



Dear Educator,

updated 7/2026

Thank you for bringing your class/group to participate in our **Redwood Ecology Program** at **Armstrong Redwoods**. This program is a collaboration between Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods and California State Parks. This letter includes:

- **How to prepare for your visit**
- **What to bring and expect on the day of your visit to the forest**
- **Role of teachers and adult chaperones**
- **Trail etiquette, follow up and teacher resources**

Thank you for carefully reading through this information to ensure the most successful visit to Armstrong Redwoods.

Role of docents

Our programs are docent-led. All **docents** are volunteers in the California State Parks "Volunteers in Parks Program" (VIP). Docents are there to enrich your students' experience by sharing their knowledge of the park's natural resources, assist with your learning objectives through hands-on activities, answer questions, encourage observation without destruction, and to inspire students to be good stewards of the environment. Docents provide an educational experience using nature as the classroom. Occasionally a State Parks and or Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods staff member will also be leading a group. We aim to have 1 docent for every group of 15 students.

What to bring/wear

- layers of clothing. It can be very cool in the forest in the morning.
- comfortable shoes
- snack, full water bottle, and lunch if you plan to eat in the park after your walk
- day pack

Preparation: trail groups, parking passes, curriculum resources

To help prepare your students for their visit to Armstrong, links to online curriculum resources are at the end of this letter.

Prior to your visit, we will send a reminder with the number of docents available for your group, their names, and instructions for dividing your students into smaller groups, if needed.

We will also email printable parking passes for free park entrance for anyone in your group arriving by car. Please print the passes ahead of time and provide them to your drivers so they don't have to pay the \$10 entrance fee. If you cannot print ahead of time, please ask the person in the entrance kiosk for a parking pass. **We suggest bringing a first aid kit.** Docents are not permitted to administer first aid.

Arrival at the park

Your docents will meet your group at the picnic tables outside the Visitor Center at your arrival time.

Upon arrival, students may use the restrooms and enjoy a snack at the picnic tables. Once the group is ready, you'll divide into trail groups, and a docent will join each group. The walk is generally 1.5 to 2 hours long. When you arrive, one of the docents will check in with you to confirm your lunch location and timing, and the time you need to be back on the bus. This will help determine what time the groups will meet to have lunch together.

Please note that buses cannot remain in the parking lot for the duration of your visit and will be instructed to park in town until it is time for pickup. Bring all belongings you need to have with you on the walk, including lunches.

Details about eating lunch in the park

There are two designated locations for eating lunch during your visit:

- **Main Picnic Area** – Located approximately 0.7 miles from the park entrance. We recommend this location for most groups.
- **Redwood Forest Theater** – Located approximately 0.5 miles from the park entrance. This is a good option for groups with a tighter schedule or those who prefer a slightly shorter walk.

Restrooms are available near both lunch areas. Your docent will confirm your lunch location and timing with you when you arrive. We request that groups not eat lunch at the picnic tables at the entrance unless necessary due to the large number of vehicles and visitors.

We suggest students bring their lunch in day packs to carry with them, or a chaperone is welcome to bring the lunches back to the picnic area if they have a vehicle. Please leave all food securely in the car until it is lunch time. Your docents will drop you off at the picnic area after the walk and you will walk back to meet your transportation on your own. The walk back may take between 25-45 minutes depending on the age range and size of your group. We recommend staying on the trails and avoiding the road.

Weather

If wet weather is expected, we suggest bringing rain gear as we will offer tours in light rain or drizzle.

Unsafe weather conditions such as strong winds or heavy rain will cancel, and we will do our best to reschedule.

Role of teachers, parent/guardian volunteers

Please bring at least **one adult chaperone per every 10 students** to help ensure that the students are staying with the group, being safe, respectful, and to maintain appropriate behavior. Teachers and parent/guardian chaperones are responsible for addressing any disciplinary issues during the program. The parent/guardian chaperones are to always stay with the group. Please bring a **maximum of 1 adult for every 4 students** to prevent the trail groups from becoming too large in size.

Trail etiquette

We encourage student exploration with guidance to prevent unnecessary damage to the plants or trails. Take only memories and trash - removing any features of the park is not permitted. Please stay with your group on trails and allow the flow of traffic to pass freely. Observe wildlife from a respectful distance and avoid disturbing animals or their habitats.

After your visit

Our volunteer docents love hearing from students. Many are former teachers or people who wish they had been teachers and though they volunteer for the joy of it, they love knowing what the students learned, and how they are impacting the lives of others.

Mail letters to:

Program Director
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
17000 Armstrong Woods Rd.
Guerneville, CA 95446

Encourage your students to return to Armstrong with their families and friends.

Park maps and other information can be found on the Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods website:

<https://stewardscr.org/armstrong-redwoods-state-natural-reserve/>

Online resources to help prepare your students for their time in Armstrong

[Teacher's Guides](#)

[Armstrong Student Journal – English and Spanish](#)

[Redwood Primer for online reading- *NEW resource August 2025*](#)

[Armstrong Redwoods Redwood Ecology Teacher's Guide](#)

[Save the Redwoods League Educational Handouts](#)

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you soon. Reach out with any questions to
alyse@stewardscr.org or lisa@stewardscr.org.