

Wildwood Canyon



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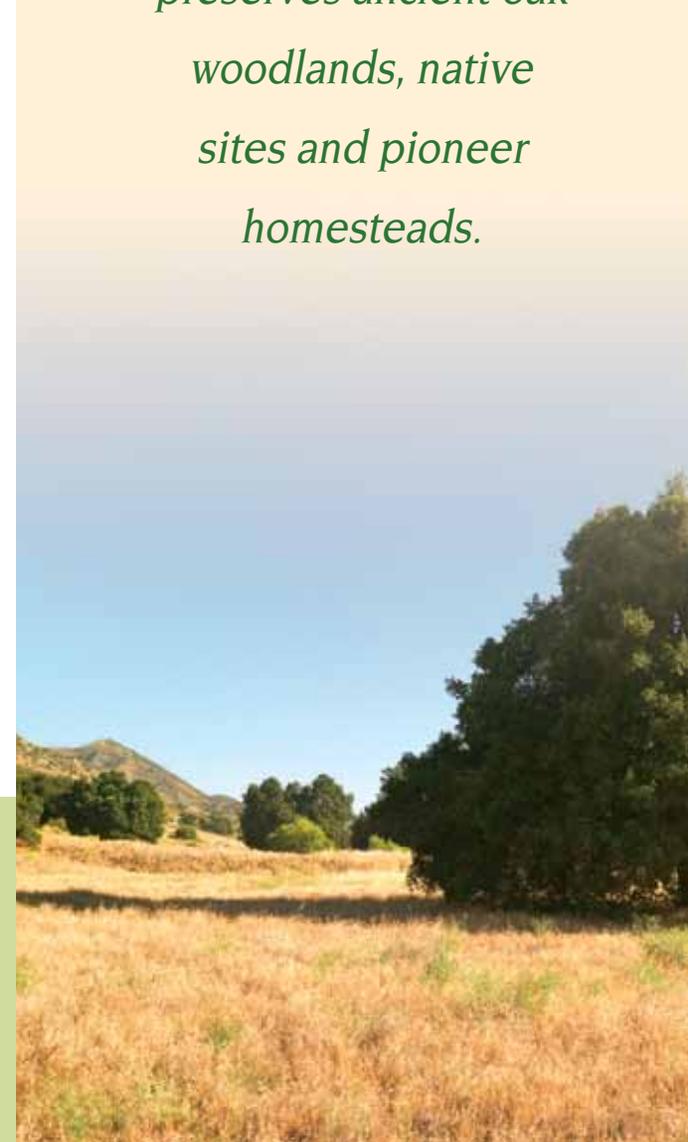
Wildwood Canyon

12261 Wildwood Canyon Road

Yucaipa, CA 92399

(951) 940-5600

Home to hundreds of species of flora and fauna, Wildwood Canyon preserves ancient oak woodlands, native sites and pioneer homesteads.



Above the hills of Yucaipa, Wildwood Canyon offers

panoramic views of the surrounding hills and valleys.

This park property in the eastern foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains features broad grasslands

and canopies of centuries-old interior live oak. The property's box canyon is home to hundreds of species of wildlife and native plants, some of them rare and endangered.

PARK HISTORY

Native People

The area near Yucaipa was known as a crossroads for traveling indigenous people. The Cahuilla were traditionally active in the area of Wildwood Canyon, as were the Serrano and Gabrieleno native people.

Early Pioneers

The first recorded landowner was mountain man James Waters, who started a hog ranch on the fringe of the current park property in the 1850s. The area was called "Hog Cañon" (the Spanish word for canyon) until the 1920s. Later settlers included rancher Louis Morris and the Brooks family, who staked mining claims in the area.

The Wildwood Lodge resort was built in the 1920s; investors planned to sell more than 500 lots in a country-club development. Few lots were sold, and the property was foreclosed in 1928. Property tax defaults

Photo courtesy of Theron Trowbridge



led to the sale of the development to Vernon Hunt, who bought up area ranches and the former Wildwood Lodge in 1940 to build Hunt Ranch.

Hi Up House was owned by the McCullough family.

During the Great Depression in 1932, Charles McCullough lost his Pasadena apple farm to foreclosure. He borrowed \$500 to purchase 88 acres in Yucaipa and brought his family to live off the land—digging wells and water tunnels to irrigate their gardens and orchards, and raising rabbits and bees. The McCulloughs lived in a converted chicken coop for 13 years while they built a new home, using recycled and found materials.

Some remnants of Hunt Ranch and the Hi Up House buildings are still on the property.

Preserving the Land

After a flood threatened developers' plans to build subdivisions, California State

Parks (supported by local conservationists) acquired Wildwood Canyon's 900 acres. On May 9, 2003, a dedication ceremony was held at Wildwood Canyon.

NATURAL HISTORY

Wildwood Canyon lies between the San Andreas Fault on the north and the San Jacinto Fault to the south. Igneous and sedimentary rocks, transformed by the intense heat and pressure of tectonic activity, form the ancient metamorphic rocks surrounding the canyon.

Wildlife

Wildwood Canyon hosts diverse wildlife. Birds commonly seen include the California quail, western meadowlark, towhee, phainopepla, red-tailed hawk, Bewick's wren, Bullock's oriole and white-tailed kite.

Other bird species found in Wildwood Canyon include the Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk and rufous-crowned sparrow.



Red-tailed hawk



Hunt Ranch today

The San Diego pocket mouse found at Wildwood is a mammal species of special concern—its population is declining due to habitat loss or breeding problems. Visitors may also see the deer mouse, cactus deer mouse, California vole and dusky-footed wood rat. Mule deer and desert cottontail share Wildwood Canyon with bobcats, black bears, gray foxes and skunks. Cougars use the canyon as a travel corridor.

Reptiles found in the park include several types of lizards, the coastal western whiptail, western skink and California whipsnake. The red-diamond rattlesnake is a reptile species of special concern.

Plant Life

The dominant plant community is Riversidian sage scrub, with valley grasslands present in most open areas. Interior live oaks (*Quercus wislizenii*) and sycamore woodlands grow along drainages and canyon bottoms.

The oaks appear to be 150 to 250 years old; in some canyons the branches have interlaced so thickly that they form a welcome shade canopy.

Dominant plants found among the chamise chaparral are scrub oak, California lilacs, sage varieties, buckwheat, monkey flower, Lord's candle and silk tassel bush.



Climate

The park's Mediterranean climate is typical of inland southern California. Dry summers range from warm to very hot (over 100 degrees); winters are more temperate but wet. Spring and fall are mild and moderate. Average annual rainfall is 14 inches; the area may experience strong, dry Santa Ana winds, usually in late fall and early winter.

RECREATION

Currently Wildwood Canyon is open only for day use from sunrise to sunset. The primary activities are horseback riding, hiking and biking. A horse staging area is located near the entrance. The Hunt Ranch corrals are also available for equestrian use, but there is no vehicle access to these corrals.

Picnic tables and portable restrooms near the entrance are the only visitor facilities.

Special events and activities are held occasionally. A schedule is available at <http://wildwoodcanyonstatepark.com>.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

At this time, no accessible features are available. Accessibility is continually being improved. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov> or call (916) 445-8949.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Lake Perris State Recreation Area
17801 Lake Perris Drive, Perris 92571
(951) 940-5600
- Mount San Jacinto State Park & Wilderness
25905 Highway 243, Idyllwild 92549
(951) 659-2607
- Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area
14651 Cedar Circle, Hesperia 92345
(760) 389-2303

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Dogs are permitted on all trails but must be on a six-foot-maximum leash and under human control at all times.
- No motorized vehicles (including OHVs and motorcycles) are permitted on park roads and trails beyond the locked gate.
- Stay on designated trails to protect vegetation and wildlife. Do not hike alone or interact with wildlife.
- Poison oak can trigger a severe rash. Stay in designated areas to avoid the plant.
- All natural, cultural and historic features are protected by law and may not be disturbed, collected or removed.
- Because fire danger is high, smoking and open flames are prohibited.
- Please pack out all trash and recyclables.
- All weapons and their use are prohibited.



Poison oak



Interior live oak
(*Quercus wislizenii*)

Legend

-  Paved Road
-  Unpaved Road
-  Trail
-  Stream
-  Intermittent Stream
-  Forest Area
-  Corral
-  Horse Staging Area
-  Locked Gate
-  Park Building
-  Parking
-  Picnic Area
-  Restrooms

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