

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE for obeying these and other park rules.

Ask a Park Ranger for further information.

- **ALL FEATURES OF THE PARK ARE PROTECTED!**
Do not remove or disturb plants, animals or geological features
- **PARK HOURS:** Opens at 8 am, and closes at SUNSET.
Visitors should be in their vehicles heading out at sunset to avoid being locked in
- **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** All alcoholic beverages are PROHIBITED IN THE PARK.
- **VEHICLES/BICYCLES:** SPEED LIMIT is 15-25 MPH on park roads, 15 MPH in campgrounds and picnic areas. All vehicles must stay on pavement and are prohibited on trails and fire roads
- **BICYCLES ARE ALLOWED** only on paved roads, fire roads and designated trails. Check at Ranger Station for current regulations
- **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, ROLLERSKATES** and gravity-propelled devices are prohibited
- **DOGS** — MUST BE IN TENT or vehicles at night MUST BE ON LEASH at all times when out of your car. MUST STAY IN DEVELOPED AREAS ONLY — not allowed on trails or fire roads
- **CAMPING** — MAXIMUM OF 8 PERSONS AND TWO VEHICLES PER CAMPSITE IS PERMITTED ONLY IN THE JUNIPER, JUNCTION AND LIVE OAK CAMPGROUNDS. JUVENILES (under 18) MUST HAVE WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENTS
NO ELECTRIC-GENERATORS 8pm to 8am
QUIET HOURS: 10pm to 6am

- **FIRES** — RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT DURING FIRE SEASON—check with Ranger
MUST BE IN STOVES OR BARBEQUES PROVIDED - no ground fires
FIREWOOD GATHERING PROHIBITED

Fire Danger - How Will It Affect You?						
Fire Danger Reading	Wood fire permitted in stoves and BBQ pits in designated picnic and camp sites	Use of Compressed Logs	Use of Charcoal	Use of Self-contained Stove	Cigarette Smoking (including within a vehicle)	Park Closed
LOW	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
MEDIUM	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
HIGH	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
HIGH WITH RED FLAG	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
VERY HIGH/EXTREME	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

- **PEACE AND QUIET:** NOISE must not carry beyond your immediate camp or picnic ground
- **PUBLIC TELEPHONES:** Located at Junction Ranger Station and the Summit
Dial 911 for emergencies
- **FIREWORKS:** PROHIBITED
- **FIREARMS/AIRGUNS:** PROHIBITED
- **HUNTING:** PROHIBITED

Mount Diablo State Park Phone Numbers:

Supervising Ranger	925-855-1730
Junction Ranger	925-837-6129
Mitchell Canyon Ranger	925-672-4266
Summit Museum	925-837-6119
Entrance Station	925-837-0904
Maintenance	925-837-6122
Sector Office	925-673-2891
General Information	925-837-2525

Group Picnic Reservations: Call Ranger Carl Nielson, 925 - 837-6129, EXT 2

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Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0346



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Park Superintendent's Report

by Roland Gaebert

I am privileged to be able to work in the Diablo/Bay Sector. I am even more privileged to be able to live on Mount Diablo. I look forward to the challenge this position holds and to continue the efforts to keep Mount Diablo State Park a jewel in the park system.



I grew up in Southern California. My parents and I emigrated from Germany in 1954. The family was sponsored to this country by caring generous people, who at that time owned the Del Mar Race Track catering services. I graduated from Escondido High School and San Diego State University. I earned a degree in accounting and, hating it, I entered the finance and banking industry. I started in finance and finished my 27 year banking career having worked for several banks including Home Federal and Citibank. My banking specialties included piloting the corporate aircraft, credit analysis, major loans, and secondary marketing. *(Continued on page 2)*

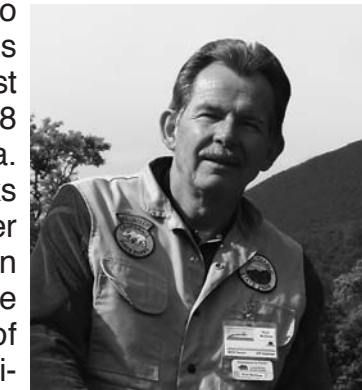


Read about tarantulas on page 2 (Hairy and Footloose)

MDIA President's Column

by Rich McDrew

Welcome to Mount Diablo State Park! This Park is one of the largest and most spectacular of the 278 State parks in California. We have more State parks in California than the other 49 states, and more than any other nation of the world. The people of California should be justifiably proud.



Mount Diablo State Park was established in 1921 with just 621 acres, and now encompasses over 20,000 acres. The Mount Diablo Interpretive Association's (MDIA) volunteers are here to help you enjoy the Park through a variety of publications such as this one. You are visiting the Park at a great time of the year. The weather is cooler than summer, and the vistas are clearer. And, the Fall and Winter flora colors are beautiful.

So, go forth and enjoy your Park, and all that it has to offer you.

Where is this location in the Park?



Story is on page 2 (Benning Compass)

The Denning Compass *by Rich McDrew*

The location depicted in the photograph on page one is at the very top of Mount Diablo, elevation 3849 feet. On the observation deck of the Summit Museum is a glass-enclosed octagonal rotunda or cupola that contains a masonry pedestal. On top the pedestal is a bronze compass aligned to TRUE north, with the following inscription:

**PLACED IN MEMORY OF
FRANCES JEAN DENNING
LT. COL. NORMAN EDWIN DENNING
USMC**

Several Park visitors have inquired about the origin of the Denning Compass. Norman Edwin Denning (1911-1983), and his wife Frances Jean [nee Warner] Denning (1914-1984) were frequent visitors to Mount Diablo State Park. They were residents of the nearby town of Diablo, and were avid Park equestrians. Norman and Frances were married in Florida in 1940, and had four children. Norman was a highly decorated Marine Corps officer and aviator. Frances' great uncle, Thorburn "James" Cumberpatch, who was also an aviator, purportedly played a role in establishing the Standard Oil aviator navigation beacon on top of Mount Diablo in 1928. It was because of their family's involvement and love of Mount Diablo that the Denning children, upon the death of their parents, wanted to give a gift to the Park in memory of their parents. They wanted to do something that their parents would approve of, and that would add to the public's experience in the Park. In 1985 and 1986, several ideas were discussed with Park Superintendent William Beat, Supervising Park Ranger Richard Gilliland, and Park Ranger Mary Angle. The bronze compass was agreed upon because of the family's involvement with aviation and the beacon. The very talented Park stone mason, Don Biaggi, cemented local native stone around the already existing plain cement pedestal. Affixed atop the pedestal was the cast bronze compass. This replaced a metal lid that, when removed, revealed the copper bolt survey mark placed by government surveyor, Leander Ransom, in 1851. The work on the Denning Compass was completed on January 16, 1997. It is interesting to note that the ashes of Norman and Frances were scattered on Mount Diablo.

Continued from page 1 (Superintendent's Report)

My hobbies include cycling, backpacking, and flying. I had my private pilot's license while in high school. Later I obtained my Flight Instructor and Commercial pilot tickets. I have extensively backpacked the Grand Canyon, the Continental Divide trail, and segments of the Pacific Crest Trail. I also enjoy the theatre and concerts. I am also a licensed "HAM" operator, KE6NPN.

For several years I taught Bicycling in the California Community Evening College in the San Diego area. I was also an 18-year volunteer with the San Diego Mountain Rescue Team and participated in over 350 wilderness searches throughout the Western States. Prior to attending San Diego State, I served a four-year enlistment in the US Air Force. I was trained as an Air Policeman. During my enlistment period, I spent over a year in Special Services on the Armed Forces Cycling Team competing under the auspices of the Amateur Bicycle League and United States Cycling Federation as a Cat 1 rider. I raced for approximately 10 years. I also served in Vietnam as Security Police at DaNang and Tuy Hoa RVN. After 27 years I retired from the stress of the banking industry and became a State Park Ranger, a dream since high school. I attended the POST academy at Mott Training Center, at the Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, Ca. in 1997. I started my Ranger duties at Lake Perris SRA. I became the Chief Ranger at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area. After several years, I took the Superintendent position at the Salton Sea Sector, which included 5 parks. After that I took a promotion to the Southern Communications Center. The Center has a third of the state's communication for State Parks, Fish and Game, and several other agencies. In July this year, I was privileged to become the Superintendent for the Bay Sector, which includes Mount Diablo.

I am going to enjoy this!!

Save Mount Diablo generously publishes the "Events Schedule" which includes hikes in Mount Diablo State Park. This schedule may be found on-line at www.savemountdiablo.com or via a link at www.mdia.org.

Hairy and Footloose on Mount Diablo

by Ken Lavin

So you think you know Mount Diablo? Well then, try this trivia quiz:

- 1) What Mount Diablo animal has a dance named in its honor?
- 2) What Mount Diablo critter launched the career of a famous Hollywood movie star? The answer is the same for both questions: The tarantula!

Although visitors to Mount Diablo are most likely to see tarantulas wandering the roads and trails in late summer and early fall, they are found on Mount Diablo all year. The spiders are seldom seen at other times because they live in underground burrows and are nocturnal in their habits. A tarantula spends most of its time waiting patiently near the opening of its burrow for an unsuspecting insect or small lizard to saunter by.

MDIA PRODUCT ORDER and MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Profits from sales support the educational programs of MDIA)

Thank you for your mail order.

If you would like to further support MDIA please consider joining the Association.

MAPS AND HIKING INFORMATION	Qty.	Amount
Mount Diablo State Park Map	2.25	_____
Mount Diablo State Park Trail Map	6.50	_____
Hike Brochures: Easy, Moderate, and Demanding-(set of 3)	2.00	_____

INTERPRETIVE PUBLICATIONS

Mount Diablo Guide	12.50	_____
Geology Brochure and Map	2.00	_____
Trees & Shrubs of Mount Diablo	7.50	_____
Common Birds of Mount Diablo	7.50	_____
Mount Diablo Wildflowers	7.50	_____
51 Uncommon Names of MDSP	2.25	_____
Mount Diablo State Park Coloring Book	3.75	_____

NATURE GUIDES - Laminated/Folded

Local Birds of the San Francisco Bay Area	9.75	_____
Local Rocks of North America	9.75	_____
Local Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Area	9.75	_____
Local Animal Tracks of North America	9.75	_____

PRODUCTS WITH MT. DIABLO STATE PARK LOGO

T-shirts: lt. blue or lt. olive; S,M, L, XL (circle size & color)	16.00	_____
Mount Diablo Patch	4.00	_____
Mount Diablo Lapel / Hat Pin	3.50	_____

SUBTOTAL:

10% discount for MDIA members and Park Staff _____

Total Amount: (includes tax & shipping) _____

Membership Category (check one) **Make Checks Payable to "MDIA"**

_____ Student/Senior	\$15
_____ Individual	\$25
_____ Family	\$40
_____ Sustaining	\$50
_____ Contributing	\$100
_____ Lifetime	\$500

Donation in addition to membership fee \$_____.

Name: _____

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Walnut Creek, Ca 94597-0346

Mount McKinley, Alaska	72,000 square miles
Mauna Kea, Hawaii	59,000 square miles
Pikes Peak, Colorado	28,000 square miles
Mount Diablo, California	18,000 square miles

So why does this myth continue to endure? Perhaps it is because the view from Mount Diablo is so expansive that it is hard not to believe. On crisp winter mornings following storms, you can truly see spectacular views west beyond the Golden Gate Bridge to the Farallon Islands, south east to the James Lick observatory on Mount Hamilton, south to Mount Loma Prieta in the Santa Cruz Mountains, north to Mount Saint Helena in the coast range and even farther north to the top of Mount Lassen in the Cascades. With binoculars you can even pick out the top of Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. With these spectacular views, it is not difficult to understand how this myth continues to live on.

If you wish to submit articles or photographs for the *Mount Diablo Review*, contact Rich McDrew at 925-932-7511 or via e-mail at mcdrewrich@astound.net. Submission deadline for the Spring/Summer edition is February 1, and for the Fall/Winter edition is August 1.

Spotlight on Common Birds of Mount Diablo

*Reviewed by
Harvey S. Brosler*

This guidebook describes the 70 common birds most likely to be seen on a typical visit to the Park of more than 200 species on Mount Diablo. The book is useful for the beginning and experienced birder. The Introduction describes how to be a birdwatcher and the defining traits of birds. Outlined are the major areas of the Park where the different species of birds can be found. Accompanying each photograph in beautiful color is a description of where the bird nests, its defining characteristics, and in most cases its diet. Along with an Index at the back of the book, there is a Field Checklist tucked in a pocket on the inside back cover.



This easy to use book is made of heavy gloss paper stock that can withstand rough treatment and can easily be placed in a backpack. The guidebook can be purchased at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center or the Summit Visitor Center for \$ 5.00 ea. or by mail from MDIA for \$7.50 ea. MDIA members receive a 10 percent discount.

The Best Summit Views

by Jim Mitchell

Every year about half a million visitors to Mount Diablo State Park head directly to the summit. They come by car, bike, and foot for the spectacular views of Central California's Bay Area, Delta, and distant mountain ranges. Many of these visitors come with a question for Park docents that they have been curious about, sometimes since childhood. Is the area of land mass viewed from the summit of Mount Diablo really the second greatest in the world only exceeded by Mount Kilimanjaro?

Early visitors made claims about Mount Diablo's views, including Josiah Whitney (Mount Whitney) who in 1862 wrote that "The view from the summit is equivalent to the area of all six New England states combined". However, the first claim comparing the view to Mount Kilimanjaro came from Robert Burgess around 1914. Robert Burgess was a Contra Costa County real estate developer and banker who built the first roads for automobiles to the summit and was looking for a way to draw attention and buyers to his newly developed Mount Diablo Estates. When Burgess made his claim, Mount Kilimanjaro was a distant and romantic place, out of reach for most Californians. Even though the summit of Kilimanjaro had been reached in 1889, it is doubtful that Robert Burgess or any other Bay Area resident could personally attest to the details of the view from its summit. Whether it was the view or simply the beautiful natural landscapes, Robert Burgess was successful in attracting buyers and in related pursuits founded the Mount Diablo Country Club and Bank of Walnut Creek. Today the trek to the top of Kilimanjaro is relatively common, with 25,000 people attempting the climb each year. We now have personal accounts from many of those lucky enough to have seen the views from both summits.

The facts are that both mountains are relatively isolated from other peaks and mountain ranges, giving each spectacular views on clear days. However, Mount Diablo only stands 3849 feet in elevation while Kilimanjaro's tallest peak Kibo stands 19,341 ft. Given the curvature of the earth, the line of sight from the top of any mountain to an unobstructed horizon can be approximated by knowing the radius of the Earth, the elevation of the mountain and a little geometry. Assuming the horizon is fairly unobstructed, the total land mass that can be seen is proportional to this distance. For Diablo, the distance from the summit to the horizon is about 76 miles. However, some peaks and mountain ridges that stand above the horizon can be seen up to 165 miles away. The same calculation would place the view from Kilimanjaro at close to 170 miles.

Edward Earl, a mathematician and computer scientist from San Diego, has researched a number of prominent peaks around the world and has determined the "view sheds" from several North American prominent peaks to be greater than Mount Diablo:

Continued on page 7

Then the spider rushes out, bites its prey, and drags it back into the burrow. In the dark of night, this life and death drama goes unnoticed by Mount Diablo's diurnal visitors.

Like other spiders, tarantulas grow by molting. That is, they shed their external skeleton. When a male molts for the last time in his life, usually when he is 7 or 8 years old, he finally leaves his burrow. He is no longer interested in hunting food; his thoughts have turned to hunting females. This is the so-called tarantula migration visitors to the mountain see in September and October. The multitudes of male spiders are not migrating; they're searching for love on the mountain!

When a male spider locates a female's burrow, he taps at the top to entice her out. However, "big momma" interprets the tapping as an invitation to dinner, not sex. She races out and, before she bites, the male must secure her fangs with hooks on his front legs. After mating the male scurries away, if he is lucky. The 8-legged Casanova never returns to his burrow but searches for more females until he literally dies of love or expires with the onset of cold weather. After mating, the female returns to her burrow to lay eggs. She may survive 20 years or more.

Despite their fearsome appearance, tarantulas pose no danger to people. Their bite is no more painful than a bee sting and tarantula venom is not poisonous to humans. That hasn't stopped the bad press, however. Nearly 150 years ago, William Brewer of the California Geologic Survey described Mount Diablo's tarantulas as "attaining the size of a small bird, possessing fangs half the size of a rattlesnake's, and delivering a bite generally considered fatal." Even earlier, during the 16th and 17th centuries, spider bites caused mass hysteria among peasants in southern Europe. The peasants were convinced the only way to rid their bodies of spider venom was to engage in a frenetic dance. Though tarantulas were blamed for the bites, the real culprits were black widows. Still, that misnamed dance has survived to this day as the Tarantella.

And the name of the famous movie star? In a 1950s horror flick entitled Tarantula, giant spiders emerged from the desert to menace Las Vegas. The monsters were stopped by a napalm strike from a jet fighter plane. The squinty-eyed, arachnophobic pilot of that plane was none other than Clint Eastwood. Perhaps it was the tarantula that inspired the title for The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly!



**Summit Museum
is open
7 days a week
10:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**Summit Temperature
and wind conditions
are updated every
20 minutes at
925-838-9225**

Understanding Trail Signs

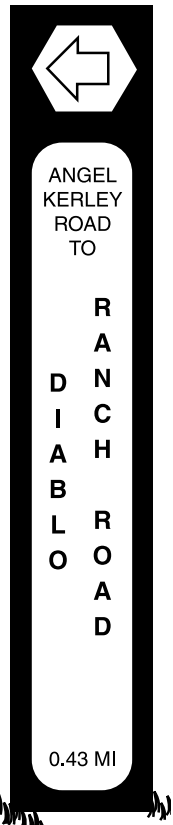
The identification of almost 200 miles of hiking trails in Mount Diablo State Park's 20,000 acres has been much improved due to the signage project spearheaded by the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association. Hundreds of signs have been installed on 403 trail signposts as part of the effort begun in 1993 by MDIA.

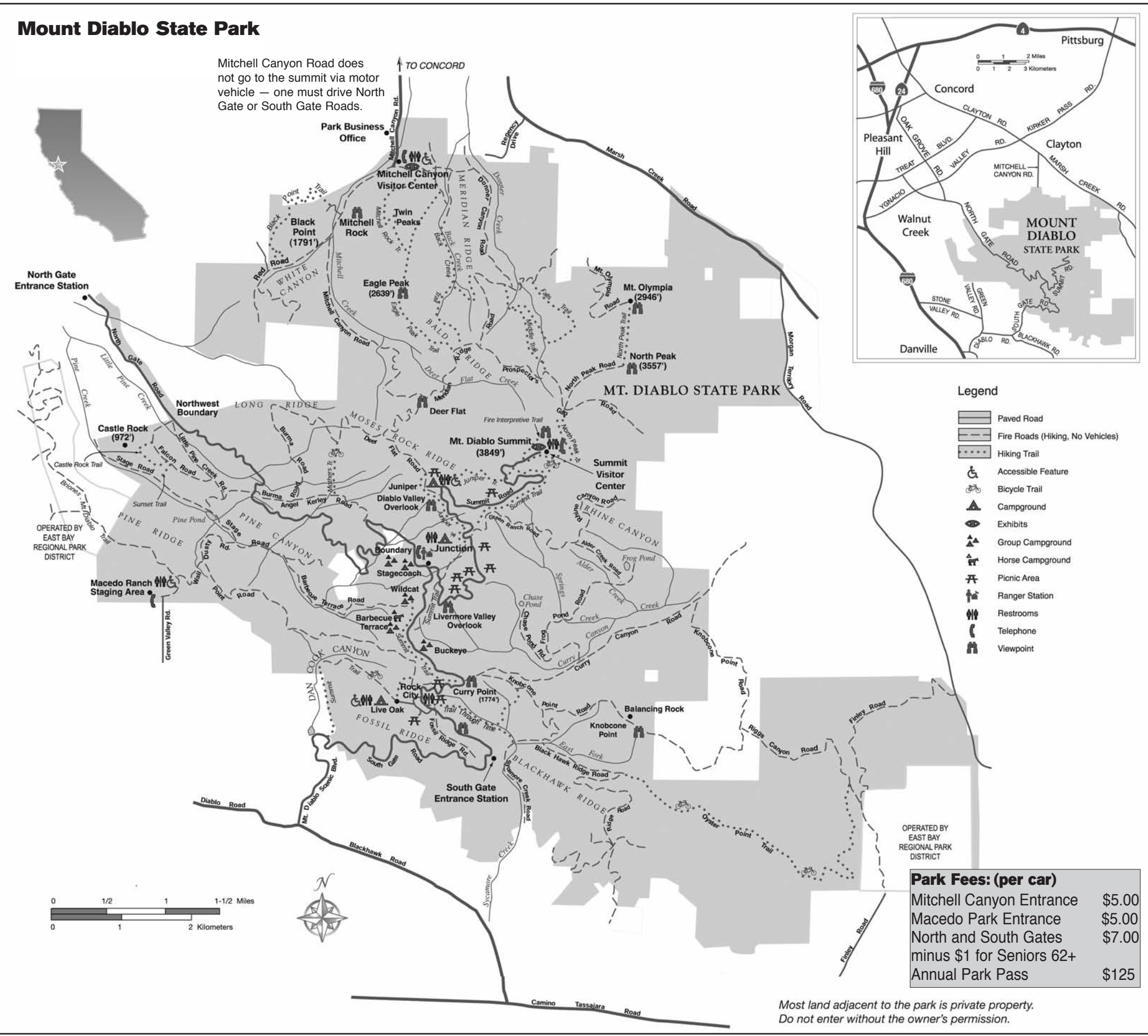
The trail signs in the park follow a uniform format prescribed for use in all California State Parks. The format has confused more than one visitor who has hastily read only the larger words on the sign. The name of the trail you are on is specified in relatively small horizontal type near the top of the sign.

The name that appears vertically in larger type (usually another trail but sometimes a park boundary) shows the termination of that particular trail; the word 'TO', in small letters, is important. The mileage to that end point is specified at the bottom.

Here is a simplified sample to the right.

The sign shows that you are on Angel Kerley Road, and that if you go .43 miles to the left you will arrive at the junction with Diablo Ranch Road, and the termination of Angel Kerley Road.





Camping At Mount Diablo State Park

Mount Diablo has three designated family camping areas and five group camps:

- Juniper Campground** (36 sites, elevation 3000 ft.) Located approximately 2 miles below the summit, on Summit Road, Juniper is known for its fantastic views. Reservations Available.
- Live Oak Campground** (23 sites, elevation 1450 ft.) Located one mile above the South Gate Entrance Station, off South Gate Road. Live Oak is near Rock City. At Rock City one can explore rock formations. Reservations Available.
- Junction Campground** (6 sites, elevation 2200 ft.) Located where South Gate and North Gate meet at the Ranger Station. This campground is situated in an open woodland area. Available on a first come/first served basis ONLY.

*All campgrounds are provided with picnic tables, fire pits or stoves, potable water and rest rooms. *The campgrounds are mainly designed for tent camping, yet they can accommodate RVs up to 20 feet in length. There are no hook ups and no dumping stations provided in the park.

*Pay phones are located at the Junction Ranger Station and the Summit Visitor Center.

Camping Procedures

You may make reservations from 48 hours to 7 months in advance by calling **Reserve America at 1-800-444-7275** or by visiting their website at www.reserveamerica.com. Reservations can be made for a specific campground but not a specific site. Campers will not be registered at Mitchell Canyon.

***Check-in time is 2:00 PM. — Check-out time is 12:00 NOON.**

Group Camps—Buckeye, Barbecue Terrace, Wildcat, Stagecoach & Boundary.

Reservations are available for all group camps with Reserve America. Each campground is primitive with running water and pit toilets. BBQ Terrace is equipped with horse ties for equestrian use. Motorhomes are not allowed in the group camping areas. During the fire season (generally, May—October) the park is subject to closure due to extreme fire danger. Campers must call the park at **(925) 837-2525 or (925) 837-0904** one day prior to their arrival to confirm park status.

General Rules

- *Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the park.
- *8 people 2 vehicles maximum per family campsite.
- *Each juvenile (under the age of 18) must have written permission from his/her parents (with the parents' phone number) prior to camping. Phone verifications will be attempted.
- *Quiet hours are from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM
- *No electric generators from 8:00 PM to 10:00 AM.
- *Firewood gathering is prohibited.
- *Fires must be in stoves or fire pits provided (NO GROUND FIRES).
- *Campfire restrictions are in effect during the fire season. Check fire conditions for appropriate use (see page 8).
- *Campers are locked in the park overnight from sunset to 8:00 AM. For emergencies, dial 911.

Nightly Rates		
In- Season	May 15 - September 15	\$20.00
Off- Season	September 16 - May 14	\$15.00
Additional Vehicle (one only)		\$7.00
Senior Discount		\$2.00 off Camping Fees

Group Camps			
Name	Nightly Use Fee	Capacity	Vehicles
Stagecoach	\$45.00	20	7
Boundary	\$45.00	20	7
Buckeye	\$66.00	30	10
Wildcat	\$66.00	30	10
BBQ Terrace	\$111.00	50	17