






# San Bruno Mountain Self-guided Tour

San Bruno Mountain Park is a landmark of local and regional significance, standing as a unique open-space island in the midst of the peninsula's urbanization at the northern end of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range. The Mountain's ridge line runs in an east-west configuration, with considerable slopes and elevations ranging from 250 feet to 1,314 feet at the summit. The 2,416 acres of rugged landscape offer excellent hiking opportunities and outstanding views of San Francisco and Central Bay Area.

**Self-guided Tour Routes (Approximate Time):**

	Saddle Trail to Youth Camp Trail: 1.75 miles (45 minutes)
	Saddle Trail: 2.64 miles (1.5 hours)
	Ridge Trail: 2.73 miles (2 hours)

## A. Plants and Wildflowers:

The park's principal natural resources include 14 species of rare or endangered plants, as well as host and nectar plants of endangered butterflies. San Bruno Mountain is renowned for its amazing array of wildflowers such as the California Poppy, Crimson or Humminbird Sage, Reddened Clarkia, and Wild Iris. Native flowers, including California Poppies and several species of Lupine, grow in abundance, but their existence is increasingly threatened by invasive non-native plants like the Thorned Scottish Yellow Gorse, Eucalyptus Trees, and wildflowers like Sweet Pea.

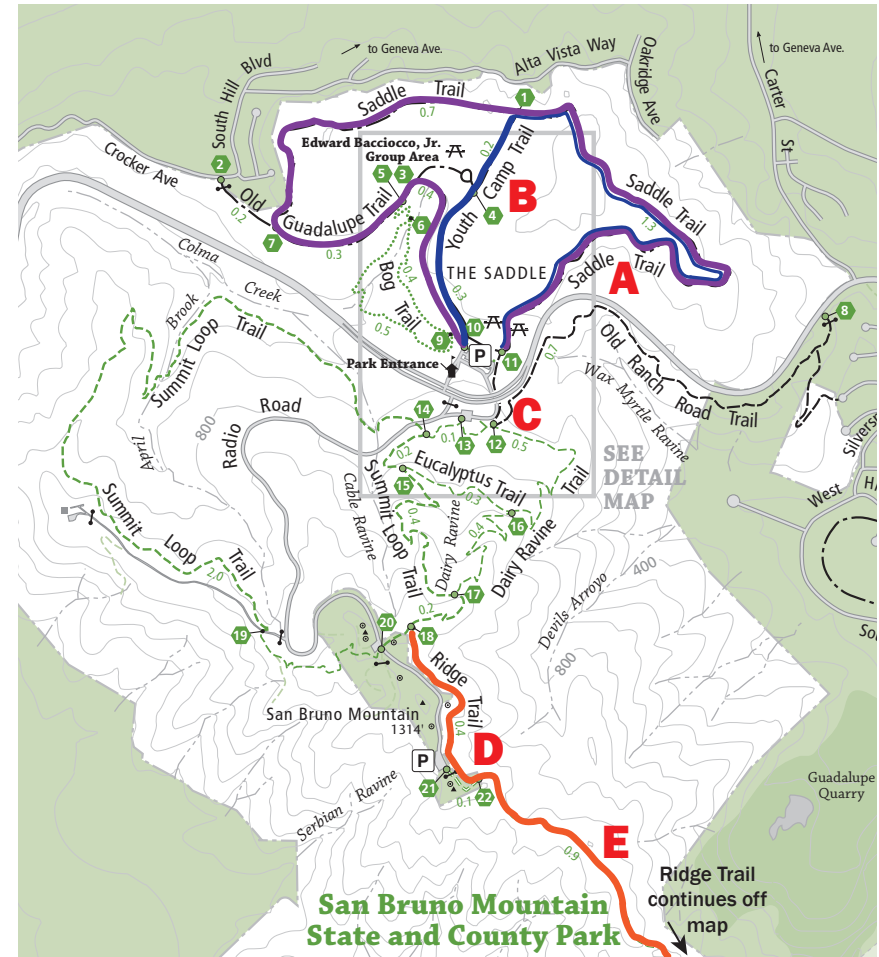


## B. Wildlife:

Endangered and threatened butterfly species such as the San Bruno Elfin, Mission Blue, Callippe Silverspot, and Bay Checkerspot are found in only a few places in the world, and San Bruno Mountain is one of them. Another threatened species, the San Francisco Tree Lupine Moth, was known to inhabit the area, but urban development destroyed this population.



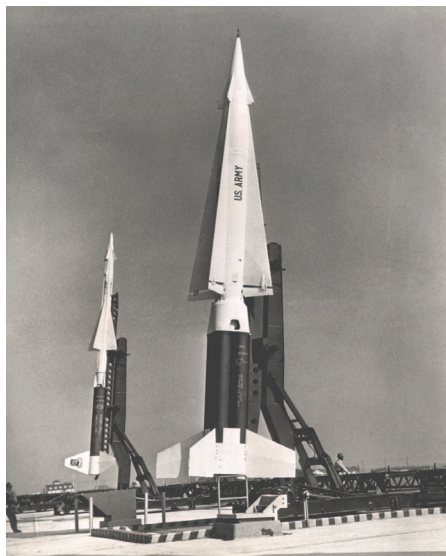
A Habitat Conservation Plan, adopted in the mid-1980's, now ensures the protection of endangered species and their habitats on the Mountain. Other resident animals include various species of snakes and lizards, coyotes, racoons, rabbits, and many types of birds such as songbirds and birds of prey.



## C. Radio Road:

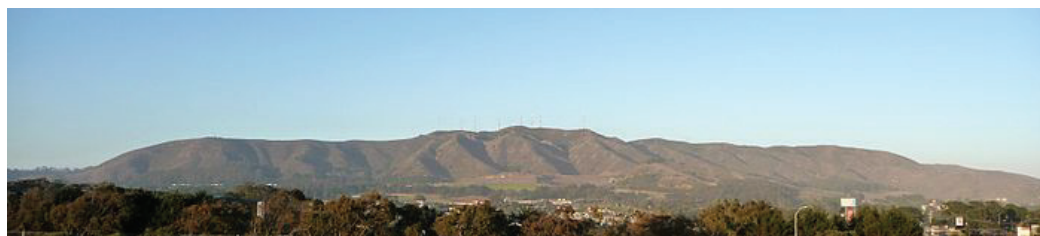
Sightseeing is also popular on San Bruno Mountain. Radio Road, leading up from the main entrance, offers visitors the opportunity to drive to the summit of the Mountain and enjoy breathtaking views north to Mt. Tamalpais, east to Mt. Diablo and west to the Farallon Islands.





### D. Nike Missile:

A number of radio and microwave transmitters can be seen today on the summit of San Bruno Mountain. San Bruno Mountain played a strategic role in the history of the military during WWII. U.S. Army Signal Corps forces used the area during WWII, establishing a signaling operation in a small cluster of buildings in the saddle area. Aircraft searchlights, capable of illuminating the skies in case of an air attack, were also installed near the summit. At the summit are also the remains of an old Nike Missile early warning radar site. This was used as a defensive system during the Cold War. This radar, along with others around the Bay Area, were used to detect approaching enemy aircraft and direct the missiles to their targets. In 1956 military forces returned to the area at the time of the Cold War to construct the Nike Radar Missile site just below the summit on the west peak facing toward the ocean. The missile complex was deactivated in 1963 and the government sold the buildings to the Crocker Land Company for the total sum of \$1.



### E. Property History

The formation of the landscape of this area dates back 130 million years to the Cretaceous Period. During that time, this area was under the ocean and heavy deposition of sediment occurred. The earth's crust buckled in the region creating fault blocks. One of the fault blocks was elevated becoming San Bruno Mountain.

San Bruno Mountain is located in the area formerly occupied by the Indigenous group called the Ohlone. They practiced a hunting, fishing and gathering economy. One historic Ohlone habitation site has been found within the park's boundaries and another has been located just outside of it.

With the arrival of Europeans, the Ohlone became subject to the Spanish/Mexican Mission System. Under the mission system, the San Bruno Mountain area was used for cattle and sheep grazing. The grant of Rancho Cañada de Guadalupe la Visitation y Rancho Viejo was granted to Jacob Leese in 1839. As late as 1869, surveys showed civilization completely surrounded the mountain flanks, but no settlements were on it. John Crocker acquired the property in the 1870's. It passed to the Crocker Land Company upon his death. In recent times the surrounding area has been developed for light industrial uses and mineral resources recovery. A quarry, located on the north base of the main ridge, was used for gravel extraction.



Pictured above is the Mission Blue Caterpillar. Mission Blue butterfly larvae, or caterpillars, get most of their food from three species of Lupines: Silver Lupine, Varied Lupine, and Summer Lupine. San Bruno Mountain supports populations of Summer Lupine and Varied Lupine.

**When you're done with your tour, please return this guide to the kiosk for the next visitor.** If you find this guide, please return it to: San Bruno Mountain State and County Park, 555 Guadalupe Canyon Parkway, Brisbane CA, 94005.

San Bruno Mountain is a part of **San Mateo County Parks**, which manages parks, preserves, trails, and historic sites throughout the county to preserve public lands and provide opportunities for education and recreation.

For more information, visit [www.SMCoParks.org](http://www.SMCoParks.org).

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