

Climate & Vegetation

Fair, sunny days, occasional winter rains, and dry summers moderated by fog characterize central California's coastal climate. Most plant growth occurs during winter and spring when the ground is moist. To prevent water loss during the arid summer and fall, drought-tolerant plants drop their older and drier leaves. At that time, danger of wildfire is high.



Adapted to a frost-free environment, most shrubs and trees, including the Coast Live Oak, remain green year round. A notable exception is one of the most abundant shrubs in the Reserve — Poison Oak, which drops its bronzy fall foliage to reveal bare winter stems. Pinkish, pale green spring leaves turn bright green in summer. The leaflets grow in groups of three and have a waxy sheen. In any season, the oils of this plant can cause a blistering, red skin rash.

The Monterey Pine is found growing naturally in only three areas of the coast where its seedlings can survive because fog-drip compensates for the rain-free summer. It has needles in bundles of three, and lopsided, pear-shaped cones. In a crowded forest, the pines grow tall and narrow, their rounded tops competing for sunlight. Single mature trees will appear stark, solid and massive. Considered the most important cultivated tree in the world today, the Monterey Pine is grown for timber in extensive plantations in New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa.

The Monterey Cypress is the Reserve's most celebrated tree. Gnarled, buttressed trunks and contorted branches reveal how it has adapted to survive on these outermost granite cliffs at the continent's edge. Notice that its tiny, overlapping, scaly leaves and walnut-sized cones distinguish it from the pine. The Monterey Cypress cannot be cultivated successfully away from the cool, moist sea breeze, for it succumbs to a fungus disease. This cypress and the Monterey Pine require heat or fire to release seeds from their cones. (See Cypress Grove Trail, other side.)

Between the woods and the sea, dense head-high stands of evergreen shrubs create an interplay of texture, color, and fragrance. The Sticky Monkey-flower, with its apricot-colored blossoms, is in bloom year round. Blue Blossom, one of the numerous species of California's wild lilacs, forms clusters of fragrant, tiny blue flowers in late winter. California Sagebrush has finely divided, gray-green aromatic leaves. Lizard Tail bears dense heads of tiny, bright yellow daisies that seem to glow in the subdued light of summer fog.

Closer to the sea and at the mercy of salt spray and wind, plants grow low in the thin soil and hug the slopes. Lavender heads of Seaside Daisy bloom from April until late fall. On rocky cliff faces, clustered rosettes of Bluff Lettuce cling in crevices. This succulent has thick, gray-green leaves that seem to be dusted with flour. In the summer, it has pale yellow, lantern-shaped flowers that open atop a reddish spike.

Grassy meadows are sprinkled with many delicate wildflowers. White clusters of small, six-pointed flowers of Star Zigadene signal "spring" in February. Other species create a changing palette throughout the year. An illustrated booklet describes the Reserve's wildflowers in more detail.

Below the cliffs, in and beyond the surf, marine algae anchor to the rocks by means of a special structure called a holdfast. These seaweeds have no true roots, but absorb nutrients from the water directly into their cells. Bull Kelp has rounded, gas-filled floats, which are six inches across and which are often mistaken for a Sea Otter's head. Giant Kelp, distinguished by its flat wrinkled blades and finger-sized floats, is shown here. It forms extensive floating canopies that sway in rhythm with the sea's ebb and flow.

At low tide, the visitor may examine the tremendous diversity of this group of plants. Careful! Rocks covered with algae are very slippery.

The Reserve Underwater

Half of the Reserve is all you see unless you're a diver and visit the underwater world just offshore. This is one of the richest underwater habitats in California. Its animals and plants are fully protected by state law from any disturbance.

The Underwater Reserve owes its richness to a combination of weather and location. In spring and summer, prevailing northwesterly winds drive surface water out to sea. The void is filled by mineral-rich water upwelling from the depths of submarine canyons. The bottom of Carmel Bay drops off at a steep rate from Monastery Beach. One mile north of the Reserve, this canyon becomes 1,000 feet deep, continues to drop in a northwest line, and joins with Monterey Bay's submarine canyon about six miles offshore, at a depth of 7,000 feet.

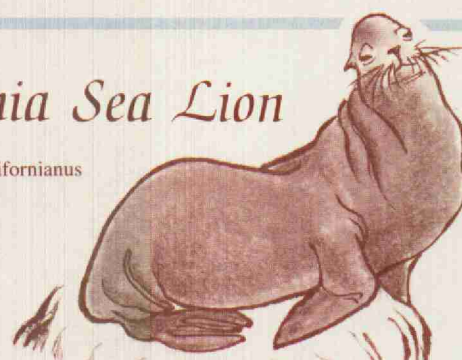
Upwelled nutrients are used in the photosynthetic process by tiny floating plant life called phytoplankton. Their abundance provides the basis of a food pyramid that supports an amazing number and variety of animals. Two water temperature zones meet and overlap on the central California coast. Animals and plants from both warmer and colder waters account for the large number of species found here.

Divers explore a realm of beauty that until this century was inaccessible except to a handful of pioneers. In the subdued light of the 100-foot-high kelp forests, animals without backbones and plants without roots create a world of vibrant color. Lingcod, cabezone and rockfish swim in and out of view. The unexpected appearance of a seal, an otter, or a whale quickens the heart.

To obtain permission to dive in the Reserve, teams of two divers each must show proof of certification, register at the Ranger Station, and abide by current posted regulations. The number of teams is limited and diving is restricted to Whalers and Bluefish Coves.

California Sea Lion

Zalophus californianus



The noisy, gregarious animals on rocks offshore from Sea Lion Point are California Sea Lions. At Point Lobos the population is composed mostly of adult males and subadults of both sexes. Adult males can attain a length over eight feet and weigh up to 800 pounds. Their general color is dark brown, or black when wet. They move around fairly well on land by using all four flippers to push themselves along. Most adults leave the Reserve in June and July to join females in rookeries extending from the Channel Islands south.

The name "Point Lobos" refers to these animals and to their barking. The earlier Spanish name was "Punta de los Lobos Marinos" — translating to "Point of the Sea Wolves."

The larger Steller Sea Lion, *Eumetopias jubatus*, once numerous in this area, has seldom been seen here since 1972.

Harbor Seal

Phoca vitulina



Harbor Seals are much smaller than Sea Lions and look like swollen cigars five to six feet long. The color varies from light gray or tan

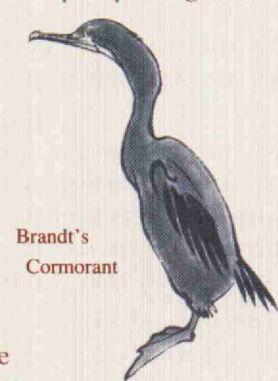
to almost black, and they are nearly always spotted. Unlike Sea Lions, their ears are not visible, and the short rear flippers, which point away from the body, are unsuited for moving about on land. These usually silent animals frequently bask on rocks just above the water where a quick getaway is possible. Harbor Seals live here all year. Their pups, born on shoreline rocks in April and May, can swim almost from birth and require only a few weeks of maternal care.

Some Other Notables

The Reserve's bountiful natural resources attract birds of the forest, meadow, shore, and sea. Many birds, such as the slate-backed Western Gull, are here all year, while others are winter or summer visitors. Some birds stop here only during migration.

The first bird you will probably notice will be the White-crowned Sparrow, found near open parking areas. Please do not feed these birds.

The long-necked, all-black sea birds are cormorants. Two species nest here — the Brandt's Cormorant, which forms a large colony on Bird Island, and the Pelagic Cormorant, which nests in small groups down the sides of cliffs and rocks.



A series of high-pitched, loud calls coming from the shoreline rocks may focus attention on another black bird. It is the American Black Oystercatcher, with its bright red bill, which it uses to chisel open shellfish found on rocks exposed at low tide.

The Brown Pelican nests further south in the spring, but is seen here the rest of the year.

The land mammals of the Reserve most likely to be seen during daylight hours are Black-tailed Deer in pine woods or at the edges of meadows; bushy-tailed Western Gray Squirrels in the pines; Beechey Ground Squirrels near shoreline vegetation and rocks; and white-tailed Brush Rabbits in the open, but never far from protective shrubs.

From time to time, a Northern Elephant Seal, *Mirovunga angustirostris*, hauls out temporarily on beaches here to molt or to rest. It is best identified by its large, normally teary eyes and by a habit of tossing sand on its body with a flipper.

Point Lobos Natural History Association

The Point Lobos Natural History Association was formed in 1978 to assist the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the preservation of the Reserve's unique qualities and to increase the public's understanding of them. This nonprofit Association undertakes educational and interpretive projects and sponsors a Docent Society. A pamphlet describing the benefits of Association membership is available at the Ranger Station or at the Information Station located in the Sea Lion Point parking area. Tax-deductible dues and donations help to fund Association activities.

Docents, identified by their green jackets and name badges, are trained volunteers who work on a regular basis to help interpret the Reserve to visitors. These volunteers staff the Whalers Cabin and the Information Station, where publications relevant to the Reserve are available. Docents also augment the ranger staff by leading nature walks and by setting up telescopes so that visitors can view offshore marine mammals and birds. Upon receipt of a written application form, docents will schedule slide shows for groups.

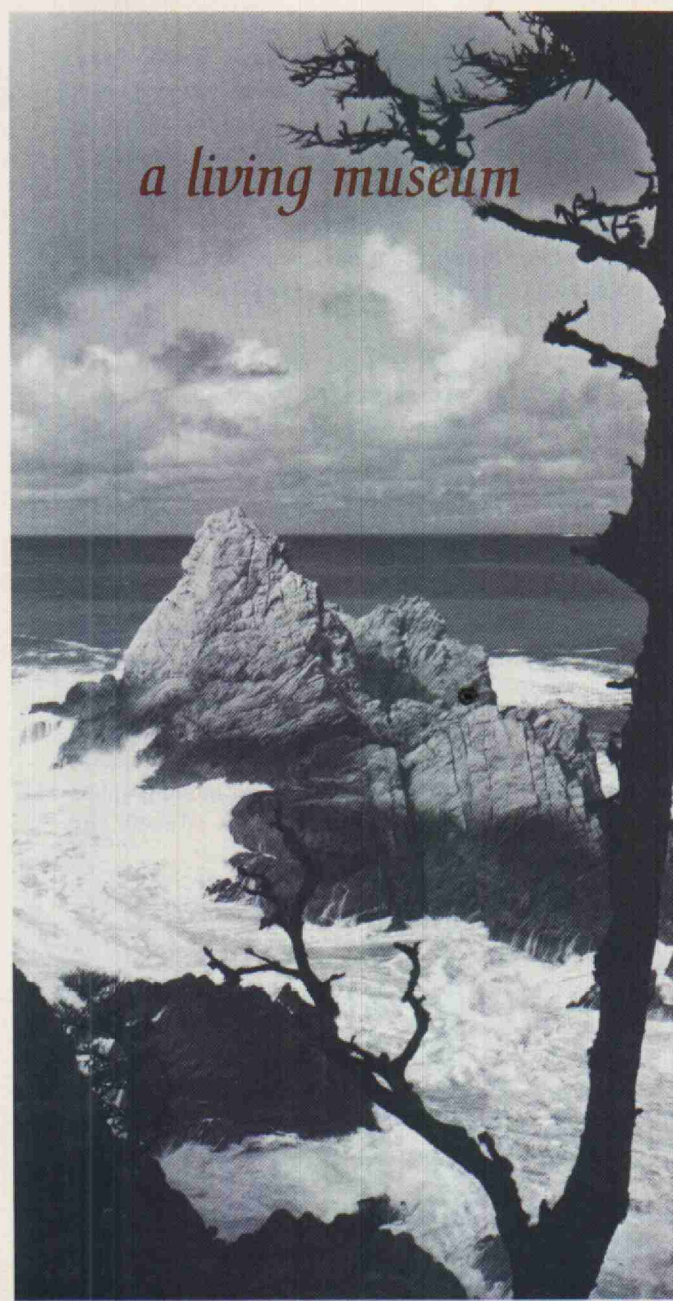
Publications about Point Lobos State Reserve include this brochure/map, a walker's guide, booklets on flowers and birds, a general interpretation of the Reserve, specialized trail guides, information sheets, and posters. To order by mail, see panel below fold.

POINT LOBOS NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION
ROUTE 1, BOX 62
CARMEL, CA 93923

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South printing, revised 1991

POINT LOBOS STATE RESERVE



a living museum

THE PINNACLE

Photo by Robert S. Gamble

With supplementary information for
CARMEL RIVER STATE BEACH

... the greatest meeting of land and water in the world.*

*LANDSCAPE ARTIST FRANCIS MCCOMAS'S BRIEF BUT EXTRAVAGANT COMPARISON REMAINS UNCHALLENGED. ALL WHO COME HERE AGREE THAT THE BEAUTY OF THIS TREE-CLAD HEADLAND IS UNEQUALED. WALK GENTLY. BREATHE DEEPLY. REFLECT. DISCOVER ITS SPIRIT FOR YOURSELF.

A Brief History

Mounds of numerous shell fragments and the presence of mortars hollowed out of bedrock indicate that Indians gathered and prepared food here. A permanent settlement was never established because fresh water disappeared during the summer and fall.

After the arrival of Europeans in 1769, Point Lobos became at various times a pasture for livestock, the site of a whaling station and an abalone cannery, and a shipping point for coal mined nearby. A portion was even subdivided into residential lots. In the early days, ownership of the land changed frequently — once supposedly during a card game.

By 1898, Point Lobos had been acquired by an owner whose foresight led to its protection. A.M. Allan bought a parcel that included portions of Point Lobos and began to buy back the residential lots. With funds from the Save-the-Redwoods League, encouragement from an aroused public, and the gift of the Cypress Grove as a memorial dedicated to Allan and his wife, Point Lobos became part of the new state park system in 1933. Additions since then have expanded the Reserve to 554 acres. In 1960, 750 submerged acres were added, creating the first underwater reserve in the nation. This portion was designated an Ecological Reserve in 1973.

The natural processes occurring at Point Lobos are generally left undisturbed. Management does, however, include the use of fire, which has always been a natural feature of the environment. Evidence of controlled burns may be visible. Roads and signs have been kept to a minimum and strict rules have been enacted to protect the area for future generations of visitors.

The Record of the Rocks

The Point Lobos landscape, a mosaic of bold headlands, irregular coves, and rolling meadows, was produced over millions of years through interaction between land and sea. Rocks formed below the earth's surface were uplifted, exposed, and then shaped by waves and weather into a variety of forms. Sands and gravels, eroded from these rocks by changing sea levels, were deposited into an array of beaches and terraces.

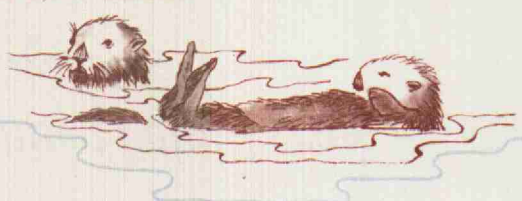
Two contrasting rock types dominate the Reserve. The Santa Lucia granite, a coarse-grained igneous rock that solidified underground 110 million years ago, makes up the craggy landscape of the North Shore and Hidden Beach, while the terrain of Sea Lion Point, the South Shore, and Whalers and Moss Coves is comprised of the Carmelo Formation, a sedimentary rock at least 60 million years old. This more easily eroded conglomerate is recognized by its bumpy collection of water-rounded rocks deposited by ancient avalanches that occurred in an underwater canyon. Both formations are visible from Sea Lion Point. Looking north across Headland Cove, you see cliffs of Santa Lucia granite; at your feet, rocks of Carmelo conglomerate.

Wave action has eroded these rock types in different ways. In granite, erosion generally occurs along parallel joints (weaker areas within hard rocks), forming deep inlets. The Carmelo Formation, because it is less uniform than granite, erodes in a more complicated pattern of cliffs and coves, as at Whalers Cove and Weston Beach. Yet when tightly compacted, sedimentary rock is as resistant to wave action as granite.

Beach sands and gravels are products of different kinds of source areas and wave action. The fine-grained sands of protected China Cove are eroded from nearby granite and then deposited by gentle currents. Weston Beach, open to storm surf, is made up of large pebbles eroded from the Carmelo Formation rocks.

Southern Sea Otter

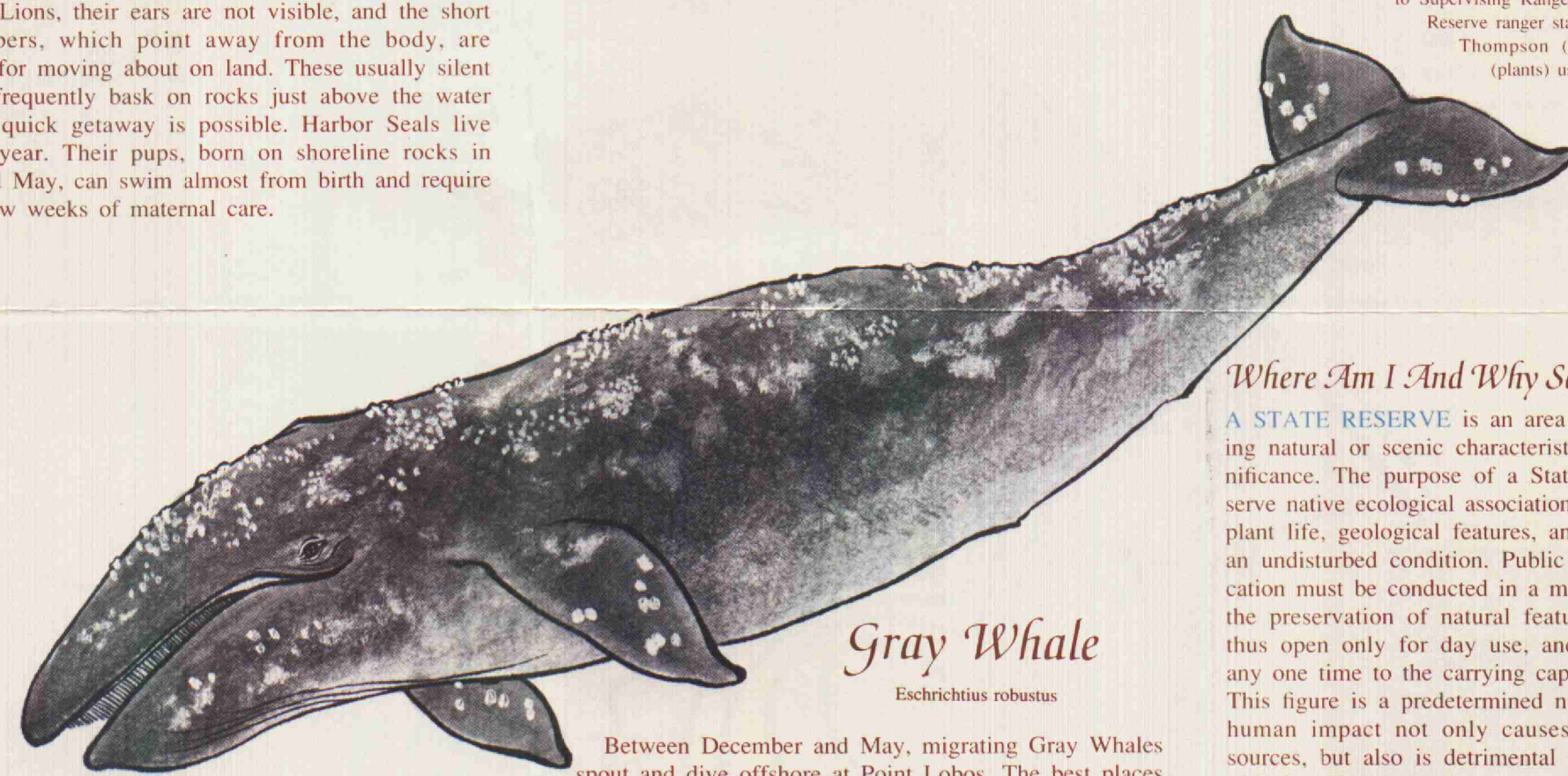
Enhydra lutris nereis



Look carefully in the floating brown seaweed in and around coves for a dark "log" with bumps at both ends — the head and webbed hind feet of a Southern Sea Otter floating on its back. Sea Otters eat and sleep in this position and seldom come ashore. They are smaller than Harbor Seals, generally measuring only four and a half feet in length and weighing close to 65 pounds for the male and 45 pounds for the female.

Births occur mainly in late winter, and maternal care continues up to eight months. A young pup may often be seen lying on its mother's chest.

Southern Sea Otters, formerly found along the coast from British Columbia to Baja California, were hunted to the brink of extinction by the fur trade. Today, the range of this threatened species covers less than 200 miles of central California coastline, from north of Santa Cruz to south of Morro Bay. The spring, 1991 census recorded fewer than 2,000 animals.



Gray Whale

Eschrichtius robustus

Between December and May, migrating Gray Whales spout and dive offshore at Point Lobos. The best places to watch them are from Sea Lion Point to Bird Island along the South Shore, and from various spots along the Cypress Grove Trail. Binoculars are helpful, since the whales may pass 500 yards or more offshore.

Look for a spout of mist or cloud of fog. The whale blows two to three times in succession, with an interval of 10 seconds between blows. If you briefly see flukes (the "tail" of a whale), you will know the whale has taken a deeper dive that will last three to five minutes. Sometimes a whale rises vertically from the water. If it seems to leap high, and splash back down, the behavior is called "breaching."

Gray Whales may be over 40 feet long and may weigh as much as 40 tons. They are mottled gray with patches of white barnacles. There is no dorsal fin, although the backbone shows a series of bumps.

When passing by here, these whales are traveling between their northern summer feeding grounds in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean, and the warm southern lagoon waters of western Baja California in Mexico, where they breed and give birth. They follow the shore and often travel in pods of three to five animals.

The round trip is about 10,000 miles. During the southward migration, the greatest numbers are seen here in early January. On the return trip, most are seen in March and April further offshore. Mothers with calves pass close to shore in April and early May.

Once hunted to near extinction, the Gray Whales, protected by international treaty, now number about 21,000.

Where Am I And Why So Many Rules?

A STATE RESERVE is an area embracing outstanding natural or scenic characteristics of statewide significance. The purpose of a State Reserve is to preserve native ecological associations, unique animal and plant life, geological features, and scenic qualities in an undisturbed condition. Public enjoyment and education must be conducted in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural features. The Reserve is thus open only for day use, and entry is limited at any one time to the carrying capacity of 450 visitors. This figure is a predetermined number beyond which human impact not only causes damage to the resources, but also is detrimental to the quality of the visit for all concerned.

RESERVE RULES are printed on the map side of this brochure for easy reference and are strictly enforced. Each visitor is responsible for knowing them. The rules differ from those of State Parks.

HOURS: 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily. On days of long summer daylight, closing time may be later and is posted at the entrance.

ENTRANCE FEE: A charge is made for each vehicle. For visitors on foot, charges are subject to current policy.

DIVING RESERVATIONS: Call MISTIX, 1-(800)-444-PARK.

WHEN THE RESERVE IS FULL, visitors may be permitted to wait in line (off the highway only) to enter on a one-visitor-out, one-visitor-in basis, regardless of previously scheduled walks. Every effort is made to treat each of the more than 300,000 visitors per year courteously and fairly.

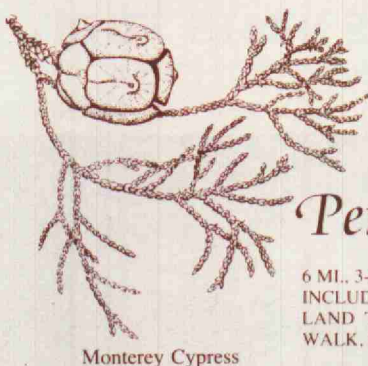
VEHICLES OVER 20 FEET may enter the Reserve when traffic is light, but not during weekends, school vacations or holidays. Trailers are not allowed, and the number of buses per day is limited.

GUIDED WALKS and Whalers Cabin museum access are offered as staffing permits. A schedule for the day is posted at the Ranger Station. Requests for nature walks and Cabin tours led by rangers or docents for schools and private groups require advance written application.

PUBLICATIONS: A mail-order list of Point Lobos publications will be sent if a written request is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Teachers who plan field trips to the Reserve may send for a special information packet.

FURTHER QUESTIONS? An information station at the Sea Lion Point parking area is staffed by docents during busy periods. There is always someone at the Ranger Station to help you when the Reserve is open.

POINT LOBOS STATE RESERVE
ROUTE 1, BOX 62
CARMEL, CALIFORNIA 93923
TELEPHONE: (408) 624-4909



Perimeter Hike

6 MI., 3-5 HOURS, FROM RANGER STATION. INCLUDES SHORE TRAILS FROM BIRD ISLAND TO GRANITE POINT. TO SHORTEN WALK, SKIP SOME LOOP TRAILS.

Cypress Grove Trail

LOOP FROM SEA LION POINT PARKING AREA: .8 MI., 30 MIN. THROUGH COASTAL SCRUB AND WOODS TO CLIFF WITH DRAMATIC AND SPECTACULAR OCEAN VIEWS. TRAIL GUIDE AVAILABLE AT INFORMATION STATION.

The favorite of many visitors, the Cypress Grove Trail winds through one of the two naturally growing stands of Monterey Cypress trees remaining on the earth. The other is visible across Carmel Bay on Cypress Point, the headland farthest west.

These cypresses, which formerly extended over a much wider range, withdrew to these fog-shrouded headlands as the climate changed with the close of the Pleistocene epoch 15,000 years ago. The oldest trees, surviving in the teeth of salt spray and wind, their roots seeking nourishment in cracks and crevices, mirror the forces of nature and time.

Point Lobos State Reserve was originally acquired to protect these gnarled trees. This particular grove is a memorial to Mr. and Mrs. A.M. Allan. (See History panel on other side.)

The reddish velvety "stuff" especially noticeable on trees and rocks of the shadowed north-facing slopes is an alga. The color comes from carotene, an orange pigment which also occurs in carrots. The plant does not harm the trees.

Between the loop trail and the parking area, and amid the dense shrubbery off trail, a keen-eyed visitor may discover a dozen or more large mounds of twigs. These are Dusky-footed Woodrat houses, which may achieve great age and size as successive owners add to them.

Take time here to enjoy Nature's array — California Sea Lions on the outer rocks, Sea Otters among swirling seaweeds in coves below, bluff wildflowers holding to chinks in the granite walls, and the delicate and harmless Lace Lichen bearding dead understory limbs.

Sea Lion Point Trail

ROUND TRIP FROM SEA LION POINT PARKING AREA: .6 MI., 30 MIN. INCLUDES COVE OVERLOOKS AND BEST VIEW OF SEA LION ROCKS OFFSHORE. THAT PART OF THE TRAIL VISIBLE FROM THE PARKING AREA IS SUITABLE FOR A WHEELCHAIR.

This trail takes you through one of Nature's seaside gardens to a magnificent ocean view. On the way, ground squirrels scurry, and sparrows perch on bushes to sing. On the right in Headland Cove, look for Sea Otters in the kelp and for Harbor Seals that often bask on the low rocks across the cove at the water's edge.

A natural staircase leads to a lower trail. The rock conglomerate here, known as the Carmelo Formation, was laid down about 60 million years ago. In Sea Lion Cove, look again for hauled-out Harbor Seals.

Barking California Sea Lions are seen further out on offshore rocks. The Devil's Cauldron between Sea Lion Point and Sea Lion Rocks is often a churning display of ocean power. Remain at a safe distance.

Bird Island Trail

FROM SOUTHERN PARKING AREA: ROUND TRIP: .8 MI., 30 MIN. THROUGH COASTAL SCRUB. ACCESS TO TWO BEACHES, GOOD VIEWS OF BIRD ISLAND AND CHINA COVE.

On the way to the Bird Island overlook, you pass between woods and sea, high above two white sandy beaches — China Cove and Gibson Beach. Both are accessible via long staircases. Swimming and wading are allowed, but the water is icy cold all year. China Cove's sparkling jade-green waters are framed by hanging cliffside gardens.

Into these cliffs, the sea surges, cuts through the tiny cracks and faults in the brittle granite rock, and in time creates caves that slowly become archways. These eventually collapse — forming islands like Bird Island.

As you walk the loop on Pelican Point, you pass wildflower displays that change seasonally, and you overlook Bird Island, which becomes a large sea bird colony in spring and summer. Hundreds of Brandt's Cormorants nest very close together on the flat part of the island. Watch for Sea Otters resting in kelp offshore and for basking Harbor Seals on rocks just above the water.

North Shore Trail

BETWEEN WHALERS COVE AND SEA LION POINT PARKING AREA: 1.4 MI., 40 MIN. ONE WAY. WOODY, WITH OPEN VIEWS OF COVES BELOW.

Exposed to prevailing northwesterly winds and seas, this rugged headland of sheer-walled coves and changing plant communities offers surprises at every turn. In spring and summer, Guillemot Island is the best spot in the Reserve to see nesting Western Gulls, Pigeon Guillemots, and both Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants. Guillemot Island can be observed from a side trail that passes over a sea cave. Part of this cave has collapsed, leaving a hole where the sea surges unexpectedly.

Near the west end, a short side trail leads to the best view of the Old Veteran Cypress, alone and clinging to the rock wall of Cypress Cove.

Whalers Knoll Trail

THREE TRAILS LEAD TO THE KNOLL. ONE FROM THE ENTRANCE ROAD, TWO FROM THE NORTH SHORE TRAIL. THE LONGEST TRAIL OVER THIS HILL IS .5 MI., 25 MIN.; ELEVATION GAIN: 180 FEET. THROUGH WOODS TO VIEWS.

"Thar she blows!" Imagine yourself an old-time lookout, stationed on this windy hill to spot the whales on which your livelihood depends. A flagpole once stood here. A signal flag was raised when whales were sighted and dipped when the boat crew was heading in the right direction.

Examine the pines for clusters of orange and black Monarch Butterflies that seek sunny, protected branches for wintering.

According to Point Lobos Docent Dorothy Nye, it's "worth the huffing and puffing — the panoramic view is splendid." If you notice neither, you are on the bypass trail.

Lace Lichen Trail

PARALLELS MAIN ROAD COASTWARD FROM RANGER STATION THROUGH MEADOW AND WOODS: .5 MI., 10 MIN. MARSHY AFTER RAIN.

The gray stringy lichen, for which the trail is named, hangs from trees that grow where the climate is cool and humid and where there is little sun. Lace Lichen does not harm the trees; it is found on the branches that have already died from lack of sunlight. A lichen is a combination of a fungus (the framework) and a green alga (the food producer). Supposedly, both plants benefit by the association. Deer like to eat this lichen, and birds carry it off for nesting materials.

After rains, colorful mushrooms, such as the poisonous and prevalent red Fly Amanita, push up through the thick pine needle mat which prevents most other plants from growing.

South Shore Trail

BETWEEN SEA LION POINT AND BIRD ROCK PARKING AREA: 1 MI., 40 MIN. ONE WAY. ALONG CLIFFS: ACCESS TO ROCKS, PEBBLY BEACHES.

Here at the ocean's edge, you may leave the trail at various points between Sand Hill Cove and Weston Beach, where there are no guide wires. Be aware of your own safety (waves and slippery rocks) and of the fragility of bluff plants and tidepool creatures. Each plant, animal, piece of driftwood, empty shell, stone, or clump of washed-up seaweed is an important part of Nature's cycle. Protect it; take nothing but photographs and memories, and keep to obvious trails and side paths.

You may see shorebirds feeding among intertidal rocks, locate stone ribbons where once molten quartz filled fissures in the granite at Hidden Beach, or discover varicolored patterns formed by erosion on uplifted sedimentary rocks.

Whalers Cove & Cabin

This continuously busy area was the site of a whaling station from 1862 to 1880. Where visitors now park, an abalone cannery once operated, and traces remain of a granite quarry, said to have supplied the stone for the San Francisco Mint. Registered scuba divers enter the water here to enjoy that part of the underwater Reserve open to them in Whalers and Bluefish Coves. Two outdoor exhibits describe subtidal life and climatic conditions.

The boulders at the water's edge provide a favorite habitat for the Beechey Ground Squirrel. This is a good spot from which to survey the cove and locate various birds, rafting Sea Otters, or basking Harbor Seals, which frequent the area.

A short walk up the road leads to WHALERS CABIN. Built by Chinese fishermen in the 1850s, it is now a cultural history museum, open as docent staffing permits. Hours are posted at the Ranger Station (usually noon to 4 P.M.). A brochure is available.

Carmelo Meadow Trail

FROM RANGER STATION TO GRANITE POINT TRAIL JUNCTURE, THROUGH PINE WOODS AND OPEN MEADOWS: .1 MI., A FEW MIN. MARSHY AFTER RAIN.

Carmelo Meadow supports a colorful garden of fragile wildflowers in the spring and summer, along with sturdier, perennial sedges and grasses that provide cover and forage for small birds and mammals. These are hunted by owls, bobcats, and coyotes from vantage points along the meadow's edge at twilight and dawn. The opening and closing hours of the Reserve are established to prevent human interference during these important periods.

Granite Point Trail

FROM WHALERS CABIN TO GRANITE POINT AND BACK, THROUGH MEADOW AND WOODS TO PANORAMIC VIEW: 1.3 MI., 60 MIN.

Beyond Carmelo Meadow, the trail goes through pine woods to Coal Chute Point, a good overlook for observing Harbor Seals and Sea Otters. Continuing on through dense, shoulder-high coastal scrub, the path takes you down to the edge of a former pasture and then up to Granite Point.

At the high point of the loop trail, there is a windswept rocky outcrop amid a garden of low-growing wildflowers. You will see Carmel Bay with its sandy beaches, the red-tiled roof of Mission San Carlos Borromeo, and Pebble Beach, famous for its golf course.

Moss Cove Trail

FROM GRANITE POINT THROUGH AN OPEN FIELD TO NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF RESERVE AND BACK: .6 MI., 30 MIN. SIDE TRAIL TO A ROCKY BEACH. NO EXIT OR ENTRY AT MONASTERY BEACH. USE MAIN GATE ONLY.

The Moss Cove Trail crosses over the lower of two uplifted and visible marine terraces, remnants of ancient beaches from an earlier geologic age. This newest addition to the Reserve is a former pasture, and it may take many years before native vegetation reclaims it. Birds of prey find good hunting here and are often seen perched on fence posts and rocky outcrops. Uphill is Hudson House, a ranger residence and training center.

