

Palomar Mountain 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 **(760) 742-3462**. If you need this publication in an alternate format, contact **interp@parks.ca.gov**.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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Palomar Mountain State Park

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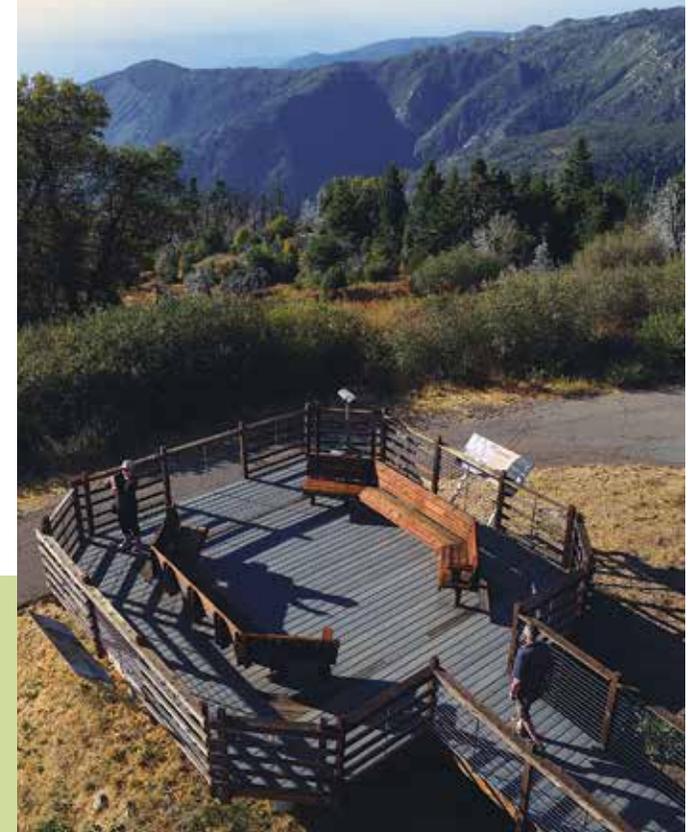
Palomar, CA 92060

(760) 742-3462

www.parks.ca.gov/palomarmountain

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*Enjoy a commanding
view of scenic vistas
from Palomar Mountain
State Park's Boucher
Hill, or hike along forest-
covered ridges, valleys,
and grassy meadows.*



Palomar Mountain State Park features

1,862 acres of pristine forest, peaceful meadows, and pleasing panoramas of northern San Diego County. Visitors can camp, hike, fish, picnic, and relax in nature. In summer, temperatures average a balmy 80 degrees. Winters bring snow to the park, with freezing temperatures that can dip below 30 degrees. Spring and autumn are moderate.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

Over millennia, what is now called Palomar Mountain was used by many local native groups—likely the Cupeño, Ipai, and Serrano people. However, the mountain stands in traditional Luiseño territory. They maintained seasonal villages on the mountain, where they hunted game and gathered acorns and other seed crops. The Pechanga Luiseño called the mountain *Pa'áaw* (pah-OW), and the area of Pauma Luiseño summer encampments (now within the park's boundaries) was known as *Wavimai*. The Luiseño people named the village site at Cedar Grove *Pee-nav-angña* and what is now Doane Valley was called *O-us-koon*, meaning “wild lilac.”

Luiseño grinding rock



Boucher Hill Fire Lookout Tower

Colonization

Spanish colonists established Mission San Luis Rey in 1798, in what is now Oceanside. The missionaries called the blue mountain range “Sierra de Palomar.”

Native Californians from the surrounding area, renamed Luiseño after Mission San Luis Rey, were brought to the mission to work. An unfamiliar diet and epidemic diseases carried by Spanish émigrés killed great numbers of native people.

Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821. Through the 1833 Secularization Act, former mission lands were to be distributed among the surviving native people who had labored at the missions. Instead, large tracts (*ranchos*) were granted to Mexican citizens. Native people either attempted to return to their homes or worked on the ranchos. Many were forcibly moved to the Temecula Valley. Today's Luiseño people work to

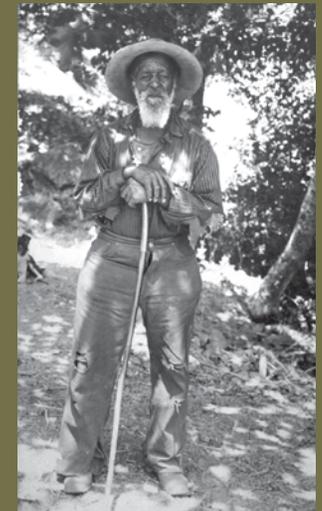
honor and restore their ancient languages and culture.

The United States gained control of California in 1848. Palomar Mountain remained a wild place for many years. The mountain was sparsely populated with native people and some homesteaders. Settlers, such as George Edwin Doane—for whom Doane Valley is named—raised livestock, grew hay, and planted apple orchards. Some of these apple trees still bear fruit today.

Palomar Mountain State Park was created in 1933 during the Great Depression. Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) members—young men employed by the federal government to help lower unemployment—built many of the roads, trails and picnic facilities still used in the park today.

NATHANIEL HARRISON

In the 1880s, “Nate” Harrison, a former slave who came to California during the Gold Rush, made remote Palomar Mountain his home. Harrison grew hay and raised hogs near the eastern edge of today's park. He died in 1920, reportedly living to the age of 101. The park's Nate Harrison Grade Road is named for him.





Fishing at Doane Pond

NATURAL HISTORY

Palomar Mountain's average 5,000-foot elevation features mixed conifer forest and meadows, uncommon in Southern California.

On the trails winding through the 450-acre Doane Valley Natural Preserve, hikers pass white fir, incense cedar and big-cone Douglas-fir trees that provide ample shade. Flowering trees and shrubs in meadowlands and streamside riparian areas blanket the mountain with color each spring. Western dogwoods, azaleas, and lilies blossom, while lupine and penstemon poke through native meadow grasses.

Such bird species as western bluebirds, woodpeckers, and red-shouldered hawks make this a birder's haven. Predators such as gray foxes, coyotes, and bobcats may be spotted. Easier to see are southern mule deer and gray squirrels.

Boucher Hill Fire Lookout Tower

The mountain has a long history of devastating wildfires, many caused by lightning. The Boucher Hill Fire Lookout Tower, at 5,400 feet elevation,

overlooks the Pauma Valley. The first fire lookout tower here was erected in 1935, and this restored tower was built in 1948.

The Boucher Hill Fire Lookout Tower is available for guided tours when volunteers are available, unless fire-spotting is needed. Boucher Hill also features a nearby accessible view deck with a panorama of the Pauma Valley below.

RECREATION

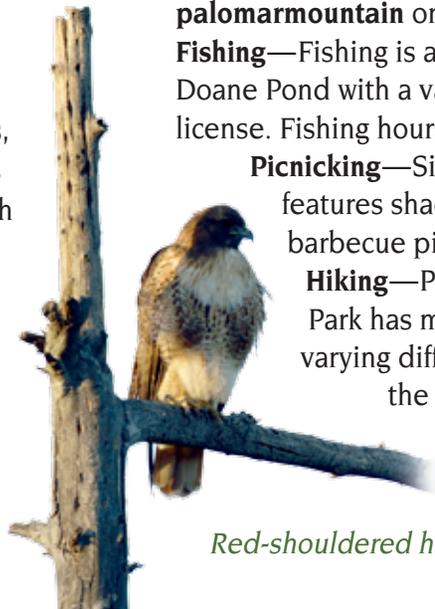
Camping—Doane Valley Campground has 31 family campsites. Each site has a table, fire ring, barbecue, and food locker. Restrooms and piped drinking water are available nearby.

Group Campgrounds—The Cedar Grove Group Campground has three areas for groups. Group Camp #1 is suitable for trailers and camper vans up to 21 feet in length and up to 25 people; two other group sites can accommodate up to 15 people for tent camping only. Reserve all campsites in advance at www.parks.ca.gov/palomarmountain or call (800) 444-7275.

Fishing—Fishing is available year round at Doane Pond with a valid California fishing license. Fishing hours are 6 a.m. to sunset.

Picnicking—Silvercrest picnic area features shaded picnic tables, barbecue pits, and restrooms.

Hiking—Palomar Mountain State Park has multiple hiking trails of varying difficulties. Please consult the map for hiking routes, use caution, and stay on the trails.



Red-shouldered hawk

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Three sites at the Doane Valley Campground and one at the Cedar Grove Group Camp #1 are designated accessible. Restrooms, the Silvercrest day-use area, and the Boucher Hill view deck are accessible.

Accessibility is continually improving. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park
15808 San Pasqual Valley Road
Escondido 92027 (760) 737-2201
- Carlsbad State Beach
7201 Carlsbad Boulevard, Carlsbad 92008
(769) 438-3143

This park is supported in part through the Friends of Palomar Mountain State Park
P.O. Box 91, Palomar, CA 92060
(951) 265-6385
www.friendsofpalomarsp.org

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Except for service animals, dogs are not allowed on unpaved trails. Dogs are welcome on leash in campgrounds and on paved trails, but they must be confined in a tent or vehicle at night.
- Firewood is sold at the camp host site or kiosk. Please contain fires to designated barbecues and fire rings.
- All natural and cultural features of Palomar Mountain State Park are protected by law and may not be disturbed or removed.
- Quiet hours are from 10 p.m. until 6 a.m. Generator use is not allowed from 8 p.m. until 10 a.m.

