



Hiking Program Talking Points

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Ocean Trails Reserve at Trump National Golf Course, Lakeview and Catalina Trails

This easy hike starts in the parking lot at the end of La Rotonda Dr. The walk will take you through the public trail system within the golf course and out on the Lakeview and Catalina Trails. Some history of the area:

- The property was once a 200+ acre garbanzo bean farm. In the early 1950s Edward Zuckerman purchased the farm with hopes to develop it with apartment units, a luxury hotel, and a golf course. When the city of RPV was incorporated in 1973, it passed a moratorium on coastal development, stopping his plans to develop the area.
- Years later Barry Hon purchased 100 acres east of the Zuckerman property, and together they proposed a golf course and housing units. Golf course designer Pete Dye was hired to design the course. The California Coastal Commission rejected a plan proposed in 1993 because it did not include enough public access. A revised proposal by Ed Zuckerman's sons was approved in 1994. This proposal took into account land set aside for the endangered California gnatcatcher.
- Pete Dye developed a beautiful course, albeit with tight fairways, to be opened to the public in July 1999. One month before opening day, on June 2, 1999, 17 acres beneath the 18th fairway slid toward the ocean. Bentonite clay deposited in underground layers sloping towards the shore was the cause of the slide. There was a break in a sewer pipe under the property. It is not known if the pipe broke and caused the slide or if the slide broke the pipe. Extensive reconstruction was in order, however what was then known as Ocean Trails opened as a 15 hole course as two other holes were used to help restore the devastated 18th hole.
- The Zuckerman family lost the course in bankruptcy in February 2002.
- Donald Trump bought the 15-hole course in August 2002 for \$27 million dollars and has made substantial repairs and changes, including lengthening fairways, adding cascading waterfalls and retaining walls at the cost of many millions of dollars. The course was renamed Trump National Golf Course
- The original owners, the Zuckermans, planted California Sage Scrub habitat around the course, and successful restoration can be seen along many of the trails and coastal bluffs.

○ Plants On the Golf Course Property

As you walk through the golf course you will see several interesting nonnative plants, including New Zealand Christmas tree (looks like a bottle brush) Australian tea tree, melaleuca (showy honey myrtle) and strawberry tree. These varieties were chosen for their **drought tolerance and also because they can be maintained to a height of no more than 16 feet**. Another species of tree on the sight is the native toyon (holly berry tree). Other native plants that may be seen include California lilac, woolly blue curls, California poppies, lupin and deerweed. There are four kinds of grass on the golf course. The tees and greens are bent grass, the roughs are fescue, and the fairways are Bermuda over seeded with bluegrass.

○ **Some of the native plants in the area:**

- ✓ **Sagebrush:** Native Americans (NA) used it for medicinal purposes by making a tea to relieve cramps, pain at childbirth, and as eyewash. Also, it was used as an aromatic in sweat baths, and as an insecticide sprinkled on the floors of dwellings as a flea and tick repellent. The seeds were ground and used in a flour mixture to make flatbread similar to a tortilla. It is sometimes called "cowboy cologne". The plant is the nesting site of the [California gnatcatcher](#).
- ✓ **Saltbush:** The leaves collect salt through the root system and from ocean spray. NA would add leaves to their fires the brush off the ash and collect the salt crystals.

- ✓ **Sage (black and purple):** Black sage has dark green leaves, and the purple sage has grayish-green leaves. Both have purplish pom-pom like flowers. Both are very aromatic and smell like stuffing when crushed.
- ✓ **Buckwheat:** California buckwheat has dark green slender leaves and looks like rosemary. Ashy leaf buckwheat has grayish-green colored leaves. Both have pinkish flowers above the leaves that turn brown in the fall. Many birds and insects eat the seeds. The NA used the ground seeds in a flour mixture to make flatbread.
- ✓ **Lemonade Berry Bush:** It is a large shrub with dark green leaves and red berries that ripen with a white coating that tastes sour. The NA made a refreshing drink from the berries and also roasted the berries to grind for a coffee-like drink.
- ✓ **Prickly Pear Cactus:** It is an edible plant and the NA ate both the paddle and the fruit. You may spot 3 varieties; beaver tail, coastal, and chaparral. It is a good habitat for the [cactus wren](#). It is known in Mexican cuisine as “nopales” and tastes like green beans. The fruit is sweet and is known as “tuna” in Spanish.
- ✓ **Jumping Cholla:** Segments detach as if jumping at you. It has barbed spines and is also a good habitat for the [cactus wren](#).
- ✓ **California Bush Sunflower:** The plant has bright yellow flowers and is a good bird habitat. The lack of water makes for dry branches that appear dead during the summer.
- ✓ **Coyote Bush:** Separate male and female plants that produce fluffy white flowers. When in bloom the stalks resemble a coyote’s tail.
- ✓ **Bladderpod:** This shrub has a distinctive smell to the leaves. It has yellow flowers and large seedpods. It is the host plant for [harlequin bugs](#), which are true bug, and go through incomplete metamorphosis (egg, nymph, adult). You can often see both adults and nymphs on the same plant.
- ✓ **Giant Rye Grass:** NA also used these seeds to ground into a flour mixture to make flatbread. The shafts were used as arrows to stun birds, and the leaves were used as thatch.
- ✓ **Mule Fat:** This plant was at one time used for food for horses and donkeys. They, however did not like it, but the mules did and grew fat, hence the name. NA used the branches as a hand drill with tinder and a wooden block when starting fires and the long straight branches were used to make arrow shafts.
- ✓ **Dudlea:** This evergreen perennial succulent can be found on steep, rocky slopes and other areas containing rocky soils. Under proper conditions Dudlea can survive up to 100 years, hence their nickname “Live forever”.

It is important to remember that this habitat is not only the plants, but the enzymes in the ground, the insects on the plants, the birds that eat the insects and use the plants for food and nesting, the mammals that live in the area and provide food for the reptiles, etc. The coastal sage scrub is a multi-species habitat that works well when in balance. It is important to weed the more aggressive nonnative plants. The Trump Organization maintains the habitat in the bluff reserves.

The lakes on the property serve as an important water quality function. All irrigated portions of the course are underlain by a drainage system that brings any excess drainage to the lakes. The lake areas were planted with native trees such as willows and elderberries that prefer a wetland environment. The lakes also provide an important habitat for migratory birds.

○ **Additional Topics To Discuss During Your Walk**

- ✓ Over the past three million years, shearing between the Pacific and North American plates has produced dramatic uplifts in the earth’s surface. As the land or sea levels shifted dramatically, Peninsula beaches were submerged and exposed. Over time, new beaches were formed and old

beaches became terraces. There are 13 beach levels of marine terraces on the peninsula. PVIC is located on terrace 2; PV Drive West and South are beach level 5. Crest Road is beach level 10. Number 13 is up at the top of San Pedro Hill, reaching 1480 ft. You can see the radar domes on top of the hill. One is for weather radar, and the other is for LAX approach radar. We are still growing up out of the sea floor at a rate of 0.4 millimeters per year (the thickness of a sheet of paper) or about **one foot every thousand years**.

- ✓ Look for the blows (up to 30 feet high) of blue whales that can sometimes be seen in the summer months. **Blue whales** are the largest animal on earth reaching a length of up to 100 feet and can weigh up to 300,000 pounds. Its heart is the size of a Volkswagen Beetle car and its tongue is the size of an African elephant. It mostly eats animals called krill, which are tiny shrimp like creatures. The blue whale may eat as many as 40 million krill per day
- ✓ Participants will also be interested in other topics docents are familiar with, including the [Tongva](#), the Sepulveda Rancho, the Japanese farmers, the [kelp forest](#), and the ocean habitat in general.

J. Fodor June 2018

Based upon notes provided by C. Blindbury, J. Nieto, Barbara Dye, and June Dixon April 2008

Map showing Forrestal Nature Reserve/Ladera Linda and Ocean Trails Reserve at Trump National Golf Club

