

SELF-GUIDED WALK - VALENCIA PEAK TRAIL

Park at the Visitor Center. Walk across Pecho Road to the stairs that lead to Spooner's Cove beach. Walk south on the beach to the base of the cliff. This is STOP #1.

The rock exposed in the lower half of the cliff is shale. It was deposited 6 million years ago in an ocean which at that time extended many miles to the east. It is referred to as the Miguelito Shale. The layers were originally deposited in a horizontal position, but about 3 million years ago were folded. The layers are dipping toward you at a steep angle. In the upper half of the cliff face are exposed the edges of flat-lying layers of gravel. The gravel was deposited on the eroded edges of the folded shale about 100,000 years ago. The drawing shows the relationship between the shale and the gravel.

Return to the top of the stairs. This is STOP #2. Notice that the sea stack in front of you is also made up of folded shale with gravel deposited across its eroded edges. During the past 100,000 years the ocean has eroded away the rock that formerly connected the sea stack with the cliff at STOP #1.

