

OC Parks

**Jr. Ranger**



South Region







## OC Parks

OC Parks encompasses regional, wilderness, historical and coastal facilities throughout the County of Orange, California. Featuring approximately 60,000 acres of parkland, open space and shoreline, Orange County's award-winning parks and programs are enjoyed by millions of residents and visitors each year, in ways as diverse as the parks themselves.

## Our Mission

We preserve and enhance OC Parks' natural and cultural resources for recreation, education and exploration.

*This Book Belongs To:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite OC Park: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Ranger Sage*



*Ranger Milo*



*Ranger Westley*



*Ranger Ruby*





# OC Parks Jr. Ranger Program

The OC Parks Jr. Ranger Program encourages park guests to explore the outdoor world within OC Parks by developing a sense of belonging, becoming a part of nature and feeling empowered to be stewards of Orange County's natural and cultural resources.

The OC Parks Jr. Ranger Program includes 20 of OC Parks' amazing parks and historic sites throughout the County of Orange. The sites are divided into four geographic areas (north, south, east and west), with a separate activity booklet for each region.

- Complete the activities for each park to receive the park's unique Jr. Ranger badge.
- Earn badges from all five parks in the region and receive a Jr. Ranger vest.
- Earn all 20 OC Parks Jr. Ranger badges to receive the grand prize, a Jr. Ranger backpack!



## Instructions

**Step 1:** To earn a park's Jr. Ranger badge, complete at least one "Anywhere Activity" and the specific pages for that park. Anywhere Activities can be done at any park location and are encouraged to be completed multiple times - it's a new experience each time! Additional copies of these activities can be downloaded at [ocparks.com](http://ocparks.com).

**Step 2:** Show your completed activities to staff or volunteers at the park office or nature center. They will administer the Jr. Ranger oath, sign off on your pages and present you with a park badge.

**Step 3:** Using this booklet, repeat steps 1 and 2 at each of the five locations in the selected region.

**Step 4:** To receive your south region prize, bring all five badges or your fully completed activity booklet to the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park Visitor Center. Be sure to check current operating hours prior to your visit. Appointments are recommended by emailing [jr.ranger@ocparks.com](mailto:jr.ranger@ocparks.com).

If you have already completed another regional activity booklet and have received your Jr. Ranger vest, congratulations! You're well on your way to receiving the grand prize!

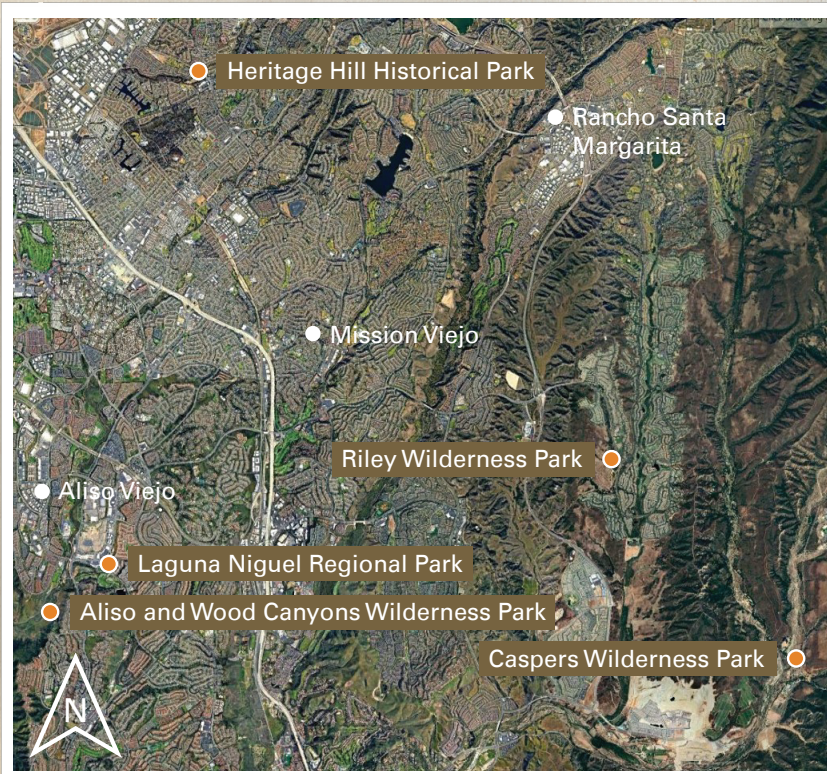
**Step 5:** Once you have earned all 20 Jr. Ranger Program badges, bring them to OC Parks Headquarters located at Irvine Ranch Historic Park (13042 Old Myford Road, Irvine, CA 92602) to receive your grand prize. Appointments are required by emailing [jr.ranger@ocparks.com](mailto:jr.ranger@ocparks.com).

**A Note to Adults:** You are strongly encouraged to let your learner take the lead on all activities. They are designed to promote curiosity and a sense of wonder. Getting correct answers is not nearly as important as having an immersive outdoor learning experience.



# South Region Introduction

In the southern portion of Orange County, steep hills, coastal canyons and wilderness parks next to suburban communities dominate the landscape. Caspers, Riley, and Aliso and Wood Canyons wilderness parks all preserve precious natural space and are managed with habitat preservation in mind. Enjoy a day out on the trails and take in the immense natural beauty these parks have to offer, including an abundance of native plants and various wildlife that call these parks home. Laguna Niguel Regional Park has its fair share of wildlife too, especially when it comes to the waterfowl that visit the park and its 44-acre lake. Interested in learning more about local history? Heritage Hill Historical Park is just the place! With four fully restored and furnished historic buildings, Heritage Hill brings visitors back in time to explore Orange County's rich past.



# Meet Ranger Westley

*South Region Jr. Ranger Mascot*



Let's hop right into it! My name is Ranger Westley and I'm a western toad. You and I are practically neighbors because I live in wilderness areas right here in Orange County. I know what you're thinking- I'm cute, in my own unique way! My textured skin makes me taste horrible to predators that clumsily assume I'm just a sluggish little meatball. If you plan to visit me sometime, I'm not always around water like my other frog friends. My preferred pad is on the ground in parks like Aliso and Wood Canyons, Caspers and Riley wilderness parks, Heritage Hill Historical Park and Laguna Niguel Regional Park. I can be seen at night ambling through leaves or under bushes, just looking for a little grub or catching a meal on the fly.

Enjoy your Jr. Ranger adventure and think of me as you're venturing outdoors to engage with this activity book. I promise not to bug you as I'm eating all the insects I can possibly snag!



# Essentials of Hiking

*Preparedness is Key!*

OC Parks are for everyone to enjoy. In the space below, draw who you are adventuring with today!

Who do you want to bring with you next time?

Have you heard of the 10 Essentials of Hiking? It's recommended you pack the items below to be prepared for any unexpected situation in the outdoors. Circle the items you brought on your adventure today.



Appropriate footwear



Maps and compass/GPS



Water



Snacks



Layered clothing



Safety items



First aid kit



Multi-tool



Sun protection












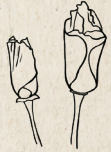









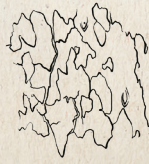




Shelter

What additional items might you bring next time?

# Park Bingo

*Nature is All Around*

Look for each of these objects as you make your way through the park. When you find one, mark it with an X. Once you get five in a row up, down or diagonal, shout BINGO! Keep exploring and see what else you can discover and if you can get more than one BINGO!

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|    |    |    |    |    |
| Singing bird  | Clouds  | Flower  | Worm  | Tall tree   |
|    |    |    |    |    |
| Nest  | Compound leaf   | Tall grass  | Hummingbird   | Flower bud  |
|   |   | FREE!   |   |   |
| Shell   | Rocks   | FREE!   | Seed  | Spider  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Lizard  | Web   | Fungus  | Elliptical leaf   | Fish  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Puzzle bark   | Woodpecker  | Broad leaf  | Squirrel  | Flying insect   |



# Nature Journaling

## *Improve Your Observation*

Nature journaling can be practiced in almost any space and can help create connections with the environment around us through focused observation.

Find an area within the park that you would like to observe and document. Spend 3-5 minutes in that location and pay attention to details you might otherwise overlook. Use your senses to focus on what you observed. What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you see?

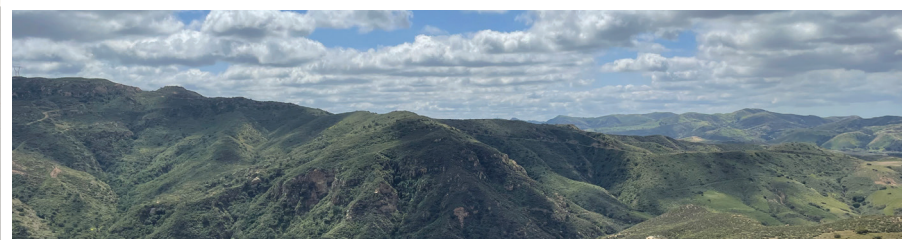
Use the space below to draw or describe your observations.



Zoom in, zoom out: Observe an organism as a whole then focus on one small feature (for example a leaf or feather). Finish by observing the organism in the big picture of its habitat.

Diversity Blitz: Find as many different organisms as possible around you and categorize them by type (for example flowers, trees, bugs, etc.).

# What's Worth Preserving or Enhancing in OC Parks?



Name three things you discovered in this park today.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Ask someone you know what three things they enjoy most about this park.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Are they the same or different than your items?

Why are these things worth preserving?

What would you change or add to enhance this park?



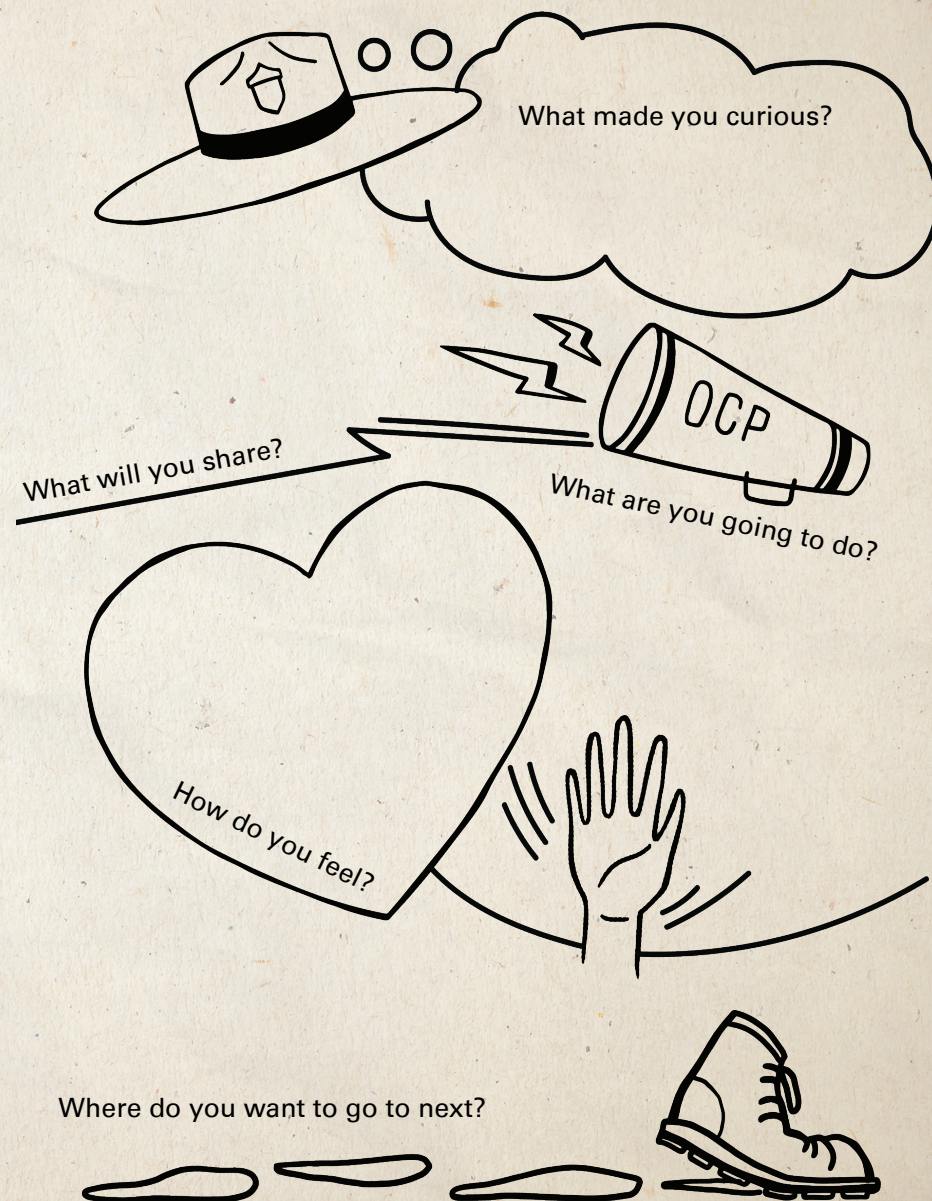
# Park Protectors

OC Parks preserves and enhances the natural and cultural resources found throughout our parks for recreation, education and exploration. This includes, but is not limited to plants, animals, geological features, fossils and artifacts. Protecting these amazing resources allows future generations to enjoy them, just like you are doing today!

Draw at least three features you feel are important to protect, preserve and enhance for people to enjoy for years to come inside the orange below.



# Tell Your OC Parks Jr. Ranger Story!

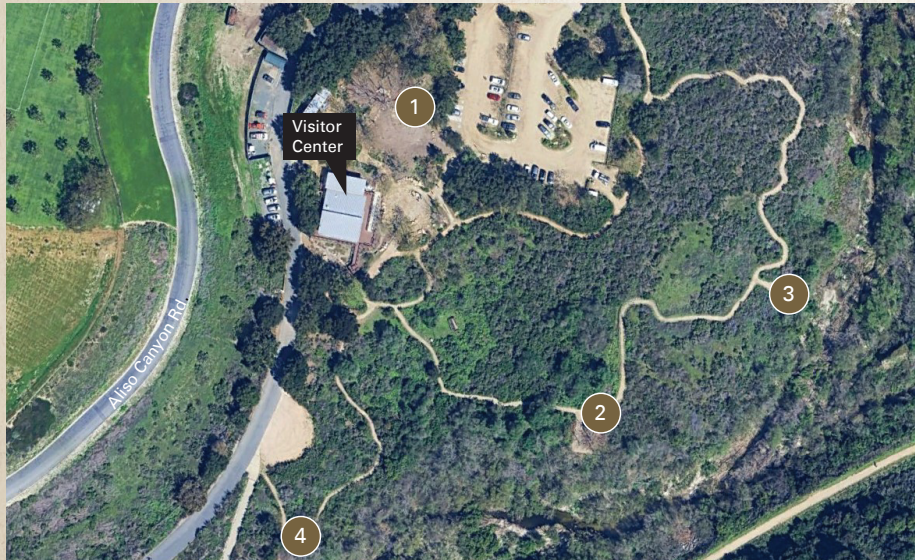




# Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park

Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park is a protected natural area nestled in a coastal canyon. Marine fog often rolls in and covers the park in mist and provides much needed moisture for diverse life to survive.

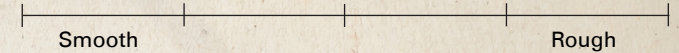
Using a pencil and the map below, stroll along the Wonderful Watershed Trail outside the visitor center to complete the activities. Use your senses to help you perceive and enjoy nature as butterflies, roadrunners and bobcats might. Imagine how many sounds and smells are out there!



*Dripping Cave, located off Wood Canyon Trail, was once used as a temporary refuge by Indigenous people. Years later, the shelter was reportedly used by the infamous Flores-Daniel Gang aka Las Manillas as a hideout to rob the San Diego to Los Angeles stagecoach.*



*Touch:* The rocks and fossils found here were once under an ancient sea. Run your hand over the rock and embedded fossils. Note the texture of your findings with an X on the scale below:



*Smell:* Animals don't like smelly leaves. Find a leaf with no thorns or spikes. Rub it and smell your fingers. Repeat twice. Watch out for poison oak and remember - leaves of three, let it be. Draw your favorite leaf below:



*Sight:* Riparian (wet) habitats near fresh water are rare in Southern California. The one in front of you is thriving! How many different organisms can you see? Draw two examples below:



*Sound:* Willow trees surround you. Songbirds flourish among willows near creeks. Sit on the stairs and quiet your body and voice. List four natural sounds you hear below:



# Caspers Wilderness Park

## *Inspect the Aspect*

Spanning nearly 8,000 acres, Caspers Wilderness Park is the largest park in the OC Parks system. It boasts many different types of terrain and its valleys and canyons are home to lots of living things.

Steep slopes and varying degrees of sun exposure make canyons incredibly diverse habitats. Seasonal water runoff is collected in the form of streams and creeks in their low points, making them deeper each year.



Canyon slopes that face north tend to have denser vegetation because they are shaded longer throughout the day, allowing moisture to stay in the soil longer. Slopes that face south tend to have less vegetation as heat from the sun causes moisture to evaporate faster.



A slope's angle in relation to the sun is called aspect.

Find an area within the park that demonstrates a visual difference between north and south-facing slopes. The viewing deck above the nature center and both West Ridge and Juaneno trails are excellent spots to see examples of aspect.

Describe the vegetation in the area. What animals do you think prefer the north-facing slope?

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What about the south-facing slope?

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Take a look at the illustration below. Some slopes are shaded from the sun, while others get full sunlight. Which ones are the north-facing slopes?

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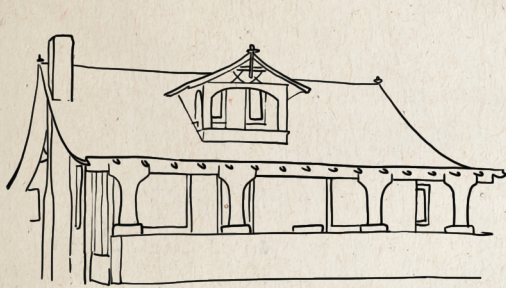




# Heritage Hill Historical Park

*Discover the Historic Saddleback Valley*

Heritage Hill Historical Park features four historic buildings that represent distinct periods of Orange County history. The Serrano Adobe represents the Mexican Rancho era, El Toro Grammar School and St. George's Episcopal Mission highlight the founding of the town of El Toro, and the Harvey Bennett Ranch House embodies life during the agricultural boom at the turn of the 20th century.



*Harvey Bennett Ranch House  
(1908)*



*St. George's  
Episcopal Mission  
(1891)*



*El Toro Grammar School  
(1890)*



*Serrano Adobe  
(1863)*

Explore each building and look for clues about what life was like in each time period. Draw or describe one item from each building that represents that time period in the spaces provided on the next page.

Serrano Adobe

Why did you choose this item?

El Toro Grammar School

Why did you choose this item?

St. George's Episcopal Mission

Why did you choose this item?

Harvey Bennett Ranch House

Why did you choose this item?

Draw or describe an item from your home that represents your life. Why did you choose this item?



# Laguna Niguel Regional Park

## Lakeside Birding Bingo

Rangers, researchers and enthusiasts identify birds for many reasons and Laguna Niguel Lake is an excellent spot for birding. The park has multiple habitats that support a variety of avian (bird) species.

Birding bingo is a fun way to identify and track the types of birds you see. Visit the lake in the southeast corner of the park and mark each bird you see on the board. Look UP to the sky, ACROSS into trees and DOWN into the lake.

Bonus challenge: Find all nine birds on your bingo card and keep count of how many of each type of bird you see by placing a tally mark for each on its box.

|                 |                      |               |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Red-tailed hawk | Great-tailed grackle | Ruddy duck    |
| Osprey          | Canada goose         | Snowy egret   |
| Mallard         | Turkey vulture       | American coot |

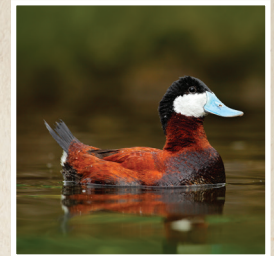
## Common Birds Found in Laguna Niguel Regional Park



Red-tailed hawk



Great-tailed grackle



Ruddy duck



Osprey



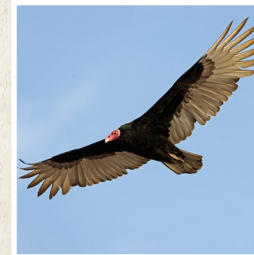
Canada goose



Snowy egret



Mallard



Turkey vulture



American coot

Pick one of the birds you found and quietly observe it for five minutes. What was it doing? Did it interact with any other animals? Describe or draw what you noticed.



# Riley Wilderness Park

## Plants Worth Preserving

Take a trip through Riley Wilderness Park's butterfly garden near the nature center and observe the native plants on display. The plants in the garden are cared for by park staff, but can also be found growing naturally in other areas of the park.

After touring the garden and finding the labeled examples of these plants, explore the park and locate at least four of the plants featured on these pages. Note the name of the trail where you found each plant and look for blooming flowers. Do you think these plants are found in other parks?



*Black sage*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*Deer weed*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*White sage*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*Chaparral mallow*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*Western sycamore*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*California sage*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



*Matilija poppy*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N

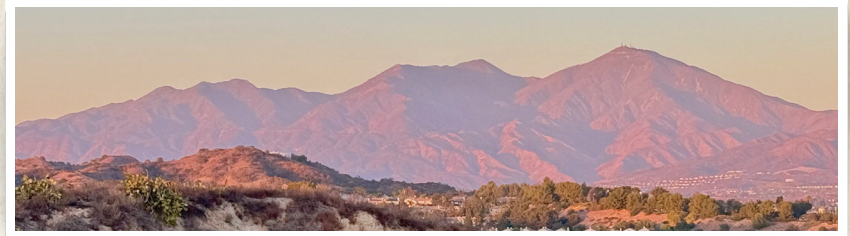


*California buckwheat*

Trail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the plant in bloom?  
Circle: Y / N



The Matilija poppy has the largest flower of any plant native to California and was almost chosen as California's state flower.





**Notes**

**Notes**



# Notes

## South Region Checklist

*Always Check Before You Go!*

| Anywhere Activities                               | Completion Date | Staff Initials |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Essentials of Hiking                              |                 |                |
| Park Bingo  |                 |                |
| Nature Journaling                                 |                 |                |
| What's Worth Preserving or Enhancing in OC Parks? |                 |                |
| Park Protectors                                   |                 |                |
| Tell Your OC Parks Jr. Ranger Story!              |                 |                |

| Park Name                              | Completion Date | Staff Initials | Badge Received |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park |                 |                |                |
| Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park      |                 |                |                |
| Heritage Hill Historical Park          |                 |                |                |
| Laguna Niguel Regional Park            |                 |                |                |
| Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park        |                 |                |                |



# The OC Parks Jr. Ranger Oath:

As an OC Parks Jr. Ranger, I promise I will help protect our parks and help our rangers teach others about them. I will help keep our parks clean and continue to learn more about nature and conservation.



## Visit all 20 OC Parks Jr. Ranger Program Locations!

### *North Region*

- **Carbon Canyon Regional Park** | 4442 Carbon Canyon Rd., Brea
- **Ralph B. Clark Regional Park** | 8800 Rosecrans Ave., Buena Park
- **Ted Craig Regional Park** | 3300 State College Blvd., Fullerton
- **George Key Ranch Historic Park** | 625 W. Bastanchury Rd., Placentia
- **Yorba Regional Park** | 7600 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim

### *South Region*

- **Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park** | 28373 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Niguel
- **Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park** | 33401 Ortega Hwy., San Juan Capistrano
- **Heritage Hill Historical Park** | 25151 Serrano Rd., Lake Forest
- **Laguna Niguel Regional Park** | 28241 La Paz Rd., Laguna Niguel
- **Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park** | 30952 Oso Parkway, Coto de Caza

### *East Region*

- **Arden: Helena Modjeska Historic House and Gardens** | 29042 Modjeska Canyon Rd., Silverado
- **Irvine Regional Park** | 1 Irvine Park Rd., Orange
- **Peters Canyon Regional Park** | 8548 E. Canyon View Ave., Orange
- **O'Neill Regional Park** | 30892 Trabuco Canyon Rd., Trabuco Canyon
- **Santiago Oaks Regional Park** | 2145 N. Windes Dr., Orange

### *West Region*

- **Laguna Coast Wilderness Park** | 18751 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach
- **William R. Mason Regional Park** | 18712 University Dr., Irvine
- **Mile Square Regional Park** | 16801 Euclid St., Fountain Valley
- **Old Orange County Courthouse** | 211 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana
- **Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve** | 2301 University Dr., Newport Beach



For more information, scan QR code.

Para más información, escanee el código QR.

더 많은 정보가 필요하다면, QR 코드를 스캔하세요.

Muốn có thêm thông tin, xin quét mã số QR.

欲了解更多信息, 請掃描二維碼。

