

Your Guide to Marin County's Public Lands

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Robert Campbell Photography

Best Winter Activities

See salmon in West Marin

Migration. Migration. Migration. That is what coho salmon and steelhead trout do in the streams throughout West Marin after winter storms. Check out Olema Creek (Point Reyes National Seashore), Lagunitas Creek (Samuel P. Taylor State Park), and Redwood Creek (Muir Woods National Monument), for the best vantage points.

View birds at Rush Creek

Enjoy the birds that visit Rush Creek Preserve. Take a walk on the Pinheiro Fire Road to see an amazing variety of shorebirds and waterfowl that spend the winter here.



Salmon in Lagunitas Creek

© Virginia Fifield

Winter hike in Muir Woods National Monument

Go on a ranger-led hike through the primeval forest at Muir Woods in search of banana slugs, mushroom gardens, coho salmon, winter wildflowers and ghost trees.

Mountain bike ride up historic Eldridge Grade to the top of Mt. Tamalpais

Eldridge Grade opened in 1884 as a horse carriage road up the north side of Mt. Tamalpais. Its rocky condition creates a perfect midwinter route to the top of Tam. The East Peak Lookout at 2,571 feet in elevation is Marin's highest point.

Check out the surf at Rodeo Beach

Rodeo Beach is only a stone's throw from San Francisco and is a great spot for checking out the waves where the surf picks up in the winter.



Bon Tempe Reservoir

© Barb Stenson

Fish at Bon Tempe with the family

Bon Tempe Reservoir is stocked with catchable rainbow trout from October to May. A great opportunity for families to get out of the house, have some fun and enjoy the scenery.

Witness migrating whales and lazy elephant seals from Chimney Rock

From December through April, California gray whales migrate from Alaska to Baja then return to Alaska, while the northern elephant seal comes ashore to birth pups and rest.

Camp in the quiet on Angel Island

Winter is a great time for locals to get a weekend campsite. Weather is often pleasant, just keep an eye on the forecast and check the ferry times. Reservations can be made with as little as two days' notice.

Hike to Hidden Lake on Mount Burdell Preserve

Hidden Lake is the most significant upland vernal pool in Marin County. During the late winter and early spring Hidden Lake serves as the breeding site for millions of newts and tree frogs. The pool sustains several listed rare plants.

Best Spring Activities

Walk through wildflowers at Point Reyes National Seashore

Spectacular displays of brilliantly colored wildflowers await curious eyes from February through April along coastal spots such as Chimney Rock, Abbotts Lagoon, and Limantour Beach.

Become a "Frog Docent" and help protect frogs at Carson Falls

The foothill yellow-legged frog is declining throughout its range. These once-common amphibians can still be seen at Little Carson Falls between March and June. Volunteer docents are present on weekends, ready to share binoculars and fascinating tidbits about tadpoles and other residents of the falls. Docent trainings are held each February.

First weekend visit to Marin Headlands

Stay in the Marin Headlands hostel, ride the MUNI 76 bus to keep it car-free! If you do this on the first weekend of the month you can visit the NIKE site on Saturday and then hike up to Battery Townsley on Sunday!



Indian paintbrush at Chimney Rock

© Susan Van der Wal

Discover a pygmy Sargent Cypress forest in the Gary Giacomini Preserve

The Gary Giacomini Preserve boasts a fantastic array of wildflowers during spring including some unusual serpentine endemics, incredible views and a pygmy Sargent Cypress forest atop San Geronimo Ridge.

Celebrate Olompali's rich heritage

Olompali State Historic Park, which has been a Miwok village, a Victorian estate and a hippie commune, celebrates 8,000 years of continuous human history each year on the third Sunday in May. Olompali's Annual Heritage Day offers a wide range of activities tied to the park's unique history.

Listen to the roar of Cascade Falls in Cascade Canyon

The creeks that run through this preserve are among the most pristine in the county. Early spring is a great time to visit, when wildflowers abound and Cascade Falls runs full.



Rush Creek

© May Chen

Working Together for the Future of Marin County

With a common mission of land stewardship, several agencies work to preserve Marin County's 143,000 acres of public lands; the National Park Service, California State Parks, Marin Municipal Water District, Marin County Parks. These agencies offer a wide range of facilities, lands and activities. Use this guide to learn more about the many opportunities offered on the public lands of Marin County.



© May Chen

Hiking near Mount Burdell

Best Summer Activities

Celebrate the summer solstice at Muir Beach

Go beachcombing and then enjoy the longest day of the year around a campfire at the continent's edge!

Visit the West Point Inn on Mount Tamalpais

The Inn was once a stopover for passengers who rode the "Crookedest Railroad in the World" up from Mill Valley to the top of the mountain. The sweeping view from the Inn includes much of the East Bay, San Francisco, Marin Headlands, Golden Gate Bridge, and the Pacific Ocean. Take a Sunday morning "Pancake Hike" and top off the view with a little maple syrup.

Find shade in the redwood grove at Indian Tree Preserve

Near the top of the Indian Tree Preserve is a dense redwood grove, catching fog and creating a cool oasis above the parched Novato landscape.



Young dancers during China Camp Heritage Day

Take a self-guided hike along the Earthquake Trail in Point Reyes

The paved Earthquake Trail is a subtle reminder of how the earth shifted 16 feet during the 1906 earthquake. This self-guided, accessible trail leaves from the Bear Valley picnic area and is a one-half mile loop.

Take an Evening Walk on Ring Mountain

Make the most of the long summer evenings. Look for the Tiburon Mariposa Lily, a flower that occurs nowhere else on earth, while you enjoy one of the most spectacular views of the bay area.

Circumambulate Mt. Tamalpais

Retrace the steps of the Beat poets Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsburg, and Phillip Whalen in their reverential hike around the entire mountain - a hiking challenge, a personal inspiration, and a scenic thrill in one day.

Celebrate China Camp's heritage

Every August, China Camp celebrates with an Annual Heritage Day at the restored, nineteenth century Chinese fishing village. Chinese music, acrobatics, folk dancing, village tours, demonstrations, and other entertainment for all ages continue throughout the day.

Best Fall Activities

Horseback ride at Point Reyes National Seashore

The Seashore offers numerous trails for horseback riders.

Keep the trails and yourself in shape - Mt. Tam Trail Crew

Join our skilled volunteers and staff as we maintain and repair our trail system, build bridges, install fencing and erosion control structures, cut back brush, and repair stairs. Trail events are generally held on the first Saturday of every month and are suitable for ages 13 and up.

View the raptor migration

Visit Hawk Hill in the Marin Headlands to watch the annual migration of raptors.

Relax on Tomales Bay

Fall at Hearts Desire Beach means less fog, more sun, and warmer water. Bring a towel and your family and spend the day. Take a meander on the half-mile Indian Nature Trail.

Fly fishing at Lake Lagunitas

Enjoy a unique catch and release fishing experience at Lake Lagunitas. The lake is stocked with catchable rainbow trout between October and May. Special regulations require that fish over 14" be released. Barbless hooks and artificial lures are required. This is a popular spot for fly fishing in a serene setting.

Visit secret Marin cemeteries

Take a trip to visit spooky cemeteries on public lands. These spots include the pioneer cemetery in the Rush Creek Open Space Preserve where Carl Rush and his wife are buried and the historic Lucas Valley cemetery (across from the Marin County Parks field office).

Hike the Tomales Point Trail

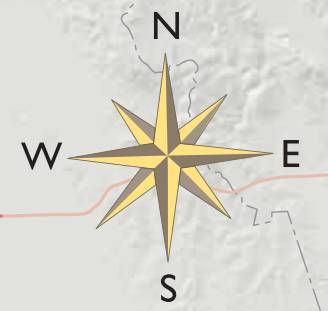
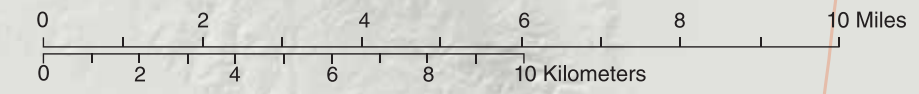
Hike the four mile Tomales Point Trail to view the native tule elk and witness a panorama of Tomales Bay, Bodega Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The trail is flat with some hills.



Looking north from the south tower of the Golden Gate Bridge towards the Marin Headlands

© Gary Snyder

Marin County's Public Lands



Point Reyes National Seashore
415-464-5137



Golden Gate National Rec Area
415-561-4700



California State Parks
707-769-5665



Marin County Parks
415-473-6387



Marin Municipal Water District
415-945-1180

Land Management

- Point Reyes National Seashore
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area
- California State Parks
- Marin County Parks
- Marin County Parks—Open Space Preserves
- Marin Municipal Water District lands
- City Parks
- Wildlife Preserves
- Cities, towns, and built-up areas

Facilities

- Ranger Station or Visitor Center
- Drive-in campground
- Hike-in campground
- Hostel
- Trailhead
- Bay Area Ridge Trail
- Other Trail



Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-4381 (Voice) 473-3232 (TDD/TTY) or by e-mail at disabilityaccess@marincounty.org. Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.

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