



News Release

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Contact:
Terry Kiser
Supervising Ranger
Terry.Kiser@parks.ca.gov
(831) 335-8364

Elephant Seal Guided Walks at Año Nuevo State Park

PESCADERO, Calif. – Reservations for guided walks to see [elephant seals](#) at Año Nuevo State Park will be accepted beginning with school reservations on Saturday, October 3. The first tours to see these majestic animals begin on December 15 through Mar. 31, 2016.

Año Nuevo State Park is home to one of the largest mainland Northern Elephant Seal colonies in the world. Adult seals begin arriving on the beaches by early December.

Bulls weighing up to 5,000 pounds engage in battles for breeding access to the females. Pregnant females come ashore to have pups beginning in mid-December, with births reaching a peak by late January. Mothers nurse their pups for about a month before weaning them, mating, and departing back to sea. Birthing and mating activity is constant from January through February. During March, hundreds of weaned pups remain behind to rest in the dunes and learn to swim in the tide pools.

State Parks volunteer docents lead visitors among the huge marine mammals and explain both the story of the elephant seals and the natural and cultural history of the area. Reservations are recommended for these popular guided walks including Public Seal Walks, School Group Walks and Equal Access Guided Walks.

Reservations can be made online through [Reserve America](#) or by calling (800) 444-4445. The public is encouraged to visit the park's website, www.parks.ca.gov/anonuevo, to help plan their trips to this extraordinary state park.

Below is information on the guided walks and general information on the park:



School Group Walks

- **Type:** School groups, grades 1-12.
- **Cost:** \$21.00 each. Allows entry for up to 20 students with two adult chaperones. One chaperone is required for every 10 youth age 17 years or under.
- **Tour Info:** School group walks offered Monday through Friday.
- **Parking:** No parking fee for school groups that arrive by school bus or individual cars.
- **Reservations:** Beginning at 9 a.m. on Saturday, October 3 for any dates during the season. There is a limit of four (4) school group walk tickets per order.

Public Seal Walks

- **Type:** Families, individuals or groups.
- **Cost:** \$7.00 per person. Children 3 and under are free.
- **Tour Info:**
 - These popular three-mile walks over rolling sand dunes and sloping terrain last about two and one-half hours and are considered moderately strenuous.
 - First guided walk of every day will begin at approximately 8:45 a.m. and the last walk at 2:45 p.m. Each walk will begin on time. Visitors who are late will forfeit their reservations.
- **Weather:** Guided walks are conducted rain or shine. Visitors should prepare for an outdoor hiking adventure that may include high winds, heavy rains and cold temperatures. Recommended clothing includes hooded rain gear, layered clothing and sturdy walking shoes.
- **Reservations:** Can be made up to 56 days in advance beginning October 20.

Equal Access Guided Walks

- **Type:** Walks available on an accessible boardwalk for visitors needing mobility assistance.
- **Cost:** \$7.00 per person.
- **Tour Info:** Fridays, weekends and select holidays from mid-December through mid-March.
- **Reservations:** Reservations required. For reservations and information, please e-mail ano.equalaccess@parks.ca.gov starting November 1 or call (650) 879-2033.

Seal Adventure Weekend

- **Type:** General public and California State Parks Association members.
- **Cost:** \$60 per person. The number of tickets is limited; only 100 visitors will be allowed to register for each half-day session.
- **Tour Info:** Visitors will have access to linger for an entire morning (8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.) or afternoon (1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.) to view the elephant seals at the peak of the breeding season. Visit the association's [website](#) for further information.
- **Reservations:** Available for sale online, www.CoastsideStateParks.org, starting in early November for California State Parks Association members and late November for the general public.



General Information on Park

- **Location:** The park is located west of Highway 1, between the cities of Santa Cruz and Half Moon Bay, approximately a 1 ½ hour drive south from San Francisco.
- **Parking:** Day use parking is \$10.00 per car.
- **Safety:** For safety reasons, use of umbrellas and baby strollers are not permitted on the walks.
- **Amenities:** Food and beverages are not sold at the park, but picnic tables are available for use before or after guided walks. It is advisable to bring bottled drinking water on the tour.
- **Closure Dates:** No public walks will be held on Christmas Day (December 25) or during Seal Adventure (Saturday, January 30 and Sunday, January 31, 2016).

For more information on the elephant seals, the guided walk program and other features of the park, please call (650) 879-2025 or (650) 879-0227 for recorded information. The public is also encouraged to visit the park's website at www.parks.ca.gov/anonuevo or their [Facebook page](#).

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About California's Drought

California has been dealing with the effects of drought. To learn about all the actions the state has taken to manage our water system and cope with the impacts of the drought, visit Drought.CA.Gov.

Every Californian should take steps to conserve water at home, at work and even when recreating outdoors. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

California State Parks Mission

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.

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