

Winter Hiking Tips

Rain brings new growth, running streams and creeks and salamanders -- and means muddy and slippery trails. Give the trails a day or two to dry out for safer hiking that does not damage the trail.

Note: trails may be closed to horseback riders and mountain bikers due to unsafe conditions - check trail conditions at facebook.com/openspaceauthority



Ensatina -- a species of salamander -- venture out in preserves during wet weather. Watch your step on the trail as they are quite slow. Please don't touch -- Ensatina are delicate! Photo by Cait Hutnik.

Wet Weather Hiking Tips

1. Wear sturdy boots that can stand moisture and mud and bring extra shoes for driving.
2. Bring hiking poles to help keep you upright -- keep the "snow cups" on the end of the poles for balance.
3. Bring a small backpack with extra clothes in case you have a fall.
4. Stay on trails to avoid damaging the trail and sensitive vegetation.
5. Before heading out, tell family or friends where you are going and when you expect to return. Cell coverage is unreliable in the preserves.
6. Dress in layers.
7. Carry extra water (drinking water is not available in the preserves).
8. Pack snacks or lunch, especially if you're hiking with children.
9. Bring a hat and a simple first aid kit.

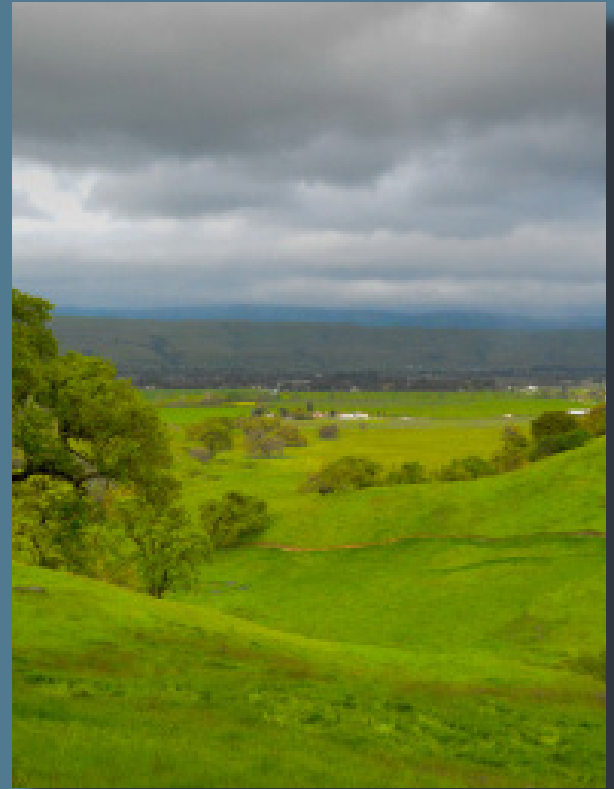


Photo by Samsudin Kamis

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Preserves

**Sierra Vista
Open Space Preserve**
5341 Sierra Rd, San Jose

Directions
From I-680
East on Berryessa Rd
Left on Piedmont Rd
Right on Sierra Rd
Parking will be on the right

**Coyote Valley
Open Space Preserve**
550 Palm Ave, Morgan Hill

Directions
From Hwy 101
West on Bailey Ave
Left on Santa Teresa Blvd
Right on Palm Ave
Preserve is at the end of Palm

**Rancho Cañada del Oro
Open Space Preserve**
4289 Casa Loma Rd, Morgan Hill

Directions
From Hwy 101
West on Bailey Ave
Left on McKlean Rd
Right on Casa Loma Rd
Parking will be on the left