Nested at the foot of the Coyote Hills, 105-acre Ralph B. Clark Regional Park features large grassy areas framed by plenty of shade trees, gently rolling hills carpeted with native plants, and a northern border of sheer sandstone cliffs. An award-winning Interpretive Center displays a glimpse into Orange County’s prehistoric past. And whether your idea of the perfect picnic includes hiking, horseshoes, or just relaxing, Ralph B. Clark Regional Park is the place for it.

A BRIEF HISTORY.

Over the past million years or so, the area that has become Clark Regional Park has changed from a marine environment to a terrestrial environment. The park’s rich fossil beds were revealed when the California Division of Highways excavated sand and gravel from the site for use in construction of the Santa Ana and Riverside Freeways from 1956 to 1973.

The County of Orange acquired the property in 1974, and Los Coyotes Regional Park opened in 1981. It was renamed in 1987, in honor of Ralph B. Clark, the Orange County Supervisor who was instrumental in the acquisition, planning and development of the park.

DON’T MISS A THING.

Want an expert to point out things you might overlook? Staff-led tours and group talks are offered year-round (by appointment through the park office). For do-it-yourselfers, a one-mile perimeter hiking trail is an easy-to-moderate way to burn off your picnic lunch.

RANGER’S RECOMMENDATION.

“The Interpretive Center is extremely interesting to both kids and adults. The variety of fossils here are comparable to what’s found at the La Brea Tar Pits. Our fossils give a glimpse into animals that lived in this area so long ago.”

RUN, JUMP, SWING, SLIDE, CLIMB.

There are playgrounds and lots of room to run around at Clark Regional Park. Be sure to allow plenty of time, because your kids won’t want to leave.

HOW DO YOU PREFER TO EXERCISE?

There are many ways to enjoy the great outdoors. We have ball fields, tennis courts, sand volleyball courts, horseshoe pits and more. Exercise doesn’t have to be boring.

PACK A PICNIC.

Bring your baby back ribs. Bring your chicken teriyaki. There are group shelters for up to 250 people. Or just spread a blanket under a shade tree and unpack the sandwiches.

OUR NATURE CENTER FEATURES FOSSILS.

Orange County wasn’t always populated with nice, friendly people. The original residents were a bit wilder. Mammoths, ring-tailed cats, giant ground sloths and a unique type of ancient llama lived in this area. Our nationally recognized Interpretive Center is home to one of the more significant fossil museums in Southern California.

COME RELAX WITH A FISHING POLE.

Whether you’re casting a line or your line’s being taken, there’s nothing like the sound of a spinning reel. Come cast a line in our stocked lake, and hook a largemouth bass, bluegill, catfish or trout. And remember, kids under 16 don’t need a license, so bring a child along with you to teach.

DOGS WELCOME.

Dogs enjoy the great outdoors, too. Just remember to keep them on a maximum 6-foot leash at all times.