



Point Reyes Nature

Hiking Calendar



2021



January

**Five Brooks: Olema Valley,
Bolema, Ridge, Stewart**

Winter in Point Reyes brings mushrooms! The mixed evergreen forest of oak, bay and Douglas fir at Five Brooks is a great place to spot mushrooms along the trail. As you hike, watch for manroot starting to flower and spreading its bright green tendrils.

Avg temp: 45-59°F

Rain: 8 days, 5.2 inches

Daylight hours: 10

Hike: Five Brooks 5.7 miles, loop

Trails: Olema Valley, Bolema, Ridge, Stewart

Start at the Five Brooks Trailhead

1. Follow the Olema Valley Trail past the Mill Pond. Turn left to stay on the trail. Hike 1.2 miles to the Bolema Trail. Turn right.
2. Hike the Bolema Trail 1.1 miles to the Ridge Trail. Turn right.
3. Hike the Ridge Trail 0.8 miles to the Stewart Trail. Turn right.
4. Hike 2.6 miles on the Stewart Trail (downhill) to the Five Brooks trailhead.



[Get details about this hike](#)

January Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

- Mushrooms (Shaggy mane shown here)
- [Bay trees](#) are budding
- [Trailing blackberry](#) has striking burgundy leaves
- [Manroot](#) are spreading and starting to flower.
- [Milkmaids](#) is one of the first wildflowers to bloom, with blossoms from January to May.

Wildlife

- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Coho Salmon](#) spawning
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) pupping & breeding
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) southern migration (peaks in mid-January)

A photograph of a forest path. The path is made of dirt and is surrounded by tall, thin trees. In the foreground, there are large green ferns. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

February

Bolinas Ridge Trail

Take advantage of winter to hike the north section of the Bolinas Ridge Trail which is fully exposed to the sun for 6.2 miles (to the Randall Trail). The south end is forested and blooming with shade-loving plants including Pacific trillium and the lily, California fetid adderstongue.

Avg temp: 46-61°F

Rain: 7 days, 5.1 inches

Daylight hours: 11

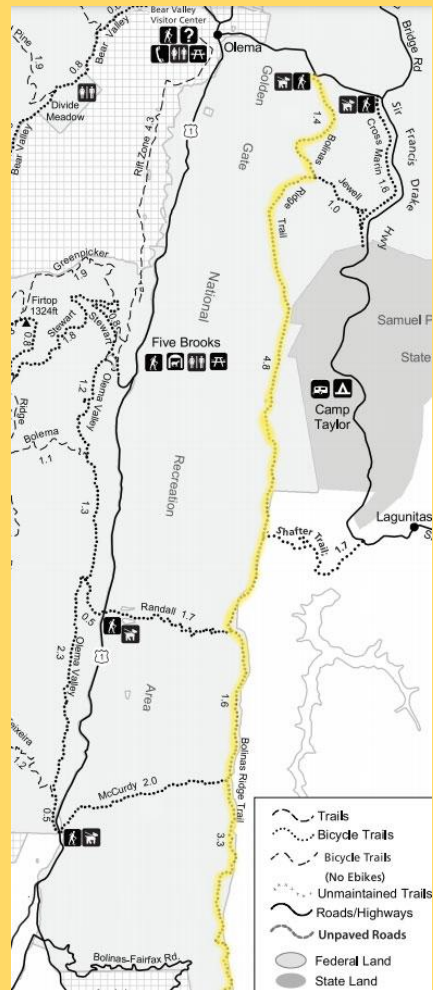
Hike: Bolinas Ridge Trail, 11.1 miles

Access the Bolinas Ridge Trail from Olema (north end) or Bolinas (south end). The Bolinas-Fairfax Road (south end) is sometimes closed in winter due to landslides so check before planning your trip.

Other access trails include the Randall, McCurdy, Cross Marin-Jewell or Shafter Grade.

Horses, bikes, dogs on leash are allowed.

[Get details about this hike](#)



February Highlights



What's Blooming on this trail?

- Mushrooms
- [Pacific trillium](#) are starting to bloom
- [California fetid adderstongue](#), shown here, is a lily that grows in mossy, moist places, often in shade. Bolinas Ridge Trail is a great place to spot it. [Read more](#)

Wildlife

- [Steelhead Trout](#) spawning
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) pupping & breeding
- Humpback Whale southern migration



March

Tomales Point Trail

Spring in Point Reyes brings Tule elk calves and wildflowers. Hike to the narrow tip of the peninsula overlooking both the Pacific Ocean and Tomales Bay. Explore the historic buildings of Pierce Point Ranch or walk to [McClures Beach](#) after your hike.

Avg temp: 46-64°F

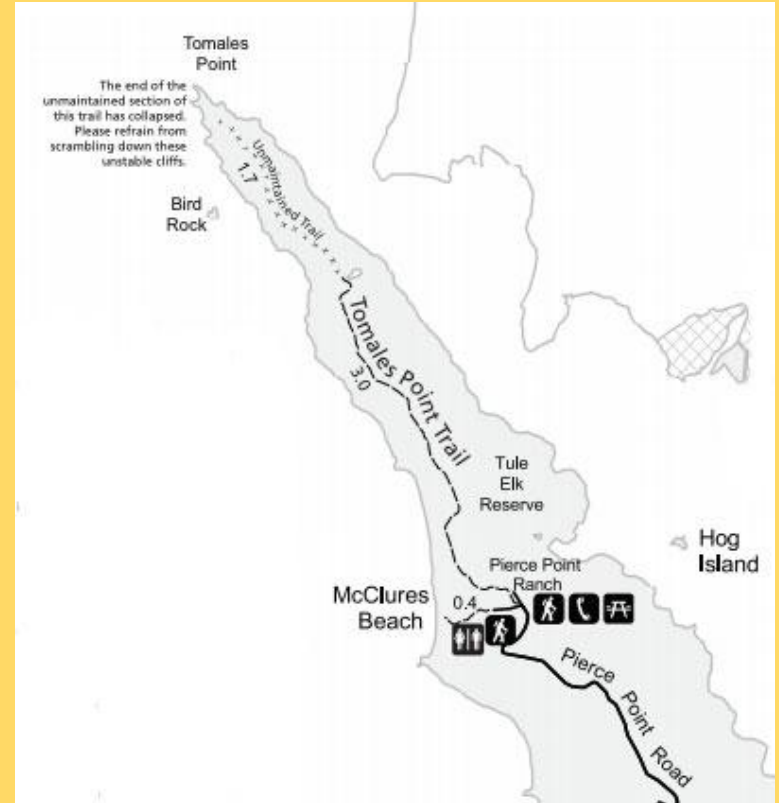
Rain: 9 days, 4.3 inches

Daylight hours: 12

Hike: Tomales Point Trail, 6.0-9.4 miles, out and back

The last 1.7 miles of the Tomales Point Trail are unmaintained and require hiking uphill through sand in parts. You may encounter a thriving patch of native cobwebby thistle. The view from the tip of the Point Reyes Peninsula is magnificent, making it worth the extra effort.

[Get details about this hike](#)



March Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Douglas iris](#) shown here
- ['Menzies' Baby Blue Eyes](#)
- [Sun cup](#)
- [Footsteps of Spring](#)
- [California buttercup](#)
- [Tidy Tips](#)
- [California goldfields](#)
- [Creamcups](#)
- [Wallflowers](#)
- [Western Blue-eyed Grass](#)

Wildlife

- Bird migration
- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Harbor Seal](#) pupping
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) pupping & breeding
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) northern migration (peaks in mid-March)
- Humpback Whale southern migration





April

Chimney Rock Trail

Wildflowers are in full bloom and there's no better place than Chimney Rock for immersing yourself in the colors of spring. Watch for Pacific Gray Whales on their northern migration. Cows and calves are close to shore and easier to spot.

Avg temp: 47-66°F

Rain: 5 days, 2.1 inches

Daylight hours: 13

Hike: Chimney Rock Trail, 1.8 miles, out and back

This short trail on the eastern spur of the Point Reyes Headlands offers panoramic views of Drakes Bay and the Pacific ocean, abundant wildflowers in the spring, barking elephant seals, and whales in the distance (bring your binoculars!).

The road to this trail is frequently closed, so check the park's [current conditions](#) before going.

[Get details about this hike](#)



April Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

- [San Francisco Owl's-Clover](#) is a rare plant with a limited coastal range.
- [Tolmie's Pussy Ears](#) (shown here) is a lily with a fuzzy interior
- [Dwarf Checkermallow](#) is a larval host to the West Coast Lady butterfly. Purple-stemmed checkerbloom is endemic to the California coast just north of the San Francisco Bay Area.
- And much, much more! [See more spring wildflowers](#)

Wildlife

- Peak [spring wildflower](#) blooms
- Bird migration
- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Harbor Seal](#) pupping
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) pupping & breeding
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) northern migration (cows and calves are close to the shore in late April)



May

Abbotts Lagoon

Spring wildflowers are blooming abundantly as the weather warms. Hike up to the ridge overlooking the lagoon to enjoy wildflowers and take in the views from ocean to pasture. With luck, you may spot a river otter family in the lagoon. Watch for heron hunting fish in the lagoon.

Avg temp: 49-69°F

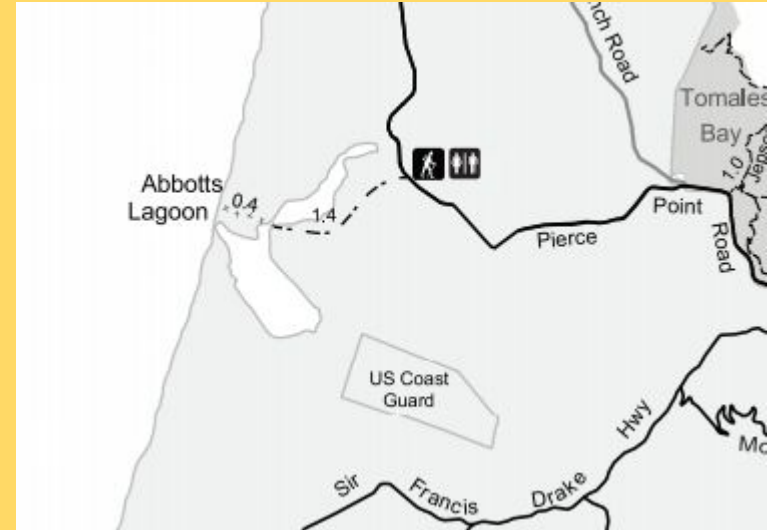
Rain: 2 days, 0.8 inches

Daylight hours: 14

Hike: Abbotts Lagoon Trail, 2.8-3.6 miles, out and back

The trail is 1.4 miles to the lagoon. From there, it's another 0.4 miles walk to the ocean, either along the lagoon or over the dunes. It's an easy, level trail and a favorite of bird watchers. The varied terrain makes for an abundance of birds. You'll encounter shorebirds at the beach, migratory birds at the lagoon, and friendly sparrows in the brambles and perched along the pasture fence. The sand dunes are a favorite destination for kids and the outer dunes are home to many interesting plants. Watch for the river otters near the bridge.

[Get details about this hike](#)



May Highlights

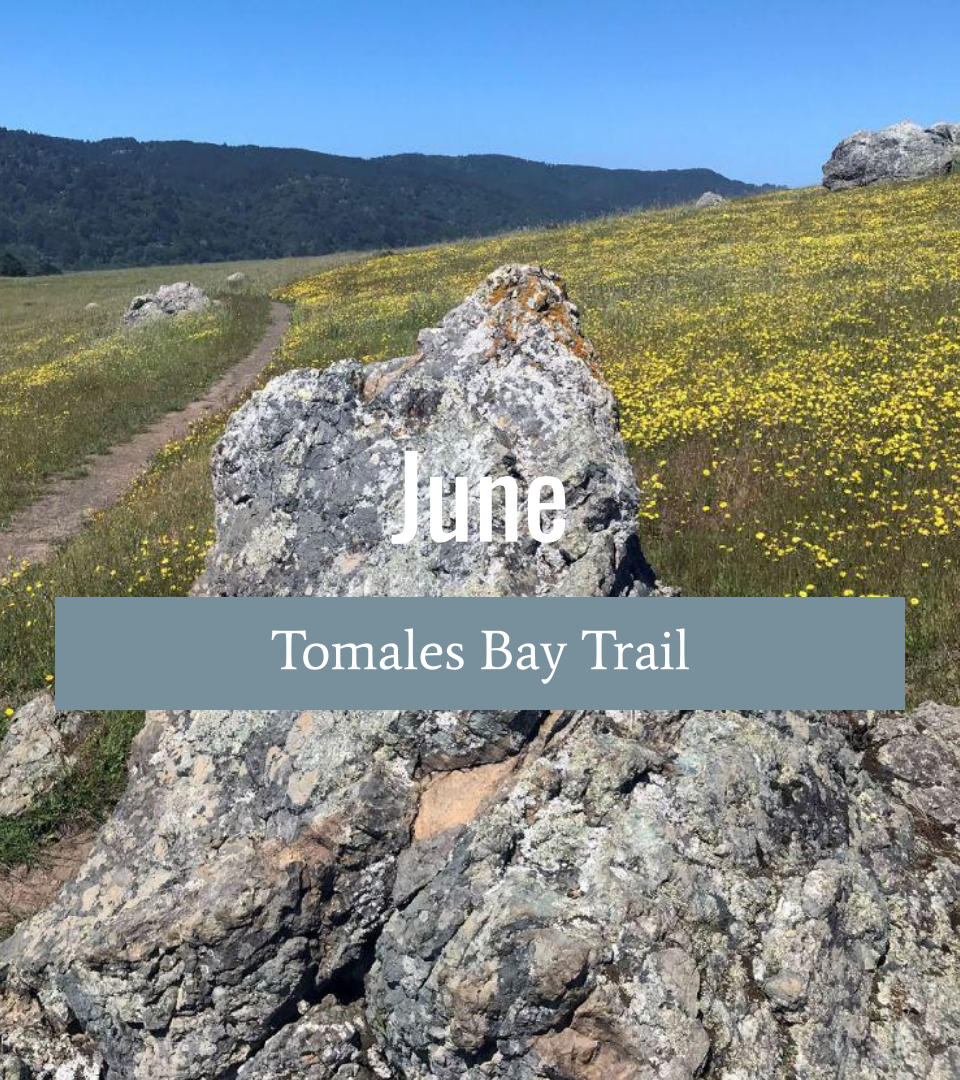


What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Salmonberry](#)
- [California poppy](#)
- [Cobwebby thistle](#) shown here
- [Tolmie's Pussy Ears](#)
- [Dwarf Checkermallow](#)
- [Seaside woolly sunflower](#) blooms on the cliffs
- [Bluff Lettuce](#) blooms in the dunes.

Wildlife

- Peak [spring wildflower](#) blooms
- Bird migration
- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Harbor Seal](#) pupping
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) northern migration (cows and calves are close to the shore in early May)



June

Tomales Bay Trail

The pasture is golden with drying grasses and a carpet of pungent yellow tarplant. Western fence lizards (blue-bellies) bask in the sun on the blueschist rocks at the beginning of the trail, and rare Point Reyes salty bird's beak is blooming along the marshy shores of Tomales Bay.

Avg temp: 52-75°F

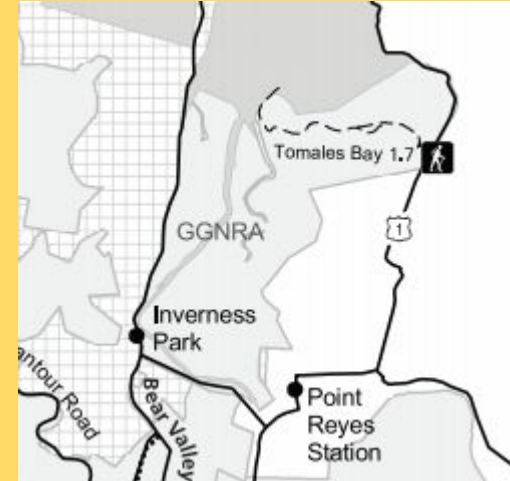
Rain: 1 day, 0.4 inches

Daylight hours: 14.5

Hike: Tomales Bay Trail, 3.4 miles, out and back

Only a short distance from downtown Point Reyes Station, Tomales Bay Trail winds through a pasture with two small ponds to the shore of Tomales Bay. Watch for turtles, frogs, and red-winged blackbirds at the ponds. Summer flowers are nestled among the grasses.

[Get details about this hike](#)



June Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Point Reyes salty bird's-beak](#), a rare plant
- [Yellow hayfield tarplant](#) shown here
- [Wavy-leafed soap plant](#)
- [Dwarf brodiaea](#)
- [White brodiaea](#)
- [Harvest brodiaea](#)
- [Ithuriel's spear](#) The name is a reference to the angel Ithuriel from Milton's Paradise Lost.
- [Long-ray brodiaea](#)

Wildlife

- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Harbor Seal](#) pupping
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) northern migration



July

Bull Point Trail

Looking across the pasture, you would not imagine Bull Point as a place of botanical richness. Hot spots for rare plants include the moist, marshy areas bordering Drakes Estero, and the moist stands of bushy plants such as willows. The sand dunes are where you'll find the endangered Point Reyes Silverspot butterfly.

Avg temp: 53-79°F

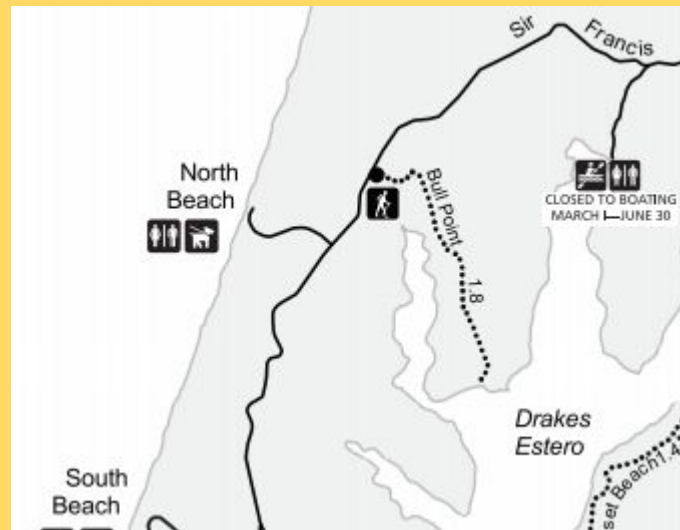
Rain: 0 days, 0.0 inches

Daylight hours: 14.5

Hike: Bull Point Trail, 3.6 miles, out and back

Bull Point Trail is an easy stroll across the flat pasture bordering Creamery Bay, one of the fingers of Drakes Estero, and Historic F Ranch. The pasture is sprinkled with wildflowers in late spring and summer, but otherwise, it's very sparsely covered in grasses and coyote brush. It's a great place to watch raptors hunting. The beginning of the trail is not well marked. On your way back, look for the red cow feeder as a landmark back to the parking lot.

[Get details about this hike](#)



July Highlights



What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Large flowered leptosiphon](#) rare
- [Point Reyes checkerbloom](#) rare
- [Point Reyes horkelia](#) rare, smells like honey!
- [Swamp harebell](#) rare
- [Leopard lily](#) special concern due to poaching
- [Coast lily](#) rare (shown here)
- [Tall white bog orchid](#)
- [Point Reyes silverspot](#) butterfly, critically imperiled

Wildlife

- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Tule Elk](#) rut
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) northern migration



August

Muddy Hollow Loop

The foggy coolness of August is ideal to keep temperatures down on this mostly-exposed loop trail. Late-summer wildflowers, including several orchids are hidden among the dried grasses. Tule elk are just beginning the rut. Listen for them “bugling” whistle-like in the distance.

Avg temp: 54-79°F

Rain: 0 days, 0.0 inches

Daylight hours: 13.5

Hike: Muddy Hollow 7.3 miles, loop

Trails: Muddy Hollow Road, Glenbrook, Estero

Start at the Muddy Hollow Trailhead

1. Take the Muddy Hollow Road Trail (on the right side of the parking area) 2.3 miles to Glenbrook Trail.
2. Turn left onto Glenbrook and walk for 0.7 miles where the trail becomes the Estero Trail.
3. Follow the Estero Trail for 4.0 miles to the Muddy Hollow Trail.
4. Take a left and walk 0.3 miles along the gravel road back to the parking area.



[Get details about this hike](#)

August Highlights



What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Coast Piperia](#) orchid
- [Hooded lady's tresses](#) orchid
- [Thimbleberry](#) shown here
- [Twinberry honeysuckle](#)
- [Pink honeysuckle](#)
- [Common Yarrow](#)
- [Western pearly everlasting](#)
- [Coast Indian paintbrush](#)

Wildlife

- Bird migration
- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding
- [Tule Elk](#) rut

A scenic view of a rocky coastline with turquoise water and a cliff in the background. The foreground shows dark, wet rocks with some seaweed. The water is clear and blue, extending to a sandy beach and a cliff in the distance under a blue sky with light clouds.

September

Estero Trail to Sunset Beach

Leopard sharks feed in the muddy shallows of Drakes Estero while harbor seals bask on sandbars. Watch for migratory birds in wooded areas and shorebirds and ducks along the water's edge. Egrets nest in the forest and leave their white feathers along the trail. Snowy plovers are finishing their breeding season and beach closures are lifted.

Avg temp: 55-80°F

Rain: 0 days, 0.1 inches

Daylight hours: 12.5

Hike: Sunset Beach Trail 7.8 miles, out and back

Trails: Estero Trail, Sunset Beach Trail

1. Hike a short distance across a hillside to a small forest, the remains of a Christmas tree farm, and finally to the bridge across the Estero. Stop and look for leopard sharks, crabs and other critters.
2. Continue hiking (up and down several inclines), through several cow gates. You'll see a trail marker with Sunset Beach Trail. Stay on the same trail! Do not be tempted to turn left. Continue for 1.4 miles past the lagoon to a bench. Depending on the tides and season, continue hiking across the marsh and along the narrow shore to the end. Explore the "lacy" rocks and tidepools.

[Get details about this hike](#)



September Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

In the marsh

- [Point Reyes salty bird's-beak](#) rare
- [Western marsh rosemary](#)
- [Marsh jaumea](#)
- [Alkali heath](#)
- [Pacific glasswort](#) shown here

And on the trail [Coyote Brush \(*Baccharis pilularis*\)](#) is spreading its fuzzy seeds

Wildlife

- Bird migration
- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Snowy Plover](#) breeding ends
- [Tule Elk](#) rut
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) juveniles

What's in the tide pools and shore here?

- [Yellow Shore Crab](#)
- [Pacific Rock Crab](#)
- [Purple Shore Crab](#) shown here
- [Purple Clam](#)
- [Nuttall's Cockle](#)
- [Plate Limpet](#)
- [Aggregating Anemone](#)
- [Black Tegula](#)
- [Giant Kelp](#)
- [Eelgrass](#)





October

Rift Zone Trail

Bay Area “summer” continues into the fall and it’s a great time to visit shaded trails to escape the heat. Enjoy flowers still blooming in moist areas. Watch for migrating birds at marshes and beaches.

Avg temp: 53-75°F

Rain: 4 days, 1.9 inches

Daylight hours: 11.5

Hike: Rift Zone Trail 8.6 miles, out and back

Trails: Rift Zone

Start at the Bear Valley parking lot

1. The Rift Zone Trail starts just after the beginning of the Bear Valley Trail on the left.
2. Hike across the Bear Valley meadow and above the Olema marsh. At the first gate, cross the driveway to the Vedanta retreat and open the gate to the cow pasture. Hike across the pasture to the woodland trail.
3. If you don't want to hike the whole way, turn around at the gate where the trail narrows, about 3 miles in.



[Get details about this hike](#)

October Highlights

A close-up photograph of a branch from a California Bay tree. The branch is covered with large, dark green, glossy leaves. Several large, pear-shaped fruits are hanging from the branch. The fruits are yellow-green at the top and transition to a reddish-pink color towards the bottom. The background is a soft-focus view of more green foliage.

What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Evergreen Huckleberry](#)
- [Coffeeberry](#) is fruiting
- [California Hazelnut](#)
- [Western Wild Ginger](#)
- [Bigleaf Maple](#) in fall colors
- [California Bay](#) (shown here) is fruiting. The thin flesh is avocado-like with a pit that breaks in two easily. You may see pits scattered along the trail. The pits or “bay nuts” can be roasted and eaten whole or ground into a powder.
- [Currants & gooseberries](#)
- [Giant Chain Fern](#)

Wildlife

- Bird migration
- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Tule Elk](#) rut
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) juveniles



November

Inverness Ridge Loop

With foliage sparse, it's a great time to spot Dusky-footed woodrat nests in the forest, often only a few feet from the trail. If you see one, there are usually other nests nearby. If you are thinking small, think again! These nests can be up to 5 feet tall and 8 feet in diameter. Look for a pyramid of sticks, often with a few green leaves or lichen on top.

Avg temp: 49-66°F

Rain: 6 days, 3.3 inches

Daylight hours: 10

Hike: Inverness Ridge 4.9 miles, loop

Trails: Inverness Ridge, Drakes View, Bayview

Start at the Bayview Trailhead

1. Follow the Inverness Ridge Trail to the paved road. Continue up the road a few minutes watching carefully for the dirt path on the left that continues the trail into the woods. (1.3 miles)
2. Turn left on the Drakes View Trail and hike 2.0 miles downhill to the Bayview Trail.
3. Turn left on the Bayview Trail and hike uphill 1.6 miles back to the trailhead.



[Get details about this hike](#)

November Highlights



What's Blooming on this trail?

- Mushrooms emerge after rains
- [Pink Honeysuckle](#) is fruiting
- [Coffeberry](#) (shown here) is fruiting. The juicy edible fruit may be green, red, or black. It contains two seeds that resemble coffee beans.
- [Pacific Aster](#)
- [Orange Bush Monkeyflower](#) blooms into the winter
- [California Bay](#) is fruiting.
- [Lipstick Powderhorn](#) year-round, plus plenty of other lichens!

Wildlife

- Bird migration
- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) juveniles
- Humpback Whale southern migration
- [Dusky-footed woodrat](#) nests are easier to spot with foliage bare



December

Alamere Falls

Take advantage of a sunny day to hike the scenic Coast Trail to Alamere Falls. It's a long hike and requires attention to the tides since you will walk on the beach for a mile out and back. Get started early in the morning to beat the crowds and allow plenty of time.

Avg temp: 45-59°F

Rain: 9 days, 5.0 inches

Daylight hours: 9.5

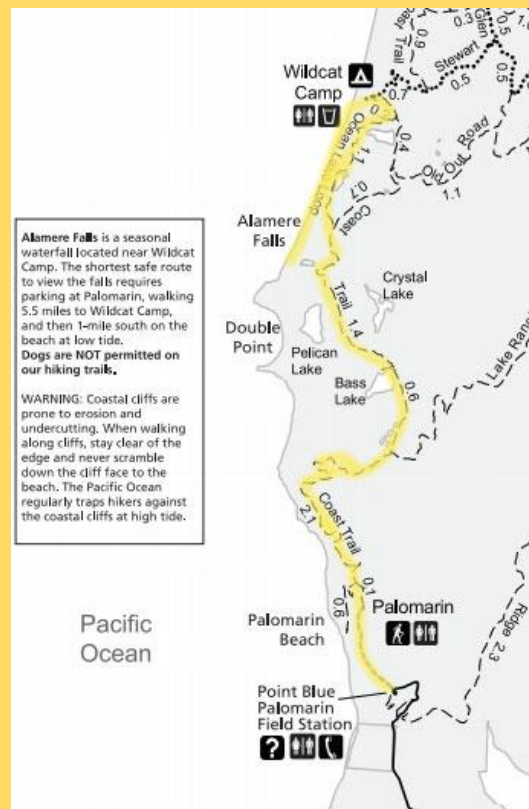
Hike: Alamere Falls 13 miles, out and back

Trails: Coast Trail, beach

Start at the Palomarin Trailhead parking lot (arrive before 10am for parking)

1. Hike on the Coast Trail 5.5 miles to Wildcat Camp (take either the Ocean Lake Loop or the Coast path)
2. Walk 1-mile south (to the left) at low tide to Alamere Falls.
3. Retrace your path back to the Palomarin trailhead.

[Get details about this hike](#)



December Highlights

What's Blooming on this trail?

- [Trailing Blackberry](#)
- [Seaside Daisy](#) shown here
- [Pacific False Bindweed](#)
- [Pacific Aster](#)
- [Paintbrushes](#)



Wildlife

- Bird migration
- Shorebirds and waterfowl
- [Coho Salmon](#) spawning
- [Northern Elephant Seal](#) pupping & breeding
- [Pacific Gray Whale](#) southern migration
- Humpback Whale southern migration