

Viewing Wildlife

Continue forest bathing while hiking along the trail. Be mindful and observe the smallest details, the colors of nature and the sounds of the forest. Shifting one's attention to nature is known to refresh and replenish the mind because it "clears your head." This is one of the many benefits of being in nature.

Activity

Soon after crossing the bridge, walk about twenty steps and start shifting your attention to the bank on your left. As you continue to look closely at the bank to find the homes of the very clever spiders called **turret spiders**. The turret spider sleeps in the daytime. At night when an insect climbs on its turret, the spider feels the vibrations and jumps out of hiding, dragging the tasty treat to its dining room.



Continue your hike and look for tracks, such as those of the **black tailed deer**. You may also see chew marks on the leaves of the soaproot plant... a sign that wildlife has found a tasty treat. Why do you think just the tips were eaten?



As you walk uphill, look to the left of the trail for a cone shaped pile of sticks about 6 feet tall. This is the home of the **dark footed woodrat**. They have waterproof rooms including a food pantry!



Signs of Human & Animal Activity

When you reach the cool grove of redwoods, you will see evidence that humans have been there. Do you notice the tree stumps? What do you think happened? Why?

ANSWER: These are the stumps of old growth redwood trees. An old growth redwood tree can range in age from 800 to 2,000 years. Redwoods were logged in Huddart Park during the Gold Rush because there was a huge need for building materials for homes and businesses to accommodate the influx of people coming to California to make their fortune.

At Trail Junction 44 continue straight on Redwood Nature Trail toward the Oak picnic area. On your right, look for animal-made paths. These are superhighways of the forest and many animals will use them. Rest at the bench, listen for sounds of human and wild animal activities. Look for signs of animals such as little spiders searching for something to eat.



When you go further on the trail, you see mounds of dirt. This is the entrance to the subterranean home of the **pocket gopher**. This gopher has little pockets in its cheeks for collecting grass seed. The Redwood Nature Trail loop ends at trail junction 49.

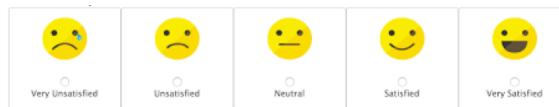
CONGRATULATIONS

You just completed the Redwood Nature Trail hike.

Do you know:

- *You just walked 1 mile.
- *It is possible that you burned as much as 100 calories
- *If you make a habit of spending time outdoors in your public parks, some benefits may include lowering blood pressure, promoting faster healing time, weight loss, and improved well being!

Circle how you feel at the end of this hike?



Redwood Nature Trail Hike

A self-guided nature walk



1 mile loop on the Redwood Nature Trail

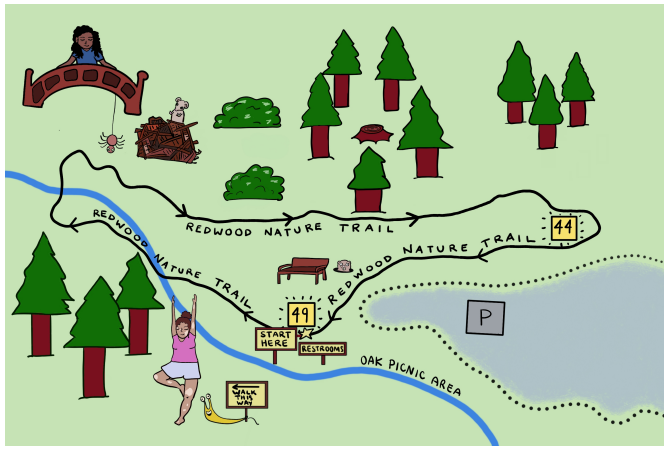


- * WALK on a forest path
- * NOTICE if you feel less stressed or more relaxed
- * CONNECT with nature

Spending Time in Nature is known to improve mental and physical health.

**Huddart Park
Healthy Hikes
San Mateo County**

TRAIL ROUTE



Map artwork by Rebecca Fenn

Forest Trees

As you walk along the trail, notice the trees on either side. They twist and turn toward the sky, finding their spot in the sun. Through a special process they convert sunlight into energy for food production. Soon you will notice a change in the temperature. It's cooler with less sun filtering through. You will come to a bridge over a creek bed. You are now in a redwood forest. These trees grow straight and tall. There is no competition for sunlight here.



Redwood Trees are the tallest trees on the planet. They can reach heights of up to 300 feet. Most of these trees sprout from the roots of a parent stump. Often this forms a "fairy circle"

around the parent tree. The young trees get food from the parent. This cathedral of trees provides a peaceful place to relax.

Activity

Can you be a redwood tree? Here is a good spot to practice an activity in yoga called tree pose. Pretend you are a tree and anchor your feet to the ground like the roots of a tree. Stretch your arms out on either side like branches. Now imagine the wind is blowing. Gently move from side to side so your "branches" can sway in the wind.

Even though the redwood tree is the tallest tree on the planet, **Douglas fir** is the tallest tree in Huddart Park. The cones of the Douglas fir look like they have hind legs and tails of mice sticking out. Pick up a cone and see for yourself.



Close to the bridge you will notice a plant with large leathery leaves with toothed edges. This is the **tan oak**, which is *not* a member of the oak family. The acorn nuts are larger than those of other oaks and they have shaggy caps on the top. The acorn was prized by the Native Americans for its mild flavor.

Sights and Sounds of Nature

One way to connect with nature is to use your senses: eyes, ears, nose, and touch. We call this a nature tool kit and it is always with you. As you pass the sign for the tan oak, stop at the bridge with railings. This would be a good spot to practice what is called "forest bathing".

Activity

Forest bathing is being in nature and connecting to it through your senses. At the bridge, practice this by closing your eyes, taking a deep breath, exhale, and open your eyes. Listen to the birds sing, and notice the different colors of green in the forest. Smell the air around you. By letting the forest in through your senses, you are connecting with nature.



The green, velvety, plant growing on trees and rocks is called **moss**. It is a small flowerless plant that doesn't have roots. It must soak up water like a sponge. When you touch it during the dry season it is brittle and dry, but when the rains come, it is soft and moist.

Close to the bridge, you will see a plant that may remind you of a green feather. This is a **sword fern**. Look closely at one of the leaves growing off the main stem. You will notice that the shape looks like a sword. That is how it got its name.

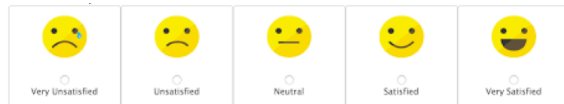


Parking: Oak Area
Trailhead: Redwood Nature Trail
Distance: About 1 mile

Trail Junction 49 Go uphill behind the bathrooms. Turn left on Redwood Nature Trail.

Trail Junction 44 Continue on the Redwood Nature Trail toward Oak picnic area.

Circle how you feel at the beginning of the hike?



LEAVES OF THREE, LET IT BE

Poison oak can produce an itchy rash if touched. Green in summer, red in fall, in winter no leaves at all.

