

JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK

Jedediah Smith is the northernmost of 30 redwood state parks that dot the California coast from Monterey County to the Oregon border. Here at the confluence of the Smith River and Mill Creek, the weather is a little warmer and drier than in Crescent City, just a few miles to the west, and summer days are often sunny while the coast is fogbound. At this park you can see many of the other impressive trees that share the forest with the coast redwood, and of course there are the primeval redwood groves with their lush undergrowth of rhododendron and azalea, and banks of ferns on giant fallen trees.

Winters here are rainy — a hundred inches of rain per season is not uncommon — and the Smith River has been known to rise 20 feet in 24 hours during a storm. But a warm, sunstruck winter's day can be one of the most enjoyable times to visit. Temperatures usually range from 45 to 85 degrees F. during the summer and from 30 to 65 during the winter; it seldom snows.

Because of its warmer-than-average climate (for a redwood park), Jedediah Smith contains an unusually wide variety of trees and shrubs, with both coastal and interior species represented. There are a few Ponderosa pines and incense cedars here along with many other inland species.

Bears are seen occasionally, as are deer, gray and Douglas squirrels, redwood chipmunks, raccoons, and other small mammals. A rare treat is the sight of an otter playing in the riffles of the river, and patient observers may be rewarded with the sight of beaver working in some of the deep pools.

Birds are plentiful. The Steller's jay adds noisy life to the campground — and steals food from the picnic tables. Among other birds found in this area are water ouzels, western robins, varied thrushes, and several species of woodpecker, including the pileated woodpecker. Occasionally a ruffed grouse, belted kingfisher, or osprey can be seen.

A picnic area on the bank of the Smith River offers tables and stoves, plus a sandy beach for sunbathing. Though the "swimming hole" here is popular, the river can be treacherous and there is no lifeguard service. Nearby, the park's nature trail winds through a redwood grove — pick up the self-guiding leaflet at the trailhead (and return it, so others can enjoy it too).

The Frank D. Stout Memorial Grove, presented to the state in 1929, is the first of the park's 44 memorial groves. In the 5000-acre National Tribute Grove, purchased through the Save-the-Redwoods League with funds from thousands of citizens and organizations, magnificent virgin redwoods combined with hemlock, fir, cedar, tanoak, and madrone, stand in majestic tribute to those who served the cause of freedom in the armed forces of the United States during World War II.

JEDEDIAH STRONG SMITH

Beaver pelts were the magnet that drew early explorers to the North Coast. Jedediah Smith, a partner in a fur-trading company, came to California with the idea of finding new trapping grounds; he was also searching for a location for a depot from which furs could be shipped direct to Eastern markets, bypassing the expensive services of middlemen in St. Louis.

Smith came from a large Ohio family of modest means. Perhaps inspired by accounts of the explorations of Lewis and Clark, he left home at age 22 to join the fur-trapping party of General William Ashley, a former lieutenant governor of Missouri, and Major Andrew Henry, an experienced fur trader. Smith served as a hunter, responsible for supplying game for food and warding off Indian attacks as well as trapping. Smith was a far cry from the popular image of the wining, wenching mountain man — he neither smoked nor swore, drank spirits but rarely, and was reputed to take a Bible wherever he went. He so impressed his fellows with his level-headed courage that he became a party leader in 1823, and by 1825 was a full partner with Ashley.

In 1826 Smith, in partnership with David Jackson and William Sublette, bought out General Ashley, and Smith led a party of 17 men southwest in search of new trapping grounds. They passed through southern Utah, Nevada, and Arizona to cross the Mojave Desert and Cajon Pass. In November 1826 they arrived at Mission San Gabriel near Los Angeles, where they were hospitably received by Father Sanchez and remained for two months of recuperation.

Unfortunately, Echeandia, Mexican governor of the province, was apparently unaware of the business of fur trapping, and thought Smith and his party were spies. Though he did not quite dare to arrest them, he ordered them out of the province. Smith, interpreting the "province" to mean the settled strip along the ocean, picked a route that led north over the Tehachapis and into the San Joaquin Valley.

Trapping in the San Joaquin was so good that in May 1827 Smith and two of his men left the main party camped on the Stanislaus River and headed back to Utah to bring more trappers. But his second crossing of the Colorado River, on his return, was considerably more difficult than the first — the formerly friendly Mohave Indians attacked, and ten men were killed. Smith and the remaining eight men managed to rejoin the main group, but when they asked for help at Mission San Jose, Father Duran arrested Smith and sent him to Governor Echeandia at Monterey.

Echeandia once again ordered Smith out of the province, and Smith again chose to leave by the northern route. This time, he made his way up the north coast, often by hacking his way through the redwood jungle. The party reached the Smith River in June 1828, to amaze the local Indians, who had never seen a horse or mule, or indeed any riding animal.

Continuing northward, the party reached the Umpqua River in Oregon on July 11. Here tragedy struck once again. While Smith and two other men were exploring upriver to find the best route, the man left in charge of the camp allowed a large group of Indians to enter, contrary to Smith's orders. The Indians, angered by an insult to one of their chiefs, attacked and killed all but one of the men remaining in camp. Smith and his companions escaped and finally reached Fort Vancouver, operated by the Hudson's Bay Company, which managed to recover most of Smith's furs and supplies.

Smith and his partners, perhaps discouraged by declining catches of beaver, sold out their business and returned to St. Louis in 1830. Smith had some idea of buying a farm in Ohio, but in 1831 he and Sublette formed a party and set out for Santa Fe. Smith was set upon and killed by Comanches while scouting alone for water.

Jedediah Smith was the first man known to have traveled the West overland from the frontier at the Mississippi to California, the first to cross the Sierra Nevada, and the first to travel the Pacific Coast from San Diego to Oregon. His travels, observations, and notes filled in many blank spaces on the map. He well fulfilled his wish 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."

Few other white men came to the Smith River area until the Gold Rush. Then miners, loggers, and settlers rushing in created trouble with the Tolowa Indians who lived along the Smith River, leading to the establishment of Camp Lincoln.

CAMP LINCOLN

In the north part of Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, along Kings Valley Road, is the site of Camp Lincoln. Established in 1862 as an outpost of Fort Humboldt in Eureka, Camp Lincoln was intended to protect the settlers and Indians from each other, and to serve as the garrison for the Smith River Reservation, a settlement for Indians from a wide area including Del Norte, Humboldt, and parts of Siskiyou and Trinity Counties.

The camp was manned on a rotation basis by companies from the 2nd Infantry, California (Federal) Volunteers out of Fort Humboldt. These units usually consisted of several officers and 50 to 60 men. U.S. Grant, then an army captain stationed at Fort Humboldt, was among those who came to Camp Lincoln.

Originally the camp may have had five to ten structures, including officers' quarters, barracks, and storehouses. The only original building still standing is a much modified house that was probably the commandant's quarters and office.

By 1866, the war between Indians and whites over the camp was abandoned; it was declared surplus and sold in 1871 to be used as a private residence until the state acquired it with the assistance of the Save-the-Redwoods League in 1976.

FISHING

The fact that the Smith is the largest undammed river in the state may be the reason that the seasonal runs of salmon and steelhead are so productive. Runs start in the fall, and fishing is generally good from October to February, depending on the weather. Catches of 30-pound salmon and 20-pound steelhead are not unheard-of. And during the summer, fly fishing for trout is popular at Jedediah Smith; Mill Creek at Del Norte is too small to provide much action.

The salmon and steelhead are anadromous — that is, they are born in fresh water but go to the ocean to mature, returning to fresh water to spawn. Many sea creatures besides salmon and steelhead opt for this way of life — lampreys, sturgeon, shad, sticklebacks, striped bass. The fish find a better food supply in the ocean, but their eggs are safer in the freshwater streams and lakes.



King salmon — called chinook in other parts of the country and in Canada, and quinnat in New Zealand — are bluish to gray on the back, silvery on the sides and belly, with may black spots on the back, dorsal fin, and tail. They gradually turn darker when they enter fresh water; females turn blackish and males often have blotchy dull red sides. They mature at three to four years old and weigh an average of around 20 pounds when they return to fresh water to spawn. The female selects a spot in the gravelly bottom of a cool stream and digs a nest where she deposits eggs that are immediately fertilized by the waiting male. She then digs another hole nearby, covering the first, and repeats the process until she is spawned out. Adult salmon live only a short time after spawning. The eggs hatch in about 60 days. The young salmon migrate to the ocean during their first few months of life, but often stay near the mouth of their home rivers until their turn comes to spawn. Fishing for salmon from a boat is generally more successful than fishing from shore.

Steelhead are a steel blue above with bright silvery sides and belly, and small black spots. At an average weight of around ten pounds, they are much smaller than the salmon. After entering fresh water they develop a broad pink or red stripe on their sides and gradually turn an olive color so that they more closely resemble freshwater trout, but they never develop the red streaks beneath the jaw that characterize the still smaller cutthroat, another sea-going trout. Steelhead stay longer in their freshwater birthplaces than salmon, and while their spawning routine is similar they do not neces-

sarily die afterward. Runs may last into March or April, and the Smith is known for its exceptionally large specimens. You may be able to get a catch from shore or while wading, using slamon eggs, clusters of roe, or nightcrawlers.

When you plan your fishing trip, remember that a California sportfishing license is required for anyone 16 years of age or more.

CAMPING

The park's campground is busy summer and winter — when the vacationers leave, the fishermen move in. There are 108 family campsites, each with table, stove, and cupboard; restrooms with hot showers and laundry tubs are nearby. While there are no trailer hookups, the park has a trailer sanitation station, and some campsites will accommodate trailers or motorhomes up to 35 feet long.

In summer, the park's interpretive program includes ranger-guided walks and hikes and float trips, plus evening campfires on a variety of nature and historic subjects. Check the park bulletin board to see what's scheduled during your stay.

Campsite reservations are recommended for summer visits, June 15 through Labor Day — you can make them at Ticketron outlets throughout the state or by mail from Ticketron, P.O. Box 26430, San Francisco, CA 94126.

There are also sites for campers arriving on foot or bicycle; no reservations are needed for these spots, located near the picnic area (see map).

DEL NORTE COAST REDWOODS STATE PARK

At Del Norte, dense redwood forest growing almost to the ocean's edge gives you an idea of what Jedediah Smith and his party were up against when they passed through this country in the late 1820s. Much of the park is virgin forest, but in the 1920s Hobbs, Wall & Co. conducted logging operations where the campground is now located, so the lush forest there is second-growth redwood, mixed with red alder. In the fall, the leaves of the alders and maples make a colorful display. In addition to the remains of the logging operation, there are traces — old ties and a decaying trestle — of the Crescent City and Smith River Railroad that once ran through the park.

Camping

The park is open from April 1 to October 31. There are 145 family campsites, each with a food locker, stove,

and table; restrooms with showers are nearby. Some of the sites will accommodate trailers up to 27 feet long and motorhomes up to 31 feet; others are walk-in sites that provide privacy for tent campers.

Reservations are recommended to be assured a campsite; they can be made in person at Ticketron outlets throughout the state or by mail from Ticketron, P.O. Box 26430, San Francisco, CA 94126. Sites for hikers and bicyclists are available on a first-come-first-served basis.

The REDWOODS

Coast Redwood Country

The coast redwood "follows the fog" and grows best at less than two thousand feet elevation, in areas of heavy winter rains and moderate year-round temperatures. In many areas, redwoods share the forest with other trees — Douglas-fir, tanoak, madrone, big-leaf maple, red alder, California laurel (or pepperwood), California buckeye, Oregon oak, California black oak. They grow in continuous belts rather than groves like the Sierra redwoods, so in some places — notably Humboldt Redwoods State Park's "Avenue of the Giants" along Old Highway 101 — you can drive for mile after peaceful mile through redwood forest.

Many plants grow around the feet of the redwood — feathery ferns, redwood sorrel with its pink flowers and purple veins, salal with its leathery green leaves and purple summer fruit, and trillium, Douglas iris, and Olympia lily. Salmonberry, thimbleberry, and huckleberry provide forage for wildlife, and travelers come from miles away to see the colorful display that decorates redwood country from April to June, when rhododendrons and azaleas bloom.

The root system of the redwood is broad and shallow, from only a few inches to six feet below the ground. Compacting of the soil over and around the roots — from foot or vehicle traffic, for example — disturbs the drainage and makes it impossible for the roots to extract nutrients from the soil. It is for this reason that you are requested to stay on established trails in redwood parks. The coast redwood reproduces best by sprouting; you will often see a circle of new trees (cathedral trees) around the remains of a tree that has been felled or badly burned.

Saving the Redwoods

As early as 1864 people recognized the need to preserve the beauty of the redwood forests; in that year, President Abraham Lincoln signed the act creating the nation's first state park, in the Mariposa Grove at Yosemite (later returned to federal jurisdiction after creation of Yosemite National Park). In 1900 concerned citizens began work to save the beautiful coast redwood groves of Big Basin, near Santa Cruz, and in 1918 the Save-the-Redwoods League, which has raised \$31 million to buy redwood lands — most of which have been added to the State Park System — was formed. Well over five hundred memorial groves — including 60 in Jedediah Smith and Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Parks — have been established with the help of League funds, and several lumber companies have cooperated by preserving redwood forests until the League could afford to buy them. Indeed, quite a few state park and memorial grove names reflect the generosity of lumbermen who donated all or part of them.

In 1968, after almost 90 years of efforts by private citizens, the League, and other conservation groups, Congress established a Redwood National Park of 106,000 acres, 46,000 of them old-growth redwoods. As this is written, the Redwood National Park contains about 78,000 acres of federally owned land, plus three state-operated parks — Jedediah Smith, Del Norte Coast, and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Parks — totaling over 27,000 acres, of which 24,000 acres are old growth virgin redwood.

California's redwood parks are monuments to these dedicated people who had the vision to preserve them for all of us.

Please Remember . . .

Dogs may come camping with you but must be on leash (no more than six feet long) during the day and kept in your tent or camper at night. They are not allowed on trails.

Fires are permitted only in the stoves and fireplaces provided; ground fires are not allowed. Down wood is part of the forest scene and may not be gathered for campfires; bring your own fuel or buy it at the entrance station.

Speed limit is 15 mph on park roads.

Camp only in designated campsites. Do not use hose bibs as water hookups.

Quiet hours are 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. — please don't run your generator between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m.

Loaded firearms are not allowed in state parks.



JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS DEL NORTE COAST REDWOODS STATE PARKS

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park
Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park
P.O. Drawer 1, Crescent City, CA 99511
(707) 464-8933

department of parks & recreation
State of California - The Resources Agency
P.O. Box 2390 • Sacramento, 95811
7-81

TRAILS

Both Jedediah Smith and Del Norte are best seen from their 22.5 miles of trails, described below – plan to take your time to get acquainted with the redwood forest. For information on trails outside state park boundaries, visit one of the Redwood National Park visitor centers, on Highway 199 at the south boundary of Jedediah Smith and at 2nd and K Streets in Crescent City, and the U.S. Forest Service office in Gasquet, six

miles east of the Jedediah Smith campground. Maps of the Six Rivers National Forest are also available at the bookstore and visitor center just north of the Jedediah Smith campground kiosk.

When you hike, stay on the trails, and watch out for poison oak. Its leaves, whether dark green or fall's bright red, and its berries – even its bare branches – can give you a nasty rash. "Leaves three, let it be."

Jedediah Smith

These two trails are easily reached from the campground.

RIVER TRAIL – 0.5 mi. (0.8 km.), EASY. This enjoyable walk along the river follows the edge of the bluff from behind the restroom near Campsite 54 to the self-guided nature trail near the picnic area.

WELLMAN TRAIL – 1.5 mi. (2.4 km.), MODERATELY STRENUOUS. The trail begins at the highway three hundred yards north of the park entrance, past the service road. As you take this steep, invigorating walk you will begin to appreciate the true height of the redwood, and get a spectacular view of the Smith River.

In summer, you can reach the next four trails by crossing the Smith River on a footbridge near Campsite 84 at the southeast end of the campground; in winter, you can reach them from Howland Hill Road (see below).

STOUT MEMORIAL GROVE TRAIL – 0.5 mi. (0.8 km.), EASY. Keep to the left after you cross the footbridge to reach the Stout Grove, a peaceful sanctuary where the highlight is the 340-foot Stout Tree, which measures 20 feet in diameter.

LOOP TRAIL – 0.6 mi. (1 km.), EASY. Beginning at the footbridge, this trail gives you the opportunity to see the wide variety of plants that live in a redwood forest, perhaps on a pleasant after-supper stroll. In spring, enjoy the trilliums in bloom.

MILL CREEK TRAIL – 4.7 mi. (7.6 km.), MODERATE. Starting from the Loop Trail, you can follow Mill Creek upstream to the Howland Hill Road (2.6 mi., 4.2 km.) or the Nickerson Ranch Trail, and return to the campground via the Nickerson Ranch Trail and Howland Hill Road for a half-day hike.

HIOUCHI TRAIL – 1.8 mi. (2.9 km.), MODERATE. Beginning at the Loop Trail, this trail follows the west bank of the Smith River to Highway 199, offering panoramic views of the river and associated plants, and even goes through a burned-out redwood. In spring, rhododendrons and trilliums make a colorful display, and there are huckleberries in late summer. Hiking time one way is around two hours; if you walk back to the campground along the highway (be careful crossing the bridge), the total hike will be 2.5 miles (4 km.) and take three hours.

The next two trails can be reached from the Howland Hill Road, a pleasant five-mile drive through an outstanding redwood forest. The road begins two miles east of the campground entrance on Highway 199; follow the signs to Stout Grove, cross the two bridges and turn right again on Douglas Park Road. You can return to the campground by turning right when you reach Elk Valley Road, or continue to Crescent City by turning left. Though fairly level, the Howland Hill Road is unpaved and is not recommended for large motorhomes or cars pulling trailers. It is two-way, so watch for oncoming traffic.

BOY SCOUT TRAIL – 7.4 mi. (11.9 km.) ROUND TRIP, MODERATELY STRENUOUS. The trailhead is about 0.8 mile (1.3 km.) west of the Mill Creek Bridge. Three miles down the trail, take the right fork to reach an old Boy Scout campsite or the left fork to cascading Fern Falls on Jordan Creek. You will cross a few small ridges and pass a number of majestic redwoods including gnarled Castle Tree, 17½ feet in diameter. Allow at least four hours' hiking time; carry drinking water.

NICKERSON RANCH TRAIL – 0.8 mi. (1.3 km.), EASY. Majestic redwoods and ferns line this trail to an old ranch, of which only the orchard remains. The trailhead is about a mile west of the Mill Creek Bridge; park at the Boy Scout trailhead. You can take a pleasant three-mile (five-kilometer) hike by returning along the Mill Creek Trail and Howland Hill Road. Just across the road from the Nickerson Ranch trailhead is the remains of the redwood-plant Old Stage Road. Now mostly reclaimed by the forest, it was once the main route between Crescent City and Grant's Pass.

These trails can be reached from Highway 199 west of the campground entrance.

SIMPSON-REED TRAIL – 0.6 mi. (1 km.), EASY. A wide pullout off Highway 199 two miles west of the campground provides parking for this trail, which leads past and over many large fallen redwoods. You will also see large burls and many ferns. In the wet season there is a variety of mushrooms. The connecting Peterson Memorial Loop Trail has footbridges crossing the many small streams that provide a habitat for skunk cabbage.

HATTON TRAIL – 0.3 mi. (0.5 km.), EASY. Directly across Highway 199 from the Simpson-Reed Trail, this trail also tours one of the park's many memorial groves. Be careful – the trail is slippery.

LEIFFER LOOP TRAIL – 1 mi. (1.6 km.), MODERATE. Turn right on Walker Road, two miles west of the campground on Highway 199; the trail begins 0.4 miles from the highway, and there is a parking area at the trailhead. This mossy trail through an old-growth redwood-and-big-maple forest connects with the steeper Ellsworth Loop Trail – you can return along the Leiffer Trail or continue to Walker Road and turn right to return to your car.

Del Norte Coast

These trails begin in or near the campground.

MILL CREEK TRAIL – 2.6 mi. (4.2 km.), EASY. This trail along Mill Creek (the same stream that flows through Jedediah Smith, though the trails do not connect) gives you a chance to wade and watch the activities of birds and small animals. The stream is generally too shallow to afford good fishing. The trail begins along the campground entrance road.

ALDER BASIN TRAIL – 1 mi. (1.6 km.), MODERATE. Beginning across the bridge from the Mill Creek trailhead, this trail takes you through a streamside habitat of alders, maples, and willows. The scene is colorful in the fall. Keep a sharp lookout for a great blue heron or water ouzel.

TRESTLE LOOP TRAIL – 1 mi. (1.6 km.), MODERATE. This is a good chance for bird-watching in a second-growth redwood forest.

NATURE LOOP TRAIL – 0.8 mi. (1.3 km.), EASY. Beginning across from the campground entrance station, this trail gives you a quick view of a redwood forest, highlighted by the red peeling bark of a madrone tree.

HOBBS-WALL TRAIL – 3.8 mi. (6.1 km.), MODERATELY STRENUOUS. This trail, named for the old lumber company that logged off the campground area, leads through the second-growth redwoods past abandoned logging cables and machine parts. It can be started from the campground, just past the west winter closure gate, from Saddle Skyline Trail (see below), from the Nature Loop, or from the park entrance near Highway 101.

SADDLER SKYLINE TRAIL – 1.5 mi. (2.4 km.), MODERATE. You can start this trail from the Nature Loop or from the campground, between Sites 7 and 8; it will take you through a Douglas-fir and young redwood forest, with plenty of opportunities for bird-watching and lots of huckleberries in the fall.

These trails can be reached from Highway 101.

MEMORIAL GROVE TRAIL – 0.9 mi. (1.4 km.), EASY. This trail leads from a turnout on Highway 101 about a mile north of the campground entrance through the second-growth redwood forest to the Hobbs-Wall Trail.

DAMNATION CREEK TRAIL – 2.5 mi. (4 km.), STRENUOUS. Used by the Yurok Indians to gather shellfish and seaweed, this steep trail leads you from Highway 101 through a dense forest with redwoods growing almost to the water's edge to a hidden sea cove with a small beach. The Highway 101 trailhead is at the Henry Solon Graves Memorial Grove in a turnout about four miles (six kilometers) south of the campground entrance.

LAST CHANCE TRAIL – 6 mi. (9.6 km.), MODERATELY STRENUOUS. On this trail you walk along the original route of the highway, through redwood, spruce, and red alder forests to the coastal bluff and spectacular ocean vistas. Begin at the south end of the trail on Highway 101, about a third of a mile (half a kilometer) south of the Damnation Creek trailhead.

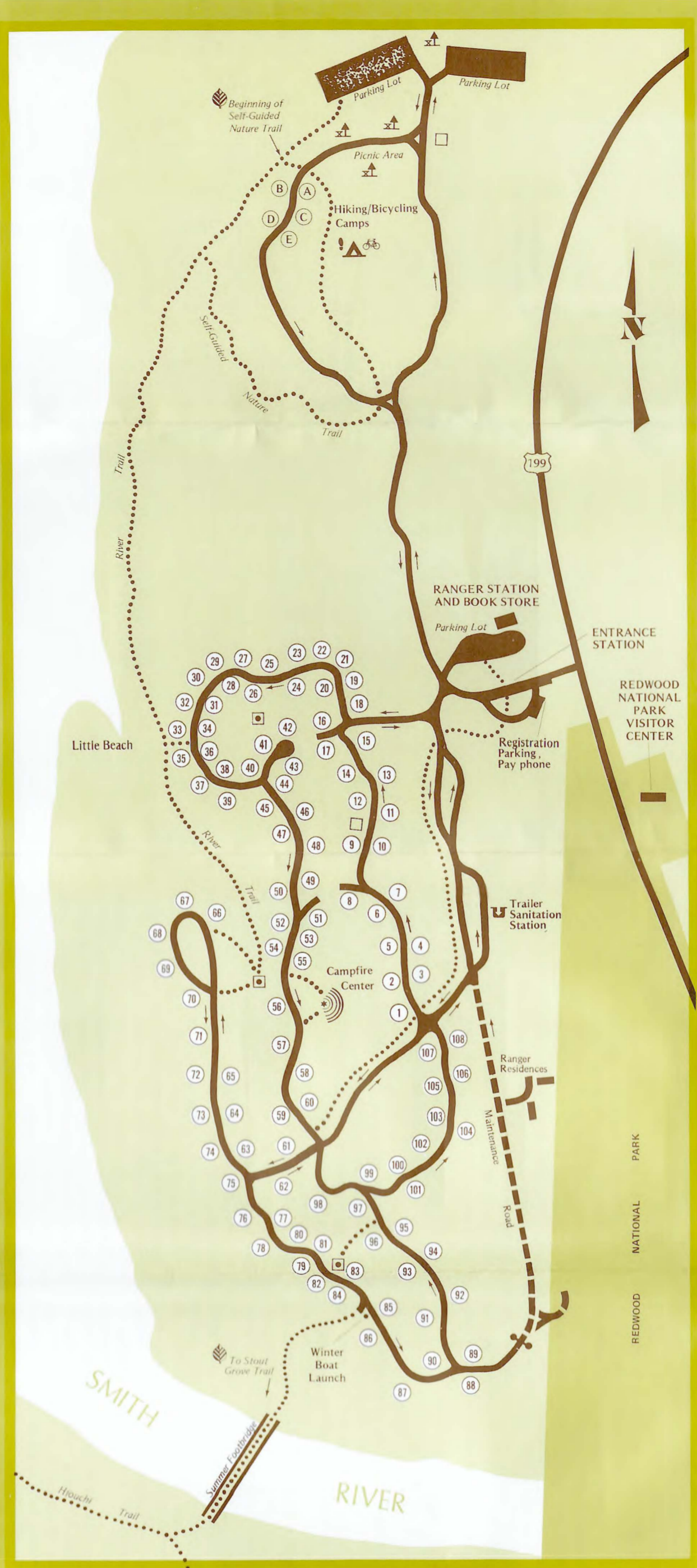
FOOTSTEPS ROCKS TRAIL – 0.8 mi. (1.3 km.), MODERATE. This trail leads from the highway to a small rocky beach, and takes about an hour round trip. The trailhead is north of the Lagoon Creek picnic area and vista point, 6 miles (9.7 km.) south of the campground entrance.



Poison Oak



JEDEDIAH SMITH CAMPGROUND DETAIL



DEL NORTE COAST CAMPGROUND DETAIL



- LEGEND**
- TRAILS
 - PAVED ROADS
 - - - UNPAVED ROADS
 - 👁 POINTS OF INTEREST
 - 🏕 CAMPGROUNDS
 - 🍃 PICNIC AREAS
 - 🚻 RESTROOMS
 - 🚿 RESTROOMS WITH SHOWERS
 - 🔒 LOCKED GATE

