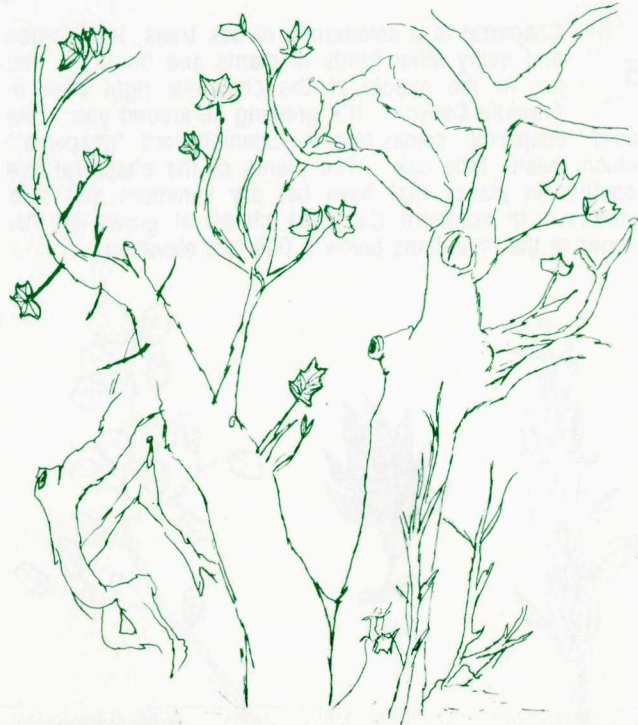




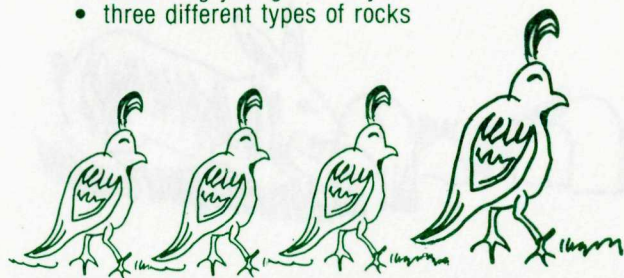
At this point, our trail turns right and continues on the other side of Lake Drive. Before you cross the road, look both ways for cars.  
OR

If you want to do some discovering on your own, you can continue walking straight ahead and go on a scavenger hunt as you walk to the big sycamore trees. Please remember to be careful of poison oak; stay on the trail, and respect all animals.



On this scavenger hunt you don't need to collect things. Use your eyes, nose and fingers to see if you can find:

- something that smells sweet
- something that flies but is not a bird
- three soft plants
- three prickly plants
- signs of three different animals
- two different shapes of spider webs
- something older than you
- something younger than you
- three different types of rocks



When you hike in Franklin Canyon, here are some things you might see: a hawk feather glistening in the sun or a stink beetle staggering along the trail. If you are lucky, you might see a snake in the tall grass, looking grasslike itself. Look closely at the oak tree; you might see a gall. A wasp is growing there. Look, there's a packrat home, looking very messy. The oak leaves are shaped like sculptures. Explore the exciting chaparral.

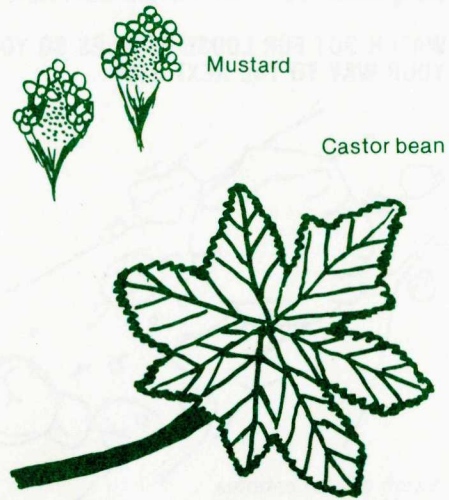


Naturalized plants were brought here from other parts of the world. Some plants were brought here on purpose like the English walnut tree. Other plants like mustard arrived here accidentally. A plant that comes from another part of the world is called an exotic plant. If it can adjust to its new home, reproduce naturally and make a place for itself in the local ecosystem, it becomes naturalized.

Naturalized plants sometimes take the place of native plants. European grasses have replaced many of the native bunch grasses. Other naturalized plants like tree tobacco are helpful. Tree tobacco came from South America and is one of the first plants to grow in disturbed areas. This helps prevent erosion. Other plants provide food for animals. That makes them part of the ecosystem of the canyon.

Naturalized  
Alien  
Transported  
Useful  
Reproduce  
Adjust  
Living  
Invade  
Millions  
Exotic  
Disturbed

Planted  
Localize  
Adapt  
Nature  
Tough  
Stabilize

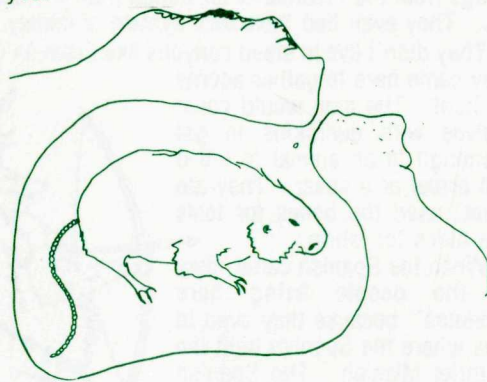


Many animals have their homes here in Franklin Canyon and we must respect their homes. Look around you. Packrats build their homes in the brush by gathering lots of small twigs. Squirrels build their nests up in the trees.

Gophers, snakes, and rats live in underground burrows. Holes in the ground are their doors. The funnel spider will sometimes spin its web over part of a hole. The web looks like a tornado and the spider lives at the bottom of it.

Insects often make their homes under rocks. Watch for ants crossing the trail on their way to and from their home.

If you stay on the trail, you won't wander into some animal's homes. By being quiet and making the most of all your senses, you may find many exciting creatures around you.



Digging a place to stay so they are sheltered, some animals eat, sleep, and feed their young in their homes. The animals that live in our chaparral have learned to adapt to the dry conditions, playing their part in the ecosystem of the canyon.

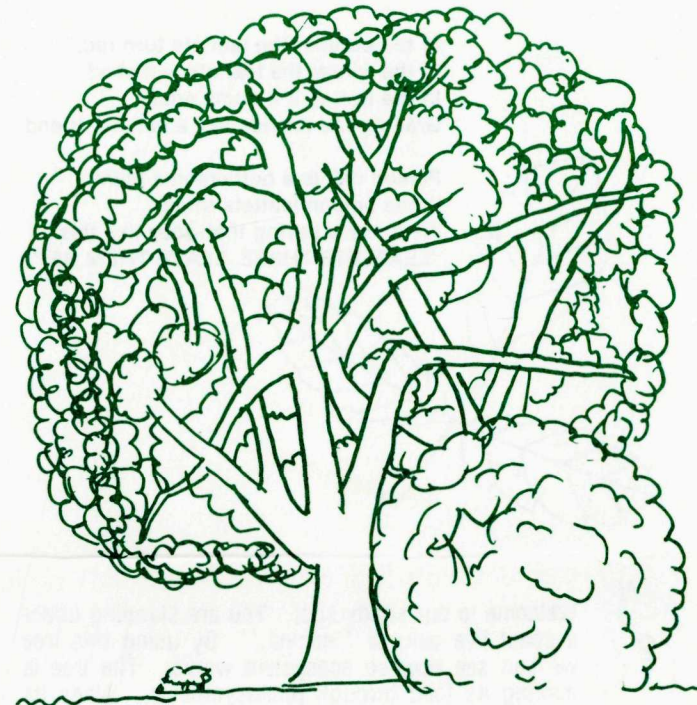


You are almost at the end of the Discovery Trail. Is it what you expected before you began? Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. Listen to the leaves in the breeze.

Open your eyes and look around at all the colors and shades of colors around you.

Try to imagine what Franklin Canyon looked like when the ancestors of the Gabrielinos first saw it.

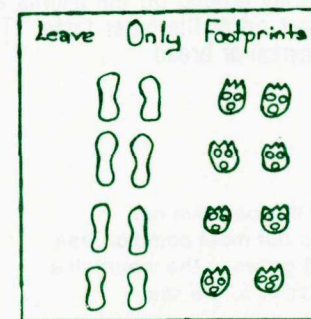
Now imagine how the canyon looks in other seasons.



Look at the scenery;  
Look at the sky;  
Look at the trees that soar ever so high.

Look at the mountains  
The beauty of it all.  
Listen to the birds, their beautiful call.

Watch the animals  
Burrowing in the hills.  
Isn't it all a tremendous thrill?



William O. Douglas  
Outdoor Classroom

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

# Discovery Trail

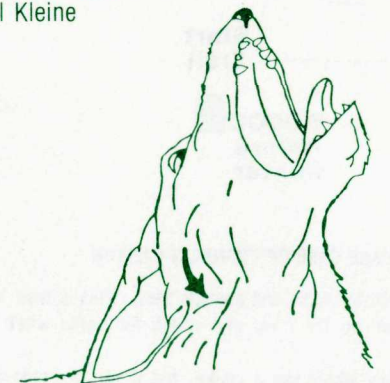


## Franklin Canyon Ranch

This trail guide was produced as a cooperative educational project. The students were helped in the classroom by their teachers, Bev Revness and Milt McCleod and by the parent coordinator, Judy Wolfenstein. Additional support was provided by the school principals, Mary Alice Hawkins and Marvin R. Goldenson. Volunteer docents from the William O. Douglas Outdoor Classroom and National Park Service rangers from Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area worked with the students when they came to Franklin Canyon Ranch. The trail guide was printed by the William O. Douglas Outdoor Classroom.

We would like to thank:

- Mr. Fred Plotkin
- Alice M. Allen
- Hal Kleine

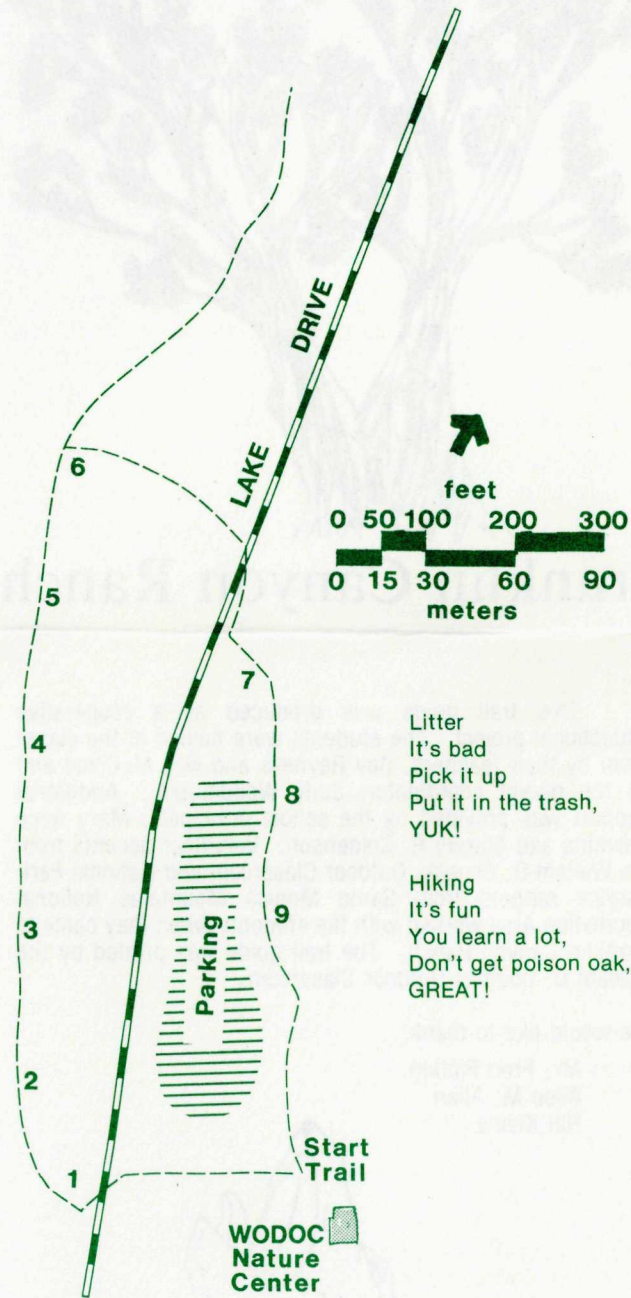


Santa Monica Mountains  
National Recreation Area



**WELCOME** to Franklin Canyon Ranch and the Discovery Nature Trail. Franklin Canyon is a pocket of wilderness in the middle of the city. That makes it a very special place. Here you can start discovering all the wonderful plants and animals that live around you.

Fifth and sixth grade students from Warner Avenue Elementary School have written and illustrated this trail guide. As you walk along the trail you will see numbered posts. At each post, our trail guide will share with you some of the things we discovered about natural phenomena occurring here.



**Litter**  
It's bad  
Pick it up  
Put it in the trash,  
YUK!

**Hiking**  
It's fun  
You learn a lot,  
Don't get poison oak,  
GREAT!

**TAKE CARE OF FRANKLIN CANYON**

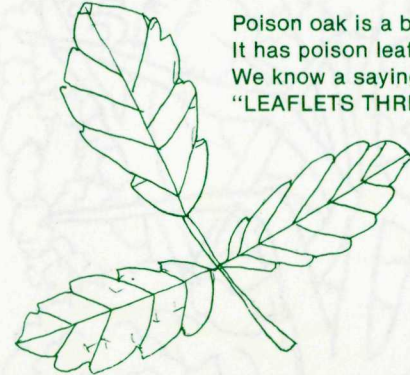
- Leave all plants, rocks and animals here. This is their home.
- Always walk on the trails and watch for traffic when crossing the road.
- You probably won't see a snake, but if you do, stop and back away slowly so you don't scare it.
- If you have any trash, take it out of the park with you.
- Fires are dangerous in the canyon so be sure no one smokes on the trail or starts a fire.



**1** Poison oak is a bushy plant with three leaflets. It grows all over the western United States below 5,000 feet elevation and throughout the chaparral. Its leaves are green and shiny for most of the year, but in autumn they turn red or yellow and fall off. The Indians used it to cure warts, ringworm and rattlesnake bites. They even used it in basketmaking.

It is called a toxic plant because many people today are allergic to it. If you touch any part of the plant, the oils in it come off and stay on your skin or clothing until they are washed off. If you are allergic to poison oak, you will get an annoying itchy rash within a day or two. You can even get it if your dog or cat touches it and you touch your pet. Even the stems and roots are toxic to us.

In the autumn the leaflets turn red,  
In the winter the leaflets will shed,  
In the Spring it blooms again,  
Gracing the hillside like a sinister friend.



Poison oak is a bothersome plant.  
It has poison leaflets three.  
We know a saying that goes like this:  
"LEAFLETS THREE, LEAVE THEM BE."

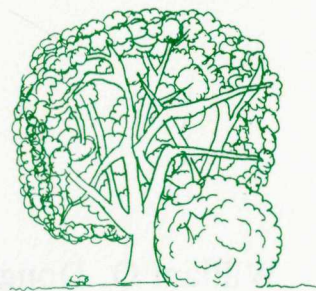


**2** Welcome to our shady spot. You are standing under a coast live oak, or "encina." By using this tree we can see how an ecosystem works. The tree is making its food through photosynthesis. When its leaves fall to the ground, they decompose to provide more food for the tree and other plants around it. Small animals and birds eat the leaves and acorns. The small animals are eaten by larger animals. There are more than 100,000 creatures in, on and around this tree.

The oak galls (oak apples) are not fruit. They house wasp larva, and happen after a wasp lays her eggs in the branch of the tree.

Indians used acorns from the coast live oak for food. They ground up the acorns and rinsed them with water to get rid of the bitter taste. Then the meal was cooked into cereal or bread.

The coast live oak  
Is our most common tree.  
It grows in the mountains  
Close to the sea.



I wish I were a live oak tree,  
With prickly leaves galore.  
My acorns would be food for all;  
My leaves would carpet the canyon floor.

My branches would shelter the animals  
From the sun and the pouring rain.  
I'd keep them warm and happy  
So they'd come and come again.

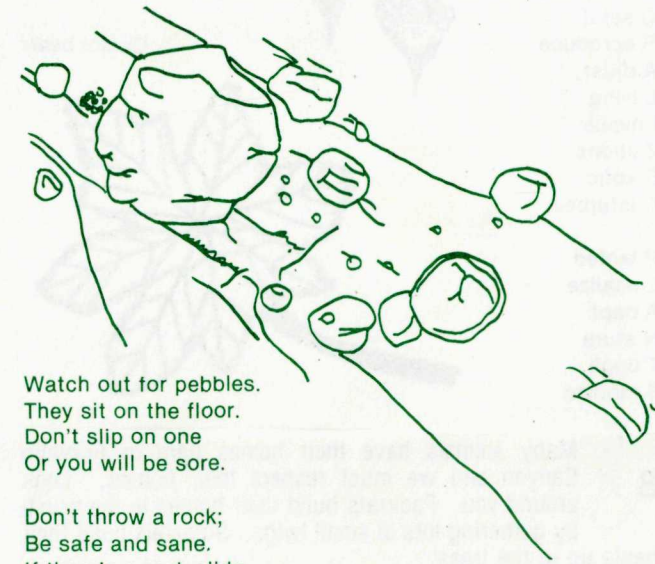


**3** This is a rock slide. The trail goes through it. Rock slides happen after heavy rains. The sliding rocks covered the plants that were growing here. The few plants that you see among the rocks are plants that grow well in disturbed soil.

Most of the rocks in this slide are Santa Monica slate, the oldest rock in the Santa Monica Mountains. Slate is dirt-colored, gray, tan, or brown. It breaks or chips easily. These rocks are about 135 million years old. You can also find granite here. Look for the hard, gray rocks with speckles in them.

For millions of years the rocks were under the ocean. They were pushed up by faults in the earth's crust to make the Santa Monica Mountains. The mountains are still growing because there is still movement of the earth's crust along major fault lines like the San Andreas Fault.

**WATCH OUT FOR LOOSE PEBBLES SO YOU DON'T TRIP ON YOUR WAY TO THE NEXT STOP.**



Watch out for pebbles.  
They sit on the floor.  
Don't slip on one  
Or you will be sore.

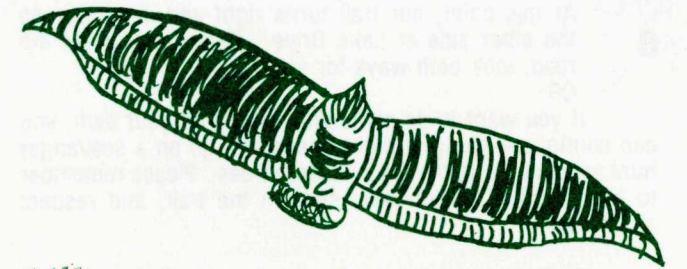
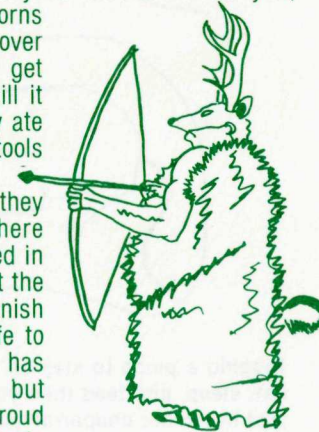
Don't throw a rock;  
Be safe and sane.  
If there's a rock slide,  
You don't want to be blamed.



**4** People have lived in and around the Santa Monica Mountains for nearly 10,000 years using all the resources they found here. They lived in villages in the Los Angeles River Basin, the San Fernando Valley and on Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islands. The people of different villages traded with each other, exchanging things from the mountains for things from the ocean and islands. They even had their own system of money.

They didn't live in steep canyons like Franklin Canyon, but they came here to gather acorns and to hunt. The men would cover themselves with deerskins to get close enough to an animal to kill it with an arrow or a spear. They ate the meat, used the bones for tools and the hides for fabric.

When the Spanish came, they called the people living here "Gabrielinos" because they lived in the area where the Spanish built the San Gabriel Mission. The Spanish brought a whole new way of life to these people. Their lifestyle has changed a lot since then, but Gabrielinos today can still be proud that their people were early residents of Los Angeles.



**5** Chaparral is a community of oak trees, low shrubs and many other kinds of plants and flowers. You are in the middle of the chaparral right here in Franklin Canyon. It's growing all around you. The word "chaparral" comes from the Spanish word "chaparro" which means little oak. The plants of the chaparral live together in places that have hot dry summers and mild winters. In southern California chaparral grows on the slopes of the mountains below 5,000 feet elevation.



Willow



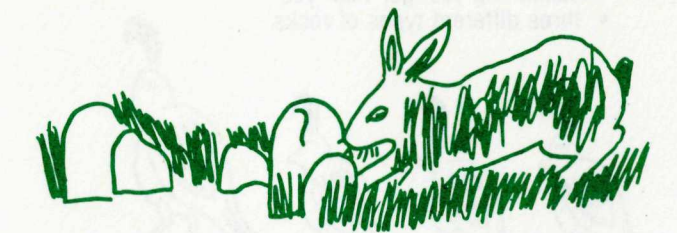
Sage



Holly leaf cherry

If you take the time to be quiet, you can hear birds chattering, the mice scurrying and maybe even the leaves whispering. You might see a red-tailed hawk, California quail, or hummingbird. You probably won't see a deer, owl or coyote, but you can look for their tracks or scat (droppings). This canyon is home for many animals. We are the visitors.

Fire is part of the cycle of life of the chaparral. It clears away dead branches and gives the heat that some seeds need to germinate. But fires can also destroy homes, so we must always be very careful with fire.



When you walk in the hills of the chaparral, it is very hot and dry. The animals are not active during the noon hours. Most birds are flying overhead or looking for food. The red-tailed hawk is circling above, gliding on a thermal. If you are lucky, you might be able to see a snake or maybe some lizards sunning themselves. When you walk in the chaparral, you feel a sense of well-being, like you are thousands of miles away from those roaring, honking and smelly cars. The chaparral is quiet and beautiful. Pay a visit as soon as you can.