

Bayview Park & Map



Bayview Park supports perhaps the most diverse assemblage of plants and animals in the natural areas system. Its grassland has some of the most beautiful wildflower displays in San Francisco. Other plant communities here include coastal scrub, eucalyptus and oak groves, and the largest Islais cherry population in the city. On a sunny day you are likely to encounter western fence lizards, California alligator lizards, or one of many non-poisonous snakes, such as the common garter snake, Pacific gopher snake, or Pacific ring-neck snake. Red-tailed hawks are often seen soaring overhead. Great horned owls rest in the notches of trees during the day, and woodpeckers can be heard hammering for an insect snack.

The primary trail is a paved road that loops through the park, beginning and ending at the eastern end of Key Avenue. Remnants of stairs and retaining walls built by the Works Progress Administration during the Depression can still be seen along the roadway.

Cultural History

Around 1900, the parkland known today as Bayview Park was nearly lost to development when George Hearst and the Bay View Land Company proposed to develop the area into an exclusive district for the wealthy. Fortunately the land was considered too far removed from downtown, and development plans were dropped. In 1902, the Bay View Land Company sold a large portion of the hill's crest to the city, which apparently had plans to build a "pest house" (isolation hospital) on the hilltop. Charles Crocker, a nearby landowner, offered to give his portion of the ridge to the city on the condition that it not build the hospital. One city official explained, "Charles Crocker didn't want a pest house close to his other properties." As a result, the hilltop was officially declared a park. In 1997, the City and County of San Francisco acquired an additional 16 acres of the upper northeast slope to be used as open space. <https://sfrecpark.org/facilities/facility/details/Bayview-Park-149>

