

Sue-meg

State Park



Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks 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.



California State Parks supports equal access. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at **(707) 677-3570**. If you need this publication in an alternate format, contact interp@parks.ca.gov.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

P.O. Box 942896

Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

For information call: (800) 777-0369

(916) 653-6995, outside the U.S.

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Sue-meg State Park

4150 Patrick's Point Drive

Trinidad, CA 95570

(707) 677-3570

www.parks.ca.gov/sue-meg

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grasses, and shrubs
decorate the meadows,
producing colorful
wildflower displays and
providing scenic views
of the shoreline and
the rock outcrops.*



Jhirty miles north of Eureka, a tree- and meadow-covered headland juts into the Pacific Ocean. This is Sue-meg State Park, with a shoreline that ranges from the broad sandy stretch of Agate Beach to sheer cliffs that rise high above the sea. A number of “sea stacks,” parts of the mainland that have been isolated by the pounding surf, stand offshore like fence pickets.

Sue-meg is shrouded in fog much of the year. During the summer, sometimes fog does not burn off for days at a time. Crystal-clear days appear most frequently during spring and fall. Rainfall averages more than 60 inches a year—most of it falling between November and April. Temperatures are moderate much of the year, with only about a 10-degree difference in average temperatures between summer and winter. Summer highs average 62 degrees, with winter lows to 38 degrees.

PARK HISTORY

Native Americans

Yurok people have lived in and around Sue-meg State Park for generations. The temperate climate and abundant wildlife of the North Coast promoted a culturally rich way of life that continues today. Yurok people built villages of redwood planks along the coast and major waterways. Traveling by dugout canoe, they fished for salmon. They also hunted elk, deer, and small game. Berries, roots, and many traditional plants are still harvested at Sue-meg; acorns are still gathered from the hillside areas east of the park.

In 1850, when gold was found in the interior, the Yurok people were overwhelmed by an influx of settlers. Conflict over the land took many forms. The native people were hunted down; any who survived the attacks were forced onto reservations. Newly introduced diseases further decimated their numbers.

Today, the Yurok have made a remarkable recovery. As the most populous tribe in California, nearly 5,500 Yurok live in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. Tribal members are building a future by revitalizing their ancestral language and traditions based on the customs of the past.

Europeans and Americans

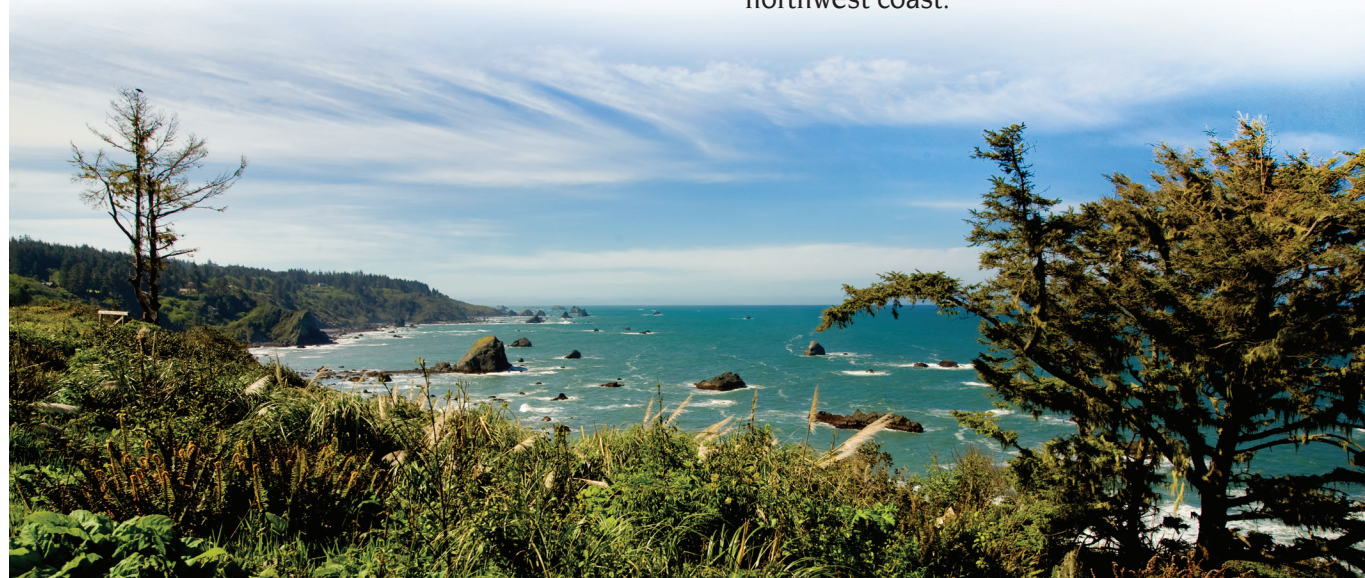
Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Sir Francis Drake sailed along the coast of what is now Humboldt County as early as the 16th century, but it was a Spanish vessel captained by Bruno de Hezeta that braved the unpredictable winds and rocky shoreline to land in Trinidad Bay in 1775. The fur trade had come to the Trinidad Bay region by June

of 1801. Captain Jonathan Winship arranged with Governor Alexandr Baranov of Sitka, Alaska, to take 100 native people from the Aleutian Islands to California on a successful sea-otter hunting expedition.

With the discovery of gold in northern California's Trinity River in the mid-1800s, the local territory experienced a rush of miners, packers, and would-be entrepreneurs. Those who had come seeking adventure and wealth through trading and trapping gave way to gold miners and settlers.

THE PARK

The California State Park Commission purchased Sue-meg in 1929 after approval of the 1928 Park Bond. Additional land was acquired over several years, bringing the park's total to 640 acres. From the beginning, the park was identified as a potential site for a traditional Indian village that would portray the rich culture of the northwest coast.



Sumêg Village

In the 1800s, the Yurok world extended from the mouth of the Klamath River north to Wilson Creek, near Crescent City, and south to Little River, near McKinleyville. The Yurok people lived in more than 50 villages, from the north at Big Lagoon to the south at Trinidad. Village sizes varied from two to two dozen houses.

In 1990 an all-Yurok crew constructed Sumêg Village, which consists of three typical redwood plank family houses, a sweathouse, a dance pit, three changing houses, and a redwood canoe. All of these structures are made from boards split from redwood trees, using hazel bindings and local stone.

The village was named Sumêg—which means *forever* in Yurok—in the hope that the village would endure for generations to come. The village site is used for cultural and educational activities that preserve the heritage of several neighboring tribes: Yurok, Karuk, and Hoopa. The park's native plant garden just south of Sumêg Village features plants used by the Yurok for basket-making, food, medicinal, and ceremonial purposes.

NATURAL HISTORY

Though the park is in the heart of California's coast redwood country, the principal trees within the park are Sitka spruce, red alder, Douglas-fir, hemlock,

and pine. Spring and summer wildflowers include Douglas iris, fairy bells, trillium, skunk cabbage, azalea, and rhododendron. Thimbleberries, salmonberries, and huckleberries are found along meadow edges. Fall and early winter bring out a wide variety of mushrooms, which may be viewed but may not be picked.



Sumêg Village. Above: Canoe and plank house; Right: Sweathouse

During the period from 1875 to 1925, this area experienced large-scale environmental devastation. The forest was logged, burned, and cleared to graze sheep and cattle, and to plant hay and potato crops and apple orchards.

Now the meadows in the park closely resemble the land prior to its acquisition as a state park in 1929. Maintained by mowing and removal of sprouting trees, the park's meadows are diverse with herbs,

grasses, and shrubs. They produce colorful wildflower displays and provide scenic views of the shoreline and rock outcrops.

Agate Beach is a gently curving sand strip that can be reached by a short, steep trail from the Agate Beach parking lot. Semi-precious agates, for which the beach is named, are polished here by the constant movement of sand and water. Winter's driving winds and high tides also deposit driftwood of many shapes and sizes on the shore.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Trails

The Rim Trail is a two-mile walk that offers excellent views of the ocean and offshore rocks. Between Agate Beach

and Palmer's Point, four rather steep quarter-mile trails connect the Rim Trail to the shoreline.

A couple of short, steep trails make it possible to reach the tops of Ceremonial Rock

(rising 107 feet above the meadow) and Lookout Rock. These old sea stacks are evidence of ever-changing sea levels and geological uplifting.

Camping/Picnicking

There are about 120 family campsites spread among the Penn Creek, Abalone,





and Agate Beach campgrounds. Each campsite has a table and a fire pit. Water faucets, restrooms, and coin-operated showers are located nearby.

The Beach Creek and Red Alder Group Camps can each accommodate up to 100 people. A covered cook shelter, picnic tables, and fire pits are provided in group camps, with spigots, restrooms, and coin-operated showers nearby.

Two group day-use picnic areas may be reserved. Sumêg holds up to 100 people and Bishop Pine up to 50. Picnickers at Sumêg will find a covered cook shelter, and Bishop Pine has fire pits.

To reserve all campsites or group picnic areas for May through September, visit www.parks.ca.gov/sue-meg or call (800) 444-7275. From October through April, camping and group picnic sites are first-come, first-served.

Interpretive Activities

The park visitor center contains exhibits highlighting the park's natural and cultural history. Nature walks, campfire programs, and Junior Ranger programs are provided during the summer months. School programs and group tours may be scheduled all year round.

Viewing Wildlife

You may see and hear California and Steller sea lions and harbor seals on

the offshore rocks in the southern part of the park near Palmer's Point. This is also an excellent place to explore tide pools. The species living in the tide pools have adapted to one of the harshest environments on earth, enduring pounding waves and howling winds. Depending upon the tides, they are exposed

to salt water, fresh water in the form of rain, and fresh air, yet the intertidal zone is one of the richest areas of life in the ocean.

Several promontories along the Rim Trail offer viewpoints of the spring and fall migrations of the California gray whale. This annual migration along the west coast of North America is one of the world's outstanding wildlife spectacles. While traveling between their summer feeding grounds in the Bering Sea and their winter breeding grounds on the Mexican coast, the forty-foot gray whales cover 10,000 miles in a year—the longest migration of any mammal. Some gray whales will summer in and around the Sue-meg coastline.

Sue-meg is also a popular spot for viewing a variety of shore birds that visit the park during their spring and fall migrations. Binoculars help to spy on murrelets, winter wrens, or red crossbills.

Sometimes black-tailed deer and black bears are spotted. To avoid bear encounters, keep your campsite clean and your food wrapped and stored safely.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Accessible campsites are available in both the Abalone and Agate Beach campgrounds. Accessible restrooms with coin showers are nearby. The visitor center is generally accessible, with designated accessible parking and restrooms nearby.

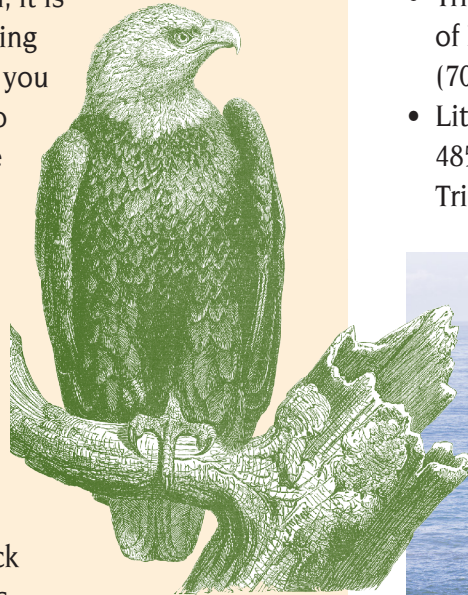


Tide pool life. Above: Ochre sea stars; Right: Gumboot chiton

PLEASE REMEMBER

- **Swimming is not advised.** The ocean off Sue-meg is cold and dangerous. Children should not even be allowed to wade, as there are unexpected holes in the underwater sand, and the undertow can be very strong. “Rogue” waves appear periodically and usually unexpectedly, and can be much larger than ordinary waves. **Never turn your back on the ocean.**
- **Do not feed the animals.** Though bears, raccoons, and skunks like “people” food, it is unhealthy for them. Feeding wild animals is unsafe for you and against park rules. Do not leave anything edible out overnight or when you are away from your campsite. Store food in locked vehicles or metal food lockers, and dispose of garbage in proper containers.
- **Plants, animals, and archaeological features are protected.** Do not pick wildflowers or mushrooms.
- **Dogs must be on a leash no more than 6 feet long.** Dogs are allowed in the campgrounds, picnic areas, and along paved roads. Except for service animals, dogs are not permitted on the beaches or on unpaved park trails. Do not leave them unattended. Loud or vicious dogs are not permitted in the park. Dogs must be confined in a tent or vehicle at night.

Bald eagle



Accessibility is continually improving. For more information, please visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Humboldt Lagoons State Park
115336 Hwy. 101 North, Trinidad 95570
(707) 445-6547
- Harry A. Merlo State Recreation Area
32 miles north of Eureka on Hwy. 101
Trinidad 95570 (707) 445-6547
- Trinidad State Beach, 19 miles north of Eureka on Hwy. 101, Trinidad 95570
(707) 677-3570
- Little River State Beach
4851 Clam Beach Drive, off Hwy. 101
Trinidad 95570 (707) 488-2041

This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization.

For more information contact:

Redwood Parks Association

1111 Second Street

Crescent City, CA 95531

(707) 464-9150

www.redwoodparksassociation.org



Wedding Rock

Sue-meg
State Park

Legend

	Freeway		Locked Gate
	Major Road		Park Building
	Paved Road		Parking
	Trail		Picnic Area
	Accessible Feature		Picnic Area: Group
	Campfire Center		Ranger Station
	Campground: Group		Restrooms
	Campground: Group		RV Sanitation Station
	Campground: Hike/Bike		Showers
	124 Campsites		Viewpoint



Pacific Ocean

