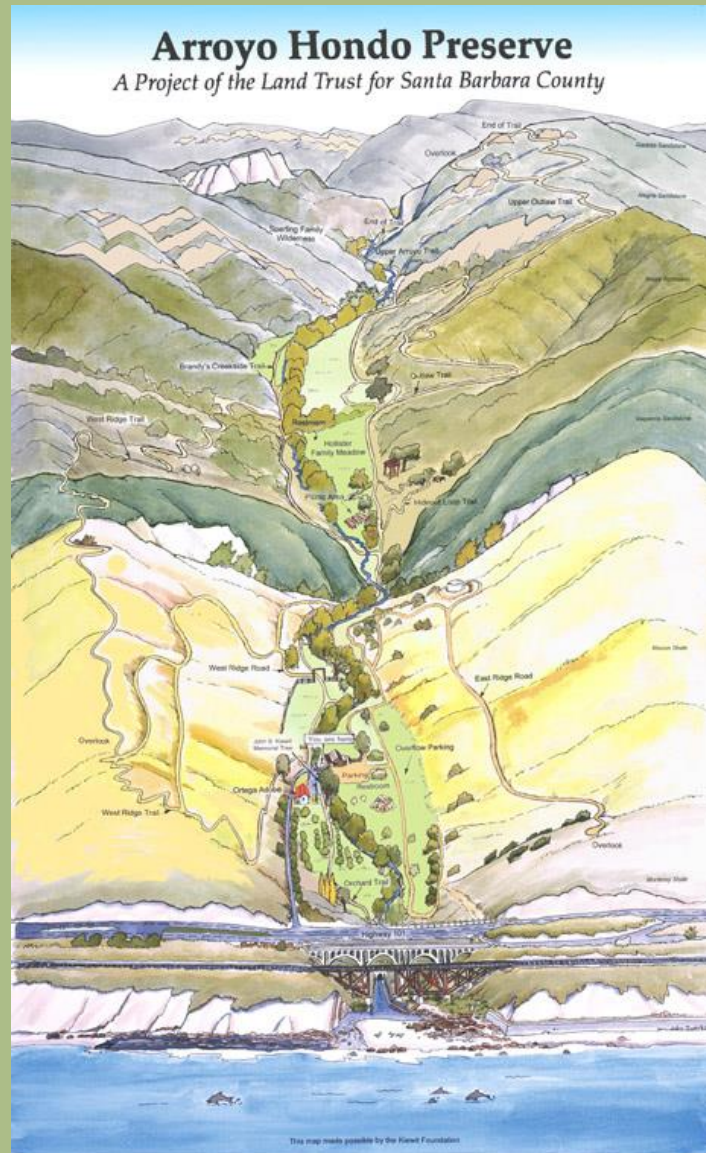




Discover the Wonders of Nature
Explore Arroyo Hondo Preserve with Your Family

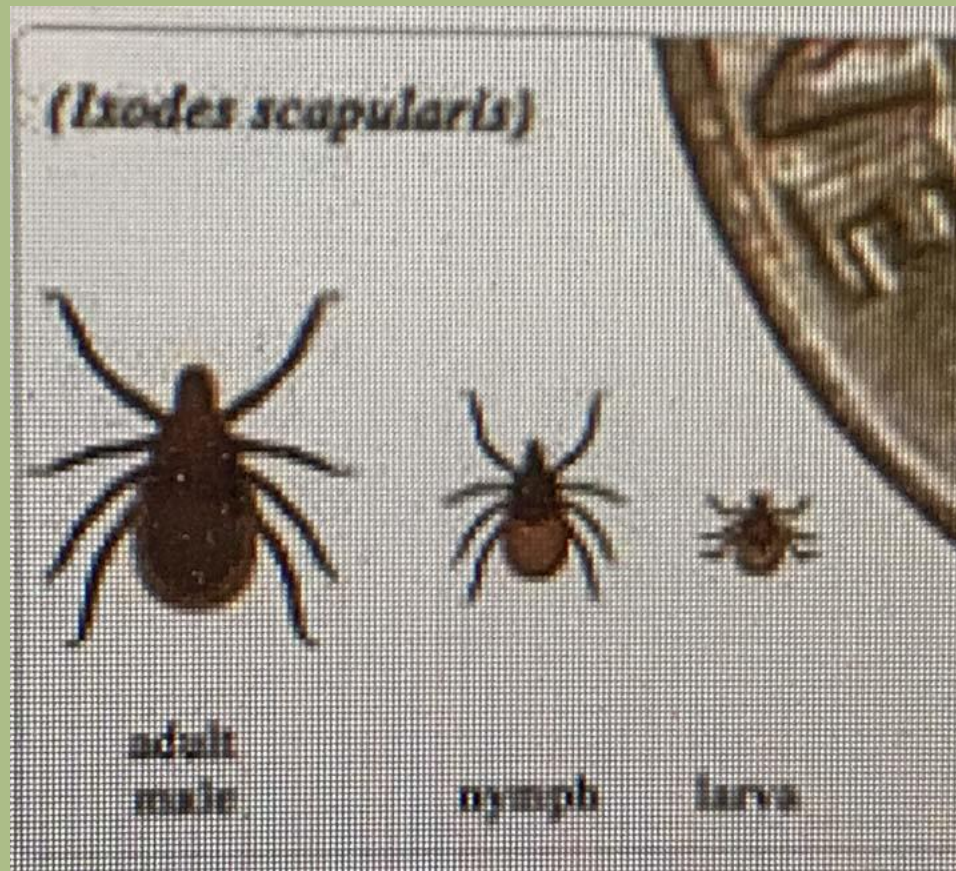


Go on a hike with your family and explore the Preserve.
Bring sunscreen, a hat, good hiking shoes, long pants, and drinking water.



Before you begin your walk, here are a few cautions and reasons to stay on the trails:

First: In spring we see ticks. If you stay away from vegetation you are less likely to pick up ticks. If you see one of these small animals with 8 legs on your clothes, pick it off and throw it far away.



Second: Watch out for Poison Oak.
Stay on the trails and avoid touching plants along the edges.



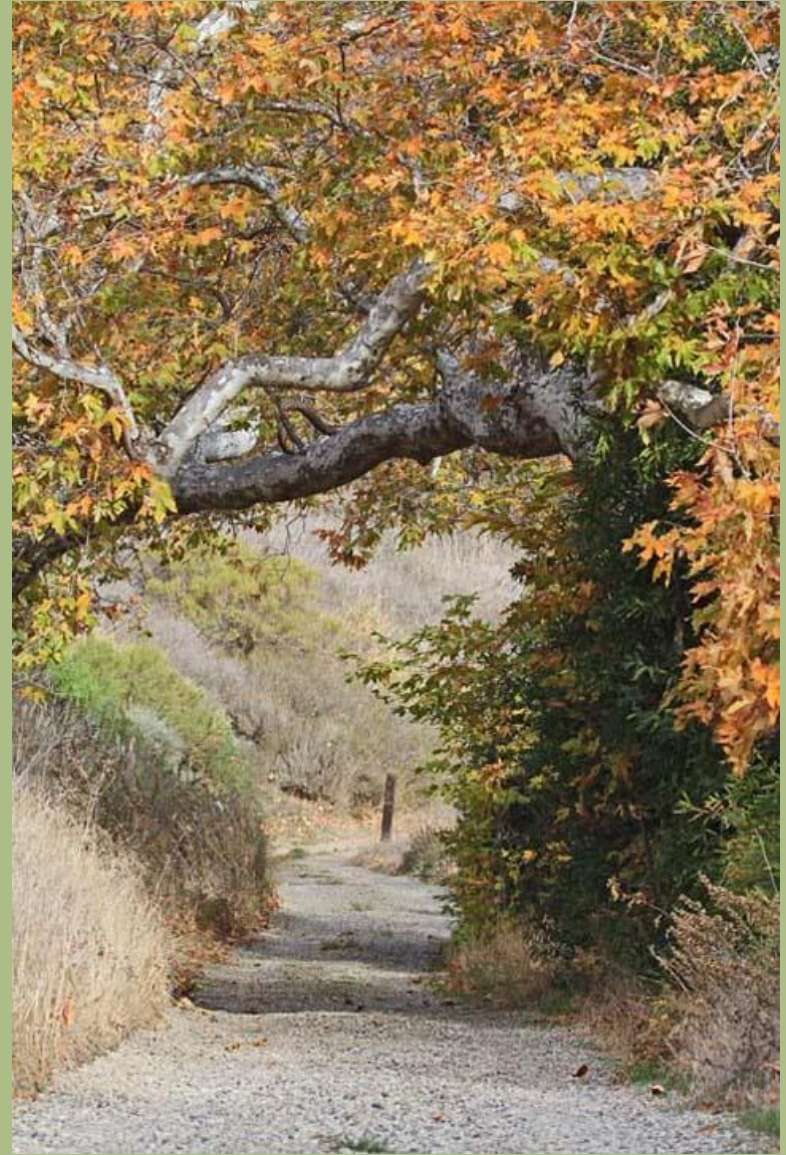
Third: Watch out for these fascinating reptiles.
Again, if you stay on trails you will see snakes before you get too close. Back up if you see a rattlesnake and watch it from a distance.



Scene the spring after the 2004 Gaviota Fire



Heading up the Canyon through a tunnel of sycamores



People of all ages enjoy the canyon



School children and preserve volunteers prepare for an adventure



A winter view - from shady stream banks
to hot, dry, chaparral-clad ridges



View from the Meadow



Fun at the Bathtub Tree

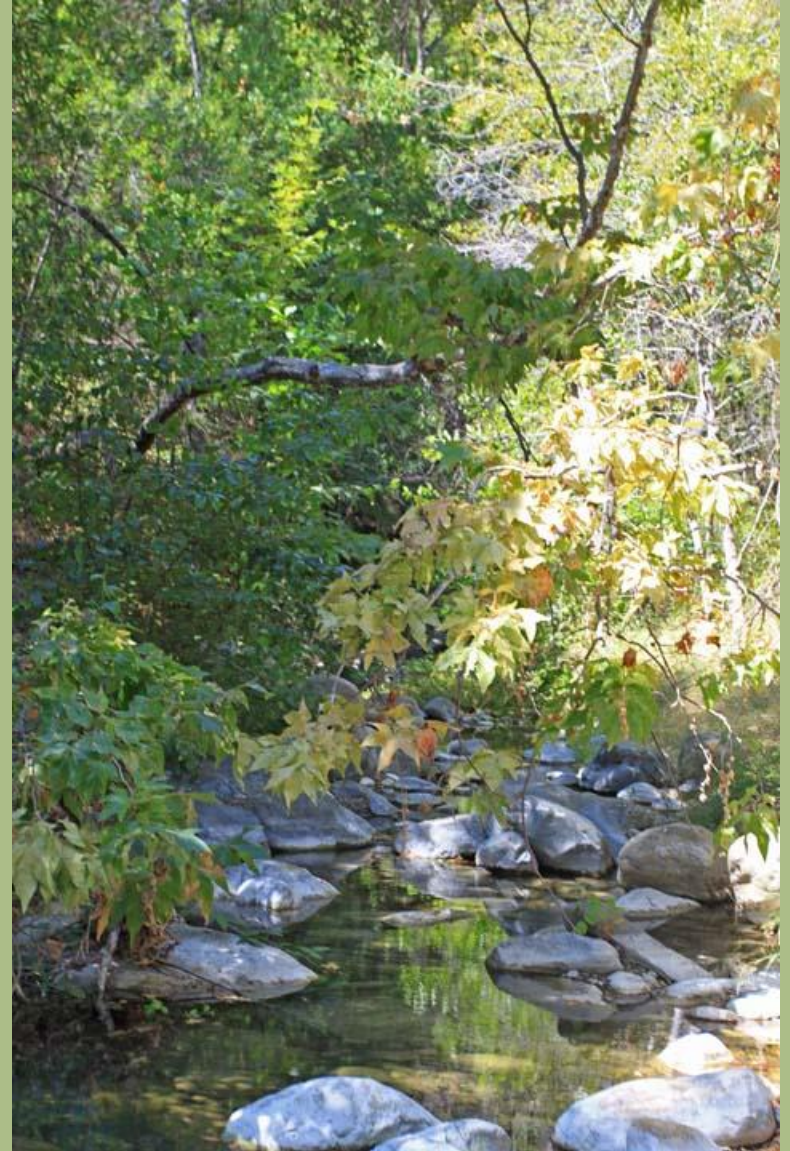
This is a giant bay tree with many trunks



High and Dry: Chaparral covers high rocky ridges and slopes



Beautiful clean stream habitat.
All through the drought Arroyo Hondo Creek still had pools.



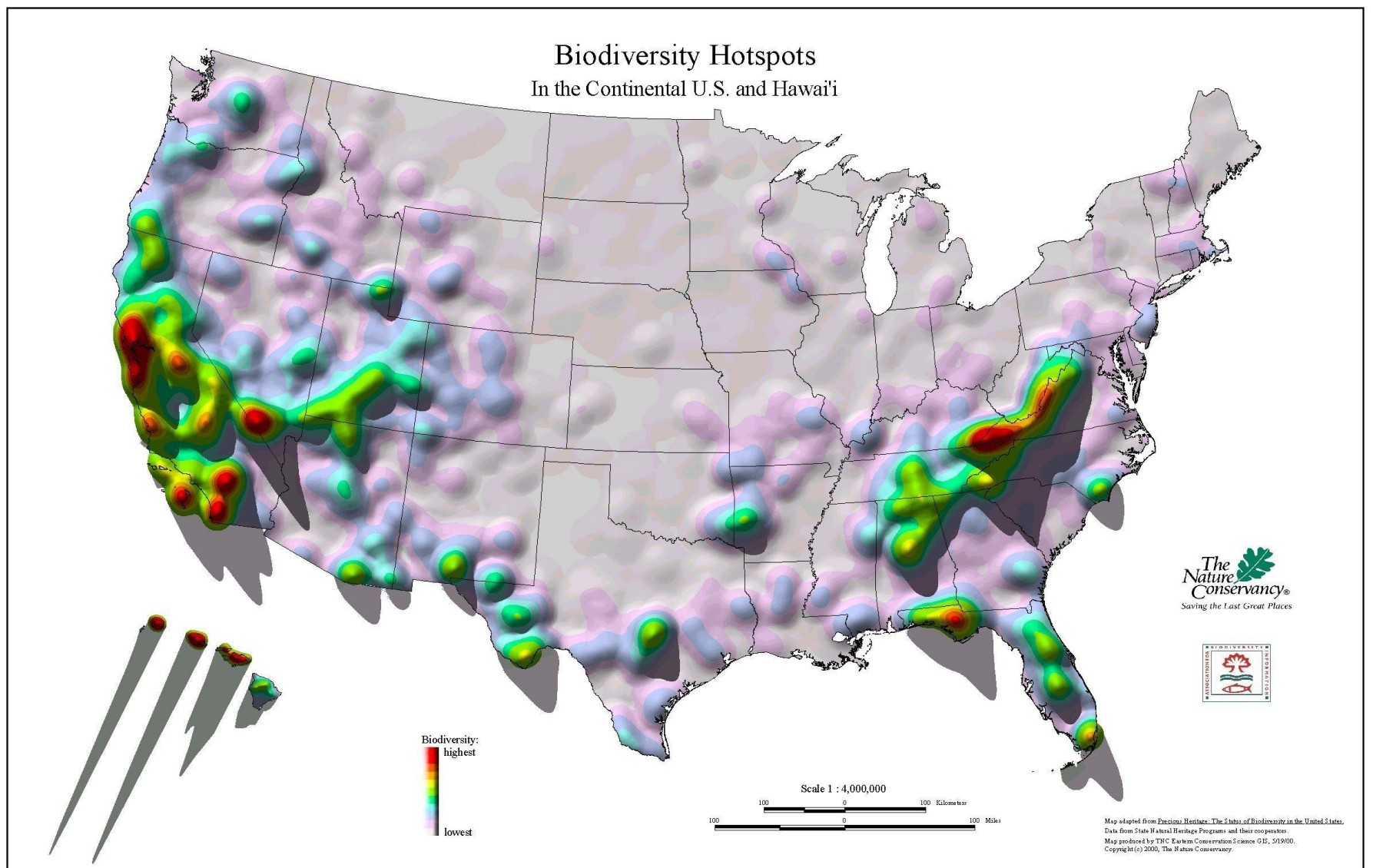
Families can learn about aquatic life



The Giant Chain Fern grows here
in a special moist microhabitat



Arroyo Hondo Preserve lies within the California Floristic Province, an area identified by Conservation International as one of the World's 35 Biodiversity Hotspots



Why does Arroyo Hondo Preserve have so many native plant and animal species

The area's diverse rock types have given rise to a number of soil types. Different plants are found growing in different soils.

With both north-facing and south-facing slopes and a deep stream channel, temperature and moisture conditions vary widely.

The Preserve includes many habitat types. Coast live oak woodland, riparian (streamside) woodland, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grassland, and giant chain fern wetland are all found here.

As it includes so many different types of environment, Arroyo Hondo Preserve has, for its size, an unusual diversity of plants and animals.

There are many species of Lichens growing on rocks and trees. This is a sign of clean air as lichens are sensitive to air pollution.



In the wet season we see many different mushrooms in the Oak Woodland. These are the reproductive structures of fungi. Fungi have many roles in nature. Some are parasites and others are important in nutrient cycling.



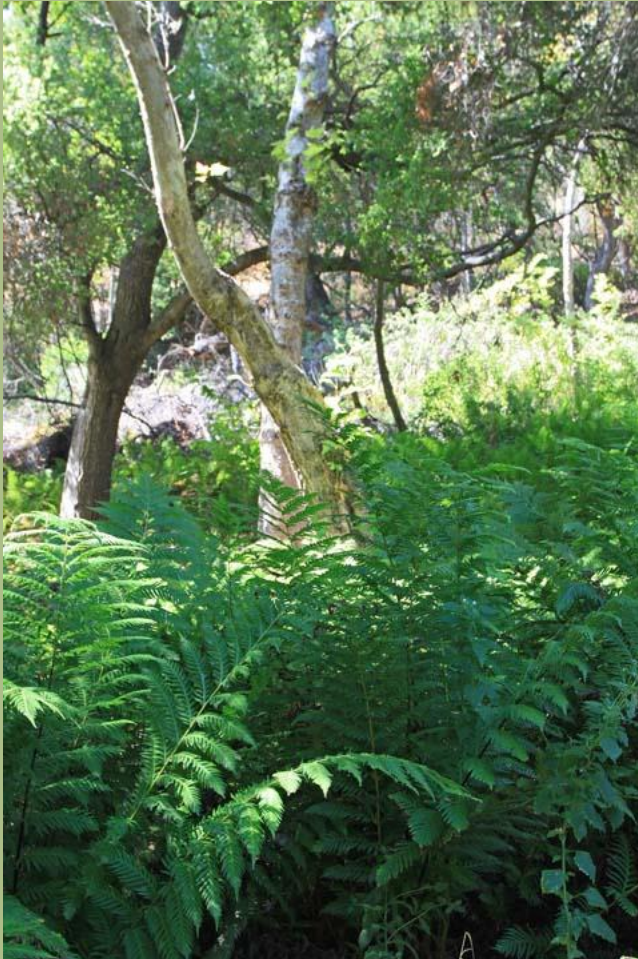
Docents Interpret the Wonders of Nature (showing visitors a shelf fungus)



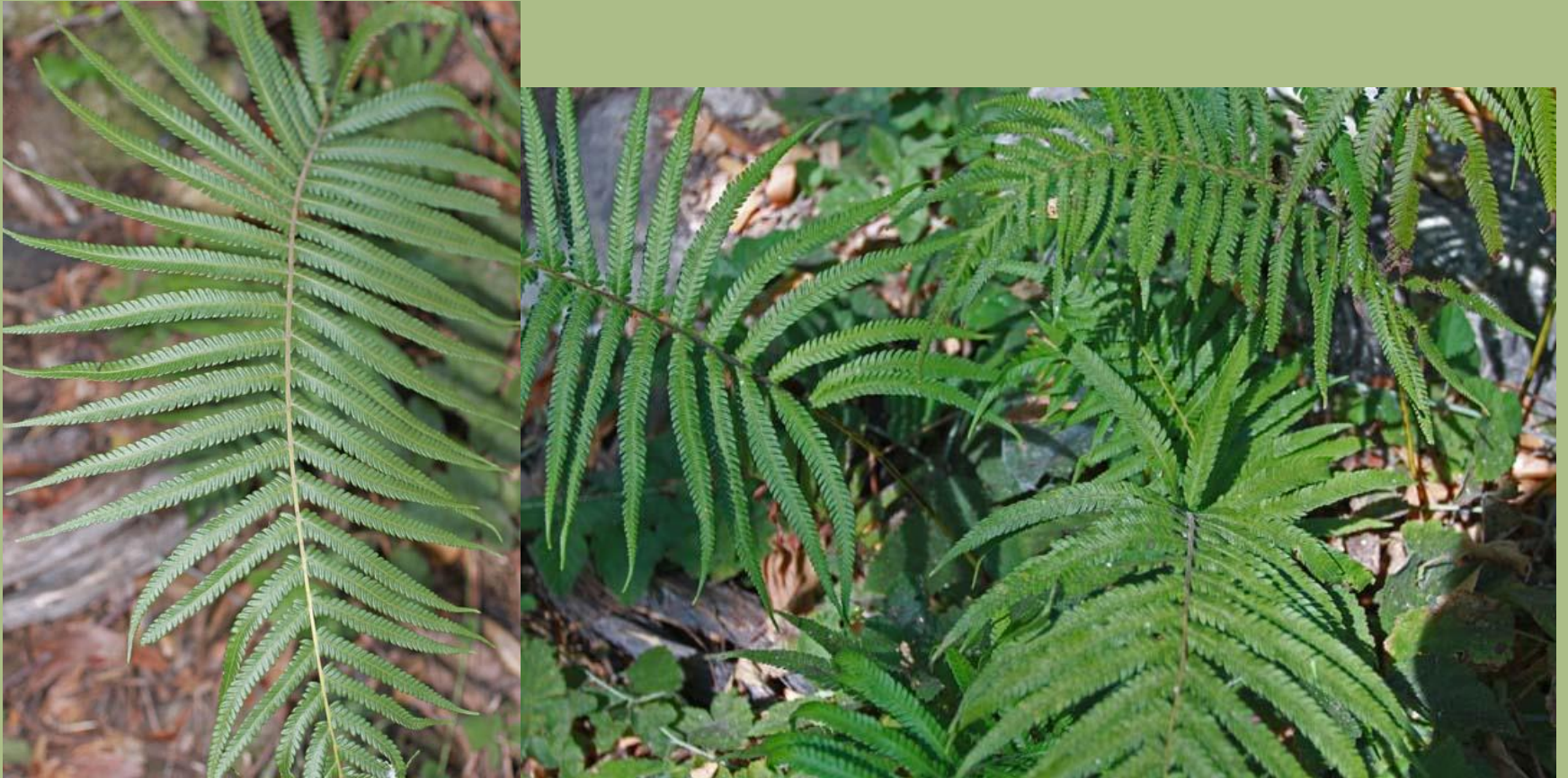
With a Tattoo Fern you can give your hand a spore print.
Flowering plants have seeds but ferns produces spores.
(you don't need to pick the fern to make a tattoo)



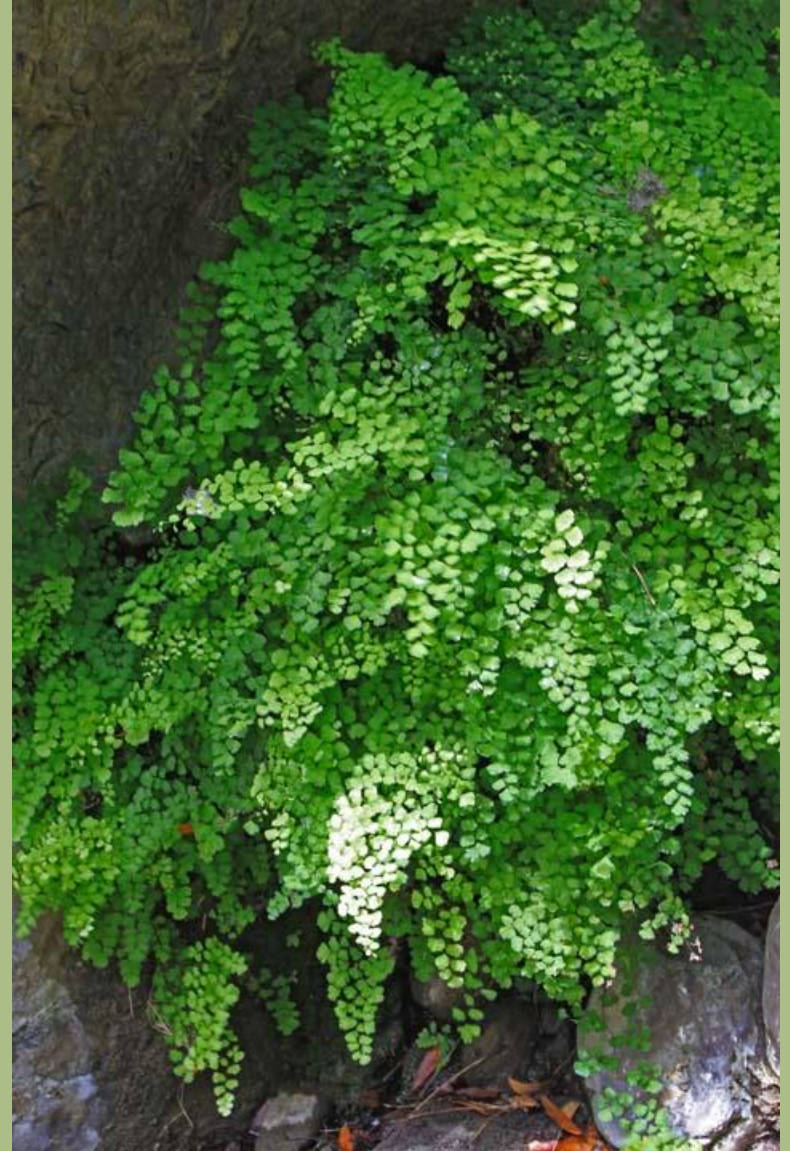
Giant Chain Fern
Woodwardia fimbriata
grows in wet microhabitats at Arroyo Hondo



Sonoran Maiden Fern
Thelypteris puberula var. *sonorensis*
conservation status: endangered in California



Bird's Foot Fern - *Pellaea mucronata*
Maidenhair Fern, Venushair - *Adiantum capillus-veneris*



Horsetail
Equisetum sp.



Hummingbird sips nectar from Hummingbird Sage



A Rufous Hummingbird in all his glory



More Plants that attract Hummingbirds:

Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry, Indian pink, Scarlet Monkeyflower, Climbing Penstemon



Scarlet Delphinium - *Delphinium cardinale*
Chaparral Pea - *Pickeringia montana*



Hoffmann's Nightshade
Solanum xanti var. *hoffmannii*
this variety is endemic to the Gaviota Coast



Plants of the chaparral: Manzanita and Yucca



Greenbark Ceanothus - *Ceanothus spinosus* (blue)
Bigpod Ceanothus - *Ceanothus megacarpus* (white)



Lemonade Berry
Rhus integrifolia



Beautiful Chaparral plants:
Pitcher Sage, Sticky Monkeyflower, Sticky Snapdragon



Golden Stars, a pretty bulb plant, blooms as the soil dries out in late spring



Giant Stream Orchid
Epipactis gigantea
found along stream sides and in seeps



Humboldt Lilies in the oak woodland at Arroyo Hondo



Coffeeberry - *Rhamnus californica*
Redberry - *Rhamnus crocea*
food for birds and mammals



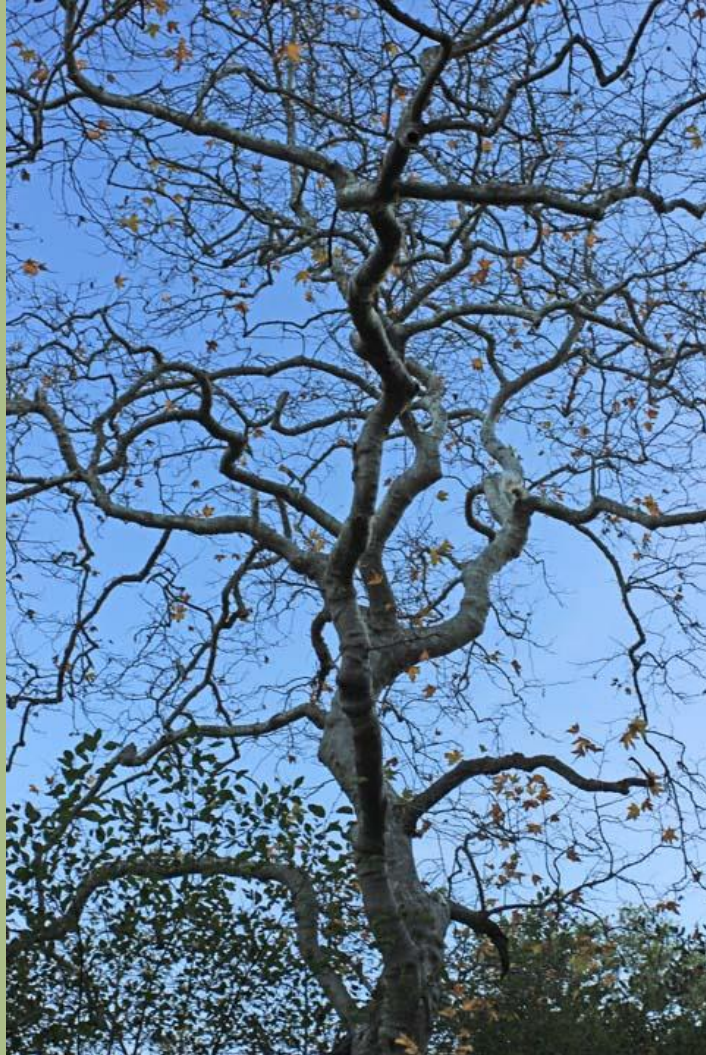
Chaparral Clematis flowers in spring



Giant Multi-trunked Bay
The Bathtub Tree
Umbellularia californica



Western Sycamore - Platanus racemosa
many huge trees at Arroyo Hondo



Children study stream invertebrates



Aquatic Invertebrates

hellgrammites, dragonflies, water striders and more



More Aquatic Invertebrates
Giant Water Bug (toebiter), water penny,
caddisfly larva, water strider



In Spring, Cicadas emerge from the soil among the roots. They make clicking sounds among the trees as they find their mates (the green cicada has just emerged)



Just a few of many butterflies
Monarch, Swallowtail, Buckeye, Lorquin's Admiral



Tiny spring azure butterflies puddling by the creek

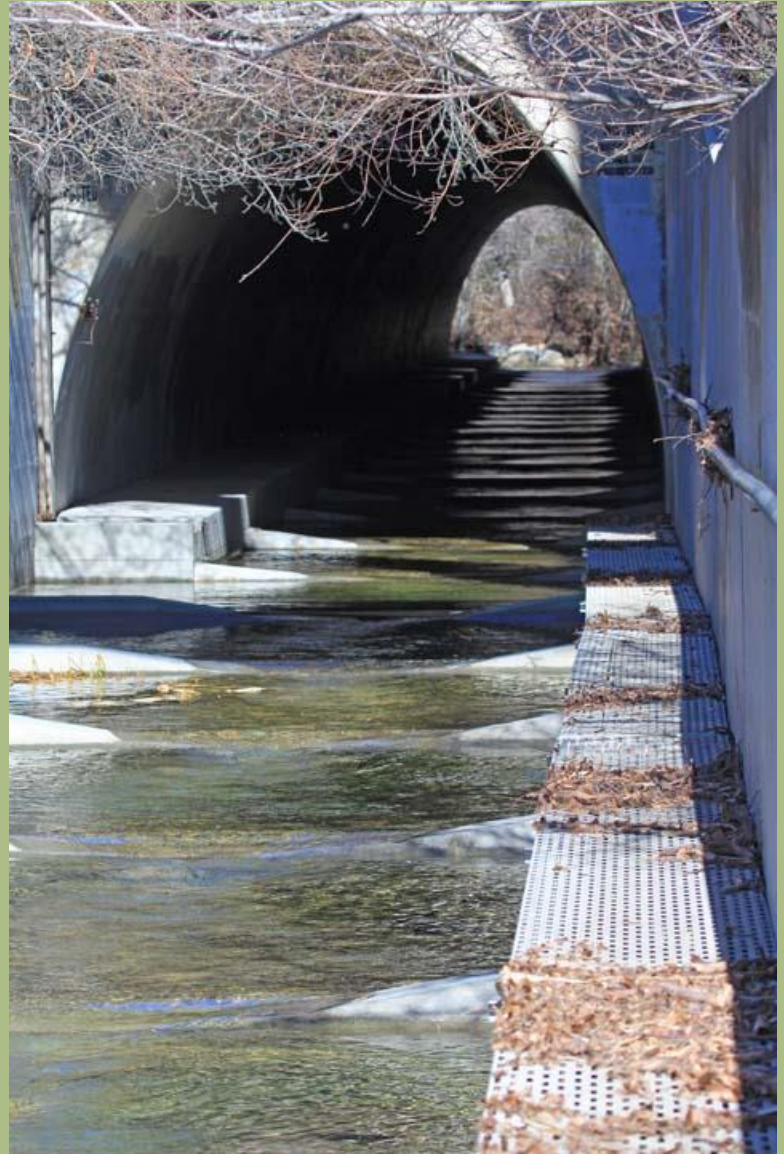
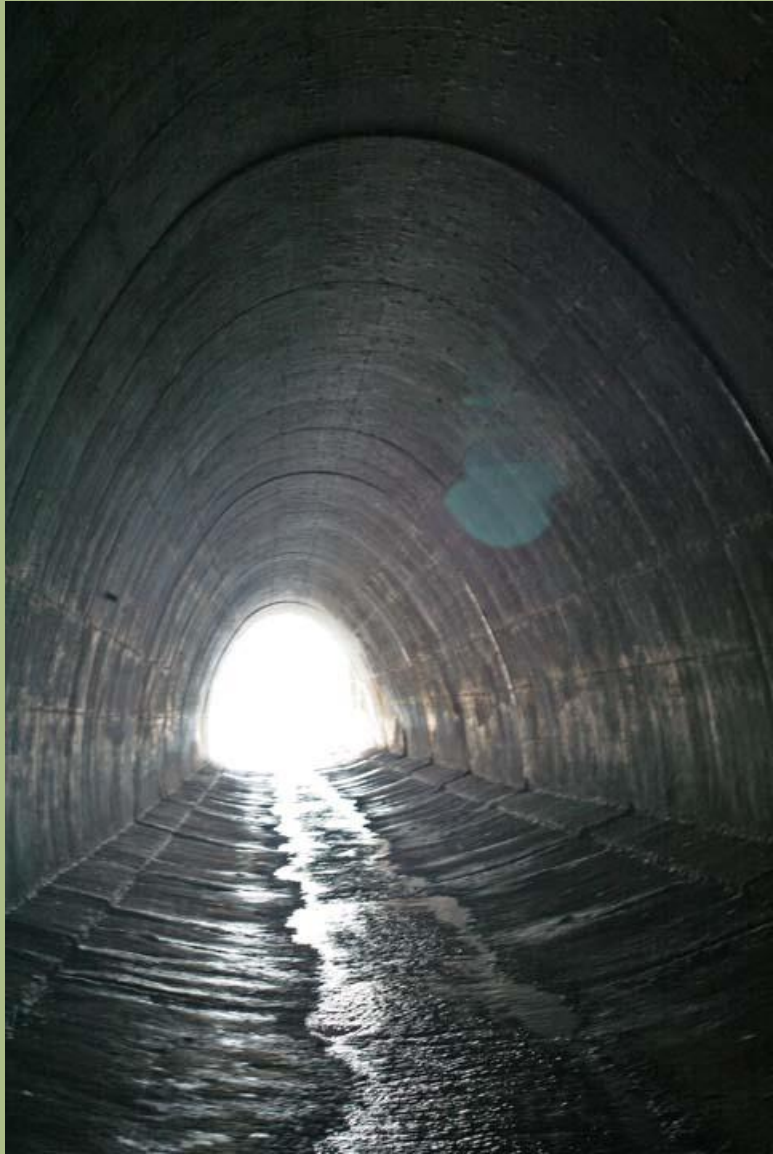


Banana Slug

lives in damp, riparian habitats,
more common in the Pacific Northwest with isolated "relict" populations to the south
occasionally seen at the Preserve when it is raining



A Fish Passage was built under Highway 101 with baffles and resting pools to help Steelhead swim to the ocean and return to fresh water to spawn (lay eggs)
(left photo is before & right photo is after construction)



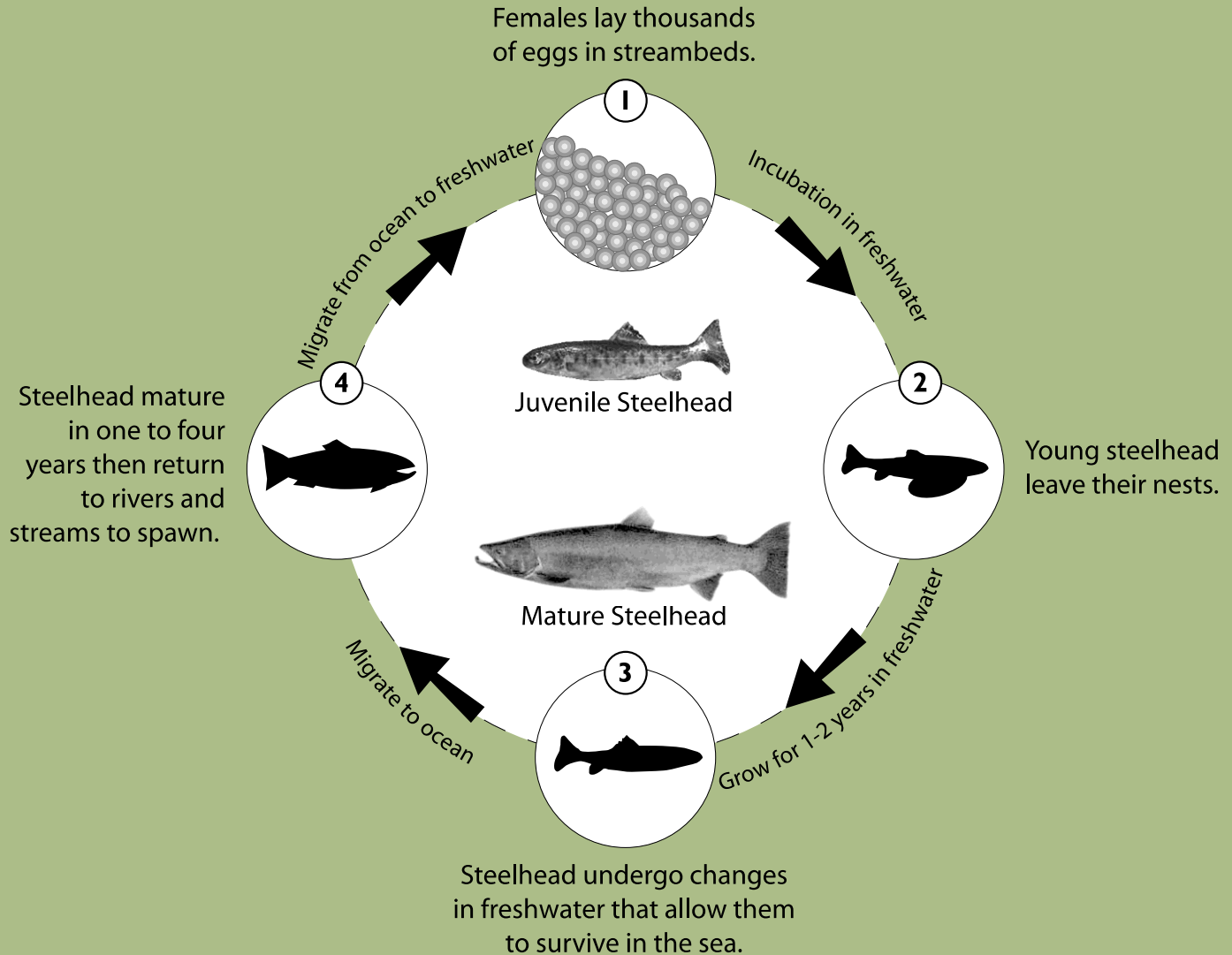
The Estuary Pool (January 2017)

We are not allowed to walk through the tunnel to the ocean but this is where the young steelhead prepare for their move into salt water.



Understanding the Migratory Life of Steelhead

Steelhead are born in freshwater streams, migrate to the ocean when they are a year or two old, live in the ocean for up to four years, then return as adults to reproduce in streams.



Southern California Steelhead - Arroyo Hondo Creek, January 30th, 2017

conservation status: endangered

In 2017 two of the seven steelhead seen in Southern California streams came up Arroyo Hondo Creek.



Pacific Treefrog (green), California Treefrog (gray)



Red-legged Frog in Arroyo Hondo Creek.
Also, egg mass of Red-legged Frog.
Conservation Status: Federally listed as a Threatened Species



CALIFORNIA NEWT

young newt with gills & adult newt

Young newts use gills to obtain dissolved oxygen from the water.
Mature newts are lung breathers and have to surface to gulp air.

Conservation Status: *California Species of Special Concern*



Newts lay eggs in gelatinous masses under water.
The egg mass on the right has younger embryos.



Western or Pacific Pond Turtle

Turtles hatch on land and young first move to the water in April

Conservation Status: California species of special concern,
USFWS species of concern



Western Fence Lizard or blue bellied lizard
This is our most common lizard. Read about how this species may help with the incidence of Lyme Disease.



Alligator Lizard

Watch out, don't pick these up as they can really bite!



Common Kingsnake

color varies from brown to black



Mountain Kingsnake

a beautiful snake, rarely seen at Arroyo Hondo Preserve



The patterns of the Gopher Snake help to camouflage it as it moves through the grass.



Watch out for the Pacific Rattlesnake

You may see young snakes with more definite patterns as well as bigger dark older snakes with less pronounced patterns.



Ring-necked Snake

This is a mildly venomous small snake. When frightened, it coils and shows its orange underside. Orange is a warning color in nature.



California Quail

a ground nesting bird, often seen in big coveys



Scrub Jays are noisy birds that are common in the canyon.



Western Bluebirds nest here in spring



Wren guards nest at the picnic area.



Turkey Vulture

many of these scavenging birds are seen at the Preserve
they have very good eyesight and a keen sense of smell



Red-tailed Hawks often soar above,
sometimes carrying their prey.



Northern Harriers are sometimes seen hunting in the grassland.



Peregrine Falcons have been seen in the canyon
they fly very fast and prey upon other birds



American Kestrels often sit on branches and power lines as they watch for small prey animals.



Several species of Woodpeckers can be found at Arroyo Hondo.



More Woodpeckers:
Northern Flicker & Sapsucker
In the orchard, look for sapsucker wells in walnut tree bark



Barn Owls and Great Horned Owls live here.
These nocturnal predators fly silently due to their specially adapted wings.



Phainopepla - black male & gray female
These birds are occasional seasonal visitors from the desert



Great Blue Herons are sometimes seen flying along the stream, especially when young fish are plentiful. These birds hunt for fish and also for rodents and lizards.



Raccoons and Striped Skunk live at the Preserve.
Striped animals are well camouflaged in areas with patches of sun and shade.



Western Gray Squirrel
look up high and listen in areas with tall oak and bay trees



Dusky-footed Woodrat

These very interesting rodents build quite complicated nests or middens from sticks. The nests are divided into separate "rooms."
(photos show whole nest and partially dismantled nest)



Arroyo Hondo has a healthy Mule Deer population. They are most often seen in the morning and at dusk. Single or twin fawns are born in spring. Fawns have spots when they are young.



Coyotes are omnivores. They hunt rodents but also eat fruit and other plant foods.



Bobcats are sometimes seen here. These beautiful wild cats have short tails and distinctive strips and spots.



Mountain Lions, California's largest wild cats, live in this area.
They are very shy and are only rarely seen in daylight.



Black Bears sometimes come down from the mountains above.
We sometimes see big bear scats full of cherry seeds or manzanita berries.
See the muddy bear prints on the wall of the Ortega Adobe!



Community volunteers and high school and college students help us with Habitat Restoration and Trail Keeping projects.

