



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE Newsletter – December 2013/January 2014

Pick a Peck of Garbage!?

For the past 10 years or so, I have been running most every weekend on Los Trancos Road, Los Trancos Circle, Vista Verde, Ramona Road, and Old Spanish Trail. Not wanting to waste a perfectly good run, I carry along some plastic bags and a glove, which I use to pick up any trash I find along the road. Below are some of the things I have collected on one of my “Trash Tours” and I will offer some suggestions as to what we all can do to keep our neighborhood clean of litter.

The recent inventory trash list and picture below shows what I picked up on Saturday November 2 along the 2 ¼ mile stretch of Los Trancos Road between Ramona and Alpine.

46 Cigarette butts + 1 plastic cigar holder, 31 Bottles & Cans (along with lots of bits of broken glass), 10 White plastic straps (used to tie newspaper bundles together), 1 VW Hubcap, 1 Plastic garden container, 1 Fitbit pedometer (broken), 1 Soccer shirt, and an assortment of paper and other trash consisting mostly of food containers, napkins, bottle caps, plastic packing “peanuts” and 1 rat trap (with partial remains).



In analyzing this and other collections gathered over the years it is my personal opinion that the majority of the trash comes from the following sources:

1) Contractors, 2) A News Delivery Service, 3) Bicyclists, 4) Locals

You can help keep our neighborhood and roads clean by taking a few simple personal actions.

- Kindly ask your gardeners or contractors not to toss out trash/basura as they come and go.
- Inform the San Jose Mercury News that you do not want their delivery service tossing the used plastic straps and plastic bag holders onto our streets. You can email them at www.subscriberconcierge.com/sanjose/feedback.aspx or call 1-800-870-6397.

- Pick up any trash you see in front of your own property and encourage your children to assist; I will not have to make as many stops along my run as I pass your house.

In closing, we live where we do because it is a beautiful natural area; with everyone's participation, we can all keep it that way for many years to come.

Submitted by Ken Kormanak

(Editor's note: We all owe a great deal of gratitude to Ken for his weekly forays!!)

What a Turkey!

Yes, we do have turkeys in our midst, Wild Turkeys, *Meliagris gallopavo*. Our Wild Turkey has quite an intriguing social and natural science. Did you know that Benjamin Franklin thought the Wild Turkey was a better selection for our national bird than the Bald Eagle? Although the Wild Turkey is found all over the eastern half of the U.S., not so in California, where its primary range is in the foothills and low mountain areas. They like to hang out in flocks of 5-40 birds, hence the groupings we have been seeing. Numbering in the millions and covering vast areas when the pilgrims arrived, their numbers were drastically reduced by 1900 because of overhunting and habitat loss, perhaps as low as 30,000. In 2011 it was estimated that their population had rebounded to around 7 million through a concerted conservation effort.

The males are the ones that like to gobble and strut with plumage erect, tail fanned and head ornaments swollen. He practices polygyny, and the better the food source in his territory, the more females he can mate with. The female lays anywhere between 6-20 eggs in a ground nest. No wonder their numbers are increasing! Since the chicks are vulnerable to multiple ground predators, they are precocial (upon birth they walk, have feathers, can follow parents and eat for themselves). The Wild Turkey diet consists of seeds, acorns, leaves and insects.

Fun Facts: Wild Turkeys mate on their own, pretty obvious. Domesticated turkeys are all artificially inseminated and have forgotten how to mate and brood. The Turkey gizzard is a muscular section of the stomach which is lined with horny plates or ridges. It is so effective that an object requiring 400 lbs. of pressure per square inch to crush was found flattened after 24 hours in the turkey gut.

Sources: Birder's Handbook, Sibley Field Guide, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, and the web site of National Wild Turkey Federation

Submitted by Linda Drey-Nightingale (who had great fun with this article)

Neighborhood Notes

- **Let's lighten the leaf litter!** It is that time of year when we need to be clearing the drains before each rain, and that includes the roadway drains. When the County comes, they only clear the open culverts; the driveway culvert is the homeowner's responsibility. You want to ensure rainwater will flow down through the road culverts and not into unwanted places like garages, etc.
- **Rainfall data** as reported by Gene Hunner: Sept. - .7", Oct. - .1, Nov. - .8, total for the season - 1.6"

2014 Community Resource Guide

We are in the process of updating the Resource Guide and need your help. If you have any **changes to the 2012 listing** for your household please **contact** Linda. 851-1787 or dreynight@aol.com and let her know what they are. **Deadline is 31 Dec. 2013.**

Community Associations' Web Sites

The web site addresses are:
<http://lostrancoswoods.org/>
<http://www.vistaverdepv.org>

The group e-mail list is:
VistaVerdeLTW@yahoogroups.com
VistaVerdeCommunityAssoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Thank you, Jerry Jensen & Rob Kalman for maintaining web sites