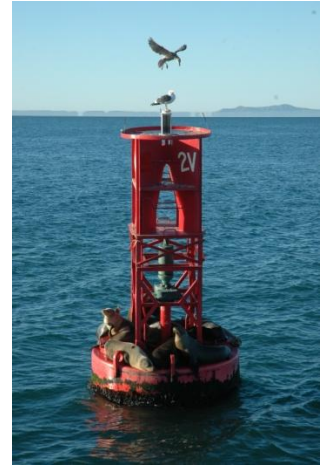


Santa Cruz Island Archaeology Tour

Tour led by Dr. Jennifer Perry
October 26 and 27, 2012

On Saturday October 27th after a smooth hour-long journey across the water from Ventura to Santa Cruz Island during which we saw dolphins, seals and a multitude of birds, Dr. Jennifer Perry, Channel Islands Archaeologist and professor at CSU Channel Islands led a tour of the natural and cultural history of the Santa Cruz Island. Her emphasis was the 13,000 year record of human occupation on the Channel Islands. She showed us shell midden and chert quarry sites on the east end of the island. The Channel Islands natives during the prehistory period used the natural resources of the island to manufacture bead money, or 'anchum. They were the mint for the Chumash Indians who lived on the mainland. The name Chumash comes from the name that the mainland Indians gave to the island. Chumash and 'anchum are related words, so apparently the name Chumash originally meant something like bead money makers. Chert was worked to provide drills to prepare holes in the Olivella shell (also called the Purple Olive, a marine snail). The western side of Santa Cruz Island provided the shells.



At Scorpion Anchorage the locations of native Chumash village sites were pointed out even though remains were not visible. Here too, historic ranching operations were very evident. A wonderful museum, ranch house, and farm machinery remain. In addition we were delighted to have Dr. Coleen Delaney, professor at CSU Channel Islands and mainland researcher talk about the extensive interaction between the Channel Islands and the mainland.



On Friday, October 26 the Santa Cruz Island tour attendees visited The Robert J. Lagomarsino Visitor Center at Channel Islands National Park in Ventura and the Natural History Museum in Santa Barbara. If you have a chance to go to the Channel Island National Park visitor center, you will find many hands on displays and an overview video of the Channel Islands. These are excellent. In the extensive Natural History Museum we were delighted to find an excellent section on Chumash culture. To augment our tour of Santa Cruz Island, chert tools including small diameter drills and Olivella shells were displayed. Also a skeleton of pigmy mammoth (*Mammuthus exilis*) found in 1994 was on display.



This smaller rendition of the continental Columbian Mammoth which stood nearly 14 feet tall, probably swam out to the islands was illustrative of the hypothesis that in isolation the big creatures get smaller and the smaller ones get bigger.

Photos above:

- 1 Sea lions, birds and Anacapa Island
- 2 Group near shell midden on Santa Cruz Island
- 3 Group at Channel Islands National Park
- 4 Santa Rosa Island Pigmy mammoth at Santa Barbara National History Museum