

The California poppy, *Eschscholtzia californica*, was named at that time.

The area came under somewhat more definite Spanish control in 1770 when Captain Gaspar de Portola and Father Junipero Serra established a mission and presidio at Monterey to serve the Spanish province of Alta California. Land in the immediate vicinity of Point Reyes was granted to individuals during the 1830s and 1840s by the governors of Mexican California. These land grants were later sold and re-sold to subsequent owners until 1880 when the village of Inverness was established, primarily as a summer vacation spot. Since that time the sunny beaches of Tomales Bay have attracted Bay Area residents for day-time outings, and summer homes have been built overlooking the bay. The more exposed portions of the peninsula west of the ridge continue to be used for dairying.

Despite its attractiveness, most of the Tomales Bay area lay untouched until the late-1940s when real estate developers began to purchase large tracts of beachfront land. Local residents, who had enjoyed these beaches for many years, feared they would be closed to public use. The Tomales Bay Beaches Committee was formed for the purpose of securing the land for park purposes. The Marin Conservation League adopted the project and, working with the Sierra Club, Alpine Club, Tamalpais Conservation League, Marin Nature Group, several garden clubs and other organizations, and with help from the state, finally succeeded in purchasing portions of the area.

The Marin Conservation League then went on to collect funds enough to acquire a grove of rare Bishop Pines, which they named in honor of Willis Linn Jepson the world-famous botanist from the University of California at Berkeley. Finally, on November 8, 1952, Tomales Bay State Park, comprising over a thousand acres, was formally dedicated and opened to the public.

The Beaches

Four gently sloping, surf-free beaches on the shore of Tomales Bay are the primary recreational attraction within the park. Heart's Desire Beach features piped drinking water, a picnic area with fire places, dressing rooms, flush toilets and automobile parking. Pebble and Shell Beach are less developed and can be reached by way of short, gentle trails. Shell Beach can also be reached by way of Camino del Mar, which leaves Sir Francis Drake Boulevard three-tenths of a mile north of Inverness. Picnicking, swimming, hiking, clamming, and boating are popular activities within the park.

Lifeguard service is not available, but the shoreline is very gentle and features shallow areas suitable for wading and waterplay. There are no boat-launching facilities, but hand-carried boats may be put in the water away from the swimming areas. Boaters are welcome to land on the beaches provided they stay clear of the well-marked swimming areas.

Tomales Bay State Park
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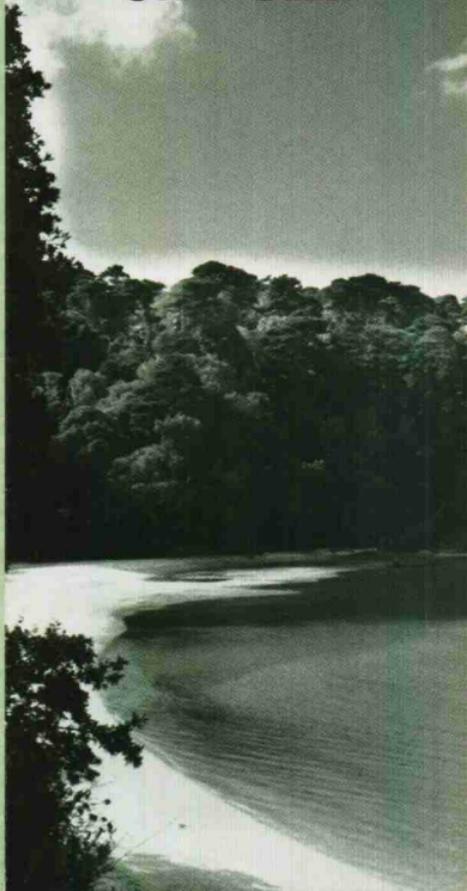
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TOMALES BAY State Park



The pine forests and gentle beaches of Tomales Bay State Park are located on the eastern edge of the Point Reyes Peninsula just forty miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge. Easily accessible from the entire San Francisco Bay Region, the park offers both pleasant upland hiking opportunities and a number of secluded beaches that are ideal for family outings. The beaches and east-facing slopes of this area are especially pleasant because they are protected from the prevailing winds by Inverness Ridge—the high backbone of the Point Reyes Peninsula. The little community of Inverness is nearby as are the many attractions of Point Reyes National Seashore.

Geology

The geology of the Point Reyes Peninsula is both interesting and amazing. The whole 100-square-mile area is separated from the continent by a great rift in the crust of the earth, the San Andreas Fault, and is drifting northwestward at a rate of about two inches a year. In the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, the greatest measured displacement along the entire fault was at the head of Tomales Bay where the area west of the fault moved an astounding twenty feet in relation to the land on the east side of the fault.

Geologists now believe that the Point Reyes Peninsula was once part of a great land mass known as Salinia. Today, however, the only parts of Salinia that remain above sea level are Point Reyes and the Farallon Islands. Some geologists argue that movement along the fault has amounted to several miles. Others point out that the granite bedrock of the peninsula and of the Farallons, is unlike any nearby granite formations found east of the fault.

The nearest granite on the east face of the fault that does match that of the Point Reyes Peninsula is in the Tehachapi Mountains more than 300 miles to the southeast. It may seem incredible that the peninsula could have moved so far, but a movement of two inches per year for ten million years would accomplish the job.

Plant Life

The park is a lush wilderness of forests, beaches, fields, hills, meadows, and marshes, each with its own plant life. Among the most prominent trees are the Bishop pine, madrone, California laurel, oaks, red and white alders, willow and buckeye. A number of shrubs also grow to tree size including several varieties of ceanothus and manzanita. Other interesting shrubs within the park include chinquapin, toyon, hazel, huckleberry, gooseberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry, purple and red elderberry, honeysuckle, oso berry, mountain mahogany and the very rare western leatherwood. Ferns line the beaches and grace the wooded areas, including woodwardia, sword, deer, bracken, five-finger, maidenhair, gold-back,

lady, polypodium, lace, grapefern, and waterfern.

Wildflowers brighten the countryside with splashes of vivid color during the Spring and attract both botanists and flower lovers from great distances. There are many kinds of lilies, fritillaria with colors from the rare white to bronze and chocolate, poppy, wild strawberry, many varieties of lupine, iris from pure white through deep violet shades, four varieties of mimulus or monkey flower, reinorchis, yellow and purple violets, yellow pansy, pussy's ears, trillium (sometimes as much as three feet tall), hound's tongue, slim solomon, fairy bells, columbine, red and blue larkspur, bleeding hearts, western wallflower, rosy arabis, aralia, paintbrush, and heliotrope. The grasses and sedges are a study in themselves.

Bishop Pine

One of the finest remaining virgin groves of Bishop pine in California is preserved in the Jepson Memorial Grove. Smaller than most other pines, and often rather craggy in appearance or shaped by the wind, they are a close relative of the Monterey pine. They belong to a group of "closed cone pines" that have survived through the centuries by adapting to the hard realities of wildfire. The tightly sealed and rather prickly cones retain their seeds until opened by heat. As a result, seeds are dispersed only when the pines are burned or the cones subjected to extreme heat. The grove can be reached by way of a one-mile-long trail.

Wildlife

Wildlife abounds in this country. Foxes, raccoons, badgers, weasels, chipmunks, squirrels, rabbits, deer, occasional bobcats, skunks, wood-rats, field mice, moles and other animals inhabit the area. Legend has it that the last band of Roosevelt elk in Marin County swam across Tomales Bay in a mass migration during the early 1860s and headed north. Grizzly and black bears also roamed the area until about that time.

Ornithologists and birdwatchers come to study the numerous species of land and sea birds. These include the rare spotted owl, band-tailed pigeons, quail, thrush, horned larks, goldfinches, summer warblers, large and small rails, puffins, murre, the great blue heron, sandhill cranes, towhees, ravens, pelicans, pelagic cormorants, ruddy ducks, geese, scoters, grebes, bitterns, flickers, woodpeckers, meadowlarks, kingfishers, pigmy nuthatches and many others.

Gopher snakes, rubber boas, garter snakes, and ringneck snakes are to be found. Lizards and a wide array of fascinating insects can also be seen including monarch butterflies.

Several varieties of clam live in the beach areas, and there are jelly-fish, crabs, and other interesting small sea animals to be seen on or near the beaches. The bay contains sharks and rays as well as many other kinds of fish.



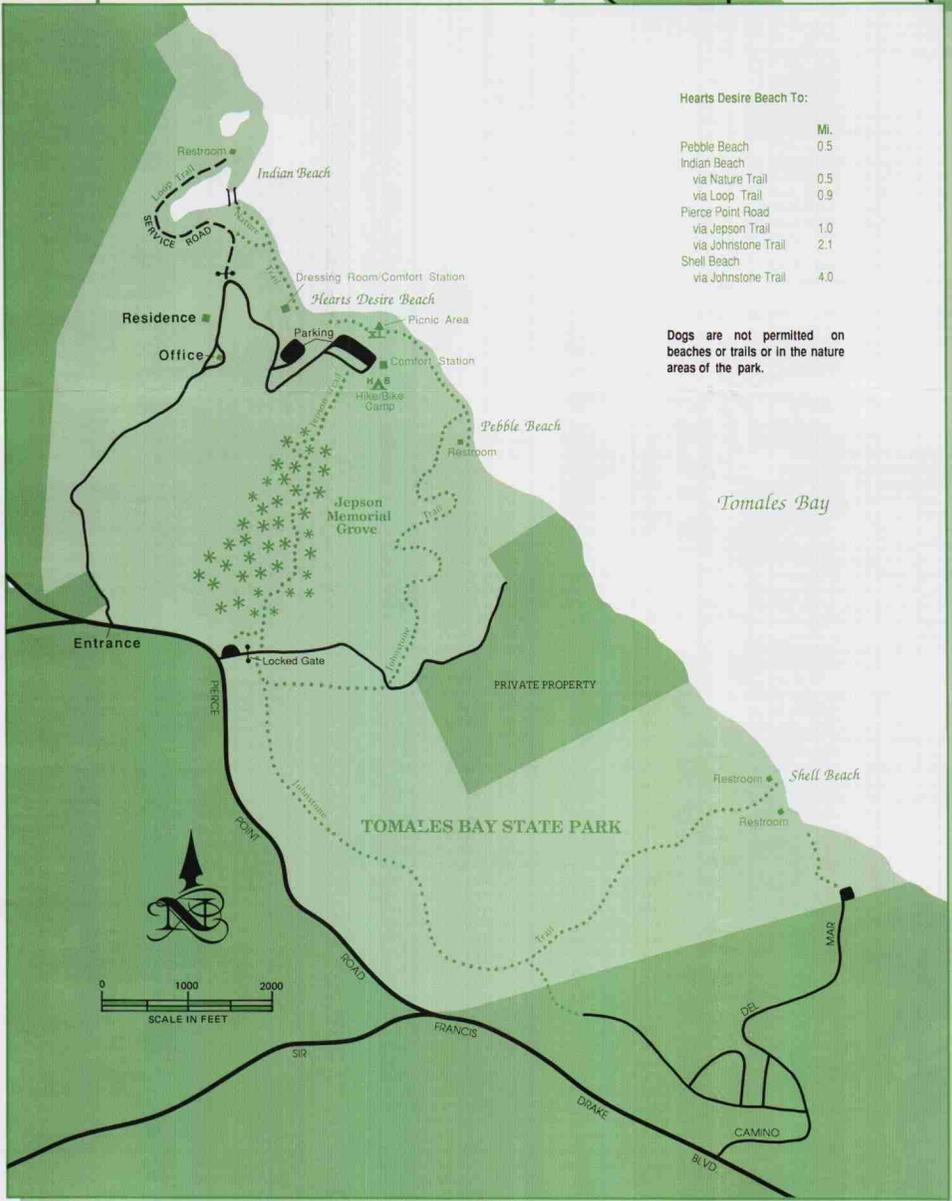
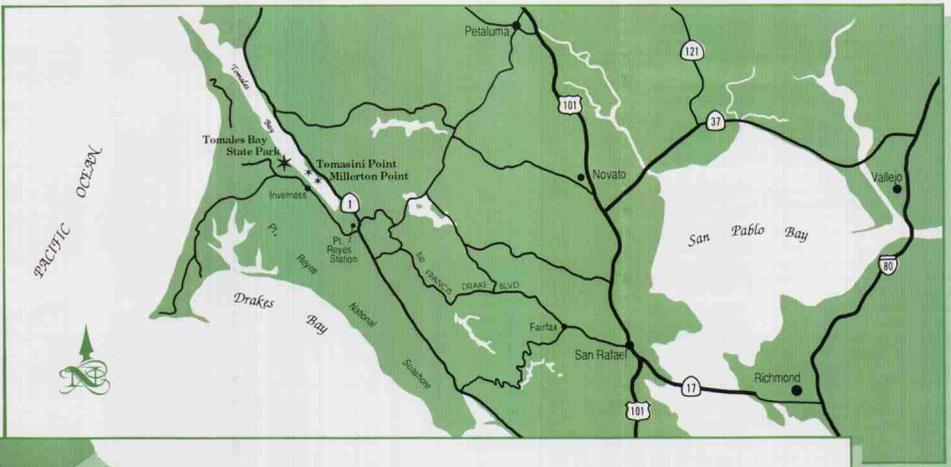
Great Blue Heron

History

The Coast Miwok Indians lived in the Marin and Sonoma County area for many centuries prior to the arrival of European explorers and settlers. They made their living by hunting, gathering, and fishing. In fact, seafood made up a significant portion of their diet and several villages or seasonal residence areas were located on the shore of Tomales Bay. Within the park, in order to help people visualize the Miwok way of life, a self-guiding nature trail features Native American uses of native plants.

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a Portuguese navigator operating under the flag of Imperial Spain, brought the first European exploratory expedition to this part of the Pacific Coast in 1542. He and his men sailed north as far as Cape Mendocino but did not come ashore anywhere in Northern California. In 1579, Sir Francis Drake beached and repaired his ship, the *Golden Hind*, somewhere along the Marin County Shoreline. He named the land Nova Albion (New England) and, in the name of Queen Elizabeth, laid claim to the entire area for England. On November 30, 1595, a treasure-laden Manila galleon, the *San Agustín*, under the command of Sebastian Cermeño, attempted to anchor in Drake's Bay but was driven ashore and wrecked by a heavy squall.

Russian and German scientists including Adelbert von Chamisso and Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz explored the area in 1816 and identified many plant species that were previously unknown to botanists.



Hearts Desire Beach To:

	Mi.
Pebble Beach	0.5
Indian Beach	
via Nature Trail	0.5
via Loop Trail	0.9
Pierce Point Road	1.0
via Jepson Trail	2.1
via Johnstone Trail	2.1
Shell Beach	
via Johnstone Trail	4.0

Dogs are not permitted on beaches or trails or in the nature areas of the park.

