

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park



Redwood National
and State Parks



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.

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN
Acting Director, California State Parks



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94296-0001	

www.parks.ca.gov

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park
1375 Elk Valley Road
Crescent City, CA 95531
707-464-6101 Ext. 5112

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Coast redwood forests grow naturally only in a narrow strip along the Pacific coastline from central California into southern Oregon. Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park protects 10,000 acres of these first-growth, primeval treasures.



Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, named for an American explorer of extraordinary courage, is a feast for the eye. The park protects 10,000 acres of primeval redwood groves, a lush undergrowth of rhododendrons and azaleas, and banks of ferns against giant fallen trees.

Here at the confluence of the Smith River and Mill Creek, summer temperatures range from 45 to 85 degrees, in contrast to the cool, fog-bound coast. Winter usually brings about 100 inches of rain per season, with temperatures averaging between 30 and 65 degrees. Snow is rare.

PARK HISTORY

The Tolowa people of this area shared a similar culture with such groups as the Yurok, Hupa, Karok and Chilula. Their lives were secure and well ordered until settlers depleted their resources and brought radical environmental changes and conflict. European diseases to which the Tolowa had no immunity decreased their numbers, and many were sent to the Smith River Reservation. Part of the site of Camp Lincoln, built in 1862 as a buffer between the native people and the settlers, is located in the park. Tolowa descendents are still present in northern California, and many continue to practice the old traditions.

WHO WAS JEDEDIAH SMITH?

Jedediah Strong Smith was the first non-native known to have traveled overland from the Mississippi River, across the Sierra Nevada to



the Pacific coast. In 1821, at the age of 22, he came west and joined the fur-trapping party of General William Ashley. By late 1826 the enterprising young man and two partners had bought out General Ashley. Smith led his party across southern Utah, Nevada, Arizona, the Mojave Desert and Cajon Pass to Mission San Gabriel, where they rested for two months.

When Mexican Governor José María Echeandía ordered them to leave, Smith headed north into the San Joaquin Valley. In May 1827 he went back to Utah to recruit more trappers, but as they recrossed the Colorado River the formerly friendly Mohave Indians attacked, killing ten men. When Smith and his surviving men reached Mission San Jose he was arrested and sent to Governor Echeandía at Monterey. Again ordered out of the province, the party went north through the redwoods, reaching the Smith River in June 1828. Two years later Smith and his partners sold their business and returned to St. Louis. But in 1831 he felt the lure of the Santa Fe Trail. While seeking water during his last wagon train west, he was killed in a Comanche ambush along the Cimarron River.

Jedediah Smith's wish was to be "the first to view a country on which the eyes of a white man had never gazed and to follow the course of rivers that run through a new land." His reports on the geology and geography of the western territories appeared in newspapers of



The scenic Smith River

the day, proving that the Sierra Nevada could be safely crossed to reach California. In a remarkably few years, his travels, observations and notes filled in many blank spaces on the map.

COAST REDWOOD COUNTRY

California's coast redwoods follow the fog and thrive in continuous belts, at elevations below 2,000 feet, where heavy winter rains and moderate year-round temperatures occur. Heights sometimes reach 350 feet or more, with a base diameter of about 20 feet. Their root systems are broad and shallow, from only a few inches to six feet underground.

The oldest coast redwoods are about 2,000 years of age and show no signs of dying out. They resist insects, fire and rot to a remarkable degree, and their vigor in sprouting back when cut or badly burned is an important factor in their longevity.

PLANT COMMUNITIES

Feathery ferns, redwood sorrel, salal, trillium, Douglas iris and tiger lily are among the plants that grow beneath redwoods. Salmonberry, thimbleberry and huckleberry provide wildlife forage, and acres of rhododendrons and azaleas bloom from April to June. The area's

warm climate encourages many other tree species, including western hemlocks, Douglas firs, big-leaf maples, red alders, California laurels, tan oak, madrone and Port Orford cedar to share the redwood habitat.

WILDLIFE

Deer, gray and Douglas squirrels, redwood chipmunks, raccoons and other small mammals are common, and bears are sometimes seen.

A rare treat is the sight of an otter playing in the river or a beaver working in a deep pool. The noisy Steller's jay enjoys stealing food from picnic tables. Other local birds include American dippers, varied thrushes, and several species of woodpecker, with an occasional ruffed grouse, belted kingfisher, osprey, spotted owl or marbled murrelet.

SAVING THE REDWOODS

California's redwood parks are monuments to those whose vision preserved their beauty. In 1900 concerned citizens helped to save the coast redwood groves of Big Basin near Santa Cruz, and in 1918 the Save-the-Redwoods League was formed. The names of several memorial groves at Jedediah Smith reflect the generosity of lumbermen who donated them or preserved them until the League could purchase them. When the park was established in 1929, the Frank D. Stout Memorial Grove became its first dedicated grove, and the 5,000-acre National Tribute Grove, dedicated to those who fought during World War II,



Spotted owl

was purchased with League funds.

In May 1994 Jedediah Smith, Del Norte Coast and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Parks joined with Redwood National Park in a cooperative management effort. Their combined total of 105,516 acres—including 38,982 acres that represent 36 percent of California's old-growth redwood forest—were designated Redwood National and State Parks.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

A picnic area near the Smith River offers tables and stoves. The swimming beach is popular, but the river can be treacherous, and there is no lifeguard service. Nearby a nature trail winds through a redwood grove.

FISHING

Depending on the weather, fishing is good from October to February. Catches of 30-pound salmon and 20-pound steelhead are possible during the Smith River's seasonal runs. During the summer, fishing for cutthroat trout is popular.

CAMPING

Reservations are recommended between June and Labor Day. Each of the 106 sites has a table, fire ring and cupboard, with restrooms and hot showers nearby. Some sites can accommodate trailers or motorhomes up to 35 feet (no hookups). Hike and bike campsites near the picnic area are not reservable.

INTERPRETIVE ACTIVITIES

Summer interpretive programs include guided walks, hikes and evening campfires on nature and historical subjects. Check the park bulletin board to see what is scheduled during your stay.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES &

- Fairly level ground around picnic tables
 - Some campsites and routes to restrooms
 - Water spigots in the campground
 - The route from the parking lot to the visitor center; large print exhibit panels; assistance in the sales area
 - The route from the visitor center to the campfire center; firm, level surface and room for wheelchairs
 - Restrooms in picnic area
- Accessibility is continually changing. Please call the park for the latest information.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

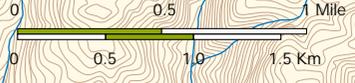
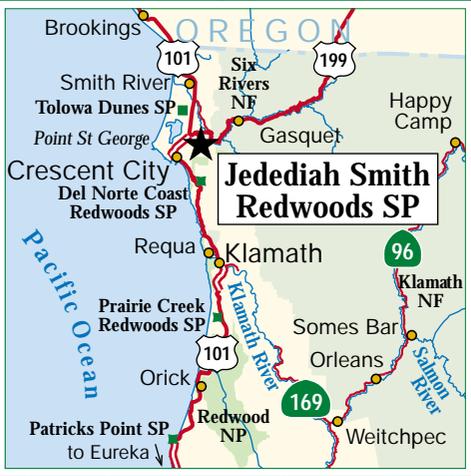
- Tolowa Dunes State Park, five miles north of Crescent City (707) 464-6101, ext. 5151
- Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, seven miles south of Crescent City (707) 464-6101, ext. 5151 or 5120

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Stay on established trails to avoid compacting the soil near tree roots.
- Park features, including dead wood, rocks, plants and animals, must not be moved.
- Purchase firewood at the park to avoid the spread of tree diseases.
- Do not feed wildlife; secure all food items.

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park

This park is supported in part through a non-profit organization.
 For information contact:
 North Coast Redwoods Interpretive Association
 127011 Newton B. Drury Parkway, Orick, CA 95555
 (707) 464-6101 Ext. 5300



JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK

Legend

- Paved Road
- Unpaved Road
- Trail
- Bicycle Trail
- Boat Launch
- Campground
- Group Campground
- Hike/Bike Campground
- Horse Trail
- Nature Trail
- Picnic Area
- Accessible Feature
- Parking
- Ranger Station
- Restrooms
- RV Sanitation Station
- Showers
- Telephone
- Campfire Center

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