

Knowland Park Nature Guide

BIRDS

Many bird species nest along Arroyo Viejo Creek and in the woodlands. Resident “sedentary” birds live out their lives in the coastal scrub and maritime chaparral; California thrashers, wrentits, quail, and others can be heard calling from their hiding places. Great Horned Owls and a variety of other raptors patrol the woods and prairie.

MAMMALS

Mountain lions secretly hunt the mule deer that gather here. Coyotes and foxes feed on small mammals, including pocket gophers and the Dusky-footed woodrat, a California species of special concern. Woodrats build large stick nests that provide protective habitats for many other small animal species.

REPTILES and AMPHIBIANS

In the winter, Pacific chorus frogs call from their breeding sites, newts return to the creek to breed, and salamanders can be found hiding under dead logs in the woodlands. Among the array of resident snakes and lizards is the Alameda whipsnake, the most endangered reptile in the East Bay.

NATIVE PLANTS and GRASSES

The park hosts 46 locally rare plant species and two state-listed rare plants — Oakland star tulip and Bristly leptosiphon. In spring, the beautiful purple needlegrass prairie is dotted with colorful displays of wildflowers.

LICHENS and FUNGI

Lichens cover rock outcrops, oak tree bark, and shrubs in the old growth chaparral, regulating the flow of nutrients and water through ecosystems. When the rains come, ancient fairy rings of puffballs emerge and other colorful fungi sprout in the woods and shrub communities.

GEOLOGY

Transected by the Hayward Fault, the park sits on a geologically rich and active site. The Great Valley Sequence is west of the fault, and the Franciscan melange formation is to the east. The rocky outcrops in this area were formed far below the earth’s surface by intense heat and pressure and were pushed up by tectonic plate action.

Wildlife in Knowland Park

Knowland Park is Oakland’s largest and most biologically diverse wild park, and it is open to the public, free for anyone to enjoy. It is home to a wide variety of native plants, irreplaceable communities of native bunchgrass prairie, wildflowers, fascinating varieties of lichens and fungi, beautiful heritage oaks, and a unique stand of maritime chaparral.

Two of the five native plant communities in Knowland Park are considered rare statewide. Less than 1% of the state’s original native grasslands remain, and Knowland Park’s are of exceptionally high quality. Maritime chaparral is ranked “imperiled” globally, and it has been reduced to less than 1% of the 15,000 acres of parkland in the East Bay hills. Knowland Park’s maritime chaparral is one “island” in a terrestrial archipelago along the California coast with such rich genetic diversity that it has been compared to Darwin’s Galapagos Islands. The stand of maritime chaparral in Knowland Park is the only one in the East Bay that is not protected by a land management agency.

The park is also part of a critical wildlife corridor for mountain lions and other California native species in the East Bay. Its native plant communities provide food and shelter for thriving populations of mammals, resident and migratory birds, insects, amphibians, and reptiles — including the threatened Alameda whipsnake.

Knowland Park Is in Peril

Despite the richness and rarity of Knowland Park’s California native habitats, the Oakland Zoo is pushing forward with its plan to bulldoze and build on the most rare and fragile areas in the park. People throughout the greater Bay Area are fighting to save this treasure. Join our cause: become a Facebook Friend, and visit our website to sign up to become a Friend of Knowland Park.



KNOWLAND PARK

Oakland, California

Nature Guide Trail Map

Fall 2013



Fremont's star lily

www.saveknowland.org



Knowland Park: A "Living Laboratory"

Knowland Park's richly diverse and rare California wildlife and plant communities reveal the intricate interconnections among them. Although not always easy to find, the park's animals and their critical habitats provide a valuable place to study a living California native environment.

Look For: Crusting lichens on the rocky outcrops; the deeper green grass of a fairy ring and its giant puffballs during the rainy season; Brittle leaf manzanita in the maritime chaparral; native wildflowers in the grasslands, coastal scrub, and oak woodlands.

Listen For: Bird calls and songs, insects, and the subtle sounds of reptiles rustling in the underbrush.

The Trails: The trails shown on this map are all fire roads. There are a few unmarked paths made by animals or hikers. The fire roads are conduits for the dispersal of invasive plants and grasses, but they provide good access to many wonderful parts of the park.

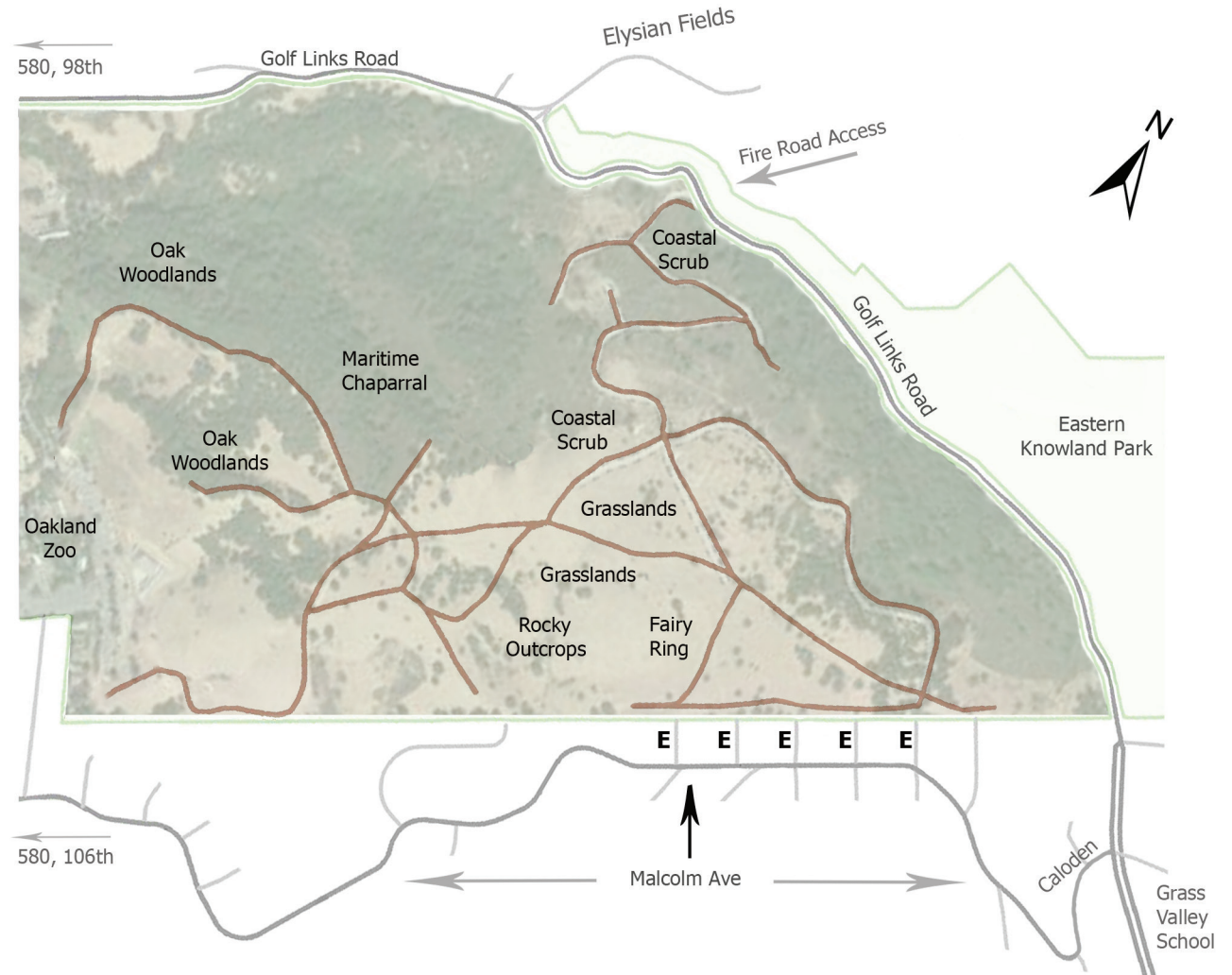
The Goats, The View, Enduring Nature:

The park's wildflowers and grasses disappear each year when the goats are brought to graze, leaving the hills barren until the rains come and the park's rich plant life can begin again. But Knowland Park's spectacular views of the entire Bay Area are always there, as are its rocky outcrops with their colorful lichen crusts. The oak woodlands, maritime chaparral, coastal scrub and the riparian corridor provide year-round habitats and outdoor opportunities for wildlife and visitors alike.

Directions: From I-580 exit at 98th, take Golf Links Road up the hill and around the park. Turn R on Caloden, which becomes Malcolm. Alternatively, exit I-580 at 106th, go under the freeway, turn R on Malcolm and go up the hill.

Western Knowland Park

a sampler of its native plant communities and natural features



No Facilities

There are no restrooms or trash cans. Please carry out your trash and dog waste.

E - Park Access

Enter the park through one of the paths at Snowdown, Cameron, Lochard, Etrick, Elvessa, or Fallbrook Way.