Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve is an ecological jewel. The 1,000-acre community forest found here is some of the most unspoiled old-growth habitat on the West Coast. An endangered species association found only in certain areas in California where ideal soil and climatic conditions exist. The vegetation association of this Preserve includes its roots in past climates and geologic history. The plants originated in the distant past along the southern coast of California when the climate was much warmer and more arid than today. Similar vegetation is found on the island just north of San Clemente Island, off the Santa Barbara coast and in isolated pockets on the mainland coast from Point Conception to Montara Mountain south of San Francisco.

Huckleberry Preserve has a year-round display of blooming plants, many rare to the East Bay. Scroll along the winding self-guided Huckleberry Interpretive Loop Trail to explore the heartland of the Preserve. Many plants that you encounter are usually confined to the immediate north coast region. Notable here are the dense thickets of chubJay, including species such as coast huckleberry, coast salal, and chinquapin.

The unusual geology of the Preserve, belonging to the Claremont shale/chert formation, owes its origin to the stratified skeletal, siliceous remains of microscopic diatoms and radiolaria, interspersed with thin bands of shale. This formation was laid down in a deep ocean basin, solidified and later exposed as hard, brittle leaf litter is deposited, soil development becomes richer and deeper, and each succeeding species' leaf canopy continues to develop upward, eventually shading over and killing the previous species. Over time, this succession—a natural part of the evolution of California's landscape—will progress toward oak-festive forest, in which bay laurels and live oaks move into the chapparal areas to shade out the chamise and manzanita.

In the past, fire played an important role in maintaining the early, pioneer stages of this successional process. An adaptation to fire by these "pioneer" chapparal species is the snow lichen, basal trunks, or burls, from which new healthy leaves emerge with hints of new life as young leaves unravel and sullen catkins glint in the morning dew. There is an endless array of color and form in leaves, twigs, flowers, and fruits year-round along the Huckleberry Interpretive Loop Trail.

An unusual feature of the Preserve is the year-round display of plants in bloom. The rare palm manzanita is clothed in clusters of small, white-to rose-tinged, urn-shaped flowers as early as January. The bush monkey flower's orange, funnel-shaped blossom contrasts silken catkins glisten in the morning dew. There is an endless array of color and form in leaves, twigs, flowers, and fruits year-round along the Huckleberry Interpretive Loop Trail.

The unusual edaphics of this shale/chert formation will greatly slow this successional process. Just how long it takes for the early stages of its succession to develop into the latest stages, no one knows for sure. These early successional stages, or the presence of these unique chapparal species, are the basis for the Preserve.

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**Help Protect and Preserve**

Please enjoy your Regional Parks safely, and help us protect and preserve your parkland by following park rules and regulations.

**Safety and Etiquette**

- **Safety and Etiquette**
- **Rules**
- Visitors are responsible for knowing and complying with park rules (Ordinance 38), available online at ebparks.org/rules.
- Dogs and horses are not allowed but they can pass through Huckleberry on the Skyline National Trail.
- Boating, water sport, wading and/or swimming is not allowed.
- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted within 50 feet of roadways or parking lots, or in posted areas.
- Keep the park beautiful. Pack out what you pack in.

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Interpretive Huckleberry the self-guided Stops along Botanic

- A Year opened: 1973

**Park Stats**

- A strenuous trail, skip the loop. Allow two hours to hike the loop and read the numbered botanic interpretive panels.

- If you prefer a less strenuous trail, take the loop’s descent into the bay forest. Just take the upper Huckleberry Loop Trail following panels one-through-15, then return.

**Park Stats**

- • Year opened: 1973
- • Acres: 200
- • Access to the 15-mile-long Oaks de Alameda Trail
- • Originally acquired to acquire the Skyline National Trail from Sibley to Redwood regional parks

**Interpretive Panels**

1. Park-flowering Currant (Ribes glaucum var. leucodermis)
2. Coast Skytassel (Gymnosporangium watsonii)
3. Pallid Manzanita (Arctostaphylos pallida)
4. Chapparal Manzanita (Arctostaphylos chrysolepis var. montana)
5. Brittleleaf Manzanita (Arctostaphylos incana)
6. Manzanita Buri
7. Intermediate Succasional Stage
8. Coast Huckleberry (Vaccinium ovatum)
9. Western Leatherwood (Dirca occidentalis)
10. Jimbrub (Ceanothus pseudasellatus)
11. Canyon Live Oak (Quercus chrysolepis)
12. California Bay (Umbellularia californica)
13. Douglas Iris (Iris douglasiana)
14. Manzanita Barren Mahina
15. Manzanitas Barren
16. Bay Trees Take Over
17. Wood Fern (Dryopteris arguta)
18. Fern Species
19. Western Sword Fern (Polystichum munitum)
20. California Hazelnut (Corylus californica)
21. Pacific Madrones (Arbutus menziesii)

**Interlude: A Hiking**

- Regional Parks.
- To Redwood Skyline National Trail.
- To connect the Delta de Anza Trail.
- Access to the 5+-mile-long East Huckleberry Loop Trail.
- The Regional Parks Foundation offers membership to park users. Benefits include free parking, swimming, and dog entry, with discounts on camping, fishing, admission, and more. For information, call 510-544-2220 or see RegionalParksFoundation.org.