

The Discovery Trail is open year round.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

The Discovery Trail is easily accessed on foot; the first portion is on the wheelchair accessible All Access Trail.

11 Notice that this stump has a small redwood tree growing out of its center. This is because some of the decayed, nutrient-rich soil caused by the action of rain and fungi has collected on the stump. A seed, carried by the wind, has managed to lodge itself in this rich soil and is now giving rise to a new tree.

12 As you walk along the park trails, you may notice branches sticking out of the ground. Often called “widow makers,” these branches—some as thick as mature tree trunks and weighing hundreds or even thousands of pounds—were once dead limbs hanging from the tops of trees. Strong winds cause them to fall to the ground. In the early days of redwood cutting, unlucky lumbermen were known to have been standing beneath them when they fell.

13 We should thank the Save The Redwoods League for this beautiful park, including this very grove. The League, a nonprofit organization, buys or accepts donations of land where redwood trees grow, and donates the land to California State Parks. Founded in 1927, the League continues to protect redwood lands for future generations. In 1955, the League bought the original 200 acres that comprised this park; the park has since grown to 850 acres. The League and those who donate are to be commended for their work in helping protect the redwoods.

Hendy Woods State Park Discovery Trail: A Self-guided Walk



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1 Look around you. Is this a forest or a meadow? Actually, it is both. This area is in transition from meadow to forest. Its shrubs and small plants provide the perfect habitat for deer and smaller animals, such as birds, rodents, gray foxes, raccoons and rabbits.



Redwood branch

2 Coast Redwoods are the tallest trees in the world. (The largest trees are their “cousins,” the Giant Sequoias, of the Sierra Nevada.) Look closely at this tree; its circumference is huge! When you look up, note that the sky is blocked by branches. Some redwoods climb upwards for more than 350 feet.

3 The black marks on the bark of these trees are fire scars. Redwood bark contains fire retardant resins and is very thick. It protects the tree from fire, decay and insects. The bark eventually heals its own scars.

4 Look at the tree in front of you. Why is it leaning so drastically? The answer is simple: the dense foliage of the redwood forest lets little sunlight come through. Trees need sun, and will often do anything, even bending or growing at odd angles, to get it. This California bay obviously found a patch of sun on the side



Douglas iris

of the trail and started to grow towards it to obtain as much sunlight as possible.

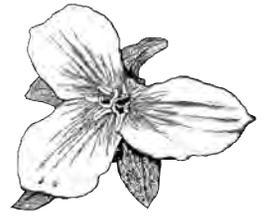
5 Redwood trees have no deeply reaching taproot, as most other trees do. Instead, they have a broad, shallow and widely spread root system. These shallow roots can be damaged if anyone steps on them. Redwood trees are unique in that they do not grow from seeds. The redwoods’ primary source of propagation is its root system, from which new trees spring.

6 The lumps you see on these trees are called burls. Nobody is quite sure what causes burls, but we do know that they are cells that have grown extremely rapidly. Burls do not seem to harm the tree. Many have distinctive shapes and forms, like oddly proportioned faces. Look at some and see if you can find any likenesses.

7 This massive tree has a large fire scar on it. Some trees seem to be completely hollowed by fire, but they are still alive, with green growth at the top. Though the tree’s bark protects it from most fire incidents, fire scars can only be healed over time.

8 Notice the three decaying trees in this general area. Each of these trees is being slowly turned to rich, damp soil. Decay in a redwood forest is mostly due to constant moisture, bacteria and fungi. Eventually another tree may spring out of the nutrient-rich soil created by one or more of these decaying trees.

9 Redwood trees are very plentiful in Hendy Woods, but other plants thrive as well. The field in front of you is filled with small plants called redwood sorrel, which resemble clover. Note the green, arching fronds of sword, bracken and chain ferns. While you are on the trail, look for wood roses.



Trillium

In winter, mushrooms grow in the soil or under leaves; look, but please DO NOT TOUCH OR TASTE. In spring, the blooming wild flowers include trilliums and Douglas irises. Various mosses and lichens grow profusely year round.

10 Just as there are many shrubs, flowers and fungi in the forest, there are also different trees.

This one is a California bay tree. If you look around, you will find many bays around the creek. A good way to tell if a tree is a bay is to break one of its leaves and sniff it. Bay trees have a distinctive fragrance.

In this grove you will find madrones and four different oak



Madrone leaves

varieties. Oaks can have oval or spiny leaves and gray bark. Madrones are very easy to spot; their bark is reddish brown and papery. If you spot a madrone tree, feel its bark; in the autumn, madrones shed their papery bark.