

As you explore the Sierra Canyon Trail, use this guide to help your child/children discover the wonders of our natural world. Find the objects and do the activities in order or mix them up. Have fun!

- Leaping Lizards! You'll know if you've seen a Great Basin Whiptail. His tail alone is as long as the more common Sierra Fence Lizard and his tail looks like...you guessed it...a whip.
- Can you find a blue rock? Look on the trail just above the Sierra Canyon bridge. The blue/green color in the rocky embankment is a sign of the copper mineral there.
- The feathery seed tails of the Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany help its seeds to travel like a bird. This 15 foot (approx.) tall evergreen tree/shrub has small, leathery leaves. A mature Mountain Mahogany can be more than 100 years old!
- Spy on a bug. If you have to look under a log or rock, be sure to carefully put it back when you are done.
- Western Tanagers are our summer feathered guests. They will delight your eyes with their bright yellow bodies, black wings and red heads (male). He gets the red pigment from the insects he eats. Can you imagine if that happened to us from eating too many strawberries or tomatoes?
- Find a place where an animal has made a home.

- Sit in silence for a minute. What sounds do you hear? Now go investigate to find out who or what is making those sounds.
- The Incense Cedar is a tall, red-barked tree with scaled and flattened branch tips. They first appear near the stream at the junction of Sierra Canyon Trail and the Discovery Trail. The best place to see these trees is near the first spring about a mile up the trail from the junction.
- Funny flower faces! Go to the first spring in Sierra Canyon (less than a mile from the rock 1st rock outcrop) in early July and you will see Stream Orchids growing above the spring. They have bright green, lance-shaped leaves with flowers at the tips of the stalks. You'll also see dark orange and yellow Columbine flowers growing in and around them.
- Monstrous rocks. There are three giant rock outcrops on the Sierra Canyon Trail. What do you see when you look at them?
- How many different colors, letters, numbers or geometric shapes can you find in the natural objects around you?
- The Sierra Currant likes water. You'll find a patch of these seedy treats at the high running spring (4.5 miles up). The berry-like, blue/gray fruits grow in clusters. You'll see many busy birds here.
- Use natural materials such as sticks, pebbles, leaves and dirt to make a map of where you are.

- Arrowleaf Balsamroot's bright, yellow flowers dot the hillsides in May. What is the greatest number of flowers you observed growing on just one plant?

Use this space to write down a trail treasure that YOU find or to draw a picture of something interesting that you see on the Sierra Canyon Trail.

## Genoa Trail System

The Genoa Trail System includes 17.5 miles of trails in the Genoa area open to hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers and dogs. Trails include Sierra Canyon Trail, Genoa Loop and Eagle Ridge Loop. The Sierra Canyon Trail is a 10 mile trail with substantial elevation gain/loss that connects to the Tahoe Rim Trail. Parking areas for the Genoa Trail System are available at the Eagle Ridge, Sierra Canyon and Genoa Canyon access points.

## Hiking with Kids

Hit the trail with your family and make some great memories! Here are some tips from the American Hiking Society ([www.americanhiking.org](http://www.americanhiking.org)) to make hikes “kid-friendly”:

- Have fun and be flexible.
- Give the kids some control. Let them set the pace and make some choices along the way.
- Bring snacks and plenty of fluids.
- Dress yourself and your children in layers and wear sturdy shoes.
- Pick a short, interesting hike and allow lots of time.
- Teach, sing and play games with your kids.
- Safety first! Consider giving each child a safety whistle and discuss how and when they should use it. Children sometimes “get it” better if they’re told to use the whistle to “find Mom or Dad” rather than if they’re lost, since being “lost” isn’t always readily apparent to them.



## Leave No Trace Principles for Kids

- Know Before You Go
- Choose The Right Path
- Trash Your Trash
- Leave What You Find
- Be Careful With Fire
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Kind To Other Visitors



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# Sierra Canyon Trail Treasures



Created by the  
Carson Valley Trails Association



CVTA is a volunteer based nonprofit organization working with partners to provide access to public lands through a recreational trail system for present and future generations to enjoy.

For more information, visit the CVTA website:  
[www.carsonvalleytrails.org](http://www.carsonvalleytrails.org)