

Torrey Pines

State Reserve
and State Beach



Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation 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.



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CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

P. O. Box 942896

Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

For information call: 800-777-0369

916-653-6995, outside the U.S.

711, TTY relay service

www.parks.ca.gov

Torrey Pines SR and SB

12600 N. Torrey Pines Rd.

San Diego, CA 92037

(858) 755-2063

(Reserve and mailing address)

Cover and intro panel photos by David Rightmer

“Visit Torrey Pines...painted cliffs and rugged canyons... green groves and flowered hillside...the wonderful panorama of mountains... the sweeping shoreline and the blue sea...will continue in its primitive beauty to be admired and loved by all who visit it.”

—Guy Fleming

Torrey Pines State Reserve is a majestic wilderness in the middle of an increasingly urban area. Its fragile environment of high, broken cliffs and deep ravines overlooking the sea is home to one of the world's rarest pine trees—*Pinus torreyana*. The Torrey pines are believed to be the remnants of an ancient woodland that once flourished along the southern California coast, but now they grow naturally only on this small strip of San Diego coastline and on Santa Rosa Island. Here, the tree clings to the face of the crumbling sandstone or stands tall in sheltered canyons.

Torrey Pines State Beach, adjacent to the reserve, stretches four and one-half miles from Del Mar past Los Peñasquitos Marsh Natural Preserve to the base of the sandstone cliff at Torrey Pines Mesa. The sandy

beach invites swimming, surfing and fishing. Low tide—when the red-tinged bluff is reflected in wet sand—is a good time to stroll the beach. Across the highway from the beach, the Los Peñasquitos Marsh Natural Preserve provides a protected breeding ground for many species of birds and fish.

PARK HISTORY

Human History

The Kumeyaay that lived at Torrey Pines traveled in bands of extended families throughout the coast, mountains and desert foothills. Their lands extended from the Pacific Ocean, south to Enseñada, Mexico, east to the dunes of the Colorado River, and north through the Warner Springs Valley to what is now Oceanside. They lived in small dwellings

and shade ramadas, which were made of willow, oak, manzanita, deerweed, tule, chamise and other local plants.

The Kumeyaay were seasonal hunters and gatherers. They gathered roots, berries, nuts and seeds—some of which were used for medicinal purposes—and practiced limited horticulture. Using fishhooks and nets, they caught a variety of sea animals, and picked up grunion, shellfish and mollusks from the beaches. The Kumeyaay hunted such game as rabbits, quail and deer with bows and arrows, throwing sticks and snares. Today, descendants of the Kumeyaay still reside in many of the same areas, including San Diego County.



Kumeyaay olla (pot)



*Kumeyaay dwelling
Sketch by J.W. Audubon, 1849*

NATURAL HISTORY

The landscape of the reserve is still changing. Nearly a million years of rising and falling seas, heavy rains, and erosion by streams and creeks gradually formed the sandstone terraces that make up the present reserve. Some geological formations are more than 45 million years old, and some rocks have traveled from as far away as central Mexico. The continuous motion of the surf creates a changing seascape, challenging artists and photographers to record its latest look. Varying elevations have produced habitats that range from salt to fresh water, from coastal strand to sage scrub, from salt marsh to chaparral to riparian. The area's mild temperatures range from a January low of about 45 degrees to a typical August high of between 75 and 80 degrees. In June and July it is not uncommon for coastal fog to last all day, enabling the Torrey pines to survive in this unlikely environment.

Torrey pine on coastal bluff

THE TORREY PINES

Early Spanish explorers named the grove of trees in the area *Punto de Los Arboles*, or "Point of Trees." The trees served as a landmark for sailors navigating off the coast. In 1850—the year of California's statehood—botanist Charles C. Parry identified this pine as a unique species and named it after his friend John Torrey, a leading botanist of the time.

When Dr. Parry returned to the area in 1883, he was distressed over the lack of protection for the trees, and he urged the San Diego Society of Natural History to save them from extinction. By 1885 there was a \$100 bounty on anyone caught vandalizing a Torrey pine tree. Possible later threats included clear-cutting the trees so the land could be used for cattle grazing. In 1899 the San Diego City Council passed an ordinance that set aside 369 acres to be used as a public park.

Concerned newspaperwoman and philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps donated the North and Parry Groves to the people of San Diego in the hope of protecting the Torrey pines. In 1916 Guy Fleming, a botanist working for the San Diego Society of Natural History reported damage to the trees by heavy public use.

Miss Scripps got the public interested in protecting the trees, and in 1921 she and the City Park Commission appointed Mr. Fleming custodian of Torrey Pines Reserve. By the time of her death in 1932, Ms. Scripps had contributed significantly to the establishment of the reserve.

Photo courtesy of the Scripps College Archives, Denison Library



Ellen Browning Scripps

THE RESERVE

The 2,000-acre reserve's setting today contains approximately 300 endangered and protected species of native plants. The plant communities of the reserve and lagoon areas include coastal strand, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and Torrey woodlands. These vanishing habitats are home to sand verbena and beach primrose in the coastal strand areas, as well as California sagebrush, California buckwheat, black sage, and

coastal barrel cacti in the coastal sage scrub community. The mesas and other high elevations are host to the chaparral community of plants, including chamise, manzanita, ceanothus, California scrub oak, toyon and mountain mahogany. The Torrey woodlands are defined by the generally poor soil and arid climate that cause the trees to have extensive root systems. The trees take on a variety of shapes as dictated by the elements—dwarfed and gnarled where most exposed to wind and salty air, or taller and more upright in sheltered areas.

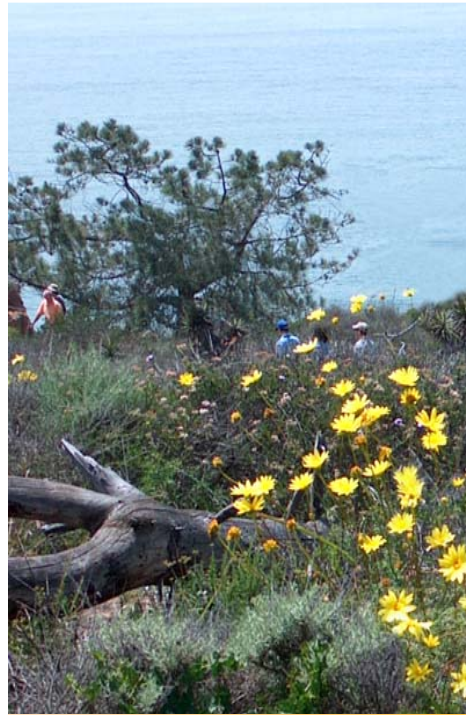
NATURAL PRESERVES

Two outstanding areas have been designated as Natural Preserves by the

State Park and Recreation Commission. Ellen Browning Scripps Natural Preserve is the area around Parry Grove and Guy Fleming trails. Los Peñasquitos Marsh Natural Preserve is one of the last remaining salt marsh areas and waterfowl refuges in southern



Sandstone cliffs



Wildflowers brighten the trails.

WILDLIFE

The intertidal zones are rich in sea life: limpets, shore crabs and hermit crabs, mussels, barnacles, sea anemones and various species of snails and shells. High above the sea, the bluffs offer excellent vantage points to watch the annual migration of gray whales. Dolphins, seals, sea lions and several species of porpoises may be seen year round.

About two hundred species of birds are protected at the reserve. Shore birds include brown and American white pelicans, black-bellied and snowy plovers, several species of gulls and terns, American avocets, western sandpipers, willets, whimbrels, sanderlings, great egrets and longbilled curlews. Farther inland western scrub jays,

California. The area is home to several rare and endangered species of birds and provides a vital stopping or nesting place for many migratory waterfowl. Portions of the reserve may be closed at times to allow the natural features to recuperate from abuse, overuse or natural disasters.

California quail, brown towhees, sparrows, Nuttall's woodpeckers, Anna's hummingbirds, ravens and mockingbirds are often found. Here brush rabbits and other small rodents are common, with occasional gray foxes, bobcats, coyotes, and mule deer. Reptile residents include rattlesnakes and a variety of other snakes, and several species of lizards, including the endangered horned lizard.

RECREATION

Trails

- 0.6-mile Guy Fleming Trail in the North Grove offers two scenic overlooks with panoramic views. This trail has the greatest variety of wildflowers, ferns, cacti and pine trees in the reserve.
- 0.4-mile Parry Grove Trail has dramatic ocean views, but most of the mature Torrey pines fell victim to a bark beetle infestation in the mid-1990s. A controlled burn has allowed natural revegetation and spectacular seasonal wildflowers. Steep stairs form the head of this trail.
- 0.1-mile High Point Trail offers a 360-degree panoramic view of the reserve and ocean.



Brown pelican



Visitor Center (Lodge) and Museum

- 0.7-mile Razor Point Trail meanders through coastal sage scrub, spectacular views of sculptured sandstone, gnarled trees and the surf 150 feet below. Yucca Point Overlook, accessed from both Razor Point and Beach Trails, features dramatic yucca flower displays in spring and stunning examples of sandstone erosion.
- 0.75-mile Beach Trail is a rustic footpath through the upper reserve to the beach 300 feet below.

- 1.3-mile Broken Hill Trail offers a beautiful view of eroding sandstone, and its north fork leads through Elfin Forest before connecting to Beach Trail near Flat Rock.
- 1.5-mile Marsh Trail goes along the southern edge of Los Penasquitos Marsh Natural Preserve. The trailhead is on the east side of North Torrey Pines Road opposite the South Beach parking lot.

Trails in the Extension

- 0.5-mile Mar Scenic Trail follows the seasonal creek through the extension.
- 0.5-mile Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Trail offers views across the marsh to the main reserve and to the ocean.
- 0.75-mile Margaret Fleming Nature Trail is a scenic walk through coastal sage scrub.
- 0.3-mile Red Ridge Loop Trail offers views of the lagoon, the main reserve, and spectacular geologic formations.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

- The visitor center (Lodge) features exhibits on local wildlife, flowers and geology, and offers a selection of interpretive publications.
- Free trail maps are available at the visitor center or at most trailheads.
- The reserve has two native plant gardens, one at the front of the visitor center, and another (the Whitaker Garden) at the Parry Grove trailhead.
- Call for information on school group activities and a teacher's guide.



Coastal horned lizard

- Information on park programs is available from the visitor center. Make group program requests at least two weeks in advance.
- Docent led nature hikes for individuals and families are scheduled at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on weekends and holidays (call to confirm).

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES ♿

- The visitor center is generally accessible. A captioned video is available. Nearby parking and restroom are accessible.
 - South Beach restroom and parking are accessible. Slope of path from lot may require assistance.
 - North Beach parking, restrooms and path to beach are usable with assistance.
 - A beach wheelchair is available.
 - Visitors with service animals should contact park staff upon arrival.
- Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details, call the park, or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.



Benches are sited at scenic locations.

Torrey Pines is a state reserve set aside to protect its natural and cultural resources. Help preserve this beautiful area.

- Stay on the trails. Walking off trail causes erosion, tramples plants and frightens animals.
- The cliffs are unstable and dangerous. Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- State laws protect all features in the reserve, including rocks, artifacts, flowers and pinecones.
- Picnicking is only permitted at the beach, not in the reserve or on the trails (water canteens are okay). Place all trash in receptacles provided.
- Smoking is permitted in the parking lots.
- Fires are prohibited. Personal portable barbecues are permitted only on the beach. Place hot coals in the hot coal containers provided.
- Dogs and horses are prohibited at the reserve and on the beach.
- All types of vehicles are prohibited on trails; bicycles may use only paved roads.
- Due to the sensitive ecological environment, it is occasionally necessary to limit the number of visitors by limiting the number of vehicles in the park. If the reserve is full, visitors may be asked to check back later or plan to visit another day.
- Park only in designated lots. Stopping on road shoulders is not permitted.



Torrey pine

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Cardiff State Beach, one mile south of Cardiff on old Highway 101 (760) 753-5091
- Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, San Diego and Twigg Streets (619) 220-5422
- San Elijo State Beach, in Cardiff on old Highway 101 (760) 753-5355/5091
- Carlsbad State Beach, in Carlsbad (760) 438-3143



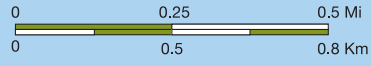
Torrey Pines State Beach

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact:

Torrey Pines Docent Society
P.O. Box 2414
Del Mar, CA 92014-1714
(858) 755-2063

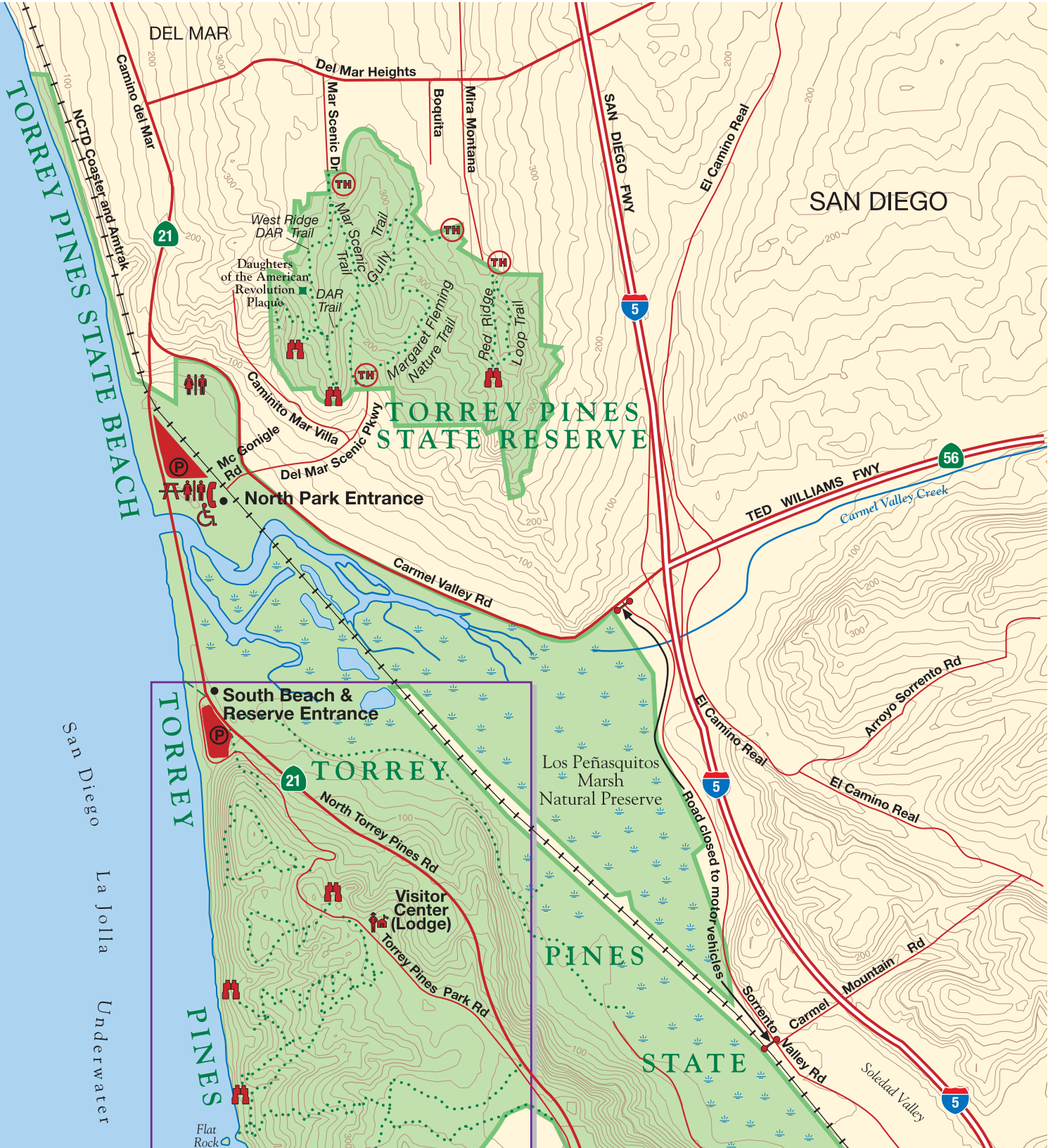
Torrey Pines

State Reserve/State Beach



Legend

- Paved road
- Paved trail
- Trail
- Railroad
- Accessible Feature
- Beach Stairway
- Locked Gate
- Marsh
- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Ranger Station
- Restrooms
- Telephone
- Trailhead
- Viewpoint



Pacific

San Diego
La Jolla
Underwater

SAN DIEGO

TORREY PINES STATE RESERVE

South Beach & Reserve Entrance

TORREY

PINES

STATE

TORREY PINES

TORREY

Visitor Center (Lodge)

Los Peñasquitos Marsh Natural Preserve

DEL MAR

Del Mar Heights

Mar Scenic Dr

Boguita

Mira Montana

SAN DIEGO FWY

El Camino Real

Canino del Mar

21

5

21

North Park Entrance

Mc Sorongie Rd

Del Mar Scenic Pkwy

Carmel Valley Rd

TED WILLIAMS FWY

56

Carmel Valley Creek

Aroyo Sorrento Rd

El Camino Real

5

El Camino Real

Sorrento Mountain Rd

Carmel Valley Rd

5

Soledad Valley

North Torrey Pines Rd

Torrey Pines Park Rd

Flat Rock



Flat Rock Beach Access see detail map below

Road closed to motor vehicles

0 0.25 Mi
0 0.2 0.4 Km

