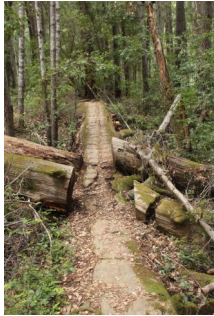


Sword Fern

On your left as you continue along the trail, you will see the western sword fern (*polystichum munitum*). Note the “hilt of the sword” at the base of each leaf that gives this fern its name. As you look to the right of the sword fern, you will see a small patch of the water loving chain fern (*woodwardia fimbriata*).



Fallen Redwood



Note a huge downed redwood tree which has been flattened to make an easy bridge for us to pass over the gulch below. It takes as long for a tree to decompose as it takes to grow, tannin in the redwood bark slows this decomposition process. **Kids!** Imagine yourself as a small insect, maybe a little beetle. Can you find places for insects to hide in this downed tree? Cross the foot bridge to continue your journey.

Fire Cave

At the Lee Pollard designated marker, note the “fire cave” of the redwood tree. This fire cave is also called a “goose pen.” This is the



base of a redwood tree hollowed out by fire, but still the top of the tree is thriving. These openings can be so large that in earlier days, settlers

would corral their livestock in them and seal it off to protect them from predators. **Kids!** Walk inside the fire cave (goose pen) and pretend you are an animal and now protected from grizzly bears!



NOTE: Keep to your right as you pass the fire cave redwood tree and **DO NOT** take the trail that goes off to the left.

Dip your head to pass under the downed redwood tree.



Huckleberry

As we finish our walk, note to the left and right the abundant huckleberry (*vaccinium ovatum*) bushes. The berries that are produced by these bushes in the late summer are food for many species of birds, raccoons, and deer.

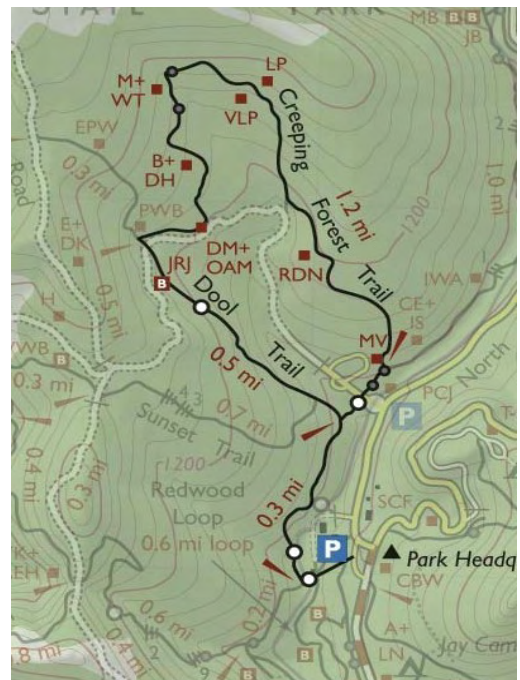
Kids! Do you see any berries or blossoms?



BIG BASIN STATE PARK



DOOL - CREEPING FOREST TRAIL INTERPRETIVE GUIDE



Welcome to the Dool-Creeping Forest Nature Trail

The Dool to Creeping Forest trail is a mixed evergreen forest with the Redwood (*Sequoia Sempervirens*) as the dominant tree species. The trail is an easy 2.5 mile loop. This guide highlights specific observations for kids and kids at heart.

Start off on the Skyline to the Sea Trail, and walk past the Old Lodge on your left. Cross the bridge and turn right. Continue on the trail and turn left on to the Dool Trail.

Old Growth Redwood

At the first intersection of the trail, marked Dool (this way) note the old growth redwood, directly in front of you as you look past the trail marker, notice the large burl at its base. Burls are a mass of cells where smaller redwood trees can originate, and have no affect on the health of the tree.



These burls are prized by woodworkers to make redwood bowls and furniture. **Kids!** How many steps does it take you to go all around this tree?

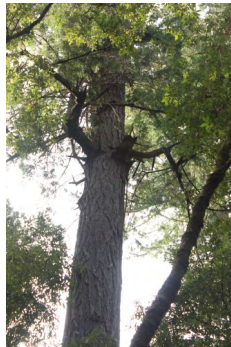


Bending Tan Oak

Move on to the bending tan oak tree (*lithocarpus densiflorus*) stretched over the trail, Notice even though the tree is broken, it is still living due to its abundant leaves at the terminal branches. **Kids!** Notice the grassy green moss on the tree trunk of the oak, feel its softness.

Douglas Fir

Walk on and notice to your left the huge Douglas fir (*pseudotsuga menziesii*) with burn scars and bare branches high above...this is an old growth douglas fir. **Kids!** The Douglas fir is sometimes called the "Puzzle Tree." Look at the bark and see if you can see why it is given that name?



Old Man's Beard Lichen

This is called "Old Man's Beard." It is a lichen which is a combination of a fungus and algae. **Kids!** To remember the relationship of fungus and algae as lichen - think of Freddie fungus and Alice algae taking a "lichen" to each other.



Redwood Roots

Look ahead of you at the Coastal Redwood (*sequoia sempervirens*) roots. Note how shallow they are. Redwood roots go approx. 2-5 feet underground and are very susceptible to damage by foot traffic. Caution for hikers!



Poison Oak

While crossing the bridge, look to your left to see poison oak (*toxicodendron diversilobum*). Note: three leaf cluster on each stem. **Kids!** Why should you avoid touching any part of this plant?



Note: After the bridge, the trail will descend slightly and you will cross the Gazos Creek Road, after crossing the road, the trail climbs a few yards to intersect with Creeping Forest Trail, turn right on the Creeping Forest Trail.

Bracken Fern



See the **triangular** shaped frond on the bracken fern (*pteridium aquilinum*), seen in many different habitats in Big Basin. **Kids!** What part of this fern do you think Native Indians used to make baskets?

Memorial Bench

This bench and its designated grove behind it is dedicated by a family or loved one to a family member (s). The proceeds are used to support Sempirvirens, a group of people dedicated to supporting the preservation of and activities in Big Basin State Park. **Kids!** As you sit on this bench, look around quietly. What do you see? Any butterflies or bees buzzing around?



Banana Slug

Kids! As you walk on from the bench, look to the ground. Do you see any yellow banana slugs? Look for slugs as you walk the trail.



Leaning Trees

Pass the Patricia Welch Bro Honor Grove and look to your right across the road. Notice the trees leaning significantly to the right. This is a good example why the trail is named Creeping Forest. In 1952 there was a landslide in this part of the park, perhaps due to an earthquake. The shallow root of the trees sitting on sediment soil left the trees standing at an angle to the ground. **Kids!** Notice the angle at which the trees are standing.

