenue north of Los Feliz Blvd. Residents have called this area “the gates of Hell.” Councilmember Ryu remarked that those work-

Traffic in Griffith Park continues on page 5

Native Trees Saved in Crystal Springs Ballfield Settlement



Many of you, as valued members and advocates for Griffith Park, have been curious about our Crystal Springs Ballfield litigation. We appreciate your patience as the detailed settlement process has taken shape.

Friends of Griffith Park finalized a significant settlement with the City of Los Angeles concerning preserving and renewing Crystal Springs Picnic Area in Griffith Park, which includes a blueprint for improving and enhancing future access for under-served Los Angeles children in the event a ballfield is developed in the park.

For decades, the Crystal Springs Picnic Area has been a favorite and treasured gathering place for Angelenos.

As one of the few flat areas in the park, Crystal Springs Picnic Area was developed in 1936 and a cross-section of Los Angeles residents have been enjoying the spacious facility ever since. With large groups of picnic tables and bar-



becues, this area is the only location in Griffith Park where large groups can reserve one or all of the areas for an event. It is also one of the few areas where barbecues are permitted because of fire danger concerns. Crystal Springs is a popular venue for family reunions, company picnics, church groups, and other organizations, particularly with its broad grassy sections where families gather for birthday parties, a barbecue, or simply to let children run around and play. The area is flanked by numerous large welcoming trees offering shade and beauty.

According to the settlement, the Heritage Western Sycamore, a living artifact of Los Angeles, along with forty-four other trees, including many native Coast Live Oak species, will be preserved for picnickers to continue to enjoy. The settlement ensures that a plan is in place in the event ballfields are developed in this area. Under the plan, while fewer

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mature trees would be destroyed, no protected native trees would be lost, and this agreement stipulates replacement of the trees on 2:1 basis. Replacement trees would be planted in configurations specifically designed to improve the Crystal Springs Picnic Area experience for families and groups. The agreement also provides for 56 picnic tables to be moved to other Crystal Springs locations in the event a single 260 ft. ballfield is built, rather than the two ballfields that were originally approved for development. The settlement stipulates that if a ballfield is built, a single, larger ballfield would be designed in order to benefit a broader range of under-served kids, and that it would remain unlocked for public use when no games are scheduled by Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. A single new ballfield would also be much more compatible with this his-

toric picnic area than the originally-proposed project. The current 56 picnic table cluster would be divided into smaller groupings to better accommodate picnicking families and groups. The settlement also stipulates that the current outdated children's playground area would be demolished if a new ballfield is constructed, and replaced by a new, updated playground.

As an organization devoted to preserving and protecting Griffith Park's natural habitat and historic features for Angelenos of every stripe to appreciate and enjoy, both now and in the future, we are pleased with the compromise Council District 4 brokered between Friends of Griffith Park, the Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Proposition K folks from the Bureau of Engineering. We are

gratified that the settlement has created a blueprint that balances the future needs of the park and so many of Los Angeles' residents who rely on the park as a natural oasis in our city in the event a ballfield is built.

Moving forward, Friends of Griffith Park hopes a higher level of consideration and scrutiny is given to retaining as many trees as possible in Griffith Park with any new projects that may occur. If by necessity trees must be taken down, they should be replaced with sustainable species such as trees indigenous to the Park. After all, trees in the park are not just essential for healthy habitat life and environmental quality, they are also an important and beautiful part of Griffith Park's heritage as a gift to the residents of Los Angeles.

Traffic in Griffith Park continued from page 3

had spent 35 days searching for a parking lot south of Los Feliz Blvd. They wanted to find a big lot where parking would be

**"It must be
made a place
of recreation
and rest for the
masses, a resort
for the rank and
file, for the plain
people..."**

*~Col. Griffith J. Griffith
bequeathing his gift to
the City of Los Angeles*

ing on the traffic mitigation plan
free and from which people could catch a shuttle to points in the park. Guess what? No such place could be found. For those of us who live in Hollywood, the idea of a big, free parking lot in our neighborhood provokes hysterical laughter. Still, there may be possibilities. Are some of the Kaiser-Sunset parking structures available on Sunday? How about the parking lot at Hollywood High? Here is some really good news. Kevin Regan admitted that every scheme Rec and Parks proposed for reopening Mount Hollywood Drive, to private vehicles and/or shuttles, met with howls of protest from Griffith Park's traditional users. Just so. The Sierra Club Angeles Chapter, Friends of Griffith Park, and other groups advocating for the safety and rights of hik-

ers, runners and cyclists, as well as for the sensitive ecology of the park, went to meetings, wrote letters, and made it quite

clear that they did not want to sacrifice the upper section of Griffith Park, what Mike Eberts called "a haven for anyone wishing to escape the maddening din below," in order to accommodate more private cars and shuttles filled with Hollywood Sign seekers. Because of the fuss we made (and probably for other reasons too) Mount Hollywood Drive is once again closed to all non-emergency vehicles. Hooray!

Members of Friends of Griffith Park, the Sierra Club and other stakeholders reminded the meeting that the habitat Griffith Park provides for its sometimes rare species of plants and animals merits at least as much consideration as human visitors, their cars, their photo ops and their recreational preferences. It is the resident plants and animals, and the geology of the park, which furnish the wilderness component of "urban wilderness." We are blessed to have such biodiversity in our midst, and we need to preserve and protect it. That should always be first on our list of priorities.

Stakeholders also asked that Rec and Parks officials not advertise Griffith Park as a Hollywood Sign viewing area. When Tom LaBonge was the CD4 councilmember, he yielded to Beachwood Canyon homeowners' pressure to reroute Hollywood Sign tourist traffic into Griffith Park.

We are dealing with a shared resource: Griffith Park. One of the problems facing humans is balancing individual needs and desires with the needs of Earth as a system. Griffith Park is a sensitive and finite system. It cannot serve as a repository for everything people want in the park or do not want in their own neighborhoods. The Griffith Park Action Plan leaves some questions unanswered and many problems unsolved, but it takes a helpful step in the direction of preserving the park.

Who Owns Wildlife? *Law and the Birth of the Preservation Movement* Richard Stanley



Few people have heard of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, but the idea behind this landmark law reaches back to Roman times and continues to drive contemporary legal debate. The basic question the Treaty addresses is: who owns wildlife? The Romans believed that undomesticated animals belonged in common to the people of the state. In Medieval times, the English enacted laws that controlled the “taking” of salmon. By the late 17th Century, American colonies adopted laws that protected wildlife from depletion by imposing rules on the type of hunting gear allowed, how much game could be taken and licensing laws. After the American Revolution, federal courts held that wildlife protection was at the discretion of the individual states.

By the late 19th Century, however, state hunting laws were unable to protect wildlife from over-harvesting. Until the 1890s, the passenger pigeon was the most abundant bird in the Western Hemisphere and probably in the world. Its numbers were perhaps in the billions. Migratory flocks blotted out the sunshine during overpasses that could last all day. Such huge flocks allowed hunting on a massive scale never seen before. By 1914, the last known passenger pigeon, a 29-year old female named Martha, died at the Cincinnati Zoo without ever having laid a fertile egg. The extinction of the passenger pigeon and the near extinction of the American bison (conducted by the federal government to control a prime food supply of Native Americans) alarmed many and launched the modern conservation movement.



In 1900, Congress passed a first-step environmental law that forbade the interstate transport of birds or game killed in violation of state laws. A new threat then arose from an unusual source: “millinery murder.” Fashion of the time demanded that women’s hats sport exotic plumes. Egrets, herons and other showy birds were slaughtered for their feathers. Congress responded with a 1913 expansion of federal protection for all migratory and insectivorous birds by declaring them “to be within the custody and protection of the United States.” This act was challenged immediately and declared unconstitutional, as it violated states’ rights to control game.

Despite this setback, the United States, through the efforts of President Wilson,

entered into a treaty with Great Britain (on behalf of Canada) in 1916 to protect migratory birds. In 1918, Congress enabled this treaty by passing the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. With this law, Congress extended federal protection to all migratory birds and their parts, including eggs, nests—and feathers! Over the years, similar treaties have been adopted with Mexico, Japan and Russia. Details of these treaties have been amended over the years to define rare exceptions (e.g., for Native Americans), to revise lists of protected species (e.g., some non-native species are no longer protected) and to modify penalties for violations. Today, there are about 1,026 species of migratory birds protected under this Treaty, including owls, hawks, eagles and other raptors, plus crows, robins, jays, hummingbirds and many other birds both common and rare.

After the ratification of the Migratory Bird Treaty, court challenges arose again. This time the Supreme Court reversed itself by declaring that states do not own wildlife—wildlife belongs to everyone and, besides, the states did an ineffective job of wildlife protection in regard to migratory birds. From the outset, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act has been a “strict liability” law, meaning that a person may be fined and punished for any violation done knowingly or unknowingly. Essentially, any kind of harm to protected species is banned under this treaty. Unknowing violations are considered misdemeanors with penalties of up to \$15,000 and/or up to six months in jail. Knowing violations are felonies with penalties of up to \$2,000

and/or up to two years in jail. Over the years, violators have been penalized for harm to birds as a result of poisoning from crop dusting, drowning in toxic open ponds, collisions with wind farm turbines, tall buildings lighted at night and oil rigs, trimming a tree in which a protected species is nesting and unpermitted sales of eagle feathers. Exceptions have been granted for the taking of Canada geese near airports,

Olympic National Parks and wrote authoritatively about raptor decline due to DDT use. Edge's DDT research at Hawk Mountain helped inspire Rachel Carson while writing her seminal book, *Silent Spring*.

Hawk Mountain brought the plight of raptors to the public's attention. In 1940, Congress enacted the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act to protect these two raptor species. Other species-spe-

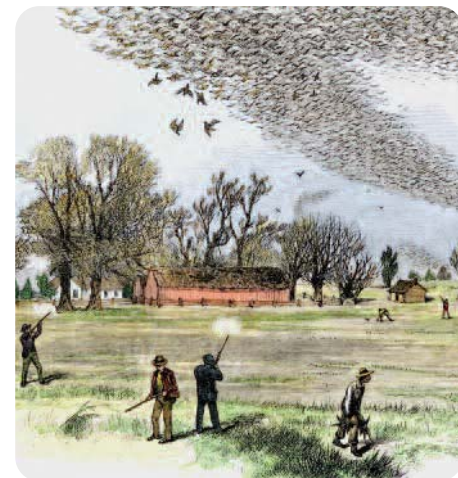
in your garage or under your kitchen sink right now: rodenticide—rat poison. Using rat poison exposes not only rodents, but also children, pets and wildlife to toxins that rise through the food chain. A rat eats poison one day and is eaten by a pet, raptor, coyote or wild cat the next day. That carnivorous animal is then likewise poisoned. Birds of prey are particularly prone to poisoning because rodents are a primary part



In 1914 the last known passenger pigeon, "Martha" dies at the Cincinnati Zoo.



Thousands and thousands of slaughtered buffalo skulls wait to be shipped eastward.



Native American ceremonial uses, scientific purposes, falconry and other reviewed purposes.

Outgrowths of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act began, too. In 1929, the Pennsylvania Game Commission placed a \$5 bounty on the goshawk. Amateur ornithologist Richard Pough heard about a place called "Hawk Mountain," a ridge along the Appalachian Trail in Eastern Pennsylvania where seasonal thermals carried thousands of migrating raptors. Upon visiting Hawk Mountain, Pough was appalled to find gunners blasting hawks out of the sky for sport and the bounty. Walking the forest floor, he gathered dozens of carcasses and photographed them. His photographs caught the attention of New York socialite, suffragist and bird-watcher, Rosalie Edge, who by 1934 unilaterally ended the slaughter by purchasing Hawk Mountain and hiring a warden to police what became the world's first preserve for birds of prey. Edge became America's most militant preservationist. She prodded the Audubon Society to greater action, helped create Kings Canyon and



Rosalie Edge, New York socialite, suffragist, bird-watcher and activist.

cific acts followed such as right and gray whale protection. By the 1960s, new laws began to be passed that recognized that game management laws alone were inadequate. The example of the whooping crane, whose population declined to just 16 individuals by the 1940s, illustrated that to protect animal species, the environments in which animals live also need protection.

With all these laws, one might think that we have come a long way in protecting the environment, but modern threats remain. One of the most common and pernicious threats to birds of prey, and to wildlife generally, might be

of their diets. Thanks to birds of prey, no rodent dies of old age.

Lately, some laws have been proposed that would control or ban rodenticides in a limited or timid way. Like most things in life, there is a right way and a wrong way to do something. Using rodenticides is the wrong way to control or to eradicate rodent pests. All rodenticides should be banned completely.

Enacting new laws may also be the wrong way to protect wildlife. There is conclusive evidence that birds of prey protected specifically under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act are harmed and killed by rodenticides. Everyone who uses rodenticides might be "strictly liable" under this act—from Los Angeles City, that maintains rodenticide bait stations in Griffith Park to the little old lady down the street who doesn't like her cat presenting an occasional dead mouse on her doorstep.

It is time to pick up the legal tool allowed in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and to ban rodenticides nationwide to protect the wildlife we own collectively. All we need is political leadership.

A Bridge Not Far

Marian Dodge

As bridges go — it's small. The Fern Dell pedestrian bridge is a mere 52 feet long, but provides critical access in Fern Dell. The bridge is located just east of the narrow concrete auto bridge at Fern Dell and Red Oak Drives.

If you've taken a Friends of Griffith Park (FoGP) tour, you've seen early postcards of the once-graceful pedestrian bridge in Fern Dell. Its wooden arch used to perfectly match the adjacent auto bridge arch. Originally, the railing had a criss-cross design popular in the 1930s. Log beams further complement the rustic nature of the bridge.

Several years ago, LA's Rec and Parks closed the bridge because one of the three support logs was rotted and several decayed deck boards placed hikers in danger of falling through.

Because this pedestrian bridge is currently inaccessible, it's created public safety concerns. Hikers and families with baby strollers come upon the closed bridge and must alter their route. Some hikers step onto the auto bridge but this is extremely dangerous as the bridge is narrow and heavily traveled. At the request of FoGP, Rec and Parks recently installed detour signs directing pedestrians to another path further up the hill.

Since the entirety of Griffith Park is a Historic-Cultural Monument, FoGP and our preservation consultant Nicole Possert of The Arroyo Guild met with the Office of Historic Resources to seek input from OHR's program manager, Lambert Giessinger. We presented historic and current photos to Giessinger who recommended an engineering evaluation to determine whether the bridge could be repaired.

FoGP also met with Councilmember David Ryu in March to familiarize him with the significance of Fern Dell, studies the organization has prepared including The Fern Dell Report, and priority projects. Ryu was impressed by the work and financial support FoGP has invested in Fern Dell and is supportive of the bridge repair efforts since this is a public safety issue. Ryu is committed to providing liaison to help get the project over any hurdles it may encounter.

After Rec and Parks granted permission to examine the bridge, a team of consultants poked and prodded to determine the current condition. Could the bridge be salvaged or would it require rebuilding? Structural engineer for preservation projects, Mel Green, and Frank Parrello, a preservation planner conducted their examination with the assistance of preservation contractors from California Waterproofing & Restoration and our lead consultant Nicole Possert. These well-known, highly re-

spected preservationists began with a visual inspection, removing several deck planks to determine the extent of wood rot. This also allowed access to test the condition of the log supports below the deck planks. GB Geotechnics used ground-penetrating radar on the concrete piers. The area around the piers was excavated to evaluate the foundation and load-bearing tests were performed on the bridge. Finally, architectural drawings of the bridge were created using a 3D scanning methodology.

The written report concluded the center support log is rotted and needs replacing but the exterior logs are in good condition.

The non-historic material — the decking and current railings — need to be replaced with a more historically-compatible design and materials. Since the existing concrete piers were originally constructed with rebar and solid foundations, they are fine.

On April 27 FoGP and our consultants met with Rec and Parks Griffith Superintendent Joe Salaices, head of construction Dave Takata, and environmental specialist Paul Davis to discuss the engineering evaluation and develop a

plan of action. Green presented the findings and analysis. FoGP consultants described the proposed repairs, and the concept to repair the railing to be compatible with the Park-Style design featured in many Fern Dell historic photos.

Based on the report, Takata confirmed the bridge could indeed be repaired. This is good news; in the past when bridges failed or a new bridge was required, Rec and Parks would purchase prefabricated bridges, which rarely complement the character of a park, due to high costs of engineering a new bridge.

FoGP is currently hiring a preservation architect and developing conceptual plans along with a cost estimate. This information will begin the internal process with Rec and Parks' Capitol Improvement Group, the Office of Historic Resources, and the Rec and Parks Board of Commissioners.

So, is funding available and adequate for the repair? Yes! Rec and Parks already has an account earmarked for the bridge. The Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust has donated a matching amount to Friends of Griffith Park for bridge repairs. We'll soon have more accurate cost estimates but are hoping the current funding is sufficient. FoGP has paid for the research and analysis and will provide the design, plans and cost estimates. Working in partnership with Rec and Parks we can get the job done.

We can't wait until walkers, baby strollers, and dog walkers can safely use the bridge again. All those enjoying a walk in the cool of Fern Dell under the bridge will be able to look up and again admire the graceful curve of the arch of the bridge and the classic criss-cross railing. Stay tuned for more updates in the future!



Celebrating the 240th Anniversary of the Anza Expedition through Griffith Park

Kathryn Louyse

Travel has certainly come a very long way in the past 200+ years. Planes, trains and automobiles have increased our ability to get from Point A to Point B breathtakingly fast. Roadways zigzag through communities while interstate freeways traverse the country. Nowadays, motor vehicles are designed to cover great distances in a few hours or a few days.

The situation was quite different in 1772 when Juan Bautista de Anza petitioned the King of Spain for financial support enabling him to explore and lay claim to the northern area (parts of modern-day California, Arizona and New Mexico).

During this era of discovery and colonization, there were a multitude of reasons to venture up the California coastline toward San Francisco Bay. Russian explorers were quickly moving south along the coastline while French explorers were moving westward toward Alta California, so it was essential the Anza expedition arrive first if Spain was to maintain control over these territories and harbors. Ironically, an earlier expedition led by Gaspar de Portola in 1769 had already arrived in the San Francisco Bay area but Portola miscalculated his position, thinking he was in the vicinity of Monterey Bay. He failed to grasp the significance of available natural resources — fertile land, vast woodlands of native trees, clean, clear water and a mild climate suited to crop production nearly year round. Departing the Bay area, Portola eventually traveled back toward San Diego without first laying claim, and in 1770, he traveled back to Spain, never to return to the New World.

The first Anza expedition in 1774 consisted of approximately 35 men plus horses, cattle and mules. It was considered a great success and upon his return to Mexico, Anza was promoted and tasked with leading another expedition northward. In October, 1775 Juan Bautista de Anza departed Mexico to journey once more toward the San Francisco Bay. Conditions had not changed — there were still no roads or trails and traveling 1,200 miles by foot or on horseback made the journey long and dangerous for those who participated.

The second, much larger group of colonists consisted of soldiers,

Anza Celebration continues on page 12

Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks Griffith Superintendent, Joe Salaiques, National Park Service Ranger Hale Sargent and FoGP President, Gerry Hans welcome participants to the Anza Celebration festivities.



If you notice this signage along your hike in the Park, it means there is a Friends of Griffith Park sponsored event somewhere up ahead. FoGP events include graffiti paint removals and trash pickups in the Old Zoo as well as native plantings and watering... It's easy to get involved — and remember, it's the people's Park!



Thanks to all groups and individuals for participating in this celebration: The National Park Service including Santa Monica Mountains Rangers & Rangers from the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, Anza Trail Color Guard, Los Californios Music & Dance Troup, Tongva flute player, Michael White Horse Aviles, National Wildlife Federation, Nature Conservancy, Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, and FOLAR.



Anza Celebration continued from page 9 their wives and families, accompanied by several padres, muleteers and vaqueros (cow-boys).

Unlike today's camping experience with all modern conveniences, Anza's journey was made extremely uncomfortable by the lack of available shelters and worse, exposure to the elements. While expedition leaders and padres were housed in their own tents, families were packed into ten tents which meant three or



more families per tent. Although cramped, they fared slightly better than muleteers and vaqueros as these individuals were forced to sleep outside throughout the journey. Expedition supplies including clothing, food, cooking utensils, blankets, tools, and munitions were either packed onto mules or hand-carried over 1,200 miles.

The exhausted party arrived at Mission San Gabriel Arcángel (slightly east of present-day Los Angeles) in January, 1776. According to historical records, they had endured unusually bitter winter weather along the southern route. The expedition then moved north-

west toward the California coastline after stopping in the Griffith Park area to replenish water and supplies.

Finally in late March, 1776, Col. Anza's long, arduous journey to San Francisco Bay concluded. As the Spanish colonists stood on the site of the now-famous Golden Gate Bridge, Anza noted in his diary, "I placed a cross, and beneath the soil at its foot, a notice of what I had seen to serve as a guide to the ships that will enter there... for the establishment of the fort rightly belonging to this port."



The National Park Service Celebrates it's First 100 Years

Originally national parks and monuments were managed by the Department of the Interior but on August 25, 1916 President Woodrow Wilson created the National Park Service "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

The Anza Expedition Celebration provided the perfect opportunity to celebrate NPS's first century of preserving parkland.

Currently, NPS manages nearly 85 million acres and since taking office, President Obama has added even more land and helped to promote preservation efforts. Check out "Find Your Park" on the NPS website: <https://www.nps.gov/index.htm>



Jeff Sikich's February 25th Lecture Focuses on Mountain Lion Populations in LA

Gerry Hans

Jeff Sikich knows mountain lion P-22 better than anyone. He first captured P-22 in March 2012 in order to place a radio-collar on him shortly after a remote camera trap snapped a totally unexpected image of this mountain lion. The cameras were part of the Griffith Park Connectivity Study, supported by Friends of Griffith Park. In the four and a half years P-22 has lived in Griffith Park, Jeff has recaptured him several times to either replace collar batteries or to treat him for sickness due to rodenticide poisoning.

Sikich is a wildlife biologist with the National Park Service (NPS). The Santa Monica Mountains is his home range, as NPS has been following mountain lions here for twelve years. However, Jeff has an international reputation for humane trapping, so he has flown all over the world to work with over sixteen carnivore species, including tigers, jaguars, and leopards.

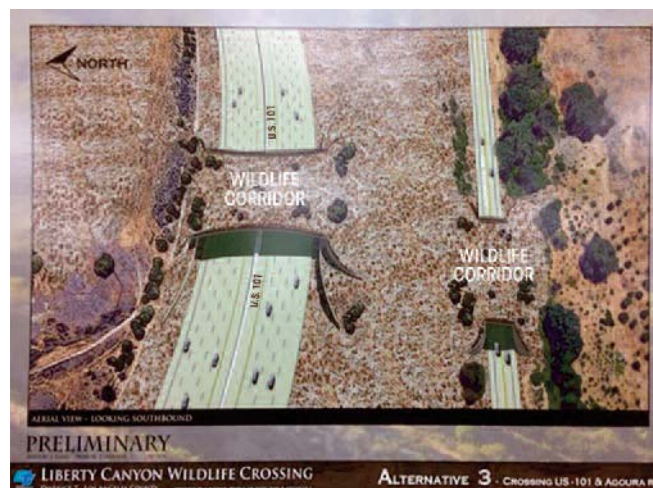
Jeff's talk described what has been learned from years of research in the Los Angeles area. As he unfolded the family tree of mountain lion populations in the Santa Monica Mountains, it was easy for all attendees to understand how limited genetic variability is a problem, largely due to habitat fragmentation and virtual impasses to other far-reaching habitat zones. Inbreeding has become more prevalent and our mountain lion population may well be on the verge of a more weakened and unhealthy state. On the positive

side, there are strong lobbying efforts for the first man-made wildlife bridge in Southern California, over I-101 at Liberty Canyon in Agoura Hills.

As we know, there is at least some connectivity to Griffith Park across Cahuenga Pass. P-22 proved it when he made the journey across two freeways (I-405 and US-101) into the Park. Also, various wildlife species have been photographed crossing these overpasses. What makes this highly restrictive linkage attractive to wildlife is that there are large chunks of habitat on both sides which helps funnel animals to the choke points where they cross.

Jeff also spoke of other urban challenges to mountain lions and wildlife in general. In addition to shrinking habitat, vehicle-related mortality is high. The rodenticides (rat poisons) issue is pervasive. Three local mountain lions were confirmed casualties of these agents which travel up the food chain. We also know that P-22 was a near victim of Diphacinone, an anticoagulant rodenticide, which probably occurred when P-22 ingested a poisoned coyote, raccoon or other mammal.

We were very fortunate to have Jeff spend time with us with an over-capacity audience. The public is much more comfortable living with wildlife – big wildlife – when scientific expertise is available. The question and answer period could have been endless!



As vast numbers of animals continue to perish in vehicle-related collisions, proposals to create wildlife corridors across freeways will hopefully reduce this number. Liberty Canyon is one of the proposed sites as one of the last large undeveloped areas along the 101-freeway and when completed, the crossing will be the largest wildlife crossing in the world. For more information: <http://www.nwf.org/Save-LA-Cougars/Wildlife-Crossing.aspx>



Griffith Park Plant Identification 101

Jorge Ochoa is a best “Friend” of this organization. Ochoa is a horticulture instructor at Long Beach City College having previously worked in the Forestry Division of Rec and Parks. He’s our resident fern expert for the Fern Dell Revitalization Project and a popular speaker for some of Friends of Griffith Park scientific lecture series.

When Jorge first approached us and offered to take folks onto the trails of the park to learn about its native plants, it was a dream come true. Jorge donated all his time and efforts to the benefit of our organization and to the people who learned from him. He has endless enthusiasm and teaches by making it fun.

Early December was the first scheduled Plant ID Class, with a good group who were challenged with a hiking loop from the Old Zoo to the Boys’ Camp. The class got rave reviews. As demand for more classes grew, we added more hikes including one in February, March and April!

An *LA Times* reporter, R. Daniel Foster, signed up for the first class, unannounced to any of us in advance. A *Times* photographer attended a later class, resulting in a nice story in the Saturday Section of the paper in March entitled, “One Big Native Garden.”

Since the classes were spread out over a wide season, and each class was held in a different area of the park, a great variety of blooming species were covered. Thanks, Jorge, for making such a special effort in helping people appreciate what Griffith Park has to offer!



2016 Bird LA Day in Griffith Park

The weather may not have started out perfectly. The threatening clouds however, worked in our favor by keeping it just this side of balmy, and while there were some drizzles enroute to the Old Zoo, we all made it through without a good drenching!

Approximately 30 individuals showed up for the NPS Ranger Anthony Bevilacqua-led hike which began at the Merry-Go-Round Parking Lot. Ranger Anthony spoke briefly about some of the bird species we would hopefully see, and then the hike began, moving up into the Fern Canyon area where FoGP boardmember Laura Howe discussed FoGP-sponsored native plantings that have been taking place over the last few years to help restore the canyon after the devastating 2007 fire. We then hiked up the fire trail and turned toward the Old Zoo, stopping to check out various bird species spotted high in the trees and even some species closer to the ground. Ranger Anthony brought along his Sibley Bird ID Book for reference and his bird call app helped to identify some of the more elusive birds high up in the canopy.

FoGP President Gerry Hans took copious notes of bird sightings for the group and surprisingly, we saw a number of different species including a Great Blue Heron high in the sky over the Old Zoo, chasing or being chased by a Red-tailed Hawk. (generally these herons are seen much closer to the LA River so this was a somewhat unusual sighting). Along the route a variety of species were spotted including some regulars, as well as some seen less frequently.

Thanks to Ranger Anthony for being such a spectacular Bird LA Day leader and to everyone who came out for this year's Griffith Park event. We hope you enjoyed the day and hope to see you next year!

LIST OF BIRD SPECIES SPOTTED IN GRIFFITH PARK (during BirdLA hike)

Acorn Woodpecker, Allen's Hummingbird, American Robin, Ash-Throated Flycatcher, Black Phoebe, Black-Headed Grosbeak, California Towhee, Common Raven, Dark-Eyed Junco, European Starling, Great Blue Heron, House Finch, House Wren, Lesser Goldfinch, Mockingbird, Mourning Dove, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Red-Tailed Hawk, Rufous Hummingbird, Song Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Western Scrub Jay, White-Throated Swift, and last but not least, one butterfly (the California Sister)

Supporting ICOC Hikes in Griffith Park




It's all about the kids — introducing them to the great outdoors and providing nature lessons. For many, it's the first time they've roamed free in the forest.

Since 2011, FoGP has partnered with the Sierra Club to bring kids from inner city schools into Griffith Park and it's great to watch the delight on their faces as they make discoveries that can only be made in parklands. So far this year, there have been eight outings and 235 kids have participated. As the year progresses, there will be even more hikes.

2011	168 kids	5 outings	2014	627 kids	17 outings
2012	284 kids	9 outings	2015	608 kids	12 outings
2013	311 kids	11 outings	2016*	235 kids	8 outings

**as of print date.*



**Aug. 18th
LECTURE
SERIES**

**Dr. Greg Pauly
at the Los Feliz
Branch Library**

*Reptile & Amphibian
Discoveries from
Southern California's
Citizen Scientist Army*

This evening, Dr. Pauly will explain what Citizen Science has done toward the understanding of amphibian and reptile populations — from Griffith Park's deep wilderness to your own backyard — and how you can help.

please join us...

**Los Feliz Branch
of the Los Angeles Public Library**
1874 Hillhurst Avenue, LA 90027
for more information call 323.913.4710
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
Lecture from 6:45 to 7:45 p.m.



Lions, and Tigers, and Bears, Oh My!

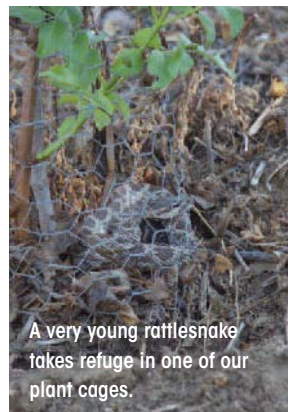
"Oh, my!" exclaimed the little kids gathered around our table at the zoo as they looked at the photo of an emaciated, mangy P-22. Many of the families were familiar with the handsome mountain lion in the iconic *National Geographic* photo and could see the devastating, unintended consequences of the use of rodenticides and were very concerned about his well-being. Friends of Griffith Park volunteers assured the kids and their parents that the National Park Service biologists had treated P-22 and once again he was looking healthy. We suggested alternative ways of dealing with rodents that will not harm other animals. FoGP also distributed flyers showing how rodenticides (rat poisons) spread from animal to animal up the food chain, ironically killing natural predators of rats like hawks and coyotes.

Friends of Griffith Park along with a dozen other environmental non-profits were invited to participate in the Los Angeles Zoo's Wild for the Planet on April 24th, one of a series of special weekend events to commemorate this year's Earth Day. Organizations set up near the lush foliage of the aviary, the carousel, and the puppet show so we had plenty of visitors. This event also presented a golden opportunity to share ideas with other environmental groups in attendance.

At the end of the day, visitors to our table walked away better informed about rat poisons, and the effects on our environment.



NPS and SAMO Volunteers Help Breathe New Life into Captain's Roost



A very young rattlesnake takes refuge in one of our plant cages.





How Green Was My River

The Los Angeles River is looking very green thanks to the efforts of hundreds of volunteers like you. For the past 27 years, Friends of the Los Angeles River (FOLAR) has created the largest river cleanup in America having expanded to fifteen sites over three weekends every spring. Once again, Friends of Griffith Park hosted the site at Bette Davis Picnic Area as we’ve done for the past four years. FoGP supplies the smiling faces that greet you, register you and hand you T-shirts, gloves, garbage sacks and snacks.

The Los Angeles River provides a quiet background to a bee hive of activity. The Great Blue Heron circles curiously overhead. Mother ducks escort their fuzzy chicks to the opposite side of

the river as a veritable army of blue-shirted volunteers march down to the river bottom. Volunteers swarm the area with their garbage bags and make quick work of tons of trash. Some area companies send large groups of volunteers and after the cleanup, have a company picnic to thank their volunteers.

The intrepid volunteer of the day award goes to a mother who hand-dug the remnants of a rusty bicycle out of the mud. She was determined to get the bicycle out and finally appeared triumphantly at the top of the bank with the rusted bike. Her kids each carried their garbage bags full of more ordinary trash: bottles, cans, and plastic bags. They were justifiably proud of their mom and the great example she set for them.

Friends of Griffith Park is proud of all our volunteers who help make this a successful event every year.



Wayfinding Signs Now Placed

Cheers to the L.A. Department of Recreation and Parks on the long overdue wayfinding signage! Four new trailhead signs and twenty-two directional signs were installed in late April.

The new rustic signs are simple, low-profile, and graffiti-resistant. The large trailhead signs feature a map of the park and park rules. The smaller directional signs show the distance between points, with arrows pointing to key destinations.

Rec and Parks appreciated the input from Friends of Griffith Park boardmembers, especially Laura Howe with their vast knowledge of the trail system within the park. Griffith Park Rangers also provided their valuable help and knowledge with the strategic placement of the signage. The final results of this collaborative effort are appropriate signs, similar to what you might see in national parks.

Millions of people, tourists and locals, flock to Griffith Park, and while many are simply hoping to get their "Selfie with the Sign," some genuinely want to take a hike. Now it will be easier for them to stay oriented. The new signs will also hopefully lower the number of rescues by Park Rangers of people who "get lost" in the park. Finally, Park visitors will now have the answer to their oft-asked question, "How do you get to the Hollywood Sign?"



Latest on Rim of the Valley

This past June, the Rim of the Valley Corridor bill which would add nearly 200,000 acres of wildlands, parks and historic sites, including a large swath along the Los Angeles River was intro-

duced for approval in the House of Representatives by Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Burbank). A similar bill will be introduced by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) in the U.S. Senate. If approved, this legislation will protect natural resources in one of the most densely-populated areas of the country, adding valuable green space to Los Angeles' current park-poor community. (please see friendsofgriffithpark.org website for comments by Rep. Adam Schiff)

While the legislation is not controversy-free, Schiff is cognizant of concerns raised by private property owners within the Rim of the Valley area. According to Schiff, "The bill would not allow for land grabs though eminent domain." Adding "As more of this

area is developed and open space diminishes, the wildlife it supports is increasingly at risk... Congress has the power to preserve the Rim of the Valley for generations to come. But we must act quickly, or the opportunity will be gone."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS & SAVE THESE DATES



9.25.2016

THE GREEK THEATRE

NORDIC NOIR

LOS ANGELES

A SPECIAL CONCERT EVENT
FROM NORDIC COMPOSER JACOB GROTH
TO BENEFIT FRIENDS OF GRIFFITH PARK

TO ENSURE SCIENTIFIC WORK AND SUSTAINABILITY
OF OUR URBAN WILDLIFE WILL CONTINUE

TICKETS AVAILABLE IN JULY
www.NordicNoirLA.com

photo credit: Miguel Ordeñana

<<<<<<< October 16 through October 22, 2016 >>>>>>>

Oct. 22nd, 2016 P-22 DAY in Griffith Park

URBAN WILDLIFE WEEK begins at the site of the proposed Agoura Hills wildlife crossing with a symbolic re-tracing of mountain lion P-22's footsteps culminating on Saturday, Oct. 22nd in Griffith Park.

This community-wide festival will celebrate our peaceful co-existence with wildlife, and the program will include education and entertainment for all ages.

More information will follow on our website. We welcome National Wildlife Federation as the lead sponsor of this event.

photos courtesy of Beth Pratt Bergstrom, NWF (top) and The National Park Service (bottom)



Join Friends of Griffith Park

When you become a member of FoGP at the \$250 level you'll receive a complimentary copy of Mike Ebert's *Griffith Park: A Centennial History*

Centennial History

(This publication is out of print so availability is limited to first come.)

Now available from Amazon...

Ebert's *Griffith Park: The Second Century* (downloadable as an e-book.)



Friends of Griffith Park
P.O. Box 27573
L.A., CA 90027-0573

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Early Fern Dell photograph highlights the lush ferns, quiet solitude and *faux bois* railings that once inhabited the area. Over the decades, Fern Dell has fallen victim to budget shortfalls, fern theft, vandalism and now drought. Friends of Griffith Park is working with LA Rec and Parks to rehabilitate the area, beginning with the pedestrian bridge (see accompanying story on page 8).

The Story of Avery

Avery's first experiences in Griffith Park came in a stroller rolling along Mulholland from the Griffith Observatory. As a toddler, her favorite afternoon activities were playing on the Bronson Canyon

playground or exploring Fern Dell. Since moving to Beachwood about 18 months ago, Avery (now 8 years old) has loved hiking the local trails and frequently leads the hikes, with a confident, energetic zest. When first beginning to hike, she noticed trash and debris discarded by prior hikers. So early on, her pre-hike preparations included an empty trash bag in which she would collect litter as she went, and even now hikes don't end until the trash bag is full! When she first learned about Friends of Griffith Park, she felt she'd found kindred spirits and immediately wanted to help the organization. In May, Avery held a one-day lemonade stand and dedicated 100% of the revenue collected to Friends of Griffith Park. With overwhelming warmth and support from LA residents, foreign visitors, and neighbors alike, Avery raised \$307 for the Park. Thank you Avery!

