A collaboration between the
San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians &
California State University San Marcos
Art and Anthropology Students

Service Learning Courses:
Community Ethnobotany ANTH 470
Advanced Digital Arts and the Community VSAR 440

INDIAN ROCK
NATIVE GARDEN PROJECT
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The San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Mission Indians

Tribal Statement...

Our Ancestors tell us that from the beginning of time our people, ‘atáaxam, have always occupied the San Luis Rey Valley, including the coastline, neighboring lagoons, oak forests, lush meadows, vernal springs, and the creeks and rivers to the north and south of the valley. The ‘atáaxam harvested the fertile land and sea, and their extensive knowledge of the environment was passed on through culture, songs, stories and dances from generation to generation.

The Spaniards established the Mission San Luis Rey in 1798 as part of the El Camino Real trail between Mission San Diego (1769) and Mission San Juan Capistrano (1776). During this period, the missionaries imposed the name San Luiseño on the original inhabitants of the land. Many ‘atáaxam people suffered and died as a result of European diseases, forced labor, and loss of their way of life due to relocation and conversion to Catholicism.

The Mexican Period (1832-1848) inflicted social, cultural, economic and political limitations on the ‘atáaxam people by forcing relocations to newly established ranchos. The ‘atáaxam served as laborers on the Rancho Aqua Hedionda, Rancho Buena Vista, Rancho Guajome, Rancho Los Vallecitos de San Marcos, Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, and Rancho Monserrat ranches.

During the American Period and treaty negotiations of 1851, the American government wanted to consolidate all the San Luiseño People into a single representative group. It was not until the 1870’s when a few reservations were established for some of the San Luiseño people near Palomar Mountain. A reservation in the San Luis Rey valley was denied the San Luis Rey Band since many homesteaders believed the coastal land was valuable for farming and ranching, and they wanted the land for themselves.

Many San Luiseño Indians had no land title documents and no rights under the new American government. Not until 1924 did the United States Congress bestow citizenship on Native Americans. Many of the San Luiseño Indians relocated throughout the states, wherever they could find work and a home.

There are many Luiseño people living today, some on reservations, but most of them in towns and cities. The San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Mission Indians has kept its identity as a people within the local communities that now exist on ancestral tribal lands. Elected leadership, committees and volunteers help to oversee the affairs of the San Luis Rey Band. Today the San Luis Rey Band is constantly being challenged to save and preserve what remains of our great cultural past, and to create and share our heritage with future generations. The San Luis Rey Band is associated with La Jolla, Pala, Pauma, Pechanga, Rincon, and Saboba. Through our cultural departments, we form a tribal coalition called LINC, the Luiseño/Cupeno Indian NAGPRA Coalition, and we work together with local governments and museums to preserve our sacred ancestral cultural heritage. One of LINC’s tasks is to review state and federal guidelines for cultural preservation and align them with legal aspects and contributions from California Indian Legal Services. (continued on next page)
The Indian Rock Native Garden is one of the many current projects of the San Luis Rey Band that focuses on cultural revitalization. Tribal Council members work with the City of Vista, its Parks and Recreation Department, and California Indian Legal Services of Escondido to honor the cultural significance of the site and to create the Indian Rock Native Garden. Currently, the San Luis Rey Band is working with CSUSM art and anthropology classes to record the restoration process of the native plant garden and habitat. Other contributors to the garden include the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. The Council consults with professionals such as Greg Rubin, Ken Hedges, Paul Price and Steve Freers on the historical and cultural significance of the native plant garden.

Our Native American Ancestors lived along the rivers, ocean, lagoons, creeks, valleys and mountains for thousands of years, leaving little to be seen by the untrained eye. What little is found or seen we consider culturally sacred and significant. Much has been displaced or destroyed with construction and development of the lands. The San Luis Rey Band is continually working with archaeologists in North County cities and communities in its battle to protect culturally significant sites. Tribal members have made presentations to the Oceanside Historical Preservation Committee, Oceanside Planning Commission, and the Oceanside City Council on matters of protecting cultural sites, resulting in mitigation and monitoring plans with the land developers. On some cultural sites, the State Native Heritage Commission in Sacramento must be contacted by our tribal representatives. The San Luis Rey Band works with archaeologists, developers and city representatives within the cities of Carlsbad, Escondido, San Marcos, Vista, Camp Pendleton, Old Mission San Luis Rey and the County of San Diego planning department.

The San Luis Rey Band offers cultural guidance to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department, Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation, Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation, Friends of Buena Vista Lagoon, Preserve Calavera, San Diego Archaeological Center, and the Vista and Oceanside Historical Societies.

Fund raising during community events, with food booths and the annual San Luis Rey Pow Wow, as well as applying for local community grants, allows the San Luis Rey Band to fund improvements to the Indian Rock garden in Vista, the Lavanderia native plant garden project at Mission San Luis Rey and the new Luiseño Community Park in Oceanside.

The San Luis Rey Band would like to thank all those who share in and contribute towards our efforts to revitalize our culture.

The San Luis Rey Band would like to thank its members, the Elders, the Veterans, the Luiseño people, the basket weavers, the children, the dancers and singers of the Pow Wow, the gardeners, the CSUSM students, and our cultural people for sharing their time and making a presence in our community.

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The San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Mission Indians Tribal Council
January 2006
A Service Learning Collaboration between the San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians and Cal State San Marcos

Art and anthropology students at CSUSM work together in collaboration with the San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians to generate cultural materials aimed at raising local awareness of the active and continued presence of Native Americans in San Diego County. Using multimedia and anthropological methods, students of Community Ethnobotany and Advanced Digital Arts engage directly with members of the Band in collaborative projects ranging from the documentation of the plant collection and processing of basket weaving materials, to the recording and production of traditional Luiseño dance, music, and story telling.

Students of the two courses, taught by artist Deborah Small and anthropologist Bonnie Bade, meet regularly with Band members throughout the semester to document cultural practices and activities of the Band related to cultural survival. A fundamental approach of the class is fieldwork, where students meet with Band members in various community settings, including local reservations, culturally significant sites threatened by development throughout North County, and the homes of elders. In these field research trips, art students use video and still cameras, while anthropology students write in their field notebooks and interview band participants.

A central focus of the two service learning courses is the establishment of the Indian Rock Native Plant Garden in Vista, California, where the San Luis Rey Band has obtained access to a small parcel of land that was once an important Luiseño ceremonial site. Students in the classes have been involved in Band efforts toward the elimination of non-native plant species at the Garden and the cultivation of many native species such as oak, manzanita and elderberry.

Another important class activity has been the exhibition of the student-band collaborative works at local museums and libraries, such as the San Luis Rey Mission, the Kellogg Library at CSU San Marcos, and the Children’s Museum at the California Center for the Arts in Escondido.

—Bonnie Bade and Deborah Small
The natural surroundings dictate many aspects of traditional life for Indigenous Californians. The natural world is dynamic, therefore, traditional life needs to provide flexibility if it is to sustain itself through changes. Just as a river changes course and plants change through seasons, so too does the social structure. There is a time for everything according to season, plant, and animal life.

The Indigenous people who occupy what is now known as San Diego County followed a complex annual routine and made decisions for the group based on how that routine would fit into that year’s allotment of rain, food harvest, and availability of game. According to the stories, these routines were set up centuries ago to establish an orderly process for the practice of harvesting and hunting. Bands of Indians harvested in a general area for each resource, and within that general area, individual clans had particular areas that were their primary harvesting areas. If an individual clan’s area did not produce enough for that clan, other clans within the band were generous with their harvest. There has never been an account of people starving.

The stories tell of misfortune for people or clans that were not generous. With this social system, people cared for their areas in a sustainable manner. Each clan has a responsibility to future generations to keep their areas in a positive balance so it will be plentiful for the future.

There are many stories and songs that are passed down from centuries ago that teach us how to do this. All plants hold value and were cared for so as to increase their valuable properties. Offerings, ceremonies, stories, and songs all signify the importance of the plant world.

—Kristie Orosco, Member San Pasqual Band, CSUSM alumna
Indian Rock was an integral part of the female coming of age ritual of the Luiseño. It was on this rock that young women painted images expressing their experiences after a transformative three day ceremony.

Interpretation of the symbols is difficult due to their esoteric and culturally specific meaning. The criss-cross patterning of lines as seen here may have represented the rattlesnake, a fierce Avenger. In the Luiseño coming of age ritual, Avengers are spirit guides to be feared, but are also revered dispensers of wisdom.

The stunning red symbols still seen on the rock today are a testament to the durability of the pigments. The red color comes from iron oxide, found in pond scum or rock crevices. The white and blue designs are recent tagging, and will weather away within a few years. Using native materials at hand, paints were made from egg whites, oil from the seeds of wild cucumber and resin from pine or spruce trees.

Pigments do not fade; they erode. The staining of the granite on Indian Rock has helped to preserve the pictographs. The flow of rain and marine moisture combine with binding agents in the rock, creating a sealant for the images. This ensures that they will endure for generations to come.

Graffiti and development threaten all pictograph images; vandals have defaced the Rock as recently as 2003. Preservation of Indian Rock as a link to the Luiseño past is an important focus of the San Luis Rey Band.

—Research by Anne Geisler, Anna Dorian, and Jeanne Rogers
—Photographs by David Fleischman
—Pictographic drawings from *Fading Images*, Steven M. Freers
Abe Sanchez, Diania Caudell and Teeter Romero are Native American basket weavers. They are guiding CSUSM students in the San Diego backcountry to gather Juncus textilis, one of the most important traditional basketry plants.

The path to the creek bed is lined with black sage, sycamore and live oak trees. Rampant wild grape vines crawl up the trees and wild blackberry vines carpet the ground and stream banks. From the enormous sycamores, last season’s leaves are strewn everywhere.

Dark green juncus overhangs the stream bank in great profusion. We’re like explorers in tropical jungles, hacking our way through the dense overgrowth. Two hundred twenty-five species of juncus are found worldwide, but the Juncus textilis we’re harvesting grows only in California. (continued on next page)
Gathering Juncus

Diania speculates that this area might be a traditional gathering site for juncus, a critically important plant that profoundly helped shape Luiseño culture. In Southern California, it’s very difficult to find undisturbed stands of juncus. Loss of habitat from both development and the invasion of non-native species has greatly diminished riparian ecosystems that support wild thickets of juncus.

We’re dressed head-to-toe to protect ourselves from poison oak. Abe wears the hat that he wove with juncus and deergrass. His bold and intricate basketry designs are inspired by traditional Chumash baskets. A master basket weaver, Abe teaches basketry to indigenous people of many different tribal affiliations throughout California. He speaks of the value of gathering from different areas, how each type of juncus is used by basket weavers for a different purpose.

Abe, Diania and Teeter are all members of CIBA, the California Indian Basket weavers Association, whose mission is to preserve, promote and perpetuate California Indian basket weaving traditions. In their commitment to indigenous cultural practices, Abe, Diania and Teeter are vital to the ongoing California Native basket weaving revival.

Baskets were the most important technological tool for Native Californians. Baskets were used for cooking, sifting, serving food, storing water, trapping small game and fowl, fishing, storing, harvesting, winnowing, and as cradle-boards, ceremonial baskets, and intricately woven gifts. Until recently, the knowledge of traditional California basket weaving techniques was endangered. The revival of basket weaving is of critical importance.

—text by Deborah Small and Anna Dorian
—photographs by Cheryl Eng, Eli Ehlinger, Jessica Walker, and Margarita Preciado
Female Coming of Age Ceremony

Waqenish was a significant rite of passage into womanhood, and took place at or near the time of a girl’s first menses, age eight or nine. It was the role of the girls’ father to announce his daughter’s ascension to adulthood, and approach a leader from a neighboring village or clan to conduct a coming of age ceremony. Ceremonial guests traveled from neighboring villages, and were provided food and gifts by the girls’ father, often including baskets, flint-tipped sticks, and strings of shell beads. The girls and neighboring tribes gathered atop a small hill that overlooked the major landmarks of the area.

“THE GIRLS, DROWSY FROM THE ADMINISTERED TOBACCO AND WATER, WERE PLACED IN THE ROASTING PITS…”

Once arranged, the ritual might include several girls from the same clan to participate who were close to or just past the age of their first menstruation, provided that one young woman was of the correct age. To begin the ceremony, the ceremonial leader, táaxku, invoked the girls’ names three times, signaling the girls to take seated positions on the ground. In front of the girls was placed a large basket, approximately three feet in diameter, containing sacred stones, large quartz crystals, feather skirts and headdresses. Kneeling in front of the girls, gesturing and reciting invocations, the ceremonial leader placed a rolled ball of powder tobacco into each girl’s mouth, followed by warm water in a chilkut drinking basket. This first portion of the ritual was a serious test of the girl’s honor. The young women were perceived as virtuous only if they could accept the ingesta, beginning with the singing was continuous, beginning with ashish and concluding with kwinamish songs. Throughout the three days the girls were lectured by their hands. The three days were filled with song and dance by the village women, followed by three nights of men’s singing and dancing around the perimeter of the pit. The participation of neighboring villages ensured that the singing was continuous, beginning with ashish and concluding with kwinamish songs. Throughout the three days the girls were lectured by their elders in the secret ways of being a woman, learning how to conduct themselves and support the community and future generations. The prolonged fasting, alteration in body chemistry brought on by the heating pits, and ritualistic experience induced visions for the girls, often taking the forms of spirit Avengers.

After three days and nights, the young women rose from the roasting pits and received hair bracelets, anklets and a mica necklace before learning new dietary habits that could extend from one month to three years, and excluded meat or salt that might introduce bodily impurities. The Luiseño culture holds women’s bodies to be sacred vessels capable of bringing children into the world.

After the fasting instructions and counsel, the táaxku made a sand painting with a central hole, into which the girls spit sage weed that was ceremonially used to anoint their bodies at head, shoulders, arms, breasts, knees and feet. Men at the perimeter of the sand painting pushed sand to the center, filling the hole and erasing the painting.

Exhausted by their time in the pit and energized by the attention of their elders, the girls raced to a previously chosen rock to have their hands and faces painted red, black and white by the chief’s wife. This paint was used to create symbols on the rock commemorating the girl’s experience and vision symbols. The hair bracelets and anklets were deposited on the rock and left to weather away.

—the adapted from texts by Philip Sparkman and Constance Goddard DuBois —research by Lauriana Leoncavallo, Treasure Addis, and Emily Broeding —photographs by Josh Walker
Among the Luiseño, avengers are messengers and spirit guides that can appear in the forms of a raven, qawi'awut, a puma, tūukut, a black widow spider, kóyxgingish, or a black diamondback rattlesnake, $dowut. Avengers act as reminders to follow social and cultural rules of conduct. Luiseño people accepted good luck as a sign of virtue, and bad luck as a logical result of acting dishonorably. One might suffer scratches from Puma, fever from Black Widow, or swelling from Rattlesnake as punishment for not observing culturally approved behaviors. Avengers are spirit guides to be feared, but are also dispensers of wisdom.

Sand paintings were an integral part of the female coming of age ceremony, reflecting the universe and consisting of three rings and a central hole. The white outer ring represented the Milky Way, the Great Beyond where one’s spirit will go. The next inner ring is black, and represented Night, the darkness between the World and the Milky Way. The red innermost ring represented Blood. Between this inner ring and a central hole were paintings of the Avengers: Panther, Raven, Rattlesnake and Black Widow, accompanied by a stick to represent purity. Opening in the rings of the sand paintings were oriented north, so that at the end of the puberty ritual when the painting was destroyed, the girl’s spirit was able to escape to the correct place through the black sky to the Milky Way.

—adapted from The Culture of the Luiseño Indians, Philip Sparkman, 1908

Many secrets of adulthood, proper behavior, and being a member of the community were passed on during ceremony, such as the Luiseño. “See these old who paid attention to this up people, and they have get this that I am telling you, you are old like these old daughters in like manner, will rise northward to the sky, they will speak of you, and to rise your spirit and soul to...
Dr. “Uncle” Henry Rodriguez
Adapted from text by Bonnie Biggs

Dr. “Uncle” Henry Rodriguez dedicated his life to local, state and national Native American Indian communities. Dr. Rodriguez was one of the early national leaders in the establishment of water rights for local indigenous people and was one of the founders of the San Luis Rey Water Authority. Dr. Rodriguez was instrumental in bringing Indian healthcare to California Reservations and worked with California State and United States federal authorities in relation to environmental protection, repatriation, and Indian health legislation.

“Uncle” Henry Rodriguez was an important Luiseño elder who helped to preserve indigenous California culture and to build bridges between the many bands and tribes within the region and state. Dr. Rodriguez passed on important traditional prayers and blessings to the next generation. He served as chairman of the La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians and was instrumental in establishing the Southern California Intertribal Council, which later became the California Tribal Chairman’s Association.

Dr. Rodriguez was an active proponent of Native American Indian education. He served as a Board Member and as a consultant to numerous school districts, helping to develop curriculum with more accurate representation of local Indian people. Dr. Rodriguez provided consultation for Indian Studies programs at the University of California campuses at Riverside and Los Angeles, the California State University campuses, at Long Beach and San Diego, and at Palomar College in San Marcos. Dr. Rodriguez was one of the most significant community consultants to California State University San Marcos in 2001 when he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Dr. Rodriguez passed away on February 14, 2002.

Uncle Henry’s Stories

The Wind

Listen to the wind. Learn about it, and you learn what is going on. Sing in tune to wind. The songs are in tune with nature. Plants have a lot to tell and give you.

—recorded by Kassandra Fisher
3 October 2001

The Sandpiper

As a small boy at the beach, Uncle Henry threw stones at a sandpiper. His mother said, “Don’t do this,” and Uncle Henry replied that it was just a stupid bird that kept running and falling to the ground over and over again. When he hesitated to throw the rock again, his mother told him it was because the sandpiper owned him, and the bird had a story. Long ago, she said, when Great Grandfather lay dying, the sandpiper had to run to make it to the funeral. But while he was running, he would stop and dip, then run again, then stop and dip, then run again. The sandpiper didn’t make it to the funeral and the cremation, and so he always runs the same way ever since. Uncle Henry’s mother asked him, “Is this the kind of life you want? Are you going to be a good person, are you thinking rationally?”

—recorded by Ron Hawkins and Kassandra Fisher
3 October 2001

The Morning Dove

Uncle Henry asked why the morning dove always sounded so sad. Then he told us that it was to remind us that we have lost someone that is greater than ourselves: Great Grandfather.

—recorded by Ron Hawkins
3 October 2001

California Sage Brush

When Uncle Henry was little his friends and he would get sticks off of the sage brush and throw them down into the canyon. How long and far the wind carried the stick revealed the amount of power within the individual who threw it. If the stick soared like the eagle, your power was great. If the stick fell quickly and disappeared, you had little power.

—recorded by Alicia Mendivil
—photograph by Kassandra Fisher
24 October 2001

The Warning

Uncle Henry told us that one time, when he was a child, a bird kept bothering him. It kept swooping down at him, crying “Tio! Tio!” Thinking it was a stupid bird he waved it away, and told his mother about it when he got home. She asked him what the bird said. He told her what had happened, that it had only been a stupid bird. His mother told him that the bird wasn’t stupid, but that he was. “Tio” in Luiseño means careful. Maybe the bird had been trying to warn him about something when it was so agitated. His mother told him that he needed to go back and apologize to the bird, which he finally did.

—recorded by Ron Hawkins
3 October 2001

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—recorded by Alicia Mendivil
—photograph by Kassandra Fisher
24 October 2001
Hidden Meadows

The greatest threat to biological diversity and ancient Luiseño cultural sites is habitat destruction. The decimated oak woodlands and coastal sage scrub plant communities at Hidden Meadows once provided critical habitat for countless resident and migratory birds, as well as for coyotes, deer, woodrats, raccoons, lizards, butterflies, and bees.

Mark Mojado, cultural representative of the San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians, has been working for over a year at Hidden Meadows in North County, San Diego. There, coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands are being demolished by a large-scale development of tract housing. Mark estimates that this site was occupied for 2,000 to 3,000 years.

When a developer at Hidden Meadows informs Mark that it will be necessary to dynamite a giant rock full of ancient mortars and metates, Mark asks him: “Do you know how many stories were told here, how many ancient songs were sung? Do you know how many women ground acorn and chia seeds here? Do you know how many families were nurtured from this rock? We thank the rock for being here, and we always treat it with respect. The rock has a spirit that takes care of us.”

Following California Environmental Quality Act regulations, a small portion of the ancient site has been left intact, capped with earth and surrounded with a wrought-iron fence. All around the ancient site, tract homes have been built.

—photographs by David Fleischman and Deborah Small
LUISEÑO... 

—portraits by Josh Walker

...People
Land Management

In San Diego, what appears to be wild land ready for development is in fact the product of careful and continuous land management practices by California’s indigenous peoples. A primary tool of land management was fire, used to burn brush for hunting and to clear valleys in order to promote new growth.

Unlike the European view of fire as a tool of war and destruction, indigenous Californians used fire to promote the growth of plants used for baskets and food. According to indigenous land management philosophies, coastal sage scrub and chaparral ecosystems require fires to clear away the old dry brush; which, if left unchecked, can be fuel for uncontrollable wild fires. Regularly planned fires reduced undergrowth, which in turn prevented serious damage to the food-producing trees from the intense heat of a fire with too much fuel. In addition, planned fires eliminated parasites such as harmful weevils and increased acorn and other edible crop yields. The use of fire was compatible with the lifecycle of the local plants, which rapidly reproduced edible seeds and depended upon fire for germination. The discounting of indigenous land management knowledge began with the practice of Mission officials, who made it against the law for Indians to burn the land.

Indigenous land management knowledge was passed from generation to generation through stories and oral traditions. The leaders of the people controlled where and when to set fires according to intimate knowledge of wind and weather patterns. The fires were started by the leaders in the fall when the lighter rains came, to ensure the growth of vegetation before the harsher rains of winter ravaged the land.

These intense land management practices created a highly productive and fertile ecosystem that allowed for the California native population to have the highest density of humans per square mile north of Mexico. Generations of indigenous people took their role as caretakers of the land seriously, and their way of life depended on this intimate knowledge of the environment.

“The use of fire was compatible with the lifecycle of the local plants . . .”

— text by Ray Esquerio
Why The Stink Bug Is Black

The Stink Bug was all white and had beautiful designs on his back. The Creator saw him and said, come up here, I’ve got a job for you. Your designs are really nice. You have a talent for design. At night when the sun goes down I want you to put the stars across the sky.

Every evening at dark the Stink Bug would take his basket full of stars and scatter them across the sky, making the beautiful designs.

Every night there was a new design. All the other creatures would say, ‘hey, those are great designs,’ and they praised the Stink Bug.

The Stink Bug started getting a big head. He began to think that he was better than the other animals because the Creator had picked him to create the designs. He stopped hanging out with the other animals. The Stink Bug’s ego grew and grew.

One day it got late. The rest of the creatures said, hey, aren’t you going to put the stars up in the sky? But the Stink Bug was kicking back underneath a tree. He fell asleep, and when he awoke the sun was coming up. He rushed and rushed and tripped over a rock. The Stink Bug spilled the stars all over the sky.

The next day, the Creator calls up. So I hear you think you’re better than all my creatures. You fouled up. I will have to punish you. I will take away your beautiful color and your designs and make you black like the night without the stars. I will make you walk with your head to the ground to humble you before the rest of the creatures. I will give you a foul odor so they won’t want to be around you. I will put the white designs on your feet, so that when you walk by, they’ll know it was you.

So that’s how Stink Bug came to be black and how his little feet came to have little white designs.

—narrated by Mark Mojado

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So that’s how Stink Bug came to be black and how his little feet came to have little white designs.

—narrated by Mark Mojado
When Louise Foussat died at 97, she was the oldest living Luiseño Indian. Throughout her life, she watched Oceanside grow into a large city. Louise worked continuously to teach people about her native culture and encourage them to love and preserve the environment. She worked to educate local elementary school children about Luiseño heritage and worked with the Anti-Litter Association, the Girl Scouts, and Adult Protective Services for many years, receiving recognition for her efforts from the city of Oceanside.

"At my age I am crawling like a turtle, living like a butterfly... but I am not a cocoon yet."
—recorded by Juel Franklin and Kassandra Fisher
2 March 2003

Louise has been recognized as a pioneer in the Oceanside Fourth of July Parade and has received an award in recognition of her efforts to preserve history. She is a truly amazing woman with a wealth of knowledge and experience that she shared with anyone with a willing and open heart.

Louise Foussat passed away in November, 2005.
—text by Juel Franklin and photographs by Chris Nunn

“They think I’m a nut because I wear my clothes like this sometimes, you know, but I say ‘I’m going to be me, never mind you, be who you want to be, I’m going to be me.’”
—recorded by Juel Franklin and Kassandra Fisher
15 March 2003

—portrait by Josh Walker
Basket weaving, we didn’t know anything about. We knew who we were, and we knew where we came from, and we knew that we had always been here, but our grandparents did not bring the children up Native American. They told us who we were, but they never followed tradition. They wanted to learn to be like, you know, all the rest of the white people. They wanted to have a car, they wanted to have this and that, so they never taught our parents, and our parents never taught us. When I came along I said “Well, I cannot let this go on because we are going to lose it.” So that’s when I started getting involved.

We are self-taught basket weavers and it was a group of 15 of us that started in the mid 1970’s. We knew who Indians were and what they had done, but we didn’t know how. So, we just picked baskets and said, “this is what we want to do, so let’s go do it.” I am Teeter Romero, I am a Acjachemen, Juaneño, but I am also Tewa from El Paso.

—interviews by Margarita Preciado, Cheryl Eng, and Elvi Meza, March 2003

A lot of our things are being destroyed. If you look at our environment around us, we have development, development, development! Juncus and all the plants that we use for actually making the baskets are being destroyed. When we’re out driving, we stop, we get out there and we take pictures. I want to find the spots, notify the nearest reservations, notify the forestry, notify the developers. Can we go in, can we pick, can we transplant? Because if you are going to develop it and destroy it, let us go in!

I am Luiseño. I am ‘atáax. My mother’s family was from San Luis Rey area and my father’s family from Pala. We started the Páa’ila Basket Weaving Circle to revitalize native basketweaving. This was the beginning of a wonderful spiritual and healing experience. I’ve been involved with protecting native plants at the local, state, and federal levels. I work to promote traditional gathering of native plants so that native cultural practices of basketweaving will continue for generations to come. I want my grandchildren to experience native California basketweaving.

—interviews by Margarita Preciado, Cheryl Eng, and Elvi Meza, March 2003

Listen
From the rock on the mountain
I see the people
Listen
See the people singing
People Listen!
The door was closed
Again it will open
My heart will weave among the people
Listen! Sing!
NoSaum lóoviq. Thank you.
Diania Caudell, 2002
Acorn Wiíwish
A Luiseño Staple Food...

You will need:
- finely ground acorns
- bucket
- colander
- cheesecloth
- clothespins
- med. sized pot
- measuring cup
- spatula
- wire whisk
- 9”x12” pan

Step One:
- Place colander on top of open end of bucket.
- Drape cheesecloth over colander and press into bowl of colander.
- Pin cheesecloth to rim of colander using clothespins.
- Pour finely ground acorn flour into center of colander.
- Fill medium sized pot with hot water and pour evenly over the acorn flour.
- Let drain thoroughly.
- Repeat this process while gently scraping mixture back to center of colander.
- When bucket is almost full, but not touching bottom of colander, pick up colander and empty bucket.
- Place colander back on top of bucket and leach flour one more time. A taste test can be done now.
- If mixture tastes bitter—leach one more time, then leach again.
- After final leaching, let mixture drain thoroughly.
- Mixture now will be thick and mushy.
- Scoop into a medium pot, it’s time to cook!

Step Two:
- Cook mixture over a medium-high flame.
- Remember to stir constantly.
- Pour about 1.5 cups of lukewarm water into mixture and continue stirring.
- Mixture will start to thicken and may start to become lumpy. If this happens, add more water.
- Always keep stirring and scraping sides of pot.
- Bring mixture to a rolling boil and turn heat to low.
- Have a glass of water near you for testing mixture.
- Keep stirring over low heat awhile longer.
- Drop a small dab of mixture into water.
- If it is ready, it should ball up and float; if not, continue a bit longer and keep stirring.
- Test again.

Step Three:
- When ready, immediately pour into 9”x12” pan.
- Mixture will set quickly. Pour and spread evenly.
- Set pan on a cooling rack and cool completely.
- When completely cooled, wrap in plastic wrap or cover with pan cover and place in refrigerator.
- Cut into bite-sized pieces and serve cold.

—Special thanks to Diania Caudell for her wiíwish recipe
The Luiseño lived between two great rivers, the Santa Margarita and the San Luis Rey. Steelhead trout, an ocean-going fish, ran up these rivers to spawn. Luiseño territory spanned from what is now known as Temecula to Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Palomar Mountain, and had diverse terrains that include distinct soil types, climates, flora, and fauna.

A delicate community of plants that included beach primrose (Camissonia cheiranthifolia) and sand verbena (Abronia maritime) held together the sand dunes that comprised Luiseño coastal territory. The now endangered Coastal Sage Scrub flourished inland of the beaches and once spanned the entirety of lands along the coast covered by the marine layer. It is here that one can hear the kitten-like call of the endangered California Gnatcatcher. The inlets of lagoons and outlets of rivers, where the mixing of salt and fresh water take place, provide the brackish marsh habitat where the low growing pickle weed (Salicornia subterminale) and salt marsh geraniums made a soft velvety layer around the waterfront.

Moving up the waterways, riparian habitats emerge with thickets of tule and mulefat (Baccharis spp.), river forests overgrown with sycamores (Platanus racemosa) and cottonwoods (Populus spp.). It is here that one finds some of the most important Luiseño medicinal plants. The broad-leaved and red-rooted yerba mansa (Anemopsis californica) resides in clearings of these watery habitats, which for centuries has provided medicine for Luiseño people.

In the inland valleys thrive the oak woodlands, large and spacious, with treetops as graceful as cathedrals. Mushrooms and fleshy ferns are abundant in the wet seasons here. At the top of the mountains are a smattering of pines and blue and black oaks mixed together with ubiquitous chaparral shrubs. The deserts lay at the bottom of the eastern base of the San Jacinto Mountains. The desert provided the Luiseño with valuable plants such as yucca (Yucca spp.), agave (Agave spp.), great basin sage (Artemisia tridentate), indigo bush (Dalea fremontii) and jojoba (Simmondsia chinensis).

Up the steep slopes of the coastal hills one finds thick chaparral communities, comprised of large woody shrubs, mainly ceanothus (Ceanothus thyrsiflorus), manzanita (Arctostaphylos spp.) and chamise (Adenostoma fasciculatum). It is here that large and elusive mammals of the region such as mule deer, bobcat, mountain lion and coyote find sanctuary.

In San Diego’s coastal, wetland and upper regions, the Luiseño lived in balance with nature, generating medicine, food, shelter and a rich cultural heritage.

“The broad-leaved and red-rooted yerba mansa . . . has provided medicine for Luiseño people.”

—text by Amanda Wolfe
—photographs by Ursula Adams
Indian Rock
Native California Garden

California State University
San Marcos & San Luis Rey Band
ing the experience of California’s native land
múukul—manzanita  *Arctostaphylos glauca*

The manzanita berries, called “little apples,” can be harvested and smashed when they ripen in the summer to make a refreshing drink. Coyotes relish the berries as much as indigenous people did. The berries can also be dried to use at a later date and added to flavor porridges made of acorn or other grains.

monkey flower  *Mimulus aurantiacus*

The stems and leaves of monkey flowers are edible and can be eaten as greens.

‘énwish—wild cucumber  *Marah fabaceus*

The large shiny black seeds were pulverized and used as a oily medium for paint pigment for ancient rock paintings.

hunúuvat—yucca  *Yucca whipplei parishii*

The yucca has medicinal, utilitarian, and cultural uses. The leaves of the yucca can be used for arthritis, fever, headaches, ulcers, and appendicitis. Today, yucca extracts, pills, and juices are sold at most health food stores.

tóókapish—Indian potatoes  *Orogenia fusiformis*

Teeter Romero relates that the nutritious and tasty bulbs were once an important food source for California Indians.

páaśal—chia  *Salvia columbariae*

The high-protein chia, one of the primary staples of indigenous people in Southern California, were taken on long journeys. One teaspoon of chia was sufficient to sustain an individual on a march for twenty-four hours.

tóowish popá’ku  *Claytonia (Montia) perfoliata*

The leaves of Indian lettuce are harvested and eaten raw. They serve as an important source of vitamin C.

páaśal—chia  

Salvia columbariae

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tóókapish—Indian potatoes  

Orogenia fusiformis

Teeter Romero relates that the nutritious and tasty bulbs were once an important food source for California Indians.
chévnish—yerba mansa
Anemopsis californica
According to Kumeyaay elder Jane Dumas, the best soap to use after trekking through poison oak is made from yerba mansa, an important medicinal native plant. The roots of yerba mansa are used to make an infusion for stomach ulcers, chest congestion, and colds. A poultice is made from the leaves to reduce swelling.

kúuta—elderberry
Sambucus mexicana
Elderberry, one of the most sacred Luiseño plants used in blessing ceremonies, is also one of the most versatile. Luiseños ate the tasty berries, and made a poultice of the leaves for sprains and itches, and used its branches to make bows, flutes, and clapper sticks. Elderberry blossoms make a powerful tea that will break a fever or fight the influenza virus. First dry the blossoms, shake out the bugs, remove the bitter green parts, then steep the blossoms in hot water.

qáa$il—white sage
Salvia apiana
White sage is a very important and sacred plant for Luiseño people. In ceremonies, white sage is burned for prayer and purification. Young stalks are eaten raw, while the seeds are ground in a metate and mixed with other seeds and grains for pinole.

‘áachawut—toyon
Heteromeles arbutifolia
Toyon’s bright red berries are so popular with native birds that the plant is also known as an aviary on a stick. Toyon berries were often roasted or parched to remove their bitterness. A tea was made from the bark and leaves to relieve stomach problems. Toyon wood was used for arrows or scrapers. The berries ripen in December, so toyon is also known as Christmas berry.
Exhibitions:  

... Mission San Luis Rey

In Spring 2003, students were invited to exhibit collaborative projects in the Luiseño Room of the Mission San Luis Rey in Oceanside, California

—photograph by Allen Bagaoisan

—sculpture by Jessica Walker
—photograph by Allen Bagaoisan

... Escondido Children’s Museum

In Spring 2004, students were invited to exhibit collaborative projects in the Escondido Children’s Museum

—painting by Eli Ehlinger
—poster design by James Miller

Indigenous Rock Native Garden Project
Exhibition:

In Spring 2004, classes installed the Indian Rock Collaboration as the inaugural exhibition at the new Kellogg Library at Cal State San Marcos.

—poster design by James Miller

—panoramic photographs by Tony Stanton and Matt Blackwell
Mark Mojado, spiritual advisor and cultural representative of the San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians, works as an archaeological monitor to salvage culturally significant Luiseño sites, features, and artifacts. For Mark everything at these sites—the oaks, chamise, Indian lettuce, gooseberries, and wild peonies—is endowed with intelligence, vitality, and spirit.

Mark relates that an elder once told him that when you first encounter an ancient site, you don’t immediately look for shells, pottery shards, mano fragments, or metates buried in the earth. What you do first is to sit down, look around, figure out where the sun rises and sets. Listen to the voice of the wind in the trees. Observe where the stream flows. Try to understand why the ancestors would have chosen this particular place for their village site.

Mark is a knowledgeable and astute observer with an eye for detail, able to read soil, shells, mosses, lichens, rocks, features and artifacts. “They call to me,” Mark tells us. “The artifacts want to be preserved.” He shows us signs of long-standing human habitation everywhere—mortars, or deep grinding holes, where women ground acorns with large cylindrical stones called pestles—and metates, the shallower basins used to grind buckwheat, chia, and white and black sage seeds with round circular stones called manos.

Mark is fueled by frustration at the continuous desecration of the natural world, as well as the ongoing destruction of culturally significant and sacred Luiseño sites. In the face of this, what strikes us is his fierce devotion to Luiseño tradition and culture, as well as his gentleness.

Mark’s work helps to salvage artifacts and features, to prevent irreplaceable information from being destroyed, and to document, catalog, and recover what otherwise might be lost, for the San Luis Rey Band and for all of us.

― text by Deborah Small
― photographs by Dave Fleischman and Deborah Small

WHEN MARK SPEAKS, HIS DEEPLY FELT ATTACHMENT TO THE LAND IS EVIDENT. HE’S NOT AFRAID TO SHOW HIS AFFINITY FOR THE WILLOW HE USES TO BUILD HIS SWEATS, THE YERBA MANSA WHOSE ROOT HE USES TO MAKE A TEA FOR HIS FRIEND WITH CANCER, THE WHITE SAGE HE USES IN CEREMONIES, OR THE GOLDEN EAGLE WHOSE FEATHERS HE TIES ON HIS CEREMONIAL STAFF.
Greg Rubin is the primary plant consultant for the Indian Rock Native Garden Project. A former aerospace engineer, Greg has created a native plant landscaping business called California’s Own Native Landscape Design, and is now devoted to proliferating native plant communities.

At Indian Rock, Greg insists on the removal of all invasive exotics such as bougainvillea and aloe vera, which destroy native plant communities by interfering with the mycorrizal grid, a fungal network that distributes nutrients and water to each of the members of California native plant communities. The long roots of the oak tree, for example, pull water up from deep in the ground and use the grid to transfer it to neighboring plants such as sage and wild currants in exchange for nutrients produced by these plants.

Greg points out native mulefat, buckwheat, coyote brush, and laurel sumac still growing on the site and discusses their medicinal and food properties. Greg teaches all of us to read the landscape. When he looks at the remnant elderberry, for instance, he knows that the area was once oak woodland, and that beneath Indian Rock itself is an ancient aquifer that sustained the native plants and the people who used them.

Greg also enumerates for us many of the components of the site that are missing—plants once part of coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities—toyons, gooseberries, currants, heart-leaved penstemon, black and white sage, chia, manzanita, summer holly, wild lilacs, sagebrush, sugarbush, sycamores and oaks. Even poison oak, a constant companion of plants in riparian and oak woodland communities, is missing at Indian Rock. As Greg says, “by restoring native plants, we restore the integrity of the relationships between plants and the many other species that depend on them, including ourselves.”

—photographs by Dave Fleischman, Margarita Preciado, Cheryl Eng, and Jessica Walker

“… by restoring native plants, we restore the integrity of the relationships between plants, other species, and ourselves.”
Steve Freers

An expert on indigenous pictographs and lithics of Southern California’s Native Americans, Steve Freers has provided invaluable consultation regarding the symbolism, pictograph pigments, and context of the images at Indian Rock, which he speculates is an outstanding example of a Luiseño female coming-of-age ritual and ceremonial site. Steve has spoken at length regarding interpretation of pictographs to students of the Indian Rock Project and has warned about the difficulty in arriving at absolute conclusions due to the enigmatic and culturally specific meaning imbued in the symbols. For example, we can only postulate that the criss-cross patterning of lines seen on the rock represent the rattlesnake, an important teacher in Luiseño world view.

Eloquently describing the social context and mindset of ritual participants, Freers transports students at Indian Rock to a time celebrating one of life’s most significant transformations, interweaving his passionate dedication to the subject with a deeply grounded technical knowledge. He explained, for example, how the red color found on the rock comes from iron oxide, found in pond scum or rock crevices. He further informed students that paints were made from egg whites, oil from the seeds of wild cucumber and resin from pine or spruce trees.

Paul Price

Paul Price has worked closely with Luiseño people throughout San Diego for more than twenty years. His extensive knowledge of Southern California Native American world views, tools, technology, symbolism, social organization, and Luiseño cultural tradition is renowned throughout the native and non-native communities of San Diego County.

Paul is responsible for the beautiful designs and Luiseño symbols seen throughout the casino at Pechanga. His contributions to the Indian Rock Native Garden Collaboration, such as lectures to students, interviews regarding Luiseño tradition, and consultation regarding symbolism, history, stories and academic references, have been invaluable.

His passion and appreciation for Luiseño culture can be seen in the artifacts he painstakingly creates, including rabbit sticks, pottery, bows and arrows, spears and other tools. Paul Price has dedicated his life to the restoration and preservation of Luiseño culture.

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STEVE FREERS’ BOOK, FADING IMAGES, PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF CEREMONIAL AND SACRED ROCK ART THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.
A non-going collaboration between Cal State San Marcos art and anthropology students and the San Luis Rey Band of Luiseño Indians.

Together, we are developing a native garden situated on an ancient Luiseño ceremonial rock site near the university.

The project involves environmental and cultural restoration to help create a legacy for present and future generations.