

NEW BOOK ON URBAN PROTECTED AREAS

Dr. Ted Trzyna of Claremont's InterEnvironment Institute has published a new book "Urban Protected Areas," which profiles natural areas near urban centers located all around the world. Included is the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park.

URBAN PROTECTED AREAS IN CLAREMONT AND AROUND THE WORLD

Ted Trzyna, of Claremont's InterEnvironment Institute, and who is also a member of the Interfaith Sustainability Council, has written a new book "Urban Protected Areas – Profiles and best practice guidelines," published by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN.)

The book starts out by characterizing the concept "Urban Protected Areas," as areas of relative naturalness that are accessible to people in nearby urban areas. There are of course degrees of naturalness, and urban protected areas have both many similarities and differences among themselves.

The book profiles 15 urban protected areas around the world, including Cape Town, Hong Kong, London, Nairobi, Taipei, Rio de Janeiro, Los Angeles, and many others. Within Rio, for example, there is Tijuca National Park, which covers some 4000 hectares of mountains inside the city limits. The park is administered jointly by the city and the national government, and has about 2.5 million visitors each year. There is no visitor fee except at Corcovado Mountain, on which stands the famous statue of Christ the Redeemer.

Near Los Angeles there is Santa Monica National Recreation Area and protected areas in the San Gabriel Mountains, such as the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park. Our local park is very accessible, and now attracts something like 500,000 visits every year, a number that has been growing rapidly.

From the 15 profiles the book distills 30 "Best Practice Guidelines," drawing conclusions from the case studies so that future urban protected areas can benefit from experiences elsewhere, and existing areas can learn from one another. Any community wishing to set aside wilderness areas can learn a great deal from the cases on display. The guidelines include: "Provide access for all: reach out to diverse ethnic groups and the underprivileged", "Engender a local sense of ownership", "Take advantage of volunteers and support groups", "Control invasive species of animals and plants", and 26 others.

The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs of the urban protected areas described. The book can be downloaded in pdf form: Go to www.iucn-urban.org.