

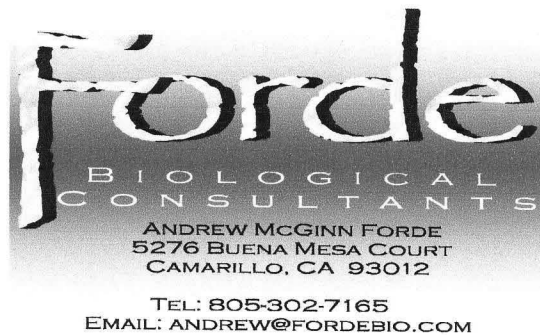
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**Forde Biological Consultants, Coast Horned Lizard Survey,  
Vista Canyon Ranch, Los Angeles County, California (revised April 2008)**

# Coast Horned Lizard Survey

Vista Canyon Ranch, Los Angeles County, California

Prepared by:



Prepared for:

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**August 28, 2006**

(Revised April 19, 2008)

This report is a true and accurate statement regarding the results of the coast horned lizard survey conducted at the property commonly known as Vista Canyon Ranch, Los Angeles County, California.

*adrian cap...*

Signature

*04-19-2008*

Date

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## Introduction

On July 14, 17, August 1, and 8, 2006, Forde Biological Consultants (FBC) conducted surveys for coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*) at the property commonly known as Vista Canyon Ranch in Los Angeles County, California. The property is located immediately south of Highway 14 and north of the Southern Pacific Railroad, between Woodfall Road and the east terminus of Lost Canyon Road at an elevation of approximately 1500 feet. Exhibit A includes a map depicting the location of the property.

## Methodology

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) consider the coast horned lizard a special-status species; however, they have not developed guidelines or protocols surveys. Lacking specific guidelines and protocols, FBC determined survey methodology based on previous experience and life history of the species. Exhibit B includes the species life history and range map produced by the CDFG.

FBC conducted the survey within and south of the Santa Clara River, on July 14 and July 17, 2006 and north of the Santa Clara River on August 1 and August 8, 2006, between 9:00 am and 11:00 am. FBC surveyed the entire channel of the Santa Clara River by walking linear transects spaced approximately 15 feet apart and parallel to the banks. FBC walked random transects in suitable areas outside the river channel. Weather conditions during the surveys fell within acceptable levels. Table 1 summarizes weather conditions during each day of the survey.

**Table 1: Weather Conditions**

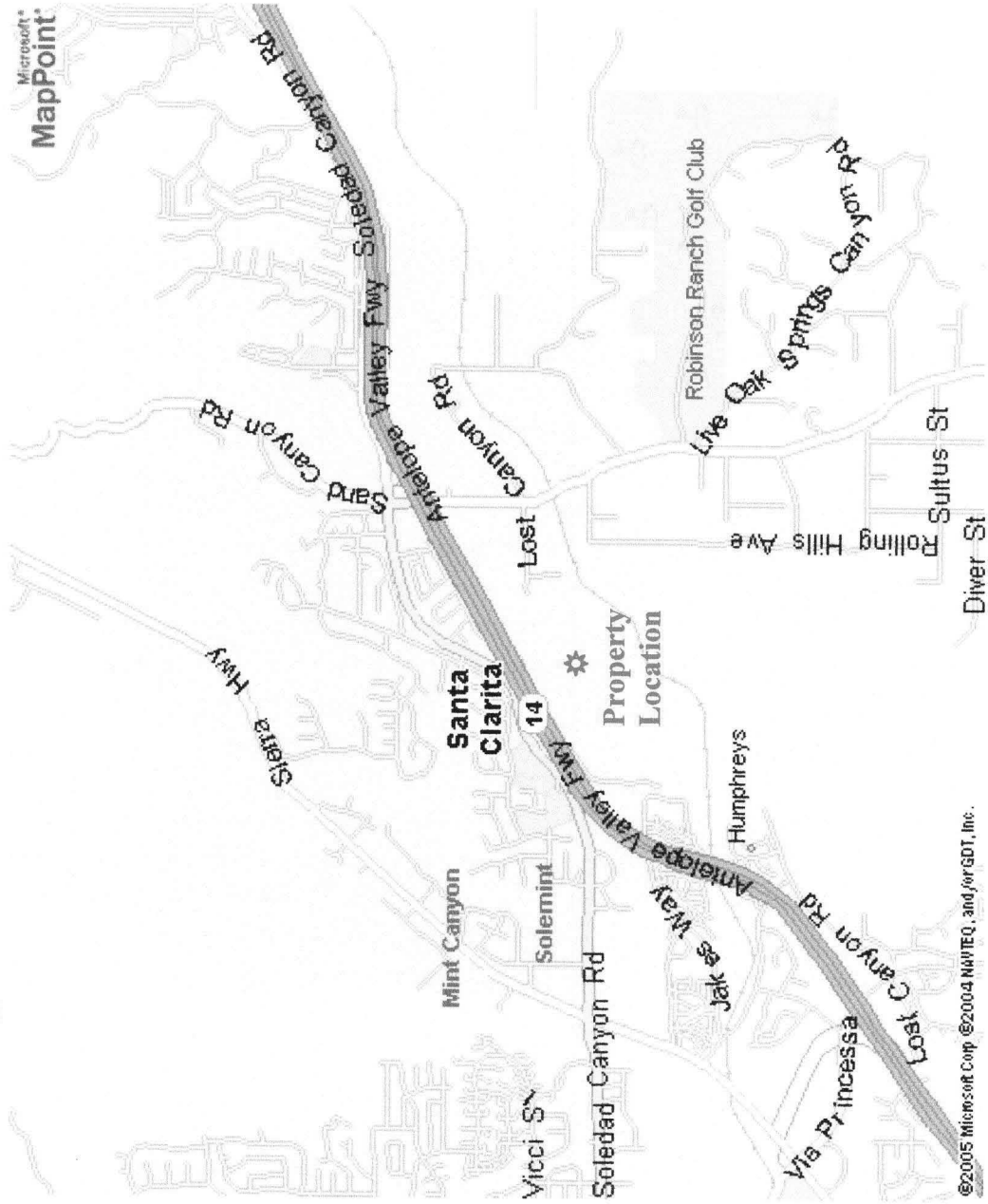
Date	Temperature @ 9:00 am	Temperature @ 11:00 am	Conditions	Wind
July 14, 2006	82°F	86°F	Clear	< 5 MPH
July 17, 2006	82°F	84°F	Clear	< 5 MPH
August 1, 2006	57°F	64°F	Clear	< 5 MPH
August 8, 2006	68°F	80°F	Clear	< 5 MPH

## **Results**

FBC detected a coast horned lizard north of the Santa Clarita River during the survey on August 1, 2006. Exhibit C includes a portion of the USGS Mint Canyon 7-5 Minute Quadrangle, which depicts its location. Although FBC only detected one individual during the course of the survey, we concluded that others are likely present within and along the margins of the Santa Clara River. Dr Edith Read observed a coast horned lizard on April 17, 2008 and Andrew McGinn Forde observed an individual near the same location on April 20, 2008.

# Exhibit A

Forde Biological Consultants



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# Exhibit B

**CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE HABITAT RELATIONSHIPS SYSTEM**  
maintained by the  
**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**  
and supported by the  
**CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY WILDLIFE TASK GROUP**  
Database Version 8.1 (2005)

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R029 Coast Horned Lizard *Phrynosoma coronatum*  
Family: Phrynosomatidae Order: Squamata Class: Reptilia

Written by: S. Morey  
Reviewed by: T. Papenfuss  
Edited by: R. Duke, D. Alley  
Updated by: CWHR Program Staff, March 2000

#### DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

The coast horned lizard is uncommon to common in suitable habitat. Occurs in valley-foothill hardwood, conifer and riparian habitats, as well as in pine-cypress, juniper and annual grassland habitats. Occurs in the Sierra Nevada foothills from Butte Co. to Kern Co. and throughout the central and southern California coast. Its elevational range extends up to 1200 m (4000 ft) in the Sierra Nevada foothills and up to 1800 m (6000 ft) in the mountains of southern California.

#### SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

**Feeding:** Horned lizards forage on the ground in open areas, usually between shrubs and often near ant nests. Pianka and Parker (1975) noted that this species, like other horned lizards, consumes many ants. Small beetles are taken in large numbers when especially abundant. Stebbins (1954) reported other insects as food items, including wasps, grasshoppers, flies, and caterpillars.

**Cover:** This species relies on camouflage for protection and often hesitates to move at the approach of a predator. Horned lizards often bask in the early morning on the ground or on elevated objects such as low boulders or rocks. Predators and extreme heat are avoided by horned lizards by burrowing into loose soil. Periods of inactivity and winter hibernation are spent burrowed into the soil under surface objects such as logs or rocks, in mammal burrows, or in crevices.

**Reproduction:** Little is known about habitat requirements for breeding and egg-laying. Males may use elevated "viewing platforms" such as cow dung (Tollestrup 1981) to locate females during the reproductive season. Eggs are apparently laid in nests constructed by females in loose soil.

**Water:** No information on water requirements. Does not require permanent water.

**Pattern:** Inhabits open country, especially sandy areas, washes, flood plains and wind-blown deposits in a wide variety of habitats. Found chiefly below 600 m (2000 ft) in the north and 900 m (3000 ft) in the south.

#### SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

**Activity Patterns:** Being a diurnal lizard, most activity occurs during the middle of the day in the spring and fall but is restricted to morning and late afternoon during mid-summer. Nocturnal activity may occur during particularly warm periods. Fall and winter are inactive periods in most areas.

**Seasonal Movements/Migration:** Pronounced seasonal movement or migration has not been reported. Habitat requirements, such as sites for courtship and display, egg-laying, and hibernation are apparently found within the normal area of activity.

**Home Range:** Little is known about home range. In Arizona, some individuals of a related horned lizard species, *P. solare*, established well-defined home ranges, while some wandered without establishing one. Males used a larger area than females; the mean maximum distance between capture points was 30 m (98 ft) for males and 15 m (49 ft) for females (Baharav 1975).

**Territory:** Horned lizards generally lack territorial defense (Lynn 1965, Stamps 1977), but combat between males (Whifford and Whifford 1973) and over female feeding territories (Nussbaum et al. 1983) has been reported.

**Reproduction:** The reproductive season for the coast horned lizard varies from year to year and geographically depending on local conditions. Pianka and Parker (1975) reported that egg-laying in southern California extends from late May through June with a mean clutch size of 13 eggs. Stebbins (1954) reported a range of 6 to 16 eggs. Hatching probably occurs after two months. The coast horned lizard is apparently unique among lizards in using a belly-to-belly position during copulation (Tollestrup 1981).

**Niche:** The spiny armour and aggressive behavior towards potential predators exhibited by horned lizards confer only partial immunity from predators. Leopard lizards, sidewinders, striped whipsnakes and other snakes, loggerhead shrikes, and hawks have all been reported as predators of horned lizards. After a review of the genus *Phrynosoma*, Pianka and Parker (1975) concluded that because of their rather specialized diets, most horned lizards probably experience little competition for food from other coexisting lizards.

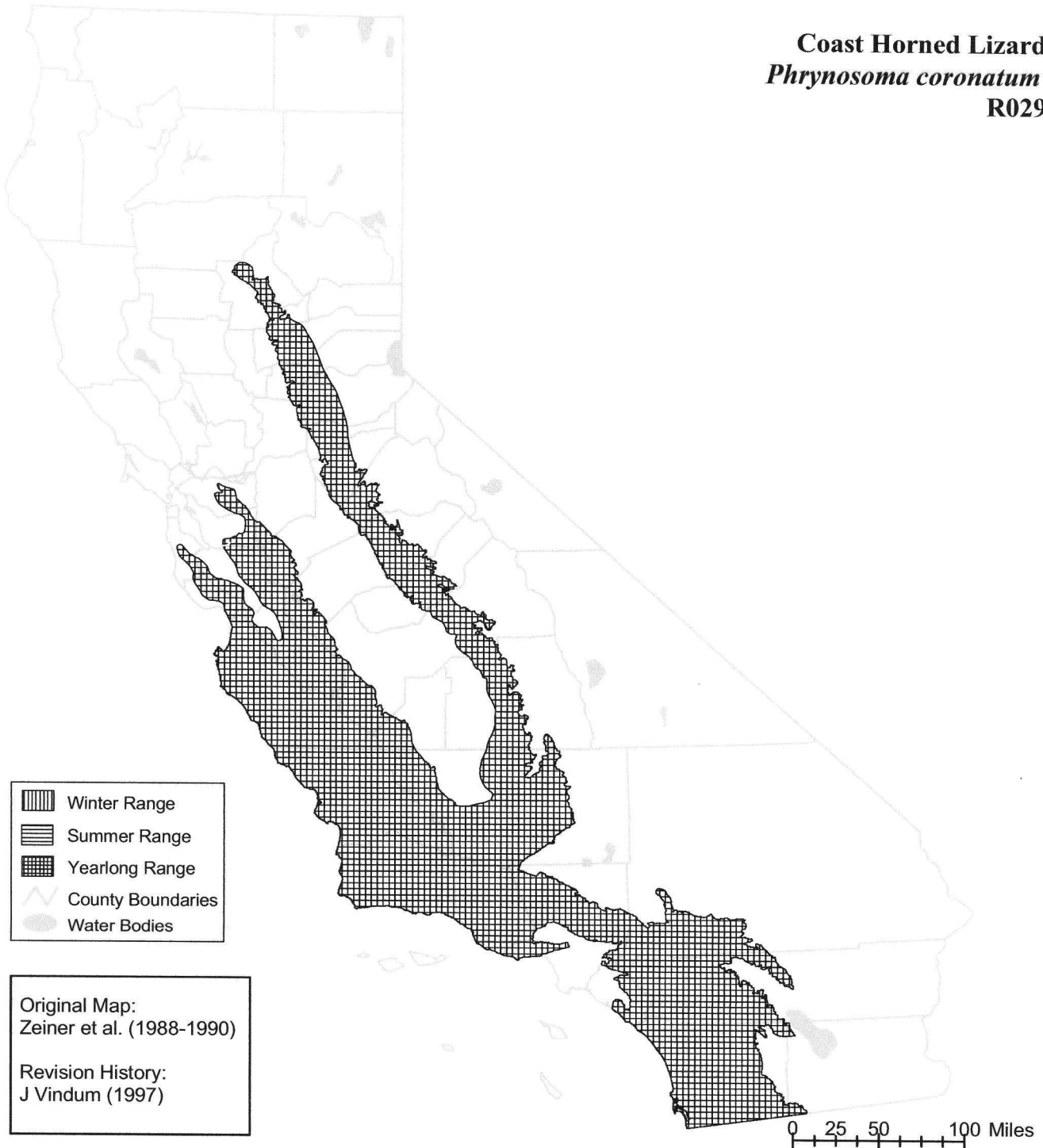
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# California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System

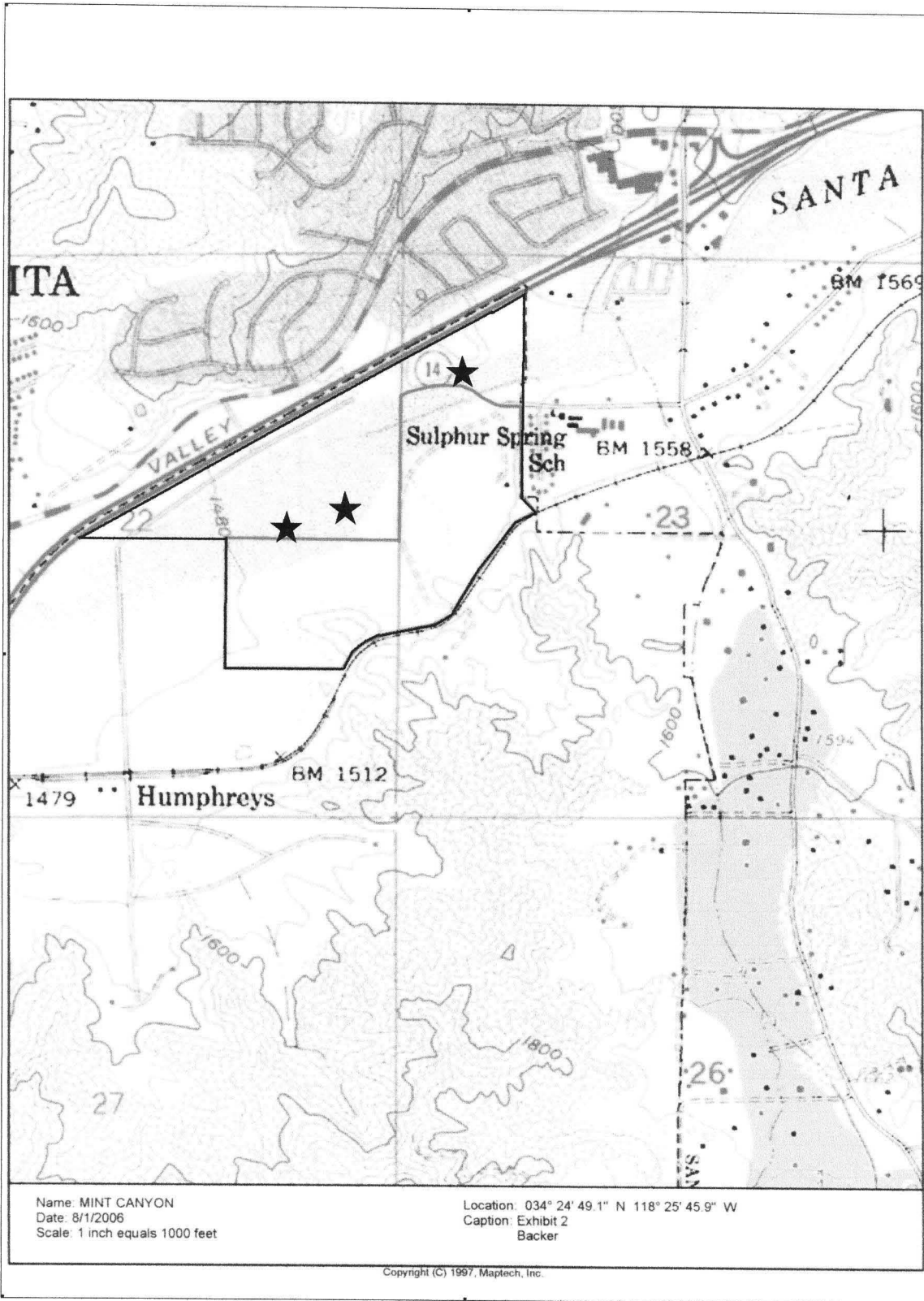
California Department of Fish and Game  
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

## Coast Horned Lizard *Phrynosoma coronatum* R029



Maps are based on available occurrence data and professional knowledge. They represent current, but not historic or potential, range. Unless otherwise noted above, maps were originally published in Zeiner, D.C., W.F. Laudenslayer, Jr., K.E. Mayer, and M. White, eds. 1988-1990. California's Wildlife. Vol. I-III. California Depart. of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California. For more information on mapping methods, visit [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/html/cwhr\\_metadata.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/html/cwhr_metadata.html).

# Exhibit C



Coast Horned Lizard Detections



Limit of Survey Area

