



## Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve

### **60 seconds**

The Enid Pearson - Arastradero Preserve provides 644 acres of open space for visitors to enjoy, such as lake and bay views, grasslands and forests. It is located in the Palo Alto foothills, at the The preserve protects almost all of Arastradero Creek which flows into Matadero Creek, and supports crucial grassland savanna, oak woodland and riparian ecosystems.

Two hundred years ago, Spanish settlers introduced European annual grasses, which out-competed native perennial bunchgrasses and wildflowers that elk, deer and antelope used to depend on. In addition, these settlers cleared much of the oak woodlands. However, small tracts of native California plants still exist at the preserve, including purple needlegrass, blue wild rye, wet meadow rye, California brome and blue, valley and coast live oak.

In the early 1960s, in efforts to prevent the destruction of the City's parkland, former City of Palo Alto Councilmember and long time Sierra Club member Enid Pearson co-formed the Parks Committee to study how other cities protect their open space. The resulting work of that Committee was the Park Dedication Charter Amendment, which was adopted in 1965 by Palo Alto voters. The amendment prohibited Palo Alto from selling any parkland without the voters' approval. Thus, Arastradero Preserve was established in 1970, when the city purchased the land from Arastra Limited after amending its Comprehensive Plan to include a majority of the foothills in the Open Space Controlled Development. In 1981, it was dedicated as parkland and in 2004, it was renamed the Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve in honor of her conservation work. Enid Pearson was one of two of the Loma Prieta Chapter's 2019 Guardians of Nature honorees.

Currently, volunteers from Grassroots Ecology and Acterra have been removing non-native species and planting native grasses, acorns and oak saplings to restore natural habitat.

### **Additional**

#### *Wildlife and Species*

At least 140 species have been recorded in the preserve, including but not limited to, California mountain lion, black-tailed deer, bobcats, coyotes, and many varieties of

birds, some of which are threatened or endangered. Enid Pearson-Arastradero Preserve provides crucial protected habitat to conserve these species.

### *Arastradero Creek*

On its way to Matadero Creek, Arastradero Creek flows into Arastradero Lake, an artificial water body, and is also joined by the local Mayfly Creek. Volunteers from Acterra have pursued a large-scale creek daylighting project and have been planting riparian species in an effort to restore and stabilize the native ecosystem.

### Additional Resources

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/parks/preserves/arastradero/>

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/6049/>

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=93148e683e7746ea92f657f704279e31>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/pearson-arastradero-preserve-biotic-project>