

Manchester

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 **(707) 937-5804**. If you need this publication in an alternate format, contact interp@parks.ca.gov.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Manchester State Park

44500 Kinney Road (Off Highway 1)

Manchester, CA 95459

(707) 937-5804 or 882-2463

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*Once a hazardous area
for shipwrecks and a home
for dairy ranches, this
park's rare dune habitat
and miles of sandy beach
offer visitors a magnificent
coastal retreat.*



Manchester State Park offers visitors one of the few remaining “wild” landscapes

along California’s northern coast. More than four miles of pristine beach backed by undulating dunes, wetlands, and coastal bluffs provide opportunities for recreation, exploration, and inspiration.

The park consists of 1,500 acres onshore, with a 3,782-acre adjacent underwater lease.

The mild coastal climate is generally cool, windy, and foggy. Temperatures range from winter lows in the high 30s to summer highs near 70 degrees.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

For centuries before European contact, the area surrounding Manchester was the territory of the Central Pomo. The local people were called the Bokeya Pomo; their village, *Pda’hau*, was near the mouth of the Garcia River. They, like other California Indians, were primarily self-sufficient, drawing from plentiful resources of the ocean, rivers, forests, and coastal shelf.

Early in the 1800s, Bokeya Pomo contact with Europeans was limited to the Russian colony at nearby Fort Ross. The mid-to-late 1800s saw a period of white settlement and development of towns, agriculture, and the logging industry within the Bokeya homeland. Efforts to resettle local Indian populations sent the Bokeya Pomo people to the Mendocino Indian Reservation near Fort Bragg. When the reservation was disbanded in 1867, the surviving people tried to return

to their native area. Much of their lands had been claimed by settlers, so the Pomo labored on farms or did seasonal work.

In 1936, with the approval of their constitution and bylaws, the Bokeya became the Manchester Band of Pomo Indians. They had jurisdiction over their rancheria land and operated a dairy business until 1959. While their participation in modern society has increased over the last 200 years, they still retain many of their traditional values, beliefs, and cultural identity.

Becoming a State Park

The William Barns Davis family owned land in this area during the mid-1870s. In 1930, California’s State Park Commission set aside 295 coastal acres for public recreation. In 1961, then-owner James Biaggi granted the State part of a dairy ranch built by Sylvanus Hoyt in the northern portion of today’s park. The combined land was named Manchester State Park in 1991.

In 1987, a 500-acre offshore section around Arena Rock was established as Arena Rock

Marine Natural Preserve. The area is now part of the larger Point Arena State Marine Reserve, created in 2010 by the statewide Marine Life Protection Act. The Act prohibits disturbance or collection of marine creatures.

Treacherous Arena Rock sits in about 100 feet of water off the southwestern tip of the park; its sedimentary top has a jutting vertical portion visible only at very low tide. Before the nearby Point Arena Lighthouse was built, six known shipwrecks were attributed to the hazards of Arena Rock. An additional 34 ships were presumed lost at sea in the area. The lighthouse exhibits some artifacts recovered from wrecks.

NATURAL HISTORY

Wildlife and Vegetation

Manchester State Park hosts rare and at-risk creatures in its wetland and coastal dune habitats. On land, tread carefully. Watch out for threatened snowy plovers

THIS STATE PARK IS HOME TO THREATENED WESTERN SNOWY PLOVERS.

Allowing any dog in an area where snowy plovers nest can cause the parent to use precious energy reserves to flee or seek cover—abandoning a nest with eggs or immature chicks and exposing them to predators and the elements. Staying a safe distance from sensitive species and their habitats is vitally important.



Western snowy plovers

on the beach, threatened red-legged frogs in the wetlands, and endangered Point Arena mountain beavers in coastal scrub and riparian areas.

The park hosts tundra swans in winter. Abalone and sea urchins attach to rocks underwater in the marine area. Colorful nudibranchs also brighten the underwater landscape. The endangered tidewater goby, a fish native to California, lives in the park's lagoons. Many shore birds and water birds stop to rest here during seasonal migrations.

Coastal wildflowers, such as sea pinks, California poppies, baby blue eyes, and wild irises, bloom in the spring. Both native and invasive beach grasses grow on the dunes.

Geology

The northernmost segment of California's 800-mile-long San Andreas Fault, separating the Pacific and North American tectonic plates, intersects a portion of Manchester State Park. Movement along the fault, naturally meandering stream outlets, and rising sea levels all contribute to the dramatic loss of sections along the coastal bluff.

RECREATION

Hiking, wildlife viewing, and enjoying the park's nearly five miles of beach are popular pastimes. Whales may be spotted offshore during the annual gray whale migration from December to April. Experienced, certified



scuba divers may dive from their boats near Arena Rock, part of the Point Arena State Marine Reserve. Shore diving in the turbulent water is not advised.

Camping—Nearly 40 family campsites and eight environmental sites are available first-come, first-served. The family sites can hold tents, trailers up to 22 feet, or RVs up to 30 feet long. The dune environmental campsites require a one-mile walk from the parking lot. Call (707) 937-5804 for environmental campsite conditions. The group campsite is limited to 40 people and 12 vehicles. Group camping reservations are recommended for weekends or summertime. To reserve the group site, call (800) 444-7275 or visit the website at www.parks.ca.gov.

Fishing—Steelhead may be caught in Brush Creek and Alder Creek. Please check with the Department of Fish and Wildlife for seasonal closures and restrictions at www.wildlife.ca.gov/regulations. All anglers 16 and over must possess a valid California fishing license.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

The main campground and day-use parking lot have accessible vault toilets. Accessibility in state parks is continually improving. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Except for service animals, dogs are allowed only in the campground. All dogs must be leashed and must be confined to a tent or vehicle at night
- All park features are protected by law and may not be disturbed or removed.
- Fires and vehicles are not allowed on the beach or dunes.
- Hang gliding and paragliding are not permitted at the park.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Hendy Woods State Park
18599 Philo-Greenwood Road
Philo 95466
(707) 937-5804 or 895-3141
- Schooner Gulch State Beach
Schooner Gulch Road at Highway 1
Point Arena 95468 (707) 937-5804

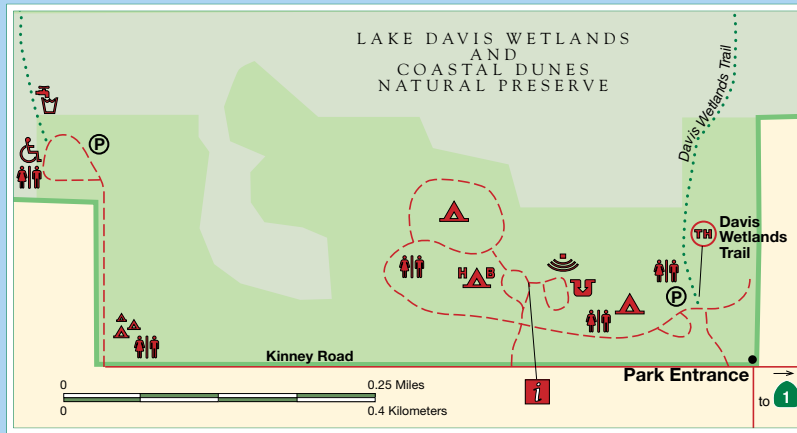
Manchester State Park

Legend

- Major Road
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Hiking Trail
- Natural Preserve
- State Marine Reserve

- Accessible Feature
- Campfire Center
- Campground
- Drinking Water
- Environmental Campground
- Group Campground
- Hike/Bike Campground
- Information/Self-Registration
- Marsh Area
- Parking
- Restroom
- RV Sanitation Station
- Trailhead

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This park receives support in part through the Mendocino Area Parks Association,
 P.O. Box 1387, Mendocino, CA 95460
www.mendoparks.org