

North Ridge Trail

The Trail: The trail has three trailheads. One is on the east side of Yosemite Avenue just north of Flanagan Drive. The northern most trailhead is on the south side of Evening Sky Drive, east of Rising Star Avenue. The trailhead for the Las Lajas Canyon Trail is located on the north side of Evening Sky Drive; a couple of hundred feet east of the North Ridge Trail trailhead. The North Ridge Trail is 1.3 mile long. The trail offers wonderful views of Simi Valley and the surrounding hills.

Geology: The trail traverses the Santa Susana Formation, which is made up of dark gray micaceous clay shale, which is crumbly. The shale weathers into a high clay soil, which can be sticky during and after wet weather. Some “swallow holes” may form, especially in the northern portion of the trail. So, watch your step. The Santa Susana Formation is of marine origin and is of middle Eocene age, i.e., 46-42 million years.

Plant Life: Most of the trail and adjacent areas are dominated by “ruderal” grasslands. The grasses are entirely made up of annual grasses from the Mediterranean Basin. Those grasses include the very overwhelmingly dominant wild oats. Also present are hare barley (often referred locally, but incorrectly, as foxtails) and red brome.

Other plants that occur are sawtoothed and coast goldenbushes, black and Mediterranean mustards, narrow-leaved milkweed, California sage brush, Russian thistle (only on the margin of the trail), southern California locoweed, black sage, California buckwheat, arroyo lupine, horehound, Catalina mariposa lily (only one noted), blue dicks, wild rhubarb, yellow sweet clover, long beaked and red stem filagees, common mallow (only one noted), wheat (one discrete stand adjacent the trail west of the North Geronimo Avenue trailhead), sow-thistle, valley oaks (off of the northern portion of the trail), laurel sumac, and prickly sow-thistle.

Animal Life: Mammals that you may see or encounter the track of include the desert cottontail and brush rabbits, Botta’s pocket gopher, California ground squirrel, striped skunk, mountain lion, bobcat, gray fox, coyote, raccoon, agile kangaroo rat, southern California weasel, and various bats. Birds may include the mockingbird, grasshopper and English sparrows, lesser goldfinch, Anna’s hummingbird, turkey vulture, red-tailed hawk, barn owl, road runner, common crow, common raven, California towhee, meadowlark, and many others. Reptiles include western fence lizard, coachwhip, California king snake, San Diego gopher snake, California king snake, two-striped racer, and the southern Pacific rattlesnake, among others. While mountain lions are present in the hills and are sighted by hiker and homeowners alike, encounters are unlikely. It is best to not hike alone. Keep small children close at hand.

While mountain lions are present in the hills around Simi Valley, encounters are unlikely, but you should always be alert. It is best that you do not hike alone, and that you keep small children close at hand. Rattlesnakes may be encountered — Stay on the trail and avoid them when they are encountered — Be observant and never try to handle them. Do not handle any wildlife, including bats, even if they appear to be injured or sick. Remember, you are visitors to their homes.

**Mike Kuhn,
Executive Chair,
Rancho Simi Trail Blazers**

*Please see **Trail Safety Tips** at this trail's main page for more info.*

