



## Hiking Program Talking Points

REV\_08232019

### McBride Trail

Distance 1.7 miles round trip. Highest Elevation 1168 feet; Lowest Elevation 984 feet. Trailhead begins at the western cul-de-sac of Ocean Terrace Drive.

Begin at the McCarrell Canyon trail, with McCarrell Canyon on the right. The area on the opposite side of the canyon was once a dry farming ranch owned by the McCarrell family. They had a big barn on the corner of what are now Crest and Highridge Roads. Their ranch house was further north on Highridge, at the corner of what is now Crestridge Road. The McCarrells raised barley for cattle and horse feed. They leased the land from the Palos Verdes Corporation in about 1910 and farmed it until the late 1940s. They did all their plowing and harvesting with mules until 1936 when they got their first tractor. After the harvest, they would transport the bales of hay and barley to a dock in Redondo Beach where it would be exported and sent to northern California and elsewhere. After the McCarrells stopped farming, the trail was bulldozed for a firebreak.

At the fork in the trail turn left to the McBride trail. Clifton R. McBride (1902-2004) was a local resident who decided late in life (~90 years old) to improve the trail around this part of the hill. He did so with hand tools and a wheelbarrow, and he worked on this trail for several years in the late 1980s. After he finished the trail he moved to Minnesota. He lived to the ripe old age of 102, and is buried in Green Hills Cemetery in Rancho Palos Verdes. His legacy is one of the finest trails in Southern California for its views of the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

The McCarrell trail at this point continues into the Three Sisters Reserve (99 acres). The view from the McBride trail at this point is from Long Point (Terranea) to Point Fermin.

As you start along the McBride trail you will see Long Point to your right. Long point has a rich history. The Tongva (people of the earth), the Native Americans who settled in the area 7-10 thousand years ago, had 2 main villages and many smaller communities on the Peninsula. Chowigna was on the bluff next to Malaga Cove School, and Toveemungna was on Long Point where Terranea Resort now stands. The Tongva got 70% of their food from the ocean, about 20% from the plants and the wild game they hunted in these hills, and they made trading material from seashells and local rocks to go inland and trade for acorns, a staple in their diet (there were no oak trees in Palos Verdes). They also made boats and traveled to Catalina Island to trade primarily for soap stone, which could easily be made into bowls and other items needed for daily life. Later, the area became part of the vast Sepulveda Rancho (Rancho Los Palos Verdes), and in the early 1900s became part of land farmed by Japanese immigrants. During WW II there was a coastal artillery emplacement on the bluff above PVIC which featured 6 inch guns. There was also a huge 16-inch gun emplacement at Whites Point toward San Pedro, and another 6 inch battery at Fort MacArthur above Point Fermin. Later, during the Cold War period, there were Nike anti-aircraft missiles placed where the Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall is now. They were removed in 1975. Long point was also the former site of Marineland of the Pacific, at one time the largest oceanarium in the world, from 1954 to 1987.

At about 10 o'clock the view is of 98 acres of land (fenced off area with no homes) owned by Jim York, founder of the York Partners Development Company, which is the last parcel of open space land in private hands. The land is now set aside as a vineyard, and partially leased to the Terranea Resort, which operates a sustainable farm on the property. They raise vegetables and salad greens which they use in their 7 restaurants.

At about the half way point the view is of a large mound of earth. Locals call this “Jack’s Hat”. Behind it is Frank Vanderlip’s summer home, built in 1916, called the “Cottage.” However, at 5,200 square feet it is hardly a cottage.

Looking at the Reserves from this point the land up to the telephone pole is the Upper Filiorum Reserve, 191 acres, acquired in 2009. From the telephone pole to the second cut in the land (mineral shelf) is the Portuguese Bend Reserve, 399 acres, acquired in 2005. After that the Forrestal Reserve, 155 acres, acquired in 1996.

Continue on until you get to Highridge Road. Turn left and halfway down the street on the West side is the entrance to the Crooked Patch trail. You will walk along a natural wetland that is being choked with invasive plants, but still has some of the tule reeds used by the Native Americans. Take the stairs at the end of the trail to return to Ocean Terrace Drive.

○ **Native Plants you may spot in the area:**

- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **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.
- ✓ **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” as the cowboys would rub it on themselves to keep the fleas and ticks off of them. The plant is the nesting site of the [California gnatcatcher](#).
- ✓ **Cliff Aster:** This perennial subshrub grows from a rhizome and is a member of the sunflower family. It blooms in the summer and occurs in flats or in crevices along coastal bluffs only on the southern California coastal area.
- ✓ **Jumping Cholla:** Segments detach as if jumping at you. It has barbed spines and is also a good habitat for the [cactus wren](#).

**Map showing McBride Trail -**

**Parking Instructions - Meet at the end of Ocean Terrace Dr. ~ Drive south on Highridge Rd., cross Crest Rd., then turn right on Ocean Terrace Dr and park at the end of the street.**



J. Fodor April 2018 (Notes based upon write ups received from Paul Funk and Henry Jurgens)