

POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Because Sedgwick Reserve is a wildland environment located some distance from urban facilities, precautions for potential hazards should be taken, similar to those for a back-country hike. The nearest medical facility is the Santa Ynez Hospital, 700 Alamo Pintado Road, Solvang (805-688-6431). In the event of an emergency call 911 and notify the reserve director or any available reserve staff.

Potential hazards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Rattlesnakes.** The Reserve is home to a wide assortment of snakes, but only one species is poisonous, the Western Rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*). The western rattlesnake is common throughout the Reserve from March to November. It is found in grassland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, oak woodlands, gray pine forests and around buildings.

Use extreme caution when reaching to places not readily visible and hiking over rocks, logs, or in tall grass. Long pants and hiking boots are recommended. Carry a cell phone.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE, HANDLE OR MOVE RATTLESNAKES. Leave them alone and they will leave you alone.

- **Poison Oak.** Not uncommon in riparian areas and shaded north-facing slopes. Easily avoided. If exposed to the leaves or stem of a poison oak plant (even if the plant is barren of foliage) wash affected areas with dish soap or Tech-Nu.

- **Mountain Lions.** The Sedgwick Reserve is ideal mountain lion habitat and we frequently see evidence of their presence (tracks, freshly killed deer carcasses). While the threat of a lion attack on a human is extremely unlikely, it remains a possibility where people and lions co-exist. Avoid hiking alone, make noise and if confronted, throw things and yell. Do not run.

- **Ticks.** Ticks in Santa Barbara County can carry Lyme disease. Routine body-checks for ticks are advised. If bitten, monitor symptoms and consult with a physician. Ticks are especially common in spring and summer.

- **Rugged Terrain.** Sedgwick is a wildland environment. There are downed logs, unstable rocks, steep slopes, cliffs, ground squirrel holes, steep and narrow roads, and many other potential hazards. Use caution and good judgment.

Precautions during fire season

Since fire is a significant danger at the Sedgwick Reserve, several precautions need to be taken during the fire season, April through November.

- During fire season, a shovel and a fire extinguisher must be carried in all cars passing beyond the field station and out onto the unpaved portions of the Reserve. They are located at each of the sign in boxes inside Reserve gates.
- Do not drive or park vehicles off the road unless you have the specific permission of the Reserve Director. Catalytic converters on cars get very hot and can start fires very quickly.
- Be vigilant and use extreme caution when using the Reserve during the peak of the fire season. Report smoke/fires and any suspicious behavior or unauthorized Reserve users to 911 and the Sedgwick Office.

