Muir Woods National Monument is a remnant of ancient coast redwood forests that blanketed many northern California coastal valleys before the 1800s. Local businessman William Kent and his wife Elizabeth Thacher Kent bought land in this valley in 1905 to protect one of the last stands of uncut redwoods. To ensure permanent protection, they donated 295 acres of redwoods to the federal government. In 1908 President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the area a national monument. At William Kent’s request, it was named for conservationist John Muir.

Thanks to the inspiration of John Muir and the generous gift of the Kent family, 100 years later we are still able to experience this ancient redwood forest. We have been entrusted to carry on the legacy of Kent and Muir, protecting this awe-inspiring place for future generations and working towards the preservation of wilderness, wildness, and natural wonder.

This is the best tree-lover’s monument that could possibly be found in all the forests of the world. You have done me great honor, and I am proud of it.

—John Muir to William Kent

Life of the Redwood Forest

Ancient Redwood Forest
Coast redwoods dominate this fog-drenched forest. Redwoods of all ages, including many over 600 years old, grow among standing dead trees, roots, and a diverse undergrowth. This specialized forest environment provides habitat for a range of plants and animals adapted to the low light and moist conditions.

Animals seem elusive in the quiet redwood forest. Some, like spotted owls, bats, and raptors, emerge mostly at night. Others like deer are most active at dawn and dusk. Some birds—warblers, kinglets, and thrushes—migrate through Muir Woods, but winter wrens live here year-round.

Reptiles and amphibians such as western garter snakes, rubber boa, and California giant salamanders are uncommon, but slimy bright banana slugs are abundant during the rainy season. Most commonly seen are Steller’s jays, Sonoma chipmunks, and Western gray squirrels.

Redwood Creek Watershed
Redwood Creek originates high on the slopes of Mt. Tamalpais and nearly bisects the park. It runs year-round, providing nearby trees and animals with water, and is host to diverse aquatic creatures, including fish, insects, and salamanders.

In summer the creek slows to a trickle and is host to many aquatic creatures, including fish, insects, and salamanders. In the winter it is host to many aquatic creatures, including fish, insects, and salamanders.

Visiting Muir Woods

Muir Woods National Monument, 12 miles north of San Francisco, is reached via U.S. 101 and Calif. Hwy. 1. Parking is limited. Try visiting on weekdays, mornings, or late afternoons. Approach roads are steep and winding; vehicles over 35 feet long are prohibited. No public transportation serves the park. Jackets are advised; daytime temperatures average 40° to 70°F.

There is a visitor center and a self-guiding nature trail. A gift shop sells souvenirs and snacks. Find gasoline and services in Mill Valley, five miles away. The park is open 8 a.m. to sunset year-round. Visitors 16 and older must pay entrance fees.

More Information
Managed by Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Muir Woods National Monument is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so all may experience our heritage. To learn more visit www.nps.gov.

Muir Woods National Monument
Mill Valley, CA
94941-2696
415-388-2595
TTY 415-556-2766
www.nps.gov/muwo

Protect Your Park
Please help preserve this national area. • Help keep wildlife healthy: don’t feed or disturb them. Fishing is prohibited in Redwood Creek. • Don’t mar or remove flowers, trees, or other natural features. • No smoking on trails. • No horses or bicycles except on fire roads. • Portable radios are prohibited. • Picknick ing and camping are not allowed, but facilities are provided nearby. • Pets are not permitted, except service dogs.

Danger: Poison oak and stinging nettles are common. • During high winds branches or trees may fall.

Loop Walks
Walk in Redwood Can yon to enjoy the forest. The 560-acre park includes six miles of trails. The main, canyon floor trails are paved and mostly level. Bridges 1 to 4 (see map) make short loop walks possi ble. Unpaved trails out of the canyon connect with trails in Mt. Tamalpais State Park.

Located near San Francisco, Muir Woods each year sees nearly one million visitors from all around the world. It is truly a window into the complex world of nature and conservation.

An Ecological Treasure
Muir Woods National Monument and the Redwood Creek watershed are a part of Golden Gate International Biosphere Reserve—one of the planet’s richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life. Located near San Francisco, Muir Woods each year sees nearly one million visitors from all around the world. It is truly a window into the complex world of nature and conservation.
California Redwoods

Redwood-like trees covered much of the Northern Hemisphere 150 million years ago. As the climate changed, the range of the redwood retreated. Now there are two species of redwood in California, with very limited changed. The coast redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) grows on a thin and discontinuous 500-mile strip of Pacific coast from southern Oregon to Big Sur. Most ancient coast redwoods have been cut, but some are protected in Redwood National and State Parks, in many California and Oregon state parks, and here in Muir Woods. This canyon of redwoods was never logged. Its forest of mixed-age and dead trees supports a biologically rich community of plants and animals.

Coast redwoods grow over 14 feet, over 252 feet and the tallest is the tallest living thing in North America. In 2006 a redwood in Redwood National Park was measured at 379.1 feet tall. The tallest is a redwood in northem California. In 2006 a redwood in Redwood National Park was measured at 379.1 feet tall.

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Roles of Fog and Fire

Fog Redwoods can flourish only in coastal California’s fog belt, where frequent summer fog supplies critical moisture in the dry season. Condensing on leaves and needles, fog drops to the forest floor and replenishes water that trees lose to evaporation and transpiration.

Fire Fire benefits the long-term health of a forest. Fire cleans the floor of stuff so redwood seedlings can reach mineral soil. Fire sterilizes bacteria and fungi in the duff layer that trees lose to evaporation and transpiration. Fire benefits the long-term health of a forest. Fire cleans the floor of stuff so redwood seedlings can reach mineral soil. Fire sterilizes bacteria and fungi in the duff layer that trees lose to evaporation and transpiration.

Coast Redwoods: Tallest Living Things

Bohemian and Cathedral groves have the biggest trees in Muir Woods. The tallest is over 252 feet and the woods has been never logged. Its forest of mixed-age and dead trees supports a biologically rich community of plants and animals.

Closely related, the giant sequoia (Sequoiadendron giganteum) grows larger in bulk but is less tall than the coast redwood. Giant sequoia can be seen in Yosemite parks. Their range is restricted to small groves on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada.

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