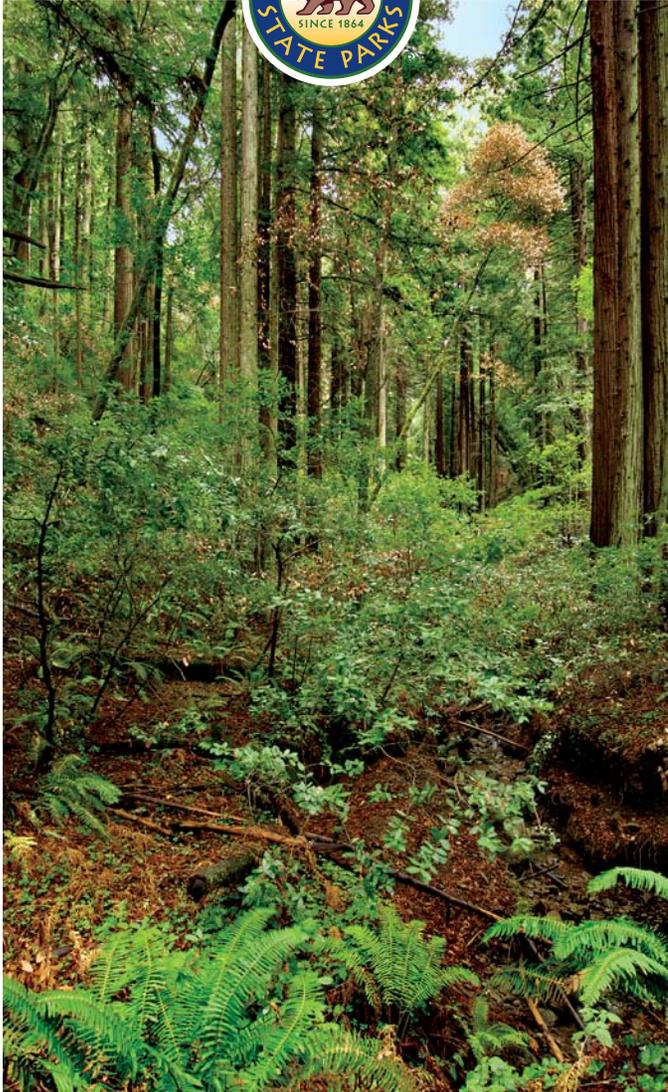


# Samuel P. Taylor State Park



## 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 can be made available in alternate formats. Contact [interp@parks.ca.gov](mailto:interp@parks.ca.gov) or call (916) 654-2249.

### CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Samuel P. Taylor State Park

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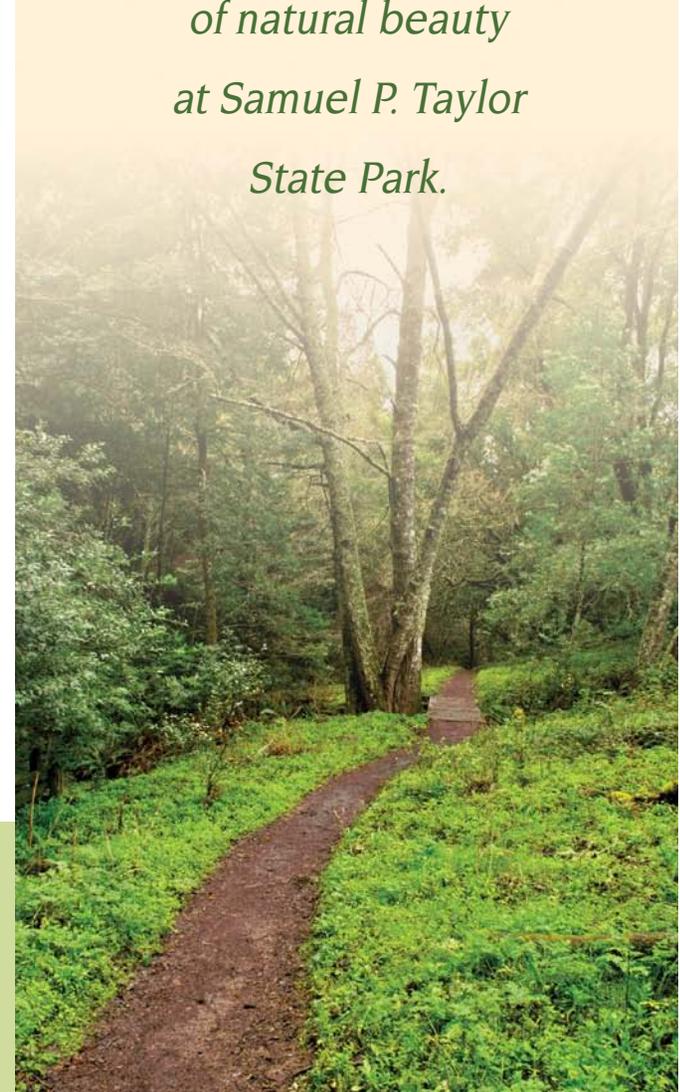
Lagunitas, CA 94938

(415) 488-9897

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

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



**S**amuel P. Taylor State Park's landscape ranges from shady canyon groves to oak-studded grasslands to the rolling hills atop Mount Barnabe. Nestled in the wooded countryside of west Marin County, the 2,882-acre park invites visitors to camp, bike, ride horses, and savor a piece of paradise.

This redwood forest community enjoys a mild climate varying 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.

### 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. The 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 and bay as well as the forests and bunchgrass-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



Samuel P. Taylor

into servitude. The land was taken over by Spanish and Mexican land grantees, and many Miwok tribespeople died from diseases introduced by the settlers. Modern-day Miwok descendants continue to live in Marin and surrounding counties.

#### Samuel P. Taylor

In 1849 the recent discovery of gold drew fortune seekers to California. Adventurous Samuel Penfield 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 two years later he left for Hawkins' Bar, Tuolumne County, to pan for gold. In 1852, Taylor shipped just over 21 pounds of gold dust to his San Francisco bankers; the gold dust netted Taylor \$5,691.99.

With the money he earned, Taylor and some partners opened a lumberyard in San Francisco. Searching for lumber sources, Taylor found and purchased 100 acres in western Marin County from Mexican land grantee Rafael Garcia. There, Taylor opened the first paper mill on the west coast. The Pioneer Paper Mill Company grew rapidly due to the demand for paper and the expense of importing it from the east.

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 established the bustling town of Taylorville with campsites and a hotel to serve travelers who could stop and spend a few days in the wilderness. 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, one of California's first recreational camping sites. Taylorville became one of northern California's most popular weekend recreation areas during the late 1870s and the 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. Oak and madrone hardwoods dominate the park's grasslands.



Pioneer Paper Mill

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, raccoons and skunks are common. Coyotes, bobcats and gray foxes may be spotted; badgers 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 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.

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.

### RECREATION

#### Trails

The park offers a wide network of fire roads; hiking, nature, and equestrian trails also wind through the park.



*California freshwater shrimp*

The scenic, paved Cross Marin Trail follows the historic North Pacific Coast Railroad right-of-way and has no vehicular traffic.

#### Camping

The main campground has about 60 family campsites with restrooms, hot showers and piped drinking water. Some parking spaces can accommodate small trailers, but none have hookups.

The Madrone Group Camp can be reserved for up to 50 people. Four cozy cabins at Madrone each hold up to 5 people. There are three sites at Devil's Gulch. Two tent-only sites can each accommodate up to 10 people. The larger equestrian campsite has a corral, hitching racks and water troughs; it can accommodate up to 20 people.

To reserve a site or rent a cabin, call (800) 444-7275 or visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

#### Picnicking

The park's main picnic area sits in a shady grove along Lagunitas 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 or visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

**ACCESSIBLE FEATURES**   
Accessible campsites, parking, and restrooms with showers are



*Lagunitas (Papermill) Creek*

located in the Creekside and Orchard Hill camping loops and Azalea picnic area. Two Madrone cabins are wheelchair-accessible. The Cross Marin Trail is paved for three 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 disturbed.
- Firearms and hunting are prohibited.
- Dogs (except for service animals) are permitted only in campgrounds, picnic areas, paved trails/roads and the Cross Marin Trail. Pets must be on a six-foot-maximum leash and confined to a tent or vehicle at night.
- 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.

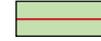
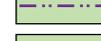


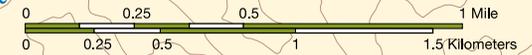
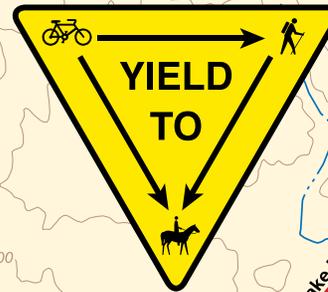
### NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Mount Tamalpais State Park  
3801 Panorama Highway, Mill Valley 94941  
(415) 388-2070
- China Camp State Park  
From Hwy. 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/Horse
-  Unpaved Trail: Hike
-  Unpaved Trail: Hike & Horse
-  Multi-Use Trail: Hike/Bike/Horse
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Golden Gate National Recreation Area
-  Bridge
-  Campground
-  Cabins
-  Dogs Allowed on Leash
-  Group Campground
-  Group Picnic Area
-  Horse Campground
-  Locked Gate
-  Parking
-  Picnic Area
-  Ranger Station
-  Restrooms
-  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  
[www.marinstateparks.org](http://www.marinstateparks.org)

