

## 6 OAK TREE, BUTTERFLY GARDEN, POND



**Caution!!!** This portion of the trail is Not ADA or stroller friendly.



### Oak Tree

Coast Live Oaks can live 125 to 250 years and can grow 20 to 40 feet tall. Touch the bark of the oak tree. Does

it feel the same or different than the smooth Sycamore tree (stop 2). The bark is rough and very thick. The thick bark protects it from fire. The leaves are small and sharp and stiff.



### Butterfly Garden

The butterfly garden is planted with native plants. The plants are labeled.

Look at the color of the plants. What color do butterflies and hummingbirds like best? If you haven't guessed, it's RED.



### The Pond

In the early springtime mosquitoes lay their eggs in the pond. The eggs hatch and

become mosquito larvae. To keep the mosquito population down you can see little fish swimming in the pond called mosquito fish. And what do you think mosquito fish eat? Mosquito larvae. Also in the spring the

Pacific Tree Frogs visit the pond to lay their eggs and they become tadpoles. Our frogs are pacific tree frogs!

**Docent-led trail talks are available for school and youth groups. Please register online @ Placerita.org**

Mission: "To inspire a passion, awareness and respect for the environment, and to preserve and protect for future generations the history and ecosystem of Placerita Canyon."

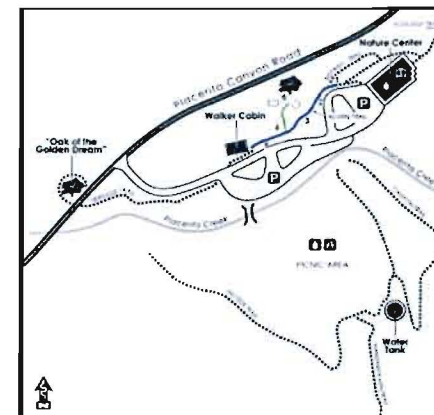


## Placerita Canyon Natural Area and Nature Center

### Acorn Trail and Junior Nature Trail

Self-Guided Nature Trail

Approximately 0.12 Mile/Time: 20 minutes



19152 Placerita Canyon Road  
Newhall, California 91321  
661-259-7721  
[www.placerita.org](http://www.placerita.org)

The Acorn Trail is designed as a short concrete wheelchair and stroller accessible trail (except as noted). Its journey starts on the sidewalk, which is at the end of the parking lot to the right as you emerge from the Nature Center. This hike is sure to begin a basic understanding of the natural world of Southern California.



This trail is designed for ADA compliance and strollers. **No** bicycles please. Rev 2/2011 JO



Please make **Memories**, take **Photos**, and take **Trash** away with you and nothing else – no plants, animals, sticks, stones or leaves. Enjoy your visit and allow others to enjoy theirs.

There are six stops on the trail. When you reach the first stop, look around. You are surrounded by a woodland of **Coast Live Oaks**, the dominant species in this habitat. These trees supply not only food and shelter for flying critters like **Western Scrub-Jays** and **Acorn Woodpeckers** but also for subterranean creatures such as the California **Ground Squirrel** and **Gophers**. If you have any questions after this walk, you can ask the Nature Center staff.

### Things to look out for on the trail

As you hike the trail, here are a few things to keep your eyes open for: **Scat** (animal droppings)--some animals, especially the **Gray Fox** use their **scat** to mark their territory. As a territorial marker, they deposit their scat in the most conspicuous place as to warn other members of their species that "this territory is taken".



**Darkling beetle:** common name Stink Bug.

For protection it stands on its head and emits a foul-smelling liquid for defense- that's how it gets his name. They are good for the environment; they clean up after plants and animals. Keep a look out for **Acorn Woodpeckers** and **Red Tailed-Hawks** in the skies and trees above you.



### 1 YUCCA PLANT



**Caution!!!** Leaf tips are sharp. Native to hot-dry areas of North American and Central America. Belongs to the agave family. Many American Indian tribes used the fiber in the leaves for rope. Yucca only needs to be rubbed until all that is left is the fiber which can then be braided together. If you shred a yucca leaf add water rub vigorously you will get a lovely green lathery yucca soap-good as a shampoo. In spring, huge candle-like flowers are displayed on a single stem. If you shake the flowers you may find a moth. The Yucca Moth hatches inside the flower in late spring and proceeds to pollinate the yucca. The Yucca Plant is New Mexico's state flower.



### 2 SYCAMORE TREE



Sycamores can live 500 to 600 years and can grow 50 to 75 feet tall. The tree requires lots of water so it lives in the Riparian Habitat (by the water). It has greenish-gray smooth bark. The leaves are large, 6 to 10 inches, soft and fuzzy and five points just like your hand. It loses all its leaves in the fall. Touch the tree. You can feel that it is cool because of the water inside. When all the leaves have fallen off you can often see mistletoe in the branches.



### 3 TREE STUMP

This tree stump came from a tree named "Lyon's Oak" and was cut down when Lyons Avenue in Newhall was being widened in the early 1970's. The tree was 147 years old when cut. Look closely at the stump, can you see the rings? Some are thicker than the others. The rings can be used to study climate from past years. If the rings are wider the rainfall was plentiful and the tree grew better than if there was a dry season. All trees in one area have similar growth rings.



### 4 GOPHER HOLES



There are many gopher holes in this area. If you sit quietly for a bit you may see one working on its burrow. Look for fresh dirt.

When the gophers leave their burrow for a new one, lizards and snakes move in and make themselves at home.



### 5 WOODPECKER TREE



Look at the downed logs. You can see many holes drilled by the Acorn Woodpeckers that live in Placerita. Some of the holes are used to store acorns. Other holes have been enlarged so that the woodpeckers can use the tree to raise a family.

Woodpeckers are social birds and families continue to live together, unlike other birds. The babies find their own homes shortly after leaving the nest.