

As weather warms, watch out for rattlesnakes in East Bay parks

By The Pioneer



*Keep an eye out for rattlesnakes when out hiking this spring.
(Photo courtesy East Bay Regional Parks)*

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CA (May 7, 2024) — In early spring, snakes emerge from winter hibernation and become more active.

Native to California, rattlesnakes thrive in a variety of wildland habitats, as well as in rural and urban areas. They become more active in warm weather. This can lead to more encounters with humans and dogs, especially along trails and roads. Officials encourage visitors to keep snake safety precautions in mind when visiting East Bay Regional Parks throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

Snakes form an important resource in the natural environment. They are prime controlling agents of rodents and other reptile populations.

Enjoy them from afar and leave them where you find them. Collecting, killing, or removing any plants or animals from the Park District is illegal. Please help protect all wildlife and their environment.

Rattlesnake Safety Tips

1. Avoid hiking alone so you have help in case of emergency.

2. Scan the ground ahead of you as you walk, jog, or ride.
3. Stay on trails and avoid walking in tall grass.
4. Look carefully around and under logs and rocks before sitting down.
5. Listen for the buzz of a rattlesnake's rattle warning you it is there.
6. Avoid placing your hands or feet where you cannot see clearly.
7. For maximum safety, consider keeping your dog on a leash.

What to Do If You See a Rattlesnake

Leave it alone – do not try to capture or harm it. All native wildlife is protected by law, and it is safest to leave it alone. If you see a snake, do not approach. Move carefully and slowly away or around it while giving it plenty of space.

What to Do If Bitten by a Snake

1. **If bitten by a rattlesnake, stay calm and have someone call 911.** Remain calm by lying down with the affected limb lower than the heart. Getting medical attention quickly is critical – do not use tourniquets, “sucking,” or snake bite kits. If you are by yourself, walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911. Do not run.
2. If bitten by any other type of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention.
3. If you are unsure what kind of snake bit you, check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases one puncture mark) associated with intense, burning pain. This is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites may leave multiple teeth marks without associated burning pain.
4. You do not need to identify the specific type of rattlesnake to receive the correct antivenom. The Northern Pacific rattlesnake is the species found in East Bay Regional Parks.

Download the Park District's [Common Snakes](#) brochure or watch our [Gopher Snake or Rattlesnake](#) video to learn how to tell the difference between rattlesnakes and gopher snakes. Additional information is available at ebparks.org/safety/wildlife-encounters.

Rattlesnake advisory issued for Bay Area parks as the reptiles become 'more active'

By [Amanda Bartlett](#) May 6, 2024

The East Bay Regional Park District has issued a rattlesnake advisory for inland parts of the Bay Area, and with temperatures [expected to increase as much as 40 degrees throughout the region in the coming days](#), sightings are even more likely as the slithering reptiles emerge from their winter hibernation and bask in the heat.

“Rattlesnakes are more active in warm weather, which can lead to more encounters with humans and dogs, especially along trails and roads,” the news release read. “Visitors are encouraged to keep snake safety precautions in mind.”

The venomous snakes are native to California and can be found in tall grasses, under rocks and near logs, and even swimming in the water as they hunt for prey and engage in courtship throughout the wildlands. The warning comes in the [wake of rattlesnake mating season](#), and as their [population booms](#), experts with Central Coast Snake Services are offering to safely relocate the animals from backyards in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, free of charge.



The northern Pacific rattlesnake is the species found in East Bay regional parks.
East Bay Regional Park District

People who come face to face with rattlesnakes on Bay Area trails are advised to leave them alone, first and foremost. “Collecting, killing, or removing any plants or animals from the Park District is illegal,” the news release read. A rattlesnake, [while typically introverted](#), won’t be shy about letting you know it’s there and that you’re too close — listen for the namesake [buzz](#) of their rattle.

While enjoying the outdoors in general, you should bring along a hiking buddy so you have help in the event of an emergency. Wear sturdy, close-toed shoes and long pants, make sure your pet is on a leash, stay on designated trails, and keep your head on a swivel, scanning

the ground ahead and stepping only in areas you can see. Packing a picnic lunch? Look carefully before sitting down and enjoying your meal.

If you do get bitten by a rattlesnake, don't panic. Call 911 and lie down, ensuring the part of your body where you were bitten is lower than your heart. A rattlesnake bite will leave two puncture marks and is typically accompanied by intense, burning pain. Don't wrap the wound with a tourniquet or bandage; wash it with soap and water or an antiseptic. Swift medical attention is critical.

Learn more about wildlife encounters and safety on the East Bay Regional Park District's [website](#).

'Costs are just skyrocketing': Are these California icons worth saving?

Each year, the state pours millions of dollars into maintaining its historic piers



Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

By [Tessa McLean](#) May 6, 2024

After a strong winter storm ripped through the California coast in February, one of the state's oldest historic piers looked like it might crumble into the ocean. Forceful waves had knocked away several of the wooden posts that hold up the deck under the end of the Cayucos Pier two hours north of Santa Barbara, leaving it teetering over the water without support. Other pilings jutted out of the ocean and were disconnected from the wooden walkway altogether.

The beloved attraction began a major yearlong reconstruction in 2014 that was supposed to last at least 30 years. Now, nearly a decade later, the end of the pier is roped off, awaiting new repairs.

It's a familiar story in California — each year, millions of dollars are poured into maintaining the state's historic piers, many of which are more than 100 years old and under near-constant threat. In addition to a recent slew of strong winter storms, likely intensified by climate change, almost the entire coastline is overdue for a big earthquake, an inevitable disaster waiting to challenge the seismic integrity of these aging icons.

There are environmental concerns with these nostalgic constructions, as well. Many of these piers are coated in toxic substances such as creosote, which helps prevent wood rot in the water and could harm vital area sea life, trickling through the aquatic food chain.



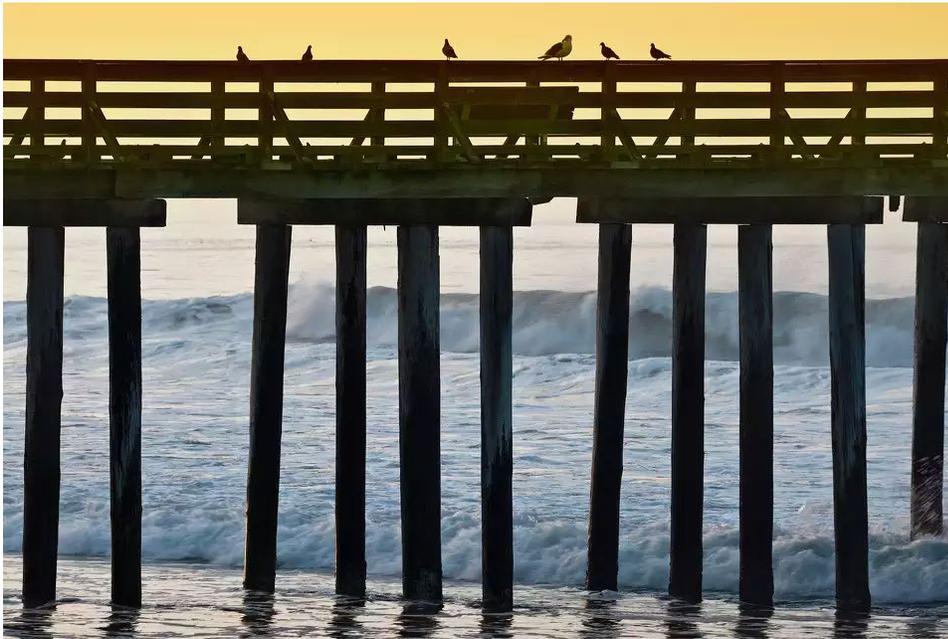
FILE: High tide at the pier in Cayucos, Calif..
A K Potts Photography/Getty Images

Yet, cities, counties, the state and even the federal government funnel money into these ancient pieces of infrastructure every year, guessing at how long until they'll need major funding again. Which brings us to one very simple question: Should California's historic piers exist at all?

A strong pull to save our piers

The Cayucos Pier, located in the San Luis Obispo County beach town of the same name, was built in 1872 to establish a port between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Like many of the once-bustling harbors along the Central Coast, the pier eventually became more popular for recreational pursuits like tourism, fishing and ocean gazing — all its primary uses today. It sees about half a million visitors a year, according to Shaun Cooper, assistant director of SLO County's Parks & Recreation Department, and has fervent support from locals.

It's also in a precarious state. When severe storms hit in 2010 and 2012, damage to the Cayucos Pier was extensive, and major repairs hadn't been made to the structure in decades. After years of planning and cobbling together funding from grants, donations and the general fund, the county — which manages the pier for its owner, California State Parks — was able to fund the \$3.5 million refurbishment project. The project widened the pier and replaced more than 200 pilings, hopefully setting it up for a more resilient future.



FILE: High tide at the pier in Cayucos, Calif.
Mint Images/Getty Images/Mint Images RF

Cooper said the community was heavily involved, rallying to maintain the pier's historic feel with wood pilings, even though they're fragile and have environmental concerns. Residents even took things a step further, creating a \$300,000 endowment to help maintain the structure in the future. But faced with yet another Herculean repair project after this year's storms, the fund's \$120,000 in accumulated interest isn't nearly enough to support the current repairs.

Cooper said they were surprised the pier endured so much damage so soon after the recent refurbishment. Engineers' assessments said debris must have hit the end of the pier hard to make the pilings come loose, something they couldn't have planned for. It could have been ocean detritus washed in from anywhere — or it could have been one piling that was knocked loose and then smacked into the others.

Now, the organization is preparing for a second restoration project, performing structural and environmental assessments and once again cobbling together funding from different sources. They're hoping to have the repairs done by the end of the year. Until then, the end of the pier will remain roped off.

'Tragedy with a silver lining'

Community support is crucial for extending a pier's mortality, and it's ultimately what saved California's most well-known pier — one of the state's most popular tourist attractions. In 1972, Santa Monica Pier was far from the beloved destination it is today and was slated for demolition in favor of constructing a giant new artificial island with a hotel and convention center. Activists across the city, including singer Joan Baez and actress Jane Fonda, who both had friends who lived on the pier, rallied against the new development and protested to save the landmark. By 1975, voters had approved a proposition that would protect the pier indefinitely.



FILE: A view of storm-damaged Santa Monica Pier after storms knocked a large portion of the structure into the Pacific Ocean, March 2, 1983, in Santa Monica, Calif.

Bob Riha Jr/Getty Images

Just eight years later, multiple winter storms in 1983 washed out nearly a third of the 1909 structure. The city formed a task force to repair it while also reinventing its image. It was a “tragedy with a silver lining,” Jim Harris, executive director of the Santa Monica Pier Corporation (SMPC), a nonprofit organization that helps manage parts of the pier, told SFGATE. It gave the task force a clean slate to work with, reimagining the space as a safe destination for locals and tourists alike, while also allowing new engineering of the pier structure itself.

Santa Monica Pier soon became a designated city landmark, and the Loeff Hippodrome, built in 1916, which holds the charming carousel, was later recognized as a U.S. National Historic Landmark. With these designations in place, the pier is protected indefinitely from any significant changes without a ballot initiative.

Still, the financial upkeep is staggering. SMPC’s projected revenue of \$1.9 million for 2023-2024, which accounts for filming, private events and other programming, was estimated to end in a budget shortfall of \$33,000, and the organization planned to cover that deficit with reserves. Meanwhile, Santa Monica includes its own “Pier Fund” as part of the city budget and it spent \$8.2 million dollars on maintaining and operating the pier from 2021-2022, the last year for which figures were available. 2024-2025 estimates put that number closer to \$10 million.

‘The costs are just skyrocketing’

No matter who owns and manages a pier, even with strong tourism and community support, it’s unlikely a single agency can fund a major restoration. State and federal agencies often provide a stopgap. The California State Coastal Conservancy is one such agency. Formed in 1976 with the goal of ensuring Californians have access to the coast through improvement programs and projects, some of its essential work is in providing grants to piers for repairs, both in emergency situations and for ongoing maintenance.



FILE: A view from the bluffs overlooks the ocean and San Clemente Pier.
Don Tormey/LA Times via Getty Images

When an agency accepts a grant from the conservancy, it agrees to maintain and operate the pier for 20 years after the work is completed. But lately, major repairs — and thus, additional funding from the conservancy or another entity — have been needed on several piers before the 20-year window has even come close to closing.

“At some point the state is going to need to look at the cost benefit of repairing these piers in the face of climate change,” said Timothy Duff, a project specialist at the Coastal Conservancy. “The costs are just skyrocketing.”

The conservancy, which gets the majority of its funding from state bond measures, has helped fund many pier restoration projects in the past decade, including at Cayucos Pier, Capitola Pier and Pacifica Pier. Duff said that even discounting these recent wild winter storms, smaller, local communities had already been having a hard time maintaining their piers.

“These communities don’t have the resources to pour money into keeping these piers open,” he said.

Pier maintenance and repairs are far from simple. There are engineering assessments and environmental evaluations. There’s permitting and the removal of damaged parts, some of which may be hazardous waste due to those toxic chemicals used to waterproof the wood. The work must be fit in around natural forces like tides and swell, and consider water visibility and other environmental factors. The labor itself is complex, and often involves underwater divers and specialized underwater construction equipment.



FILE: Waves roll under the Pacifica Pier, Sunday morning, Dec. 16, 2018, as a large storm approached Pacifica, Calif. Karl Mondon/Bay Digital First Media/The Mercury News via Getty Images

For now, though, these communities have decided the benefits of what Duff calls “classic, iconic postcard scenes you’ve seen for generations” outweigh the costs.

“People love to drive to the coast to park at a pier and walk on the pier and have that magical feeling of being over the open ocean. They’re a real destination,” Duff said.

And unfortunately, he said, we’re losing the ability to maintain them.

Preparing for climate change

Without funding from sources like the Coastal Conservancy, these projects may not be completed at all. But even with the agency’s money, it has become a challenge to cover the entire scope of work a pier truly needs for longevity. When Capitola Wharf, which hadn’t had an extensive overhaul in years, needed work, the city passed a 10-year, quarter-cent sales tax in 2016 to help restore the pier. But after the brutal 2021 storms battered the pier, the city decided to expedite the planned repairs, which were still in progress when strong 2023 storms ripped out much of its midspan.



FILE: A view of the damage sustained by the pier in Capitola, Calif., after a huge storm in January 2023.
Josh Edelson/AFP via Getty Images

In the original plans, long-term repairs included widening the deck to help it be more resilient to future storms, along with new pilings made of fiberglass instead of creosote-coated wood.

The original project estimate was \$8.9 million, but with the storm damage it will come closer to \$10 million, Jessica Kahn, public works director for the city of Capitola, told SFGATE. Funding ultimately came from a head-spinning number of agencies: a \$1.9 million Coastal Conservancy grant, a \$3.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Measure F tax that equates to \$3 million, \$500,000 from the California Natural Resources Agency and a \$1 million insurance payment from the January 2023 storms.

“[The piers] are really symbolic,” Kahn said. “It’s not because they’re money makers. They’re things people treasure. It’s a lot of the reason these facilities still exist.”

This major overhaul is expected to keep Capitola Wharf viable for 30 to 40 years, but “we’re very aware of climate change and sea level rise,” Khan said. Raising the pier about 20 feet to address the latter was considered in an earlier proposal, but would have doubled the project cost.



FILE: A view of storm-damaged Capitola Wharf in Santa Cruz. The damage occurred after a bomb-cyclone hit Santa Cruz County in January 2023.

Federica Grassi/Getty Images

UC Santa Cruz professor and director for the UCSC Center for Coastal Climate Resilience Michael Beck told SFGATE that decisions like this may feel right at the time, but “if you really want it to be around for that time period, then we should take those costs now.

“If you thought it was too expensive now, you’re likely to think it’s too expensive later,” he continued. “So a little bit of that is kicking the can down the road and a little bit of it is this crazy belief that somehow we’ll find more money in the future, which sure seems unlikely.”

The real cost of the historic ‘look’

Not every pier can and should be saved, though. The Coastal Conservancy and other agencies also fund projects to remove California piers when deemed appropriate. Richmond’s Ferry Point Pier had been so battered by storms over the years that it was set for removal in 2022. Several delays postponed the project, including salmon season, which meant crews could only work during a small window of time. Then, they discovered asbestos covering some of the logs, in addition to the creosote.



The Ferry Point Pier on the Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline in Richmond, Calif., on March 8, 2024. *Madeline Wells/SFGATE*

This year, after a \$1.2 million infusion from the federal government, Ferry Point Pier may finally be removed.

Representatives from the East Bay Regional Park District, which manages the pier, said it would have taken nearly \$5.5 million to repair the pier, and those repairs would likely have lasted only around 20 years. What's more, the pier's removal could be a boon to bay eelgrass, a plant that's a crucial component to preventing coastal erosion and promoting area sea life, which has been threatened over the years by dredging, climate change and liveaboard communities.

"People understood it was a hazard," Eddie Willis, a planner with EBRPD, said. "Sure, there was some nostalgia about this old wooden pier in the San Francisco Bay getting removed. It reminds you of a bygone era."



A view of the damaged Seacliff State Beach pier's lifeguard tower.
Courtesy of State Parks

California State Parks removed Seacliff State Beach pier in Santa Cruz in 2023 after it was battered by so many storms over the years it was deemed not worth repairing. It was “an imminent threat to public health and safety” after January 2023’s atmospheric rivers, California State Parks spokesperson Douglas Johnson told SFGATE via email. The removal took 10 weeks and cost about \$328,000.

California’s piers are always at risk

Other lurking threats to the piers are less predictable. San Francisco’s historic Municipal Pier was closed indefinitely by the National Park Service in 2022 after a 5.1 magnitude earthquake triggered an assessment that deemed it unsafe for public use. The 1,400-foot walkway was built in 1929 and had been in dire need of repair for some time. A popular fishing spot, as well as a destination for both locals and tourists since it creates the city’s popular Aquatic Park Cove, the pier provides vital protection as a breakwater to swimmers, rowers and the historic ships docked at Hyde Street Pier.

Much of the damage to Municipal Pier over the years has been from winter storms and crashing waves, but it has also endured other harm, like a freighter crashing into it in 1953. Repairs have been estimated to be as high as \$150 million and there are no current plans to reopen or repair the pier.



An aerial view of Aquatic Park in San Francisco, with Municipal Pier in the foreground.
Mindaugas Dulinskas/Getty Images/iStockphoto

“We can propose these projects to have them repaired, but we at the local level don’t get to make that decision,” Dale Dualan, spokesperson for the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, said at the time of the closure.

Just last month, a fire engulfed Oceanside Pier north of San Diego, originating from one of its restaurant buildings at the edge of the dock. About 90% of the pier was saved, according to reports, and local officials declared an emergency this week to gain funds to fix the structure. It remains closed until further notice, and there’s no estimate yet of what repairs will cost. In its history, it has been damaged and rebuilt five times.

But as costs balloon over time, UCSC’s Beck said, the question of whether to save these beautiful relics of the past will become harder and harder for community leaders to answer.

“We absolutely have to be assessing the real costs and benefits,” he said. “... But we really at least need to be aware of the consequences to our budgets of doing that and the choices that it impacts in the future.”



East Bay officials release rattlesnake advisory as more sightings by hikers are being reported

Bay City News

Friday, May 3, 2024 6:00PM

The East Bay Regional Park District issued a rattlesnake advisory this week as more of the reptiles are being spotted by hikers.

OAKLAND, Calif. -- It's that time of the year again when sunny spring weather brings snakes slithering across trails to warm up their cold blood.

The East Bay Regional Park District issued a rattlesnake advisory this week as more of the reptiles are being spotted by hikers.

The district said snakes are emerging from winter hibernation and becoming more active. Rattlesnakes are native to California and occur in a variety of wildland habitats, as well as in rural and urban areas.

Snakes are more active in warm weather, which can lead to more encounters with humans and dogs, especially along trails and roads.

The district urges visitors to keep snake safety precautions in mind when visiting East Bay Regional Parks throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

"Snakes are an important resource in the natural environment. They are prime controlling agents of rodents and other reptile populations," the district said in a statement. "Enjoy them from afar and leave them where they are found. Collecting, killing, or removing any plants or animals from the Park District is illegal. Please help protect all wildlife and their environment."

The district issued some tips to avoid unpleasant encounters with rattlesnakes, saying people should avoid hiking alone so they have help in case of emergency. They should scan the ground ahead of them as they walk, jog, or ride. Stay on trails and avoid walking in tall grass and look carefully around and under logs and rocks before sitting down.

The district also said to listen for the buzz of a rattlesnake's rattle, warning of its presence. People should avoid placing their hands or feet where they cannot see clearly. And keep dogs on a leash.

Anyone who sees a rattlesnake should leave it alone. Don't try to capture or harm it. All native wildlife is protected by law, and it is safest to leave it alone. Do not approach a rattlesnake. Move carefully and slowly away or around it while giving it plenty of space.

If bitten by a snake, stay calm and have someone call 911. Lie down with the affected limb lower than the heart. Getting medical attention quickly is critical -- do not use tourniquets, "sucking,"

or snake bite kits. If someone is by themselves, they should walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911. Do not run.

If bitten by another type of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention. If someone is unsure what kind of snake bit them, check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases one puncture mark) associated with intense, burning pain. This is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites may leave multiple teeth marks without associated burning pain.

People don't need to identify the specific type of rattlesnake to receive the correct antivenom. The Northern Pacific rattlesnake is the species found in East Bay Regional Parks.

Download the district's common snakes brochure [here](#). Additional information is available [here](#).

Parks district celebrates itself, updated park

May 1, 2024 Updated May 2, 2024



ParkFest: Celebrate 90 years of East Bay Regional Parks

ParkFest – the celebration of East Bay Regional Park District’s 90th birthday – comes to Lake Chabot Regional Park, 17600 Lake Chabot Road in Castro Valley, on May 11.

The free celebration is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and features musical and other performances, a kids’ zone with hands-on fun, nature exhibits, activities, food trucks, eco-friendly games, and more.

This year marks nine decades since a group of local leaders, inspired by some of America’s first conservationists, successfully brought the creation of the East Bay Regional Park District to residents. It’s time to celebrate the open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation, and environmental education provided by that incredible vision 90 years ago. Please join East Bay Parks at its free birthday festival for the entire community.

“Taking this moment to reflect and commemorate our past will help us flourish in our next 90, even 100 years,” said Park District General Manager Sabrina Landreth. “We are the largest regional park district in the nation, we are highly regarded, well loved, and we look forward to growing more inclusive and accessible for our park visitors.”

Check the ParkFest webpage for updated information on alternative transportation methods (biking, busing), and trip planning as parking is limited.

ParkFest is accessible by BART, and a free shuttle will be available to and from Bay Fair station.

Recreation area in Oakland renovated, expanded

The East Bay has another park to enjoy this summer and beyond after a ribbon-cutting ceremony at newly renovated and expanded Roberts Regional Recreation Area, 10570 Skyline Boulevard, in Oakland last weekend.

Visitors can now enjoy the increased size of the pool, including additional shallow areas for recreational activity, swim lessons, and training, East Bay Parks officials said in a press release. The upgraded facility also includes a new changing room building with restrooms, which include gender-neutral facilities and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Roberts Pool Renovation Project was made possible through funding from California State Parks, Measure WW, Regional Parks Foundation, the Park District, and a bequest from John and Ellen Sutter.



PAIR TIED TO 13 PARK DISTRICT AUTO BURGLARIES ARRESTED

written by CC News May 2, 2024



Image by EBRPD

The [East Bay Regional Park District Police Department](#) announced the arrest of two men in connection with multiple auto burglaries throughout Contra Costa County.

According to Park District Police, they arrested **Brian Ray, 45** of Bay Point and **Daniel Gillaspay, 42** of Antioch, who were connected to at least 13 burglary cases since December 1, 2023.

Recently, Ray and Gillaspay were arrested on warrants from their agency and have been booked into the Martinez Detention Facility.

Locations and dates

- 12/01/2023- Contra Loma Regional Park/Antioch
- 12/03/2023- Contra Loma Regional Park/Antioch
- 12/29/2023- Round Valley Regional Preserve/Brentwood
- 12/31/2023- Contra Loma Regional Park/Antioch
- 01/09/2024- Round Valley Regional Preserve/Brentwood
- 02/11/2024- Round Valley Regional Preserve/Brentwood
- 02/11/2024- Contra Loma Regional Park/Antioch
- 02/18/2024- Castle Rock Regional Recreation Area/Walnut Creek
- 02/24/2024- Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail/Lafayette
- 03/11/2024- Briones Regional Park/Martinez
- 03/22/2024- Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve/Antioch
- 03/26/2024- Big Break Regional Shoreline/Oakley
- 03/27/2024- Castle Rock Regional Recreation Area/Walnut Creek

2023 California Vehicle Theft Facts:

- In 2023, 202,802 vehicles were stolen, at an estimated total value of \$1.8 billion. This is a 2.1 percent increase from the 2022 total for vehicle thefts statewide. The average rate of vehicle thefts in 2023 was approximately one vehicle every 2 minutes and 36 seconds with an average loss of \$8,876 per stolen vehicle.
- Of the 202,802 vehicles stolen in 2023, 44.2 percent were personal trucks and sport utility vehicles (SUV), 41 percent were automobiles, 5.8 percent were commercial trucks and trailers, and 4.3 percent were motorcycles. All other vehicles (e.g., recreational vehicles, construction and farm equipment, special construction) accounted for 4.7 percent of thefts
- Approximately 21.6 percent of all vehicle thefts occurred in the San Francisco Bay Area (Alameda, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties). Of the vehicle thefts in the San Francisco Bay Area, 53.8 percent occurred in Alameda County.

In 2023, for the second time, the top three stolen automobiles were:

1. 2015 Kia Optima
 2. 2000 Honda Civic
 3. 1998 Honda Civic
-

Rattlesnake season is here. Here's how to stay safe

East Bay Regional Park District has issued a rattlesnake advisory.

by [Callie Rhoades](#) May 1, 2024, 4:00 p.m.



Rattlesnakes may be more visible in East Bay parks as the weather warms up.

Credit: Courtesy of the East Bay Regional Park District

The sun is coming out, the hiking trails are heating up, and more East Bay residents are heading out to get some vitamin D. But they're not the only ones looking to soak up the sun. With warmer temperatures on their way, the local rattlesnake population is also taking to the trails.

On April 30, the East Bay Regional Park district issued a rattlesnake advisory, advising park visitors how to stay safe this summer as rattlesnakes emerge from hibernation.

In the wintertime, when temperatures consistently drop below 60 degrees, the cold-blooded rattlesnakes go into a "hibernation-like state" known as brumation which they can stay in for several months, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Once the weather warms up, they become more active, especially at dawn and dusk when they are at lower risk of overheating. The reptiles use the sun and changing temperatures to regulate their body functions.

Rattlesnakes are a vital part of our California ecosystem. They live in a diverse range of habitats, including rural, urban, forested, and desert environments. They also help manage rodent and other reptile populations.

While usually not an aggressive animal—rattlesnakes tend to avoid people, and bites are extremely rare—they can be dangerous if they feel threatened. East Bay Regional Park officials warn parkgoers to take necessary precautions to keep themselves and the rattlesnakes safe.

When heading out onto a trail, it's important to keep your eyes on the path and scan for any rattlesnakes that may be lying out. Similarly, if you're resting on a log or rock, make sure to

check the area before you sit down. Remember to always stay on the trail and avoid walking in tall grass. You can also keep an ear out for the rattlesnake's telltale buzz of its rattle, which acts as a warning from the animal.

If you do happen to see a rattlesnake, leave it be. Move slowly and carefully around or away from the animal, giving it lots of space.

In the unlikely event that you are bitten by a rattlesnake, remain calm and have someone call 911 immediately. The park district also advises that you keep the affected limb below your heart. You should not use a tourniquet or try to remove the venom yourself. If you are alone, call 911 or walk calmly to the nearest phone. You should avoid running, but seeking medical care as soon as you are able is vital.

The parks district also has additional information on [wildlife encounters](#) as well as resources to [properly identify rattlesnakes](#).

Rattlesnake advisory issued by East Bay Regional Park District as weather heats up

May 1, 2024 / 3:10 PM PDT / CBS/Bay City News Service

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Snake Safety Tips

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If bitten by a snake, stay calm and have someone call 911. Lie down with the affected limb lower than the heart. Getting medical attention quickly is critical -- do not use tourniquets, "sucking,"

or snake bite kits. If someone is by themselves, they should walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911. Do not run.

If bitten by another type of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention. If someone is unsure what kind of snake bit them, check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases one puncture mark) associated with intense, burning pain. This is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites may leave multiple teeth marks without associated burning pain.

People don't need to identify the specific type of rattlesnake to receive the correct antivenom. The Northern Pacific rattlesnake is the species found in East Bay Regional Parks.

East Bay Regional Park District issues rattlesnake advisory

April 30, 2024



Photo courtesy of the East Bay Regional Park District.

The East Bay Regional Park District released an advisory today on rattlesnakes, which emerge from winter hibernation in early spring and become more active.

Warm weather can bring more potential for rattlesnake encounters with humans and dogs, particularly along trails and roads.

Visitors are encouraged to avoid hiking alone in case of an emergency, to scan the ground ahead as they walk, jog or ride, stay on trails avoiding tall grass, and to look carefully around and under logs and rocks before sitting down. Keep your dog on your leash to be extra safe, park officials said.

If you encounter a rattlesnake, leave it alone – it is unlawful to capture or harm one. Move carefully and slowly away or around it and give it plenty of space, park officials said.

Those who are bitten by a rattlesnake are instructed to stay calm by lying down with the affected limb lower than the heart, then having someone call 911. Getting medical attention is critical. Those bitten should not use tourniquets, “sucking,” or snake bite kits. If you are by yourself, walk calmly to the nearest source of help to dial 911, do not run.

If bitten by any other type of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention.



Not sure what bit you? Check the bite for two puncture marks (in rare cases one) associated with intense, burning pain, which is typical of a rattlesnake bite. Other snakebites can leave marks without associated burning pain.

The Northern Pacific rattlesnake is the species found in East Bay Regional Parks. Snakes are important to the natural environment, helping to control rodents and other reptile populations. But enjoy them from afar.

For more information, download the Park District's [Common Snakes](#) brochure or watch our [Gopher Snake or Rattlesnake](#) video to learn how to tell the difference between rattlesnakes and gopher snakes. Additional information is available at ebparks.org/safety/wildlife-encounters.



Mount Diablo Blooms: 12 Good Places to See Spring Wildflowers

With early, heavy rain, wildflowers are already blooming on and around Mount Diablo and across the Diablo Range. Here are 12 of our favorite spots to visit now and in the coming weeks and months.

1. Mitchell Canyon in Mount Diablo State Park

For many locals around Mount Diablo, this is a fan-favorite trailhead. At the interpretive center at the start of the trailhead, there's a native plant garden and cool stuff for kids to touch and ask questions about. Trails offer a wide variety of wildflowers, stunning ancient oaks, lots of birds, and interesting geologic features.

2. Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve

Black Diamond Mines was once the largest coal mining operation in California, and you can still experience the life of a miner in the visitor's center.

From March through November, you can also tour the mines. (Tours require advance reservations, but tour tickets are only \$5 each, and the visitor's center is free. A \$5 parking fee may apply.)

Now nature largely has restored itself to spectacular beauty and ecological health. Look closely and you might spot entire hillsides covered in wildflowers right now!

3. Contra Loma Regional Park

Wildflowers are popping out all over the place at Contra Loma right now. A leisurely stroll around the reservoir will give you a good vantage point to spot a lot of them.

Contra Loma also has lots of good places to picnic, and many species of birds to enjoy. You might spot an American

white pelican or a great blue heron.

4. Morgan Territory Regional Preserve

Visit the morning side of Mount Diablo. The regional park sprawls across more than 5,000 acres, with trail connections to Round Valley Regional Preserve, Los Vaqueros Watershed, and Mount Diablo State Park. Its ridgetop views make you feel like you're on top of the world.

5. Round Valley Regional Preserve

Round Valley has big, wide-open meadows as well as blue oak-studded hills to climb. Several tree-lined creeks cross the park, including Marsh Creek, which kids like to explore during the months when streams are running.

In addition to beautiful wildflower displays, Round Valley offers good habitat for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox.

6. Henry W. Coe State Park



Yerba mansa (*Anemopsis californica*) at Doolan Canyon Regional Preserve by Scott Hein



California Poppies on Shell Ridge, photo by Jannine Lefevre



Mount Diablo globe lily, a wildflower only found on and around Mount Diablo, at Morgan Territory Regional Preserve. Photo: Scott Hein

This is the largest state park in northern California. With 87,000 acres of terrain, there's plenty of opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and botanizing.

It is less than a two-hour drive from Mount Diablo State Park.

7. Sunol Wilderness Regional Preserve

Sunol Wilderness feels remote but is only 20 miles from Pleasanton or Fremont. The park is home to spectacular spring wildflower displays, intriguing rocks, and Alameda Creek.

The visitor's center has animals that kids can interact with and settlers' costumes they can try on. Sunol is also home to lots of interesting bat species.

8. Ohlone Wilderness Regional Preserve

To get into the Ohlone Wilderness,

you need to hike or ride your way in on horseback. The centerpiece of this nearly 10,000-acre park is Rose Peak, which is just 32 feet lower than Mount Diablo. Surrounding the peak are grassy ridges covered in flowers in the spring. Keep an eye out; you may see golden eagles, mountain lions, and tule elk.

9. Pinnacles National Park

Come see the wildflowers bloom at California's newest national park. While you are there, you might spot a California condor — the condors that recently visited Mount Diablo came from Pinnacles.

10. Del Valle Regional Park

This park has awesome wildflowers and a fairly new visitor's center. You can also rent boats and paddle around on the lake there.

It is easy to rent a cabin or a reserve a campsite at Del Valle (reservations open four weeks prior, which means it is a good place to go if you are planning an overnight trip with short notice).

11. Del Puerto Canyon

Feeling adventurous? Visit the less-traveled Del Puerto Canyon, which burned in the 2020 wildfires. Make this a scenic road trip, by taking Del Puerto Canyon Road to get there, or Mines Road. Want to hike? Park at the Frank Raines or the Minniear Day Use Area.

12. Mines Road

A loop from the back side of Mount Hamilton over to Mines Road or Del Puerto Canyon is one of the best routes to see wildflowers blooming.

Updated on April 25, 2024, Save Mount Diablo



PARKFEST: CELEBRATE 90 YEARS OF EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS

EBRPD

written by [CC News](#) April 25, 2024



On May 11, the East Bay Regional Park District will Host Parkfest, a 90th Birthday Celebration held at Lake Chabot Regional Park.

This year marks nine decades since a group of local leaders, inspired by some of America’s first conservationists, successfully brought the creation of the East Bay Regional Park District to residents. It’s time to celebrate the open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation, and environmental education provided by that incredible vision 90 years ago. Please join East Bay Parks at its free birthday festival for the entire community.

“Taking this moment to reflect and commemorate our past will help us flourish in our next 90, even 100 years,” said Park District General Manager Sabrina Landreth. “We are the largest regional park district in the nation, we are highly regarded, well loved, and we look forward to growing more inclusive and accessible for our park visitors.”

- Who: Open and accessible to all
- What: [ParkFest](#) – 90th Birthday Celebration of East Bay Regional Park District
- FREE event featuring musical and other performances, a kids’ zone with hands-on fun, nature exhibits
- and activities, food trucks, eco-friendly games, and more!
- When: Saturday, May 11, 2024

- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Where: Lake Chabot Regional Park (17600 Lake Chabot Road, Castro Valley, CA 94546)

Please check the ParkFest [webpage](#) for updated information on alternative transportation methods (biking, busing), and trip planning as parking is limited.

ParkFest is [BARTable](#) and a free shuttle will be available to and from Bay Fair Station.

Performers: Grammy Award-Winning [Alphabet Rockers](#), [Anthony Ant of Oakadelic](#), [Los Cenzontles](#), [Black Cat Zydeco](#), [White Crane Dragon and Lion Dance Association](#), [Berkeley High School Jazz Band](#), [Prescott Circus](#), [Asheba Caribbean Music](#), [Silly Circus Show](#), magic and bubble shows, and more!

Food and beverages for purchase provided by [Golden Gate Gyro](#), [Waffle Roost](#), [Coolinaria](#), [The Geez Freeze](#), and [Drake's Brewing Company](#).

East Bay Regional Park District thanks our other sponsors and community partners: [Oaklandish](#), [GirlVentures](#), [Civicorps](#), [Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program](#), [The Oaklandside](#), [Berkeleyside](#), and [KOED](#).

EAST BAY TIMES

Finishing largest creek restoration project in East Bay Regional Park District's history took four years, about \$10 million

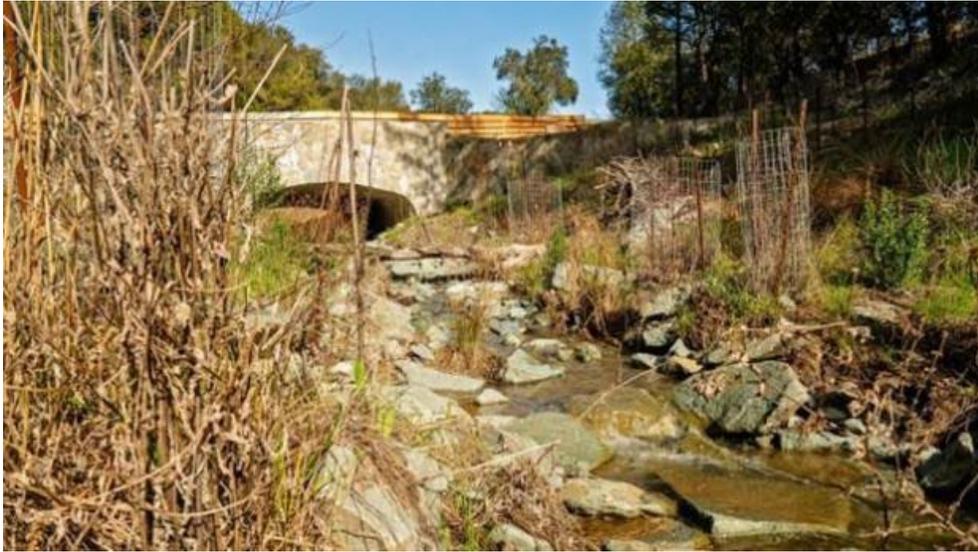


photo courtesy of the East Bay Regional Park District

A newly restored and daylighted creek flows through Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. Finishing the largest creek restoration project in the East Bay Regional Park District's history took four years and some \$10 million.

By [GINNY PRIOR](#) | Columnist

PUBLISHED: April 24, 2024 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: April 24, 2024 at 6:23 a.m.

Mother Nature may put an exclamation point on April this weekend. Showers are possible in some parts of the region as we wrap up Earth Month and a productive rainy season for the Bay Area.

One of the season's benefactors is a pure strain of rainbow trout, spotted in the creek at the newly opened Eastport Staging Area to Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve. It took four years and some \$10 million to finish the largest creek restoration project in the East Bay Regional Park District's history, opening up about a half-mile of creeks that had been either buried or redirected through culverts.

Along with rainbow trout, hikers who enter through the Pinehurst Road gate may see Cooper's hawks, white-tailed kites and other native wildlife feeding along the three-mile McCosker Ranch loop trail.

"We're hoping for some 300 types of animals that could visit the area," says park district naturalist Susan Ramos, who adds that even threatened and endangered wildlife like the red-legged frog and the Alameda whip snake may move back in. The San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat may even make a return.

"It's a native rat, and its great because it provides food for golden eagles, raptors and owls," says Ramos.

The project manager for the creek restoration, Carmen Erasmus, says crews planted more than four acres of native habitat including willows, live oak and alders. She says the alders they planted in 2020 have tapped into ground water and some are close to 30 feet tall now. In the culvert under Pinehurst Road, they installed fish baffles so the trout can migrate from San Leandro Creek to the restoration area's connecting creeks.

From 9:30 a.m. until noon May 4, naturalist Michael Charnofsky will lead a group hike from Eastport Station. The Park District is not taking reservations for this free hike, but you may want to carpool because there are only nine spaces in the parking lot, plus two handicapped spots.

Other tips: No dogs are allowed in this entrance to the park. A portable toilet will have to do until completion of the project's second phase, which will include restroom facilities and a group campsite.

For history buffs, you can still see some of the old Sacramento Northern rail line, which traveled from the Oakland hills through a tunnel and exited near the Eastport Station.

Discover Tilden Park Golf Course



AGC SF Bay Area Shoot 2011-Tilden Park GC, Berkeley, CA 94708

Nestled among the rolling hills above UC–Berkeley, Tilden Park Golf Course offers more than just a round of golf—it presents an experience. As you wind your way up the Berkeley Hills, the drive to the course gifts you with glimpses of the stunning Bay Area panorama below, hinting at the awe-inspiring journey awaiting you.

Spanning 6,294 yards of meticulously designed landscape, this championship course crafted by William Park Bell Jr. promises an adventure like no other. With its tree-lined fairways, contoured greens, and a backdrop of natural parkland, Tilden Park Golf Course transports you to a world seemingly miles away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

But it's not just the scenery that sets Tilden Park Golf Course apart—it's the experience. Awarded the Best Golf Course for Oakland and the East Bay in 2010 by the SF Guardian's Best of the Bay, this course prides itself on offering not just a round of golf, but an unforgettable journey. Whether you're here to test your skills on our challenging layout or have lunch with friends, exceptional service is always at the forefront.

As a part of the East Bay Regional Park system, Tilden Park Golf Course is deeply committed to preserving the natural beauty that makes the Bay Area so unique. And the commitment to excellence doesn't end there. Exciting developments are on the horizon, with the unveiling of our newly renovated and rebranded bar and grill, The Overlook. Featuring a terrace boasting

brehtaking views and a revamped menu sure to tantalize taste buds, it's set to become the go-to spot for golfers and socialites alike.

But that's not all. Tilden Park Golf Course continues to enhance its offerings, with recent upgrades to our three-story driving range. Now resodded with lush grass, equipped with new range balls and mats, and featuring convenient credit card machines, perfecting your swing has never been easier. Plus, with lessons, leagues, and an array of course-hosted events, there's something for every level of golfer.

So, whether you're seeking a challenging round of golf, a picturesque venue for your next lunch with friends, or simply a place to unwind amidst nature's splendor, Tilden Park Golf Course invites you to embark on an unforgettable journey—one that begins with us.

For more information visit www.tildenparkgc.com or call us at (510) 848-7373