

Regional in Nature

# Activity Guide

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2021

East Bay   
Regional Park District  
*Healthy Parks Healthy People*



**Addressing Sudden Tree Die-Off**  
with California Natural Resource Agency  
Deputy Secretary Jessica Morse. See page 2.

**Above: Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline**  
**Great Holiday Hikes**  
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Healthy Parks Healthy People

ebparks.org

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# Expanding Access to Parks, Trails, and Shorelines

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER SABRINA B. LANDRETH



Preserving land and providing quality parks for public health and enjoyment is central to the Park District's mission. We work continually throughout the year to enhance public access and recreational opportunities, including acquiring additional parklands and planning,

designing, and constructing amenities. Here are some of our planned and recently completed projects.

### ALONG THE SHORELINE

Opening early next year, the **Brickyard Cove Project** in Berkeley will provide access to the shoreline for walking, biking, and nature viewing. The new staging area includes parking, picnic tables, walking trails, and restored habitat.

The District's new **Dumbarton Quarry Campgrounds** recently opened along the shoreline in Fremont next to Coyote Hills Regional Park and Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge. Currently, the camping area includes 63 family campsites with RV hookups, a camp store, two shower buildings, reservable picnic sites, and a day use area with a playground. More campsites and amenities are planned.

Additionally, **Encinal Beach in Alameda** reopened at the end of last year after habitat enhancement and public access improvements, including trails, beach restoration, and ADA beach access.

### REGIONAL TRAILS

The District is also focused on expanding trails. Opened last year, the **Albany Beach and Bay Trail Expansion project** closed a critical one-mile gap in the San Francisco Bay Trail, creating a continuous 18-mile bicycle and pedestrian corridor along the shoreline, from Oakland to Richmond.

Another Bay Trail extension project was recently opened at **Lone Tree Point in Rodeo** connecting another half-mile gap.

### PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

A new staging area is coming to **Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park at the Tyler Ranch property in Sunol**, including 78 parking spaces, restrooms, and a small family picnic area. The staging area will provide hiking, bicycling, and equestrian access into the southern end of Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park. The staging area is scheduled to open in Summer 2022.

These new parks and trail connectors add to the quality of life for all in the East Bay. For more information about new parks and public access, see pages 3-4.

## ADDRESSING SUDDEN TREE DIE-OFF

California Natural Resources Agency Deputy Secretary Jessica Morse Visits East Bay Regional Parks for Up-Close Look at Tree Die-Off



The **2021 fire season** has brought new challenges, including 1,500 acres of dead or dying trees in Regional Parks – caused by the extreme drought and changing climate. Dead standing trees burn hotter, faster and have the ability to cast embers far ahead of the original fire, igniting potentially dangerous new fires.

The Park District takes sudden tree die-off very seriously and has moved quickly to remove dead and dying trees from parks while also protecting sensitive habitats. Over 765 dead standing trees have been removed from Reinhardt Redwood and Miller/Knox Regional Parks,

with additional tree removal planned in these parks, as well as Tilden, Anthony Chabot, among others.

In September, the Park District hosted CNRA Deputy Secretary Jessica Morse for a site visit of three of the Regional Parks most severely hit by the recent phenomenon of sudden tree die-off. Deputy Secretary Morse saw first-hand the extent of tree die-off in parks and met with the District's year-round fuels reduction crew. Additional funding is needed to address the dangers of sudden tree die-off.

## RESTORING HAYWARD MARSH

Salt ponds were once a naturally occurring component of San Francisco Bay's tidal marshes, including the Hayward Marsh at Hayward Regional Shoreline. In the 1850s, much of the bay's wetlands were diked to form ponds for commercial salt production. Many of the San Francisco Bay's man-made salt ponds have since been restored to tidal marsh and other wetland habitats, including some ponds within Hayward Marsh. Hayward Marsh has been used for the last 20 years to treat wastewater and provide habitat for wildlife.

Planning is now underway to restore 260 acres of marshland at Hayward Marsh to improve habitat for important species

such as the salt marsh harvest mouse, California least tern, western snowy plover, and Ridgway's rail. The project also looks to enhance public access for hiking, biking, and nature viewing.



The Hayward Marsh project is similar to the completed project at Bay Point Regional Shoreline, which

restored marsh habitat and upgraded existing trails to withstand sea level rise.

For more information about the project, visit [ebparks.org/about/planning](http://ebparks.org/about/planning).

## VOLUNTEERS RETURNING TO REGIONAL PARKS

The Park District appreciates and cherishes our volunteers who provide an important level of support for park activities, programs, events, and facilities. Unfortunately, volunteer programs have been canceled for the past 18 months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thankfully, volunteer programs are beginning to return to the Regional Parks. Heavy demands during the pandemic have left parks in need of some extra love and support, and the Park District is grateful to have our volunteers back in the parks they love.

The return of Park District volunteers was on full display on September 18 at this year's Coastal Cleanup Day, where nine miles of bay shoreline were cleaned in six Regional Parks. Overall, 600 participants helped remove 8,000 pounds of garbage and 175 pounds of recycling from parks and shorelines.

Returning volunteer opportunities include:

- Park improvement projects (park and shoreline cleanups, habitat restoration projects, invasive plant removal programs)

- Limited trail maintenance projects
- Docent activities at the District's visitor centers
- Ambassadors of the Regional Parks tabling at community events

Wildlife volunteer programs are also set to return in the future.

If you are interested in volunteering, visit [ebparks.org/about/getinvolved](http://ebparks.org/about/getinvolved).



## GREAT HOLIDAY HIKES

The fall and winter holidays are a great time to get into nature and spend time with family and friends. While holiday gatherings and shopping are an enjoyable tradition, spending time in nature helps relieve stress and improves your physical and mental health. Here are a few perennial favorites.

### BULL VALLEY TRAIL LOOP (PHOTO ABOVE)

*Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline, Martinez and Crockett*

**Length:** 4.8-mile loop **Intensity:** moderate

From the blue waters of Carquinez Strait to the north to the rolling hills in the south, this park offers magnificent views. The trail traverses open grasslands and small eucalyptus groves and takes you through the historic town of Port Costa.

### INDIAN JOE NATURE TRAIL TO FLAG HILL TRAIL

*Sunol Regional Wilderness, Sunol*

**Length:** 4.45-mile loop **Intensity:** moderate

This trail climbs out of the valley and meanders through grasslands leading to a rocky ridge top. Enjoy sweeping views of the region.

### LAKE ANZA TO WILDCAT GORGE TRAIL

*Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley*

**Length:** 3.5 miles **Intensity:** moderate

Start this hike at Lake Anza and descend along Wildcat Creek through tall redwoods and shady oak/bay woodlands. Climb Meadows Canyon, eventually dropping back down to the creek.

### PINOLE POINT TRAIL TO GIANT STATION TRAIL

*Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Richmond*

**Length:** 4.13-mile loop **Intensity:** easy

This trail brings you right into the park's most vibrant eucalyptus woods, offering an aromatic experience you won't forget.

### QUAIL/BAYVIEW TRAIL LOOP

*Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont*

**Length:** 2.8-mile loop **Intensity:** easy

This hike takes you out around the base of the hills to provide spectacular views of the bay and the multicolored salt evaporation ponds. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of a golden eagle.

# New and Upcoming Parks, Public Access, and Amenities

The East Bay Regional Park District is a system of beautiful parklands and trails in Alameda and Contra Costa counties that comprises nearly 125,000 acres in 73 parks, including 55 miles of shoreline and over 1,250 miles of trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and nature learning. The Park District acquires, manages, and preserves natural and cultural resources for all to enjoy now and into the future. The District works to improve public access and recreational opportunities to the community, especially for underserved communities, while balancing the need to preserve, protect, and enhance sensitive habitats and the natural environment.



Photo: Larry Campbell

**Judge John Sutter Regional Shoreline** – Opened last year, this new park at the eastern touchdown of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge provides spectacular views of the entire bay and new eastern span of the Bay Bridge, including a massive 600-foot long by 40-foot wide observation pier built atop six remaining piles from the old Bay Bridge. The new park was the long-term vision of former Alameda County Superior Court Judge and Park District Board Member John Sutter, who advocated for a future waterfront park in the 1960s when the area was still active as the Oakland Army Base.



**Dumbarton Quarry Campground** – Located at the foot of Dumbarton Bridge in Fremont and opened recently in August, this is the Park District's first urban campground along the San Francisco Bay and one of the newest large campgrounds opened in California in three decades. The campground, with ADA accessibility, includes 63 family campsites (60 with full recreational vehicle (RV) hookups), a camp store, two shower buildings, a day use area with playground, reservable picnic sites, and trail access to scenic waterfront trails in Coyote Hills Regional Park and Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge. Future plans include convenience cabins, additional family campsites, and two large group camping areas.

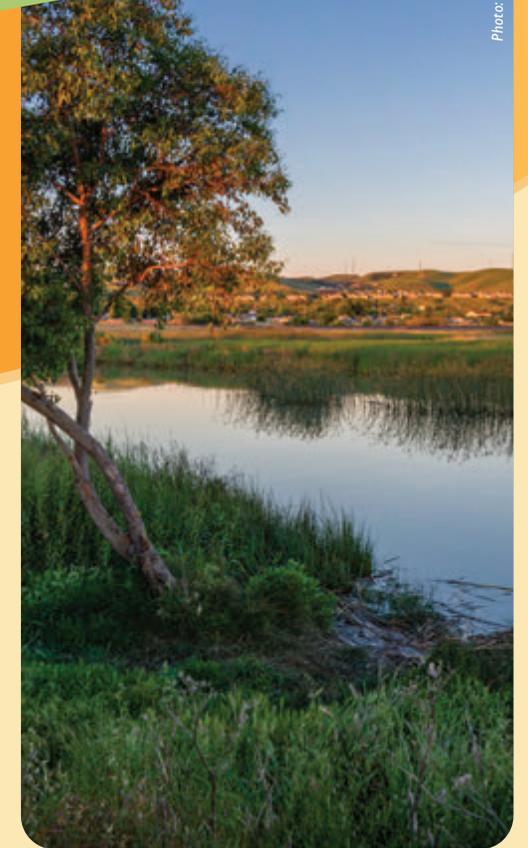


Photo: Jen Yanga

**Bay Point Shoreline Restoration and Public Access Improvements** – This eastern Contra Costa County shoreline gem, one of the Park District's climate-resilient parks, was reopened last November with restored tidal emergent marshland and transitional upland habitat. Improved public access amenities includes additional parking, bathrooms, picnic areas, drinking fountains, a kayak launch, and elevated walking and biking trails – all designed and constructed to withstand future sea level rise.

**Encinal Beach** – This little-known shoreline gem in Alameda was upgraded in 2021 with dune restoration, shoreline stabilization, and public access amenities, including trails, beach restoration, and ADA beach access. Tucked away behind Encinal High School, it provides beach and water access for fishing, kayaking, and other water sports. Encinal Beach is part of the San Francisco Bay Water Trail that provides access to 450-square miles of open water.

# New and Upcoming Parks, Public Access, and Amenities



**Albany Beach and Bay Trail Expansion project** – Opened in 2020, this major project removed a one-mile gap in the San Francisco Bay Trail, creating an 18-mile continuous trail segment from Richmond to Oakland. Public access upgrades at Alameda Beach also include additional parking, restrooms, picnic tables, and beach habitat enhancement. First envisioned in 2000 with the adoption of the McLaughlin Eastshore State Park General Plan, the project overcame significant challenges, including right-of-way acquisition, permitting, engineering, and funding.



**Black Diamond Coal Mine Experience** – A new educational experience has opened at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve inside the Hazel-Atlas Mine that gives visitors a greater understanding and appreciation for the area's coal mining past. The interactive and immersive experience transports visitors back in time with the sights and sounds of an active 1870s-era coal mine.



**Brickyard Cove Project** – Opening early next year, the new shoreline access point includes new parking, restrooms, picnic tables, and walking paths. Brickyard Cove is part of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, which is managed by the Park District.



**Del Valle Visitor Center** – This seasonal Visitor Center, open June through September, has been fully renovated, complete with new, interactive, and bilingual (English and Spanish) educational exhibits about local wildlife and the role Lake Del Valle plays in providing water storage, flood control, and recreation for residents in eastern Alameda County.



**Lone Tree Point Bay Trail** – A new half-mile San Francisco Bay Trail extension recently opened at Lone Tree Point along the San Pablo Shoreline in Rodeo, including a large 200-foot bridge over protected riparian habitat. The adjacent staging area is also being upgraded and is set to reopen soon with additional parking, a restroom, and picnic area improvements.



**Tyler Ranch Staging Area** – A new staging area is under construction at Pleasanton Ridge Regional Park, including new parking, restrooms, and picnic tables. The new staging area will provide improved access to the southern end of Pleasanton Ridge for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. This new staging area is expected to open in summer of next year.



# Ardenwood

## HISTORIC FARM

### Is it Farewell to the Monarch?

Ardenwood's eucalyptus groves were once the site of a rare and exciting natural phenomenon – the annual gathering of monarch butterflies. On sunny afternoons from late October to February, standing in the grove as the monarchs took flight was like being inside a snow globe of butterflies.

After years of steadily declining populations, trees that once had clusters of up to five thousand monarchs now stand bare through the winter. While habitat degradation, increased use of pesticides, drought, and climate change have all taken their toll, this pollinator species still has hope. In addition to a relatively steady eastern monarch population, some overwintering sites in California reported small western monarch clusters last winter, and individual monarchs are occasionally spotted at Ardenwood throughout the year.

We hope you will be on the lookout for monarchs at Ardenwood this winter, and we invite you to join us in our conservation efforts. This year, in honor of monarchs, we will be hosting multiple programs highlighting all our beautiful and diverse local pollinators.



### Be a Community Scientist

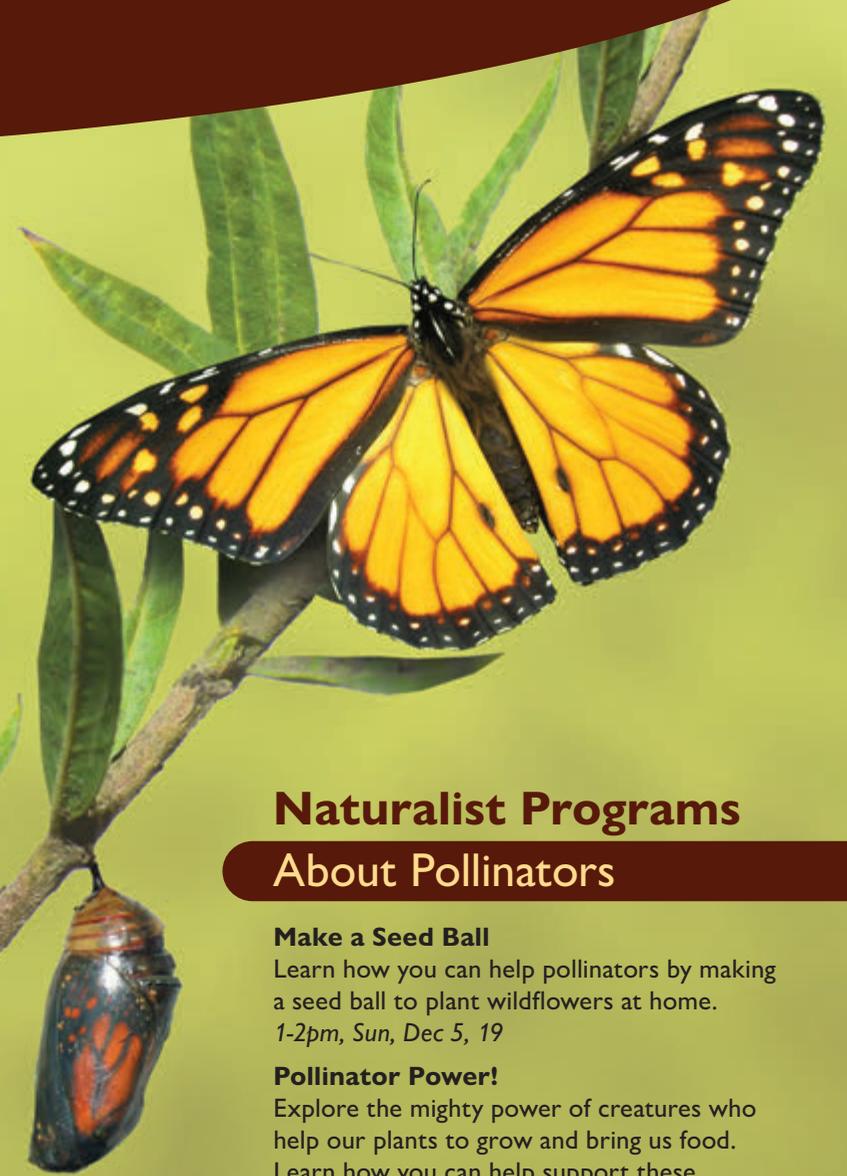
If you spot a monarch or a monarch caterpillar, scientists would like to hear about it! Report your sightings on iNaturalist or monarchmilkweedmapper.org.

Photo: Rodger Nyemaster

### Do Your Part

Simple things you can do will make a difference for monarchs and all pollinators.

- **Use your purchasing power:**  
Choose organic produce and honey.
- **Create a refuge:**  
Avoid pesticides and grow nectar plants at home or in your neighborhood.
- **Stabilize the climate:**  
Reduce your carbon footprint through everyday actions such as shopping locally, turning down your thermostat, and turning off lights when not in use.



## Naturalist Programs

### About Pollinators

#### Make a Seed Ball

Learn how you can help pollinators by making a seed ball to plant wildflowers at home.  
1-2pm, Sun, Dec 5, 19

#### Pollinator Power!

Explore the mighty power of creatures who help our plants to grow and bring us food. Learn how you can help support these tiny heroes.  
11am - noon, Sat, Dec 11, 18

#### Native Plant Gardens

Explore our native plant gardens here at the farm, learn their numerous benefits, and take home something to help jump-start a native garden at your home!  
1:30-2:30pm, Sat, Dec 11, 18

#### Pollinator Puppet Show

Join a colorful cast of puppet characters on an adventure to discover how important pollinators are. How do pollinators help us, and how can we help them? Audience participation is encouraged.  
11:00-11:30am, Sun, Dec 12, 26

# Big Break

## REGIONAL SHORELINE



Big Break Visitor Center is open and offers many opportunities to learn and play at the Delta. Check out EBRPD – Big Break ([ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org)) to view current operating hours and program offerings.

## Fall is for Fungi

With the cold and rainy fall season upon us, mushrooms are starting to pop up around the East Bay Regional Parks. Some – like the Death Cap – are deadly, while others – like Lion’s Mane – are coveted by local chefs.

Despite these differences, all mushrooms have something in common: they are just a small part of a much larger organism, the fungus. And it turns out that fungi (the plural of fungus) are responsible for making the world go round. Let’s explore some basics.



Poisonous *Galerina Marginata*

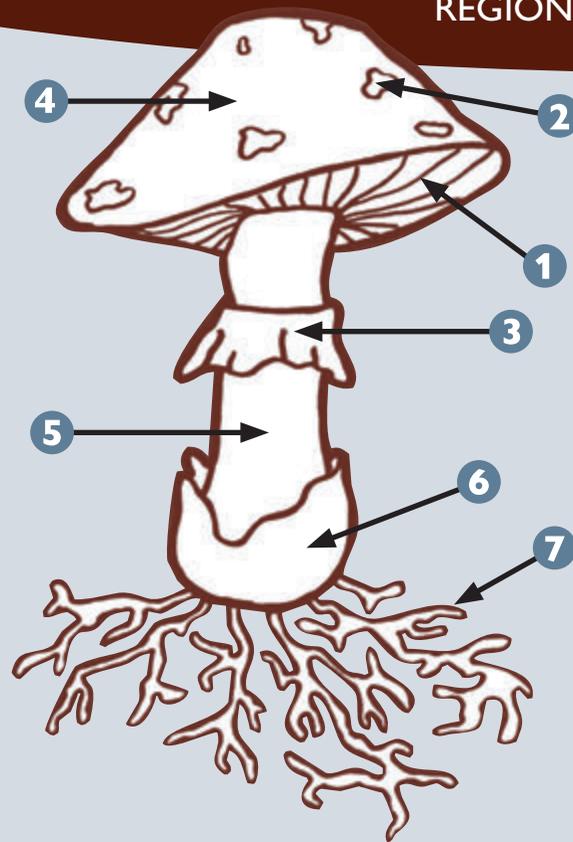
Photo: Walt Sturgeon, Wikimedia Commons

### So...what’s the difference between a mushroom and a fungus?

Once believed to be plants, fungi are now classified in their very own kingdom: the Fungi kingdom. Even though fungi can look like plants, they are more closely related to animals because their cells are composed of chitin – just like the exoskeleton of a shrimp – and because they cannot make their own food through photosynthesis.

Some fungus – but not all – produce fruiting bodies (also known as mushrooms) to reproduce. And much like fruit containing seeds that will germinate and grow into the next generation of plants, mushrooms contain millions of spores that will germinate and grow into the next generation of fungus.

**DISCLAIMER: COLLECTING MUSHROOMS IS NOT ALLOWED IN EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS. WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT DISTURB THEM IN THEIR NATURAL STATE – BUT PLEASE DO ENJOY BY LOOKING, PHOTOGRAPHING, OR SKETCHING.**



## Anatomy of a Mushroom

Identifying mushrooms is a skill that takes a long time to master. However, studying the basic structures of a mushroom is a great place to start. The terms to familiarize yourself with are:

- cap** – the mushroom “hat”
- scale** – rough patch of tissue on the cap
- stipe** – or stem
- gills** – the area underneath the cap that contains spores
- annulus** – the ring on the stipe
- volva** – the cup-like structure at the bottom of the stipe
- mycelium** – the thread-like filaments that make up most of the fungus

Your turn – try to label each part of the mushroom with the correct name!

Answers: 1d, 2b, 3e, 4a, 5c, 6f, 7g

To learn more about toxic mushrooms in the East Bay Regional Park District, please check out: EBRPD - BEWARE TOXIC MUSHROOMS ([EBPARKS.ORG](http://ebparks.org))



Photo: Bernard Spragg, Wikimedia Commons

## Why Study Fungi?

Because fungi spend most of their life invisible, hidden in their substrate or food source, they also tend to be overlooked. From healthy soil and plants to medicine and food, fungi are responsible for many things that we depend on. Check out a few reasons why mycology – the study of fungi – is important.

- Fungi make medicine.** Today, scientists grow fungi to make antibiotics like Penicillin.
- Fungi recycle nutrients in the soil.** Fungi are important decomposers – they break down organic material and make the nutrients available for other organisms in the soil.
- Fungi help plants and trees grow.** Some fungi have mutually beneficial relationships with plants – they connect to plant root systems to trade nutrients and water for sugar.
- Fungi are used for food and drinks by humans.** Although many mushrooms *ARE poisonous*, some are edible and highly nutritious.
- Fungi provide food and shelter to wildlife.** Many animals, including invertebrates – such as slugs, and mammals – such as mice, use mushrooms for food and shelter. By feeding the basic levels of the food web, these mushrooms support entire ecosystems.



Photo: Hoiger Krisp, Wikimedia Commons

Poisonous Death Cap Mushrooms

See [ebparks.org/calendar](http://ebparks.org/calendar)



# Black Diamond Mines

## REGIONAL PRESERVE

During this time of year, as the days grow shorter, and nature looks towards renewal, many of us take stock of the past year. 2021 has seen wonder and it has seen challenges. Here at Black Diamond Mines, we are thankful for the peace that the park gives us, and the resilience that has been shown in nature, as well as our communities. As you reflect on the year, please take a moment to consider what nature and the parks have done for you. Sometimes the benefits to us and the environment may surprise you.

### Five Reasons to Thank a Tree

#### 1 **Trees are just beautiful!**

In the spring and summer, all the trees at Black Diamond produce a pigment called chlorophyll that allows them to absorb blue and red light, producing shiny green leaves to grace the golden-brown hillsides. In the fall, some trees begin to drop their leaves when other chemicals kick in that turn leaves to gorgeous hues of red, orange, and yellow! Look especially for cottonwoods, some oaks, and almonds to provide fall color.

- 2 **Trees cool us down.** As temperatures climb higher each year, producing new heat islands, trees come to the rescue. An EPA study found that trees absorb the sun's radiation, which can naturally lower a building's surface temperature by 20 to 40 degrees and a car's

surface by 45 degrees. More trees mean spending significantly less on-air conditioning. Talk about money savers! In addition, trees pull carbon from the environment as they grow. This carbon sequestration helps fight the impacts of climate change.

- 3 **Trees provide food.** Since the dawn of time, trees have provided fruit, nuts, berries, and flowers for creatures to digest. In the parks, you can still find wild California walnut trees, manzanita trees, and oak acorns that are traditional food sources for the East Bay's earliest Native communities. This is the time of year these foods will often be harvested.

- 4 **Trees give shelter.** Trees are also homes for an array of local species such as bald eagles, bats, and even grey fox who make their home out of hollow tree trunks. Next time

you are on a hike look out for gumball size to golf ball size balls hanging off tree branches. Those are oak galls! Galls are homes to tiny harmless wasps that inject trees with a substance to change the bark into a fortress for their eggs!

- 5 **Trees Protect.** You probably already know that trees naturally turn the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> into oxygen, helping us offset the harmful effects of climate change. You may not know that they also protect us from storm surges, flooding and intense rains. Trees are great at absorbing excess water, and their roots help hold the ground in place protecting us from landslides.

## Black Diamond Scavenger Hunt

As you explore Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve this winter, keep a keen eye out for some of these signs of the season:



*Baccharis salicifolia (Mule Fat)*



*Oak titmouse*



*Fern*



*Moss and liverwort*



*Sapsucker*



*Phainopepla*

# Coyote Hills REGIONAL PARK



## Native American Heritage Month

**N**ovember is Native American Heritage Month and we want to honor truth in history and awareness of contemporary issues facing the Native communities throughout the East Bay, and the world.

Indigenous peoples are closely connected to the land through distinct traditions, unique languages, and sophisticated knowledge systems. In the Bay Area, many individuals from the Ohlone, Bay Miwok, Delta Yokut, and many more groups, continue to live on this land practicing their culture and traditions to this day.

The East Bay Regional Park District strives to promote accurate and holistic depictions of Indigenous peoples in our public and school programs. These programs are not a substitute for Native voices, and we ask others to join us in learning about California Native peoples from California Native peoples.

We extend our immense gratitude to the many Native folks who have contributed – and continue to contribute – their perspectives, voices, and culture to our programs.

We understand supporting equity and inclusion for Indigenous people is ongoing, and hope you will join us in this work as a part of our growing and diverse community. Let's celebrate the Indigenous people who still reside on this land, and have been here since time immemorial.



Visit this link to learn more about some of the great work that Native People are doing throughout the Bay Area.

## Activities in the Park

Come by the Coyote Hills Visitor Center to follow your own natural curiosities. Engage in a range of hands on activities, investigations, and crafts. Watch a live animal feeding and learn

more about habitats and how to protect them. All ages welcome. We'll have something new to offer every Saturday and Sunday. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, masks are required, and social

distancing between participants must be maintained.

Please check out "ebparks.org/activities/naturalists" for a full schedule of programs.



# Crab Cove

## VISITOR CENTER AND AQUARIUM

### STEELHEAD AND RAINBOW TROUT ... ONE FASCINATING SPECIES

In 1855 scientists first described rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) in North America by observing fish from Redwood Creek, now part of Reinhardt Redwood Regional Park! These fish may have been steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), which, confusingly, is the same species. Rainbow trout spend their whole lives in freshwater streams, rivers, and lakes. Steelhead trout, like salmon, are anadromous: they hatch in streams and rivers, spend 1-2 years living and growing in freshwater, and then swim out to the ocean to become adults. When 3-5 years old they will try to swim back up the same stream to spawn (lay and fertilize eggs). Unlike salmon who die after spawning, steelhead can spawn 3-4 different years.

What an adaptable species, transitioning between fresh and salt water, or just living in fresh water! The two varieties can also mate, with their babies becoming either variety. Fish of the original genetic strain (from 1855) can still occasionally be found swimming up Redwood Creek in winter during high water events. But how is this possible, since Redwood Creek flows into San Leandro Reservoir, and below that is Lake Chabot with no access to the ocean? After becoming landlocked, these adaptable fish now use the reservoir as their "ocean." They are rainbow trout because they live only in fresh water, even though some of them spawn up streams.

The Central California Coastal steelhead, with much more of a steel color than rainbow trout, is a federally threatened species (even though the same species, the steelhead variety is considered threatened).

Photos: Dan Sarkis



**Park District biologists net, tag, and release steelhead trout above the BART weir in Fremont that currently blocks migrating fish.**

Photo: EBRPD Fisheries Intern



**A rainbow trout from Stonybrook Creek, a tributary of Alameda Creek. Notice the line of pink, which steelhead do not have.**

At one time they spawned in great numbers in dozens of streams between Sonoma and Santa Cruz Counties. Now many of those streams cannot support trout for a variety of human-caused reasons, and only a few streams support healthy steelhead populations. Trout require clean, oxygen-rich, and cool water shaded by trees.

The drought is having a significant impact on both steelhead and rainbow trout populations throughout California. One local example is Wildcat Creek in Tilden and Wildcat Canyon Regional Parks, which is at risk of losing its trout population. When stream levels become this low, steelhead cannot swim past human-made barriers into upper spawning grounds. Such risks make the efforts of landowners to restore streams that much timelier.

The East Bay Regional Park District is one of many agencies collaborating on a long-term effort to restore Alameda Creek, the largest watershed in the East Bay. Hopefully, someday soon, steelhead trout, and possibly even salmon, will swim up fish ladders and around other urban challenges into more protected lands to spawn. To learn more about this collaborative effort, go to: [alamedacreek.org](http://alamedacreek.org).

Hopefully, this winter will bring lots of rain and a chance for a glimpse of these incredible fish! Please be mindful of sensitive streams in parks like Reinhardt Redwood and Wildcat Canyon Regional Parks. Bring binoculars to observe the species from afar and keep children and pets out of these important fish habitats.

## INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AT CROWN MEMORIAL STATE BEACH

[ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org) • [ebparks.org/parks/vc/crab\\_cove](http://ebparks.org/parks/vc/crab_cove) • [ebparks.org/activities/naturalists](http://ebparks.org/activities/naturalists) • Phone: (510) 544-3187

### BIRD WALKS ALONG THE BAY

Feast your eyes on a variety of shorebirds who have migrated to the San Francisco Bay. Some are spending the winter here, others are just passing through. With close observation and a few tricks and tips you can begin to distinguish between the puzzling grays and browns of these amazing birds!

Bring your own binoculars. Beginners welcomed and encouraged.

No registration; drop-in.

**Sat., Nov 27, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and  
Thu., Dec. 23, 8-10 a.m.**  
at Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary

**Thu., Dec. 9, 10-noon**  
at Crab Cove Visitor Center

### FISH FEEDING TIME

Visit our aquariums to see who lives here! Observe crabs, fish and other critters while they eat! What's on the menu? Let's find out!

No registration; drop-in.

**3-3:30 p.m., Every Sat. Nov. and Dec.**  
at Crab Cove Visitor Center ♿ ♿

### CALIFORNIA COAST AND OCEAN PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT through December

Come see the prize-winning California Coastal and Ocean Amateur Photography Exhibit courtesy of the California Coastal Commission.

No registration; drop-in  
at Crab Cove Visitor Center ♿ ♿



# WINTERTIME HABITATS

## Why Is It So Messy?!

You may have gone hiking or exploring in one of the parks and wondered why dead trees were left on the ground or why fallen branches were moved off the trails into a pile rather than thrown away somewhere. Animals use these places in our parks as shelter for themselves and as places to look for



Photo: John Krzesinski

food. Even poison oak is a beneficial habitat, provides food, and is a place of protection for lots of wildlife – even though it isn't a favorite of most people.

This winter, you can support backyard wildlife too, but it does mean giving up on a “perfect” tidy yard. One of the best ways to help is by planting native plants! A good place to start is by visiting your local nursery or look online at [gardenplanner.calscape.org](http://gardenplanner.calscape.org) where you can enter your city and goals of the space and it will give suggestions of natives you may consider.

## Provide Food and Shelter

- Leaf litter provides home for beneficial animals and insects. Leaf litter also helps birds find the food they need since the leaves provides a home for insects.
- Dead trees and logs provide food by attracting insects, mosses, lichens and fungi. They also provide cover and places for wildlife to raise their young.
- Build a brush pile, just do it away from your house! Use fallen branches to build a brush pile that will shelter birds from predators and the weather. Rabbits, snakes, and other helpful wildlife might also take refuge there.
- Leave perennials untrimmed until spring. Seed heads provide a helpful food source for birds.
- Keep unwanted critters away by bringing in dog or cat food overnight so it doesn't attract mice, rats, raccoons, skunks, etc.

## Wonderful Water

Wildlife need clean drinking water to survive and birds need to bathe in order to keep their feathers in top condition. If you are able to care for it, a birdbath can be a great addition to your yard. It provides water for wildlife and an opportunity to view them playing and drinking.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Lee Greengrass

- To entice small birds to jump in, a bath should be no more than three inches deep. You can make your bath accessible to small birds, bees, butterflies by adding several stones to the bath or placing a few sticks on top that the animals can use as perches.
- Set up your bath near shrubs or trees to protect from predators and keep the water clean. Birdbaths should be cleaned regularly to prevent bacteria and algae growth.

## Craft: Make a Bird Feeder



Feeling crafty? You can create your own bird feeder with a few common household items! You'll want to gather a plate, spreading knife, smooth peanut butter, birdseed and a pinecone. If you don't have a pinecone you can use a cardboard tube like the inside of paper towels or toilet paper. If peanut butter isn't an option, alternative nut butters and Crisco work too!

### Instructions

- 1 Cut a long length of yarn or ribbon to hang the bird feeder.
- 2 Tie the ribbon in a knot around the pine cone near the top (about three sections down).
- 3 Tie a knot in the end of the ribbon to create a loop.
- 4 Use the knife to get a large clump of peanut butter on the paper plate.
- 5 Use the knife to spread peanut butter inside the pine cone and around the edges.

- 6 Sprinkle the birdseed over the pine cone.
- 7 Roll the pine cone in the birdseed that is on the plate.
- 8 Hang the bird feeder on the tree.

### Tips on Where to Hang Bird Feeder

- **Find a quiet place:** Avoid open and noisy areas and try to hang your bird feeders at eye level or a little above.
- **Safety:** Position bird feeders roughly 10 to 12 feet from suitable shelter such as trees, brush piles or shrubs to give birds a safe, fast retreat whenever a predator is nearby.
- **Prevent window collisions:** Feeders should be less than three feet away, or greater than 10 feet away from windows.
- **Refilling:** Place feeder where it will be easy to refill.



# Mobile Education

## Fun Facts about the Opossum

The **opossum** (*Didelphis virginiana*) is the only marsupial native to North America. Yes, this house cat sized mammal has a pouch, also called a **marsupium**! At birth, the baby marsupial, also known as the joey, is the size of a jellybean! The young joeys, furless and blind, must crawl into their mother's pouch to finish developing for eight more weeks. Once inside the pouch, each joey will attach to one of the mother's 16 teats.

As the joeys mature, they start to climb out of the pouch and ride on the mother's back. This is how she teaches them survival skills and how to be a successful adult.

The opossum faces challenges when living in an urban environment. Most importantly, the urban opossum needs its **habitat** to be within 10 square city blocks of a natural water source. Achieving this can be difficult, due to dangers such as automobiles, dogs, and humans. Do you know where your nearest natural water source is?

Opossums are often **scavengers** and eat **carrion**, bugs, ticks, fruit, and vegetables. They see best

at night and are nocturnal, which means they live their life at night and take cover during the day. The opossum is an **arboreal** animal, preferring to live in trees. The opossum's tail is **prehensile**, so it can hold onto a tree while the rest of the animal hangs upside down! It has **opposable** thumbs that help it climb trees and procure food.



Photo: Wikipedia

A **range** is the geographical area in which an animal can be found. The opossum's range was originally limited to warmer regions of the east coast, but has expanded throughout the eastern United States and the west coast. Snow is a significant factor that limits the opossum's range. Opossums do not **forage** (look for food) in the snow successfully because of furless hands, short legs, and a big heavy body! Due to climate change their range has spread north to Michigan and even Canada.

If you see an opossum, please admire it from a distance. This animal is not aggressive, but it does have 50 sharp teeth to chew with. If an opossum feels threatened it might hiss and show its teeth or it might play dead!

## Opossum Word Scramble

1	L	R	R	E	A	O	B	A		
2	O	A	R	N	R	C	I			
3	A	M	U	R	S	M	U	I	P	
4	E	P	L	S	A	O	O	B	P	
5	H	E	I	R	E	P	L	E	S	N
6	A	H	B	T	T	A	I			
7	E	N	G	A	R					
8	N	E	G	A	C	S	E	V	R	
9	O	G	E	R	A	F				
10	O	O	S	P	S	M	U			

Answers: (1) arboreal, (2) carrion, (3) marsupium, (4) opposable, (5) prehensile, (6) habitat, (7) range, (8) scavenger, (9) forage, (10) opossum

## How to Draw an Opossum

**What you need:** A pencil, an eraser, a ruler, and a sheet of paper.

**Draw your opossum:** Using a grid is a time-honored way to reproduce an image. To start, draw a grid on your paper with squares seven across and three down. Your grid can be any size. The larger the grid, the larger your drawing. Begin

drawing the opossum in the grid by focusing on one square at a time. Notice where the opossum's lines cross the blue grid lines and where the lines are within the square. Continue drawing matching what you see within each grid box.

When you are done, erase the grid and you have your opossum drawn!

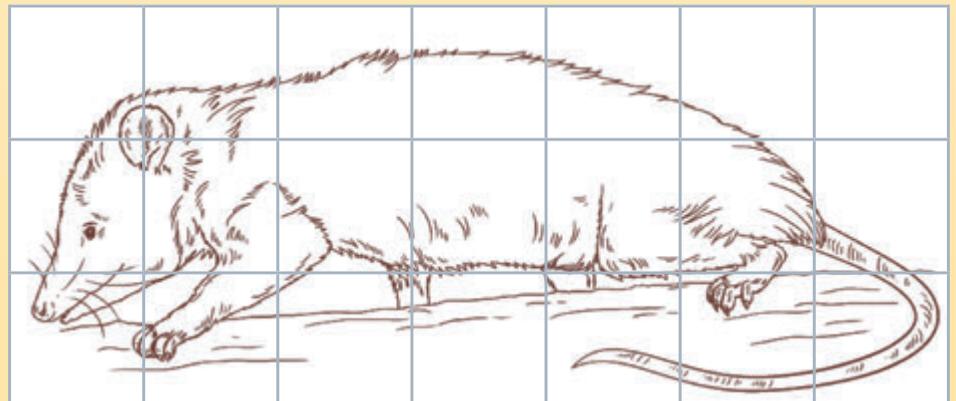


Illustration: Photocoloring

# Outdoor Recreation



## Basic Kayaking Safety Tips ●●●●●●●●●●

**Always wear a life jacket!** Also known as a PFD (or Personal Flotation Device), a life jacket is your lifeline. Know how to adjust the straps for a proper fit.

**Be aware of changing weather** conditions and be prepared for the possibility of a capsizing. Learn how to do a self-rescue. If the combined air temperature and water temperature are not greater than or equal to 120 degrees Fahrenheit, a wet suit or dry suit is recommended to keep you warm in the event of a capsizing.

**Always be sure to check the weather.**

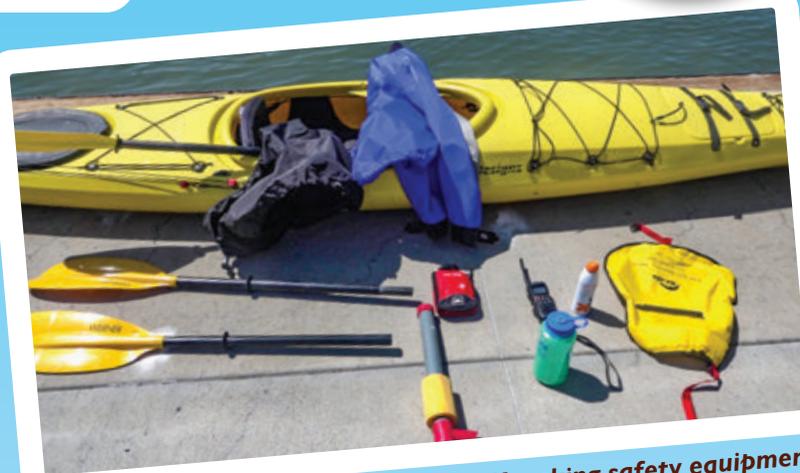
This includes the wind and tides. Studying a tide chart can help you plan your kayak trip in an area with tidal influence like the San Francisco Bay and California Delta. Make sure to time your trip accordingly so that you will not launch or land in the mud. Tides also affect current. A savvy kayaker will plan to leave against the current and return with the current.

**Bring and know how to use the necessary safety equipment.** In case you lose or separate from your paddle, it's a good idea to stow away a spare on your kayak. Always have two forms of communication with you, such as a cell phone and marine radio. A paddle float is recommended to assist you back into the boat during a self-rescue, and a bilge pump for removing water from the cockpit.

**Bring plenty of water and a snack.**

Dress in layers, and protect yourself with sunscreen and a hat.

**Go with a buddy** when you can, and if you paddle solo, make sure to let someone know where you plan to paddle and what time to expect your return.



Kayaking safety equipment

## Kayaking for Folks 50+

Consider joining Outdoor Recreation staff for an upcoming **Kayaking for Folks 50+** class at MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland! Learn kayaking skills with your peers at a pace that is right for you. On land we will cover paddling techniques, equipment selection, and boating safety. Then we will head out on the water practicing what you have learned by touring San Leandro Bay by kayak.

November 11.....#42274

December 7.....#42275

**Registration:** [ebparks.org/registration](http://ebparks.org/registration)  
or 1-888-327-2757, option 2



Photo: AJ Treia



# Sunol Wilderness

REGIONAL PRESERVE



## Winter Wandering

### Did you know grizzly bears once roamed California?

Although black bears aren't endemic to this area, large mammals – like grizzly bears – were, and would fatten up for the winter on carbohydrate and fat-rich acorns.



**14** See [ebparks.org/rin](http://ebparks.org/rin) for upcoming programs.

## Cultural Connections

For millennia, people from Mesopotamia to China, from ancient Rome to northern Africa, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, relied on oak trees and their acorn crops for food.



*Ohlone Peoples actively managed acorn resources by using fire, which increases production of acorns and makes them easier to gather.*



*Dotorimuk, a classic Korean side dish of acorn powder cooked into a jelly-like consistency, is mild with an earthy, nutty flavor.*

Discover all of our winter naturalist programs at:  
[ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org)

Follow us on Facebook  
[@SUNOLREGIONALWILDERNESS](https://www.facebook.com/SUNOLREGIONALWILDERNESS)

# Tilden

## NATURE AREA



Photo: Anthony Fisher

### Stationary Sun

Walk up the mountain  
 Pay your respects  
 To the last day of the year  
 Bundle your worries in a blue-gray cloak  
 And throw them into the sun's eternal pyre  
 Rejoice! A new year is near-  
 Hope and promise are yours!

*Solstice sunset from Wildcat Peak, 2020.  
 Join Naturalist Trail Gail on a solstice sunrise Peak hike.\**

## INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS AT TILDEN NATURE AREA

[ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org) • [ebparks.org/parks/tna](http://ebparks.org/parks/tna) • [ebparks.org/activities/naturalists](http://ebparks.org/activities/naturalists) • Information: (510) 544-2233

### FARM CHORES FOR LITTLES.....

Little children will enjoy taking care of the little animals at the Little Farm. Meet at the rabbit hutch for a variety of age appropriate activities. Masks required.  
 10:30-11am, Sun, Nov 7 & 21, Dec 5 & 19 and Sat, Dec 11.....Interpretive Staff

### WOOLLY LAMBS ♿

Ever wonder what a sheep's wool feels like? Come meet our flock and make your own mini sheep from their wool to take home. Meet at the Visitor

Center. Masks required.  
 3-4pm, Sat, Dec 4 & 18....Jenna S. Collins



### HOLIDAY TIE-DYE

Tie-dyeing isn't just for Deadheads, festies, and burners – you too can experience the magic of staining clothes in a deliberate pattern and wearing the fantastic and unique results!

Bring your own white cotton item, we'll provide the know-how and dye. Masks required. Rain cancels.  
 2-4pm, Sun, Dec 5.....Trent Pearce

### PAINTING WITH DISH SOAP

Spoiler alert: we aren't actually painting with soap. We'll use soap to BLOCK the paint, so that we achieve a fantabulous 80s-inspired pattern on ... whatever you bring to paint. Masks required. Rain cancels.  
 2-4pm, Sun, Dec 12.....Trent Pearce

### HYDRO-DIPPING

Don't worry, this isn't what it sounds like. Hydro-dipping is a different way to paint using water. Bring a metal water bottle or mug to paint and we'll

show you how it's done. Masks required. Rain cancels.  
 2-4pm, Sun, Dec 19.....Trent Pearce

### \*MEET THE SOLSTICE SUN – HIKE

Rise with the sun, on this early morning hike. We meet at the Nature Center and hike to the peak in hopes of greeting the solstice sun. BYOC – Bring your own Coffee! And flashlight.  
 6:15-8:30am, Tue Dec 21.....Trail Gail  
 No registration; drop-in.

## INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS IN VARIOUS PARKS

No registration, drop-in • Information: (510) 544-2233



Photo: Jerry Ting

### MONDAY BIRDING

It's time to search for fall and winter birds because they are beautiful and interesting.  
**Nov 1 – Tilden Nature Area.** Mild hills.  
**Nov 8 – Briones:** Bear Creek staging area. Hills.  
**Nov 15 – Miller Knox:** Richmond. First entrance after the tunnel. Flat.  
**Nov 22 – McLaughlin Eastshore State Park:** meet in Seabreeze Mkt. lot. Flat.  
**Dec 6 – Point Pinole:** Dotson Family Marsh. Flat.  
**Dec 13 – Point Pinole:** Atlas Road Staging Area. Flat.

9am-Noon, Mondays.....Anthony Fisher

### THE OVER-THE-HILLS GANG

Hikers 55 years and older interested in nature study, history, fitness, and fun are invited to join this series of monthly excursions exploring the Regional Parks.  
**Nov 16 – Carquinez Strait:** Port Costa Staging Area – Out and back on mostly paved trail.  
**Nov 30 – Miller Knox:** First lot after tunnel – from shore to history and back.  
**Dec 14 – Tilden Nature Area:** We'll explore the Tilden Nature Area, then celebrate the end of the year with a celebration; bring something to share.

10am-12:30pm, Tuesdays.....Trail Gail

See [ebparks.org/calendar](http://ebparks.org/calendar) **15**



# Volunteer PROGRAM

East Bay   
Regional Park District  
*Healthy Parks Healthy People*  
2950 Peralta Oaks Court  
Oakland, CA 94605-0381  
ebparks.org

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: *Docent Volunteer Educators*

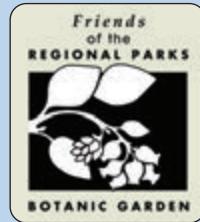


**F**or more than 30 years, the East Bay Regional Parks have been lucky enough to foster the dedication and support of a very special group of volunteers — the Docent Volunteer Educators. Docent Volunteer Educators undergo extensive training to work alongside naturalists and share their passion for learning and love of nature and history with park guests and staff alike.

Each visitor center has developed a specialized training program that focuses on what docents need to know to assist with the educational programs offered. These required trainings are offered at different times for each visitor center. Docents help with school field trips, special events, public programs, resource protection, and much more!



••• **Ardenwood Historic Farm, Fremont**  
Help with the farm and garden, provide historical demonstrations, and relive the Victorian era.



••• **Botanic Garden, Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley**  
Help maintain the garden and lead tours for the public on weekends.



••• **Del Valle Regional Park, Livermore**  
Help visitors connect to nature and history at the newest East Bay Park Visitor Center!



••• **Big Break Regional Shoreline at the Delta, Oakley**  
Help visitors appreciate wetland ecologies, hydrology, cultural history, the Delta, and California's water policy.



••• **Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont**  
Teach others about this vital wetland environment and current and past histories of the Native Ohlone Cultures.



••• **Sunol Regional Wilderness, Sunol**  
Work with naturalists at Sunol to share the natural and cultural histories.



••• **Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Antioch**  
Go deep underground to tell the story of the Hazel-Atlas mine.



••• **Crab Cove at Crown Memorial State Beach, Alameda**  
Help connect visitors with the marine and shoreline life, as well as Alameda's history.



••• **Tilden Nature Area, Berkeley**  
Help with education programs, work on the Little Farm, participate in monitoring projects, and much more.

**Sound like fun?** Help make our parks a welcoming and friendly place for visitors to learn and play!  
**Learn more:** [ebparks.org/DocentVolunteeringBrochure](http://ebparks.org/DocentVolunteeringBrochure) and [ebparks.org/DocentVolunteering](http://ebparks.org/DocentVolunteering)