

HISTORY The first Spanish explorers into Contra Costa (1772) found Bay Miwok Indians living in the foothills of Mt. Diablo. The grasses and foothills of Mt. Diablo appealed to the Spaniards as potential rangeland. When the Mexican government took over California in 1821 it conferred huge land grants to the soldiers who marched with the explorers.

Dona Juana Sanchez de Pacheco was granted Rancho Arroyo de las Nueces y Bolbones (Creek of the Walnuts and Indians). Its acreage included the western slopes of Mt. Diablo and today's Diablo Foothills Regional Park.

DESCRIPTION The 1,024 acres of Diablo Foothills are bounded by two dramatic East Bay landforms: the Castle Rocks of Mt. Diablo and the undulating "camelback" ridges that form Shell Ridge. These ridges link the park to the City of Walnut Creek's Shell Ridge Open Space and Mt. Diablo State Park, which together represent of the largest open space area (about 23,000 acres) of the East Bay. Diablo Foothills also contains Castle Rock Regional Recreation Area, a 15-acre recreational facility serving central Contra Costa County.

NATURAL RESOURCES Vegetation varies from grassland and oak savannah on the hills to riparian and oak woodland in the valley. Pine Creek flows through Pine Canyon and is within the eastern portion of the Walnut Creek watershed, which drains 150 square miles of central Contra Costa County into San Francisco Bay.

Diverse habitat types support an equally diverse array of wildlife, including mule deer, bobcats, coyote, grey fox, long-tailed weasels, raccoons, gophers, rabbits and ground squirrels. Birds such as red-winged blackbirds, northern mockingbirds, scrub jay, California quail and brown towhees use the park for nesting and foraging habitat. Rock outcrops shelter garter and gopher snakes, western fence lizards, southern alligator lizards, tree frogs and California salamanders. The perennial pools of water in Pine Creek ensure the survival of green sunfish, mosquitofish and largemouth bass.

Of special interest are the raptors (birds of prey) that nest in the Castle Rocks. Golden eagles, red-tailed hawks and prairie falcons nest in these striking sandstone formations and hunt for prey in Diablo Foothills. These Domingue sandstone formations occur through the central-northern portion of the park and form spectacular outcroppings just outside the park boundary.

FACILITIES Diablo Foothills offers abundant open land for hiking and nature study. Castle Rock Regional Recreation Area offers eight reservable picnic facilities, a swimming pool and bathhouse, food concessions, a playfield, a dance floor, an archery range, basketball, softball, volleyball, and many recreational activities for children. For reservations or information, call the Picnic People at (510) 462-1400, email picnic@picnicpeople.com, or visit their Web site at www.picnicpeople.com.

RESPONSIBLE TRAIL USE RULES

Violations of any of the following may result in citation:

ALL TRAIL USERS:

- Be safe, considerate and aware of your impact on the trail and other trail users.
- For everyone's safety, keep to the right. Proceed single file around blind curves.
- For your safety, headphones are not advised.
- Safety helmets are recommended for bicyclists and equestrians.
- Dogs must be on leash where posted, and under full verbal control elsewhere. Please clean up after your dog.

BICYCLES:

- Bicycles are not permitted, either walked, ridden or carried, on trails marked "No Bicycles."
- Bicycles shall not be ridden at an unsafe speed, or greater than the posted speed limit. **Be aware of how you are perceived by other trail users.**
- Bicycles must always yield to pedestrians. Before passing, SLOW DOWN, establish verbal contact, ring bell.
- When approaching equestrians, call out, ring bell and STOP, whether you are seen or not. Ask for instructions on how to pass safely.
- On blind turns, SLOW DOWN, call out, ring bell, and ride single file.

PEDESTRIANS:

- **Keep to the right** when approached by other trail users.
- Always yield to equestrians.
- Check behind and to both sides before changing course.

EQUESTRIANS:

- Keep your horse to the right or where safe when encountering other trail users.
- Communicate. Let other trail users know how to pass your horse safely.
- Please clean up after your horse in the staging area.

Trail conflicts or violations should be reported to the Trail Hotline at (510) 733-6991. For a more immediate response, call (510) 881-1833. **In case of emergency, dial 9-1-1.**

TO REACH THE PARK:

Exit I-680 at Ygnacio Valley Road in Walnut Creek and drive east. After about three miles turn right on Walnut Avenue. After about two miles turn right on Oak Grove Road, then bear right onto Castle Rock Road and follow it to the Orchard Staging Area on the right. A left turn onto Borges Ranch Road prior to the Orchard Staging Area will bring you to the City of Walnut Creek's Borges Ranch, and a trailhead into Shell Ridge Open Space.

PARKLAND RULES

Welcome to your Regional Parklands. Help protect park resources and ensure an enjoyable visit for everyone by complying with these rules and any posted regulations. Violators will be subject to citation or arrest. For more information, ask a Park Ranger, Public Safety Officer, or telephone (510) 881-1833.

PARK GATES ARE OPEN to the public during hours posted at the park entrance. Unless otherwise posted, CURFEW is between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., except for persons possessing a permit to remain on parklands.

MOTOR VEHICLES are restricted to paved public roads and designated parking areas only. Vehicles must exit at posted gate closure hours.

BICYCLES may be ridden only on designated bicycle trails, and on fire or service roads, unless otherwise posted. Bicycles are not permitted, either ridden, walked or carried, off designated trails or in areas posted "No Bicycles," or on narrow hiking or narrow equestrian trails. State law requires that all bicyclists under age 18 wear an approved helmet while riding on trails and roadways. Riders should call out or sound a warning when overtaking other trail users.

DOGS must be leashed (six-foot maximum) and under control at any posted area, parking lot, picnic site, lawn or developed area. No dogs or other animals are permitted at any swimming pool, beach, wetland or marsh. Owners must always carry a leash (six-foot maximum). Dogs may be off-leash in open space and undeveloped areas of parklands, provided they are under control at all times. Dangerous animals are not allowed in the parks. Please dispose of your dog's waste by placing it in a garbage can. Persons who walk more than three dogs at a time on Regional Parks trails must obtain a permit; please call (510) 544-3009 for information.

SWIMMING, WADING and other water contact activities are not permitted in Diablo Foothills Regional Park.

PLANTS, ANIMALS, GEOLOGIC, ARCHAEOLOGIC OR HISTORIC OBJECTS are protected by law. Please do not disturb or remove any of these features.

HELP PROTECT OUR PARK WILDLIFE by not releasing or feeding ducks, cats or other animals. Do not feed wild park animals; enjoy them from a distance.

FIRES are permitted in barbecue pits or personal cooking equipment in designated picnic areas only, placed at least 30 feet from flammable materials. Please do not place hot coals on the ground or in a garbage can. Please dispose of hot coals or other burned fuel in barbecue pits or in provided hot coal disposal containers. FIREWORKS are not permitted in any regional park.

CAMPING is not permitted within District parklands without a permit.

FISHING requires a state fishing license, and a District fishing permit is required when posted.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are not permitted at pools, swim beaches or within 50 feet of paved roads, parking lots or posted areas. Otherwise, beer and wine are permitted at picnic areas and elsewhere on parklands.

GAMES and ACTIVITIES, including model rockets, model airplanes, hang gliding, golf and other activities with potential risk to property or park visitors are permitted only in designated areas.

ASSEMBLIES, PERFORMANCES, SPECIAL EVENTS or similar gatherings require a permit.

Please be considerate of other park visitors if you use a RADIO. A permit is required for AMPLIFICATION of voice, music or other sounds.

FIREARMS or BOWS AND ARROWS are not permitted on Regional Parklands except at established ranges. Crossbows, spears, slingshots, air pistols or rifles, and other dangerous weapons are prohibited anywhere on Regional Parklands.

PARK VISITORS are responsible for knowing and following park rules.

DIABLO FOOTHILLS

REGIONAL PARK CASTLE ROCK RECREATION AREA

