Solar + battery... Eco-wins... Comeback Condors... WBC hiatus... Heat beats

Pgs 1, 6  Pg 2  Pg 4  Pg 6  Back page

JOIN THE CLUB - ONLY $15 - FREE BAG - SIERRACLUB.ORG
Big push for solar and battery

By Katie Davis

Sierra Club has partnered with Swell Energy to offer solar and battery solutions to Santa Barbara and Ventura county residents, and to create a clean, "virtual power plant" alternative to a polluting gas power plant.

A live "Solar + Battery" event was held on Sept. 24 to educate participants and take their questions. For those who couldn't make it, the webinar is available here: https://tinyurl.com/SolarBatteryWebinar

Meanwhile, here are some common questions about home battery storage.

Q. What if I already have solar? Can I add a battery? What if I need both?
   A. Yes, you can pair a battery with existing solar panels. You may want to add a battery so you can use your solar power if there is an outage or power shutoff. If your solar doesn't eliminate electricity costs, adding a battery can let you run off stored energy during peak expensive hours of the day, eliminating utility costs without adding more solar panels.

Q. What does it cost? How long until I get a return on investment?
   A. Cost and pay back will vary depending on the size of your system, incentives, and utility costs. There is an extra $1000 special incentive in SCE territory. There may be greater utility savings for PG&E customers. There are high fire hazard zone and medical rebates.

Q. What kind of battery is it? Who will do the installation?
   A. There are a variety of battery options available. Swell Energy uses the Tesla Powerwall. One benefit of Tesla is the regular software updates and user-friendly app for monitoring your system. Swell uses a network of local installers, and they guarantee a certain amount of incentive rebate and do all the work of applying for it for you, seeking permits and shepherding the project along.

Q. What do you mean by a "virtual power plant"?
   A. Our community resisted plans to build yet another power plant on the beach in Oxnard, but there might be valuable alternatives considered. We succeeded, and SCE chose a power battery portfolio in place of the Puente gas plant. In addition, to large commercial battery storage, a network of thousands of home batteries will meet the need. "How a California community succeeded in pushing for a reliability fix that will see the installation of storage projects rather than a natural-gas peaker plant." https://tinyurl.com/SCETips

Gift that keeps giving

What do you want your legacy to be?

Ours is to protect the planet starting from our own chapter area of Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, where we live and/or work.

This is a legacy that you are already part of as a member or friend. Many of you have supported our Chapter over the years either through volunteer efforts like clean ups or graffiti removal, taking part in our outings, participating in rallies, writing letters on important decisions, contributing to issues to cover our costs, giving a general donation, or giving in honor of someone whose dues are our foundation.

Whether or not you know it, your generosity has been thousands of people explore, enjoy, and protect Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, and made it a part of your life. Now, we hope you will consider making the Los Padres Chapter Sierra Club in your will, trust, or beneficiary designation.

Your gift costs nothing now, you can change your mind at any time due to circumstances or preference. You retain control of your assets during your lifetime. There is no minimum contribution required. It's a wonderful way to carry on your passion and to be remembered as a champion for the environment.

If you have already left a gift for us, we hope you will let us know. Notifying us gives us the chance to thank you and ensures that we honor your wishes for the use of your gift. To learn more, contact Jon Ullman or Emily Engel today: JonUllman@sierraclub.org EmilyAEngel@gmail.com

Central Coast Community Energy will be rolling out in Santa Barbara County in 2021. Take this survey (in English or Spanish) to help us know your priorities about what kinds of electricity programs and subsidies you would like to see: https://tinyurl.com/SCEnovSPARENT

EAVESDROPS

"The wilderness is restorative for the soul ... it is the opposite of twitter ... it reminds us of forces and values larger than ourselves." — Nicholas Kristof, in a New York Times, after a family hiking trip on the Pacific Northwest Trail (nkat's recent, established in 2009). He concludes: "It lets us to the wild spaces inspire our efforts in this election cycle by underscoring what is at stake not only for the next four years but also for the next four millennia."

California is well known for its magnificent natural landscapes, but one of the greatest dangers it faces is the loss of its natural beauty. This is a result of the negative effects of climate change. The Sierra Club is working to protect the natural beauty of California by opposing the development of new fossil fuel projects, such as the Puente gas plant, and advocating for the expansion of renewable energy sources.

The Sierra Club is a grassroots organization that is dedicated to protecting the environment and ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same natural beauty that we do. The organization is made up of thousands of volunteers who work together to protect the environment and promote sustainable living.

The Sierra Club has a long history of fighting against the development of fossil fuel projects in California. The organization has been a leader in the fight against the Puente gas plant, which is a controversial project that has been the subject of numerous protests.

The Sierra Club is committed to protecting the environment and ensuring that future generations can enjoy the same natural beauty that we do. The organization is working to protect the natural beauty of California by opposing the development of new fossil fuel projects, such as the Puente gas plant, and advocating for the expansion of renewable energy sources.
Wins from challenging oil
By Katie Davis
VENTURA WINS

During another record-breaking, climate-fueled fire season in California, Ventura County took action to reign in emissions.

On Sept. 15 the supervisors adopted one of the most protective oil well setback laws in the nation, 2500’ from schools and 1500’ from homes, with a study to increase home setbacks to 2500’ as well.

The board also banned flaring gas and trucking oil—a source of diesel emissions and a severe road hazard for other drivers. Oil companies must now use renewable energy to the extent feasible to power oil production.

The new plan also includes a building electrification code for all new buildings starting in 2023 which will reduce indoor air pollution, lower costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions ...

and they created a Climate Emergency Council to develop additional programs for Ventura County.

SANTA BARBARA WINS

Given the hundreds of new oil wells proposed in Cat Canyon, Executive Director Hugh Warren has converted us to throwing off the oil (shut down since the oil wells proposed in Cat Canyon, programs for Ventura County.

We go where action is...
leases hinge on the outcome of the leases on public lands and in our offshore oil (shut down since the oil wells proposed in Cat Canyon, programs for Ventura County.

Greenhouse gas emissions … pollution, lower costs and reduce a building electrification code.

房企 must now use renewable energy projects.

Conejo: Hugh Warren, 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net

Santa Barbara: 968-8217, kdavis2468@gmail.com

Conservation VC: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jhcasitas@gmail.com

Liz Lamar (at large): 667-7617, elisabethlamar@hotmail.com

Richard Hunt (Treasurer), 966-4157, richardhunt@cox.net

David Gold (at-large): 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com

Katie Davis (Chair): 968-8217, kdavis2468@gmail.com

Conejo: Hugh Warren, 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net

Gerry Ching (Secretary): 964-5411, gching@cox.net

Alex Pujo (at large): 962-3578, alex@pujo.net

Santa Barbara 965-9719 • Ventura 988-0339

Condor Call
www.sierraclub.org/lospadres ~ www.sierraclub.org/condorcall

EDITOR: Condor’ John Hankins, 452-2885
200 Pacific Street, Ste 401, Santa Barbara, CA 93101-1240
ADVERTISING: Contact Editor& Editor (above)
www.sierraclub.org/condorcall

Copy Deadline: 20th – Advertising Deadline: 22nd of month preceding publication.

Publication Schedule:
February/March, April/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan

Condor Call
NATIONAL OFFICE & MEMBERSHIP OFFICE:
301-303 2nd Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 964-5411 • Fax: (805) 964-6901
Email: membership@sierraclub.org
Change of Address: Write Sierra Club, 500 S Market St., Suite 700, Oakland CA 94607, or call (800) 779-9111.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE:
7201 Webster St. Suite 1300, Oakland CA 94612
(510) 548-2200 • Fax: (510) 548-2223
Email: info@sierraclub.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
Katie Davis (Chair), 968-8217 • Email: kdavis2468@gmail.com
Jim Hines (Executive Director), 340-9266 • Email: jhcasitas@gmail.com
Jim Taylor (Treasurer), 667-7617 • Email: elisabethlamar@hotmail.com
Hugh Warren (Conejo Group Rep): 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net
Santa Barbara: 968-8217, kdavis2468@gmail.com
Conservation VC: Jim Hines, 340-9266, jhcasitas@gmail.com
Liz Lamar (at large): 667-7617, elisabethlamar@hotmail.com
Richard Hunt (Treasurer), 966-4157, richardhunt@cox.net
David Gold (at-large): 642-7748 x6, davidgold4@aol.com
Katie Davis (Chair): 968-8217, kdavis2468@gmail.com
Conejo: Hugh Warren, 341-6295, mail@hkwarren.net
Gerry Ching (Secretary): 964-5411, gching@cox.net
Alex Pujo (at large): 962-3578, alex@pujo.net
Santa Barbara 965-9719 • Ventura 988-0339

EVENTS
Oct 15: Waterfront’s History, a 7pm Zoom event by historian Neal Graffy. “In the 1970s, John Peck Steams and his new wharf literally opened Santa Barbara’s front door and the world rushed in,” said the notice from the host, Santa Barbara Maritime Museum. Details or to sign up, go to: www.SBMMA.org

Oct 16: Wild & Scenic Film Festival, a signature event for the Ventura Land Trust, must go virtual this year. It inspires environmental activism and a love for nature. Guests can enjoy it at home with food and drinks via special ticket packages featuring local restaurants, breweries, and raffle items. To sign up to, go to: www.VenturaLandTrust.org/Events

Oct 17: Geology Hike at Haskell’s Beach, led by Susie Bartz for the Gaviota Coast Conservancy. From 2-5pm: Details at: www.GaviotaCoastConservancy.org

Nov 3: The Election, called “one of the most consequential elections in history” by the Sierra Club. Haven’t voted yet? This is your last chance. Don’t blow it!
**SIGHTINGS**

**Shoe strikes, fun, sun and uranium!**

By John Hankins

We may be getting used to Zoom meetings and webinar events during the quarantine, but we don’t like missing things.

The amazing Outings we have every week throughout the year, having our trained leaders show places you haven’t been before or pointing out aspects on trails you have been on.

We’re still in full mode via our activism and some limited outdoor things, like the Coastal Cleanup Days. See the next SB Sierra Club News box page 3 for contacts and links where you can get involved. When we can’t get out now because of those few restrictions, we encourage all to go outside on your own.

If you’d like to donate (it helps the chapter and the money stays here at home), do not turn the page and forget, but go directly to: www.sierraclub.org/donate/1000

**Sept 26: Shoe Strike by the Society of Fearless Grandmothers, sponsors of monthly demonstrations for Climate Change action. Visit: sbgrandmothers.org.** The SB Sierra Club put out a call for members to participate. Register for future events at: SBGrandmothers88@sierraclub.org

**Sept 24: Solar + battery storage webinar with a Q&A sponsored by our chapter in our area.** The club has partnered with Swell Energy to offer solar and home battery solutions to Santa Barbara and Ventura county residents, and to create a clean, “virtual power plant” alternative to a polluting gas power plant. While the webinar is over, you can still check its valuable info; see story pg 1.

**Sept 24: Hanson Nature Preserve** is nearly 1,000 acres of river and upland habitat, spanning almost two miles of the mighty Santa Clara River. Located at the end of Mission Rock Rd. The Nature Conservancy conducted a Zoom meeting to introduce it to the public. The Ventura Sierra Club is in touch in helping restore this area, formally a gravel mine.

**Sept 15: Good news as the Ventura County Supervisors finalized the General Plan by a vote of 3-2 (see next pg 1); see for details by Bennett, Zaragoza and Parks voted in the majority. This is a bold plan to tackle climate change and protect residents, disproportionate communities of color from health impacts of oil; also, it includes more electric construction and trail access in Ojai. See story pg 1.

**Sept 1: Oil reined in a 3-2 vote of the Ventura Board of Supervisors.** There are more than 100 members and supporters of the Sierra Club voted to advocate for more space between oil and gas and between oil and schools. A study shows more than 8,000 residents live within 2,500 feet of an oil well, most of whom are Latinx. CFROG was also a leader in this issue. Read the whole story here: https://tinyurl.com/OilSpacedOut

**Aug 27: Platform Holly decommissioning towns hall on how to ensure that all the facilities are removed, and the environment restored. State lands and city of Santa Barbara hosted with Sierra Club participating.**

**Aug 26: Liberty Canyon Wildlife Overpass plan just got a $5 million boost from the CA Wildlife Conservation Board. To be located in the Agoura Hills area allowing wild animals free to go across the freeway:** the Sierra Club has been a major supporter in getting it done.

**Aug 26: Big Battery Project by SCE has started to see if it can be approved for the SB-Ventura coast to tap into renewable energy and provide electricity during outages. Our Los Padres Chapter was cited as a major supporter in the Carpintaria Coastal Area project about this community effort to create Energy Storage Resilience Project.**

**Aug 25: Water Talks about Casitas Springs webinar to help understand that community needs, concerns, questions, and insights become part of the State’s future water projects. Also, a webinar on the effects of oil on Santa Barbara County. Features a who’s of who water agencies and local experts. Supported by Los Padres Chapter. Check it out here: https://tinyurl.com/casitasSprings**

**Aug 14: Uranium mine-field story in Ojai Valley News by Perry Van Houten detailed the controversy with our chapter’s Jim Hines in touch with the Los Padres Chapter’s Jim Hines and Jim Hines.**

**Sept 26:** Uranium mine-field story in Ojai Valley News by Perry Van Houten detailed the controversy with our chapter’s Jim Hines in touch with the Los Padres Chapter’s Jim Hines and Jim Hines.**

**Aug 9: Online Get-together with the Sierra Club by way of Meetup with over 30 Enviro bugs, including an “active fun man,” RD nutritionist who loves nature,” a lady who “would love to meet other adventurers,” and so many other fine folk.

**Aug 5: Call-in testimony at AB345, a bill to create an environmental justice component for the state’s Natural Resources Agency, notably to support increased setbacks from houses and homes by oil facilities of at least 2,500 feet. Sierra Club and our local chapter members called in to the Senate committee considering the Assembly bill.**

**Aug 5: SB Council agrees with Sierra Club to oppose Exxon using trucks to transport its offshore oil on a 6-0 vote. Our chair, Katie Davis, testified as did the Environmental Defense Center, among others.**

**Aug 4: Tax myth that oil drilling contributes lots of taxes and school funding debunked by our executive Director Jon Ullman in a SF News-Press article on Exxon’s trucking oil proposal. Exxon claims it would contribute millions of dollars to the county.**

**As a 13-year old in 2007, Alex Loostra of Ventura and her mother started Matter, a climate change activist group aimed at youth; check them out at www.MatterYouth.org.** He erected those posts on the Ventura Pomeroyades years ago as a wake-up call to calling for sea levels. Lots of good information on the posts. We hear Santa Barbara will be erecting similar sea level posts. (Photo by Condor John.)

**Fines for oil spills**

An important bill increasing fines and penalties for oil spills was signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom on Sept. 24.

The bill is close to the Los Padres Chapter’s hearts not only because of the numerous spills in our area, but also because our local Assembly member, Monique Limón, it wrote AB 3214.

Existing law makes it a felony to knowingly engage in or cause the discharge or spill of oil into waters of the state, or knowingly fail to begin cleanup, punishable by a fine of not less than $500 more than $500,000 for each day a violation occurs. It is also a felony to fail to notify the Office of Emergency Services with a fine of not less than $2,500 or more than $250,000 for each day a violation occurs for a first conviction, and double that for a second conviction.

Limón’s bill would double the minimum and maximum amounts of the fines described above.

The bill would authorize the court to also impose upon a person convicted of knowingly causing a spill or failing to begin cleanup a fine of up to $10,000 per gallon spilled more than 1,000 gallons of oil.

**Up the lazy river**

Progress is being made on the Hanson Nature Preserve, nearly 1,000 acres of river and upland habitat, spanning almost two miles of the mighty Santa Clara River.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has been working since 2004 to restore this area of former gravel mine back to a natural riparian system and is now working on opening this preserve for public enjoyment. Our Ventura Sierra Club has been a key supporter with volunteers.

A special Zoom presentation was held on Sept, 24 to hear from TNC staff about this beautiful natural preserve and how you can get involved. The Preserve is located midway between Santa Paula and Saticoy, (exit Hwy 126 at Briggs road), at the end of Mission Rock Rd.

This work has included extensive removal of the non-native Arundo plant, wetland creation, and planting with native plants. Restored riparian forest in the project area supports several state and federally listed species of birds, fish, and reptiles.

There are few locations on the Santa Clara River that are accessible to the public. It is the hope of TNC that this preserve will be a beautiful place for outdoor education, as well as a place for communities to gather, view wildlife, hike, and connect with the dynamic Santa Clara River.

After the Zoom presentation, all feedback was positive, such as this post from Tricker PC: “Great presentation, good to see that there are plans to open this amazing area for the community to enjoy this beautiful area.”

“Feel good after the meeting? Me too! Here is the website with the video, the architectural concept for the public area/trails, and a link to get on their contact list as well as for getting involved by the survey. See you out there soon,” said Nina Danza, Ventura Sierra Club chair.

She added, “be sure to get on the contact list and become a volunteer at the site” (contact list is at the end of the link).
Comeback condors now wild and free

A true conservation success, the Ventura Sierra Club hosted a fast-filled and fascinating look into “The Comeback of the Condor” earlier this year. Comeback indeed, even after the horrendous fires throughout California. As of press time, 90 of the 100 condors in the Northern Los Padres Forest and near Big Sur were accounted for via radio transmitters. The Big Sur sanctuary was burned, but people and condors had evacuated. However, among the missing condors is Hiko, whose name means “born during troubled times.” The baby condor hatched on April 25 just before the Covid-19 quarantine and蹒跚 a breakfast for a family of four or more, a condor hand puppet, and the bare-faced bird that feeds upon carrion. The condors were literally brought back from the brink of extinction with the wild population numbering only 22 in the 1980s. A controversial capture program was instituted for a zoo breeding program with the hope that eventually there’d be enough birds hatched to release them into the wild, Forman explained.

Well, that has happened, just last July the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported the endangered California condor (Gymnogyps californianus) currently flies free along the western coastal mountains of the United States and Mexico and the northern desert mountains of Arizona. Fossils from the Pleistocene era have been found in various parts of North America, but that long history was in danger due to hunters and lead poisoning, the latter of which is still a threat.

There are two condor sanctuaries within a short drive in our chapter region; at Bitter Creek near Maricopa (Kern County) and Hopper Mountain near Fillmore. You can’t go untended onto either refuge, but the Friends can take you. You can get close enough on public roads to see them, however. While tours may not be happening right now, get on the list by signing up here: www.friendsofcondors.org

Forman said the hard task of rescuing the species from extinction is a multi-million-dollar effort with partners including Fish and Wildlife, US Geologic Survey, University of California, National Park Service, Ventana Wildlife, various zoos and bird organizations.

Vince Grieve welcomes the public during a Friends of the Condor outing. (Photo by Condor John Hankins)

Plastic recycling a ‘betrayal of trust’

“How Big Oil Misled the Public into Believing Plastic Would Be Recycled” is the headline to an important NPR investigation. The story, published in September, is part of a joint investigation with the PBS series Frontline that includes the documentary “Plastic Wars,” which aired March 31 on PBS. It is available here: https://tinyurl.com/plasticwars

The Sierra Club has long fought against the flood of plastics, notably the single-use variety, but has since expanded it to an AddUp Campaign to “stand up to protect public health over plastic industry fear-mongering.”

“Plastics are made from fossil fuels. As the oil and gas industry is being pushed back by clean energy, they’d do anything to make sure that creating the petrochemicals for single-use plastics continues to make a profit,” according to the Sierra Club. Act here: https://tinyurl.com/plasticscampaign

The lead paragraphs to NPR Reporter Laura Sullivan’s story are:

Laura Leebrick, a manager at Rogue Disposal & Recycling in southern Oregon, is standing on the end of its landfill watching an avalanche of plastic trash pour out of a semitrailer: containers, bags, packaging, strawberry containers, yogurt cups.

None of this plastic will be turned into new plastic things. All of it is buried.

“To me that felt like it was a betrayal of the public trust,” she said. “I have been lying to people ... untruthfully.”

Rogue, like most recycling companies, had been sending plastic trash to China, but when China shut its doors two years ago, Leebrick scoured the U.S. for buyers. She could find only someone who wanted white milk jugs. She sends the soda bottles to the state.

But when Leebrick tried to tell people the truth about burying all the plastic, she says people didn’t want to hear it.

“I remember the first meeting where I actually told a city council that it was costing more to recycle than it was to dispose of the same material as garbage,” she says, “and it was like heresy had been spoken in the room: You’re lying. This is gold. We take the time to clean it, take the labels off, separate it and put it here. It’s gold. This is valuable.

But it’s not valuable, and it never has been. And what’s more, the makers of plastic — notably the single-use variety, but have known this all along, even as they spent millions to promote the American public the opposite.

Read the rest of the story here: https://tinyurl.com/npbPlasticWars

EAVESDROPS

Feeling good about that compostable cup you bought your juice in? It is very unlikely it will actually get composted. Sorry.

Op-ed subhead in the LA Times about the drive to find alternatives to single-use plastic and how hard it is to compost or recycle. It’s conclusion? The greenest alternative is the oldest one: use reusable containers!

Fishery Web

Catherine Mullin of our SB Group reports “There is a new cool website/portal on the CA state managed fisheries. It lists 33 species, reports on their population, stock status, life history etc. The plan is to add more species.” See it here: https://marinespecies.wildlife.ca.gov

Mullin is a representative on the Channel Islands Marine National Sanctuary Management Council, which announced the website recently.
By John Hankins

It’s been one mountain lion kitten killed after another this summer for National Park Service biologists in the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills. In total, 13 kittens were born to five mountain lion mothers between May and August 2020. Unfortunately, there have also been deaths, notably in late September when an adult was killed while trying to cross the 101 freeway in the Calabasas area, another last year at 405 freeway and, according to a study by the National Park Service, 17 have been killed by motorists from 2012 to 2019.

A key solution is wildlife crossing bridges, notably one in the planning stages over eight lanes of the 101 freeway at Agoura Hills, allowing migration of the current isolated community of over a dozen lions living in the Santa Monica Mountains. Such a wildlife corridor is not only for the lions, but would also increase habitat for bobcats, coyotes, deer, fox and many other species.

The National Wildlife Federation is leading a fundraising campaign for the Agoura overpass, already raising about $16 million of its $85 million goal to break ground in 2021, according to the LA Times. To donate, go to www.SavelAcorn.org

Another good news event was a September ruling by a judge formally granting permission to four conservation organizations to help defend Ventura County’s innovative wildlife connectivity ordinances—the first of their kind in California. Ordinance No. 4537 and Ordinance No. 4530, which increase protections for important designated wildlife corridors connecting the Los Padres National Forest, Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills, were challenged in court by industry groups last year.

Too, the proposed widening of the 101 freeway from Thousand Oaks to the city of Ventura is perhaps another opportunity to construct a wildlife overpass in the Conejo Grade area, said Jim Hines, our chapter’s vice-chair.

“The Conejo Grade is a known wildlife crossing and the National Park Service has documented a number of cases where mountain lions and other wildlife have crossed the 101 freeway in the area. I have seen deer crossing there in my own car,” said Hines.

“The level of reproduction is a great thing to see, especially since half of our mountains burned almost two years ago during the Woolsey Fire,” said Jeff Sikich, a wildlife biologist at Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. “It will be interesting to see how these kittens use the landscape in the coming years and navigate the many challenges, both natural and human-caused, they will face as they grow older and disperse.”

Poison bill

A pheon of mountain lion kittens totaled 21 this year in the Santa Monica Mountains area, the most in the 18 years that we’ve been studied. However, there were also deaths, notably as some tried to cross the freeway. (Photos courtesy of NPS and CHP)

By Jim Hines

Yes, even I take a break from the world of environmental activism. I wanted all my friends, fans and supporters to enjoy the Autumn season, my favorite and truly a season to enjoy for all its beauty.

Autumn foliage colors, red autumn berries, everything cooler, nutrients and shorter days define this season.

Plus, there is much to do in the garden during Autumn... bulbs to be planted such as fragrant hyacinths, colorful daffodils, stately tulips, cheerful crocus and many more. Planting bulbs will now assure that your spring garden is filled with endless beauty.

Cool season annual flowers go in now, such as fragrant sweet peas, giant snapdragons, fragrant stock, stately lceland poppies and cheerful dianthus. Plant now to have a colorful yard before the holiday season arrives.

And the cool season vegetable garden will be filled with cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, many varieties of lettuce, onions and edible peas. Root crops can be planted as: beets, carrots, radishes and turnips. Plant now to assure wonderful plates of healthy edibles at your holiday meals.

We are visually dazzled by the colorful leaves of Liquid amber, flame red Chinese Pistachio and brilliant Sapium trees.

Ornamental berries also light up our gardens, red berries on Pyracantha ‘Coastoree’, Nandina, Holly and CA native Toyon say, look at us it’s Autumn! But most importantly, enjoy the Autumn season for what she is, a season of grand beauty. Take a drive along a scenic highway where you see live Fall colors. Eat pumpkin everything, drink apple cider and harvest Autumn squash (such as acorn, butternut, Hubbard and banana squash). Allow Autumn to fill your days with peaceful bliss.

Virtual tours a click away

A virtual tour is a panoramic view of an existing place that can be viewed online, often for travel or vacation-related research. They can take many forms, such as a collection of panoramic images that are played in sequence to view like a moving video with added sound and text effects or using models in place of real-life video and images. Some virtual tours also include music or narration describing points of interest. Taking it a step further, certain virtual tours can be combined with a treadmill or stationary bike to simulate the experience of hiking or cycling in the outdoors.

However, don’t totally count out actual adventures on the ground. The Sierra Club has numerous domestic and international service trips and adventure tours available. Check them out here: www.content.sierraclub.org/tours

Examples of online tours include a Virtual Yosemite, a groundbreaking interactive tour of one of America’s most popular and spectacular natural environments. Placer Closer to home, the National Marine Sanctuary System offers virtual tours of a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. From the thriving kelp forests of Channel Islands to the treasured coral reefs of the Florida Keys, few places in our great planet can come close to the wonders of the National Marine Sanctuary System.

Grand Canyon in Depth is a video podcast of eight episodes that explores the natural and human history of Grand Canyon National Park. Join park rangers, scientists, and historians as they take us beyond the rim of the canyon to discover the diversity of life and the extraordinary beauty of Grand Canyon National Park. www.VirtualYosemite.org

www.Sanctuaries.NOA/.gov/VR
https://tinyurl.com/GrandcanyonSeries
https://tinyurl.com/OutsideVirtual
https://tinyurl.com/ExpediaVirtual

There are so many more available partly due to the pandemic reducing the chances of actual outings. Outside Magazine and Expedia have some of the best links. Check them out: https://tinyurl.com/OutsideVirtual
https://tinyurl.com/ExpediaVirtual

Enjoy a cool autumn

By John Hankins

A study in autumn leaves is a wonder to the eyes. (Photo by Niall Fritz

Virtual tours a click away

A virtual tour is a panoramic view of an existing place that can be viewed online, often for travel or vacation-related research. They can take many forms, such as a collection of panoramic images that are played in sequence to view like a moving video with added sound and text effects or using models in place of real-life video and images. Some virtual tours also include music or narration describing points of interest. Taking it a step further, certain virtual tours can be combined with a treadmill or stationary bike to simulate the experience of hiking or cycling in the outdoors.

However, don’t totally count out actual adventures on the ground. The Sierra Club has numerous domestic and international service trips and adventure tours available. Check them out here: www.content.sierraclub.org/tours

Examples of online tours include a Virtual Yosemite, a groundbreaking interactive tour of one of America’s most popular and spectacular natural environments. Placer Closer to home, the National Marine Sanctuary System offers virtual tours of a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. From the thriving kelp forests of Channel Islands to the treasured coral reefs of the Florida Keys, few places in our great planet can come close to the wonders of the National Marine Sanctuary System.

Grand Canyon in Depth is a video podcast of eight episodes that explores the natural and human history of Grand Canyon National Park. Join park rangers, scientists, and historians as they take us beyond the rim of the canyon to discover the diversity of life and the extraordinary beauty of Grand Canyon National Park. www.VirtualYosemite.org

www.Sanctuaries.NOA/egov/VR
https://tinyurl.com/GrandcanyonSeries
https://tinyurl.com/OutsideVirtual
https://tinyurl.com/ExpediaVirtual

There are so many more available partly due to the pandemic reducing the chances of actual outings. Outside Magazine and Expedia have some of the best links. Check them out: https://tinyurl.com/OutsideVirtual
https://tinyurl.com/ExpediaVirtual

There are so many more available partly due to the pandemic reducing the chances of actual outings. Outside Magazine and Expedia have some of the best links. Check them out: https://tinyurl.com/OutsideVirtual
https://tinyurl.com/ExpediaVirtual
Some camps reopen

All campgrounds in the Los Padres National Forest are now open except for group campgrounds, if reserved for ask for refunds here: [www.lospadres.org](http://www.lospadres.org)

Recreational shooting in all areas has been suspended until Dec. 31 due to dangerous fire conditions. While the Service has been renewing the closure orders every two weeks, it gets complicated due to some developed campgrounds are managed by Parks Management Co. while the National Forest manage others.

During National Drive Electric Week every September, the Sierra Club has conducted popular events that display owners’ cars with the ability to ask practical questions from those who know.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, that couldn’t happen this year, so we went virtual as did the Santa Barbara Community Environmental Council, often a partner with us.

And just in time for the national event, CA Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order that stated: “It shall be a goal of the State that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035 ... that 100 percent of medium and heavy-duty vehicles in the State be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. It shall be further a goal of the State to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035 where feasible.”

Of course, some of those goals must pass muster with agencies and the legislature, but any case, vehicle manufacturers are scrambling to provide more EV choices and charging companies are also erecting public stations by the thousands.

A lot of the virtual events happened from Sept. 28 through Oct. 4. Some of those included an EV driver and dealership meet and greet, an EV Techs “Drive and Learn” and one about incentives. Those who signed up got a free EV starter kit with informational brochures and goodies. The CEC conducted an EV 101 webinar on Oct. 2 across both coasts.

“The Ventura events highlighted the lean-air benefits, cost savings and fun provided by driving an electric vehicle,” said Ventura Supervisor Kelly Long. “By increasing access to electric vehicles, we are supporting the state’s goal of putting five million zero-emission cars on the roads by 2030.”

Now, it is in 10th year, National Drive Electric Week celebrates the benefits of electric cars. This year, the experience is mostly online.

Here’s some handy links that will catch you up to the fast accelerating EV campgrounds and day use areas.

Drive EV week was virtual, but real

For all the amazing adventures, just go to: www.nca.org/events

WBC co-founder Teresa Norris enjoying students learning about the wilderness during a junior course. (Photo by Arturo Hernandez)

Our wilderness course on hiatus

The year’s hiatus was necessary because preparation for the annual spring course starts months before and the extensive effort would be wasted if the quarantine policy goes February.

“The Sierra Club has had a tremendous boost in support from the outdoor community and the public because of WBC training hundreds of people, ranging from family members, couples, and singles of all ages to enjoy, be safe and secure in the outdoors, even when the weather turns or an accident happens,” said Condor John.

A Search and Rescue team member once said our training makes their jobs easier and likely results in fewer need to rescue the uninformed or the unlucky,” he added. SAR always has speakers at WBC as do other outdoor experiential groups (LP Forest Association, LP ForestWatch and more) and stores (Patagonia, REI, REI Cheap Sports etc). We are a different animal, the WBC will spring forth again, in spring of 2021. Just like new growth would in the wilderness.

Some camps reopen

Sierra Club Local Outings

All Sierra Club local outings have been cancelled until further notice; domestic trips via the National Sierra Club have been cancelled until at least Feb. 1, 2021. Check the Los Padres Chapter website for updates to this policy at: [www.sierraclub.org/lospadres](http://www.sierraclub.org/lospadres)

Recreation Area Re-opens

Many of the campgrounds, day use areas and trailheads in the Los Padres National Forest recreation area of the Los Padres National Forest have been difficult to get to since the first crossing was closed due to high water levels. It is now open, and the campgrounds that were closed are open now (except for group campgrounds). These developed areas are subject to a user fee, but if you are not using a developed area, a fee cannot be collected. A new sign posted at the first kiosk makes this clear, but you must use an existing roadside turn-out and be completely off the pavement.

Please Be Safe

Please observe social spacing. And if an area is too crowded, pick another. And be careful with fire.

Day Use Fees

Day use fees are not required for roadside parking outside of developed campgrounds or day use areas.

Local note: Closure of the Punch Bowls in an area of Santa Paula Canyon may extend into October. Check with Ojai District, 646-4348.

Before you go into the forest, check the alerts and closures (you may also subscribe to them) here: https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/lopnf/alerts-notices

Drive EV week was virtual, but real

During National Drive Electric Week every September, the Sierra Club has conducted popular events that display owners’ cars with the ability to ask practical questions from those who know.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, that couldn’t happen this year, so we went virtual as did the Santa Barbara Community Environmental Council, often a partner with us.

And just in time for the national event, CA Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order that stated: “It shall be a goal of the State that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035 ... that 100 percent of medium and heavy-duty vehicles in the State be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. It shall be further a goal of the State to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment by 2035 where feasible.”

Of course, some of those goals must pass muster with agencies and the legislature, but any case, vehicle manufacturers are scrambling to provide more EV choices and charging companies are also erecting public stations by the thousands.

A lot of the virtual events happened from Sept. 28 through Oct. 4. Some of those included an EV driver and dealership meet and greet, an EV Techs “Drive and Learn” and one about incentives. Those who signed up got a free EV starter kit with informational brochures and goodies. The CEC conducted an EV 101 webinar on Oct. 2 across both coasts.

“The Ventura events highlighted the lean-air benefits, cost savings and fun provided by driving an electric vehicle,” said Ventura Supervisor Kelly Long. “By increasing access to electric vehicles, we are supporting the state’s goal of putting five million zero-emission cars on the roads by 2030.”

Now, it is in 10th year, National Drive Electric Week celebrates the benefits of electric cars. This year, the experience is mostly online.

Here’s some handy links that will catch you up to the fast accelerating EV campgrounds and day use areas.

Go to CEC’s website to catch their webinars and info: www.scepowerofus.com

The Ventura County Regional Energy group has an EV blueprint here: [www.VCRE.org](http://www.VCRE.org)

Follow the EV Advocates of Ventura County here: [www.facebook.com/groups/457622451119506](http://www.facebook.com/groups/457622451119506)

This neutral-brand overall educational website is perhaps the best for all levels of education: [www.InsideEVs.com](http://www.InsideEVs.com)

Breaking news and the how what and why of EVs: [www.electriccarreport.com](http://www.electriccarreport.com)

Green car reports, hybrids and electrics. [www.GreenCarReports.com](http://www.GreenCarReports.com)

Drive Electric Website: [https://sites.google.com/view/](https://sites.google.com/view/)

And North America’s leading non-profit that has over 80 chapters. [www.fcevauto.org](http://www.fcevauto.org)

Also see our links and story about solar power, batteries and EVs on page 1.

Fight of the century Petro vs Renewable

We are ecstatic about the news that Gov. Newsom is asking that all new cars sold after 2035 be zero-emission vehicles and he threw his support to ban hydraulic fracturing, the latter of which requires legislative action.

The executive order, announced Sept. 23, is the nation’s first state to mandate 100 percent zero-emission vehicles, but it’s up to the CA Air Resources Board to implement the phase-out which would likely spark a Petroleum vs Renewables War. In the interim, incentives to buy electric are likely to increase. The order does not affect the ability to own gas-powered cars or buying or selling them used.

For those who might be a bit wary about moving from petrol-powered autos and trucks to renewables, check out this remarkably simple ending to a Bill McKibben article in the New Yorker:

“Instead of finding a distant pool of petro-farming and tracking the subsurface geology to make it flow, instead of shipping the crude to a refinery, and then to a gas station, and instead of having thousands of miles of tank whose pistons must then evolve in small buckets to pour a ton of sheet metal down a road ...

... instead of all that, you can let the wind turn a blade, take the wind’s energy and capture it, store it in a battery, and run a far simpler motor of a car, or a bus or a train.”

He also makes salient points about how easy it is to retain oil workers or workers on accidents.
My life in the wild

By Jim Hines

Greetings Friends

I am on a lifelong journey which started when I was five. I now walk old walking, exploring, riding my horse over thousands of acres of open space lands which made up my family’s ranch which included the lake which is now Lake Casitas and the surrounding wild open space and the Los Padres National Forest.

I have always felt a need to be close to something bigger than myself and that early age I experienced on the land my first face to face encounter with a mountain lion, my first walk in a flowing creek, my first look at a world of nature unlimited and untamed which would inspire me throughout my life.

As I grew up, I continued my journeys in the wild to various natural areas across our nation and far off wild places in foreign lands, all the while marveling, learning and being inspired by the wild, the wild lands, the wild creatures and the wild experience.

I am alone in nature, but I am never lonely, I bond with all that is small and all that is large, I bond with the sky, I bond with the water and I bond with wild creatures.

In nature everything’s important, everything is connected, and everything works for the harmony of our planet’s ecosystem.

I see, I hear, I feel, I touch, I listen, I smell and I taste ... the senses all come alive in the wild for there is no place better to connect with one’s self than in the wild.

I see in the wild, I see death in the wild as the power of nature in the raw dictates how life is lived.

Yes, that first walk across the Rancho Santa Ana meadow started me on a journey which I never imagined, a journey of fascination, a journey of sadness, of longing, of love, of hope, of respect and a journey of appreciation for all which is wild.

Wild nature has truly touched me in many personal ways, I have learned, I have fallen, I have cried, I have laughed, I have loved and I have been forced to reckon with my own feelings about what is happening to the wild today and to take direct action to protect all that is wild.

Join the Sierra Club for action to preserve our wildlands and animals here:

www.SierraClub.org

CFROG hires director

The Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas (CFROG) Board of Directors has chosen Liz Beall as its new Executive Director, effective on Oct. 1.

“Liz is an outspoken advocate for environmental justice and has the vision, perseverance, and knowledge needed to achieve CFROG’s goals,” said John Brooks, board president.

Our Los Padres Sierra Club has worked with the group for years, sharing common goals.

Liz has a strong track record of nonprofit leadership and has dedicated her career to championing environmental sustainability. She is the founder of two Bay Area nonprofits: Full Circle Farm, an 11-acre educational farm on a public middle school campus, and Wild Child, a wilderness-based environmental education program.

Liz moved to Ventura County in 2018.

“As a passionate advocate for a sustainable future, I am incredibly excited to help CFROG continue to take on the challenges of both programmatically and geographically — and make a positive and lasting impact on the future of the Central Coast.”

As the former Intermountain Executive Director for GreenRobots, Liz oversaw a local environmental advocacy group responsible for significant victories for Bay Area open space preservation.

She is a founding member of the Bay Area Children & Nature Collaborative and the Santa Clara County Food System Alliance.

Liz holds her M.Sc. in medical anthropology from Oxford University, and her Bachelors from San Jose State University. A gifted storyteller, she is also a graduate of UCLA’s School of Theatre, Film, and Television. She is married to her husband, John, and their two daughters live in Oxnard.

Get a Field Bag • SierraClub.ORG
CLIMATE WATCH

Heat, smoke, covid...what's next? Hope!

CLIMATE WATCH: Heat and Smoke compound covid risks, green recovery more important than ever

By Sean Cummings

It feels somewhat absurd to write this column at this moment: in recent weeks, it seems stepping outside, opening one’s eyes, and inhaling should have provided enough information on how the climate’s doing.

The heatwave that struck California the first weekend of September brought temperatures in the 110s to the Santa Ynez Valley and the Santa Barbara foothills, with an unofficial 122 degree reading in Solvang. Ventura County fared no better; record breaking heat in the Fillmore foothills and Oak View (120 degrees) and in Ojai and Fillmore (118 degrees).

That’s dwarfed, however, by Death Valley’s recording on August 16th of 129.9 degrees Fahrenheit, Earth’s hottest in almost a century. These conditions form part of a familiar cycle: climate change intensifies heat waves and dry spells, leaving more dry fuel for bigger and more numerous wildfires. Over five million acres have burned this year across thirteen western states, with over three million in California alone. Over twenty times more acres have burned in California than by this time last year, making this our worst ever fire season.

COVID’s impact on climate change, in contrast, has turned out underwhelming: a recent study in Nature Climate Change indicates 2030 will be just 0.01 degrees Celsius cooler than it would have been without COVID-19 lockdowns. Hope remains, however. The same study estimated that avoiding fossil fuel bailouts in pandemic recovery efforts and putting just 1.2% of global GDP into low-carbon technology development could prevent 0.3 degrees Celsius of warming by 2050. Santa Barbara County recently saw another hint of green recovery, as the Board of Supervisors voted to bring the county into compliance with a state CEQA update that evaluates new developments based on whether they’ll cause people to drive more. If it works as intended, the change could help reduce the transportation emissions that make the county one of the fastest warming in the nation.

Finally, on Sept. 23 Gov. Newsom signed an executive order asking that all new cars sold after 2035 to be zero-emission vehicles, and he threw his support to ban hydraulic fracturing.

“We just went through an historic heat wave that was really a heat dome on the entire West Coast,” Newsom said. “We believe our strategies moving forward will mitigate that.”

We had a warning about climate change almost three years ago during the Thomas Fire followed by devastating floods, so much so that they made a movie out of it! It’s available on YouTube.