



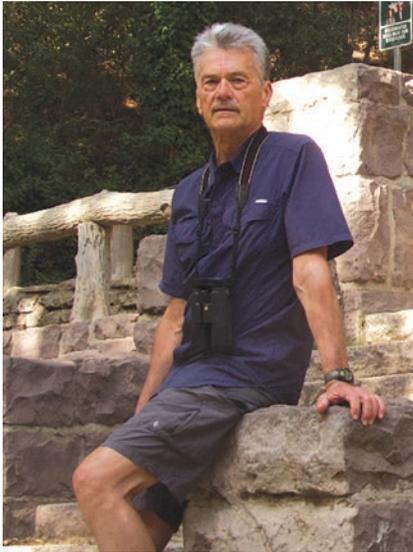
griffith

the newsletter of friends of griffith park/summer-fall 2021



in this issue...

- ✓ Aerial Tram update
 - ✓ NWF's Beth Pratt
 - ✓ Raptor Study Volunteers
 - ✓ Mapping Griffith Park's Geology
 - ✓ Film Crews in the Park
 - ✓ 125 Years – Coming Soon
- and more...*



Gerry Hans at Soroptimist Picnic Area, Fern Dell

Welcome to our summer newsletter just as Griffith Park is getting back to serving the people of LA in a more expanded manner. The parking lots for Travel Town, Pony Rides, Live Steamers, and the Observatory were empty for much of the “great pause.” However, people coming to the Park to enjoy fresh air and nature, and exercise for their physical and mental health were largely undeterred. In fact, they were drawn to the Park in droves!

The reduction in vehicular traffic, especially around the Observatory area, was welcomed by wildlife, resulting in a notable decrease in roadkill. And for all Park visitors, it was a pleasant relief and better Park experience. But let’s all take a deep breath at what’s in store when tourism picks up this summer and the coming holiday season. Planning better access to Griffith Park via public transportation with fewer cars is forward thinking that must not be postponed.

Along the same lines, managing a Park to serve the people necessitates managing and protecting its flora and fauna. We believe we can all do a better job moving forward. While FoGP invests in Park science, we also continue to lobby the City for at least one staff ecologist or biologist. Recreation and Parks has 450 parks and over 17,000 acres under its wing. An ecology professional who would help guide best management practices, and advise and educate Park workers, rangers, and Park users, doesn’t really seem out of line. FoGP wonders — when will biodiversity and sustainability goals preached at top City levels trickle down to creation of a new Park ecologist position?

We welcome Council District 4’s newly elected Nithya Raman. Her voice in support of Recreation and Park staffing during the Budget Hearings aligned with FoGP’s. We are also heartened that she has taken a stance of opposition against any version of a Griffith Park Aerial Tram (*See story page 5*). CD 4 Field Manager, Sarah Tanberg, has taken a deep-dive into understanding Park issues and the problems the surrounding community face. All good news!

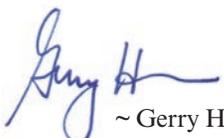
FoGP has plenty of work to do the rest of the year. We took a giant leap forward in historic Fern Dell by applying for a “Safe, Clean Water Act” grant to study the feasibility of stormwater capture. (*Story on page 10*). If successful, we’ll be in the queue for design study and construction funding in subsequent cycles. This L.A. County program could help fulfill many dreams for revitalizing this gem within Griffith Park. Water recirculation to the upper stream and infrastructure repair are all possibilities, while water could be cleaned, stored, and put to good use within the 20 acre site, rather than being lost to storm drains only to disperse into the ocean.

During this nesting season the pandemic did not deter FoGP’s Raptor Survey. The beauty of community science is that trained volunteers continue to contribute data regardless! Now in its fifth year, the survey boasts an ever-increasing number of hawk and owl nests monitored. With the nesting season winding down, watch for the final report and presentation which are coming soon. (*Read about two Raptor Survey volunteers on page 9*).

We are ecstatic to have awarded our first Diversity Scholarships to two students pursuing higher education in environmental sciences (*See page 19*). We look forward to continuing our relationship with the Zoo Magnet Center’s students and activities.

We’re also delighted to be affiliated with so many experts and educators within our local scientific community, bringing greater knowledge and respect for Griffith Park’s incredible, yet vulnerable, wildlife and habitat. Earlier this spring we presented a series called Species of Special Concern which can be viewed online at friendsofgriffithpark.org.

As we hit the restart switch for LIVE volunteer activities and events, we’re looking forward to jumpstarting Park efforts. Your enthusiasm keeps us moving forward to protect and enjoy this magnificent Park. ♣


~ Gerry Hans

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Photo: Gerry Hans

on the cover:

Exquisite Blazing Star – article on page 3.
Cover photo: Gerry Hans

photo above:

Always be careful where you step! Snakes are well-camouflaged as they blend into tall grass, so it’s important to stay safe and stay on trails while hiking in Griffith Park.

Park Rangers respond 24/7 to Park-related emergencies. Keep this number handy!
(323) 644-6661

The Giant Blazing Star

~Gerry Hans, FoGP President

If it sprouted in your backyard you'd likely think it was a weed and cut it down along with thistle or dandelions, because until this unassuming plant blooms it has few redeeming features. But don't be fooled! How many native plants in Griffith Park throw large, stunning blooms like the lovely showy blazing star? It's a solid WOW!

Giant blazing star (*Mentzelia laevicaulis*) is a native found in western states and many counties within California. Normally it grows to about three feet in height with many branches. At the tip of each branch is a flower with a diameter as large as five inches. The bloom has five distinctly pointed petals of bright waxy yellow that gleam in the morning sunlight, and a long beard of stamens completing the rest of Mother Nature's artistic sculpture. It blooms during the hot summer months, opening at dusk, remaining open only during the morning hours.

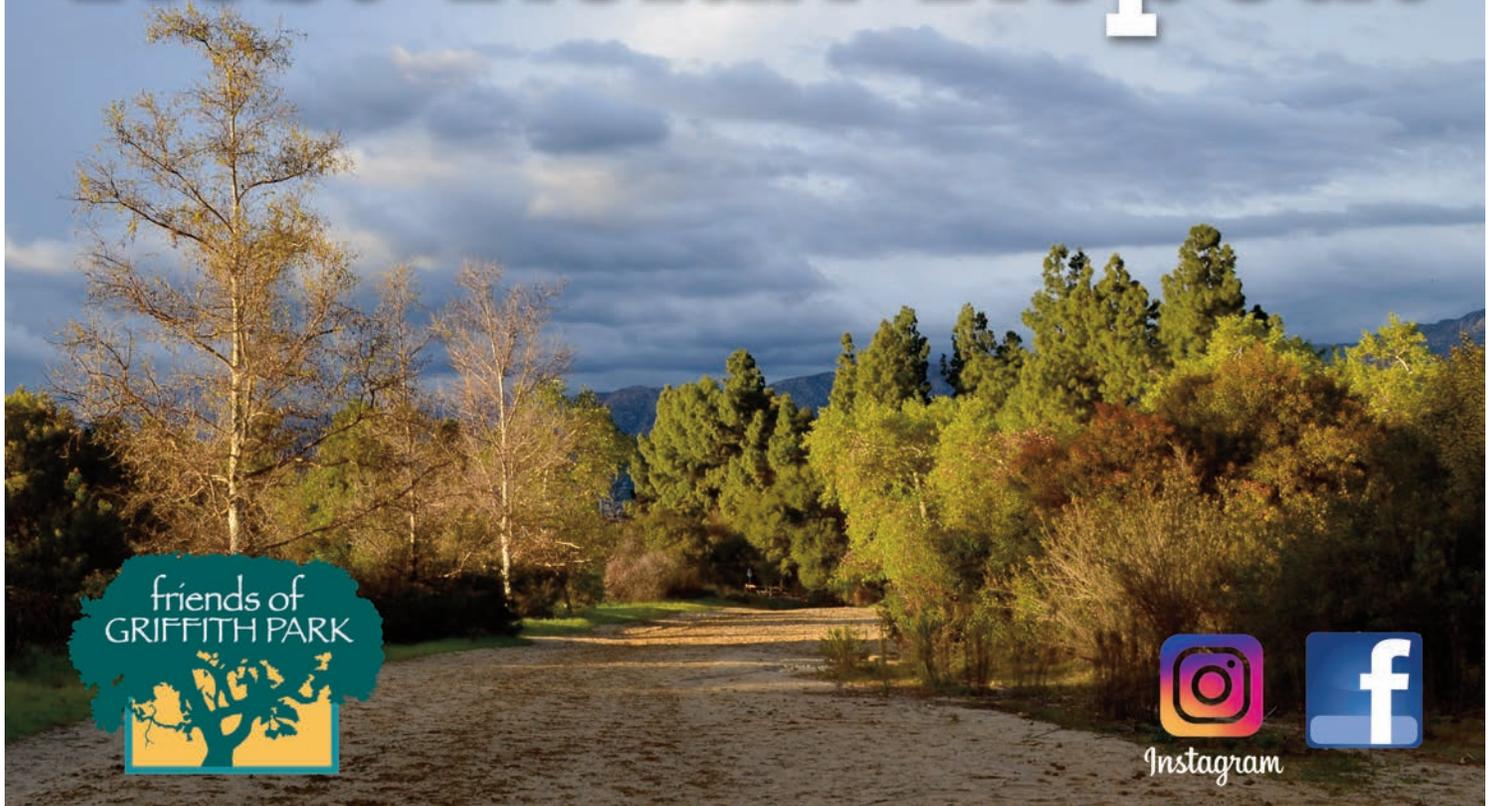
The plant likes sand, rocks and dry hot cliff faces. With the drought we're currently experiencing perhaps it will expand its range within Griffith Park! This bloom provides nectar for insects, especially moths, native bees, and perhaps bats!

It would be a good choice for dry rock gardens in your yard. It's a short-lived perennial, which will re-seed itself. I imagine you'd be the first one on your block to try it. ♡



Photo: Gerry Hans

Rest · Relax · Repeat



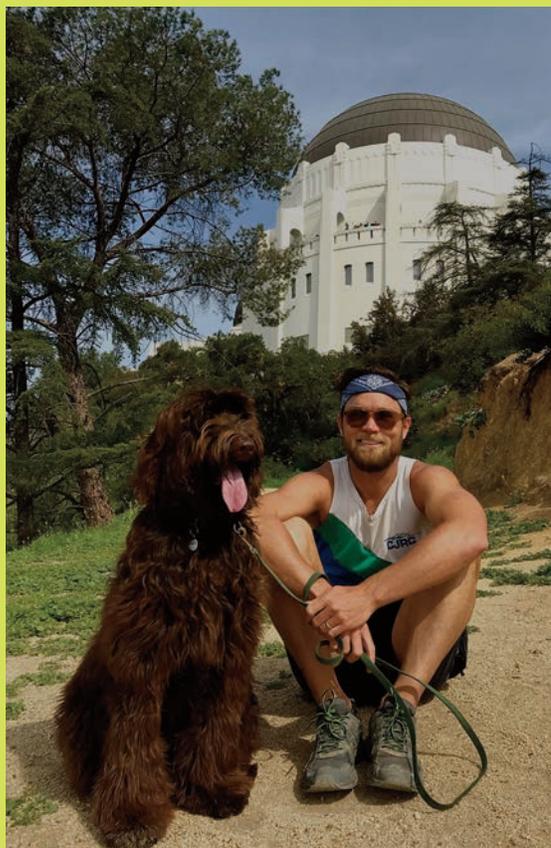
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Hiking Along the Hogback ~Alex Phillips, FoGP board member



If you spend a lot of time hiking in Griffith Park, you're definitely going to get asked what your "favorite" hike is. This is like responding to "what's your favorite color?" when you were a kid, but more difficult. Are you going to dazzle them by suggesting a trek to the Hollywood Sign or Wisdom Tree? Are they looking for something short and sweet like Bird Sanctuary to Mt. Hollywood and back via the Observatory? Is a stroll through Fern Dell more their vibe? Three great options right off the bat without even scratching the surface of all the fun adventures to be had in Griffith Park. However, when I think about my go-to, tried and true hike, the answer will always have to be Hogback Trail.

Lace up those hiking shoes and lather on sunscreen, because this hike is a fun (but strenuous) 5-mile tour of some of the main attractions in the Park's southside. Unless you're lucky enough to live within walking distance of trailheads, parking is going to be a major challenge when planning your hike. First put "Commonwealth Nursery" into your GPS. This will take you up N. Commonwealth Ave., north of Los Feliz Blvd. on a road that dead-ends into the Park. Commonwealth is mostly a single-lane, residential road with parking on both sides of the street.

If you find parking on this heavily trafficked street, congratulations! The hard part is done — now it's time to hit the trails and get your blood pumping.

As you go up Commonwealth and enter the Park, you'll notice a very steep, wide trail immediately on your right. Yup, we're going up there! The Cedar Grove Trail takes you to one of the many little shaded gems that are often used for filming. (Sometimes midmorning sprinklers provide a bit of a surprise obstacle course!). Catch your breath at one of the many benches in the area. When you're ready, exit Cedar Grove and head uphill toward the north-east, onto the paved road of Vista Del Valle Dr.

This stretch of Vista Del Valle to Joe Klass Water Stop provides some great views of the Angeles Forest to the east. Passing the Joe Klass Water Stop we're continuing on Vista Del Valle to the helipad to the west, past the LADWP water tower. Linger here for some great vistas of DTLA, the Observatory, and, on a clear day, the ocean. Have a little stretch because we're going up again on the quad-busting Hogback Trail.

Hogback Trail starts just past the helipad. Vista Del Valle continues straight ahead and Riverside Trail goes downhill. Hogback heads slightly uphill at this intersection and brings you to dirt trails and fire roads. This flat section has some nice views of the Observatory to your left. There's even a cute metal bridge just past Glendale Peak. Then it's all up from here! There are three concerted uphill stretches with plateau breaks or slight downhill. Don't try to grind through them; stop when you need to rest and take in some of the amazing views: San Fernando Valley and mountains on one side; DTLA, the Observatory and Roosevelt Golf Course on the other.

Once you've conquered Hogback, you'll find yourself at Dante's View, one of Griffith Park's three historic folk gardens. Take a moment to explore this intricate, meticulously maintained garden. Head downhill toward the Observatory on the wide fire road (adjacent to Dante's View) which joins a large intersection of trails. As you continue down Mt. Hollywood Trail (the large fire road), check out the great Observatory panoramas from above. Head toward the collection of boulders just south of the intersection.

As you trek down Mt. Hollywood trail, you'll see a plethora of trails, and stunning views of the Hollywood Sign. There's a nice photo opportunity at the Tiffany & Co. Foundation viewpoint. Continue along Mt. Hollywood Trail to the Berlin Forest. What's up next? The Observatory! If this iconic gem is new to you, you could easily spend several hours enjoying and exploring. Continue down the Boy Scout trail for the last leg of the hike.

This winding trail ultimately takes you to the Roosevelt Golf Course parking on Vermont, across from the Greek Theater. Carefully cross Vermont toward the playground and golf parking. (FYI: Franklin's Cafe is a great place to grab a snack or drink.) Head east on Commonwealth Canyon Dr. toward the Vermont tennis courts and you are on the home stretch. Commonwealth Canyon Dr. winds along the side of the golf course so, keep an eye out for stray golf balls. This route will drop you back where you started — at the top of N. Commonwealth Dr. Find your car and *HOORAY* — you did it!

This hike clocks in at just about five miles and the overall duration depends on how fast you're going and your stops. Even with a couple water fountains along the way, it's definitely necessary to bring plenty of water, especially during the hotter months. ♡

Do you have some amazing photos from doing this hike? Consider sharing them by tagging @friendsofgriffithpark on Instagram. We always love to see you out enjoying the Park!

Griffith Park Aerial Tram – Not Out of the Woods! ~Gerry Hans, FoGP President

On November 9, 2019, a brush fire broke out at Forest Lawn Drive and Barham Boulevard, near Warner Bros. Burbank Studios. It consumed 80 acres of Griffith Park rugged habitat, including a canyon of high ecological value, coast live oak woodland. It was a persistent slow-moving fire which took a long time to extinguish, but the initial smoke plumes were dense and horrific. 236 fire personnel worked on the ground, five helicopters fought from the air, and two fixed-wing aircraft made water

On March 18, 2021, Warner Bros. issued an update on what had been promoted as the “Hollywood Skyway,” citing “challenging construction issues” and “protocols necessary to protect guests during emergencies.” What would they have done with a moving tram with hundreds of people traversing both directions through thick smoke?

The Warner Bros. plan was only one of the four aerial tram options being considered by the City. At the time of this writing, the

even make it onto the list of bullet points in Stantec’s early outreach with nearby neighborhood and non-profit organizations during 2019-20. FoGP believes safety should have been a priority at the top of the list.

FoGP’s six-page opposition letter sent last year to the Mayor, stated the following, along with habitat, recreation, and other concerns:

According to City Park Ranger brush fire data, an average of eight significant brush fires (.25 acre or more) per year occurred the last three years (2017-2019), a total of 177.5 acres. While a closed-loop tram system might be taking some passengers further from harm’s way during a fire event, the

opposite direction might be taking them closer to the brush fire. For this reason, it’s logical to assume that passengers may be put at risk, with no control over self-escape, a terrifying prospect. A brush fire event may be one of the reasons an evacuation becomes necessary, but there are others, as well: power failure, unexpected Santa Ana winds, and mechanical or computer failures.

The 80-acre fire which helped change Warner Bros.’ mind is only a tenth the size of the fire Griffith Park experienced in 2007. And there have been many large fires before, as well.



drops. The fire burned halfway to the top of Cahuenga Peak and the Wisdom Tree. Only now, do we realize it was this brush fire that triggered reality-thinking at Warner Bros., leading them to abandon their hope to build a \$100 million ride to the top of Mount Lee and a viewing platform to see the Hollywood Sign so close up it would be hard to get it into one camera frame. Warner Bros. team had pitched the idea with significant outreach to nearby community groups and the City, but that was long before the Cahuenga fire.

other three options are still very much alive. Each of these alignments is much longer than Warner Bros. abandoned plan, more than two miles, with up to 95 gondola cars operating with a car capacity of 8-10 people each. Do the math to figure lives in danger!

Stantec was hired by the City to study the possible tram alignments, including Warner Bros., taking into consideration technical, environmental, and financial factors. While passenger safety will likely be factored in the final report, this crucial concern didn’t

After Italy’s recent catastrophe that killed 14 riders, we’re reminded that gondola technology is imperfect, and rescues in inaccessible areas will be difficult. Stantec’s recommendations from its \$750,000 analysis are expected to be released soon, and the City will have the choice to say “no!” FoGP and at least 30 other entities — including the cities of Burbank and Glendale — have formally voiced strong opposition and continue to encourage the City to abandon all aerial tram options. ♣

Tram Rendering courtesy Cartifact

A Force of Nature

~A conversation between FoGP board member Dora Herrera and National Wildlife Federation Director Beth Pratt

Beth Pratt, the unstoppable force leading the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) in California, names all of her backyard frogs George. That goes a long way to explain why, when the NWF created a region in California, only Beth would do — they wanted someone who was innovative, passionate about nature, wildlife, and conservation. Today, Beth is still the young girl who was inspired to become a biologist by watching *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom*, the movie *Born Free*, and, yes, Bugs Bunny cartoons “I’m gonna love him, and squeeze him, and call him George”.

That inner kid conceived of a “Go Big or Go Home” idea and reached out to Friends of Griffith Park in 2013. We said yes. Yes, to the biggest Hide & Seek* event put on by NWF across the country. Yes, to a day of instilling our passion for nature to hundreds of young kids in Los Angeles via hikes, scavenger hunts, and inspirational teachers.

At the end of the day, tired, sunburnt, and happy, we knew that more collaborations were in our future.

Several years later, Beth contacted us again — this time about hosting P-22 Day. She remembers approaching FoGP with her idea, and our response was “You want to do a what? A festival for a mountain lion? That’s crazy – we’re in!” She adds, “That’s what I love about you guys. That was an incredible partnership, and hugely successful.”

The first year, a thousand came to celebrate the discovery of a mountain lion living in the urban wilderness of Griffith Park. Last year, 20,000 people participated in a virtual week-long extravaganza. The featured band, Black Pumas has even received a Grammy. The year 2021 marks the fifth anniversary of P-22 Day. Hold on to your hats because we’re planning an in-person — and — virtual hybrid event!

The FoGP-sponsored Griffith Park Connectivity Study yielded a stunning surprise when in 2012, P-22 was discovered by Miguel Ordeñana. This once-in-a-lifetime achievement, spawned worldwide attention to a crisis facing mountain lions — the possibility of extinction due to a lack of connectivity which was causing inbreeding.



Beth Pratt is joined by a young admirer at a P-22 Day pre-event



P-22 Day celebrations included a stop at Yuca’s on Hillhurst and an invite to take a P-22 selfie. Dora and Beth were joined by FoGP’s Marian Dodge, Steve Dodge and Mary Proteau (in front)

Several years back Beth again reached out to FoGP with another big, bold idea. An idea that, if we stay on track, will be breaking ground later this year: the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing Bridge. Once completed, this wildlife bridge will be the first in California, and the largest in the world. But it won’t be the last in this state.

Beth Pratt will see to that.

I recently had the pleasure of chatting with Beth about her career with the NWF, her journey as a biologist cum MBA major, and what the future holds for her once the current wildlife crossing project breaks ground, and her contribution to it becom-

*One of National Wildlife Federation’s (NWF) goals with Hide & Seek is to instill a lifelong curiosity and love for the great outdoors. So when this event took place in Griffith Park, the overwhelming response by kids and families alike — we had a great day!

ing a reality is complete. Here's a recap of our fun, convoluted conversation:

When Beth was getting her biology field degree, the dominant philosophy was that "wildlife goes in these pristine places, and that wildlife and people should never co-exist." The discovery of P-22 in Griffith Park upended that paradigm, sending her on a personal and professional transformation. It took putting the blinders on, and going against senior leadership and traditional scientists within her organization for whom the notion of using a mountain lion personality, of anthropomorphizing P-22, was unthinkable.

Thankfully her boss, Larry Sweiger, had her back and encouraged her unusual, innovative way of engaging people without the "scientificky, techie concept of connectivity and fragmentation" that the public doesn't care about. Beth learned an important lesson — however we come to protecting wildlife, it's never about the science or the policy. Instead, it's about something that captures our imagination.

As she tells it, when Beth first started carrying a P-22 cutout around and posting on social media how he needed a female companion, the reaction from scientists was immediate: "What the hell are you doing?" — and — "P-22 doesn't date!"

A few months later those same scientists were coming back to her saying, "I get it now. People are coming up to me at events, and asking me biology questions!" Today, she is stopped wherever she goes (whether she's carrying P-22's cutout or not) with questions about P-22, and the progress being made on the wildlife crossing. That's what makes Beth good at what she does — she changed the traditional approach to conservation, creating a case study in how to empower and engage the community,

without throwing science at them. That's why P-22 is a gamechanger — as a charismatic megafauna, he awakened conservation and wildlife groups to the importance of storytelling.

P-22 also challenged Beth to reconsider the



Photo: Miguel Ordeñana

notion that there was no nature in Los Angeles, leading her on a journey focusing almost exclusively on urban wildlife. She remembers being "blown away" on her first trip to Griffith Park in 2012 — busting the myth that L.A. is nothing but concrete and freeways. Griffith Park made her look deeper, realizing that it's not just a city Park but an incredible wilderness Park supporting an incredible amount of biodiversity; even with all the commercialization, it's still an intact ecosystem in the Santa Monica Mountains. When one considers the number one threat to wildlife worldwide is loss of habitat, it's imperative to be cognizant that it's our responsibility to help preserve or reclaim habitat in our human spaces. As Beth exclaims, "I think raising attention to the utmost scientific importance of these city green spaces or parks, no matter how big or small they are, to preserving biodiversity these days, that is something to highlight!"

Our conversation then moved to the plight of the monarch butterfly — a species that nobody thought would ever become extinct

because there were once millions and millions of this butterfly in the state. Sadly, however, today there are merely 2,000 left in California! Their biggest threat is habitat loss. Once spaces like Griffith Park and small backyard stopovers which the butterflies rely on for food and breeding grounds are removed, these butterflies are unable to rest and replenish along their long journey.

Consider for a moment, the importance of spaces like Griffith Park for people and health, and also the well-being of wildlife. Consider how much we've already lost, and how the community is becoming keenly aware of how we can co-exist in ways that may be different. Beth explains, "It's hard to ignore a mountain lion in your backyard, but if you don't look deeper, you *might* miss the butterfly. Or, as Lila Higgins of the Natural History Museum says, 'We wouldn't have mountain lions in L.A. if we didn't have beetles.'"

Beth continues, "Those of us who work for the environment, or wildlife, or social justice know the fight's never going to be over. It's up to us to inspire others, to work to fix these injustices or environmental degradation." And, there it is, the reason Beth Pratt and Friends of Griffith Park get along so well — a shared love of working to protect wildlife and nature in urban spaces with a "Go Big or Go Home" mentality. We have these crazy ideas (okay they're mostly Beth's), and we DO them.

Speaking of collaborations, Beth is already plotting new projects: connecting Griffith Park to the Los Angeles River, building a crossing over the 5 Fwy, in the Santa Anas, outside Yosemite, placing wildlife habitats and corridors throughout the L.A. area, and adding more wildlife mobility near Liberty Canyon with projects along the 118 and 126 freeways. Her question to us will always be, "Friends of Griffith Park, are you in?" ♡

Photos, opposite page: Kathryn Louyse



The Liberty Canyon Wildlife Crossing

Man-made obstacles have always presented a challenge for wildlife attempting to slip across roadways which is why this crossing is imperative.

Earlier this year, NWF announced they had received a \$25 million challenge grant from the Annenberg Foundation in support of the wildlife crossing campaign. While NWF has raised approximately \$44 million to date, this massive crossing, spanning more than 200 feet over ten lanes of the 101 freeway will require an additional \$35 million to unlock the Annenberg challenge.

If interested in receiving more info or donating, go to <https://savelacougars.org/>

Celebrating Volunteer Creativity ~Brenda Rees, FoGP Board member

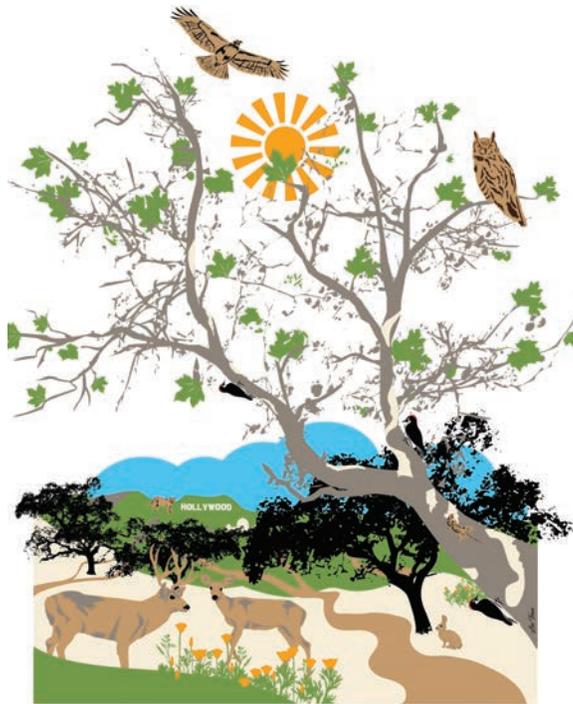
Earlier this year, our amazing Volunteer Director Laura Howe proposed a tee-shirt design contest for FoGP — and we received some impressive, creative responses! After some intensive deliberation, FoGP selected not one, not two, but THREE tee-shirt designs from the many received, which will soon become available for purchase on our site.

Chosen were two creations from Kris Mukai, a local Los Angeles designer who studied at the Pratt Institute in New York and whose work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Bloomberg Businessweek* and more. We love Kris' version of our local hawks and coyotes!

Also, FoGP warmly responded to Kali Ciesemier's design of acorns in an oak tree — we thought our FoGP volunteers are like those little acorns whose work in Griffith Park produces big results.

Loc Tran's delightful color imagery of the flora and fauna of Griffith Park also caught our eye. A freelance graphic artist — who also is an excellent nature photographer — Loc is based in Pasadena and has art directed various publications and has created numerous designs and print materials for a wide range of clients.

We can't wait to share these items with our supporters, so be on the lookout! Are you on social media? Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and we'll let you know when they're available. Also, you can sign up to receive our e-blasts where we'll also share this information! ♡



friends of GRIFFITH PARK

Loc Tran www.instagram.com/locdesign



Kris Mukai hikrismukai.com
top two images



Kali Ciesemier
kalidraws.blogspot.com

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Raptor Volunteers Keep Their Eyes on the Prize

~Brenda Rees, FoGP Board member

Armed with binoculars, perhaps a clip board and eyes that are continually scanning, Friends of Griffith Park Raptor Survey Volunteers are the backbone of this ongoing and important natural history project now in its fifth year.

Each year, more volunteers sign up which means more nests can be observed which makes for more data and a clearer snapshot of the health of our local raptor populations. Supported by FoGP, the Raptor Survey is overseen by Dr. Dan Cooper, Courtney McCammon and Gerry Hans who rely on volunteers to monitor and observe nests at least twice a month. (Most volunteers seem to visit more than that.)

Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and ages, but they are all united in their curiosity and love of the natural world. Once volunteers taste the fun and importance of watching their nest(s) through the season, they are hooked. Repeat volunteers are common.

Now in her second year as a volunteer, Susan Proffitt has the good fortune to live in Nichols Canyon where she sees a variety of birdlife not far from a street that's lovingly referred to as "Raptor Road." So far, she's found nests for great horned owls, red-tailed and Cooper's hawks. "I am trying to find a nest for a red-shouldered hawk!" she says. "I want to say I have the 'Final Four' when it comes to L.A. raptors."

That gentle competitive spirit keeps volunteers like Susan returning to the hillsides, peering through tree limbs and focusing across canyons. She admits she's lucky when it comes to seeing birds; her property butts up against an open space that is owned by

the Nature Conservancy.

A mycologist (mushroom scientist) by trade, Susan was thrilled to discover that her love of birdwatching could be tapped for a greater good. "I've always been a birder even in my youth," she says.

Last year, during the start of the pandemic, Susan explained that the survey helped give her days shape and form. The initial quietness of lockdown brought a sense of reflection to her monitoring. "When you go out and just focus on looking and watching, well, it becomes a kind of meditation," she says. "In those moments, you are fully alert and can feel how you connect with nature."

A parliament of owls

"You can hear all kinds of owls at night around here," says Corey Nickerson who lives near Bronson Caves in Hollywood. "Great horned and screech. We are so lucky to live so close to so much nature and to have Griffith Park nearby. Being in it gives you a different appreciation of wildlife."

As Corey visits her red-shouldered hawk nest (in a sycamore tree) near Griffith Park, she's often accompanied by her 9-year-old son, Benji Greenwald who is learning firsthand about raptor behavior. They too have another raptor goal: to find a nest of a screech owl.

"I grew up in New Hampshire and my father was a biologist and I would often go with him to see bird releases. He was instrumental in helping the bald eagle population rebound there," Corey says about her lifelong love of birding — which she is now instilling in her son.

Watching the birds in the wild is different than seeing them in a zoo says Benji who walks with his mom 20 minutes one way to monitor the nest. Along the way, the team has seen coyotes, rattlesnakes and lizards.

"Being allowed to experience the birds and watch them as they become a family is incredibly special," admits Corey. "I'm sure we are going to continue to do this survey for years to come." ♡



Top: Second year raptor study volunteer, Susan Proffitt. Bottom: Corey Nickerson is often joined by her son, Benji as she monitors her nest.

Photos: courtesy Susan Proctor and Corey Nickerson

Why the Focus on Fern Dell? ~Gerry Hans, FoGP President

When Griffith Park was designated as Los Angeles' largest Historic Cultural Monument in 2009, Fern Dell was one of the most significant contributing elements influencing that rigorous decision-making process. In earlier years, Fern Dell was literally the "cool place," visited by Los Angelenos and world travelers alike, and postcards sent around the world proved this charming, tranquil area was a Los Angeles highlight. Fern Dell is steeped in history harkening back to 1914 when the LA Parks Department planted the original fern garden in the dell's stream-fed canyon.

This is why Friends of Griffith Park made Fern Dell a priority preservation area, and invested heavily on revitalization planning by qualified landscape architects, engineers, and experts in historic restoration. Now this advanced planning is paying off.

FoGP was presented with an opportunity to submit an application for L.A. County's Safe, Clean Water Program (Measure W) for technical feasibility related to water quality and storm water capture. Because Fern Dell is within the Ballona Creek Watershed, if accepted, our application could provide feasibility planning to collect and recirculate water to the upper reaches of Fern Dell, which are bone-dry much of the year.

In a stepped process, if all goes well, this study could lead to project design and implementation within a couple years under the same Measure W funding. FoGP has engaged Craftwater Engineering to assist us in the application process. Currently, we're conducting extensive outreach with City departments and the community; and are receiving enormous support. Our advanced planning has given us vision and confidence in pursuing this next step valued at \$300,000 of technical feasibility work, so stay tuned! Restored water flow and water features are hugely important to rehabilitation of Fern Dell.

More Preservation Projects

In the meantime, FoGP continues moving forward, preserving other historically-sensitive projects. Spearheaded by FoGP, the newly reconstructed pedestrian bridge is being used extensively, keeping people

safe from vehicles on the narrow Fern Dell Drive bridge. And, turning back time to its 1920s original look was well worth the extra effort.



Some of the *faux bois* (false wood) hand-railings in lower Fern Dell were artistically refurbished, with support from the Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust. The Trust agrees with FoGP that Fern Dell is a very special place! The second phase wrought-iron fencing is now completed, and spans from FoGP's last-completed section curving around to the north gate to the lower dell trail.

Equally exciting, FoGP has engaged the services of *faux bois* expert Terry Eagan to help restore the Soroptimist Picnic Grove. This quiet, charming area on the eastern side of Fern Dell near the pedestrian bridge was dedicated in 1947. It features delicate, artistic, hand-crafted *faux bois* and is likely the oldest example of the unusual artform existing within Fern Dell. But after nearly three-quarters of a century, the railings are also in need of rehabilitation, which is where Eagan comes in. He's a *faux bois* expert who lent his skills to restore Huntington Garden's famous *faux bois* arches and railings.

FoGP is anxious for Eagan to complete the restoration which will include replacing missing or broken handrails, addressing structural decay, protecting any exposed supporting metal, as well as a cosmetic makeover. Fortunately, according to Eagan, everything is recoverable in order to preserve the rich history of the Soroptimist Picnic Grove.

The next time you're in Fern Dell, we encourage you to stop by and admire this lovely work of art tucked inside this tranquil part of Griffith Park. It's up on the hill, east of the road and south of the pedestrian bridge ♡

Faux bois railings surrounding the Soroptimist Picnic nook are clearly in need of restoration as seen in these photos. The work will be undertaken by Terry Eagan, an expert in the field.

Photos: Gerry Hans

A Green Ring for Los Angeles

~Kathryn Louyse,
FoGP Board member

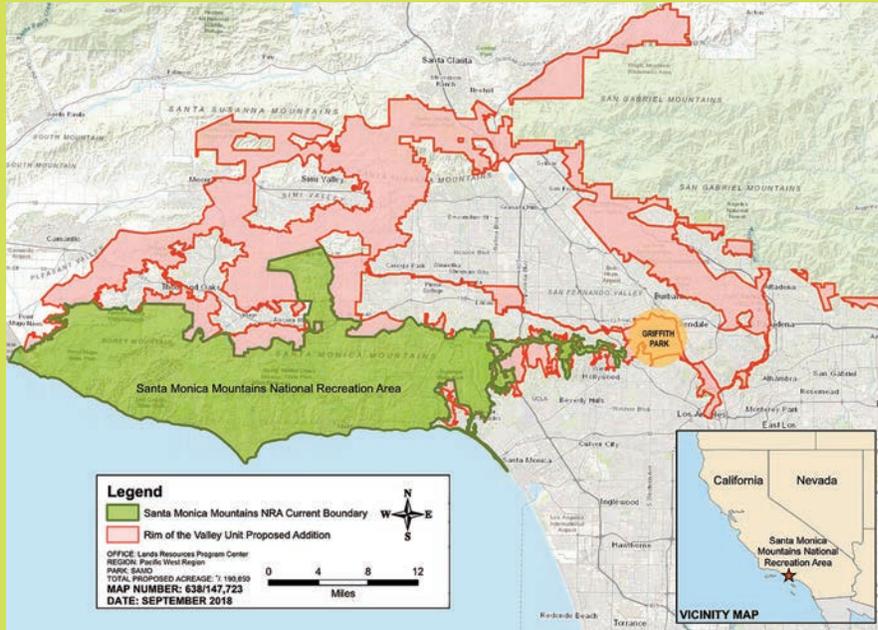
Sometimes moving forward requires a long look back and deciding whether the path we're on is the best path for the future. When Spanish colonists first arrived in the small pueblo now known as Los Angeles, little did they realize how expansive this city would ultimately become.

As the city grew, so too grew encroachment into wilderness areas, followed by consumption of green spaces. Even now as urban growth continues, seemingly unabated, a new conversation is taking shape – how to create recreational opportunities for millions of Los Angelenos which will increase, rather than diminish, their quality of life.

Enter Rim of the Valley (ROTV) — an idea that's been a long time in the making. This ambitious project was first introduced by California Congressman Adam Schiff who's been advocating for more than 20 years to make ROTV a reality. During the years-long study, environmental activists, city and government officials, along with the greater LA community, were invited to weigh in on various aspects of the proposal. During outreach meetings, many in the community voiced concerns that this legislation was needed sooner, rather than later — otherwise, more green space would fall victim to large development interests. Other respondents felt it was imperative to include wildlife corridors in the final project which would offset lack of genetic diversity in many species, particularly mountain lions. (*See accompanying story page 6*).

What's Rim of the Valley all about?

For those unfamiliar with this legislation, ROTV would expand the current Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, tying together portions of land currently displaced by man-made obstacles — such as freeways and residential zones. By weaving together areas that loop around the Los Angeles basin, recreational opportunities would also be created for millions of LA residents. And, if



Some Rim of the Valley highlights include:

- More outdoor recreational opportunities will be established for millions of LA residents
- Critical habitat would be preserved and broadened for threatened species like cougars and the California red-legged frog
- Cultural sites like El Pueblo de Los Angeles would be protected
- Partnerships will be created with local governments and schools connecting youth with the outdoors

encompasses a large swath of land to the west. The addition of land further north, east and even areas in downtown LA City (indicated in red) would allow for greater movement of species, especially once the Liberty Canyon Wildlife Bridge is completed near Agoura, to the northwest.

Land added to the San Gabriel and Santa Susanna Mountains would allow big cats and other large species to move safely across man-made barriers, into more natural environments, and hopefully lessen the number of vehicle-related deaths. In addition to the Liberty

Canyon Wildlife Bridge, more connective crossings should receive consideration, especially as genetic diversity for some species is under threat across the entire basin.

Now that ROTV has finally passed the House of Representatives, Friends of Griffith Park is cautiously optimistic that it'll pass quickly through the Senate.

If this bill passes, Griffith Park would receive more protections as an extension of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. The idea makes sense because Griffith Park is located on the easternmost edge of the Santa Monica Mountain range and is currently considered a landlocked area since it's surrounded on three sides by residential zones, freeways and the encased-in-concrete Los Angeles River.

It's time to move forward and get the bill passed — which would move Los Angeles toward a greener future for all living in this community! ♻️

this legislation passes the U.S. Senate, there will also be a marked increase in habitat for many species that call LA home.

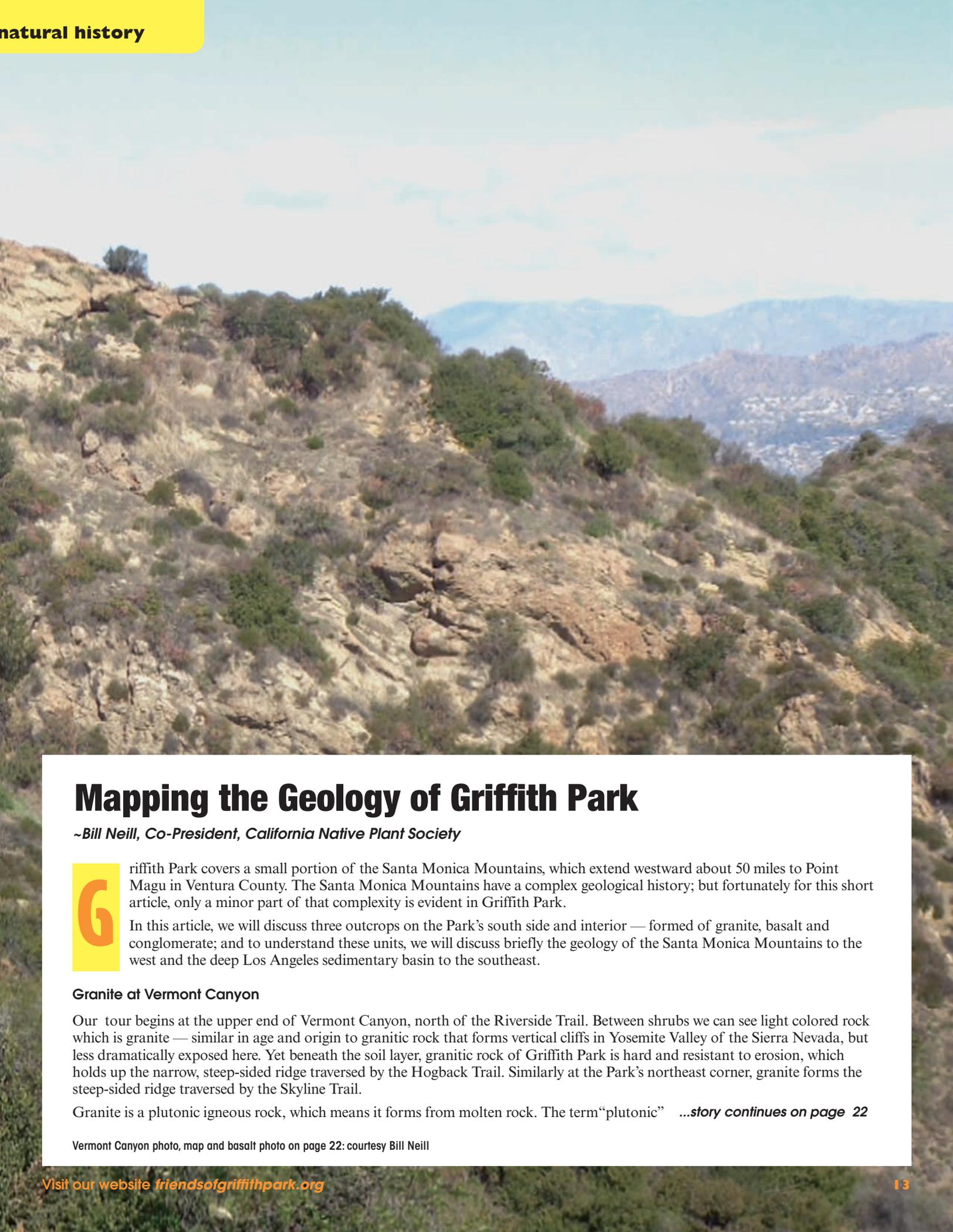
Another reason to support the bill — it will provide protection of important cultural sites in the community, including the original Spanish colony, — El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles de Porciúncula.

Currently, as indicated on the map, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area

Friends of Griffith Park is as close as your computer... we'll continue to keep you informed about upcoming events and Park venues so check back often. www.friendsofgriffithpark.org

If you have an issue while recreating in the Park, please call Park Rangers directly... they're on call 24/7 – (323) 644-6661





Mapping the Geology of Griffith Park

~Bill Neill, Co-President, California Native Plant Society

Griffith Park covers a small portion of the Santa Monica Mountains, which extend westward about 50 miles to Point Magu in Ventura County. The Santa Monica Mountains have a complex geological history; but fortunately for this short article, only a minor part of that complexity is evident in Griffith Park.

In this article, we will discuss three outcrops on the Park’s south side and interior — formed of granite, basalt and conglomerate; and to understand these units, we will discuss briefly the geology of the Santa Monica Mountains to the west and the deep Los Angeles sedimentary basin to the southeast.

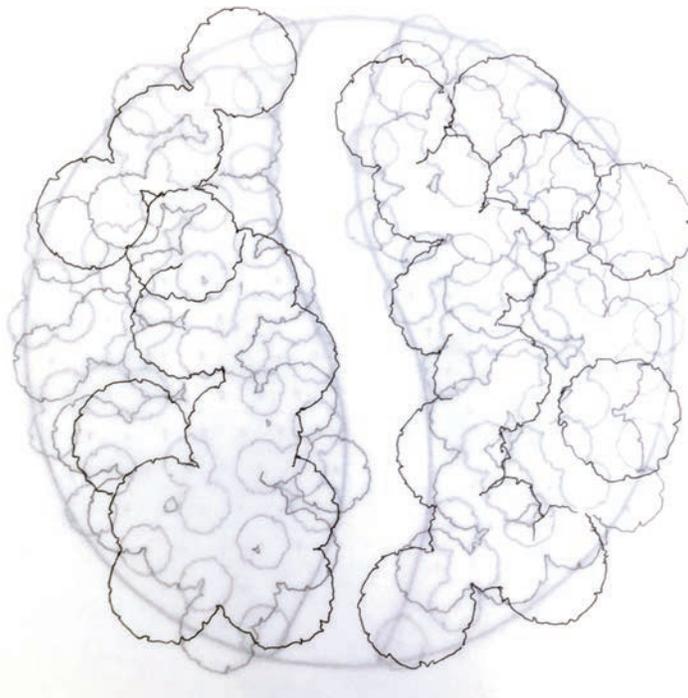
Granite at Vermont Canyon

Our tour begins at the upper end of Vermont Canyon, north of the Riverside Trail. Between shrubs we can see light colored rock which is granite — similar in age and origin to granitic rock that forms vertical cliffs in Yosemite Valley of the Sierra Nevada, but less dramatically exposed here. Yet beneath the soil layer, granitic rock of Griffith Park is hard and resistant to erosion, which holds up the narrow, steep-sided ridge traversed by the Hogback Trail. Similarly at the Park’s northeast corner, granite forms the steep-sided ridge traversed by the Skyline Trail.

Granite is a plutonic igneous rock, which means it forms from molten rock. The term “plutonic” ...*story continues on page 22*

Vermont Canyon photo, map and basalt photo on page 22: courtesy Bill Neill

A Micro-forest for Griffith Park ~Katherine Pakradouni



Thanks to support from the Hancock Park Garden Club, the Bette Davis Picnic Area of Griffith Park is becoming home to a new native Micro-Forest as part of the Los Angeles Parks Foundation's LA Park Forest Initiative.

This new 900 square foot micro-forest is being modeled after the Miyawaki method of afforestation. Unlike a traditional tree planting, this method of afforestation involves using strictly local, indigenous species, and planting them very densely, with various layers of vegetation (e.g. understory, shrub, tree, and canopy trees) planted side by side to provide a thick, impenetrable quality over time. The resulting self-managing forest ecosystem — which includes a center, decomposed granite pathway for observation and enjoyment — is said to require zero maintenance after two years and may host as much as 20 times the wildlife biodiversity of non-native, managed forests.

If you wander into this area, you may see baby saplings in the ground by the summer; in two years, we expect a full, albeit very young forest.

What makes the project unique is that more than 90% of the plants and trees in this “forest” were grown from seeds collected from within Griffith Park. By utilizing seeds from wild specimens that have survived without extra water or care on our hillsides and in our canyons, we are setting up the forest to be as regionally resilient and successful as possible. Species were chosen based on their ability to withstand summer drought, their superior wildlife value, and their ability to tolerate both the sunny conditions of the young forest, as well as the shadier conditions of the mature forest.

Berry-producing shrubs like toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*), and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea*) are planted amongst nut and acorn producing trees, such as the increasingly endangered California black walnut (*Juglans californica*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) to provide maximum habitat support for our local songbirds and other wildlife. Understory species such as heart-leaved or climbing penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*), California wild rose (*Rosa californica*), creeping snowberry (*Symphoricarpos mollis*), and fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) provide dense shelter and protection for ground and shrub-nesting birds and small mammals. Natural mulch protects the ground from the invasion of weeds, but also supports a variety of insects and microorganisms as it decomposes. Those insects and microorganisms form another critical part of the food web, while at the same time enhance the health of the soil, which in turn supports the growth of the shrubs and trees in the forest.

This innovative project has support from many partners. In addition to the generous support of the Hancock Park Garden Club, the L.A. Department of Recreation and Parks is enthusiastic about identifying low-maintenance native plants that can thrive in other city parks, and LA Audubon Society is on board to measure the impact of this project on local bird life.

This self-sustaining model of native forest ecosystem creation could become a game-changer for Los Angeles and would be a replicable model that could be used at other parks, in schools, at businesses, in home landscapes, or even alongside freeways, bike paths, golf courses, horse trails, and other urban greenways. The positive impacts for biodiversity enhancement, pollution mitigation, reduction of surface air temperatures, urban beautification, and carbon sequestration are endless. ♻️

Micro-forest planting palette

Understory:

California wild rose / *Rosa californica*
Creeping snowberry / *Symphoricarpos mollis*
Fuchsia-flowered gooseberry / *Ribes speciosum*
Climbing penstemon / *Keckiella cordifolia*

Large shrubs:

Toyon / *Heteromeles arbutifolia*
Coffeeberry / *Frangula californica*
Lemonadeberry / *Rhus integrifolia*

Mid-sized Trees:

CA black walnut / *Juglans californica*
Elderberry / *Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea*

Large Trees:

Coast live oak / *Quercus agrifolia*
CA bay / *Umbellularia californica*

Katherine Pakradouni is a Native Plant Horticulturist and Los Angeles Parks Foundation's Project and Program Manager.

Microforest rendering: courtesy Katherine Pakradouni

Underground Griffith Park: Holes as Homes

~Brenda Rees, FoGP Board member

Have you ever taken a hike in Griffith Park and — in between soaking up a dramatic view or enjoying a quiet leafy glen — spied a hole in the ground, the side of a hill, or tucked underneath a low hanging limb? You wonder, “Gee, what critter is making this hole their home?”

These openings to the underground highlight the fact that there is so much more to Griffith Park than meets the eye. While there can be abundant activity going on above ground, what happens in the dirt underneath our feet would probably blow our minds.

Here are three of the more interesting underground occupants that call Griffith Park their home. If you see these or other holes as you visit the Park, we hope you will be respectful and remember these openings are a front door to some critters’ home.

Desert cottontail

In cartoons, Bugs Bunny has an expansive underground “apartment” with furniture and more; however, real-life rabbit abodes are rustic but comfortably-fashioned with function in mind.

Desert cottontails (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) create nests lined with grass and with fur that the mother pulls from her belly to make a soft impression for her youngsters. Often, cottontails will repurpose other mammal burrows; they prefer to locate their nests beneath shrubs to keep them even more hidden. Young cottontails are typically weaned at two weeks old and will leave the nest area three weeks after birth.

Unlike European rabbits that create elaborate social burrow systems, the cottontail is more solitary albeit tolerant of neighbors around them.

If the weather is especially sweltering, cottontails will scratch out a shallow depression using their front paws like a back hoe; they will settle in and wait for the day to cool off before braving the outside world.

Cottontails have a lot to watch out for; many predators depend on them for their existence such as hawks, coyote, bobcats, snakes and even squirrels. It’s a pretty good guess that P-22 has found rabbit on his menu during his stay in the Park.

Tarantulas

If you discover a nice round hole, you may have found the home of a delightful California tarantula (*Theraphosidae*), a very docile spider that spends most of its life in underground burrows. Tarantulas will either dig burrows themselves using their fangs, or they will take possession of an abandoned burrow. As they grow, tarantulas enlarge their burrows to accommodate their bigger bodies.

Tarantulas come out at night to hunt for cockroaches, crickets, grasshoppers and newborn mice. Although their fangs contain poison, tarantulas and their bite are not serious to humans. Painful? Yes. Deadly? No.

In the fall, you may see this hairy spider in the daylight hours. From September to October, males leave their burrows to search for a mate. The journey can be treacherous; lizards, snakes, coyotes and foxes enjoy feasting on them. Large tarantula hawk wasps engage in a ferocious battle with its namesake that often leaves the spider paralyzed. A female wasp drags the body back to her burrow to lay her eggs on; then when hatched, wasp larva feed on the tarantula.

For tarantula males that are lucky to make it to a female’s burrow, they will tap on web strands outside the entrance. If the female is willing, she’ll come outside and receive his sperm, which he deposits on a web that she then receives and uses to fertilize her eggs.

She’ll seal her eggs in a cocoon and guard them for six to nine weeks; up to 1,000 tarantulas could hatch.

Still, our suitor is not out of the woods yet. Female tarantulas have been known to eat their partners if they linger too long afterward. All this may explain why female tarantulas can live for up to 25 years while the average lifespan for males is only seven or eight years.

California Harvester Ant

Yes, we have a native ant here in L.A. The California harvester ant (*Pogonomyrmex californicus*) creates underground nests to hold the seeds they spend all day foraging. At night, worker ants defend the nest but will open the entrances in the morning to once again begin the process. The nest entrance is often surrounded by seed husks, a tell-tale sign that you have found harvester ants.

Watch out: a harvester ant’s bite and sting are both painful. Many native plants in the chaparral depend on harvester ants to disperse their seeds. Some of the seeds stored in these underground granaries sprout before they’re eaten.

In addition to their gathering and guarding duties, workers are enlisted to become undertakers; they remove and carry dead ants bodies to a spe-

cific location far away from their nest — or place them in a specialized nest chamber.

Many species depend on harvester ants as food; Griffith Park’s Blainville’s horned lizard diet depends exclusively on harvester ants which were plentiful at one time in the Los Angeles Basin. However, introduction of the invasive Argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*) has displaced our native ants — creating a profound challenge for Blainville’s horned lizards to survive. Originally from South America, these tiny brown Argentine ants hitched a ride in shipping containers and can now be found practically everywhere; as they do enjoy our Mediterranean coastal climate. These are the ants you typically find invading your home.

All the more reason to embrace our California harvester ant! ♡



Harvester ants exit the one inch hole



Tarantula abode (1 1/2" diameter)



Desert cottontail “apartment” (approx. 10")

More photos online at friendsofgriffithpark.org

Photos: Gerry Hans

Like us on FACEBOOK and Instagram... Friends of Griffith Park



Coexisting With Film Crews in Griffith Park

~Lucinda Phillips, FoGP Board member

Rebel Without a Cause, La La Land, Invasion of the Body Snatchers and the *Batman* TV show — what do they all have in common? Our beloved Griffith Park. For decades scenes from many movies and TV shows have been filmed in the Park. Watching shows, films and commercials, we often recognize our favorite trail, mountain top, the Batman cave or the iconic Griffith Observatory featured in a scene.

Over the years, however, filming has also had a deleterious effect on the Park.

From 2014 to 2017, FoGP started collecting anecdotal observations of the increased level of filming in the Park. We noticed an increase in questionable site locations, and poor stewardship displayed in protecting the Park.

We've witnessed:

- ~ **multiple big-rig vehicles, trucks, trailers, and cars in remote areas**
- ~ **filming and live music close to raptor nesting sites**
- ~ **crew members smoking**
- ~ **newly restored areas of native plantings trampled**
- ~ **trails expanded causing erosion and drainage problems**
- ~ **removal of branches and damage to trees and flora**
- ~ **crew activity causing hazards for passive recreation**
- ~ **and much more!**

We acknowledge that filming is a very important part of many Angeleno livelihoods (myself included!) and our intent was not to discourage filming. The directive from the Mayor's Office is to encourage and keep film production in Los Angeles. However, it was obvious that the Park needed protecting and the institution of better guidelines could help safeguard its habitat, wildlife and visitor experience.

In March 2017 FoGP President Gerry Hans and I met with the Park Film Office, then-Griffith Park Superintendent Joe Salaices, and Film LA to discuss how we could improve the filming protocols in the Park.

This proved to be a long but rewarding process!

We had follow-up meetings in 2018 with the Park Film Office and the Griffith Park Advisory Board (GPAB) met with the Film Office, Mayor's Office, Teamsters and LAPD.

In February 2019, FoGP Volunteer Coordinator Laura Howe and I were also members of GPAB and we formed a GPAB ad hoc Filming Guidelines Committee together with Tracy James, Park Services; Park Film Office; Stefanie Smith, then-RAP Maintenance Supervisor and FoGP's Gerry Hans.

Our ad hoc Committee worked diligently with RAP and the Park Film Office to create a better system. We approached this from several paths to establish better communication with film companies and create a win-win for both filming and the wildlife and ecosystems within Griffith Park.

Safeguarding habitat, protecting wildlife

Stefanie Smith and RAP Maintenance created a training protocol for the Film Monitors. This had an extremely beneficial effect. The protocol streamlined the selection of appropriate locations for specific film shoots and created better understanding by staff to know what is and isn't appropriate.

The ad hoc committee worked on improving the film guidelines that currently exist. We met with the Park Film Office and others to help create protocols and practices so both the film office and film companies understand they are working within a natural area with sensitive wildlife. We also made recommendations for hiring a wildlife biologist to advise and make further determinations regarding the appropriateness of filming in certain locations at certain times of the year, light and noise issues, etc.

Then the committee created a map with highlighted areas for good filming locations and sensitive filming locations for internal use by the Film Office.

The size and scale of a film shoot has a dramatic effect on the impact to an area. We analyzed the data spreadsheets, provided by Nicole Robottom of the Park Film Office outlining size, location, and type of film shoots in Griffith Park. Our map is meant as a practical reference which includes the recorded nesting areas of raptors from an ongoing study.

We also saw the need to institute financial repercussions to offenders and especially repeat offenders. Companies who disregard and damage or erode the open areas should be penalized.

In November 2019, we presented GPAB and RAP with the four documents we had created:

Filming Guidelines for the preservation of healthy wildlife and ecosystems of Griffith Park. A supplement to the existing GP Filming Guidelines

Sonic & Light Impacts to Wildlife Areas

Sound Disturbance on Wildlife Citations

Filming Guideline Map for Internal Use

In January 2020, Laura Howe and I met with RAP General Manager Mike Shull and Joe Salaices who were receptive to the guidelines and saw the need to establish better protocols to safeguard the Park.

Before Covid-19 halted film production, we saw a great improvement in all aspects of filming in Griffith Park.

Earlier this year we held a Zoom call with Griffith Park Superintendent Stefanie Smith, Nicole Robottom and Juan Leon of RAP Maintenance to revisit the guidelines after a long lull from filming in the Park due to the virus.

Stefanie expressed her continued strong commitment to the Filming Guidelines, and saw the need for a refresher training program for film monitors.

This year is heating up, film production-wise. Everyone is clamoring for more shows for their streaming platforms and don't forget: cinemas are opening for popcorn and a movie!

We look forward to our treasured Griffith Park being treated by film production with the kind of respect it richly deserves! ♣



Photos, opposite and top: Filming in sensitive habitat areas creates massive impacts to the surrounding vicinity
middle: Mt. Hollywood Drive (normally closed to vehicles)
bottom: Small film shoot in Crystal Springs picnic area

Photos, opposite, top, center: Gerry Hans
Photo, bottom: Kathryn Louyse

LEAVE NO TRACE!

Stay on trails - no cutting switchbacks!

Avoid fragile vegetation and riparian zones (the area adjacent to water sources)

Pack it in – pack it out!

This is a refrain generally heard in national parks but it's also applicable in Griffith Park. If you bring your plastic bottle into the Park, make sure to deposit it properly in a trash or recycling can as you leave. Tossing it off the side of a hill... not cool.

Respect wildlife Griffith Park is *their* home... please allow distance between yourself and other animals, especially coyote. Leaving food on picnic tables encourages bad behavior and unfortunately, wildlife becomes the loser.

Dog etiquette We all love our dogs, but they must be leashed for their own safety as well as the safety of others. Dog poop must be properly trashed, otherwise bacteria will enter the Park ecosystem.

Be kind to the Park so future generations can continue to appreciate this vast urban wilderness!



Celebrating 125 Years and Counting *~Mary Button, FoGP Board member*

December 16th, 2021 marks the 125th birthday of Griffith Park. This deserves a celebration! Friends of Griffith Park will be coordinating with the Department of Recreation and Parks for festivities later in the year, so please stay tuned.

As a beloved oasis in the heart of Los Angeles, Griffith Park is the largest U.S. municipal Park entirely surrounded by a city. It's survived fires, floods, and repeated attempts of developers.

This gem of a public Park has been around since December, 1896 when Colonel Griffith J. Griffith donated more than 3,000 acres of his Rancho Feliz to the City of Los Angeles. It was a Christmas gift to be used as "a place of rest and relaxation for the masses."

The Park and its numerous attractions have a long history, and there are many stories to tell. Here are just a few:

In December 1912, the Colonel made a second Christmas present to L.A., one that had an expressly classical component: funds to build an open-air Greek Theatre and an Observatory in the Park. The Greek Theatre, designed by architect Samuel Tilden Norton,

opened in the summer of 1931. The Greek Revival/Art Deco Griffith Observatory, designed by architects John C. Austin and Frederick M. Ashley opened its doors to an eager public in May, 1935.

In 1923, a massive sign reading HOLLYWOODLAND was erected just below what is now called Mount Lee. Originally the sign was intended to advertise a real estate development of the same name and should have lasted a mere 18 months. While the development itself succumbed to the 1930s Depression, the sign has endured.

By the 1930s, Angelenos had discovered the Park was ideal for hiking, and the Audubon Society championed Griffith Park as a great place to observe birds.

The Griffith Park Carousel became the inspiration for Walt Disney, whose daughters loved to climb atop the gilded horses. While they galloped around on this 1926-era Spillman merry-go-round, Disney imagined a much grander amusement Park, which later became... take a guess? The carousel's 68 prancing steeds are jumpers, and a custom-built organ plays more than 1,500 marches and waltzes.

Travel Town came about in 1952, displaying various pieces of transit history, including several trains. After Travel Town received its first locomotive, other cars and vehicles began to roll in, including a circus wagon from Beverly Amusement and a one-horse shay from Knott's Berry Farm. Travel Town now boasts a vast collection of railcars and vehicles.

Post-WWII years were good for Griffith Park. James A. Doolittle took over the Greek and booked noteworthy headliners like Judy Garland and Harry Belafonte, as well as dance companies like Joffrey Ballet and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project.

In the '60s, the Park became a haven for counterculture. It attracted hippies, who held love-ins at Park Center, near the merry-go-round. They practiced yoga and formed drum circles. Motorcycle gangs and beatniks were also part of the scene at Griffith Park.

In 1979, the Tetrick Trail Run emerged in Griffith Park. This trail run encompassed 8-miles on an old interior fire road. This wasn't the typical trail race with standard mile markers. Instead, the mile markers were nudists who would pose for photos with runners as participants reached the markers. Eventually the Park Rangers caught on, and the race was shut down within a decade.

The Autry Museum of Western Heritage opened on November 22, 1988. Singing cowboy and entrepreneur Gene Autry cut the rope with a Bowie knife in front of guests including Willie Nelson and Charlton Heston.

Griffith Park has always had much to offer Angelenos and visitors to enjoy. We're looking forward to the celebration this December! Friends of Griffith Park will continue to ensure Griffith Park is protected and that it thrives for the next 125 years and beyond. ♣

Meet Friends of Griffith Park Scholarship Recipients of 2021

~Brenda Rees, FoGP Board member

Friends of Griffith Park recently announced the recipients of its new scholarship which will annually support two students of color who attend the North Hollywood High School Zoo Magnet Center (known as the Zoo Magnet) that's located inside Griffith Park near the Los Angeles Zoo.

Awarded to students who demonstrate academic excellence and a desire to become environmental stewards, the scholarship was presented to the 2021 recipients in a ceremony on June 1. Here's a little more about these two young people and their ambitions for protecting and preserving our natural diversity.

Katherine Lopez-Argueta has been imagining a career with animals since she was in elementary school but she didn't realize all the options and opportunities out there. She had thought about becoming a veterinarian but once in middle school, she figured out she wanted to be a zoologist/wildlife biologist.

Lopez-Argueta — who will start this fall at Humboldt State University — is excited to continue her education into the natural world. She has a strong affinity for snakes — an animal that has often been vilified or abused in black markets. One of her dream jobs would be working with the King Cobra Conservancy which supports ecological research and conservation initiatives for this important tropical Asian reptile.

While at the Zoo Magnet, Lopez-Argueta volunteered with FoGP helping establish the Anza Native Garden and planting trees. “My first birthday party was held at Griffith Park,” she says adding that she and her father often hike on weekends in the Park or other nearby green spaces. “I'm passionate about keeping Griffith Park as natural and wild as possible. I think it's a privilege to see a Western fence lizard, birds, snakes and anything else when I am in the Park.” One of her internships brought her to working alongside National Park Service rangers across the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area; she spent time observing how rangers split their time between enforcement and education. A highlight: watching a ranger relocate a rattlesnake from the Greek Theatre.

Looking back at her path so far, Lopez-Argueta sees many people who have brought her to this point in her life: her parents, her teachers at the Zoo Magnet and even the middle school PE teacher who first told her about the Zoo School. She thinks about her grandmother in Honduras whose love of animals she believes she has inherited. “I'm the first in my family to embark on a career in this field,” she says. “I can't wait.”



Jaime Martinez remembers always enjoying animals as a child and how, as he grew older, felt proud when he could take on more responsibilities of caring for the family dog. He's got his sights on continuing that caretaking as he works toward a career in zoology; he's been accepted into Moorpark

College's Exotic Animal Training and Management program.

Martinez regularly volunteered at the LA Zoo, sharing information with the public, working at the petting zoo and supervising children as to the proper ways for interacting with animals. Mammals are his favorite animals.

“Having our school in Griffith Park is a great thing,” he says explaining how he rolled up his sleeves for mulching events with FoGP. He remembers going to Travel Town as a kid; today he often hikes in the Park and enjoys the view from Skyline Trail which overlooks the California Condor area at the LA Zoo.

“I'd like people to know about the diversity of animals that are found in Griffith Park,” he says. “What other Park has a resident mountain lion?”

Martinez sees a career that includes a lot of outreach education; he's especially concerned about climate change but also the conservation of endangered species. “Over the past decades, a plethora of species have been wiped off the face of the Earth because of our wrongdoing,” he says. “While it may not seem that one species makes a difference, it really does.” He hopes to advocate for stricter laws and regulations against poaching, deforestation and the introduction of invasive species.

This summer, Martinez will be enrolling in some of the pre-rec classes as he preps for the two-year program. He looks forward to greeting the public when the Moorpark Zoo — a training zoo — is open on weekends for tours; he'll be wandering the walkways with some kind of animal in tow as he interacts with groups. “I'm thinking a lemur on my shoulder,” he says.

Above all, Martinez is thankful for family support and all his teachers at the Zoo Magnet. “I am very honored to have been chosen for this scholarship,” he says. “It really means a lot to me and my family.” ❖

COMING SOON



Photo: Petyr Whisky

Friends of Griffith Park is gearing up for some terrific events which include:

Results from the 2021 Raptor Study

The study concludes in July and results will be shared later this summer.

Hike with Jorge Ochoa

If you've hiked the Park with Jorge, you know this is the hike to take as he shares a wealth of information about flora and fauna.

Volunteer Events

Great news! We've received approval from RAP to return to our volunteer efforts which will soon be posted on social media and our website. Stay tuned!

Photos: courtesy of Katherine Lopez-Argueta and Jaime Martinez



3-7-1944

The Infamous Detention Facility in Griffith Park

~Marian Dodge, FoGP Board member

Over the years Griffith Park has responded to urgent national and local housing needs. During the Great Depression the Park housed CCC camps to give jobs and homes to thousands of unemployed men from across the country. After World War II the current zoo parking lot became a Quonset hut Rodger Young Village to house soldiers and their families returning from the war. Currently the Park is hosting a Bridge Housing facility to provide shelter until permanent housing can be located for the unhoused. The Park was also the site of RV units for the unhoused under the RoomKey program. Noble causes all.

However in 1941 Griffith Park had the ignominious distinction of becoming a detention facility. The Griffith Park Internment Camp, run by the U.S. Army, was located in the old CCC Camp Riverside where Travel Town is today. After Camp Riverside was closed, the army used it as a recreational facility for soldiers. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the old CCC barracks was secured to house Issei “enemy aliens.” This facility was surrounded by double fences eight feet high topped with barbed wire. The FBI arrested 35 Issei on immigration violations such as expired visas. Most of the men were fishermen on Terminal Island whose real “crime” was that they were Japanese who worked near army and naval installations and were thus assumed to be a threat. On February 21, 1942, 77 Issei were transferred to the Griffith Park Detention Camp. The

camp also held some German and Italian nationals. From there they were transferred to other internment camps such as Ft. Lincoln in North Dakota.

The Uno family’s father disappeared on December 7, 1941. They had no idea what had happened to him until they got an anonymous phone call three weeks later; he might be one of 300 men at the Griffith Park Detention Facility. The family took bags of essential items, yelled outside the fence, and tossed them over the fence to him. A later anonymous phone call told the family to go to the Glendale train station. They packed bags of food and were able to say good-bye to their father as he waited in line to board a train for another internment camp.

The Griffith Park Detention Facility continued to play many roles during the war. In July 14, 1942, it became a POW processing site for Japanese, German and Italian prisoners. In August, 1943, this area became the Army’s Western Corps Photographic Center and Camouflage Experimental Laboratory. In 1947 after the war, this site was returned to the Park.

One Los Angeles Family’s Story

Sixteen-year-old Takashi Hoshizaki was a student at Belmont High School. Born and raised in Los Angeles, he was active in Boy Scout

Photo, above: The Hoshizaki family after arriving at the Heart Mountain detention camp. Takashi Hoshizaki is standing, second from left
Photo, opposite page: Takashi visits the former detention camp

Troop 33 and especially enjoyed the camping. He helped his dad in his grocery store in the Virgil District. Like most boys, as soon as he turned sixteen, he got his drivers license. This meant he could help his dad by making deliveries to customers. He frequently had to haul 100-pound sacks of rice up several flights of stairs to clients. It was tough work, but it made him strong. Takashi was enamored with aviation. He loved flying model airplanes and was even designing his own model planes.

On Sunday morning December 7, 1941, Takashi went to a large model airplane meet at Western and Rosecrans. When he returned home he learned of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The next day when he returned to Belmont High School, there was no anger expressed toward the Japanese students. Many had been friends since their days at Dayton Heights Elementary School which had a very diverse student body. The FBI picked up several friends' fathers, some school teachers and a Japanese principal because they were considered community leaders. Japanese families had to move out of the Terminal Island neighborhood; they sought relatives because word was out that they would be moved by areas and they wanted their family to stay together.

His dad declared that Japan would lose the war because they lacked the resources to win. Nevertheless, he started preparing. Because his father had to close his store, they sold and trucked much of their groceries to another retailer east of the Civic Center. His mother, an excellent seamstress, converted her desk sewing machine to a portable so she could take it with her. A neighbor stored personal items they couldn't take to the camps in a small warehouse he had on the back of his property. Takashi's father leased their house to the elementary school principal for three years. That protected their property and the warehouse. He bought boots and canteens for the entire family.

On the day they left home, they gathered at the Hollywood Independent Church for an unknown destination which turned out to be the Pomona fairgrounds. Takashi volunteered to work in the mess hall serving food and washing dishes. The facility served 2100 people at each meal, about 300 per seating. The head cook was Nob, a chef at the LA Country Club, a Nisei (son of a Japanese immigrant). When they were sent to , the same mess hall group stayed together. The community helped each other in the camps. They had baseball games and talent shows.

One very hot day, their neighbors visited them at the detention camp in Pomona. The Marshalls, a Black family, had lived in the neighborhood for years and were very well-liked. They had a son Tak's age so they grew up together. The Marshalls ran a catering business. They brought the Hoshizakis an apple pie – not just an apple pie, but pie a la mode. The ice cream was a welcome treat on the hot day. The Hoshizakis never forgot the special effort the Marshalls made to bring them ice cream. The Marshalls also kept an eye on their property while they were incarcerated.

In August, 1942, a large group of detainees was shipped by train to Heart Mountain. The Black staff on the train sympathized with the Japanese and made sure they got lots of food, too much food, in fact. To Boy Scout Takashi the wide open spaces of Wyoming looked like a great place to go camping when he first stepped off the train. However it was windy and dusty so his sisters were constantly sweeping. He worked the morning shift in the mess hall and went to school in the afternoon where he completed his high school education. His father worked in the poultry yard raising chickens.

Young men in the camp were required to complete a "Loyalty Questionnaire." Were you loyal to the United States? Yes. Would you serve in the army in a segregated unit? No. So he became a

"Yes-No boy." When he got a notice to report for a physical, he simply didn't show up. There were 63 resisters in the camp who refused to comply with the draft notice because the internment camps had violated their civil rights and they would be serving in a segregated unit. They were arrested, tried solely on refusing the draft, and sent to the federal penitentiary at McNeil Island in the Puget Sound. Even in prison Takashi made the best of the situation. He took correspondences courses in math and learned to play the piano from a Black inmate. President Truman later pardoned all 63 resisters. Much later in the 1960s he would get positive feedback when people learned he had been a resister.

Back home his family had gotten their house back after the war thanks to the watchful eyes of the principal and the Marshalls. Takashi enrolled in Los Angeles City College where he met his wife Barbara, a Chinese American, in a botany class. He got his masters degree at UCLA. When the Korean War began in 1950, he was still young enough to be drafted. Since his civil rights had been restored, he and several other young resisters signed up. With all the science classes he had at UCLA, he was assigned to the medical corps.

After the Korean War, Takashi pursued his PhD at UCLA where he studied circadian rhythms and wrote a proposal for NASA on the effect it would have on astronauts. He went to work at Jet Propulsion Laboratory where he developed the concept of growing plants in space to feed astronauts. His beloved wife Barbara died in 2012, but Takashi still lives in East Hollywood near his father's old store. Takashi is very active in the Heart Mountain Wyoming Interpretive Center.

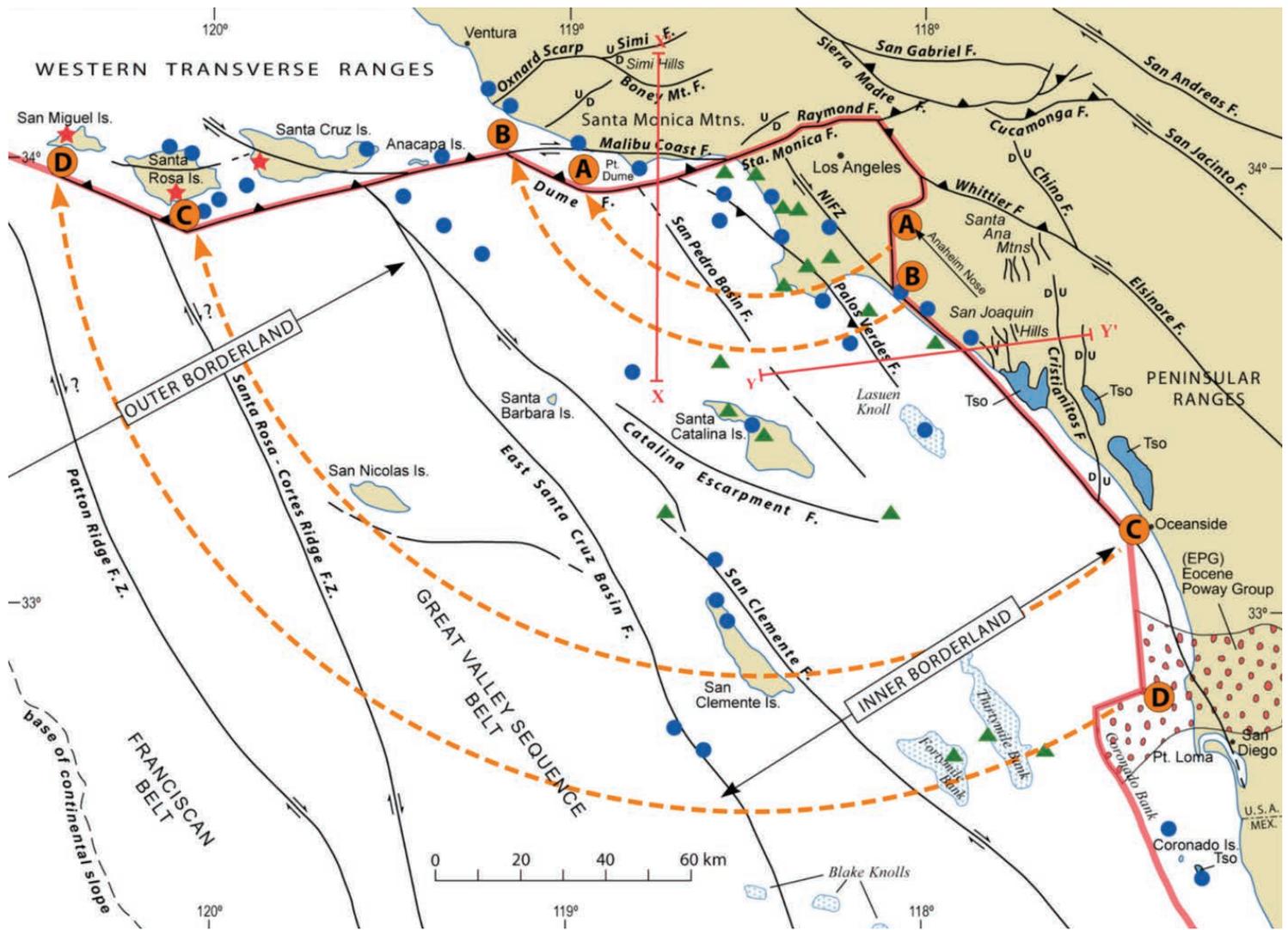


and a postscript...

Barbara Hoshizaki and Fern Dell

When Friends of Griffith Park was seeking a fern expert to help with the restoration of Fern Dell, we received high recommendations for Barbara Hoshizaki, president of the International Fern Society. She was the right person for the project, a world-renowned expert who had previously worked on a 1960s renovation of the Fern Dell plants. Barbara also penned "Fern Dell Specific Treatment Recommendations."

In addition to multiple consultations with FoGP, she graciously donated hundreds of cuttings from her own fern collection to plant in Fern Dell. These ferns are currently being propagated by Jorge Ochoa's horticulture students at Long Beach City College for future planting in the dell.



Geology story from page 13

signifies that molten rock solidified slowly, deep inside the Earth so that crystals of quartz, feldspar and mica grew large and interlocked. Granitic rock is widespread in California, forming the Sierra Nevada, extending southward to the Mojave Desert and to the Peninsular Ranges of Riverside and San Diego Counties that extend into Baja California.

When this rock formed — during Cretaceous time, the age of dinosaurs about 90 to 110 million years ago — California resembled the Andes of South America, with a long chain of volcanoes aligned parallel to the continental margin; and the granitic rock that we see today formed as the roots of these volcanoes. Although active volcanoes of the Andes are spaced about 20 to 40 miles apart, over time volcanic vents in California moved around so that eventually the entire region was intruded by granitic rock.

During Cretaceous time, the cause of profuse volcanism inland from the California's

continental margin was the same process that produces the Andean volcanic arc today. In ocean basins, oceanic crust is constantly created at submarine volcanic ridges called spreading centers, such as the Mid-



Atlantic Ridge and East Pacific Rise; and as oceanic crust formed of basalt moves away from the spreading center and cools, it forms a "tectonic plate" about 60 miles thick.

Basalt is dark and relatively heavy from high iron content, and where the mobile oceanic plate encounters the continent, composed of lighter buoyant rock, the oceanic plate descends at an angle back into the Earth's interior, causing deep earthquakes, in a process called "subduction." The subducted oceanic plate carries water-bearing clay minerals into the Earth's interior, where water lowers the melting temperature of rock and is expelled at inland volcanoes along with molten rock.

Basalt at Bronson Caves

California's Cretaceous volcanic arc shut off about 70 million ago, when the angle of subduction flattened and tectonic activity moved eastward to form the Rocky Mountains. Then around 20 million years ago — in Miocene time, as mammals were evolving — the tectonic plate boundary changed from convergence to sideways movement along the proto-San Andreas Fault. This change fractured the continent's edge which resulted in eruption of basaltic

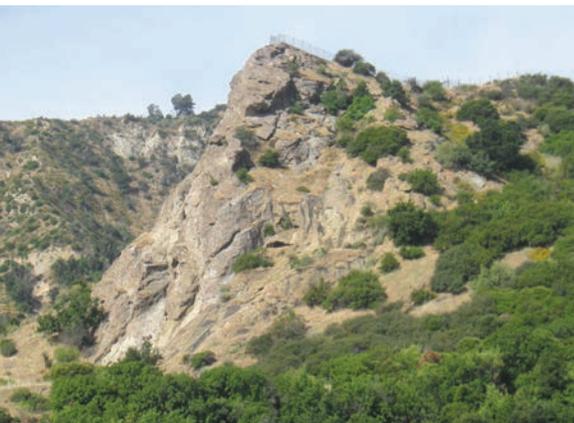
lava that covered the eroded granite and is now exposed near Bronson Caves and along Vista Del Valley Drive.

Miocene crustal fracturing and volcanic eruptions affected the entire Santa Monica Mountains to the west and resulted from a slow clockwise rotation of a crustal block — the Western Transverse Ranges — away from the present coast of Orange and San Diego Counties. Evidence for this rotation includes measurements of paleomagnetism in volcanic rocks that originally pointed northward to the Earth's magnetic pole but now point eastward. Griffith Park was located near the pivot point of the rotated block, shown on the map (left); and to the southeast, a deep sedimentary basin formed, which was slowly filled by about 30,000 feet of marine sediments — mud and sand — on top of 3,000 feet of volcanic rock.

Conglomerate at Bee Rock

The third rock formation that is widespread at Griffith Park is conglomerate that overlays and is interbedded with volcanic layers. It is formed of rounded cobbles and pebbles and sand that were transported and deposited by fast-flowing streams and rivers. Miocene conglomerate underlies much of the northern and western portions of Griffith Park but is not well exposed except at Bee Rock and in road cuts.

Further west in the Santa Monica Mountains, volcanic rock is overlain by deltaic and marine sediments not present in Griffith Park. Relatively recently in geologic time, the mountain range was tilted, uplifted and eroded to form the present topography. ♣



For more information on regional geology, see *Roadside Geology of Southern California*, by Arthur Gibbs Sylvester and Elizabeth O'Black Gans, 2016, Mountain Press Publishing Co.

Photo, opposite page: Basalt from the Bronson Canyon area

Photo, above: View of Bee Rock

Bee Rock photo: Kathryn Louyse

A Fond Farewell to Tom LaBonge and Equestrian Lynn Brown



Top photo: Tom LaBonge joins Bernadette Soter and Rosemary DeMonte at one of the early FOLAR cleanups

Bottom: Lynn Brown, Griffith J. Griffith Family Trust's Clare Darden, FoGP president Gerry Hans are joined by California Senator Anthony Portantino, FoGP's Marian Dodge, Julio Gosdinski from the Griffith Park Merry-go-Round and Mike Eberts, author of the *Centennial History of Griffith Park* at a FoGP Member Picnic in Crystal Springs

Photos: Kathryn Louyse



Photo: Kathryn Louyse



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**LOOKING BACK
LOOKING FORWARD**



Photo: Dora Herrera

After a long, dismal year when the Covid-19 pandemic brought all volunteer efforts to a screeching halt, many are looking forward to getting back to the business of helping Griffith Park prosper. In 2019, the area between Crystal Springs Picnic Area and the adjacent golf course was a weed-infested, trash-collecting area. With permission, FoGP and volunteers transformed the Anza Native Garden, and now golfers, hikers and runners often stop to admire the transformative work. (The inset photo was taken earlier this year.)