

A Field Guide to the Communities of Pogonip

A bumblebee gathering pollen from wild mustard



What Is Your Community?



Every species here in Pogonip has a home and plays a unique role within one or more of the habitats here. Use this guide to help you discover the common inhabitants in each of the four main communities within the park: Redwood Forest, Mixed Evergreen Forest, Meadow, and Riparian. Explore and learn about the species that call Pogonip home and see how your community compares with theirs!

*Please take one and return
so that all can enjoy*

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What Community Am I In?

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Answer the questions below, beginning with choosing between 1 or 1', and then go to the question or habitat your answer directs you to!

1. Are you in an open area and can you see the sky above you?..... 2

1'. Are you surrounded by trees and see their canopy above you with small amounts of sky..... 3

2. Are you by water?..... **Riparian**
Trails you may be on: Sycamore Grove, Spring Box, Pogonip Creek Nature Loop

2'. Are you not by water?..... **Meadow**
Trails you may be on: Fern, Pogonip Creek Nature Loop, Prairie, Lower Meadow, Spring, Ohlone, Lookout

3. Are the trees 30-80 ft tall? 4

3'. Are the trees close to 100 ft tall or more?..... **Redwood**
Trails you may be on: Rincon, Limekiln, Spring Box, Pogonip Creek Nature Loop, U-Con, Harvey West

4. Are you by water?..... **Riparian**
Trails you may be on: Sycamore Grove, Spring Box, Pogonip Creek Nature Loop

4'. Are you not by water? **Mixed Evergreen Forest**
Trails you may be on: Fern, Brayshaw, Spring, Pogonip Creek Nature Loop, Ohlone, Emma McCrary

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Map of: Pogonip Communities

Coolidge Dr.
Entrance

Clubhouse

Spring St.
Entrance

Golf Club Dr.
Entrance

- Trails
- Redwood Forest
- Mixed Evergreen Forest
- Meadow
- Riparian

Note: This map is an estimation of habitat lines and is not exact. Please use this as a reference and not an exact navigational tool.



Coast Redwood



Big Leaf Maple



California Bay Laurel



Douglas Fir



Chestnut Backed Chickadee



Dark-Eyed Junco



Brown Creeper



Lichen



Limekiln

The Redwood Forest

Trees Trees Trees

Looming above you are a variety of trees. Smell the spicy aroma of the Bay Tree, look at the 'mouse tails' in the Douglas Fir cones, and watch the helicopter flight of the Maple seeds.

They form the backbone of the forest, providing food, shade, and habitat for the species found in this community.

What's That?

Did you catch that quick movement or hear a soft "seep seep" high above you? You may have just spotted a Brown Creeper! Watch it as it 'creeps' its way up a tree in search of small insects to snack on.

A Parasite in Plain View

Look for a shelf-like parasitic fungus growing on the trunks of Bay trees. Called the Artist's Conk, it has white pores on its underside that contrast with its cocoa brown spores.



Artist's Conk

Rebel Plants

Bracken and Sword Ferns reproduce using spores instead of seeds. Flip over their leaves to see their spore-producing structures!

Stem Structure

Hedge Nettle has a square-shaped stem and pungent leaves, both of which characterize members of the mint family.



Hedge Nettle



Bracken Fern



Sword Fern



Redwood Sorrel



Waxy Caps



Banana Slug



Witch's Butter



Turkey Tail



Ensatina

Mixed Evergreen Forest

Not Quite A True Oak
Unlike our Coast Live Oak, the Tanoak has bristly-capped acorns that look somewhat like a cross between a typical acorn and a chestnut. The bark from these oaks were historically used to help tan leather.



Santa Cruz Manzanita



Tanoak

Poison Oak

Leaves of Three, Let it Be!

Poison Oak is a plant that looks very different in each season. The leaves can be bright, dull, red, or green, or even absent. Contact with any part of this plant at any time of year can cause an itchy and painful rash. Despite its reputation, don't overlook admiring this plant's delicate white flowers and fruits.

Western Gray Squirrel

Cotoneaster



Coast Live Oak, Provider for Many

Hear some tapping in the oaks direction? The Acorn Woodpecker, may be building up its store of acorns by stuffing them into holes all along the trunk. Look for the light green lichen called Old Man's Beard hanging down from its branches. Why might some oaks have so much more of this lichen than others?

A Food Source for Some

The soft leaves of hazelnut are unmistakable. Can you find any hazelnuts before the birds and squirrels have already collected them in the summer and fall?



Red Admiral



(Inside)

Look Closely!

Look for slender salamanders under logs. At first glance, these tiny salamanders look like an earthworm, but look again! Their limbs are minute!

Slender Salamander



Dark-Eyed Junco



California Towhee



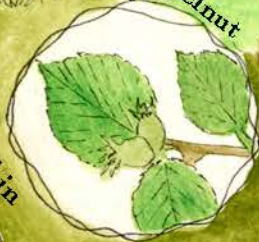
Birds of a feather what together?

Look for Dark Eyed Juncos, California Towhees, and American Robins feeding on the ground. How do their feeding behaviors differ from one another?

American Robin



Hazelnut



The Common Buckeye is often seen fluttering low to the ground. Watch the adults suck up nectar from flowers with their proboscis.



Buckeye

Wild Blackberry



American Crow



Common Raven

Hawk Talk
Hawks can be seen and heard hunting high in the sky. Listen for a high-pitched: "Skaaaawerewerew...Skaaawerewerew..." of the Red Tailed Hawk and the rapid repeating: "kee-ahh... kee-ahh... kee-ahh... kee-ahh!" of the Red-Shouldered Hawk.



Red-Shouldered Hawk



Red-Tailed Hawk

Within the chrysalis, the Buckeye transforms from a pea soup like liquid into an adult butterfly. Once emerged, the adult pumps liquid into its wings. they harden in the sun, and are flight ready!

Chrysalis



Ringlet Butterfly

The Meadows

Is It A Crow or a Raven?!

These birds are often confused but do have some distinguishing characteristics. If they're flying, pay attention to the shape of the tail and if you hear them call the crow will "caww caww" while the Raven will "croak croak".

What's that rustling?

Listen for the soft rustle of Rattlesnake Grass in the wind. Its flowers look like a Rattlesnakes tail. Move your hand through the tops of the grass to hear the noise they make.

Clues Left Behind
Mammals are often hard to directly observe, but they always leave signs such as tracks and scat. Keep an eye on the ground as you're walking and see if you can spot some scat and figure out who left it there!



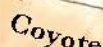
Rabbit



Deer



Bobcat



Coyote



Gopher Mound



Sky Lupine



Wild Mustard



Pineapple Weed



Rattlesnake Grass



Orb-Weaver Spider



Blue Dicks



California Poppy



Coyote



Brush Rabbit



Bush Rabbit Nest



Coyote Brush

The life of a Buckeye begins as a tiny egg laid on a leaf of its host plant. Can you find it's caterpillar in this drawing? (hint: look in a corner)



Egg

As a caterpillar, it eats and sheds its outer cuticle when it outgrows its skin. Eventually, it finds a spot to hang and form a Chrysalis. (see upper right)



Caterpillar

Deer Tracks

Willow

American Sycamore

Coyote Tracks

Bobcat Tracks

Rocks eroding,
rocks forming

The water flowing from
this spring on the Spring box trail
is full of dissolved calcium carbonate
from eroding limestone-rich rocks.
Just above the inlet to the koi pond,
some of it has re-solidified beneath
the flowing water.

What looks like mud
is actually a rock
called tufa. Feel it
for yourself!

Sycamore Grove

Wood Duck

Flashy Style

The male Wood Duck is a bird that is hard to miss with its
"look at me" coloring that helps them attract females, which are less
colorful than their male counterparts.

Common
Merganser

Where did the Koi
come from?

Along the Spring Box Trail is the
koi pond. Local Santa Cruz people have
released these fish here which live off of the
algae that grows on the
bottom of the pond.

Coyote or bobcat?

Look for tracks in the wet soil near water
sources. One way to tell whether your
track was created by a canine or
feline is to look for claw marks. A
canine track such as a coyote will
nearly always show claw marks
while a feline track such as a bobcat
will not. Bobcats, like house
cats, have the ability to retract
their claws when
they're walking.

Liverwort

Cottontail Rabbit
Tracks

Coast
Redwood

Koi Pond

The Riparian Community

Important Uses

Native Americans used the leaves of the iris as cordage
to create necessities such as rope and snares for hunting
as well as fishing nets.

Spider Plant

Douglas Iris

Miners Lettuce

Mountain Lion
Tracks

Spring Box Trail

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Questions? Comments? Nature notes?
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