

Ancient Trees

Millions of years ago, redwood trees were found all across North America. As the climate changed, their range steadily decreased. Now, the only place where these tallest living trees survive naturally is a narrow fog-influenced belt along the Pacific Coast from the Oregon border to the Santa Lucia Range, south of Monterey. The redwoods of the East Bay once reached from the Oakland Hills east to Moraga. Some trees along the Oakland ridgeline were so tall they were used as navigational points by ships entering the Golden Gate. The remnants of these giants can still be found today as the stump-sprouted rings of their ancestral parent trees.

As more people moved into California in the early 1800s, the demand for timber for housing grew. Between 1840 and 1860, heavy clear-cutting took place in the East Bay redwood groves to supply the housing boom in the San Jose and San Francisco areas. Five square miles of redwoods were reduced to a sea of stumps by 1865.

The redwoods you will see in this canyon are the second and third generation clones of the ancient giants that once grew here. Today, this redwood forest ecosystem, particularly the stream that flows through it, supports a unique assemblage of living organisms.

Walk lightly and look carefully as you explore this ancient environment.



HELP US by staying on the trail and keeping your dogs leashed!