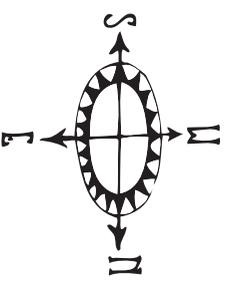
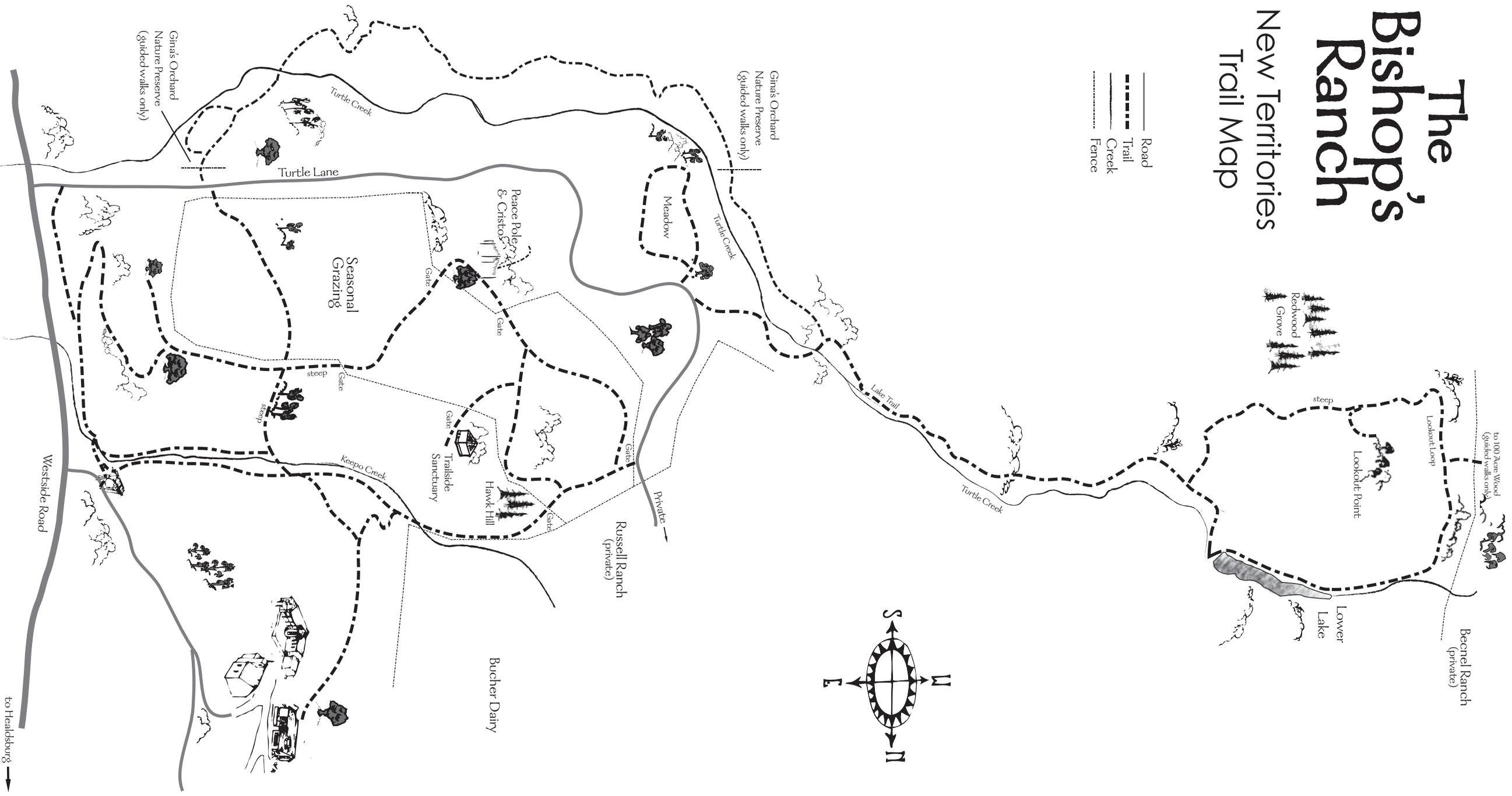


# The Bishop's Ranch

## New Territories Trail Map

- Road
- - - Trail
- ~ ~ ~ Creek
- ..... Fence



Ginna's Orchard  
Nature Preserve  
(guided walks only)

Ginna's Orchard  
Nature Preserve  
(guided walks only)

to 100 Acre Wood  
(guided walks only)

Beonel Ranch  
(private)

Russell Ranch  
(private)

Bucher Dairy

to Healdsburg →

and coastal sun cup, all of which are native.

Most of the field grass is exotic (not native) and consists primarily of ryes, oats and barleys. Wild radish grows profusely amid the grasses in the open fields. The little pink, yellow, or white flowers smell like radish!

Of particular interest is the native bunch grass growing on the steep slope to the left as you walk by lower lake. This is a rare and rewarding sight that could have looked the same hundreds of years ago, prior to European contact. We also enjoy a rich variety of trees and shrubs including five species of oak, bay laurel, buckeye, madrone, big leaf maple, Douglas fir, and coastal redwood. Magnificent red-barked manzanita shrubs are easily mistaken for trees among the madrones. Other shrubs include the coyote bush and mountain mahogany which has small pinnate ("featherlike") leaves and plume seeds. This extremely hard wood was favored by the Indians for arrow tips and digging tools. Nourishing vines include delicious goose- and blackberry, wild grape, and honeysuckle. Pink wild roses brighten the upper paths.

## Fauna

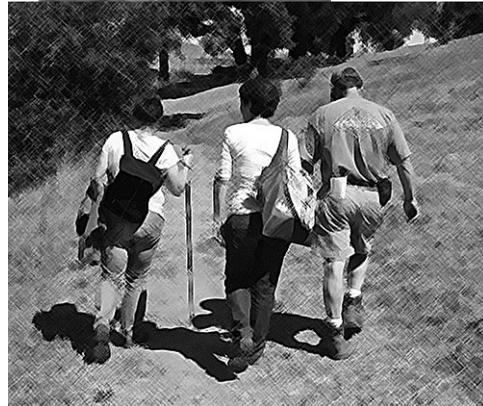
The large wild animal most likely to be seen during daylight hours is the blacktail deer. Gray squirrels scurry about, but it is unusual to spot any other mammals, which are shy of humans and primarily nocturnal. Backcountry Ranch residents include mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, badgers, skunks, opossums, raccoons, and wild pigs, whose rooting is beneficial to the woodlands, but erosive to open meadows. Also sharing the land with us are several species of field mice, vole and gopher which are food favored by red-tailed hawks. None of these animals are normally aggressive.

Birds are abundant and visible. On both lakes wood ducks and coot can often be sighted. Green herons have been seen on the lower lake. Quail and red-tailed hawks are frequently seen as are turkey vultures. Harder to find are wild turkeys and pheasant. Smaller birds that abound in fringe or border zones include bush-tits, finches, scrub and stellar jays, towhees, and sparrows.

Especially in warm times, little lizards dart about in the bushes and across the trail. There are rattlesnakes who want to avoid you and are not commonly met.

There are, of course, insects too numerous to list here. In early summer beautiful butterflies grace the land. Bugs or bees do not usually bother persons on the trails. Bug repellent is not normally required.

# TRAIL GUIDE



The Bishop's Ranch  
*a retreat and conference center  
for all ages*

## Trail Tips

Thank you for coming to The Bishop's Ranch. Your visit can be made richer by walking the trails where you will discover the beauty of nature and the many surprises she holds, from wide vistas to tiny jewel-like flowers. These trail tips are given in the hope that your time on the trails will be comfortable in all seasons.

Prepare for the trails as for any hilly walking in Northern California: shoes with good-gripping soles, hat and sunscreen, water, perhaps dark glasses. In warm season the hillsides can become very hot in midday and may be chilly early or late in the day. There are no rest rooms on the trail.

There is poison oak by the trail sides. Rattlesnakes may be found in rocky, warm, sunny spots off the trails. Many who have walked here often have never seen one, but be alert-you never know. Should you hear a warning rattle, locate the direction, and back away slowly. The small ticks which can bear lyme disease also live here. Tight, high socks tucked into pant legs as well as a post-hike "tick check" are recommended.

Wild pigs are most elusive as are bobcats and mountain lions. It is extremely rare to glimpse them as they are keen to avoid humans. If a large wild animal is encountered, stay calm and hold your ground facing the animal, which will probably run away from you. Back up slowly and share the story with us all later! Most likely, you will only see lots of birds and perhaps a squirrel, as well as little darting lizards, all harmless and fun.

Enjoy and please take time to reflect upon the beauty and wonder of the biodiversity around you. Many persons who do this have nourishing spiritual experiences out on the trails.

**Smoking is never permitted on the trails.**

## Grazing Activity on Ranch Lands

The award winning Bucher Family dairy, our neighbor next door, is moving to organic milk production. To help them meet organic guidelines, The Bishop's Ranch is making additional grazing lands available. Cattle will graze on Ranch land seasonally in selected, fenced areas. This grazing will benefit the Ranch with wildfire protection by keeping the grass low.

## Walking Protocol in Grazing Areas

Generally the cattle are somewhat wary of unfamiliar people and will move away. Some of the cattle, especially the younger animals, are curious and may approach hikers. The animals do not mean to be threatening and walkers should remain calm and continue on their way. If cattle are grazing along the trail they are focused on eating and will move away as walkers approach. Ranch guests should never, frighten or chase these valuable animals.

## Benefits of Grazing parts of Ranch Lands

For millennia, many forces have shaped the landscape surrounding The Bishop's Ranch. One of the most significant of those forces is fire. Since the 1850's the area has been used for intensive agricultural pursuits, including grazing of large domestic animals such as cattle and sheep. Deforestation in some areas was just one of the results of these activities. The introduction of dozens of species of non-native annual grasses and other plants has changed the landscape tremendously.

For many, many years, wildfires have been seen as threatening to developed property and undesirable and so have been suppressed. As once deforested areas grow new forests, explosive fire conditions often result. The Bishop's Ranch, as much of California, is in an area where future destructive wildfires are a given and must be planned for.

Low intensity fires bring many benefits, such as brush and insect control and prevention of more explosive, destructive fires. On The Bishop's Ranch, these prescribed burns are not really a practical option at this time. Yet, vegetative fuels that lead to uncontrolled wildfires do build up rapidly, including in grassy areas that are now covered with non-native annual grasses that provide quick burning fuel. One way to manage the accumulation of fuels is through grazing.

## Our Vital Russian River Watershed

Keepo Creek and Turtle Creek drain into the Russian River, seen as the line of trees crossing the valley as you look eastward toward Mt. St. Helena from the lawn between the Chapel and the Ranch House. Our connection to the Russian River is a good way to approach the ecological concept of interdependence. All life, flora and fauna, in this watershed spanning from the headwaters above Ukiah to the ocean estuary at Jenner, is dependent upon the health of the river's water and the integrity of the riparian (flood plain) zone wherein the river enlarges during the Wet season. A remarkable abundance of diverse and essential life forms live in riparian zones, which also provide cooling shade vital for salmonid and other aquatic life. Mountain lions use it as a highway between the dwindling habitats left for them.

## Flora

The wildflowers are wonderful in spring to mid-summer. We have noted more than thirty varieties of wildflowers including golden fairy lantern, Mariposa lily or gold nuggets, Henderson's shooting star, lupine,