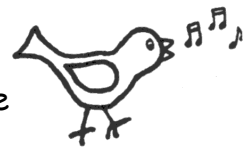




This trail was developed for kids in memory of Mary Shannon. Mary was a volunteer here at Eaton Canyon for many years and was president of the Nature Center Associates: The Student Naturalists and staff of Eaton Canyon fixed up the trail in 1999 and re-routed it in 2001. As you walk along The trail take time to stop, look, and listen for the birds and other wildlife all around you!

STOP #1

The pond is a special part of our ecosystem. Look for insects that live around the pond. Some of them like to stand on water! Do you see any tadpoles? They'll grow up to be frogs and toads. Do you see any algae? How about any other pond wildlife? Now look up at the Sycamore tree and around at the bushes. Do you see any birds? Do you hear any birds? How many different songs do you hear? Can you sing any of them?



STOP #2

The plant just to your right with the taco-shaped leaves is the Laurel Sumac. Some people say that this plant makes you itch, so make sure you don't touch it! The plant next to and behind the Laurel Sumac is California Sagebrush. Try rubbing some of its leaves between your fingers (but remember, don't pick any!) and then smell your hands. They say that in the olden days, cowboys would rub this plant on their clothes to make them smell better before going into town after weeks of herding cattle. That's how it got its nickname — cowboy cologne!

STOP #3

Look at the big oak tree. This is a **Coast Live Oak**. It is called "live" because it keeps its leaves all year long, Touch the bark. It is rough and thick, and it helped this tree live through a huge fire in 1993! This big oak tree grew out of a tiny acorn. Now it has acorns of its own! Not all of those acorns will grow into oak trees, though. Some will be eaten by animals, such as Acorn Woodpeckers and squirrels. Another plant that often grows around oak trees is poison oak. It has three leaflets on every stem. If you see it around the canyon, look, but don't touch! it'll make you itch, itch, itch!!

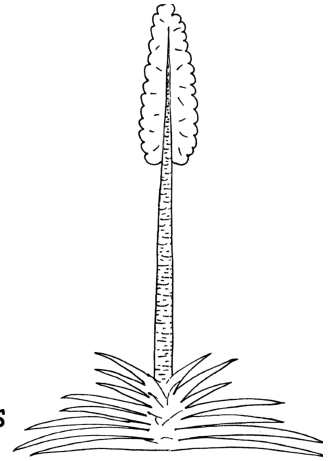


STOP #4



Look at the cactus, but be sure to keep your distance from those sharp spines! Some birds like to hide in the **Prickly Pear Cactus**. This plant has pretty yellow flowers in the spring. Now look right behind The cactus, Do you see a plant with long, needle-tipped leaves? This is the **Whipple Yucca**. After eight to twelve years,

This plant makes a tall stalk with beautiful white flowers. After the white flowers come green seed pods. When the pods pop open and scatter the little black seeds, the plant dies and the new plants take root from the seeds. This is all part of nature's endless cycle!



STOP #5



Another part of nature's endless cycle takes place when a plant dies. The log covered in fungus is decomposing. It will provide nutrients for the plants growing around it. Now look up at the **Sycamore Tree**. In The spring, There are small green leaves covered in fuzz. (Hummingbirds like to use this fuzz in their nests!) In The summer, the leaves are large and green and leathery. In the fall, the leaves are dry and brown. In the winter, the tree is almost bare.

STOP #6

Look at the rocks in front of you. These are some of the rocks that you can find here in the canyon. Inside the Nature Center, you can find a display that will show you all their names. How are they different from one another? How are they similar? Feel them. Do they feel different from one another? In the spring and summer, lizards like to come out and sunbathe on the warm rocks. Snakes and bugs and other animals sometimes sneak under rocks for shelter. Rocks and soil are an important part of the ecosystem and the endless cycle of life!



STOP #7

- 🐾 Look on the ground. Do you see any footprints? Listen carefully...do you hear any animals? Look around...do you see any animals? If you stand quietly and look carefully, you may be lucky enough to see a **California Ground Squirrel** or an **Audubon's Cottontail Rabbit**! They both live here in the canyon. The squirrel lives in long tunnels underground. The rabbit lives in the bushes. They are both very fast, so you have to be very quiet and wait and watch to see em.



STOP #8

The scruffy-looking plant in front of you is called Scale Broom. Can you guess where the name came from? Hint: take a look at the stems! The broom-like stems are covered in scales, which are actually the leaves! In the fall, yellow flowers dot this plant. Tiny parachutes carry the seeds away to make new plants.



STOP #9

There are two kinds of sage growing here. The light-colored one on the left is the White Sage. Its leaves are light gray and soft. Pale lavender or white flowers grow on long stems. The plant to the right is Black Sage. Its dark green leaves are wrinkled. Light blue flowers bloom along the tall stems during the spring and early summer. Smell both plants (but don't pick any!). Do they smell the same? Which smell do you like better? Both of these plants belong to the Mint family. Bees love them and help to spread their pollen.



STOP #10

Look up at the mountains. Our San Gabriel Mountains are special because they belong to one of only two mountain ranges in the whole United States that run East and West! This is called a "Transverse" mountain range. These mountains are some of the most beautiful and rugged mountains in the world!



STOP #11

The big, tall bush is called the Coffeeberry. Inside its berries are shiny black seeds that look like coffee beans. Deer, coyotes, and band-tailed pigeons love to eat the berries! The shiny green leaves are beautiful all year long. In front of the Coffeeberry is California Buckwheat. In the summer, the flowers are pink and white. In the fall, they turn a rusty color. Bees love to visit these plants.

