

Fall Hikes 2009

Fall is a great time to discover the beauty and variety of California State Parks. To ensure your hike is enjoyable, it's important to wear proper shoes fit for hiking, wear a hat for sun protection, and bring drinking water. For a safe and pleasant outing, be sure to check the weather forecast.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

[CHINA CAMP STATE PARK](#) (MARIN COUNTY) has many trails including a short 3/4 mile gently rolling loop walk called the Turtle Back Nature Trail that is open only to foot traffic. The trail skirts the edge of an old island on the shore of San Pablo Bay. Today, pickleweed marsh has replaced open waters and the trail gives a close-up view of the salt marshes that harbor such endangered species as the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and the Clapper Rail, while the upland side of the trail reveals oaks, bays and grassland communities. For more information, call the park at (415) 456-0766.

[Links to other Northern California Hikes](#)

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

[PACHECO STATE PARK](#) (MERCED COUNTY) is a great destination for hikers. The trail up to Spike's Peak (2.5 miles) offers stunning views. Returning by way of the Pig Pond Trail takes hikers near the old adobe ruins of the original San Luis Gonzaga rancho, and a cowboy's line shack from the Miller & Lux era. Pacheco State Park is located between Los Baños and Gilroy on Highway 152 at Pacheco Pass. Take the Dinosaur Point Road exit south from the highway and turn right almost immediately at the park sign. For more information call the park at (209) 826-6283.

[Links to other Central California Hikes](#)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

[TORREY PINES STATE RESERVE](#) (SAN DIEGO COUNTY) has over six miles of trails, many with scenic views overlooking the beach. From Freeway 5, take the Carmel Valley Road exit and proceed west on Carmel Valley Road, turn left on Highway 101. The Guy Fleming Trail is a short, relatively easy hike that runs through Torrey Pine trees and associated chaparral. From the trail, hikers can enjoy spectacular sunsets in the evening. For more information call the park at (858) 755-2063.

[Links to other Southern California Hikes](#)

Visit California State Parks on line at <http://www.parks.ca.gov>