

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



Winter 2015-2016
December 2015
January-February 2016

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

To Ensure That Your Experience is Enjoyable, Please Review This Important Information

- Please be courteous to other trail users. Stay alert and make your presence known to other trail users well in advance, particularly when approaching from behind.
- Hikers yield to horses; bicyclists yield to hikers and horses. Observe trail speed limits (15 mph max; 5 mph when passing).
- Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions or rental horses). Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for all horses, and helmets must be worn by all riders under age 18.
- Heavy rain within two days prior to a mountain bike or horseback ride cancels the activity.
- For all hikes, wear boots or sturdy walking shoes appropriate for rugged trails.
- Dress in layers (T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, sweater, and/or jacket). The weather can be unpredictable. No matter what season it is, be prepared for rain, wind, fog, or sun!
- Carry ample water with you to drink. Water is not available on preserves.
- Bring sun protection (hat, sunscreen) and insect repellent.
- Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.
- Please carpool if possible. Parking is limited in some locations. 🌿

SPECIAL NOTE

If you have a group of 8 or more people who would like to attend a docent-led activity listed here, please contact the Docent Program Manager to discuss in advance at 650-691-1200 or docent@openspace.org. Other arrangements may need to be considered for your group.

Karl Gohl

GENERAL INFORMATION

With this newsletter in hand and a sense of exploration in mind, we invite you to enjoy the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District preserves. These 26 extraordinary preserves include over 62,000 acres of permanently protected open space, from redwood forests to bay shoreline. We encourage you to participate in the wide variety of adventures offered inside Outdoor Activities.

The activity durations listed are averages based on our experience. However, always allow extra time in your schedule for unusual circumstances, or the slower pace of some groups.

You can help by arriving a little early to ensure a prompt start for each activity.

The activities are free, though some require reservations. Heavy rain cancels the activity unless otherwise noted in the description. If there is light rain or the threat of rain, go to the meeting place.

All activities are developed and led by docents who have completed a District training program. These docents volunteer their time to share their knowledge of nature with you. For more information about the volunteer docent program, visit the District's Web site at www.openspace.org, or phone the District at 650-691-1200 weekdays, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. 🌿



Ravenswood
Open Space Preserve

Frances Freyberg

Header photos above, left to right: Strether Smith; staff; Amanda Louria; and Liv Ames.

www.openspace.org

WHERE TO MEET

Directions to preserves featured in this season's schedule of *Outdoor Activities* are listed below. Some preserves have more than one access point. Some activities meet at different locations than where the activity will actually occur. If an activity does not meet at the preserve listed, or if there is more than one preserve access point, the alternate meeting location will be indicated in italics on a separate line following the preserve name as part of the activity header. (For example: **Skyline Ridge Meet: Russian Ridge** or **Russian Ridge Meet: Caltrans vista point**). If no information follows the preserve name, then refer to the detailed directions for the preserve or alternate meeting location listed below.

Note: Restrooms are not always available; please plan accordingly.

PLEASE CHECK THE LISTED DESCRIPTION TO MAKE SURE YOU MEET YOUR ACTIVITY LEADER AT THE CORRECT LOCATION.

EL CORTE DE MADERA CREEK

Meet at the Preserve parking lot located on the west side of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard), about 1-mile south of the Caltrans Skeggs Point parking area and 2.7 miles north of the intersection of Highway 35 and Highway 84.

Skeggs Point: Meet at the Caltrans vista point on the east side of Skyline Boulevard, about 4 miles north of La Honda Road (Highway 84) and 1.5 miles south of Kings Mountain Road. Please note that Caltrans prohibits a left turn into the parking lot when approaching from the north along Skyline Blvd.

FREMONT OLDER

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Prospect Road in Cupertino. Exit Highway 85 at De Anza Boulevard. (From northbound 85 turn left on De Anza Blvd. and from southbound 85 turn right on De Anza Blvd.) Travel on De Anza Blvd. (toward the mountains) for about 0.5 miles. Turn right on Prospect Rd. At the first stop sign, turn left and cross the railroad tracks to remain on Prospect Rd. Follow Prospect Rd. for 1.3 miles, turning left after the Saratoga Country Club, until you reach the Preserve parking lot.

LONG RIDGE

Peters Creek Trailhead: Meet at the roadside pullout area on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, 3.6 miles north of Highway 9 or 3.3 miles south of Page Mill Road. If you are coming from the north on Skyline Blvd., the pullout is just past Portola Heights Road on the right. From the south, the pullout is near the Palo Alto city limits sign on the right. There is additional parking across Skyline Blvd. at the Grizzly Flat trailhead (Santa Clara County Park).

Hickory Oaks trailhead: The trailhead pullout is 5.1 miles south of Page Mill Road or 1.3 miles north of Highway 9 on the west side of Skyline Boulevard.

LOS TRANCOS

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Monte Bello Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

MONTE BELLO

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Page Mill Road (across from Los Trancos Preserve), 7 miles west of I-280 or 1.5 miles east of Skyline Boulevard. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 35 minutes travel time.

PICCHETTI RANCH

From the intersection of I-280 and Foothill Expressway, go 3.5 miles south-west (toward the mountains) on Foothill Boulevard/Stevens Canyon Road. Turn right on Montebello Road. The Preserve is 0.5 miles up Montebello Rd. on the left.

PULGAS RIDGE

From I-280, exit Edgewood Road. Drive 0.75 miles on Edgewood Rd. toward San Carlos/Redwood City. Turn left (north) on Crestview Drive, then immediately turn left on Edmonds Road. Follow Edmonds Rd. to the Preserve parking lot entrance on the right.

PURISIMA CREEK REDWOODS

Meet at the Whittemore Gulch entrance/ North Ridge parking lot. This entrance is on Skyline Boulevard next to the now closed Kings Mountain Country Store. The parking lot is 4.5 miles south of Highway 92, and 8.1 miles north of Highway 84.

Purisima Creek Road entrance: From the Highway 92 and Highway 1 intersection in Half Moon Bay, travel south on Highway 1 approximately 4.3 miles. Turn left on Verde Road. After turning on Verde Rd. and traveling 0.25 miles, continue straight to remain on what becomes Purisima Creek Road. (Verde Rd. splits off to the right.) Travel approximately 3.7 miles on Purisima Creek Rd. to reach the Preserve.

RANCHO SAN ANTONIO

From I-280, take Foothill Boulevard south and turn right almost immediately onto Cristo Rey Drive. Continue about 1 mile, veer right around the traffic circle, and turn left into the park. Go to the lot farthest to the right and meet near the restroom at the bottom of the hill.

RUSSIAN RIDGE

Meet at the main Preserve parking lot on the northwest corner of the Skyline Boulevard (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection (across Skyline Blvd. on the right). Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 40 minutes travel time.

Mindego Gateway parking lot: From I-280, exit Page Mill Road and head west. Drive about 9 miles to the junction with Skyline Boulevard, cross over Skyline Boulevard and on to Alpine Road. Continue on Alpine Rd. for 1.5 miles. Parking area is on the right. Allow 45 minutes travel time from I-280.



Fremont Older Open Space Preserve

SIERRA AZUL

Meet at the Jacques Ridge parking lot located near the intersection of Hicks Road and Mt. Umunhum Road in San Jose. Exit Highway 85 at Camden Avenue. (From northbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Branham Avenue and then turn left on Camden Ave. and from southbound Hwy. 85 turn left on Camden Ave.) Travel on Camden Ave. about 1.6 miles. Turn right on Hicks Rd. and travel for about 6.3 miles. Turn right on Mt. Umunhum Rd. The Preserve parking lot will be on the right.

SKYLINE RIDGE

Meet at the Preserve parking lot on Skyline Boulevard located one mile south of the Skyline Blvd. (Highway 35) and Page Mill/Alpine Road intersection. After entering the Preserve, turn right and go to the farthest parking lot. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 45 minutes travel time.

SKYLINE RIDGE (continued)

Equestrian parking lot: After entering the Preserve, proceed to the farthest parking lot on the left. Those traveling from I-280 on Page Mill Rd. should allow approximately 40 minutes travel time.

ST. JOSEPH'S HILL

Meet at the County boat launch parking lot next to the Lexington Reservoir Dam. From southbound Highway 17, take the Bear Creek Road exit, cross over the highway, and go 0.4 miles north on Highway 17 to Alma Bridge Road. Follow Alma Bridge Rd. over the top of the dam. Continue beyond the dam as the road jogs to the right. Turn right into the parking lot just before the road veers to the left. A Santa Clara County Park parking fee is in effect.



STEVENS CREEK SHORELINE

Meet in the "Kite Area" parking lot at Shoreline-at-Mountain View Park. From Highway 101, take Shoreline Boulevard east to the Shoreline Park entrance. After passing the entrance kiosk, turn right into the parking lot.

THORNEWOOD

From I-280, take the Highway 84/Woodside Road exit. Follow Highway 84/Woodside Road through Woodside and then to a junction with Portola Road at 3.3 miles. Bear right to stay on Highway 84, now La Honda Road. At 4.9 miles from Highway 280, turn left at a brick wall marked 895-897; look for the District sign just inside this gate. The small parking area is on the right about 500 feet from the entrance gate. Please do not drive beyond this lot toward the private residences.



Claire Landowski

La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve

THORNEWOOD (continued)

Alternatively, from the junction of Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) and Highway 84 in Sky Linda, take Highway 84/La Honda Road north 1.9 miles and turn right at the brick wall marked 895-897.

WINDY HILL

From I-280, exit Alpine Road in Portola Valley. Go south on Alpine Rd. about 2.9 miles to Portola Road (the first stop sign). Turn right on Portola Rd. and travel 0.8 miles to the parking lot on the left side of the road. 🌿

KEY TO SYMBOLS



Easy Hike: Flat to gently rolling hills. Total elevation gain less than 200 feet. Leisurely pace.



Moderate Hike: Steeper or more frequent uphill grades. Total elevation gain 200 to 600 feet. Leisurely to moderate pace.



Strenuous Hike: Steep hills and/or long distances. Total elevation gain greater than 600 feet. Moderate to vigorous pace.



Suitable for children: must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. See the activity description for any additional information.



Wheelchair accessible.



Stroller accessible: Jogger-type suggested.



Meal/snack break: Bring a lunch, dinner, or snack as appropriate.



Dogs on leash: Well-behaved and socialized dogs are allowed, and must be controlled on a maximum six-foot leash.



Equestrian Ride: Riders under age 18 must wear a helmet. Lead lines are required and breast collars are recommended for horses. Equestrians must provide their own horses (no stallions or rental horses).



Reservations required: Reservations for activities requiring them will only be accepted within the two (2)-week period just before the activity date. To make a reservation or a cancellation, visit the District's Web site www.openspace.org/reservations or call 650-691-2150 (enter 2). If you provide information prior to the reservation acceptance period, it will not be processed. Please limit your reservation to a maximum of four (4) people.



Easy Nature Ride: Slow, leisurely pace, minimal climbing, and multiple stops to observe nature.



Introductory Mountain Bike Ride: Outings include demonstration and practice emphasizing trail etiquette and techniques required for dirt riding followed by a 5- to 7-mile ride on fire roads and single-track trails, with occasional natural history stops. Riders should be in good physical condition to perform climbs and descents.



Intermediate Mountain Bike Ride: Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; able to climb and descend steep and moderately-rough trails. Recreational ride at a moderate/brisk pace; 8+ miles on a wide range of fire roads and single-track trails. For experienced riders in very good physical condition with good endurance.



Advanced Mountain Bike Ride: Intended for participants with dirt single-track riding experience; competent at climbing and descending steep and rough trails. Moderate to fast pace, 10+ mile ride on a wide variety of trail conditions. For experienced riders with a high level of physical fitness and excellent endurance.

Note: For all rides, bicyclists must wear helmets and bikes must be in good condition, and the participants must be very familiar with the operation of gears and brakes. Mountain bikes are strongly recommended for all except the Easy Nature Rides. Easy Nature, Introductory, and Intermediate Rides include a natural history component that is provided by the docents during the rest stops. Advanced rides develop and improve mountain bike skills – any natural history discussion stops are secondary to the overall riding experience.



Healthy Parks, Healthy People – Bay Area: Introductory level and easy to moderate activities for people of various ages. Some activities have a health and wellness focus.

Explorer Hike: Pioneers on Skyline Ridge

Wednesday • December 2

Skyline Ridge • 4 mi

Meet: Russian Ridge

10:30am to 2:30pm



Ever wondered what happened to Page Mill Road after it reached Skyline Boulevard? Join docents Lynn Jackson, Dennis Smith, Kate Gudmundson, and Laura Levin and explore the Old Page Mill Trail. On this moderately-paced hike with a 500-foot elevation gain you'll be retracing part of the route used to haul redwood lumber from Page's Mill on Peters Creek over to San Francisco Bay and hear the history of a few colorful characters.

Introductory Geocaching Hike for Families

Saturday • December 5

Los Trancos • 2 mi

10:00am to 2:00pm



This fun and interactive outing is great for families and children (who can hike for 3 miles). Join docent Lyndall Erb, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor to search for geocaches, or hidden treasures, using GPS units supplied by REI. You are welcome to bring small trinkets to trade for objects you'll find in the caches. This activity is an introduction to geocaching and is geared toward the first-time geocacher. **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after November 21.



Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve

Get Some Redwood Oxygen

Saturday • December 5

Purisima Creek Redwoods • 5.3 mi

Meet: Purisima Creek Road entrance

10:00am to 3:30pm



Find out why you'll be breathing some of the cleanest air in the world with docents Bob Segalla and Bruce Hartsough on the Purisima, Craig Britton, and Soda Gulch Trails. This moderately-paced hike through the restorative forest is suitable for capable children and has a downhill return. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after November 21.**



Earthquake Walk

Sunday • December 6

Los Trancos • 2-3 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



Join docents Mike Alexander and Paul Billig for a fun and educational hike along the San Andreas Fault. On this leisurely stroll, you'll stop to discuss the wonder of plate tectonics, examine remnants left by thousands of major earthquakes, and learn how to prepare for future earthquakes.



Nature's Garden in Fall

Tuesday • December 8

Monte Bello • 4 mi

10:00am to 1:00pm



Docents Vivian Neou and Debbie Mytels will lead this leisurely hike along the White Oak and Stevens Creek Nature Trails as you look at nature's garden in fall. You'll look to see what's wide awake and flowering as well as sleeping, and discuss how various native plants can fit into your own garden.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • December 9

Windy Hill • 4-6 mi

10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Katherine Jen, Louise Casey, Fran Keeler, Huey Shin Yuan, and Vivian Neou for a moderately-paced exercise focused hike. Each quarter, "Scenic Aerobic" hikes will be offered at different preserves. The route of each hike will be based on current trail and weather conditions. **(Note: These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)**

Fleas Navidad Dog Walk

Saturday • December 12

Pulgas Ridge • 3 mi

9:00am to 11:00am



Celebrate the beginning of the holidays by walking the dog. Join your canine companions on a moderately-paced hike. The pups will enjoy smells along the Blue Oak, Hassler, and Polly Geraci Trails as docents Ann Reisenauer and Patty Lovelace describe the natural surroundings. All dogs must be on leash. Please bring plastic bags for poop scooping. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after November 28.**



Shelley Smith

Los Trancos Open Space Preserve

Step Back In Time

Saturday • December 12
Bear Creek Redwoods • 1-2 mi
Meet: See text below
10:00am to 12:00pm



Docents Jenny Whitman and Padma Satish will take you and your family on an easy hike around the former Alma College site and surrounding Preserve. You'll explore history through stories and be shown an amazing collection of photographs and maps dating back to the 1880's of the three lavish estates that once stood on the property. Among the photographs are pictures of the Alma College campus when it was being used as a finishing school for Jesuit Priests. **(Note: Directions will be sent.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after November 28.



El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve

Russian Ridge – End to End

Tuesday • December 15
Russian Ridge • 8 mi
10:00am to 3:00pm



Join Docents Ed North and Huey-Shin Yuan on this fast-paced hike from one end of this Preserve to the other end and back. Weather permitting you may have a wonderful view of the Bay from the top of Borel Hill and answer the question – who is Borel? You'll also see one of the few remaining windmills in the area on this strenuous hike with an approximate 800-foot elevation gain.

Explorer Hike: Late Autumn in the Forest

Wednesday • December 16
El Corte de Madera Creek • 4 mi
Meet: Skeggs Point
10:30am to 2:30pm



Take a break from seasonal activities and get outside with docents Lynn Jackson, Laura Levin, Kate Gudmundson, and Dennis Smith to explore this wooded Preserve along the Sierra Morena, Fir, and Methuselah Trails. You'll enjoy making a side trip to visit an old growth redwood and hiking the shaded trails among a variety of trees. This will be a moderately-paced hike with a stop for lunch.

Escape the Holiday Madness

Saturday • December 19
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5 mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Escape for a while from the holiday crowds! There are a wide variety of plant communities in the Bay Area and many of them can be found on this Preserve. Join docents Martin Manley and Linda Smith for a moderately-paced hike. You'll discuss how the varieties of plant communities have become adapted to their unique environments. If the weather allows, a lunch break is planned at the picnic tables down by Stevens Creek. At the end of the trip you'll have the option for a little wine tasting (on your own) at Picchetti Winery.

Winter Ride at ECdMC

Sunday • December 20
El Corte de Madera Creek • 13 mi
Meet: Skeggs Point
10:00am to 3:00pm



Explore the shaded forests and challenging single-track trails of this beautiful Preserve on your mountain bike with docents Dave Kocsis and Patty Lovelace. This intermediate/advanced level ride takes you through mixed evergreen and redwood forests, passes lush riparian habitats, then climbs back to a vista point with a sweeping view of the Pacific Ocean before returning to your starting point. There will be over 2,000-feet of climbing. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after December 6.**

Solstice Sundown at Turtle Rock

Sunday • December 20
Long Ridge • 3 mi
Meet: Hickory Oaks trailhead
4:00pm to 6:30pm



Sunset on the winter solstice often produces a spectacular display of clouds and a shadow pattern on Turtle Rock that is the basis of a dubious human creation legend. Join docents Tommi and Strether Smith, Bill and Marilyn Bauriedel, and Earl Girbovan for an easy hike that will arrive at Turtle Rock in time for the sundown show and a discussion of the legend. **(Note: Parking is limited, please carpool with your friends.)**



Strether Smith

Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • December 23
Fremont Older • 4-6 mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



(Please see the activity description for December 9.) **(Note: These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)**

Signs of Winter with Views

Tuesday • December 29
Pulgas Ridge • 4.5 mi
1:00pm to 3:45pm



Enjoy a winter hike viewing a variety of trees and bushes with berries plus enjoy scenic views of the Bay. Join docents Liz Foreman and Huey-Shin Yuan to explore the plants and trees in this popular Preserve as you hike along the Blue Oak, Cordilleras, Dick Bishop, and Dusky-footed Woodrat Trails. Enjoy a scenic view on the top of the ridge. This moderately-paced hike will include some hilly and uneven terrain.

New Year Eve Fun

Thursday • December 31

Sierra Azul • 11 mi

10:00am to 3:00pm



Want to have some extra fun before the New Year? Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou for a fast-paced hike to Bald Mountain and back. You'll travel through mixed woodland, chaparral, and grassland along Barlow Road and the Woods and Bald Mountain Trails. You'll also enjoy lunch with the panoramic views of the valley below.

JANUARY

Healthy New Year Resolution

Friday • January 1

Monte Bello • 10 mi

10:00am to 3:00pm



If 'stay healthy' is one of your New Year resolutions, you can start with a fast paced hike through this popular Preserve. Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou to explore the White Oak, Stevens Creek Nature, Indian Creek, Bella Vista and Canyon Trails. Enjoy a beautiful view of the Bay Area from the top of Black Mountain. You'll enjoy a well deserved lunch along Waterwheel Creek Trail with a peaceful view of the woodland.

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • January 3

Los Trancos • 2-3 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



(Join docents Strether Smith and Harry Cornbleet, and please see the activity description for December 6.)

Explorer Hike: Winter in the Redwoods

Wednesday • January 6

Purisima Creek Redwoods • 5.5 mi

10:30am to 2:30pm



Join docents Dennis Smith, Lynn Jackson, Kate Gudmundson, and Laura Levin as you experience winter at this Preserve. You'll be able to judge if the rain predictions based on El Niño have come to pass! You'll look for early blooming flowers and trees, search for the several varieties of ferns, and identify animal signs for birds, and mammals found at this Preserve. This round trip hike will include a lunch break in the redwoods at Soda Gulch.

Umunhum Barlow Explorer

Saturday • January 9

Sierra Azul • 5 mi

8:30am to 1:00pm



Join docents Greg Azevedo, David Schwaderer, and Huey-Shin Yuan for an uncommon hike around Mt. Umunhum via Barlow and Woods Roads. This moderate hike with many short breaks and wonderful views includes trail sections that are steep with varying surfaces. You'll begin hiking along Mt. Umunhum Road near the Bald Mountain trailhead and continue to Barlow Road to hike back to the Jacques Ridge parking lot. (Note: Participants will carpool/shuttle to the trailhead.)



Picchetti Winery,
Picchetti Ranch Open Space Preserve

Winter Birds by the Bay

Saturday • January 9

Stevens Creek Shoreline

Nature Area • 2 mi

10:00am to 1:30pm



Walking along the Stevens Creek Trail in early winter you can expect to see flocks of shorebirds, gulls, and ducks, and hopefully some less common species. Docents Bill and Marilyn Bauriedel will help you learn shortcuts to identify some of the look-alike species. Beginning birders and capable children over 6 years old are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them. The docents will provide a spotting scope to view overwintering birds up close.



Purisima Creek Redwoods
Open Space Preserve



Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area

Search for the Everlasting

Saturday • January 9

Picchetti Ranch • 5 mi

10:00am to 3:00pm



Join docents Bob Segalla and Tanya Clausius to enjoy the excitement of this Preserve so close to home. You'll discover if the everlasting plant smells like maple syrup to you. A lovely view awaits you along the Orchard Loop and Zinfandel Trails. You can listen to the sound of Stevens Creek as you enjoy lunch at a Santa Clara County Park picnic area. Capable children can handle this moderately-paced hike. A visit to Picchetti Winery for tasting is optional (on your own) at the hike's end.

Fungal Fun

Sunday • January 10

Purisima Creek Redwoods • 7 mi

9:00am to 4:00pm



Join the fun, finding and focusing on fungi. Docents Chris MacIntosh, Paul Billig, and Lynn Jackson will lead you down through the woodlands on the North Ridge and Whittemore Gulch Trails, and you'll return uphill through more exposed habitats on the Harkins Ridge Trail. You'll see a wide variety of colors, shapes, and sizes growing underfoot (and sometimes overhead) on this non-technical fungus appreciation hike – train your eyes to notice the sometimes camouflaged but always fascinating fungi that flourish in winter. The rain (or lack of) will determine what is seen. Bring boots for mud, plus stamina and your curiosity. This strenuous hike has frequent stops, and there are some very steep sections of trail.

Qigong Among the Oaks

Sunday • January 10
Picchetti Ranch • 2 mi
10:00am to 12:00pm



Join docents Maureen Draper and Susan Bernhard to learn some basic breathing and stretching techniques from the ancient healing practice of Qigong. The energy of the oak trees around this Preserve will be the inspiration for a deeper appreciation of the beauty around you on this leisurely-paced hike.

El Corte de Madera Creek Sampler

Tuesday • January 12
El Corte de Madera Creek • 6.5 mi
10:00am to 3:00pm



Make like a local tourist and visit the sites of this Preserve on an out and back moderate hike. Docents Sarah Schoen, Vivian Neou, and Greg Hughes will guide you to an ancient redwood (so old it's called Methuselah) and to an intricate tafoni sandstone formation. Along the way you'll learn some of the local history and ecology: logging, a tragic aviation disaster, and protection of coho salmon. You'll stop midway for lunch at the Vista Point with, weather permitting, lovely views of the Pacific Ocean.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • January 13
Rancho San Antonio • 4-6 mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



(Please see the activity description for December 9.) **(Note: These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)**



Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve

Introductory Geocaching for Families

Saturday • January 16
Bear Creek Redwoods • 1-2 mi
Meet: See text below
10:00am to 1:00pm



(Join docents Jenny Whitman, Debbie Mytels, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor and please see the activity description for December 5.) **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended. Directions will be sent.)** Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 2.



El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve

California Buckeye in Winter

Sunday • January 17
Monte Bello • 4.5 mi
9:30am to 2:30pm



Explore the buckeye trees of Black Mountain with docents Mike Alexander and Kandis Scott on a moderately-paced hike along (and adjacent to) the Bella Vista and Old Ranch Trails. You'll learn about this remarkable species' history, uses, and unique adaptations to California's climate.

In winter, the buckeye exhibits a stark beauty like no other, and you'll observe this in a variety of inspiring, and photogenic forms and settings. You'll help record detailed observations of select trees as a way to track their seasonal progression. This is the first of four hikes, one in each buckeye season over the coming year. Capable and engaged children aged 12 and older are welcome.

Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 3.



Karl Gohl

Monte Bello Open Space Preserve

Slow Ride at Monte Bello

Sunday • January 17
Monte Bello • 10 mi
10:00am to 12:00pm



Join docents Patty Lovelace and Dave Kocsis for a slower paced ride at this Preserve. This is an intermediate level ride due to climbing and single track, but you'll be going at a slow pace to suit those who like to enjoy nature as they cycle, or who prefer not to go at a faster cycling pace. You'll climb Black Mountain, ride the Waterwheel Creek Trail loop, and perhaps (depending on rider preferences and trail availability) continue to White Oak Trail to climb out. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 3.**

Bay Breezes and Windy Hills

Tuesday • January 19
Windy Hill • 8 mi
10:00am to 3:00pm



Join Docents Ed North and Huey-Shin Yuan for a tour of this Preserve and learn how it got its name. You'll climb Hamms Gulch and traverse the Lost Trail, and if the weather cooperates, you may be able to get a spectacular glimpse of the Bay. You'll return on the Spring Ridge Trail on this strenuous hike that includes approximately 1,200 feet of climbing.



Explorer Hike: Winter Waterfowl

Wednesday • January 20
Stevens Creek Shoreline
Nature Area • 4.5 mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



Embark on a waterfowl expedition with docents Kate Gudmundson, Lynn Jackson, Laura Levin, and Dennis Smith to look for birds visiting the San Francisco Bay after their fall migration along the Pacific Flyway. You'll enjoy the salt air and bay views as you leisurely meander along the Levee, Bay, and adjoining trails while exploring a variety of habitats including Stevens Creek, salt ponds, tidal marsh, and sloughs – all in your quest to see feathered friends visiting from near and far.

Restoring Balance

Saturday • January 23
Monte Bello • 3 mi
Meet: Picchetti Ranch
10:00am to 12:30pm



Using breathing techniques makes it easier to connect with the rhythms of the natural world. Join docents Maureen Draper and Padma Satish for a leisurely-paced hike on the beautiful Waterwheel Creek Trail. As you observe some of nature's strategies for renewal, you may be renewed as well. (Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead.)

Pond to Pond: Winter Fungi

Saturday • January 23
Skyline Ridge • 5 mi
Meet: Equestrian parking lot
10:00am to 2:15pm



This moderately-paced hike with docents Susan Bernhard and Noa Doitel will indulge you in the rejuvenating effects of the season. You'll start with a short downhill route to explore around Horseshoe Lake. If it has rained recently you'll be on the lookout for fungi, and changes to native plants as you hike the Fir Knoll Trail loop, then head up the Sunny Jim Trail with its glorious hills and mixed terrain. After a break at Alpine Pond and the Daniels Nature Center, you'll hike back on the Ipiwa Trail taking in a beautiful vista over the coastal range.



Richard Kurnishi

Fremont Older Open Space Preserve

Fungi Forms and Structures

Saturday • January 23
Purisima Creek Redwoods • 8 mi
Meet: See text below
10:30am to 3:00pm



Join docents Steve Warner and Theresa Walterskirchen on a journey to discover winter fungi. You'll travel along the trail past Bald Knob to an old growth redwood at the intersection of Irish Ridge and Lobitos Creek Trails. Fungi forms, structures, and functions will be discussed when/if any specimens are found. This out and back strenuous hike includes approximately 1,000 feet of elevation change. Docents will share prepared fungi specimens if no growing mushrooms are found. This hike will occur rain or shine so please be prepared for any weather. (Note: Directions will be sent. Participants will carpool to the trailhead.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 9.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • January 27
Picchetti Ranch • 4-6 mi
10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for December 9. (Note: These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)

Fremont Older History Ride

Saturday • January 30
Fremont Older • 11 mi
9:45am to 12:00pm



Learn the history of this Preserve on an intermediate mountain bike ride with 2,000-foot elevation gain lead by docents Linda and Glenn Wegner. Riders must have experience with single-track trails, fire roads, and climbing hills. The ride leaves promptly. Bring ample drinking water and power snacks. Dress in layers, weather can vary. (Note: Arrive early to find parking).

Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 16.



Valbhav Tripathi

Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve

FEBRUARY

Explore Hike: Scouting for Newts

Wednesday • February 3
Picchetti Ranch • 4.5 mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



Search for newts with docents Kate Gudmundson, Lynn Jackson, Laura Levin, and Dennis Smith on a moderately-paced out and back hike along the Zinfandel Trail. You'll visit both a pond and a creek to check for breeding newts. You'll also have the opportunity to look for other flora and fauna that may be out and about on a brisk winter day. Your lunch break will be at picnic tables under the canopy of mature sycamore trees.

Winter Wild Stories

Friday • February 5
Picchetti Ranch • 4 mi
1:00pm to 4:00pm



Join docents Padma Satish and Debbie Mytels on this out and back hike along the Zinfandel Trail at a moderate pace. You'll be observing the wilderness landscape, and the condition of ground cover, shrubs, and trees in winter time as you walk along in the mixed plant community.

New Trail to Ancient Oaks

Saturday • February 6
Russian Ridge • 3.7 mi
Meet: Mindego Gateway parking lot
10:00am to 1:00pm



Explore the newest trail in this Preserve with docents Ann Reisenauer and Susan Bernhard. You'll visit ancient oaks and look past Mindego Hill to the ocean on this moderately-paced hike via the Ancient Oaks, Charquin, and Mindego Hill Trails.

View from the Ridge

Saturday • February 6

Long Ridge • 5 mi

Meet: Peters Creek trailhead

10:30am to 3:30pm



Join docents Bob Segalla and Steve Brugler to explore what this Preserve has to offer. You can expect newts along the lush Peters Creek Trail and enjoy a tranquil pond, green forests, ridges, and grasslands. You'll stop for an ocean view at the Wallace Stegner bench. This moderately-paced hike is suitable for capable children.



Sheryl Ertich

Long Ridge Open Space Preserve

Owls of Monte Bello

Saturday • February 6

Monte Bello • 3 mi

3:30pm to 9:00pm



Join docents Karen DeMello, Jan Hintermeister, and Cathy Brown on this walk to learn about the rarely seen but sometimes heard owls of this Preserve. You'll begin with mini-tutorial stops to learn about local owls, then stop for dinner at dusk. As you retrace your steps in darkness, be prepared to stand quietly and patiently in the cold to listen for owls along the way. Whooooo knows, maybe you'll get lucky and hear one! Wear quiet clothing, bring a packable dinner, a flashlight (with red cellophane covering if possible), and binoculars (if you have them).

Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 23.

Earthquake Walk

Sunday • February 7

Los Trancos • 2-3 mi

2:00pm to 4:30pm



(Join docents Judy Fenerty and Debbie Mytels, and please see the activity description for December 6.)

Climbing the Flanks of Mt. Umunhum

Sunday • February 7

Sierra Azul • 8 mi

10:00am to 1:00pm



Join docents Dave Kocsis and Patty Lovelace on a steep ascent up the flanks of Mt. Umunhum on the remote Barlow Road, followed by lunch at Bald Mountain with a grand view of the Coyote Valley, and you'll have an easy descent back to the starting point on his is a moderately-paced mountain bike ride with about 1,400 feet of climbing overall. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after January 24.**

Chinese New Year Celebration

Monday • February 8

El Corte de Madera Creek • 8 mi

10:00am to 2:30pm



Join docents Huey-Shin Yuan and Vivian Neou to celebrate the year of the Monkey. You'll explore this beautiful and heavily forested preserve along the Gordon Mill, Timberview, Giant Salamander, and Fir Trails. After visiting an old-growth redwood tree and hiking a 30- to 50% grade climb along the Fir Trail, you'll enjoy your lunch at a scenic spot with a picnic table. This hike is a fast-paced workout with 2,000-feet elevation gain.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • February 10

Pulgas Ridge • 4-6 mi

10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for December 9. **(Note: These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)**



Karl Gohl

Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Fungal Fun

Saturday • February 13

Purisima Creek Redwoods • 7 mi

9:00am to 4:00pm



(Join docents Chris MacIntosh, Cathy Brown, and Emma Finter, and please see the activity description for January 10.)

Three Cheers for the Red, White, and Blue

Monday • February 15

Picchetti Ranch • 5 mi

10:00am to 3:00pm



Do you know the three early spring wildflowers that match our nation's colors? Join docents Paul Billig and Huey-Shin Yuan as you celebrate Presidents Day and search the trails at this Preserve for these early risers. After exploring the area around the seasonal pond, you'll head out on the Zinfandel Trail and stop for lunch at the picnic area in Stevens Creek County Park. The hike will have about 500 feet in elevation gain and is suitable for capable children 10 years and older. Participants are encouraged to dress in patriotic colors!

Explore the Interior

Tuesday • February 16

Rancho San Antonio • 8 mi

10:00am to 3:00pm



Join docents Ed North and Huey-Shin Yuan on a fast-paced journey into the interior of this Preserve. You'll ascend the Coyote and Wild Cat Trails up to the Upper High Meadow Trail (approximately 1,000 feet of climbing). From an elevated vantage you may catch a glimpse of the Bay before descending on the Rogue Valley Trail.



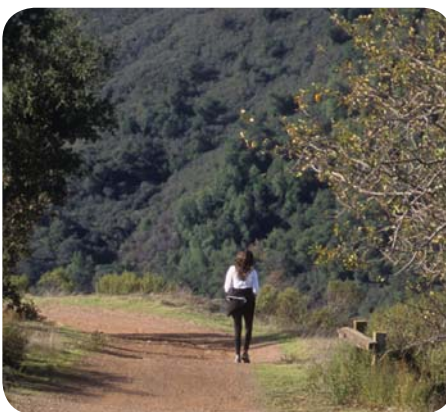
Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve by Karl Gohl

Explorer Hike: Wildflower Treasure Hunt

Wednesday • February 17
Thornewood • 4 mi
10:30am to 2:30pm



Experience the delight of discovering ephemeral spring wildflowers with docents Laura Levin, Kate Gudmundson, Lynn Jackson, and Dennis Smith. Descending through chaparral into redwood forest at a leisurely pace, you'll travel along the Schilling Lake and Bridle Trails on this out-and-back hike. If the timing is right, you'll be treated to a display of Fetid Adder's Tongue near your shaded, creek side lunch spot. **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 3.**



St. Joseph's Hill Open Space Preserve

Step Back In Time to Discover the History

Saturday • February 20
Bear Creek Redwoods • 1-2 mi
Meet: See text below
10:00am to 12:00pm



(Join docents Jenny Whitman and Lyndall Erb, and please see the activity description for December 12.) **(Note: Directions will be sent.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 6.**

Signs of Spring

Tuesday • February 23
Pulgas Ridge • 4.5 mi
1:00pm to 3:45pm



Enjoy an almost spring hike with viewing of a variety of early blooming wildflowers, native trees, and bushes. Join docents Liz Foreman and Huey-Shin Yuan to explore this popular Preserve as you hike along the Blue Oak, Cordilleras, Dick Bishop, and Dusky-footed Woodrat Trails. Enjoy a scenic view on the top of the ridge. This moderately-paced hike will cover some hilly and uneven terrain.

Scenic Aerobic Hike

Wednesday • February 24
Monte Bello • 4-6 mi
Meet: Picchetti Ranch
10:00am to 1:00pm



Please see the activity description for December 9. **(Note: Participants will carpool to the trailhead. These hikes will vary in difficulty from moderate to strenuous; please refer to difficulty rating.)**

M&M's — Manzanitas and Madrones

Friday • February 26
St. Joseph's Hill • 3.4 mi
9:30am to 1:00pm



You'll enjoy a 360-degree perspective of the Bay Area including Mt. Umunhum and Mt. Hamilton, as well as spectacular views of bayside communities. Docents Farhana Kazi, and Bill and Marilyn Bauriedel, will weave tales of the Ohlone people into a natural history interpretation of the landscape. You'll traverse one of the most beautiful manzanita-lined trails, with backdrops of Sierra Azul Preserve and Lexington Reservoir. This is a moderately-paced loop hike starting at the Jones Trail (steep ascent) and continuing along the Novitiate, Manzanita, and Serpentine Trails.

Fremont Older History Ride

Saturday • February 27
Fremont Older • 11 mi
9:45am to 12:00pm



(Please see the activity description for January 30.) **Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 13.**

Night on Froggy Hill

Monday • February 29
La Honda Creek • 6 mi
Meet: See text below
3:00pm to 9:00pm



Explore a limited access area of this Preserve for an evening of winter listening with docents Debbi Brusco and Lynn Jackson. You'll hike uphill in open grassland at a leisurely-to-moderate pace. There will be extended stops to learn about pond restoration efforts conducted by the District to enhance habitat for fauna and for watershed protection. After dinner you'll quietly experience the night, listening for creatures that chorus most when they can't be seen. Bring your meal, plastic to sit on, and flashlight with a red filter or cellophane covering. Binoculars, hiking stick, and camera are optional. **(Note: Directions will be sent.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 15.**



Thornewood Open Space Preserve

Introductory Geocaching Hike for Families

Saturday • February 20
Skyline Ridge • 2.5 mi
Meet: Russian Ridge
10:00am to 2:00pm



(Join docents Sarah Schoen, Padma Satish, and an REI Outdoor School Instructor, and please see the activity description for December 5.) **(Note: This activity includes some off-trail hiking; long pants are recommended.) Reservations are required and will be accepted on or after February 6.**