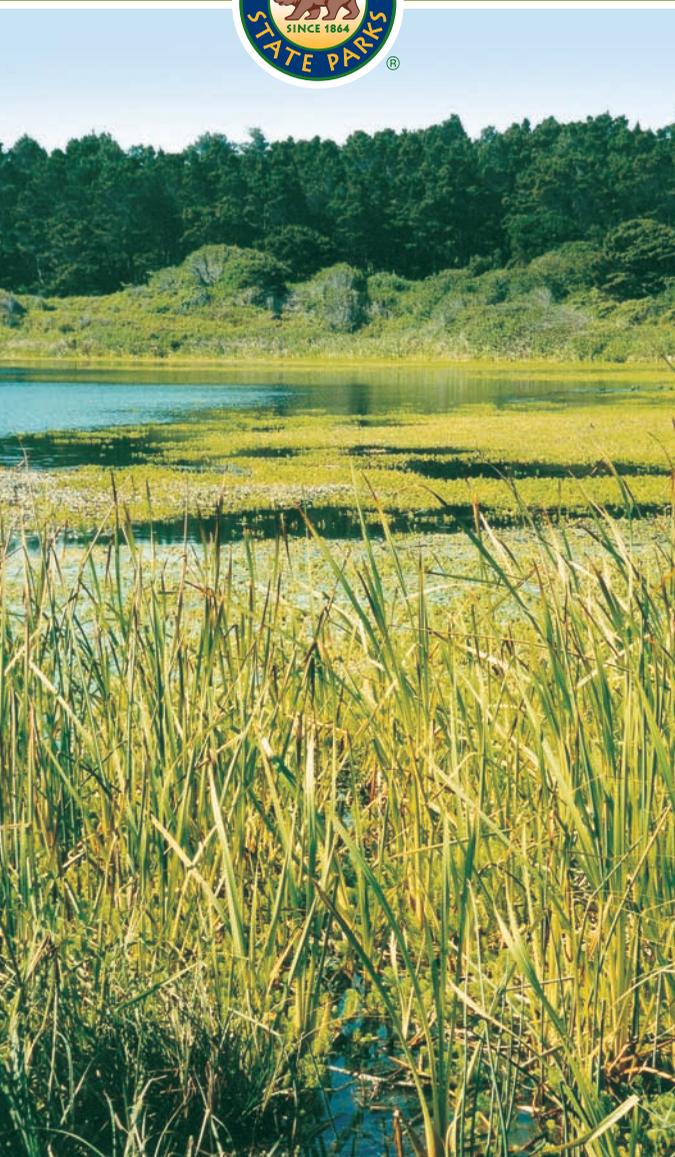


# MacKerricher State Park



## Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation 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 the phone number below. To receive this publication in an alternate format, write to the Communications Office at the following address.

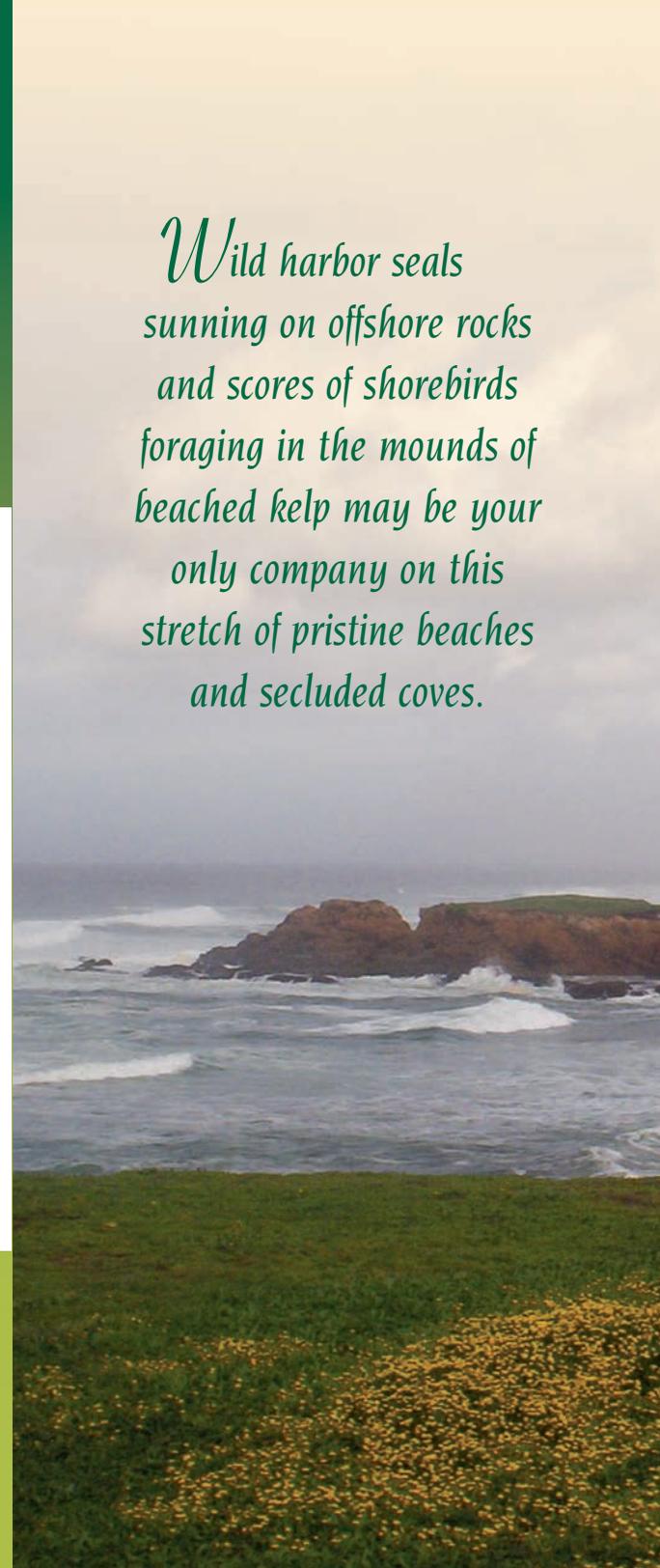
**CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS**  
**P. O. Box 942896**  
**Sacramento, CA 94296-0001**

For information call: 800-777-0369  
916-653-6995, outside the U.S.  
711, TTY relay service  
***www.parks.ca.gov***

Discover the many states of California.™

**MacKerricher State Park**  
**24100 MacKerricher Road**  
**Fort Bragg, CA 95437**  
**(707) 937-5804**

*Wild harbor seals  
sunning on offshore rocks  
and scores of shorebirds  
foraging in the mounds of  
beached kelp may be your  
only company on this  
stretch of pristine beaches  
and secluded coves.*



**M**acKerricher State Park's diversity, moderate climate and wild beauty make this special place on the Mendocino Coast a gem among California's state parks. Watch harbor seals and migrating gray whales, stroll on secluded beaches, bicycle along an old logging road overlooking the sea, and experience the solitude of northern California's most pristine stretch of sand dunes.



*Secluded beach*

### **PARK HISTORY**

For thousands of years, the Northern Pomo and the Coast Yuki thrived on the natural riches of this area. The resources were so plentiful that various local subgroups, as well as other native groups, were routinely permitted to travel through Pomo and Yuki lands to fish and to collect seaweed, shellfish, acorns and other foods. Today their descendents still gather foods and other resources natural to the area in the practice of native traditions.

Duncan MacKerricher moved to this area from Canada in 1865. A few years later, he bought 1,000 acres and named it Rancho de la Laguna, where he raised cattle, hogs and draft horses. After a wharf was built at Laguna Point, MacKerricher permitted the owner of a lumber mill on Mill Creek to construct a gravity-fed railway from Cleone to Laguna Point. MacKerricher's holdings became the core of the park when his heirs sold the property to the State in 1949.

### **MAJOR FEATURES**

Three miles north of Fort Bragg on Highway 1, the park extends approximately nine miles along the coast. The shoreline of its south half consists of rocky headlands separated by sandy beaches and coves. Miles of gently sloping beach lie in the northern half.

The entrance road leading to the Laguna Point boardwalk passes three campgrounds and Lake Cleone. The picturesque overpass near Lake Cleone once carried steam engine trains to the former Union Lumber Company mill in Fort Bragg. Today, walkers, joggers and bicyclists use the coastal trail—or haul road, as it is historically called. The haul road used to extend from Fort Bragg to the Ten Mile River watershed. Thirty-acre Lake Cleone was once a brackish water marsh that received a high-tide dose of salt water. However, construction of the haul road blocked off the seawater, creating the



*Fishing at Lake Cleone*

present trout-stocked, freshwater lake. Motorized boats are not allowed.

### **PLANT COMMUNITIES**

The lake area and campgrounds host a forest of Bishop, Monterey and shore pine, Douglas fir and other types of vegetation that thrive in the favorable soil and climate. Dunes topped with sand verbena, sea rocket, sand primroses, beach morning-glories and grasses produce a palette of yellows, reds and greens rolling gently across the sand hills.

Alongside an isolated stretch of beach, the Inglenook Fen Ten Mile Dune Preserve—an unusual sand dune complex—contains several terrestrial, wetland and freshwater ecosystems. At their widest point, the dunes extend some three-quarters of a mile from the beach to Highway 1. Please avoid stepping on plants. Walk on the beach, rather than the dunes, to avoid harming a number of sensitive, threatened or endangered dune species.



*Bishop pine*



*Schoolchildren visit the tide pools.*

The headlands leading to Laguna Point are blanketed with a thick mat of grasses. Velvet grass, sweet vernal and several other varieties of grasses and wildflowers cover the headlands that extend to Pudding Creek, where a popular beach and the Pudding Creek Trestle are found.

### **WILDLIFE**

Rocky shorelines are home to tide pool organisms that have adapted to their specific intertidal homes. They can die if moved just a foot or two, so please don't endanger these protected resources. Kelp forests line the water along the north side of the point. On the beach you may see shorebirds foraging amid kelp that has been washed ashore. Harbor seals sun themselves on the rocks near the point. From mid-December to early

April, crowds are drawn to the overlooks as gray whales migrate between the Bering



*Osprey*

Sea and Baja California. The headlands, shoreline, lake, wetlands, woods and sand dunes draw more than 90 species of birds.

Black-tailed deer are often seen near the lake, as are raccoons, gray foxes, rabbits, and gray and ground squirrels. Osprey, ring-necked and mallard ducks, and great blue herons are some of the birds found year-round at the lake, which also serves as a resting habitat for migratory waterfowl. Though rare, mountain lions have also been sighted in the area.

### **CAMPING AND PICNICKING**

In the park's four campgrounds, 148 campsites accommodate tents and recreational vehicles up to 35 feet. All campgrounds have restrooms with flush toilets and hot showers, and all sites have tables, food storage lockers and fire rings. Ten walk-in campsites offer a backpack-type experience without a long hike. Walk-in campers park in a designated area at the south edge of Surfwood Campground and carry equipment and supplies some 50 yards to campsites. Camping reservations are highly recommended, particularly in the summer.

The Lake Cleone picnic area has tables, fire pits with grills, running water and a great view of the lake. A 1.3-mile trail circles the trout-stocked lake. Restrooms are nearby.



### **ACTIVITIES**

Scheduled or guided activities, including hikes, Junior Ranger and campfire programs, are posted on bulletin boards throughout the park. During gray whale migration seasons, there are organized whale watches on Laguna Point. A mounted skeleton of a 30-foot gray whale is exhibited next to the visitor center at the park's entrance. Staffed by volunteers, the visitor center features interpretive displays and a gift shop with books and other printed material. A private concession located near the park offers horse rides in designated areas of the park.

### **NEARBY STATE PARKS**

- Westport Union Landing State Beach  
1.5 mile north of Westport (707) 937-5804
- Russian Gulch State Park, 2 miles north of Mendocino (707) 937-5804
- Caspar Headlands State Beach and State Reserve, 4 miles north of Mendocino (707) 937-5804

### **ACCESSIBLE FEATURES**

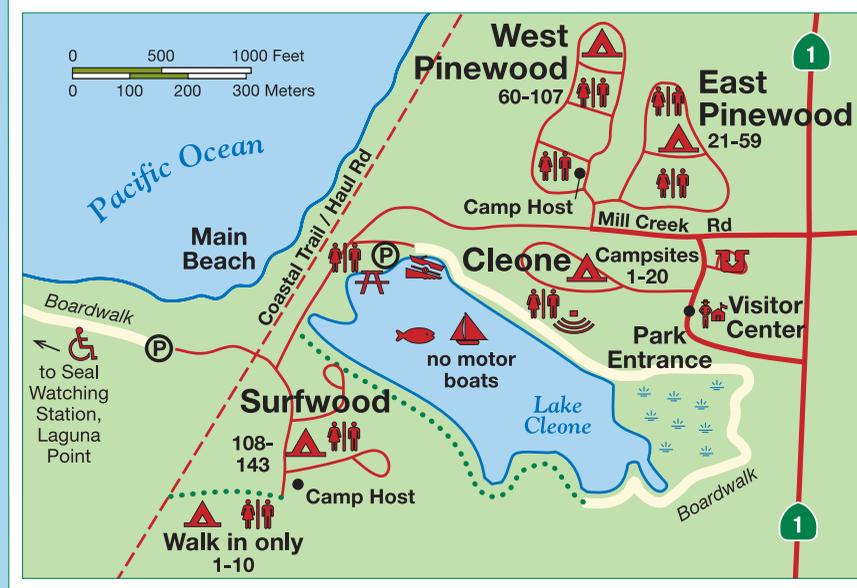
- The raised walkways at Laguna Point and Lake Cleone
- Restrooms and six paved campsites

Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details call the park or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

## PLEASE REMEMBER

- The ocean can be very dangerous. Always keep an eye on the surf and never turn your back on the ocean.
- It is illegal to remove or harm plants, animals or other natural features.
- Keep dogs under control and on a leash no longer than 6 feet. Dogs must be enclosed in a tent or vehicle at night.
- Bicyclists under age 18 must wear helmets. Bicycles are not allowed on boardwalks and the lake trail.
- Keep campground fires in the rings provided. Purchase firewood at the park entrance and at camp host sites. Do not collect fallen twigs and branches—they provide important nutrients.
- Quiet hours are 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Engine-driven generators are not allowed between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- There is a two-vehicle limit per campsite. Extra vehicle fees apply. Park only in your registered site's parking area.
- Call (800) 444-7275 for camping reservations or visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact: Mendocino Area Parks Association, P.O. Box 1387, Mendocino, CA 95460 • (707) 937-5397  
Email: [mapa@mcn.org](mailto:mapa@mcn.org)



## Legend

	Paved road
	Coastal Trail / Haul Road
	Trail
	Accessible Feature
	Boating
	Boat Launch
	Campfire Center
	Campground
	Fishing
	Marsh
	Parking
	Picnic Area
	Ranger Station
	Restroom
	RV Sanitation Station

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