



San Pedro Valley Park Self-guided Tour

A 1,052 acre area embracing the middle and south forks of San Pedro Creek, this park is nestled amongst the Santa Cruz Mountain range and the foothills of Pacifica. The park offers group picnic areas, family picnic sites, a self-guided nature trail, hiking trails, a visitor center, and views of a seasonal waterfall. **Start your tour at the Visitor Center.**

Self-guided Tour Routes (Approximate Time):

-  Weiler Ranch Trail - 2 miles (1 hour)
-  Montara Mountain Trail to Brooks Creek Trail to Trout Farm Trail - 2.5 miles (2 hours)
-  Hazelnut Trail to Weiler Ranch Trail - 4.5 miles (3 hours)



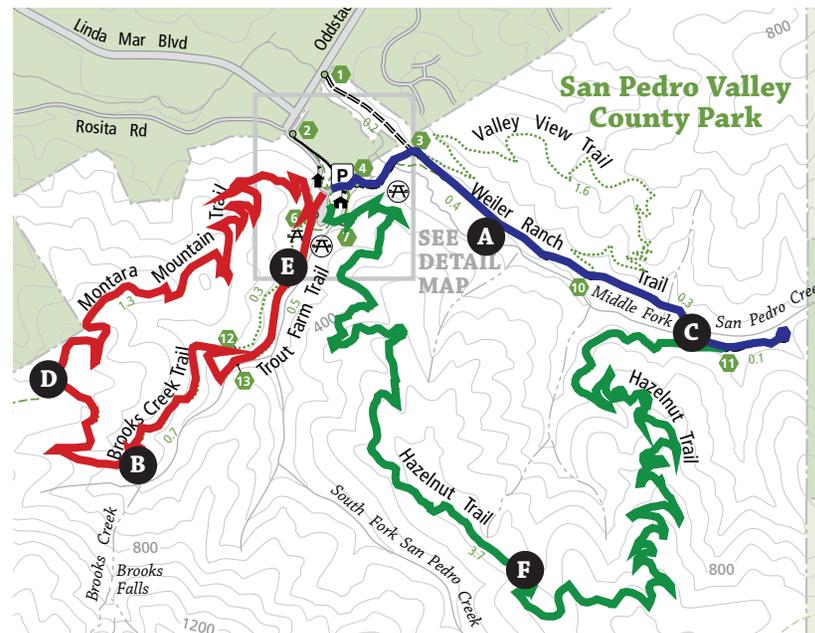
A: Grassland Habitat:

About 70 percent of a grass plant is underground. Grasses have long roots that grow deep into the earth and grow mats to keep the grass from being pulled up by grazers. Grass is drought tolerant and fire resistant and can regenerate from its roots. Seeds or grains of grasses have protective outer shells that keep the seeds viable for many years. Temperate grasslands have a growing season and a dormant season adapted to live with the rainy and dry portions of the year. The primary plant species within a grassland habitat are bunch grasses and perennial wildflowers. Numerous animals depend on the various grasses and low, wind-sculpted shrubs for food and shelter.



B: Brooks Falls and Montara Mountain:

The tallest waterfall in San Mateo County, Brooks Falls drops 207 feet off of Montara Mountain to the canyon below. The fall has three tiers and can be heard and seen across the valley on the appropriately named Brooks Creek Trail. Brooks Creek originates on the north face of Montara Mountain, the backdrop of which is made up of massive slabs of granite. Montara Mountain is one of the northernmost sections of the Santa Cruz Mountain range which separates the bayside of the San Francisco Peninsula from the oceanside. Montara Mountain is home to a unique biodiversity including several species of endangered and even endemic plants. Funnily enough, Montara is actually a made-up word. It originated when a mapmaker misread the previous map that had labeled the valley just north of the mountain as Cañada Montosa, meaning wooded valley.



C: Steelhead Run San Pedro Creek:

San Pedro Creek supports one of the few remaining steelhead trout populations in San Mateo County. Between December and February keep a look out for the silvery-gray fish as they travel upstream to spawn. The upper watershed of San Pedro Creek is protected within this park, but the lower portions of the stream were modified to flow through suburban development for 2.5 miles until its mouth at Pacifica State Beach into the Pacific Ocean. Recent restoration projects for the creek have been completed to allow better fish passage and to prevent flooding.





D: Spectacular Views:

On the horizon are the Farallon Islands. These islands are 26 miles off the coast of San Francisco and are closed to the public. They are a National Wildlife Refuge which protects a huge seabird colony consisting of twelve species of seabirds and shorebirds. Over 250,000 seabirds populate the island! Seals, whales, and sharks all frequent the area as well. Altogether the islands make up approximately 120 acres. The Farallons were known as the “Islands of the Dead” to the Ohlone Native Americans. Historians believed they did not travel to the islands in belief that they were home to spirits of the dead. Spanish explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo discovered the islands in 1539 and named them the Farallons, which is Spanish for cliffs or small pointed islets. He is also famed for naming Point Reyes and Monterey Bay. Highway 1 from Santa Barbara to San Francisco is named the Cabrillo Highway in honor of him. To the North, you can see Point Reyes, Mount Tamalpais, and the famous Golden Gate Bridge!

E: Trout Farm History Panel:

Stop here to learn more about the history of the previous landowners of San Pedro Valley Park.

F: Coastal Scrub Habitat:

Coastal scrub describes a type of plant community found in central California, typically in proximity to the coast. Adapted to a cool, moist



environment, the various larger shrubs found here have stems and foliage that tend to be more soft and flexible, rather than stiff and woody. These shrubs dominate the landscape to varying degrees and associate with herbaceous understory which compete for light and space with the dominant shrubs.

In San Pedro Valley Park the dominant shrub is coyote brush, which is tolerant of drought and the salty air of marine fogs. One can readily find coastal scrub throughout the park where coyote brush grows in association with other shrubs such as coast sagebrush, blackberry and poison oak. This assemblage of plants provides large amounts of habitat and resources for birds, mammals and invertebrates.



Bobcats are frequently seen at the edge of the grasslands and riparian zone near the Weiler Ranch Trail.

When you're done with your tour, please return this guide to the kiosk for the next visitor. If you find this guide, please return it to: San Pedro Valley Park, 600 Oddstad Blvd, Pacifica, CA

San Pedro Valley Park is a part of **San Mateo County Parks**, which manages parks, preserves, trails, and historic sites throughout the county to preserve public lands and provide opportunities for education and recreation.

For more information, visit www.SMCoParks.org.

San Mateo County Parks
Wild places & friendly spaces