

ENID W. PEARSON Arastradero PRESERVE



Palo Alto
Open Space

Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, Baylands Nature Preserve and Foothills Park include almost 4,000 acres maintained and managed by the City of Palo Alto as open space for recreation and wildlife habitat preservation.

ENID PEARSON-ARASTRADERO PRESERVE
1530 Arastradero Road
Palo Alto, CA 94304
650 329-2423
open.space@cityofpaloalto.org
cityofpaloalto.org/openspace

HOURS
Open to the public every day
from 8 a.m. to sunset.
Last entry is one-half hour before
the closing time posted on the
sign near the parking lot entrance.
Gates are locked at closing time.



CITY OF
PALO ALTO



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

- Walking, jogging, biking, horseback riding, bird and nature watching.
- Volunteers help restore degraded habitat. Workdays are on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call to confirm when holidays fall near a workday. Meet in the preserve parking lot. Please call 650-962-9876 x311 to RSVP. For more information about restoration activities, visit grassrootsecology.org.
- Nature walks and programs on ecology and natural history are presented for all age groups on weekends throughout the year. A schedule of programs is available in the City's *Enjoy!* catalog or at <http://enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org>. Call 650-329-2423 for information.

PRESERVE RULES

- Park in designated parking areas.
- Please be courteous to other trail users. Always yield to equestrians. Bikes must also yield to hikers. When in a group, avoid blocking the trail.
- Stay on marked trails. Seasonal trails are closed during periods of high rain and will be re-opened by Park Rangers when the ground is firm.
- Dogs must be on leash at all times. Off-leash areas in Palo Alto are located at Mitchell Park (455 E. Charleston Rd.) and Peers Park (1899 Park Blvd.).
- The danger of a wildfire is always present. Fires, barbecues and smoking are prohibited.
- No hunting or camping.
- Bicycle helmets required.
- No remote-controlled devices.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited.

HISTORY

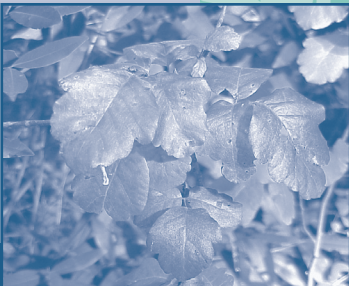
Before it was preserved as open space, Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve was a working ranch. In the early 1970s, a developer proposed building 1,776 new houses on the property. Determined to keep land in the foothills as open space, the Palo Alto City Council purchased 433 acres in 1976.

In 1984 the Council adopted a Park Master Plan for the creation of a “low intensity park, with emphasis on the natural and open space amenities of the land and sensitivity to the fragile foothills ecology.” Since then 189 more acres were acquired, bringing the total acreage to 622.

Since 1997 Grassroots Ecology has undertaken a unique partnership with the City to conduct a stewardship program on the Preserve. Grassroots Ecology has been responsible for improvements to the trail system, control of non-native plants, environmental education programs and habitat restoration projects.

Volunteers are presently at work planting acorns and caging oak saplings to increase the number of oaks in the Preserve. In the grasslands, they are removing thistle and teasel, and planting native grasses. The goal of this ambitious project is to restore precious habitat to its natural splendor for the benefit of wildlife and future generations.

Poison oak benefits wildlife and provides beautiful fall color, but oil from any part of the plant can cause a severe rash. Poison oak appears in different forms and is best avoided by staying on trails and not touching unknown plants.



Bounded by Los Altos Hills, Stanford University and Portola Valley, the 622-acre Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve contains three major plant communities: grassland savanna, oak woodland and riparian.



Small plots of native grasses are still found on Pearson-Arastradero including purple needlegrass, blue wild rye, wet meadow rye, and California brome. Blue, valley and coast live oak are the predominant oaks found on the hillsides and in ravines, with smatterings of black and scrub oak found elsewhere. California laurel (bay tree), willows, toyon, buckeye, elderberry, wild rose, snowberry, and poison oak are found along the creekside corridors.

RESTORATION & HABITAT PROTECTION

Two hundred years ago, California's golden valleys and foothills were dominated by perennial bunchgrasses and wildflowers. These perennials supported vast herds of elk, deer and antelope that roamed the landscape. European annual grasses, introduced by Spanish settlers, quickly out-competed the native plants since they produced more seeds and had no predators. Eventually, these non-native grasses and weeds replaced over 90% of the Californian grasslands.

Our oak woodlands have declined as well; settlers cleared the land of oaks to increase grazing land for livestock. The livestock ate acorns and saplings and compacted the soil making it difficult for oak roots to penetrate. The proliferation of non-native plants compounded the impact to the oaks since they deplete soil moisture faster than native grasses.



We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

—ALDO LEOPOLD

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