

Samuel P. Taylor State Park



Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



California State Parks supports equal access. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at (415) 488-9897. This publication is available in alternate formats by contacting:

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Discover the many states of California.™

Samuel P. Taylor State Park

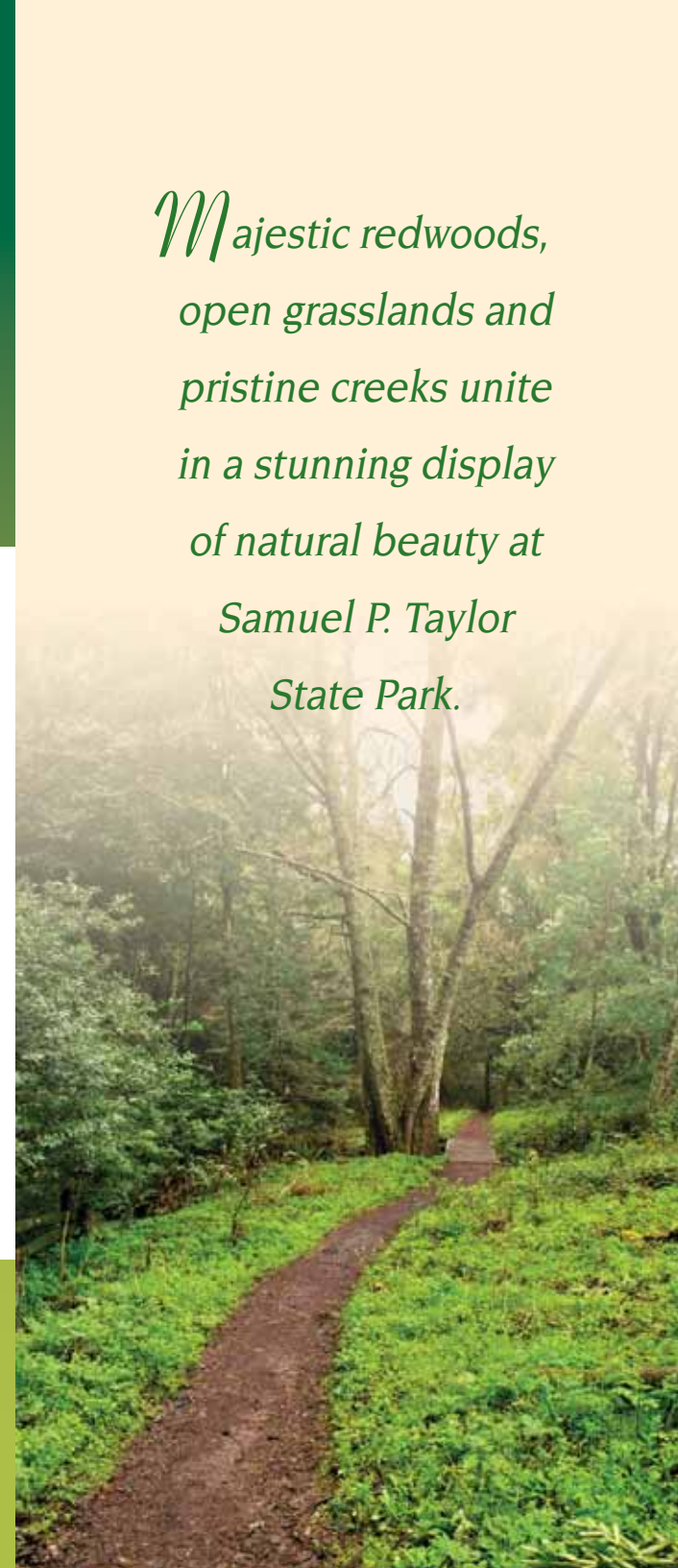
8889 Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

Lagunitas, CA 94938

(415) 488-9897

*California freshwater shrimp photo courtesy of
Dr. Larry Serpa, The Nature Conservancy*

*Majestic redwoods,
open grasslands and
pristine creeks unite
in a stunning display
of natural beauty at
Samuel P. Taylor
State Park.*



Samuel P. Taylor State Park's landscape

ranges from shady canyon groves to oak-studded grasslands to the rolling hills atop Mount Barnabe. Nestled in 2,882 acres of wooded countryside in west Marin County, the park invites visitors to camp, bike, ride horses, and savor a piece of paradise.

This redwood forest community enjoys a mild climate ranging from dense fog and rain to full sun. Summer temperatures average in the low 80s, while winter days drop to the high 50s with frequent rainfall. Dressing in layers is recommended.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

Archaeological evidence shows that the indigenous Coast Miwok people inhabited the area now known as west Marin County for at least 3,000 to 4,000 years before Spanish missionaries and settlers arrived. Miwok, one of the most populous native groups in California, have a cultural heritage that includes shamanism and complex, elaborate languages. The Miwok lived on nature's abundance, sustaining the land and coastal waters by fishing and hunting only for what was consumed, and burning the grasslands after their seed harvest to encourage new growth. The Coast Miwok took full advantage of the nearby ocean as well as the forests and bunch-grass-covered hills.

European explorers began incursions into Coast Miwok tribal lands in the 1500s.

By the 1700s, the Spanish mission builders had forced many Coast Miwok natives into servitude. The Miwoks' land was taken over by Spanish and Mexican land grantees, and many Miwok tribespeople died from newly introduced diseases and the atrocities of European settlers. Modern-day Miwok descendants continue to live in Marin and surrounding counties.



Samuel P. Taylor

Samuel P. Taylor

In 1849 the recent discovery of gold drew fortune-seekers to California. Adventurous Samuel Penfield Taylor, grandson of Declaration of Independence signer George Taylor, and a group of friends purchased a schooner and set sail for San Francisco Bay. Upon arrival, 22-year old Samuel found a wooden cask filled with eggs floating near shore. He cooked the eggs, overturned the cask, and set up a food stand on the beach.

Food sales proved profitable, but three years later he left for Hawkins' Bar, Tuolumne County, to pan for gold. In 1852, Taylor shipped 6,173 pennyweight of gold to his San Francisco bankers; the gold dust netted Taylor \$5,691.99.

With the money he earned, Taylor bought 200 acres in western Marin County from Mexican land grantee Raphael Garcia. Taylor opened the first paper mill on the west coast. The Pioneer Paper Mill Company grew rapidly due to the demand for and the expense of importing paper from the east.

Soon Taylor had established the bustling town of Taylorville—complete with new roads, steam engines, a tannery and a blasting-powder mill.

In 1874 the North Pacific Coast Railroad built a narrow-gauge railroad running from Sausalito through Marin to serve Point Reyes and Tomales Bay. Taylor built the Azalea Hotel to serve travelers who could stop and spend a few days in the wilderness near Taylorville. Guests were free to camp during the summer, swim in his big millpond, fish, hunt, explore the natural wonders and relax. Soon Taylor built Camp Taylor, California's first site for recreational camping. Taylorville became one of northern California's most popular weekend recreation areas during the late 1870s and early 1880s.

NATURAL HISTORY

Chert and sandstone underlie well-drained soil that hosts profuse vegetation. Shaded, fern-filled groves of coast redwoods, *Sequoia sempervirens*, are found along the canyon bottoms and up the north-facing slopes. The striking *Aralia californica*, or elk clover, displays immense leaves with huge cream-colored flowers blossoming in early summer.



Pioneer Paper Mill

Oak, tanoak and madrone hardwoods dominate the park's grasslands.

Wide, grassy slopes characterize Devil's Gulch. A succession of native wildflowers adds an ever-changing highlight to the landscape—buttercups and milkmaids early in the spring, followed by Indian paintbrush as summer approaches. Live oak, laurel, Douglas-fir and madrone trees grow in this part of the park, and big-leaf maples turn beautiful colors in fall.

Wildlife

Black-tailed deer are common. Raccoons, skunks, coyotes, and gray foxes may be spotted; badgers and bobcats are seen occasionally. Rarely, mountain lions come out in the daytime.

On Barnabe Peak, turkey vultures circle and kestrels and red-tailed hawks watch for prey. Swallows, owls, egrets and woodpeckers nest in the park.

In the winter and early spring, coho salmon and steelhead trout migrate from the ocean to spawn in Lagunitas (Papermill) Creek. Sadly, fewer fish make these annual runs because both the coho and steelhead are now endangered. Fishing is no longer permitted in Lagunitas Creek or within the park.

Nearby lakes do allow fishing; a valid state fishing license is required for anglers age 16 or over.

The California freshwater shrimp, *Syncaris pacifica*, is another endangered species. Lagunitas Creek is one of the few prime habitats left for this two-inch crustacean.



California freshwater shrimp

RECREATION

Trails

The park offers a wide network of fire roads; hiking, nature, and equestrian trails also wind through the park. The scenic, paved Cross Marin Trail follows the historic North Pacific Coast Railroad right-of-way and has no vehicular traffic.

Camping

The redwood groves have 61 family campsites with restrooms, hot showers and piped drinking water. Some parking spaces can accommodate small trailers, but none have hookups.

Two group campsites can also be reserved. Madrone Group Camp #1 has space for up to 50 people, and Group Camp #2 can hold up to 25 people. Devil's Gulch Horse Camp #1 has a corral, hitching racks, watering troughs and a campsite for up to 20 people. Two tent-only sites for up to 10 people are nearby, but are not horse camps.

To reserve any site, call (800) 444-7275 or visit www.parks.ca.gov.

Picnicking

The park's main picnic area sits in a shady grove along Lagunitas (Papermill) Creek. Each site has a table and barbecue. Piped drinking water and restrooms are nearby. The Redwood Grove and Irving group picnic areas hold groups of up to 80 and 30 people, respectively. To reserve, call (800) 444-7275.



Lagunitas (Papermill) Creek

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Accessible campsites, parking, and restrooms with showers are located in the Creekside and Orchard Hill camping loops and Azalea picnic area. The Cross Marin Trail is paved for 4.5 accessible miles; pavement begins near Azalea picnic area. Accessibility is continually improving. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- The park and its natural and cultural resources are protected by state law. Nothing may be removed or altered.
- Firearms and hunting are prohibited on State Parks lands.
- Poison oak can trigger a severe rash. Stay in designated areas to avoid the plant.
- Please help us preserve the natural features of the park by staying on the trails and respecting the signs designating trail usage (hikes, bikes, or horses).



























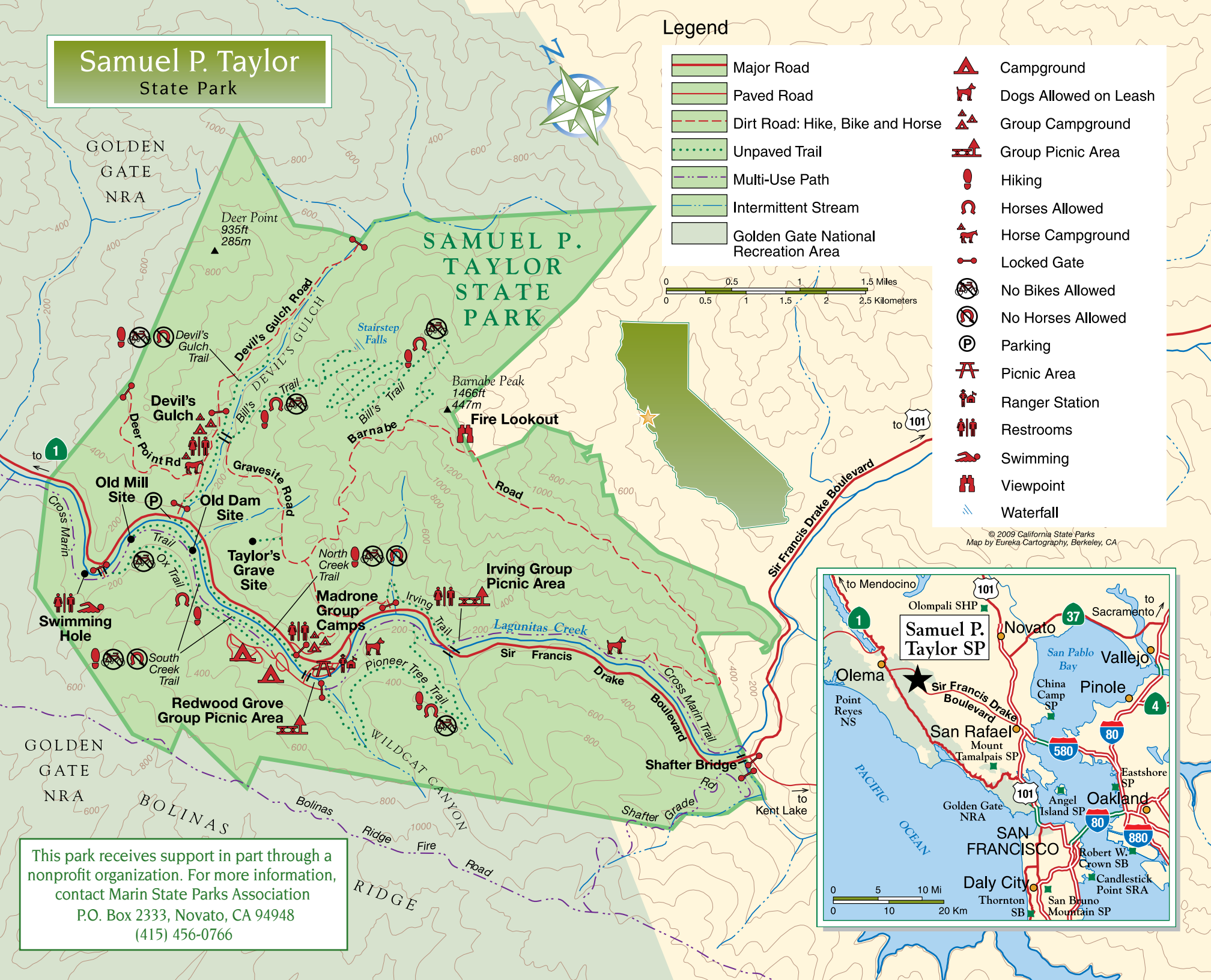
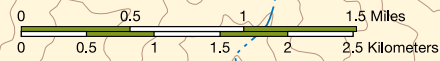
NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Mount Tamalpais State Park, 3801 Panorama Highway, Mill Valley 94941 (415) 388-2070
- China Camp State Park, from Highway 101, go east on North San Pedro Road for 5 miles to the park (415) 456-0766

Samuel P. Taylor State Park

Legend

-  Major Road
-  Paved Road
-  Dirt Road: Hike, Bike and Horse
-  Unpaved Trail
-  Multi-Use Path
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Golden Gate National Recreation Area
-  Campground
-  Dogs Allowed on Leash
-  Group Campground
-  Group Picnic Area
-  Hiking
-  Horses Allowed
-  Horse Campground
-  Locked Gate
-  No Bikes Allowed
-  No Horses Allowed
-  Parking
-  Picnic Area
-  Ranger Station
-  Restrooms
-  Swimming
-  Viewpoint
-  Waterfall



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Map by Eureka Cartography, Berkeley, CA



This park receives support in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information, contact Marin State Parks Association
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