



5th Grade Geology and Natural History Program Description

Los Serenos de Point Vicente

The program is conducted at the Forrestal Nature Preserve and offers an experiential learning experience for the students, with emphasis on the geology of the Palos Verdes Peninsula plus a review of the history and the natural habitat of the area.

How the Program Works

Participants are broken up into groups of between 10-12 students and assigned to a docent from Los Serenos who will act as their teacher and guide for the roughly 2-hour session. At least one teacher or parent is assigned to each group in addition to the docent to act as a chaperone for the children. The students are taken on an approximately 90-minute hike into the preserve. The students will also have the opportunity to visit the nature room in the newly opened Ladera Linda Community Center before or after the hike for an additional hands-on experience, with examples of native plants and animals, geology, and historical artifacts of our indigenous peoples.

Curriculum

Geology- Because the Forrestal Nature Preserve was once a quarry, many interesting geological features have been exposed. We will review with the students how the peninsula was formed, including a discussion of subduction and plate tectonics, and the types of rocks that make up most of the area. Igneous, Metamorphic, and Sedimentary rock formation is discussed, along with crystals and fossils. Examples of most of these types of rocks are seen on the hike plus are available for the students to touch at the Community Center.

History- During the nature walk and in the Community Center, some of the history of the area is reviewed. Emphasis is placed on the Native Americans who once lived here, and on the Sepulveda Rancho which once was located on the Peninsula.

Natural Habitat- The nature preserve is an excellent example of the native coastal sage scrub habitat that once made up most of the Peninsula. The plants that make up this habitat, including sage brush, buckwheat, lemonade berry, and many others, are shown to the students as we walk. Birds, lizards, rabbits, insects and other animals seen on the hike are identified by the docents, and the nocturnal animals that are usually not seen during the day are discussed. An emphasis is placed on how the Native Americans used the plant and animal life in their daily lives, plus how students can help preserve the natural habitat. Because the Forrestal preserve has an excellent view of the ocean, the students are also taught about whales, focusing on the Pacific Grey Whales that migrate past this location each year.