

Carlsbad Time Lines

Q3 2025

Carlsbad, California, Historical Society

President's letter

Visitors to our museum are often surprised at the depth of our collection and displays. Often they are left amazed after seeing a dinosaur replica in our oversize collection housed in the barn, or becoming aware that Carlsbad also had a Native American, Spanish and Mexican period.

We consistently and actively try to increase awareness and knowledge of the vast and expansive areas of Carlsbad history. So, you can imagine our surprise after a recent discovery and one which subsequently had us falling down the research rabbit hole after spotting these prickly pear cacti at Carrillo Ranch.



Cochineal infection at Rancho Carrillo and potent dye coming out of bug when squeezed

Our first reaction seeing so many prickly pear cacti infected was "Oh no, what is going on!" After inquiring about these spotted cactus from a passing staff member, we learned this was actually a cochineal (scale insect) infestation, and it produces as part of the natural defense mechanism, a carmine color excretion. Our subsequent research turned up the facts that these excretions have been used by native people for hundreds of years throughout the Americas, and once discovered by Spanish conquistadors, it became a major export to Europe where they revolutionized cloth dyeing colors, paints, and inks.

A few examples of the impact of this discovery include: changes in the colors for Catholic Cardinals robes from purple to red, and by 1600 British military uniforms were made from this dye and became

to be known as the Red Coats, a significant change in British military uniforms. It is reported that cochineal for a time was the second most important export to Europe, after silver.

Still in use today in cosmetics, it's a natural alternative to synthetic dyes.

Go see for yourself these incredible insects at Carrillo Ranch and check out the Wikipedia link below for more information.

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cochineal#:~:text=Carminic%20acid%20is%20extracted%20from,su ch%20as%20crimson%20and%20scarlet.>

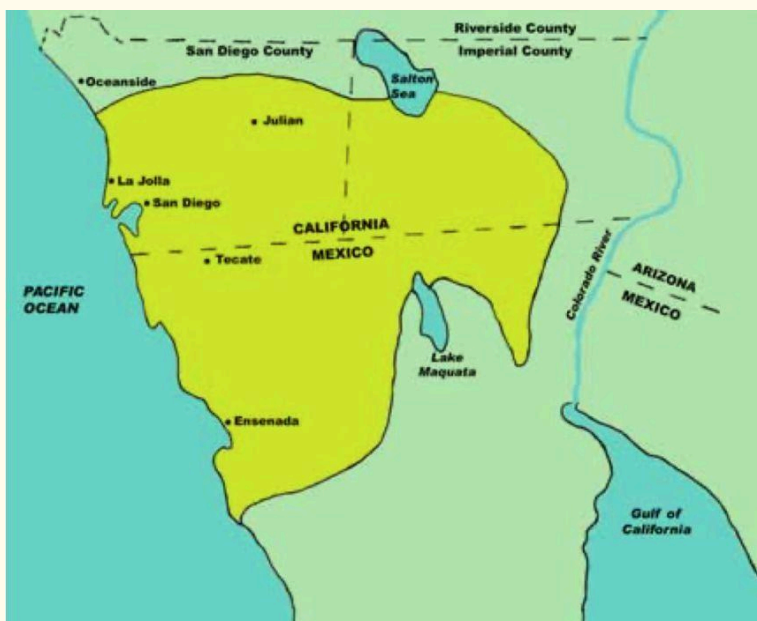
"The cochineal (Dactylopius coccus) is a scale insect in the suborder Sternorrhyncha, from which the natural dye carmine is derived. A primarily sessile parasite native to tropical and subtropical South America through North America (Mexico and the Southwest United States), this insect lives on cacti in the genus Opuntia, feeding on plant moisture and nutrients. The insects are found on the pads of prickly pear cacti, collected by brushing them off the plants, and dried.

Chemical structure of carminic acid, the predator-detering substance found in high concentration in cochineal insects: The insoluble aluminium and calcium salts of this acid form red and purple dyes called "carmine".

The insect produces carminic acid that deters predation by other insects. Carminic acid, typically 17–24% of dried insects' weight, can be extracted from the body and eggs, then mixed with aluminium or calcium salts to make carmine dye, also known as cochineal. Today, carmine is primarily used as a colorant in food and in lipstick (E120 or Natural Red 4).

Carmine dye was used in the Americas for coloring fabrics and became an important export good in the 16th century during the colonial period."

San Diego County Has Largest Number Of Reservations in California



Approximate Boundary of Kumeyaay based on Luomal (1978)

San Diego has a high number of Native American reservations because it is home to the Kumeyaay Nation, which is a large and historically significant Indigenous group in the region. The Kumeyaay Nation was split by the US-Mexico border, resulting in reservations both north and south of the border, with San Diego County having the largest number on the US side. Additionally, the Mexican-American War and subsequent Indian treaties led to the establishment of various reservations in San Diego County, with some tribes being forced to relocate. There are 18 federally-recognized Tribal Nation Reservations and 17 Tribal Governments, because the Barona and Viejas Bands share joint-trust and administrative responsibility for the Capitan Grande Reservation.

The Kumeyaay population is estimated to be around 4,250 people today, according to the Smithsonian Institution Folklife Festival. This population is spread across 13 reservations in California and some communities in Mexico. The Kumeyaay people are also known as the Southern Diegueño. At the time of initial contact with Europeans, the Kumeyaay population was estimated to be over 60,000. This population was severely impacted by disease, encroachment, and conflict with subsequent Spanish, Mexican, and American governments, leading to a drastic decline.

Kumeyaay Practiced Ethnobotany

Ethnobotany is the study of the relationships between people and plants, focusing on how different cultures use, manage, and perceive plants. It explores traditional knowledge about plants, including their uses for food, medicine, shelter, and other purposes.

The mild California climate allowed the local first peoples to survive and prosper as mostly hunter gatherers. However it has been documented that during their migrations from the coast to the mountains, and from north to south, these people planted and took care of vegetation. For example, there were found groups of edible cacti that could not have gotten there without human intervention. Kumeyaay had a long list of plants used for many purposes, including some that are medicinal.

The video in this link shows examples of such plants.



Bladder Pod



Holy Leaf Cherry

Official California State Prehistoric Artifact

You might not know about Carlsbad's contributions to California's state prehistoric contributions. A replica of the stone bear is on display at the Carlsbad Historical Society Museum, along with photos of the discovery site.

https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=25962



"Chipped Stone Bear"

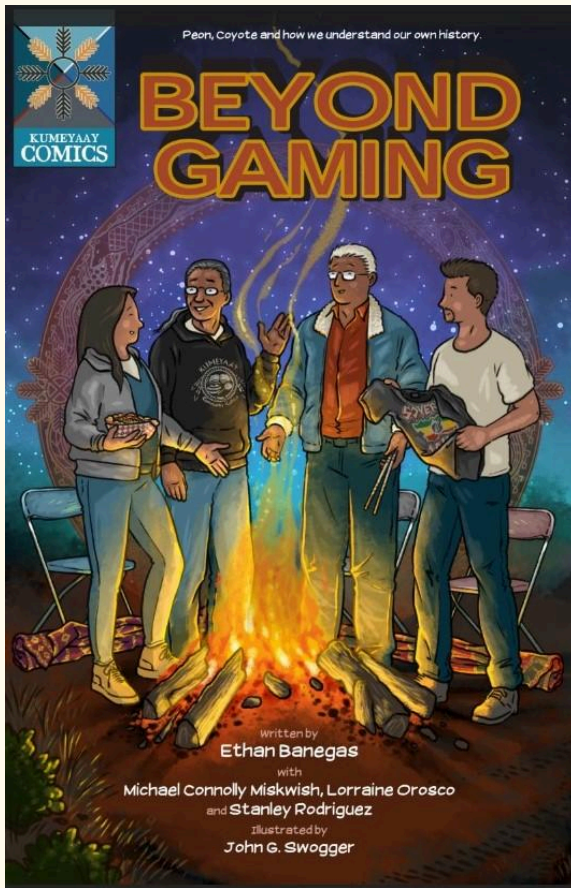
In 1985, an artifact made from volcanic rock was unearthed at the Allan O. Kelly Archaeological Dig overlooking the Agua Hedionda Lagoon in Carlsbad, California in San Diego County. Archaeologists noticed a 2.5" long by 1.5" piece of meta-volcanic rock that looked a lot like a bear. It was fashioned by California Indians around 7,000 to 8,000 years ago. Created in the way that they made arrowheads or spear points, the stone artifact displayed markings of being chipped into a specific form. The unique shape gave speculation that the small item might have had some religious connotations to the local members of the Luiseño and Juaneño Indian Tribes.

This prehistoric artifact is called the "Chipped Stone Bear" and is the Official California State Prehistoric Artifact, as adopted by the California Legislature on June 24, 1991. As an effigy in prehistoric times, it is still revered today as one of the earliest examples of representational art recovered in the Western United States.

Comic Book Series Featuring the Kumeyaay

The San Diego Union Tribune recently highlighted a comic book series featuring the Kumeyaay . Created by Ethan Banegas, SDSU professor, co-owner of the Kumeyaay.com and Historian for the San Diego History Center, which operates the Junípero Serra Museum. He is a descendant of the Kumeyaay, Luiseno, and Cupeno bands, and grew up on the Barona Reservation

<https://www.kumeyaay.com/>



Kumeyaay Comic Book

Ethan Lawrence Banegas, a descendant of the Kumeyaay, Luiseño/Payómkawichum, and Cupeño/Kuupangaxwicheh bands of Native Americans, grew up on the Barona Reservation in San Diego County.

"Kumeyaay Oral History Project, a community-based research project, after collecting thirty-one personal interviews, video-taped oral histories, and photographs from San Diego's First People. Through this project, Banegas collected the voice of the Kumeyaay people, giving a voice to the voiceless.(<https://ais.sdsu.edu/faculty/bios/banegas>)"

For more information on local bands of native people, please check out the two sites listed below.

<https://native-land.ca/listings/territories/luiseno>

<https://native-land.ca/listings/territories/kumeyaay>

Membership and Donations

Membership renewals, for those that are not already Life Members, are due by the end of the year. Please do not wait until the last day, and consider upgrading or sending a donation if you want. All your contributions go a long way in running the museum, particularly paying for insurance and a

docent. We are constantly indexing our collections and enhancing our webpage (which gets about 1000 visitors per month). Thank you.

Upcoming events

Our next board meetings are going to be on August 18 and November 17, both at 4 pm, at the Shipley-Magee House. Visitors are welcome.

Instead of an end of year annual meeting, we are planning to have an open house for all members. The holidays get very busy and schedules conflict. We will let you know later on.

Remembering Marvin Sippel

On Monday, **August 25, at 11am** we will be celebrating Marvin's incredible life.

Pilgrim Church 2020 Chestnut Ave, Carlsbad CA 92008

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Heifer International or a charity of your choice.

Life stream at <https://zoom.us/j/260920653>

Carlsbad Historical Society

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www.carlsbadhistoricalsociety.com

*Open Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm

*Private Tours by appointment

*School, Scouts and Families welcome