

# Explore Art, History and Nature Museums in Santa Cruz County!

The Santa Cruz County Museums Partnership, a collaborative association of non-profits, promotes local art, natural and cultural history organizations to both visiting tourists and residents.

## History Museums

[www.SantaCruzCountyMuseums.org](http://www.SantaCruzCountyMuseums.org)

## Natural History (Continued)

### 1 Agricultural History Project

Discover the history of agriculture in this area of the county – including the crops, people, artifacts and farming practices that have made the Central Coast what it is today. View our exhibits & explore our gift shop, "Country Corner." Families welcome.

Agricultural History Project  
2601 East Lake Ave. • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-724-5898

Thurs – Sun, 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm or by appointment.  
Call for holiday hours. Groups by appointment.  
Free Admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.aghistoryproject.org](http://www.aghistoryproject.org)



### 2 Aptos History Museum

Aptos evolved from an Indian village to a Mexican cattle rancho, Claus Spreckels' thoroughbred horseranch (the millionaire sugar grower), a lumber town, an apple processing center, and ultimately a resort. The first public aeroplane flights took place here and it was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake epicenter.

Aptos History Museum  
7605-E Old Dominion Court • Aptos, CA 95003  
831-688-1467

Mon – Fri, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm and by appointment.  
Free Admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.aptohistory.org](http://www.aptohistory.org)



### 3 Capitola Historical Museum

Capitola, the oldest resort on the Pacific Coast, is celebrated with stories and photographs in the changing exhibits of Capitola Historical Museum. Research materials may be viewed by appointment. Community walking tours for groups of 25 persons or more can be arranged on weekdays from May through September with advance notice.

Capitola Historical Museum  
410 Capitola Avenue • Capitola, CA 95010  
831-464-0322

Wed, Fri, Sat & Sun, 12:00 – 4:00 pm  
Free Admission – Donations Appreciated  
[www.capitolamuseum.org](http://www.capitolamuseum.org)



### 4 Cowell Lime Works Historic District

The Cowell Lime Works Historic District, UC Santa Cruz, offers a glimpse into the workings of a 19th century rural industry. Local limestone was heated in large redwood fired kilns to produce lime for making mortar and plaster. See the lime kilns, cooperage (barrel factory), worker cabins, cook house, and massive timber-framed barns. Self-guided walking tour brochure at <http://limeworks.ucsc.edu>.

Cowell Lime Works Historic District  
UC Santa Cruz, 1156 High St., MS: FF&CSanta Cruz, CA 95064  
831-459-1254

Admission/Parking Fee: Daily parking permit, \$6.00; free on weekends  
<http://limeworks.ucsc.edu>



### 5 Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks - History

5a-Pacific Migrations Visitor Center, New Brighton State Beach  
1500 Park Ave, Capitola, CA, 95014  
831-464-5620 or 831-685-6444

5b-Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park Visitor Center  
144 School Street, Santa Cruz, CA, 95060  
831-425-5849

5c-Wilder Ranch State Park Visitor Center  
1401 Old Coastroad, Santa Cruz, CA., 95060  
831-426-0505

[www.ThatIsMyPark.org](http://www.ThatIsMyPark.org) for open days and hours



### 6 The Museum of Art & History

Explore Santa Cruz County history in an interactive, family-friendly setting. The MAH offers hands-on exhibits and educational programs on everything from early settlers to the 1989 earthquake.

The Museum of Art & History @ the McPherson Center  
705 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-429-1964

Tues – Sun 11:00 am – 5:00 pm  
Admission fees: Adult – \$5, Seniors & Students over 18 – \$3, Students between 12-17 – \$2, and under 12 is free – Free First Friday of each month with extended hours to 9:00 pm.  
[www.santacruzmaah.org](http://www.santacruzmaah.org)

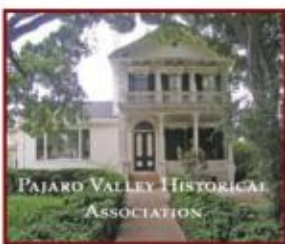


### 7 Pajaro Valley Historical Assn.

Pajaro Valley Historical Association manages the Bodicus-Corr house and gardens, the Snyder Archive and the Volk Museum. We gather, research, preserve and display items relating to the history of the Pajaro Valley. Individual and group tours may be arranged. Facilities can be rented for events.

Pajaro Valley Historical Association  
332 East Beach Street • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-722-0305

Tues, Wed and Thurs 11:00 am – 3:00 pm  
Free admission – donations appreciated  
[www.pajarovalleyhistory.com](http://www.pajarovalleyhistory.com)



### 8 Quail Hollow Ranch County Park

See this 1950s historic ranch house through the eyes of the Lane family – former owners of *Sunset Magazine*. Learn about the historic horse ranch, peruse old issues of *Sunset*, and see a 1950s renovated floor plan. Check out some of the natural history displays before going on a hike or enjoying a picnic.

Quail Hollow Ranch County Park  
800 Quail Hollow Road • Felton, CA 95018  
831-335-9348

Saturdays (Nov-Mar) & Sundays (year round) 9 am – 4 pm  
Admission/Parking Fee: Some activities require a fee and/or advance registration; parking is free.

[www.scparks.com](http://www.scparks.com)



### 9 Rodgers House

The James and Malvina Rodgers home, at the entrance to the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, is a beautifully designed residence from the 19th century. The house is filled with period furniture left by their descendants, one of whom was related to author, John Steinbeck. The house is open during the county fair and other events, and it is possible to call for tours and rentals.

Rodgers House, Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds,  
2601 East Lake Ave. • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-724-5671

Mon – Fri 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. Tours (10+ people) Mon – Sun by appt.  
Free admission – donations appreciated  
[www.santacruzcountyfair.com](http://www.santacruzcountyfair.com)



### 10 San Lorenzo Valley Museum

Explore San Lorenzo Valley history in a 1906 redwood church. Exhibits including logging & mill camps, use of flume & then narrow gauge, local early schools, vignettes of Victorian life, local pioneer biographies, & rotating exhibits. Visit our bookstore for local history, exploring, & nature books.

San Lorenzo Valley Museum  
12547 Highway 9, Boulder Creek, CA 95006  
831-338-8382

Wed, Fri – Sun 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Free Admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.slmuseum.com](http://www.slmuseum.com)



### 11 Santa Cruz Boardwalk Historium

The Boardwalk's rich history has been lovingly preserved inside the Boardwalk's Historium, located on the 2nd floor of Neptune's Kingdom. This unique exhibit details the Boardwalk's first 100 years of amazing memories with an array of images and photographs. Whether you are visiting the Boardwalk for the first time or the 100th time, the Historium shares the Boardwalk's amazing story during the last century of thrills and screams.

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk Historium  
400 Beach Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-423-5590

Hours vary – Call (831) 423-5590 and ask for hours of Neptune's Kingdom  
Admission/Parking Fee: Free admission daily. Parking rates vary depending on time of year.  
[www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com)



### 12 Santa Cruz Surfing

This unique little museum's exhibit chronicles over 125 years of local surfing history beginning when 3 Hawaiian princes surfed the waves off of Santa Cruz on July 5, 1885, becoming the first persons to introduce board surfing to the United States mainland. Administered by the Santa Cruz Surfing Club Preservation Society.

Santa Cruz Surfing Museum  
Mark Abbot Memorial Lighthouse  
701 W Cliff Dr, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-420-6289

Winter Hours: Thur – Mon 12:00 – 4:00 pm  
Summer Hours: Wed – Mon 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. Free Admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.santacruzsurfingmuseum.org](http://www.santacruzsurfingmuseum.org)



### 13 Soquel Pioneer and Historical Association

The Soquel Pioneer and Historical Association has partnered with the Porter Memorial Library where we have our historical displays, artifacts, books and history room. The Historical Association is a community organization dedicated to preserving Soquel history and its role in the development of Santa Cruz County. Come visit and explore our museum in the 1913 historical building located in downtown Soquel.

Soquel Pioneer and Historical Association  
3050 Porter Street, Soquel, CA 95073  
831-475-3326

Days/Hours Opened: Mon - Fri 12:00 – 4:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Admission/Parking Free. Free Admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.SoquelPioneers.com](http://www.SoquelPioneers.com)



### 14 Watsonville Fire

Our museum offers an up close and personal view of the apparatus and equipment used during the history of the Watsonville Fire Department. Our building was in use by the fire department from 1924 until 1982 when the new building adjacent to the museum was opened. The two buildings together offer a glimpse of the past as well as the present. The museum is operated by the Watsonville Firefighters' Association, a registered non-profit organization.

Watsonville Fire Department Chief Gene Friend Museum  
105 Second Street, Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-768-3202

Thurs – Sat, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Hats are available by appointment.  
Free admission – Donations appreciated. Free parking available behind the fire station.



## Natural History

### 15 Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Sempervirens Room exhibits at Park Headquarters display the history of Big Basin, the oldest California State Park. Exhibits in the Nature Lodge show the natural environment of the park. Mountain Parks Foundation partners receive 15% discount in Nature Store.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park  
Sempervirens Room and Nature Lodge  
21600 Elg Basin Way • Boulder Creek, CA, 95006  
9 miles from Boulder Creek, CA on Hwy 236  
831-338-8861

Daily with seasonal hours, \$10 vehicle fee  
Donations appreciated.  
[www.mountainsparks.org](http://www.mountainsparks.org)



### 16 City of Watsonville Nature Center

Discover one of the largest remaining freshwater wetlands along the Central Coast of California. The center offers bilingual activities for the whole family with exhibits on wetlands animals, plants, habitats and cultural history. Join us for nature walks to learn about the amazing bird species that depend on the wetlands and the plants that make this habitat special. Over 6 miles of trails open to the public 7 days a week.

City of Watsonville Nature Center  
30 Harkins Slough Rd. • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-768-1622

Sat – Sun 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. Nature Walks on Sun at 1:30 pm (bilingual) and Weekdays by appt.  
Call for a list of special events and programs. Free admission – Donations appreciated  
[www.wetlandsofwatsonville.org](http://www.wetlandsofwatsonville.org)



### 17 Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks - Natural History

17a-Natural Bridges State Beach Visitor Center  
2531 West Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, CA., 95060  
831-423-4609

17b-Seaside State Beach Visitor Center (pictured at right)  
201 State Park Drive, Aptos, CA., 95003  
831-685-6444

[www.ThatIsMyPark.org](http://www.ThatIsMyPark.org) for open days and hours



### 18 Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park Interpretive Center

Interactive exhibits of the four diverse habitats of the park, which include many unique and endangered plants and wildlife. The Visitor Center is at the beginning of the 8 mile walk in the grove of 270 ft. tall redwood trees where you may see these bright yellow banana bugs. Mountain Parks Foundation partners receive 15% discount in Nature Store.

Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park  
1/2 mile from Felton on Hwy 9  
525 N. Elg Trees Park Road • Felton, CA 95018  
831-335-8418

Open daily 11:00 am – 4:00 pm, \$10 vehicle fee  
[www.mountainsparks.org](http://www.mountainsparks.org)



### 19 Rancho Del Oso

Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center, 17 miles N of Santa Cruz in the coastal portion of Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The newly remodeled Nature and History Center features both cultural and natural exhibits. There are trails through seven different ecological zones, from the redwoods to the ocean, including the popular Skyline-to-the-Sea trail. Nature programs are held year-long.

Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center  
3600 Highway 1 • Dawson, CA 95017  
831-427-3288

Sat and Sun, 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Also by appointment between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm  
No charge for school field trips – donations appreciated. Private groups: Check with State Parks for fees  
<http://www.ranchodeloso.org/>



### 20 Sanctuary Exploration Center

The Exploration Center, with free admission is located down at the beach across from the wharf features engaging interactive and multi-media exhibits designed to help visitors explore the sanctuary's remarkable marine environment and understand their personal role in protecting this underwater treasure.

Sanctuary Exploration Center  
35 Pacific Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95060



### 21 Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

Connect with Nature & Explore Local Natural History: visit exhibits of forests, wetlands, and grasslands, see a California king snake, grind acorns in our Ohlone Room, touch tide pool animals, watch honey bees at work, browse our bookstore and climb on our life-sized sculpture of a grey whale. We promote the Nature Lifestyle!

Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History  
1305 East Cliff Dr • Santa Cruz CA 95062-3722  
831-420-6115

Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm  
Days: School year: Tues thru Sat, Summer (June 6 thru Labor Day) Wed thru Sun. Admission: \$4.00/adult; \$2.00/seniors (60+); Youth under 18: Free; Museum Members: Free; Admission free for individuals and families on the first Thur of Jan, April, July, and Oct. Tour reservations required for all group visits, including Free Thurs. Donations appreciated.  
[www.santacruz museums.org](http://www.santacruz museums.org)



### 22 'Sculpture Is' at Sierra Azul

The Pajaro Valley Arts Council Gallery presents 'Sculpture Is' – an annual, seasonal sculpture exhibit at Sierra Azul Nursery and Gardens. Walk the fabulous two-acre Mediterranean demonstration garden to see over one hundred sculptures created by regional artists. 'Sculpture Is' can be enjoyed from June through October.

'Sculpture Is' at Sierra Azul Nursery and Gardens  
2650 E. Lake Avenue • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-763-0939

Days/Hours Opened: June thru October.  
Everyday 9am - 5:30pm • Admission/Parking Fee: Free  
[www.pvarts.org](http://www.pvarts.org) or [www.sierrazul.com](http://www.sierrazul.com)



### 23 Seymour Center at Long Marine Lab

Visit a working marine lab dedicated to advancing human understanding of the world's ocean. Exhibit hall, aquarium, touch pools, incredible views, and the Ocean Discovery Shop. Take a tour, watch the waves, hold a sea star, touch a shark! Marvel at the world's largest whale skeleton.

Seymour Center at Long Marine Lab Affiliated with Long Marine Lab, UCSB  
End of Delaware Avenue • Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-459-3800

Tues – Sat, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sun, 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
Closed major holidays; call for extended summer days/hours  
Adult – \$5, Student or Senior (64+) – \$4, Child (4-16) – \$4,  
See website for special free days and discounts  
<http://seymourcenter.ucsb.edu>





# ART • HISTORY • NATURE MUSEUMS

## 24 Cabrillo College Gallery

One of the largest college galleries in the Monterey Bay Area hosting 6 exhibitions annually. With a focus on national and international artists the gallery also hosts a very popular annual student exhibition.

Cabrillo College Gallery  
6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos, 95003 (Library Bldg #1002)  
831-479-6308

Mon - Fri 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Mon and Tues 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
Free Admission

www.cabrillo.edu/services/artgallery



## 25 Eloise Pickard Smith Art Gallery

This first gallery on the UCSC campus was named after the wife of the first Provost of Cowell College, Page Smith. Eloise was appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to head the California Arts Council and a proponent of the arts. The gallery's main focus has been art of the Monterey Bay region.

Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery, Cowell College, UCSC  
University of California Santa Cruz, 95064  
831-459-2953

Tues - Sun 11:00 am - 4:00 pm. Closed June, July, Aug.  
Reopening Sept 27, 2011. Free admission. Parking: meters or \$2-weekdays / No charge-weekends. Wheelchair accessible.

http://cowell.ucsc.edu/smith\_gallery



## 26 Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery

The Sesnon Gallery encourages interdisciplinary discourse through the lens of the arts. On the UC Santa Cruz campus, the gallery brings contemporary art to a broad cross-section of the public, representing a range of methods, media and cultures. The gallery is wheel chair accessible.

Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery  
Porter College, UC Santa Cruz, 95064  
831-459-3606

Tues - Sat 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm, Wed 12:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
http://arts.ucsc.edu/sesnon



## 27 The Museum of Art & History

Explore three floors of contemporary art in an interactive, family-friendly setting. The MAH features rotating exhibitions of local, national, and international artwork and craft. The Museum also offers creative events on Friday nights that invite you to dive into art-making.

The Museum of Art & History @ the McPherson Center  
705 Front Street, Santa Cruz, 95060  
831-429-1964

Tues - Sun 11:00 am - 5:00 pm. Free admission to members.  
Admission fees: Adult - \$5, Seniors & Students over 18 - \$3, Students between 12-17 - \$2, and under 12 is free.  
Free First Friday of each month with extended hours to 9:00 pm  
www.santacruzma.org



## 28 Pajaro Valley Arts Council Gallery

The Pajaro Valley Arts Council Gallery presents six to seven rotating contemporary visual art exhibitions showcasing the talent of regional artists. Please also visit our outdoor sculpture garden, 'Sculpture Is', at Sierra Azul Nursery (see #22 listing).

Pajaro Valley Arts Council Gallery  
37 Sudden Street • Watsonville, CA 95076  
831-722-3062

Thurs - Fri 11:00 am - 4:00 pm, Sat - Sun 12:00 - 4:00 pm  
Free Admission - Donations appreciated  
www.pvarts.org



## 29 Santa Cruz Art League

The Santa Cruz Art League creates an environment for the creative path; to network, find inspiration and support. SCAL provides exhibits, performances and educational programs for all ages. We have about fourteen art exhibitions a year.

Santa Cruz Art League  
526 Broadway • Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831-426-5787

Wed - Sat 12:00 - 5:00 pm, Sun 12:00 - 4:00 pm  
Free admission  
www.scal.org



## 30 Santa Cruz County Arts Commission

Works by local artists are exhibited year-round on the 1st & 5th floors of the Government Center, 701 Ocean Street. The County permanent collection, including pieces from the Visual Chronicle, is displayed on floors 1-5 of the Government Center.

Santa Cruz County Parks Department - Public Art Program  
831-454-7901  
County parks are open everyday from sunrise to sunset

Santa Cruz County Government Center - Exhibitions  
831-454-7901 or 831-454-2000  
Mon - Fri 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, except for Holidays and Furlough days. Free Admission

www.scparks.com



## 31 Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center

Our Gallery features a wide variety of fine arts and crafts all handmade by local artists. Paintings (oils, acrylics, watercolors, digital), Jewelry, Ceramics, Textiles, Glass, Wood, Basketry and more!

Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center  
9341 Mill Street, Ben Lomond, CA 95005  
831-336-3513

Gallery Hours: Wed - Sun 12:00 - 6:00 pm  
Free admission & parking  
www.MountainArtCenter.org



## 32 Scotts Valley Artisans

Scotts Valley Artisans is a 5600 sq. ft. non-profit display and sales venue featuring the work of almost 150 Santa Cruz County fine artists and crafterpeople.

Scotts Valley Artisans  
230 D.M. Herron Rd. • Scotts Valley CA 95066  
831-439-9094

Mon - Sat 10:00 am - 6:00 pm, Sun 11:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Free admission.  
www.scottsvallyartisans.com



## 33 Tannery Arts Center

This 8.2-acre campus that works in partnership with the City of Santa Cruz and ArtSpace to build affordable homes for the arts at the historic Sals Tannery. 28 working studios are home to 55 artists, and 8 art cooperatives. Exhibitions, classes, dance, music, drama, workshops, visual, literary, and performing arts.

Tannery Arts Center  
1050 River Street • Santa Cruz, 95060  
831-621-6226

Open to the public • Studios Open 1st Friday each month, 6 - 9 p.m. • Free  
www.tanneryartscenter.org



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www.santacruzcountymuseums.org

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11065 Commercial Parkway  
Castroville, CA 95012

**ARTS COUNCIL SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**  
Arts Council Santa Cruz County  
1070 River Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Santa Cruz Sentinel ONE-CLICK LEADER**  
www.santacruzsentinel.com

**Santa Cruz County Bank**  
1800 Green Hill Road, Suite 210  
Scotts Valley CA 95066

**Liberty Bank**  
Felton & Boulder Creek  
13223 Highway 9 Boulder Creek, CA 95006  
6230 Hwy 9 Felton, CA 95018

**Tannery Arts Center**  
1050 River St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**KBK Insurance Agency**  
1006 Freedom Blvd Watsonville, CA 95076

**Legend**

- Art Museums
- History Museums
- Nature Museums

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Partially funded by a grant from the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County.