



## Peñasquitos Preserve Hike

This hike is a beginner to slightly moderate hike and the duration is from 1 to 3 hours depending on your preference. This is either an out and back hike or it can also be drop off and pick up at the two entrances. The hike includes an expert naturalist, water and granola bars.

About the preserve: Los Peñasquitos (meaning little cliffs) Canyon Preserve lies between Rancho Peñasquitos and Sorrento Hills to the north and Mira Mesa to the south. Stretching approximately seven miles from the I-5 and 805 merge to just east of I-15; it encompasses some 4,000 acres of both Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons.

Native American history within the Preserve dates back as far as 7,000 years ago. Remains of the prehistoric culture can still be found. There is a historic adobe - [Santa Maria de Los Peñasquitos Adobe](#) (ca. 1823), and also ruins of another adobe, the El Cuervo (ca. 1857), located in the Preserve.

Los Peñasquitos Canyon and its tributary, Lopez Canyon, are characterized by varied natural resources. Over 500 plant species, more than 175 types of birds, and great variety of reptiles, amphibians and mammals evidences the rich bio-diversity of the canyon. Many of these species are rare or endangered and are protected within the Preserve.

Many different geologic formations and soil types make up the steep slopes, riparian stream corridors, flat mesa tops and grassy hillsides of the Preserve. The varying terrains and soil types, in conjunction with continually flowing water, form more than 14 habitat types and support a diverse collection of flora and fauna. The scenery of the canyon includes:

- A waterfall cascading through volcanic rock
- A streamside forest of giant California live oaks.
- Groves of majestic sycamore trees.
- A year-round stream populated by pacific tree frogs, crayfish and largemouth bass.
- A fresh water marsh hosting a variety of aquatic birds including great blue herons, egrets, mallard ducks and more.
- Mule deer, bobcat, coyote, and raccoon are just a few of the mammals that can be observed throughout the Preserve.