

Round Valley Regional Preserve

HISTORY Round Valley Regional Preserve was once home to California Indians. It was probably a boundary between several tribal groups, an area where members of East Bay and San Joaquin Valley groups met periodically to trade and socialize. Evidence of Native American use has been uncovered at several sites in the preserve.

The land was purchased in 1873 by Thomas Murphy, an Irish immigrant who established a ranching and farming operation. Murphy's grandson, Jim Murphy, sold the core 700 acres of Round Valley to the East Bay Regional Park District in 1988. A few pieces of farm equipment in the preserve date to the late nineteenth century or early twentieth. Remember that all archaeological and historic objects in the preserve are protected by law; **please leave them undisturbed for others to see.**

The preserve is open for hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling (with some restrictions). The climate at the preserve is arid and temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer months. **Be prepared for the summer heat:** use sunscreen, wear a hat and loose-fitting clothing, wear good hiking shoes, and bring plenty of water.

NATURAL RESOURCES The 2,024-acre preserve contains non-native grassland, oak woodland/savannah, shrubland, and riparian woodland plant communities. The grassland is interspersed with extensive stands of blue oak woodland/savannah. Round Valley itself is primarily annual grassland with valley oak lining the intermittent drainages. Non-native grasses, inadvertently introduced to California by early settlers, comprise the annual grassland flora. The dominant grasses are annual ryegrass, wild oats, soft chess, and ripgut brome, with wild barley, foxtail chess, red brome, silver hairgrass, and annual bluegrass occurring in lesser amounts. Native and non-native wildflowers occur in spring.

The steep, northeastern-facing slopes in the southwestern portion of the preserve support mixed oak woodland and chamise/black sage/manzanita chaparral. Riparian and wetland vegetation consisting of moisture-dependent grasses, rushes, herbs, shrubs, and/or trees occur along Round Valley Creek.

POLICE, FIRE, MEDICAL EMERGENCY9-1-1
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WEB SITE..... www.ebparks.org
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The southwest corner of the preserve supports mixed oak woodland containing blue, valley, coast live, interior live, and black oak; California buckeye; and California bay laurel.

Riparian vegetation occurs primarily along Round Valley Creek. The creek flows until late spring or early summer, after which the water pools at intervals along the streamcourse. Tree cover along the banks is sparse; vegetation includes spikerush, sedge, rabbitsfoot grass, watercress, curly dock, monkey flower, and willow.

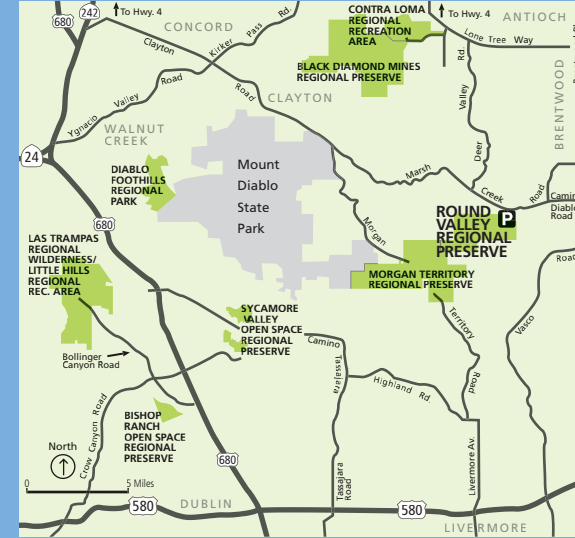
WILDLIFE The preserve is habitat for a wide variety of wildlife typical of that found in the East Bay Area and also some species more common to the Central Valley. Several species in this area have evolved to survive with only seasonal supplies of water and green vegetation.

Mammals in Round Valley include the California ground squirrel, San Joaquin pocket mouse, Audubon's or desert cottontail, and the endangered San Joaquin kit fox. Round Valley is one of the northern extremes of the kit fox range in California, and is listed on the Federal and State endangered species lists. The kit fox is prey to coyotes and red foxes, and dogs can be a disease vector to the kit fox. Like other scavengers, it is susceptible to secondary poisoning. The Park District is playing a major role in protecting the fox by protecting its habitat in Round Valley.

The preserve is also home to nesting golden eagles, which are protected by State and Federal law. The golden eagles feed on ground squirrels, and with the local burrowing owls, are a state "Species of Special Concern." Burrowing owls nest in ground squirrel burrows and feed on mice and insects.

Ponds and streams in Round Valley support the federally threatened California red-legged frog, western toads, western pond turtles and Pacific tree frogs. These species breed with the onset of winter rains, and burrow into the mud or use rodent holes for hibernation during the dry summer months.

GEOLOGY The bedrock geology of the preserve is Cretaceous Panoche shale and sandstone, with deposits of recent alluvium on the surface in valleys and creek drainages. The preserve has small amounts of high-quality soils, located mainly in the level areas along Marsh Creek and in the valley proper. Most of the soil, however, is of a lower quality, suitable only for range, wildlife, and watershed uses. The Marsh Creek (Mount Diablo) Fault is located about two miles southwest of the preserve.



To Reach Round Valley:

From Walnut Creek: From I-680, exit at Ygnacio Valley Road. Proceed on Ygnacio Valley Road to Clayton Road in Concord and turn right (east). Clayton Road becomes Marsh Creek Road in Clayton. Proceed east on Marsh Creek Road, past Deer Valley Road, until you reach the preserve staging area on your right.

From Brentwood: Take Walnut Blvd. south to Marsh Creek Road and turn right. When Marsh Creek Road intersects with Camino Diablo Road, bear right and stay on Marsh Creek Road. You will reach the preserve staging area on the left.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please contact the EBRPD Public Affairs Department at (510) 544-2200, fax (510) 635-3478, TDD (510) 633-0460, or info@ebparks.org.



East Bay Regional Park District

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