

BEFORE YOU BEGIN— Do NOT touch this plant!



Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) is abundant throughout the park and is one of the first plants you should recognize. It is dangerous to humans allergic to the oil found throughout the plant. The oil causes intense itching and the skin of the victim may break out in watery blisters. The leaves can vary in color from waxy green to bright scarlet. During the fall and winter months the leaves will drop off exposing bare branches till spring. Poison Oak can climb up trees like a vine but also grows as a groundcover or shrub. Signs indicating this plant are located along the trail.



1. The native Monterey Pines (*Pinus radiata*), which blanket the Monterey Peninsula, comprise one of three remaining natural stands of this tree in the United States. It is the most abundant tree in the park and is of primary importance to local ecology. This species of pine has three leaves or needles per bundle (occasionally two) connected at the base by a papery sheath. The seed-producing female cones are about the size of a pear at maturity. The smaller male cones, which bear pollen in February, are found at the tips of the branches. Gray Squirrels love the tiny black seeds or nuts in the female cones and strip off the cone-scales to obtain them. Look for these "pine cobs" as you continue your walk.



2. You should have a spectacular view of the Monterey Bay providing it is not foggy. At this point you are standing near the top of Jacks Peak (elevation 1,068 ft.), the highest point of land on the Monterey Peninsula. Jacks Peak is named for David Jacks, a Scottish immigrant who arrived in Monterey in 1850 and became a very successful businessman and landowner. Today, David Jacks is better known for the creamy white cheese his local dairies produced which became known as "Monterey Jack" cheese.



13. Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is one of the most common plants in the Coastal Scrub/Soft Chaparral community. It bears yellow flowers on male plants and white flowers on female plants. Coyote Brush has small oak-shaped leaves and produces its tiny flowers in late summer. The bushy nature and tufted seeds of this plant attract many birds including: California Quail, Lesser Goldfinch, White-Crowned Sparrow, Wrentit and others.



14. Many animals make their homes in the Coastal Scrub since it provides good shelter. These animals are rarely seen because they feed during evening or early morning hours, but they do sometimes leave signs or tracks indicating where they have been. Look for tall mounds of sticks and leaves in the brush which are probably the homes of Dusky-footed Woodrats or Pack-Rats. Small golfball-size holes filled with freshly turned dirt indicate where Pocket Gophers have been burrowing. Other common animals which are part of the Coastal Scrub ecology include: Columbian Black-Tailed Deer, Coyote, Bobcat, Gray Fox, Raccoon, Brush Rabbit, and various rodents, birds and reptiles. Look for signs of these animals as you continue your walk.



15. The competition between the native Coast Live Oak and Monterey Pine is dramatically evident here. This stately Coast Live Oak (± 150 years old) has been here since the Spanish occupation of the 1800's. During the past 60 years the taller, faster growing Monterey Pines have extended their range, slowly shading out the life-giving sunlight to these ancient oaks. This change is a good reminder of Nature's constant cycle of life which we—and all other living creatures—are part of.

We hope you have enjoyed this narrative section of the walk. You may continue on this trail to the parking lot where the walk began.

As you complete your walk, perhaps you will gain an awareness of why special areas like Jacks Peak have been set aside for your enjoyment, learning and inspiration. With your help and thoughtful use this valuable resource will always be here for the public of today and future generations to come.

If you have no further use for this guide, please place it in the trail brochure box.

This trail and brochure have been developed through the efforts and support of the following:

Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society

Park Rangers:

M. Bregado
A. Miyamoto
C. Nance
A. Reta
G. Smith
A. Treganza

Toro - Royal Oaks - Jack's Peak
Laguna Seca - San Lorenzo
Lake San Antonio



Monterey County Parks

855 E. LAUREL DRIVE, BLDG. "G"
P.O. BOX 5249
SALINAS, CA 93915-5249

(831) 755-4899
FAX: (831) 755-4914
website: www.co.monterey.ca.us/parks

"Quality Recreation with a Personal Touch"

SKYLINE SELF-GUIDED NATURE TRAIL



Jacks Peak Regional Park
Monterey County Parks Department



The Skyline Self-Guided Nature Trail begins on the Jacks Peak Trail, across from the covered sign, and is a leisurely .8 mile walk. Look for the numbered posts which correspond to the numbered explanations in the text of this brochure.

We ask your cooperation in following Park rules and regulations during your visit. All plants and animals, including dead and down wood, are protected and may not be disturbed. Please stay on the trail, leave no litter, and refrain from smoking.

Please return this guide to the brochure box when you are through so others may use it. Enjoy your walk and please come again.



11. Sticky Monkey Flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) has orange, funnel-shaped blossoms which often dominate the landscape during the spring and summer months. One can easily identify this shrub by its sticky, dark-green leaves. Anna's Hummingbird is frequently seen darting from flower-to-flower lapping nectar through its long tubular tongue.



California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) of the Composite or Sunflower family is the shrub with the feathery gray-green foliage. Pinch a leaf between your fingers (without damaging the plant) and smell the pungent odor. Sagebrush is not a true sage, but is related to wormwood, which is used in Europe in making the liqueurs absinthe and vermouth.



12. Wildflowers can be found in bloom throughout the year. One of the earliest spring flowers is the Shooting Star (illustration). Other common spring flowers include: California Poppy, Yarrow, Indian Paintbrush and Morning Glory. In summer you can see Dune Buckwheat with its pinkish-white, pom-pom like flowers. Please refer to the Park Native Plant List for other wildflowers.



3. Lichens (pronounced like-ens) are the grayish-green growths attached to branches of the Monterey Pines. Each branch may have several forms of lichen growing on it, varying in structure and color. The thread-like Lace Lichen is often mistaken for Spanish Moss. A Lichen is not a moss, but a combination of two plants, an alga and a fungus which live together for mutual benefit.



On pine branches you may see Pygmy Nuthatches (left) and Chestnut-backed Chickadees (right) who sometimes use lichens for nesting material. Other birds which frequent the pine forest include: Steller's Jays, Common Bushtits, Dark-eyed Juncos, Plain Titmice and Mourning Doves. Please refer to the Park Bird List for others.



4. Marine Fossils in this case were found nearby and give us a clue to the geologic past of Jacks Peak. The development of the present-day landscape began about 300 million years ago when the sea covered the entire area and extended inland to much of the San Joaquin Valley. Countless numbers of dead marine animals became imbedded in the sediments at the ocean bottom leaving their impressions, some of which you see here. About 12 million years ago, great earth forces pressed, folded and raised-up the ocean sediments to form the local hills and mountains you see today.

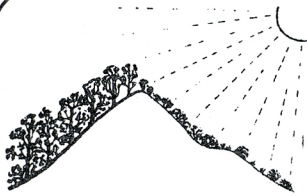
Please remember, all natural features are protected and may not be collected or disturbed.



5. The Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) was named by the early Spanish-Californians because of its strong resemblance and relationship to the Strawberry Tree in Spain. (Madrño in Spanish means strawberry colored.) The red-colored bark will peel off in thin layers during the summer leaving a smooth greenish surface. Madrone charcoal was used by early Californians in the making of gunpowder. A tea made from the bark was employed as a treatment for colds and stomachaches.



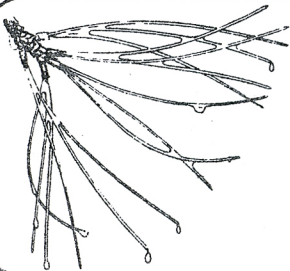
6. Local Costanoan Indians of the Rumsen Tribe probably used the Jacks Peak area to hunt and gather food and materials. One plant gathered by many tribes throughout California was Amole or Indian Soap Plant. Soap-like suds are formed when the bulb is crushed and mixed with water. This plant has slender, green, corn-like leaves and can be found growing beneath the larger shrubs along the trail. Indians are known to have tossed the crushed bulb into streams to stupefy fish, a practice now forbidden by law. The soapy, poisonous substance was removed by baking, boiling, or roasting, making the bulb edible.



7. As the Park is on an east-west ridge north of the Equator, the south-facing slopes receive direct light from the sun, making the area hotter and drier than the shaded north slope on the opposite side of Carmel Valley. The moisture loving plants of the Monterey Pine Forest thrive on the cooler north-facing slope while the arid south-facing slope is dominated by hardy low-growing shrubs of the Coastal Scrub/Soft Chaparral plant community.



8. Many hawks and vultures use rising warm air currents to soar in search of prey on the ground below. As slopes of the Valley warm, air ascends and ocean breezes develop to maintain the cycle. This provides a steady and reliable source of updrafts on sunny days. Raptors which frequent the area include: Red-Tailed Hawk, Red-Shouldered Hawk, Turkey Vulture and American Kestrel.



9. If Summer Fog has greeted you during this walk, you may have felt falling moisture droplets which have collected on the needles of Monterey Pines. These trees can trap up to ½ inch of moisture per week from fog which shrouds the Monterey Peninsula most of the summer months. Monterey Pines are dependent on these droplets for their survival, which is why native stands of this tree rarely extend more than six miles from the ocean. The Monterey Pine is extensively used in forestry plantations in Australia and New Zealand.



10. On this south-facing slope, the Coastal Scrub/Soft Chaparral plant community is comprised of a grayish-green collection of low bushes. The variety of herbs in the community provides a pleasant fragrance. Plants which thrive in this dry soil and moist sea air include: California Sagebrush, Black Sage, Wild Lilac or Ceanothus, Coyote Brush and Poison Oak.