



Field Trip Opportunities -- Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Red Tour: Southern California Restoration Challenges Tour (Tour is limited to 20 people)

Itinerary:

11:15am-11:30am	Depart Westin Bonaventure Hotel
11:30am-1:00pm	Travel to Irvine Ranch Conservancy Headquarters
1:00pm-2:00pm	Board an open flat-bed truck with cushioned seating, and travel to Irvine Ranch Wildlands and eat picnic lunch at Augustine Staging Area with Presentations by Drs. Jutta C. Burger and Megan Lulow
2:00pm-5:30pm	Tour of Irvine Ranch Wildlands
5:30pm-6:00pm	Travel to Orchard Hills Shopping Center
6:00pm-7:30pm	Dinner on own
7:30pm-8:30pm	Return to hotel by bus

Description:

The Irvine Ranch Wildlands encompass nearly 40,000 acres of undeveloped habitat in southern California and include most of the acreage protected regionally under the Orange County Natural Community Conservation Plan. Situated in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains, the northern portion of the Wildlands has retained much of its native fauna and flora, including regionally sensitive species such as mountain lion, arroyo toad, coast horned lizard, cactus wren, California gnatcatcher, white-tailed kite, and Tecate cypress. The land has, however, also experienced nearly 200 years of grazing and frequent fires; at least 5000 acres are partially or severely degraded and in need of repair. The Wildlands are currently owned by The Irvine Company, the County of Orange, the City of Irvine, and The Nature Conservancy. They are managed by the Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC) and are part of the Nature Reserve of Orange County. Restoration efforts by the IRC are focused on converting degraded habitat back into native coastal sage scrub, grassland, and oak-sycamore woodland cover at a large scale. Outreach efforts include public programs and an extensive volunteer program including docent-led outdoor activities and land stewardship that help foster an appreciation of nature and the threats to it.

Upon arrival at IRC headquarters, participants will be taking a 15 minute drive to the Wildlands, where they will enjoy an outdoor picnic lunch and overview presentation of environmental challenges and planned restoration actions by Field Ecologists Drs. Jutta Burger and Megan Lulow. We will then continue on a driving and walking tour through Limestone Canyon and its surrounding environs. Topics presented during the field trip will include: the importance of restoration prioritization, habitat restoration techniques, invasive species issues, and target species restoration. Preliminary results from ongoing projects will also be presented. Following the tour, the group will eat dinner on their own at Orchard Hills shopping center, which includes several dining options. From there, participants will be picked up and transported back to Los Angeles.



What to Wear & Bring:

Dress for walking---long pants and lightweight long sleeved shirt (ticks, scratchy plants, and poison oak). Hats, sunscreen and sturdy walking shoes are a must.

Food Offered:

Water and lunch will be provided. Dinner is on own – participants will be bused to Orchard Hills Shopping Center for dinner options:
www.OHVC.notlong.com

Driving distance:

Distance is approximately 40 miles from downtown Los Angeles.
www.scrctmap.notlong.com

Cost of Tour:

\$50.00 per person

(Fee includes admission, lunch and transportation.)

For Questions about the Tour Site, Contact:

Dr. Jutta C. Burger

Irvine Ranch Conservancy

Phone: (714) 508-4765

Email: jburger@irconservancy.org

For Questions about Tour Logistics, Contact:

Sharon Borneman

UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes

Phone : (352) 392-5930

Email: spb@ufl.edu

Tour Guide: Miki Fujitsubo, Corps Landscape Architect/Water Resource Planner, W: (916) 557-7440; Cell: (916) 397-8039