January 1, 2014

Kick off the New Year with a winter hike for adults and kids in a California State Park in Mendocino County.

North to South

Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area, Leggett, 11:00 a.m. Meet at the park entrance station. Easy 2 mile walk through old-growth redwoods. Young children are welcome on this hike. Bring water, rain gear, coffee, tea or hot cocoa to help stay warm. No dogs allowed on trail for this hike. More information 707-925-6482.

MacKerricher State Park, Fort Bragg, 11:00 a.m. Meet docent Fred Andrews at park visitor center. Learn about the annual gray whale migration and look for whales offshore. Binoculars will be available to help visitors study whales and other fascinating wildlife found near MacKerricher's shores. The hike is wheelchair accessible. Young children are welcome on this program. More information 707-961-0471.

Russian Gulch State Park, Mendocino, 12:00 noon. Meet at the park's recreation hall. This will be a moderate to strenuous 5.5 mile out and back hike (2.75 miles each way) to the beautiful waterfall at Russian Gulch. You will learn about the park's natural history from Dave Jensen, birder and naturalist. This hike is suggested for children 10 years and older, and adults. Bring water, snacks, hat and binoculars with you. No Dogs allowed on trail for this hike. More information 707- 961-0471.

Mendocino Headlands State Park, Mendocino, 1:00 p.m. Meet docent Jim Owens at the Ford House Visitor Center. Walk out to the Mendocino Headlands to look for gray whales. Learn about the annual migration of gray whales. 1 mile easy hike. 3 years old is the minimum age for children on this walk. Rain will cancel this event. Wear layered clothing. Bring binoculars, water and a camera. More information 707-937-5397.

Van Damme State Park, Little River, 10:00 a.m. Meet the docent at Hwy 1 and Gordon Lane. The parking lot is about 2 miles north of Little River, California, on Hwy 1. This 10:00 a.m. hike goes downhill through the Spring Ranch property to bluffs overlooking the ocean to look for migrating gray whales. Learn about the annual migration of gray whales between Alaska and Baja. After looking for whales, you will retrace your path uphill to the dirt parking lot. One section of the dirt path is very steep. Bring binoculars, water and a snack. Wear layered clothing. More information 707-961-0471.