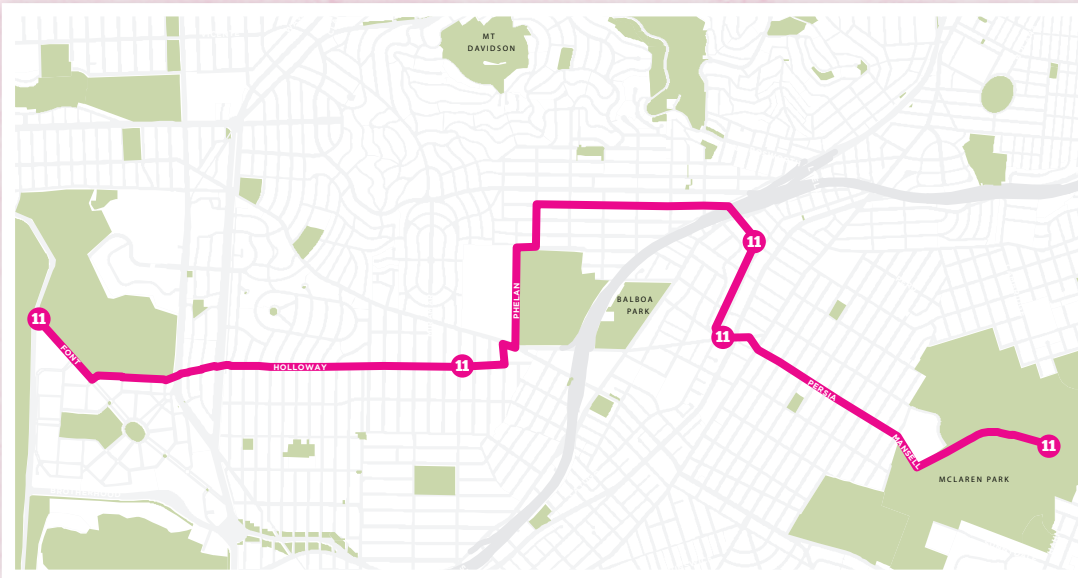


INGLESIDE

SPECIES: COAST LIVE OAK/ CALIFORNIA BUCKEYE



ROUTE HIGHLIGHTS

- » Lake Merced, San Francisco State University, Park Merced, City College San Francisco, Balboa Park, June Jordan School for Equity, McLaren Park



Credit: Wikimedia Commons

COAST LIVE OAK/CALIFORNIA BUCKEYE – *Quercus agrifolia/Aesculus californica*

Stop by for a Recharge!

What if there were a California Buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) and Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) on every city block? Coast Live Oaks support a vast array of insect life. More species of small moth larvae feed on Coast Live Oaks, for example, than any other plant species on the San Francisco peninsula. These mighty oaks and their associated insects are indispensable to many migratory songbird species that pass through San Francisco and rely on it for shelter and food. Our resident Western Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*) helps with planting new trees – scrub jays hoard away several thousand acorns per season, and when they forget to recover their food stash, an oak tree is born. California Buckeye, on the other hand have been called the ‘gas station for butterflies’. The pale pink, nectar-rich flowers bloom in thick upright spires from late May through July and feed adult butterflies of all sizes and colors. Also, Buckeyes, among other San Francisco wild trees and shrubs, are the larval food plant for Spring Azure (*Celastrina ladon*) butterflies!

RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY

Resident

KEY HABITAT FEATURES

Inhabits well drained soils of coastal hills and plains / Buckeyes grow in a range of conditions from crowded, moist, semi-shaded upper creek banks to canyon bottoms to south-facing slopes and hilltops – needs underground water source.

DIET

Coast live oaks host more species of small moths, for example, than any other plant species on the San Francisco peninsula. Buckeye pale pink flowers in June and July are a rich nectar source for many species of butterflies.

ASSOCIATED PLANTS & ANIMALS

Mountain Lilac – Ceanothus ‘Ray Hartman’, California Wild Grape – Vitis californica ‘Roger’s Red’/California Dogwood – Cornus sericea ssp. occidentalis, Twinberry Honeysuckle – Lonicera involucrata “Chestnut-backed Chickadee.

Butterflies of many varieties. Host plant for Spring Azure. Scrub jays may bury several thousand acorns in one season. By hiding and sometimes forgetting about their food stashes, Scrub Jays are planting future trees. Oak trees are especially valuable to the many species of migratory birds that are in San Francisco for only part of the year.

NESTING INFORMATION

The oak woodland community may also include toyons, pink flowering currant, oso berry, coffee berry and many other species. Buckeye grows intermingled with Valley Oak, Oregon Oak, Coast Live Oak and California Bay Laurel. Can be found standing alone in grassland at the lowest elevations, intermingled in Blue Oak woodlands at intermediate elevations, and in mixed evergreen forests of Black oak, Digger Pine, Ponderosa Pine and Interior Live Oak as it nears the limit of its range.