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# CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK ACTIVITY GUIDE

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VOL. I, No. 1

ARNOLD, CALIFORNIA

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## MESSAGE FROM PARK SUPERINTENDENT GARY OLSON

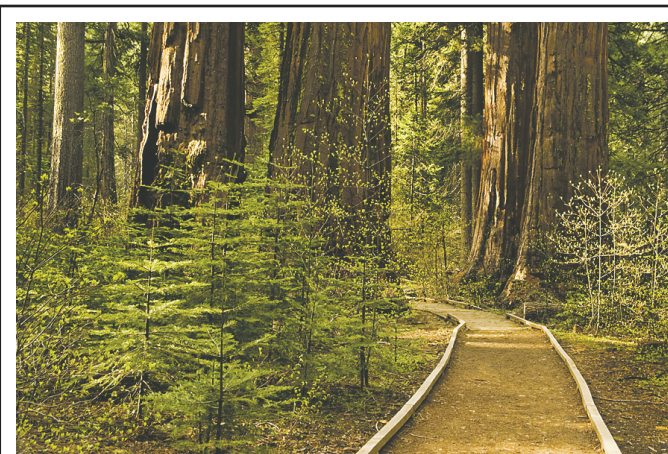
Welcome to Calaveras Big Trees State Park, one of California's most outstanding state parks. This park was created to preserve and protect two groves of giant sequoias—the world's largest trees. Although Native Americans and early European explorers had seen the big trees earlier, it wasn't until A.T. Dowd wandered into the Calaveras North Grove in 1852 that the world learned of these trees. Situated within the central Sierra Nevada mixed-conifer forest, the park also protects portions of the Stanislaus River and Beaver Creek, ancient volcanic formations, and natural meadows. Within the park you will find campgrounds, hiking trails, a Visitor Center, Warming Hut, and opportunities for many types of outdoor recreation. Park staff and Docents offer educational programs that will enhance your understanding and enjoyment of this special place. Look inside this guide for more details.

If you have visited the park before, you may notice some changes this year. There is a new boardwalk in the North Grove meadow, which was built by a crew from the California Conservation Corps, along with park staff. The boardwalk protects the meadow's fragile plant and animal life from foot traffic. A new visitor center is under construction near the North Grove parking lot. Funding for this \$2.7 million project is coming from the \$500,000 donated by the Calaveras Big Trees Association and the 2006 voter-approved Proposition 84 bonds. This bond money does not impact the current California budget. We are looking forward to a larger space for visitors, new exhibits and audio-visual programs, as well as much-needed workspace. We hope you will visit our new center when it opens in 2013. You may also notice that certain parts of the park look more open than during your previous visit. In early December 2011, a violent windstorm blew down hundreds of trees throughout the park, causing a two-week closure due to safety concerns and cleanup efforts. The North Grove campground was hit especially hard. Seventy large trees were completely uprooted and smashed picnic tables, bear boxes, bridges, and campfire rings. Photographs of the damage can be viewed in the Visitor Center. We anticipate that total cleanup of the park will take most of this year. We appreciate your patience as we work to make the park safe and accessible for all our visitors.

I invite you to immerse yourself in the natural world of Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Whether you plan to kick back and relax or do some strenuous hiking, I hope you take the time to observe and experience what is here. It is a special place, with much to discover. Enjoy!

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© 2010, California State Parks. 090-P68758. North Grove Trail

Giant Sequoias—the world's largest trees—are native only to the western slope of California's Sierra Nevada mountains. Two groves of these magnificent trees are protected within the park. The easily accessible North Grove is historically significant as the Giant Sequoia discovery site. The more remote and pristine South Grove contains the largest trees in the park.

## FACTS ABOUT CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK

- Located 3 miles east of Arnold on Highway 4.
- Open daily from sunrise to sunset.
- No cell phone service in the park.
- P.O. Box 120 / 1170 E. Highway 4  
Arnold, CA 95223
- Latitude/Longitude: 38.2719/–120.2867
- Elevation at North Grove: 4,750 feet
- Ranger Station: (209) 795–2334
- Visitor Center: (209) 795–7980 or (209) 795–3840
- CA State Parks website: [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)
- Calaveras Big Trees Association: [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org)

## PARK ACTIVITIES

There are lots of options when it comes to park activities. This is a four-season park, and the possibilities vary by season. Many activities can be enjoyed on your own and at your own speed. Other choices are interpretive programs offered by the park staff and volunteers that will enhance your knowledge and understanding of the park. These activities are posted in front of the Visitor Center and at the Park Entrance Station. Be sure to pick up a park brochure which has a map of the entire park. Trail guides are available for four of the seven main trails. Plan to stop by the Visitor Center where you can interact with hands-on displays, watch a slideshow about the park, and talk with our knowledgeable Docents and Staff. The store in the Visitor Center sells books, clothing, and children's items that make great souvenirs of your visit. All sales stay in this park and directly support park interpretive and educational programs. Take a look at these pages to see what is offered in each season.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit our webpage at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) or call us at the Visitor Center: (209) 795-7980 and (209) 795-3840 or Ranger Station (209) 795-2334.



Photo by Alan Beymer. Dogwood Blossoms

## SUMMER

Summer is the busiest time of year here, with the park fully open, warmer, drier weather and many visitors enjoying their vacations.

### JOIN PARK STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

**Jr. Rangers:** Designed for our 7–12 year old visitors, we meet behind the Visitor Center on most summer days at 10 AM for an hour. Earn park mementos and learn about the park.

**Jr. Cubs:** Our 3–6 year old friends and their designated adults are invited to join us behind the Visitor Center on most summer mornings at 10 AM for up to an hour. Learn about the park with age-appropriate activities.

**North Grove Guided Walks:** Each day we meet in front of the Visitor Center at 1:00 PM for a walk through the historic North Grove of Giant Sequoias. Experience the trees in person with a knowledgeable guide.

**Evening Programs:** Campfire Programs, Night Walks, and Astronomy Nights are offered several nights a week. Look for the posted schedule for details.

**Creek Critters:** Meets once or twice a week at Beaver Creek to explore life in the creek. Check the posted schedule for details.

**Family Day:** This fun-filled day occurs on the third Saturday of August each year. Visit [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org) for details.

From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, the Visitor Center is open Sunday—Thursday from 9:00 AM—5:00 PM, and Friday—Saturday from 9:00 AM—6:00 PM.

### TO DO ON YOUR OWN:

- Hike any of our seven maintained trails (see trail descriptions on page 4).
- Camp in one of our two large campgrounds, five environmental sites, or two group camps (see pages 6 – 7 for campground information).
- Splash and fish in Beaver Creek or the Stanislaus River. Be cautious at the river—it has some dangerous Class V rapids.
- Have a picnic in one of the picnic areas located throughout the park.
- Ride your mountain bike or hike on our many miles of fire/dirt roads (see the park brochure for a map).
- Opportunities abound for nature photography, bird watching, star-gazing or just doing nothing!



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## SPRING AND AUTUMN

Spring and autumn are often the most beautiful times to visit the park. Showy white dogwood blossoms in spring and colorful leaves in the autumn create a striking contrast with the massive Sequoia trunks. It is also a time of variable weather conditions, with snow, rain and sunshine all possibilities. Because of this, the timing of the dogwood bloom and fall colors varies from to year. If you want to arrange your visit for these natural events, you can leave a postcard with us in the Visitor Center, and we will send it to you when it's time to visit. You can also check our website for updates.

The opening and closing of park roads, trails and campgrounds also varies during these seasons. To ensure that you are prepared for the conditions, it is recommended that you check on road and weather conditions before you visit. For road conditions call Caltrans at 1-800-427-ROAD.

### JOIN PARK STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

**Guided Tours** of the North Grove on Saturdays at 1:00 PM. If there is snow on the ground, it will become a Snowshoe Tour. Meet at either the Visitor Center or the Warming Hut—check for posted signs. Tours last 1.5 hours.

**School Tours** can be arranged in advance for April/May and September/October. Contact the School Tour coordinator at (209) 795-7980 or visit our webpage for more information.

**The Visitor Center** hours vary during these seasons. The Visitor Center is open only on weekends and holidays for much of the spring. It is open daily starting in April through November with varying hours. Call or check our website for times: (209) 795-3840 or [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org).

**Saturday Seminars** are sponsored by the Calaveras Big Trees Association. These educational programs are free with park admission and open to the public. Check their website for dates and topics: [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org)

**Docent Training** classes are offered during spring and fall. To become a Park Docent, you must complete a mandatory four-hour Docent orientation class, which is offered only in the spring and the fall. After you complete the orientation, you can participate in other trainings for the many Docent jobs that are available at the park. It's a great way to experience the park, meet other like-minded people, and contribute. Call the Visitor Center for more information (209) 795-7980.

### TO DO ON YOUR OWN:

Hike, bike, ski, snowshoe, picnic and camp... or not. It all depends on the current conditions.



*Photo by Alan Beymer. Autumn Snow on the dogwoods*

## WINTER

Winter is a quieter time to enjoy the North Grove area of the park. The main park road and all campgrounds are closed during the winter months—check our webpage at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) for exact dates.

There is often—but not always—snow at this elevation for much of the winter. To fully enjoy the snow, be sure you are prepared with proper clothing and a safe vehicle. For clothing, remember your ABC's: Anything But Cotton! Once cotton gets wet it will make you colder and can lead to hypothermia. Layers of wool or synthetics with a water-resistant outer layer work best. Don't forget a hat, gloves and snow boots. On sunny days, you may need sunglasses and sunscreen as the snow can strongly reflect the sun's energy. Road conditions on Highway 4 can change rapidly as storms move in and out. What may start out as a clear road in the morning may end up covered in several feet of snow by the afternoon. It is best to drive either a four-wheel or all-wheel drive vehicle, and always carry chains. You may be turned around or cited by the California Highway Patrol if you don't have chains in your vehicle. To check on current road conditions, call 1-800-427-ROAD. Remember: in the snow, take it slow.

### JOIN PARK STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

**The Warming Hut** at the end of the North Grove parking lot is open on weekends and holidays from Thanksgiving through late March from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Enjoy a cozy fire, complimentary warm drinks, and camaraderie with fellow visitors and park volunteers. Donations are appreciated.

**Snowshoe Tours** are offered on Saturdays and some holidays at 1:00 PM. Bring your own snowshoes or borrow a pair of ours for this tour. Tours last about 1.5 hours and start at the Warming Hut. They are paced for the abilities of the group. Visitors that are not dressed safely for the weather may not be allowed to join the tour.

**The Visitor Center** is open on weekends and most holidays from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

We often host special events in the winter such as our Winter Wonderland celebration in December, or Snowshoe Thompson Days in February. Check [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org) for more details.

### TO DO ON YOUR OWN:

- Snow play is allowed in the North Grove area. Build a snowperson, ride a sled, or simply marvel at the beauty.
- Bring your own cross-country skis or snowshoes and travel the North Grove trail or the 3.5 mile loop out the park road and back through the campground.



# HIKING TRAILS

There are seven maintained hiking trails in the park as well as many miles of fire roads. They offer a range of difficulty and highlight the varied features of the park, including the Giant Sequoias, the rushing Stanislaus River, and the Lava Bluffs formation. For your safety and the enjoyment of others, dogs and bicycles are only allowed on fire roads and paved roads. Dogs must be on leash at all times in all California State Parks. Check the park map for locations of trails and roads. Trail guides are available for the North Grove, South Grove, Bradley Grove, and Lava Bluffs trails and can be purchased at the Visitor Center or picked up at the trailhead. Please stay on the trails when hiking, to protect the plant and animal life of the park. When the park road closes for winter, the only trail that can be accessed is the North Grove. The following is a brief description of each trail and its prominent features.

## NORTH GROVE AREA

**North Grove Trail:** This gentle 1.7 mile loop will take you through the historic grove of Giant Sequoias discovered in 1852. The Big Stump, Mother and Father of the Forest, and the Pioneer Cabin Tree (at one time a “drive-through” tree) are all located along this trail, as well as about 100 very large Giant Sequoias. The trail begins and ends at the far end of the North Grove parking lot. This trail is “stroller-friendly” when dry. Allow 1–2 hours.

**Three Senses Trail:** Located next to the Big Stump, this is a very short loop of just a few hundred yards, intended to help visitors enjoy a sensory experience of the forest. Trail markers display both printed words and Braille. Allow 20 minutes.

**Grove Overlook Trail:** This trail begins a short distance beyond the Big Stump, branching off of the North Grove Trail just past the #2 marker. It climbs the ridge above the grove and parallels the North Grove Trail for about ½ mile to provide views of the upper parts of the Big Trees. It rejoins the North Grove Trail near the Father of the Forest and trail marker #13. From there you can walk either right or left on the North Grove Trail to return to the trailhead. Allow 1–2 hours.

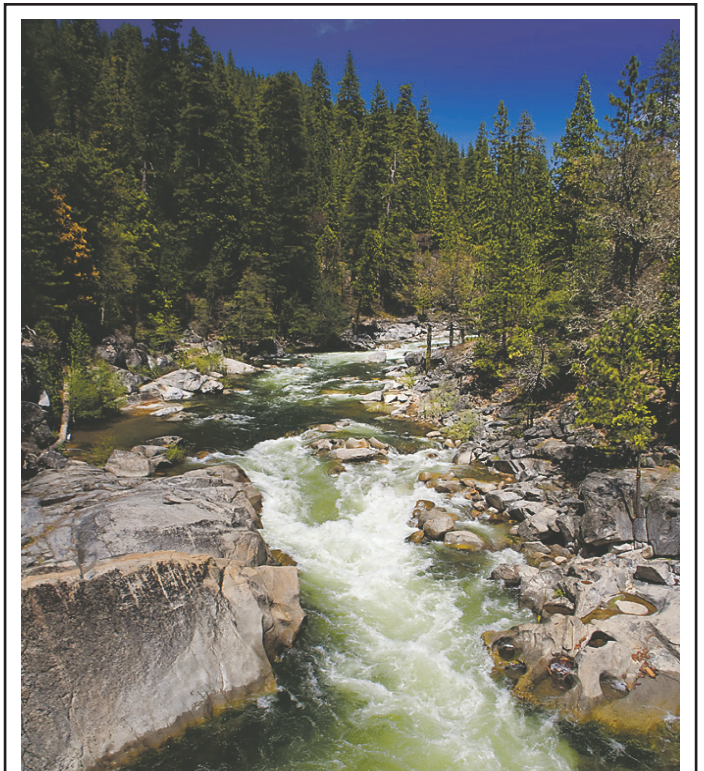
## SOUTH GROVE AREA

**South Grove Trail:** This trail travels through the South Grove Natural Preserve, home to about 1,000 mature Giant Sequoias, and the largest trees in the park. This moderately difficult trail consists of a 3.5 mile loop through the lower part of the grove, with a ¾ mile-long spur trail leading to the Agassiz Tree—the largest in the park—for a total of 5 miles. The South Grove Trailhead parking area is located nine miles past the park entrance station on the main park road. There are restrooms at the trailhead, but no drinking water. Allow 2.5 to 4 hours for this hike, and be sure to bring water and wear sturdy shoes.

**Bradley Grove Trail:** This 2.5 mile round-trip moderate loop trail travels to a grove of young Giant Sequoias that were planted in the 1950s by summer park caretakers and conservationists Owen and Adrienne Bradley. To access the trail, start hiking on the South Grove Trail. Just after crossing the bridge over Beaver Creek (about 600 yards), look for a trail sign and box with trail guides and follow the trail to the left. The Bradleys were concerned about the danger of wildfire to the Giant Sequoias in the newly acquired South Grove, so they decided to collect seedlings and replant them in this location as a safeguard. This is a nice area for wildflowers in the late spring. Allow 1–2 hours and bring drinking water.

## OTHER TRAILS

**River Canyon Trail:** This is **NOT** a gentle stroll along the river, but a very strenuous hike into and out of the Stanislaus River Canyon. The hike is 8 miles round-trip, with an elevation change of over 1,000 feet. On summer afternoons this south-facing slope can be very warm. To access the trail, start hiking on the North Grove Trail. Just past marker #2, take the trail to the right



© 2010, California State Parks. 090-P68679. *North Fork of the Stanislaus River*

and follow it up to the Scenic Overlook (not the Grove Overlook trail). At the far end of the Scenic Overlook parking lot, you will find a restroom, a display describing the trail, and access to the rest of the trail. From here, you will descend 1,000 feet over 3 miles to the Stanislaus River. From there, you will retrace your steps, traveling 3 miles and ascending 1,000 feet back up again to the Scenic Overlook. Be sure you are physically able to do this hike and carry plenty of drinking water. There is no trail guide for this trail, but it is shown on the park map. If you decide to walk back along the park road, be aware that it is a lot longer and just as hot. Allow 4–6 hours.

**Lava Bluffs Trail:** This 2.5 mile loop trail will take you through varied environments, across a volcanic formation, and along a historic water ditch. This diverse area hosts the park’s most colorful spring wildflower displays and excellent birdwatching. There are many steep sections along this trail, including some with difficult footing. Because the trail follows a south-facing slope, it can be enjoyed more in the spring or fall rather than on hot summer afternoons. This is the only trail in the park with poison oak, but it is easy to avoid if you are careful. The trail begins at the Lava Bluffs parking area, about 5 miles from the park entrance on the main park road. Allow 2–3 hours, and bring plenty of water.

**Fire/Dirt Roads:** You are welcome to hike or bike ride on any of the park’s fire/dirt roads. All are shown on the park map. Dogs on leash are allowed on these roads as well. You can purchase a Bicycling Guide to the park in the Visitor Center (\$1.00).



## THE GIFT OF FIRE

Fire is just as important to Sierra Nevada forests as are soil, water, sun and air. These forests evolved in the presence of frequent fires, and individual tree species have very specific adaptations that not only allow them to survive fire, but in some cases require exposure to fire in certain parts of their life cycles. Before humans arrived, fires were started mostly by lightning and might burn uninterrupted for months at a time. The first people to arrive here—over 12,000 years ago—lived with fire and eventually used it to improve their food supply, create better basketry materials, and keep routes for travel and trade open. It has only been within the last 120 years that the next wave of human immigrants decided that fire was destructive and should be eliminated from the forest.

The natural resource managers at Calaveras Big Trees are now dealing with results of this disastrous decision. While the lush, thickly forested land may look beautiful to the casual observer, it is not a healthy or natural situation. Environmental scientists have used data from tree rings, early photos, and oral histories to learn that fires once burned through this landscape as often as every five years. When fires burned that frequently, the amount of fuel was kept low so that the fires did not become huge and destructive. The forest was more open, which let in more sunlight for wildflowers and shrubs, and created optimum conditions for wildlife. And the trees themselves were healthier since they weren't in stiff competition with other trees for water and sunlight. A healthy forest in the Sierra should have about sixty trees per acre (the size of a football field), but in most areas of the park there may be several hundred.

Environmental Scientists at the park are using several methods to restore the forest to a healthier, more open condition. Among these tools is prescribed fire, which is used over large areas to reduce the fuels on the ground. But some areas are so thick with small trees and fuel that this is too dangerous. Thinning of these areas using chainsaws often needs to be done first, and you may see piles of logs waiting to be burned safely in some places. The giant sequoia groves are the top priority for this type of work and it is likely that restoration work will be happening while you are here. It may seem strange to see crews cutting trees down in a park where the natural environment is protected, but it is critical to the survival of this forest to recreate original open and healthy conditions.



Photo by Alan Beymer. Chickaree with Giant Sequoia cone



© 2010, California State Parks. 090-P68706. Spring in the Big Trees.

## AMAZING GIANT SEQUOIA FACTS

- Giant Sequoias (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) are the largest trees on earth.
- The most massive Giant Sequoia known is the General Sherman Tree in Sequoia National Park, which is 275 feet tall and 36.5 feet in diameter. If you wanted to hug this tree, your arms would need to be 103 feet long!
- The oldest known Giant Sequoia lived for 3,200 years. Think about it!
- The ancestors of Giant Sequoias date back 150 million years to the Jurassic Period and were once widespread across North America and parts of Europe.
- The only place Giant Sequoias grow now is on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. The 75 distinct groves are found within a narrow band about 260 miles long and 15 miles wide, at its widest point.
- One cone from a Giant Sequoia contains an average of 200 seeds. A mature big tree can have 7,000 cones. That means each large Giant Sequoia can have as many as 1,400,000 seeds!
- One seed is about the size of a flake of oatmeal. It would take 91,000 seeds to weigh one pound.
- Giant Sequoias not only are adapted to surviving fire, they need fire to clear the ground for their tiny seeds. Thick bark, high branches, and fire-resistant tannins protect the trees from fire.
- Giant Sequoias have shallow roots that can extend 100 feet out from the tree. It takes a lot of water, nutrients and sunlight to grow a Big Tree!
- Native American people have lived near these trees for thousands of years. Some early European explorers noted sightings in their journals as early as 1833, but it wasn't until A.T. Dowd stumbled upon the Calaveras North Grove in 1852 that the world learned of these trees.
- There is much more to learn about these amazing trees. Find out more at the Visitor Center, by attending park interpretive programs, or by reading our trail guides.



## CAMPING AT CALAVERAS BIG TREES: NORTH GROVE, OAK HOLLOW, ENVIRONMENTAL SITES, AND GROUP CAMP

The North Grove Campground is near the park entrance and within walking distance of the North Grove of Giant Sequoias, the Visitor Center, and Campfire Center. Sites 1–74 encircle the North Grove meadow, along with restrooms, coin showers, and running water.

The Oak Hollow Campground is located 4 miles from the park entrance off of the main park road. Sites 75–129 are set in a pine and oak forest, with running water, restrooms, and coin showers.

Environmental Campsites are walk-in sites away from the main campgrounds. Three sites are located about 1.5 miles from the park entrance, and the other two are 9 miles from the park entrance, near Beaver Creek. It is a short walk into each site. Each site has a picnic table, fire ring, portable toilet, and food storage locker. There is no running water at these sites. Refer to the park brochure and map for locations.

There are two Group Campgrounds located across Highway 4 from the main part of the park that can accommodate large groups of 40 and 60 people. There are restrooms, coin showers and running water at both sites. Refer to the park brochure and map for locations.

To reserve a site between May 15 and September 15, contact ReserveAmerica at 800–444–PARK (7275) or TTY: 800–274–7275, or [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov). Sites are available on a first-come first-served basis during the remainder of the year. The campgrounds are closed during the winter months. Check our webpage for current information about campground openings and closures.

While you are here . . . Please read the following to make your stay safer and more enjoyable.

Check-in time is 2:00 PM. Check-out time is at Noon. Campers who arrive early will not be allowed to check in until all due-outs have been confirmed out. If space is available, campers may register for additional nights at the entrance station prior to check-out time. Campers wishing to stay in the park after noon on their check-out day must vacate the campsite by noon and move to a day use area.

Quiet hours: are from 10:00 PM to 8:00 AM. Radios and other sounds must not be audible beyond your immediate campsite regardless of the time of day. Generators may not be used between 8:00 PM and 10:00 AM.

Vehicles: Your camping fee includes parking in your campsite for one vehicle. A day use fee is required for each additional vehicle. If there is room, a second vehicle may park in the campsite. There is limited overflow parking for a third vehicle.

Water: Do not attempt to connect hoses to the park faucets. You may fill water tanks at the Ranger Station.

Wastewater: Collect wastewater from dishwater or trailer/RV drains. Dispose of it in any restroom toilet.

Messages may be posted only on the message board at the park entrance. The Dump Station in the park is currently closed until repairs can be completed. There are several dump stations outside the park, in the local area, and they all charge for their service. Ask at the Visitor Center for current information about fees and locations.

## A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR

While you are in the park, you are sharing the forest with many animals—including Black Bears. The park was created to protect all the natural resources here—including bears—and also provide outdoor recreation for humans. In order to keep both you and our wildlife safe, we ask that you follow certain regulations. In fact, failure to follow these regulations (T13CCR4323(b)) may result in a citation with a fine of up to \$1,000.

### Here are the reasons:

Black bears are smart, resourceful, strong, hungry, have a highly developed sense of smell, and can weigh over 300 pounds. It is a magical sight to see a wild bear foraging in the forest, but when they become used to humans and human food, they can become destructive, aggressive and dangerous. If a bear becomes a danger to humans, it may have to be euthanized for the public's safety.

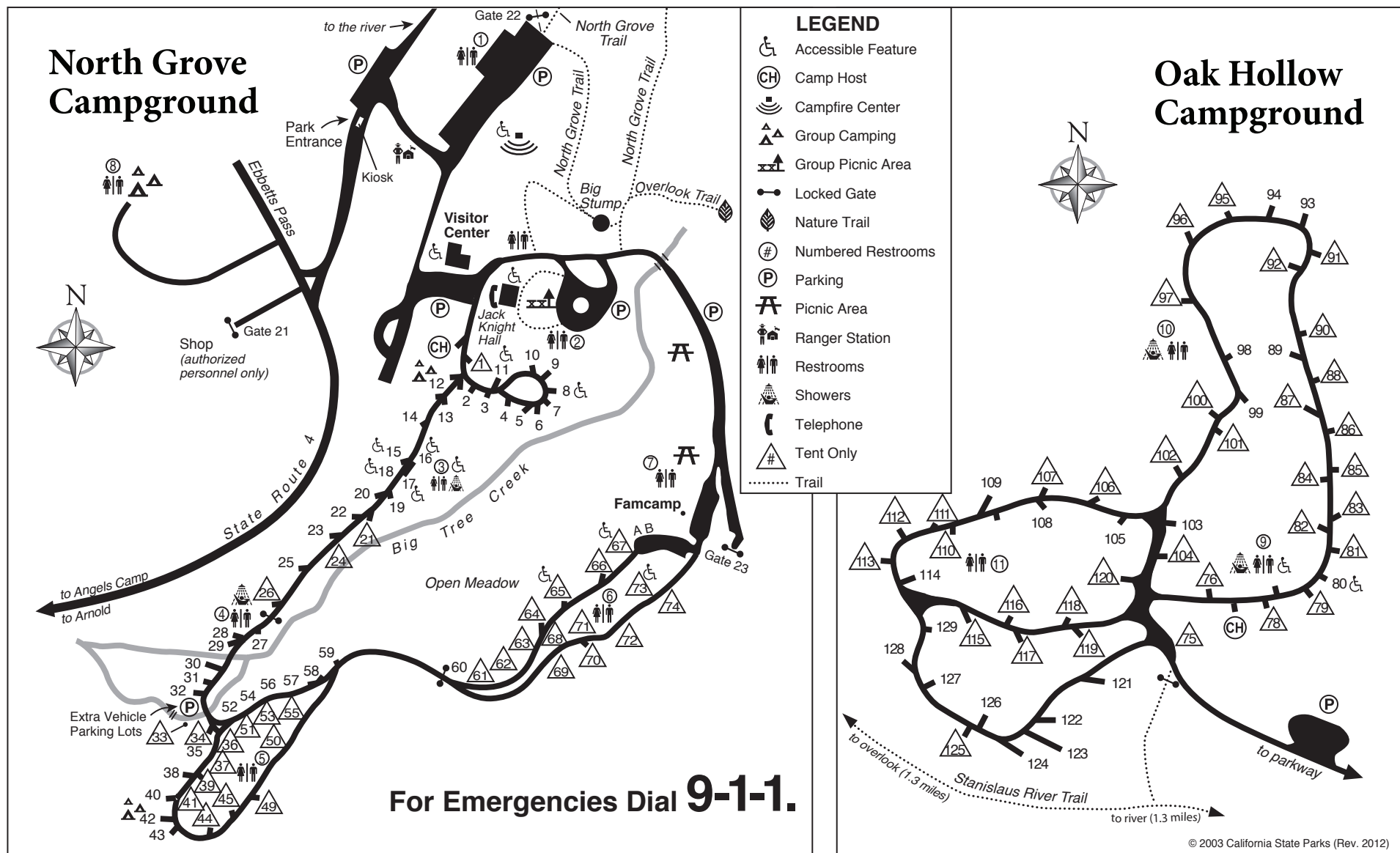
### Here are the rules:

- Do not feed the bears or any other animals.
- Day use visitors must lock up all food, recycling and trash **AT ALL TIMES** (except while actively eating or preparing food) in a vehicle incapable of being opened by wildlife.
- When camping, all food, drinks, pet food, garbage, recycling, and scented items (soap, toothpaste, cosmetics, etc.) must be placed in a food storage locker **AT ALL TIMES** (except while actively eating or preparing food)—even when you are in the campsite. The locker doors must be closed properly on both ends with both chains latched.
- Do not eat or drink in your tent.
- Do not leave pets or pet food outside at night.
- Report all bear sightings to park staff.

Bears display aggressive behavior by showing their teeth, stomping their front feet, lowering their head and arching their back, or charging toward the threat (you). If you see any of these behaviors, pick up children, stand tall, raise your arms and yell “BAD BEAR” at the bear. Always give the bear an escape route. Don't throw anything at the bear and don't run—they can run faster than you. And guess what? They're better at climbing trees too.



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## YOUR DOG IN THE PARK

Many people want to enjoy the natural beauty of the park with their favorite pet. In order to keep your dog, other visitors, and park wildlife safe, we ask that you abide by the following regulations, common courtesy and good judgment.

### REGULATIONS

- Your dog must be kept on a leash and controlled at all times while in the park.
- Leashed dogs are allowed in campgrounds, picnic areas, paved roads, fire roads and parking lots, but are not allowed on the seven developed hiking trails.
- Do not leave your dog unattended in the park.

## WHY?

### To protect your pet:

Dogs in wild areas can be bitten by snakes or other wildlife they happen to startle, injured by a porcupine or sprayed by a skunk. Dogs may pick up ticks and thorns or brush up against poison oak. They may contract a disease or parasite from park wildlife. They may be injured by a fall, entry into the swift water of the river, become lost or hit by a car. Large predators such as mountain lions may even kill an unprotected dog.

### To protect park resources:

The presence or lingering scent of a dog disturbs and frightens nearby wildlife. Dogs can transmit diseases and parasites to native animals, including deer, foxes, and coyotes. Dogs that run loose have been known to harass or kill park wildlife.

### For the safety and enjoyment of other visitors:

Some people are intimidated by dogs—even friendly ones. Dogs reduce the amount of wildlife that hikers are likely to see. And irresponsible dog owners leave waste along trails that is a nuisance and may contaminate the water supply.





The Calaveras Big Trees Association (CBTA) is a non-profit corporation (501c3) that supports the planning and funding necessary to deliver high quality educational and interpretive programs at Calaveras Big Trees State Park. We are supported by memberships, revenue from the gift shop in the Visitor Center and various fund-raising events throughout the year. The vision of CBTA is to help ensure “that each and every visitor’s experience inspires awe and appreciation for the natural, cultural and recreational resources at Calaveras Big Trees State Park”.

CBTA holds several fund-raising events a year and also sponsors free seminars and programs that are offered to the public as part of our commitment to provide educational and interpretive programs. Activities that we fund and support include:

- Junior Rangers
- Junior Cubs
- North Grove Tours
- School Group Tours and Programs
- Summer Intern
- Seasonal Interpretive Park Aides
- Family Day Event in August
- Winter Wonderland Event in December
- Volunteer Trainings, Events, and Recognition
- Warming Hut and Snowshoe Tours
- Maintenance of the Visitor Center Library
- Visitor Center Store Management
- Public Seminars and Workshops
- Scholarships
- Park Publications

CBTA provided \$500,000 in matching funds for the new Visitor Center project. We are currently raising funds to produce the multimedia program that will be presented in the new visitor center.

You can learn more about us and our upcoming activities and programs by visiting the CBTA web site at [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org). You can also follow us on Facebook.

We invite you to join us! Please visit the web site and join online, or pick up a brochure and application in the Visitor Center. Members receive discounts at the Visitor Center store while supporting a worthy cause. All funds contributed to CBTA stay in this park and are tax deductible.

Calaveras Big Trees Association P.O. Box 1196 Arnold, CA 95223 (209) 795-3840 [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org)

# 10% OFF

## One Item on Your Next Purchase at the Calaveras Big Tree State Park Visitor Center



### OTHER LOCAL OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

**Ebbetts Pass National Scenic Byway:** In 2005, the 61 miles of narrow, twisting Highways 4 and 89 that link the towns of Arnold and Markleeville were designated a National Scenic Byway—one of only seven in California. The route offers access to a huge array of outdoor recreational opportunities, and the trans-Sierra drive, itself, is spectacular. For more information, contact the Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway Association at (209) 795-4789 or [www.scenic4.org](http://www.scenic4.org)

**Caves:** There are several privately owned and operated limestone caves near the town of Murphys that offer tours. For information contact: Mercer Caverns: (209) 728-2101 or [www.mercercaverns.com](http://www.mercercaverns.com) and Moaning Cavern: (209) 736-2708 or [www.caverntours.com](http://www.caverntours.com).

**Columbia State Historic Park:** Located about one hour southwest of the park, Columbia is a living historic gold rush town, featuring the state’s largest collection of gold rush-era brick buildings and host to numerous living history events. Phone: (209) 588-9128

**Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park:** Located 12 miles east of Jackson, this park preserves a great outcropping of marbleized limestone with 1,185 mortar holes—the largest collection of bedrock mortars in North America. The land is sacred to the Miwok people, and the park is still used today for traditional cultural practices. Phone: (209) 296-7488.

**Railtown 1897 State Historic Park:** Located about one hour southwest of the park, Railtown 1897 is a unique treasure trove of preserved steam railroad artifacts. Visitors can tour the grounds and take a ride on a steam locomotive through the Sierra foothills. Phone: (209) 984-3953

**Stanislaus National Forest, Calaveras Ranger District:** From the Highway 4 corridor, you have access to fourteen developed campgrounds, seven lakes, 200 miles of maintained trail for a variety of uses, and the Stanislaus and Mokelumne Rivers. Many programs and activities are offered during the summer. Skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling on groomed and backcountry sites are popular winter activities. Sites closest to the park are: Wakaluu Hepyoo Campground near Dorrington, Lake Alpine, the Stanislaus River, and the Arnold Rim Trail ([www.arnoldrimtrail.org](http://www.arnoldrimtrail.org)). For more information, contact the Calaveras Ranger District in Hathaway Pines at: (209) 795-1381, TDD (209) 795-2854, or the Lake Alpine Station (summer only): (209) 753-2811 or visit: [www.fs.usda.gov/Stanislaus](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Stanislaus). Their visitor’s guide, *The Stanislaus Traveler* is filled with information.

**White Pines Lake:** Located on Blagen Road 1 mile northeast of Arnold. This public lake is a wonderful place to fish, swim, kayak or canoe, birdwatch, bring your dog, have a barbecue, or go for a walk. There is also a children’s playground, the Sierra Nevada Logging Museum and one of the trailheads for the Arnold Rim Trail. The facilities are maintained entirely by volunteers.