



[Bay Area NewsContra Costa County](#)

EBRPD LAUNCHES ANNUAL TRAILS CHALLENGE PROGRAM

Press Release

written by [CC News](#) January 17, 2024



Oakland, CA – For the past 31 years, the East Bay Regional Park District has encouraged the public to explore their Regional Parks through its annual Trails Challenge program. The free program connects people with nature and healthy recreation by providing 20 designated trails

for each year's challenge.

The 2024 Guidebook includes 20 trails available for all levels of fitness, ranging from easy and moderate to challenging. There are trails open to hikers, bicyclists, dogs, and equestrians. Trails Challenge 2024 also offers increased accessibility with trails that have been evaluated and identified as usable by persons with mobility limitations.

To complete the challenge, hike five of the 20 trails, or 26.2 miles (the distance of a marathon) of trails within East Bay Regional Park District. You can submit your log, online or by mail, by December 1, 2024, and receive a commemorative pin, while supplies last.

Trails Challenge is made possible in partnership with the Regional Parks Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, who have both sponsored Trails Challenge since 2005.

Download the 2024 EBRPD Trails Challenge and learn more at ebparks.org/TC.

Tips for the Trails

East Bay Regional Parks are popular with hikers, bikers, equestrians, and nature viewers, among others. Help keep trails enjoyable for all by following these tips for the trails:

- *Hikers:* Stay to the right and stay alert
- *Bikers:* Slow down around others and call out or ring your bell when passing
- *Equestrians:* Keep to the right around other trail users and let them know how to pass your horse safely

More tips for trail safety can be found on our Trails are for Everyone

webpage: www.ebparks.org/about-us/whats-new/news/trails-are-everyone.



EAST BAY PARK DISTRICT TO HOST MLK DAY OF SERVICE

written by [CC News](#) January 15, 2024



The East Bay regional Park District invites the community to attend the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service shoreline clean-up event on Monday, January 15 from 9am to noon.

The event honoring Dr. King

will take place at various locations within Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. REGIONAL SHORELINE: All over the nation, the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service inspires Americans to come together and serve their communities. Every year, to celebrate the MLK holiday, citizens engage in service to empower and strengthen our communities and bring us closer to his vision of a “Beloved Community.”

We are hosting volunteer projects at the following MLK Shoreline Locations

- Shoreline Cleanup at Tidewater Boating Center
- Gardening and Maintenance at MLK Grove
- Shoreline Cleanup at Oakport Staging Area

Choose a location above to register!

If you would like to bring a group, please register yourself and then call (510) 544-2229.

For general information, call (510) 544-3187.

To celebrate 90 years, East Bay Regional Park District invites you to explore your parks

Founded in 1934, the park district has been tending wild and recreational places in Oakland's backyard.

by [Callie Rhoades](#) Jan. 12, 2024, 3:00 p.m.



Members of the first East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors and the first park district general manager next to signs pointing parkgoers to recreation areas. Credit: courtesy of East Bay Regional Park District

Whether it's the soaring redwoods at [Reinhardt Regional Redwood Preserve](#) or the Bay lapping along [Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline](#), the East Bay Regional Park District is home to some of the Bay Area's most iconic landscapes. And 2024 marks the district's 90th birthday.

Established in 1934, the district is now the largest of its kind in the U.S., with 73 parks, including 125,000 acres of parklands, 55 acres of shoreline, and 1,300 miles of trails.

Throughout 2024, the district will celebrate its 90th birthday with programs and events across its vast array of parks. These include outdoor activities, walking tours, and educational seminars dedicated to honoring the district's community, ecosystems, and legacy.

“It's been 90 years of creating a district out of preservation and looking towards the future,” said Jen Vanya, public information specialist of the park district.

The park district's humble beginnings

In the early 20th century, the farmers and residents scattered in the East Bay hills were struggling to maintain consistent freshwater access. The [East Bay Municipal Utility District](#) was formed in 1923 and began acquiring land from other utility companies to help solve the area's water problems. In the process, they accumulated an excess of 10,000 acres of watershed.

This caught the attention of residents who envisioned the acreage as a potential “Grand Park” that would stretch from Lake Chabot in San Leandro to Wildcat Canyon in Richmond.

This local desire for parklands reflected a larger national movement that was growing at the time—[the early conservation movement](#). The movement took shape between the 1850s and the 1920s, leading to the formation of numerous environmental organizations and legislation to set aside millions of acres of land for conservation and recreation.

Thousands of environmental activists and residents across the East Bay formed the East Bay Regional Park Association in the early 1930s. They lobbied state and local officials for an official park district which they claimed would not only help protect lands and water but would also provide vital outdoor activities and employment opportunities for people during the Great Depression. In 1933, then-governor James Rolph signed

a bill that approved the formation of a park district. In 1934, the last necessary step was completed when the public voted in favor of the plan, and the East Bay Regional Park District was formed.

Vanya said that this advocacy for the parklands to be established is foundational to how the park district views itself today.

“It goes back to the foundation of the park district, all the way back to the 1920s, before the park district existed, it was civic leaders who came together and communities who rallied around it,” said Vanya.

The park district has always shared a vision with community members and local agencies to make preservation and conservation of park spaces a priority, Vanya said.

After the district’s inception, the population of the Bay Area rapidly increased. The park district responded by acquiring new land across Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

The first three parks created by the district were Upper Wildcat Canyon, now known as [Charles Lee Tilden Regional Park](#), [Temescal Regional Recreation Area](#), and Roundtop, now referred to as [Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve](#). By the late 1950’s the district had formed three more parks and it kept on acquiring land. The East Bay Regional Park District now boasts 73 parks.

Upcoming events to celebrate the East Bay Regional Park District

The beauty and reprieve from the city life the parks offer have touched the lives of countless residents. In recent years, the park district’s preserves, trails, and recreation areas have seen an average of 25 million visitors annually.

Starting in 2016, the University of California Berkeley's [Oral History Center](#) at the Bancroft Library started work on a [project](#), in collaboration with the park district, about the legacy of the parklands. The interviews shed light on the history of the park district and its impact on the community. Former park employees from the mid- to late-20th century, their children, as well as other Bay Area residents, shared their experiences.

"I feel like I'm a world away when I leave Alameda and I go up to the top of the hill, get out of the car, and you see so many people enjoying it," said Johanna Hall, daughter of Ansel F. Hall, the National Park Service's First Chief Naturalist, in an interview with the center. "It's wonderful [at Redwood Regional Park]."

Others shared their hopes for the future of the district.

"I just want to see it continue and thrive," said Joan Suzio, a longtime park district employee and former ranger.

In [recent social media posts](#) shared by the district about the anniversary, commenters across platforms shared their gratitude and support for the historic parklands.

In return, the district has dedicated resources to make sure the parks, the ecosystems that rely on them, and the people who enjoy them, continue to thrive.

Park district staff manage vegetation, freshwater resources, and vital habitat for the East Bay's diverse range of flora and fauna. This includes [dedicated planning](#) towards protecting biodiversity, managing water quality concerns, wildfire mitigation, and climate adaptation.

They have also recently [hired](#) a new assistant general manager of public safety and police chief to help in maintaining the safety of the parks' numerous visitors.

“I am excited to be part of an organization that cares about engaging with the public and providing positive experiences in nature and recreational opportunities with safety in mind,” said Chief Roberto Filice.

The park district is also supported by volunteers and its non-profit partner, the [Regional Parks Foundation](#). The district often hosts a variety of cleanup, restoration, and educational activities for its volunteers.

This interaction and dedication to the community is what, according to Lauren Bernstein, executive director of the Regional Parks Foundation, makes the East Bay Regional Park District Special.

“There are adults now that grew up going to the parks and coming to some of our programs and now they’re sending their kids too and it’s really awesome to see that,” said Bernstein.

As a way of commemorating its 90th birthday, the district is putting on a handful of interactive events, volunteer opportunities, and programs throughout the year that prioritize stewardship and education.

Upcoming events range from [a tide walk at Hayward Regional Shoreline](#) to [a bioblitz in Sunol](#). Residents can also join several [walks taking place](#) in February in honor of Black History Month at [Thurgood Marshall Regional Park](#) which are dedicated to exploring the natural and human history of the area, as well as a [“Winter Walk” at Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline](#).

In addition, the district will host a spring anniversary celebration and monthly naturalist-led “Explore Your Parks” adventure programs.

“We welcome everyone to come celebrate with us throughout the whole year,” said Vanya.

Events will be taking place throughout the year. Learn more about which events are coming up [here](#).

East Bay parks district names police chief

- Jan 11, 2024 Updated Jan 11, 2024



After a nationwide search, the East Bay Regional Park District said this week that Roberto Filice is its new Assistant General Manager of Public Safety and Police Chief.

The East Bay Regional Park District's mission is to preserve a rich heritage of natural and cultural resources and provide open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation and environmental education. An environmental ethic guides the District in all of its activities. Filice will be sworn in on Jan. 22.

The Assistant General Manager of Public Safety and Police Chief position will further enhance the vital work of fire, police and lifeguard services, knowing that public safety and quality of life are both personal and shared responsibilities for all visitors.

As the largest regional park district in the country, the park system spans Alameda and Contra Costa counties and serves an estimated 30 million visitors a year through park and trail access, visitor centers, and programs. Its workforce provides

services that encompass 73 parks, 55 miles of shoreline, and over 1,300 miles of trails. With an expansive area and diverse lands, the Park District's Public Safety Division comprises Police, Fire, and Lifeguard Services. The Police Department includes the Air Support Unit, Marine Patrol, Equestrian Patrols, Investigations Unit, and a 24-hour per day 9-1-1 Communications Center.

"We are pleased to welcome Chief Roberto Filice, a highly seasoned leader and law enforcement executive with over 25 years of dedicated public service, to the East Bay Regional Park District," said Sabrina Landreth, parks district general manager.

"I am excited to be part of an organization that cares about engaging with the public and providing positive experiences in nature and recreational opportunities with safety in mind," Filice said. "With a community-focused and team-oriented approach, I am ready to build partnerships, mentor and support career development opportunities, collaborate to enhance our work, and commit to serving the public in my role at the East Bay Regional Park District."

With decades of experience, Filice has served as the Chief of the Salinas Police Department since 2021, following his tenure there as Assistant Chief for four years. During his tenure, his strategic vision, in alignment with the principles of 21st century policing, was centered on crime reduction.

Blue-Green Algae Found at Del Valle and Shadow Cliffs Lakes

- By Ruth Roberts

Jan 11, 2024



(Photo - Doug Jorgensen)

REGIONAL – People and animals are being warned to stay out of Del Valle Lake in Livermore and the lake at Shadow Cliffs in Pleasanton after high levels of toxic algae were found in the water.

“The safety of the public is the park district’s top priority,” said East Bay Regional Park District spokesman Dave Mason. “We understand the public’s concerns, but toxins from algae in the water can harm people and animals ... visitors should follow all signage.”

Blue-green algae occurs in most inland waters and can have significant effects on the water quality and functioning of aquatic ecosystems. Under certain conditions, such as warm temperatures, calm weather and specific nutrients in the water, the blooms may release toxins that can make people and animals sick.

Exposure to the toxins can lead to headaches, skin irritation, vomiting and diarrhea. If you think you've been affected by blue-green algae, experts advise seeking medical attention.

The lakes remain open for boating, but people and pets are restricted from swimming or going in the water.

Signs warn the following:

Do not touch scum in the water or on shore

Do not let pets go into the water, drink it or go near the scum

Do not use water from the lake for cooking. Boiling or filtering will not make the water safe

Small watercraft and float tubes are not recommended

For fish caught, throw away the guts and clean fillets with tap water or bottled water before cooking

Mason said there are no immediate plans to treat the algae. Climate conditions change rapidly and it's possible the blooms will fade on their own. The park district will continue to monitor the situation. Danger advisories have also been issued for Contra Loma in Antioch and Lake Temescal in Oakland.

This isn't the first time in recent months that blue-green algae closed East Bay lakes. Last Fourth of July, park officials posted "danger" advisories at Lake Temescal in Oakland and Quarry Lakes Regional Recreation Area in Fremont and banned swimming, boating, and fishing at both lakes.

For more information, visit, www.ebparks.org.

Park District Names New Head of Public Safety

- Jan 10, 2024 Updated Jan 10, 2024



Roberto Filice is the East Bay Regional Park District's (EBRPD) new police chief and assistant general manager. (Photo courtesy: EBRPD)

Roberto Filice, who has headed the Salinas, California, police department since 2021, has been named assistant general manager for public safety and police chief by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).

EBRPD said Filice, who has master's degrees in both business administration and criminal justice administration from Columbia Southern University in Alabama, will assume his new position on Monday, Jan. 22.

According to his LinkedIn profile, Filice also has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from Mountain State University in West Virginia and completed the FBI National Academy Leadership Development program in 2014.

"We are pleased to welcome Chief Roberto Filice, a highly seasoned leader and law enforcement executive with over 25 years of dedicated public service, to the East Bay

Regional Park District,” said General Manager Sabrina Landreth. “We look forward to his leadership and strong sense of community service in this important role that prioritizes public safety, quality of life, and exceptional park experiences.”

Filice replaces former assistant general manager Anthony Ciaburro, who resigned last March after seven years with EBRPD.

The EBRPD encompasses 73 parks and regional preserves in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including 55 miles of shoreline and 1,300 miles of trails. The district, one of the largest in the country, reports more than 30 million annual visitors.

The district’s Public Safety Division includes fire, lifeguard, and police services, including air support, marine, and equestrian patrols, and an investigative unit, along with a 24-hour 9-1-1 communications center. It has an annual budget exceeding \$41 million and during peak summer months employs about 450 people, including 150 lifeguards, 24 firefighters, and 77 full-time police officers.

“I am excited to be part of an organization that cares about engaging with the public and providing positive experiences in nature and recreational opportunities with safety in mind,” Filice said. “With a community-focused and team-oriented approach, I am ready to build partnerships, mentor and support career development opportunities, collaborate to enhance our work, and commit to serving the public in my new role.”

Felice joined the Salinas Police Department as assistant chief in 2017 and was promoted to chief of police in 2021. He also served five years as commander of the Marina, California, Police Department, and five years with the Seaside, California, Police Department, rising from patrol officer to sergeant.

Felice is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Police Executive Research Forum, and the California Police Chiefs Association, where he is the Central California representative on the board of directors.



New Police Chief Chosen At East Bay Regional Parks

Roberto Filice will be sworn-in on Jan. 22.

Bay City News, News Partner

Posted Wed, Jan 10, 2024 at 6:46 am PT



Roberto Filice has been appointed assistant general manager of public safety and police chief at the East Bay Regional Park District, according to an announcement Jan. 6, 2024. (East Bay Regional Park District via Bay City News)

EAST BAY — The chief of the Salinas Police Department has been appointed assistant general manager of public safety and police chief at the East Bay Regional Park District.

Roberto Filice, chief in Salinas since 2021 and assistant chief for the previous four years, will be sworn in and begin his duties on Jan. 22, the park district announced Saturday.

The largest regional park district in the country, the East Bay system spans Alameda and Contra Costa counties. It consists of 73 parks, 55 miles of shoreline, and more than 1,300 miles of trails.

Bay Area Outdoors: Where to get wet at East Bay parks with this weekend's King Tides

At shore parks across the Bay, here's where to experience these exceptionally high tides – and glimpse the future of climate change.



A man rides his bike along a flooded Sausalito/Mill Valley bike path during the "King Tide" in Mill Valley, California on January 3, 2022. (Photo by JOSH EDELSON/AFP via Getty Images)

By [JOHN METCALFE](#) | jmetcalfe@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group

PUBLISHED: January 9, 2024 at 12:07 p.m. | UPDATED: January 10, 2024 at 5:40 a.m.

The [king tides](#) are once again upon us. These extremely high tides, caused by [just the right gravitational alignment](#) of the sun and earth and moon, will sweep in from Jan. 11-12 to soak shoes, give bikers a taste of hydroplaning and – if we want to be real about it – lend us a picture of the future of climate change.

Tides as high as one to two feet above normal will flood shorelines around the Bay. Caltrans has [already announced](#) it's closing shoulder parking on Highway 1 in Tam Valley due to anticipated flooding. Other locations that will see inundation this weekend, as well as regularly in the future thanks to greenhouse-gas emissions pumping sea levels higher and higher, include the Hayward Regional Shoreline and the McLaughlin Eastshore State Park. All told, it will likely cost \$110 billion by 2050 to [protect the Bay Area shoreline](#) against this steady inward march of the oceans. If you want to peer into the crystal climatological ball this weekend, several public parks around the East Bay are staging king-tide activities to observe the swole waves and even get wet (or at least muddy). Here are [three events from the East Bay Regional Park District](#) to check out this weekend in Martinez, Alameda and Hayward; another round of king tides will arrive in February, and dates for those events are included as well:

[What are King Tides?](#) *Sun. Jan. 7 from 9-11 am | Sun. Jan. 14 from 2-4 pm*

"Come experience one of the highest tides of the year and a glimpse into the future. Discover what causes king tides and explore the tidal zone on this walk and talk. The terrain is flat, but not all paved. Please dress for the weather, wear boots or other shoes that can get wet, and expect to get a little wet." **Details:** Radke Martinez Regional Shoreline (Martinez) at the parking lot off N. Court St.

[King Tides at the Cove](#) *Fri. Jan. 12 from 11:30 am to noon | Fri. Feb. 9 from 10:30-11:30 am*

"Stop by during your lunch or morning break and watch as the king tide flows into the marine protected area. Participate in community science and take photos to help document this tidal event!" **Details:** Doug Siden Visitor Center at Crab Cove (Alameda)



[Bay Area News](#)

EBRPD ANNOUNCES NEW ASSISTANT GM OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND POLICE CHIEF

Press Release

written by [CC News](#) January 8, 2024



Photo by EBRPD

After a nationwide search, the [East Bay Regional Park District](#) announces the appointment of Chief **Roberto Filice** as its new Assistant General Manager of Public Safety and Police Chief at the public agency.

The East Bay Regional Park District's mission

is to preserve a rich heritage of natural and cultural resources and provide open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation and environmental education. An environmental ethic guides the District in all of its activities. Chief Filice will be sworn in and begin in the role on January 22, 2024.

As the largest regional park district in the country, the park system spans Alameda and Contra Costa counties and serves an estimated 30 million visitors a year through park and trail access, visitor centers, and programs. Its workforce provides services that encompass 73 parks, 55 miles of shoreline, and over 1,300 miles of trails. With an expansive area and diverse lands, the Park District's Public Safety Division comprises Police, Fire, and Lifeguard Services. The Police Department includes the Air Support Unit, Marine Patrol, Equestrian Patrols, Investigations Unit, and a 24-hour per day 9-1-1 Communications Center.

“We are pleased to welcome Chief Roberto Filice, a highly seasoned leader and law enforcement executive with over 25 years of dedicated public service, to the East Bay Regional Park District,” said Sabrina Landreth, General Manager at the East Bay Regional Park District. “We look forward to his leadership and strong sense of community service in this important role that prioritizes public safety, quality of life, and exceptional park experiences.”

“I am excited to be part of an organization that cares about engaging with the public and providing positive experiences in nature and recreational opportunities with safety in mind,” said Chief Roberto Filice. “With a community-focused and team-oriented approach, I am ready to build partnerships, mentor and support career development opportunities, collaborate to enhance our work, and commit to serving the public in my role at the East Bay Regional Park District.”

The Assistant General Manager of Public Safety and Police Chief position will further enhance the vital work of Fire, Police and Lifeguard Services, knowing that public safety and quality of life are both personal and shared responsibilities for all community members.

With decades of experience, Chief Filice has served as the Chief of the **Salinas Police Department** since 2021, following his tenure there as Assistant Chief for four years. During his distinguished tenure, his strategic vision, in alignment with the principles of 21st Century Policing, was centered on crime reduction, fostering new opportunities for officer career development, enhancing organizational efficiency through technological advancements, and a steadfast commitment to refining and cultivating community relationships.

Chief Filice’s academic achievements include the successful completion of the FBI National Academy (Session 255), Senior Management Institute in Policing (SMIP), FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar (LEEDS), Peace Officers Standards and Training Executive Certificate, a Master of Business Administration in Public Administration, and Master of Science degrees in Criminal Justice Administration from Columbia Southern University. Additionally, Chief Filice holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Mountain State University and is currently attending the prestigious Executive Leaders Program at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

Chief Filice actively participates in various professional associations, reflecting his commitment to ongoing learning and collaboration. He is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), Salinas Faith-Based Organizations, California Police Chiefs Association, FBI National Academy Associates, serves as the Central California Representative on the CalChiefs Board of Directors, and is a Board Member of the Marina Police Activities League.

*The **East Bay Regional Park District** is the largest regional park system in the nation, comprising 73 parks, 55 miles of shoreline, and over 1,300 miles of trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and environmental education. The Park District receives an estimated 30 million visits annually throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties in the San Francisco Bay Area.*



Salinas Police Chief To Head East Bay Regional Park District Police

Jan 7, 2024

By Bay City News

The chief of the Salinas Police Department has been appointed assistant general manager of public safety and police chief at the East Bay Regional Park District. Roberto Filice, chief in Salinas since 2021 and assistant chief for the previous four years, will be sworn in and begin his duties on Jan. 22, the park district announced Saturday.

The largest regional park district in the country, the East Bay system spans Alameda and Contra Costa counties. It consists of 73 parks, 55 miles of shoreline, and more than 1,300 miles of trails.



East Bay Regional Park District marks 90th anniversary in 2024

January 4, 2024



Photo courtesy of the East Bay Regional Park District.

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), the largest regional park district of its kind in the nation, is celebrating its 90th anniversary this

year.

Throughout 2024, the EBRPD will host events and programs to recognize the milestone. Among them are a community birthday celebration on May 11 and monthly naturalist-led “Explore Your Parks” adventure programs.

The EBRPD manages 73 regional parks that encompass over 125,000 acres of parklands, 55 miles of shoreline, and more than 1,300 miles of trails in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

The park district’s roots date back to the late 1920s, when thousands of acres of watershed land in the East Bay Hills became available for development. Civic

leaders worked to preserve the land for environmental conservation and public enjoyment.

Renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and National Park Service's Chief Naturalist Ansel Hall were tasked with surveying the watershed lands for potential park use. The resulting 1930 Olmsted-Hall report is largely considered the founding document of the EBRPD.

On Nov. 6, 1934, voters resoundingly passed a ballot measure to establish the park district. The first three EBRPD parks — Upper Wildcat Canyon (Tilden), Temescal and Roundtop (Sibley) — were established after land was purchased from the East Bay Municipal Utility District on June 4, 1936.

For more information about the Park District's 90th Anniversary, including events and activities, visit www.ebparks.org/celebrating-90-years.

"We invite the public to enjoy their regional parks and shorelines and celebrate with us throughout the year at events and programs commemorating our 90 years of service to the community," Park District General Manager Sabrina Landreth said.

EAST BAY TIMES

In brief: Berkeley's Tilden Fungus fair happening Jan. 20-21

View hundreds of local mushroom specimens, mingle with mycological community at two-day event

By [COMPILED BY EAST BAY TIMES](#)

PUBLISHED: January 3, 2024 at 9:35 a.m. | UPDATED: January 3, 2024 at 10:27 a.m.

BERKELEY

Celebrate the fruits of winter, view hundreds of local mushroom specimens, mingle with the mycological community and enjoy presentations by guest speakers at the East Bay Regional Park District's (EBRPD) two-day Tilden Fungus Fair from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Jan. 20-21 in the Berkeley hills' Tilden Nature Area.

For more information, visit ebparks.org/events/tilden-fungus-fair online.

EAST BAY

Beware of toxic mushrooms in parks during rainy season

With the return of winter rains, park visitors may have noticed mushrooms popping up in East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) properties. Mushrooms are an ecologically important part of the district's parklands and may look beautiful but sometimes contain dangerous toxins.

The death cap (*Amanita phalloides*) and western destroying angel (*Amanita ocreata*) are two of the world's most toxic mushrooms, and both can be found in East Bay parks during the rainy season.

Both species contain amatoxins, molecules that are deadly to many animals. Symptoms may not appear until up to 12 hours after consumption, beginning as severe gastrointestinal distress and progressing to liver and kidney failure if treatment is not sought immediately.

Both mushrooms can be lethal to humans and pets if consumed. They are mainly associated with oak trees and can be found growing anywhere oak roots are present. The death cap is a medium to large mushroom that typically has a greenish-gray cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem and a large white sac at the base of the stem.

The western destroying angel is a medium to large mushroom that usually has a creamy white cap, white gills, a white ring around the stem that can disappear with age, and a thin white sac at the base. It fruits from late winter into spring.

Park district officials urge the public to be safe and knowledgeable about toxic mushrooms when encountering them in the parks. Collecting any mushrooms in the district is not allowed. Pet owners should contact a veterinarian immediately if they suspect their pet may have eaten a toxic mushroom.

While the death cap and western destroying angel mushrooms are responsible for most cases of mushroom poisonings in California, deadly toxins can also be found in *Galerina* and *Lepiota* mushroom species, which also occur in the Bay Area. For more details online, visit ebparks.org/safety/trails/toxic-mushrooms.

— EBRPD

Beware: Deadly mushrooms are blooming across the East Bay

Death caps and Western destroying angels, both common in Oakland, thrive after rainfall, the East Bay park district warns.

by [Iris Kwok](#) Jan. 3, 2024, 10:12 a.m.



Amanita mushrooms in display at the Tilden Fungi Fair on Jan. 28, 2023.

Credit: Iris Kwok

December pours spread fungal spores.

The rainy season means a blooming of a colorful array of mushrooms — some of which are deadly

— in wooded areas in and around Oakland.

California Poison Control System operates a free hotline at 1-800-222-1222

As it does every year around this time, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) is warning of the danger posed by toxic mushrooms — reminding park visitors that two of the world's deadliest types of shrooms thrive in the East Bay: the *Amanita phalloides* (death cap) and the *Amanita ocreata* (Western destroying angel).

Both are associated with oak trees, and can be found growing anywhere oak roots are present, according to the park district. Both the death cap and the destroying angel contain amatoxin, a lethal chemical compound that causes liver failure. Symptoms of mushroom poisoning typically appear around 12 hours after consumption.

Mushrooms tend to thrive after heavy rains, but when it comes to deadly amanitas, it's not a hard and fast rule, Debbie Viess, a retired zoologist who founded the Bay Area Mycological Society, told [Berkeleyside last year](#).

"Mushrooms don't behave the same all the time. They have windows of fruiting and they have times that they like to fruit," Viess said. "Amanitas share resources with many other mushroom species on the same tree. Sometimes they take turns, and sometimes they compete, so there's really no predicting what's going to come."

Other species of mushrooms, including the Lactarius rubidus (candy cap) — great in ice cream — and the plump, orblike Calvatia gigantea (giant puffball) — which can be [sliced into discs and turned into a "pizza"](#) — also thrive in the East Bay's parks. But if you're hoping to forage any, you'll have to do it elsewhere, as mushroom collecting is prohibited in Tilden and other EBRPD parks.

Experts generally advise against eating foraged mushrooms — especially when it's one you can't identify with utter certainty.

The California Poison Control System, which took 71 calls for human mushroom exposures in Alameda County in 2021 and 2022, advises people to use caution and eat mushrooms from grocery stores, not friends. Most of those calls came from patients between 1 and 3 years old and those in their 20s, who were presumably "getting into stuff more deliberately," CPCS executive director Stuart Heard [has told Berkeleyside](#).

In 2016, there were 1,328 emergency department visits nationwide and 100 hospitalizations from accidental poisonous mushroom ingestion, according to a [2021 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Pets are also at risk. Last January, one Berkeley resident spoke out to warn others after her puppy died from [eating a death cap in Codornices Park](#). A Berkeley animal hospital said it sees about 20 suspect pet poisonings annually.

To safely learn more about fungi, explore the East Bay Regional Park District's [toxic mushroom page](#)(which contains handy photos of mushrooms to avoid) or visit the [Tilden Fungus Fair](#) on January 20 and 21, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Tilden Nature Area.

The Carbonator: Reducing Wildfire Risks



A new machine called a carbonator is being used by the East Bay Regional Park District to fight fire with fire, literally. The carbonator was recently started up for the winter season. The carbonator is currently being used at Anthony Chabot Regional Park to dispose of vegetation from a large 365-acre fuels reduction project. In 2020, the Park District found over 1,500 acres of dead and dying trees within its parks caused by drought stress and climate change. The carbonator burns organic matter at extremely high temperatures

(about 1,300 degrees Fahrenheit) using very little oxygen to dispose of vegetation, which results in very low greenhouse gas emissions. The carbonator is a climate-friendly disposal method, especially compared to the conventional open pile burning or transporting loads long distances off-site in diesel trucks.

"The project at Anthony Chabot Regional Park is a first-of-its-kind project in the Bay Area," said Park District General Manager Sabrina Landreth. "As the largest regional park district in the nation and a local leader in wildfire prevention, we knew we needed to find an innovative solution for disposing of the vegetation from our fuels reduction projects."

The resulting material, called biochar, is being used within the Park District as a soil enhancer.

"The carbonator is an innovative fuels reduction tool to address wildfire risks," said Chief Aileen Theile.

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT TRAILS CHALLENGE 2024

EBRPD

written by [CC News](#) January 1, 2024



Every year more than 10,000 people participate in this FREE self-guided hiking and bicycling program to explore the East Bay regional parks and to keep fit outdoors. Trails Challenge is made possible

with the generosity of the [Regional Parks Foundation](#) and [Kaiser Permanente](#), who have sponsored Trails Challenge since 2005.

*FREE Trails Challenge 2024 Guidebooks and T-Shirts are available, **while supplies last**, at the following [Visitor Centers](#): [Big Break](#), [Black Diamond Mines \(Greathouse\)](#), [Coyote Hills](#), [Crab Cove](#), [Del Valle](#), [Sunol](#), and [Tilden Environmental Education Center](#) (T-shirts only). Limit one T-shirt per visitor present. Be sure to check open days and hours before heading out.*

Del Valle Visitor Center remains closed, – check the [Del Valle Facebook](#) page for distribution updates. Guidebooks (no T-Shirts) are also available at [EBRPD Headquarters](#), 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, CA 94605, for pickup during regular office hours.

For the past 31 years, the Park District has promoted healthy recreation and time in nature through its annual Trails Challenge program. The free program connects people to nature through hiking and biking by providing 20 designated trails ranging from easy to challenging. The Trails Challenge is part of the global [Healthy Parks Healthy People \(HPHP\)](#) movement that underscores the connection between a healthy green environment and community health.

The [2024 Guidebook](#) includes 20 detailed trail descriptions available for all levels of fitness, from easy to challenging. There are trails open to hikers, bicyclists, dogs, and equestrians, and Trails Challenge 2024 offers increased accessibility with trails that have been evaluated and identified as usable by persons with mobility limitations (see pages 7-13).

To complete the challenge, hike **five of the 20 trails**, or **26.2 miles of trails** within East Bay Regional Park District. You can submit your log, [online](#) or by mail, by December 1, 2024, and receive a commemorative pin, *while supplies last*.

All 20 featured trails are available on the [AllTrails](#) app. First download the free app, sign up and log in. Then go to www.alltrails.com/lists/ebrrp-trail-challenge-2024 and click on “Copy to my lists”, followed by “Continue in App”. The featured trails will show under ‘Lists’ in ‘Saved’. The app indicates where you are on the trail, enabling easy return to the trail if you stray from it. You can also record your hikes and share your photos and comments with other park users.

- Download: [2024 Trails Challenge Guidebook](#)
- Download: [Easy Trail Maps](#) | [Moderate Trail Maps](#) | [Challenging Trail Maps](#)
- Download: [Trails Challenge Log Form](#) – Keep track of all of your hikes
- Submit Online: [Trails Challenge Log Form](#)

Maps: EBRPD makes every effort to provide useful and accurate information. The information provided is based on many data sources and represents only the approximate relative locations of features and property boundaries. We cannot guarantee that this information is correct or complete, and cannot take responsibility for conclusions drawn from this information. By using this site/maps you agree to the terms of this disclaimer.