

Safety & Trail Etiquette

RESTROOMS AND WATER can be found at the Nature Center and a water fountain is located at the first stop on the trail.

BE AWARE of the potential and inherent dangers that exist in any wilderness setting. Watch for and avoid rattlesnakes, poison oak and stinging nettle.

DOGS must be on leash at all times as required by LACC Section 10.32.010. Please clean up dog waste and pack out all litter. Dog waste bags are available at the trail head and at Quarter-Mile Bridge.

FIRE AND SMOKING are not permitted in the Preserve due to the potential for serious fire damage.

FIREARMS are not permitted in the Preserve per RHE City Municipal Code 12.24.030.

NATURAL FEATURES are protected in the Preserve and are to be admired, but not removed.

HORSES are allowed on the Preserve trails. If you are on foot, please stand quietly aside to allow horses to pass.

BICYCLES are not allowed in the Preserve.

TRAIL CLOSURES will be in effect during and following significant rainfall to protect trails. Closures may also go into effect at various times for habitat protection and erosion prevention when deemed appropriate. Please respect any signs regarding these closures.

TRAIL MODIFICATIONS of any kind are not permitted in the Preserve. This includes

How You Can Help

If you would like to donate, participate in trail work, become a nature center volunteer, or join a guided nature walk, please visit the PVPLC website at: WWW.PVPLC.ORG or call (310) 541-7613.



George F Canyon Nature Preserve is located on 51 acres and features a Nature Center, hiking/equestrian trail and stream that passes through one of the most pristine and beautiful canyons on the Peninsula. The Preserve is the site of the only mainland exposure of Catalina schist, the bedrock that underlies most of the Los Angeles area.

Interpretive signage and plenty of benches along the trail create a delightful way to experience both willow-riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats. An intermittent stream in the Preserve acts as a magnet for insects, birds and mammals. A spectacular view of the Los Angeles basin rewards those who make it to the very top either by foot or horseback.

The Nature Center is owned by the City of Rolling Hills Estates and operated by the Conservancy. Inside, visitors can view displays and can consult books and other information about the plants, animals, insects, geology and natural history of the canyon.



INFORMATION

IN EMERGENCY: Dial 911

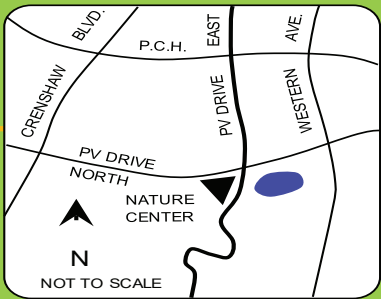
Crimes and violations should be reported to LA County Sheriff Department at 911 or (310) 539-1661.

CITY OF ROLLING HILLS ESTATES
4045 Palos Verdes Drive North
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
(310) 377-1577
WWW.CI.ROLLING-HILLS-ESTATES.CA.US

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA LAND CONSERVANCY
916 Silver Spur Rd., Suite 207
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
(310) 541-7613
WWW.PVPLC.ORG

GEORGE F CANYON NATURE CENTER
27305 Palos Verdes Drive East
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
(310) 547-0862
Email: gfc@pvplc.org
Fridays 1 - 4 pm and
Saturdays & Sundays 10 am - 4 pm

Activities include naturalist guided monthly hikes, bird walks, and full moon night hikes. No one is permitted in the Preserve after dark.



Follow us on at WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PVPLC.ORG

Scan for trail map



PALOS VERDES PENINSULA LAND CONSERVANCY

GEORGE F CANYON Nature Center & Preserve



TRAILS

GEORGE F CANYON NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE

Stein-Hale Nature Trail

1. Habitat Intersection

Here, two local habitats intersect. Uphill, the steep slope is dominated by scrubland habitat where drought-tolerant coastal sage scrub plants thrive. Smell the fragrant, gray leaves of sagebrush and listen for the kitten-like call of the threatened California gnatcatcher, which relies on this increasingly rare habitat for survival. Below the trail, tall willow trees reveal streamside woodland habitat where more water is available. Both habitats change seasonally but in different ways. Many scrubland plants drop leaves to survive dry summers while some streamside woodland trees drop leaves as the days shorten in winter.

2. “Leaves of three...”

It is a good idea to learn how to identify poison oak before touching plants along the canyon trails. This dynamic plant takes many forms, growing as a bush or vine with leaves emerging vibrant green in spring, changing to fiery red in fall, then falling to the ground in winter. All stages can produce an itchy allergic reaction, so be sure not to brush against it as you hike the trail. The saying “Leaves of three, let them be” is a good reminder of poison oak’s recognizable 3-leaflet pattern. Our native blackberry, also abundant with a 3-leaflet pattern, can be distinguished by the blackberry’s prickly branches. Fruit of blackberries and poison oak both provide important food for wildlife, as do the mint-like leaves of stinging nettle, another trailside plant better left untouched.

3. Bird Observation Deck

Water is life, and the riparian habitat is an oasis for both migratory and non-migratory bird species. Look and listen to see how many different birds you can observe. Binoculars are available for use during Nature Center open hours.

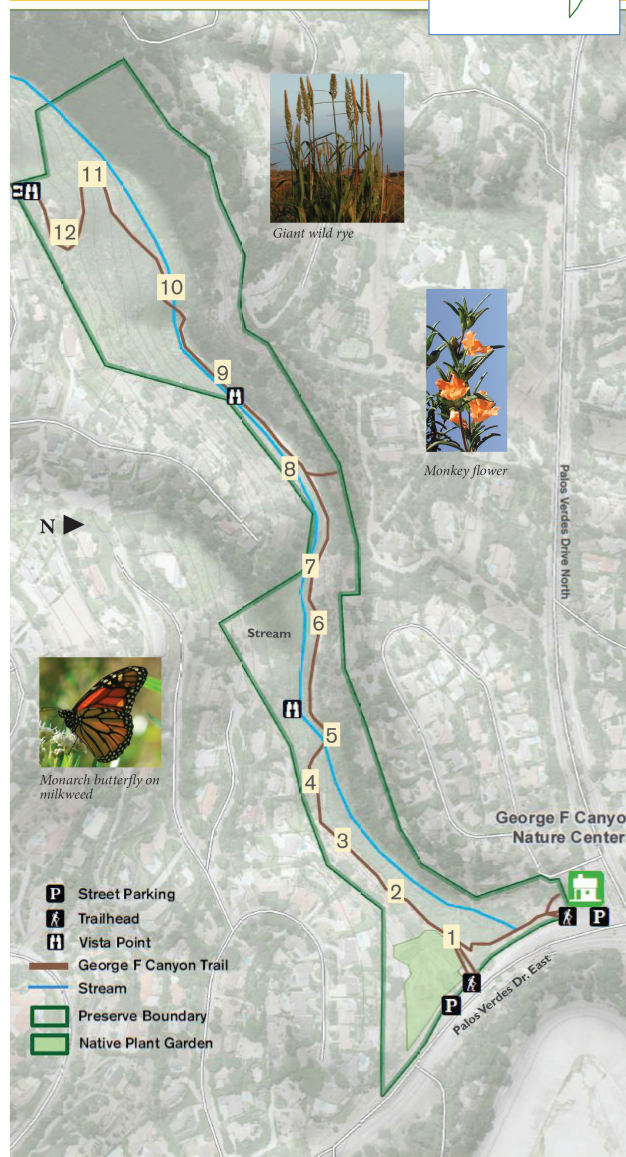
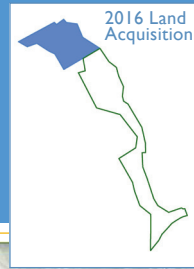
4. Wind in the Willows



and insects. Watch for graceful mourning cloak and tiger swallowtail butterflies which feasted on willow leaves as

Tall red and arroyo willow trees indicate a stream is nearby. Willows have been an important resource for the Tongva people of this area for basketry, dwellings and medicinal uses. Willows offer shade and habitat for many birds, mammals

In 2016, the Land Conservancy acquired 15 acres of contiguous land to protect and preserve more of the canyon.



caterpillars. In spring, you may find yourself surrounded by fuzzy willow seeds drifting on the wind like snowflakes.

5. Quarter-Mile Bridge

Stop at the bridge to enjoy the view up and down the stream. George F Canyon is the major drainage channel for the north side of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Notice evidence of the volume of water that passes through this seasonal stream cut into the streambank. Pause to consider that the canyon itself was formed by the steady process of erosion over time.

6. Local Geology

The Palos Verdes Peninsula was once a Channel Island before becoming part of the mainland and still shares many features with Catalina Island. As you continue your hike, keep your eye out for Catalina schist, the hard bluish-gray, purple or greenish rocks exposed along the trail and in the stream bed. This 150-million-year-old metamorphic rock is the oldest found on the Peninsula and forms the base of the whole Los Angeles basin--but is only found exposed here at George F Canyon. When you encounter these rocks, try pouring a little water on one to appreciate how colorful they are and how unique it is to find them exposed to daylight!



7. Cherry Snacks and Wildlife Tracks

The tree in front of you is an old Catalina cherry. This native tree is a favorite of the wildlife who enjoy both the delicious cherry fruit as well as the large seed inside. Keep an observant eye for signs of animal life. Animals leave their signature everywhere in the form of tracks, scat, scratches on bark, feathers, hair or maybe even a chewed cherry seed left over from a meal! As you continue along the trail, look for nests, dens, burrows and other trail signs left by native mammals, birds, reptiles and insects.

8. Say “Berries so very severely sour”

See if you can say this tongue twister three times fast as you admire the stand of lemonade berry growing behind the trail marker. The tart flavor coating the otherwise in-

edible seed has been used to make a local form of lemonade that pre-dates lemons here in California. Just up the trail, stop at the bench in the shade of a toyon tree. The toyon’s abundant red berries provide an important food source for wildlife in winter, but must be cooked to be edible to humans.

9. Half-Mile Bench

Sit in the shade of a Catalina cherry tree and quietly observe the plants, birds, butterflies and dragonflies that inhabit the canyon. Many of the benches and other features have been generously installed by local Scouts earning their leadership awards. Find out how your troop can help out or earn badges at pvpplc.org



10. Duenes’ Ford

Here, you are crossing the stream again. Heavy rains once made this impassable, but this bridge now makes crossing easy to do year-round. The trail ascends the south side of the canyon with an 1/8-mile moderate climb. To your left, watch for snowberry, heartleaf keckiella and bush monkeyflower.

11. Raptor Viewing Bench

Watch for raptors and other bird species soaring on wind currents rising above the steep canyon cliffs. A raptor is a bird of prey, and they hunt small mammals, reptiles and other prey. Enjoy the expansive view of pristine habitat up the canyon. Here, an additional 15 acres were added to the Nature Preserve in 2016 through the efforts of the Conservancy and major supporters.

12. Elderberry Lookout

Behind you, notice the majestic, old elderberry tree, also called the “music tree” for all of the instruments that can be made from its wood. The berries are an important food source for the wildlife but beware, they must be cooked to be edible to humans.

Enjoy the view and notice how far you’ve come: Nearly 400 feet in elevation and a mile from the Nature Center! As you gaze out over the urban expanse, take a moment to reflect on the importance of natural open spaces and enjoy the sounds of nature.