

**NRS**N A T U R A L  
R E S E R V E  
S Y S T E M

University of California

## Site Specs

Administering  
Campus  
UCLAEstablished  
1995

## Location

Los Angeles County, in Santa Monica Mountains; 7.2 km (4.5 mi) north of Malibu; 42 km (26 mi) by road from UCLA.

## Size

126 ha (310 acres)

## Elevation

392 to 472 m (1,285 to 1,550 ft)

## Average Precipitation

610 mm (24 in) per year

## Average Temperatures

High: 32°C (90°F), can top 41°C (105°F)  
Low: 4°C (40°F), can dip to -4°C (25°F)

## Facilities

All destroyed in 1993 Malibu-Topanga fire; planning underway for education/nature center and residence.

## Databases

Maps, aerial photos, geologic surveys; extensive species lists of fungi, vascular plants, and vertebrates.

## Personnel

Director of education/community outreach and faculty reserve director on campus.

## Contact Information

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## NRS Website

<<http://nrs.ucop.edu>>  
(Or, for direct access to further information about this reserve —  
<<http://nrs.ucop.edu/reserves/stunt.html>>.)

# Stunt Ranch Santa Monica Mountains Reserve

Set in the southernmost mountains of the Transverse Ranges, the Stunt Ranch Santa Monica Mountains Reserve is located in the Cold Creek watershed of Malibu Creek, perhaps the most pristine and biologically diverse watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains. Cold Creek itself flows year-round through the reserve. Smaller tributaries of Cold Creek additionally provide the reserve with a well-developed corridor of riparian habitat. Primary habitats include chaparral, coast live oak woodland, and annual grasslands. Overall, there are more than 300 vascular plant species. The reserve also harbors an abundance of fauna, particularly birds and reptiles. All of Stunt Ranch burned in 1993, but has recovered well. The site's natural diversity remains undiminished and continues to provide excellent educational and research opportunities. Research is also possible at other natural areas adjacent to the reserve under management of the National Park Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Mountains Restoration Trust, and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

## Selected Research

Stream ecology; ecophysiology of chaparral shrubs; post-fire successional processes in chaparral plant and animal communities; effects of slope and vegetation on post-fire erosion; fire modeling using remote-sensing digital imagery from NASA; ant distribution and interaction; scrub jay communication and caching behavior; signal variation and categorization by wrentits; division of labor and reproductive skew among paper wasp foundresses.

## Special Programs

**Educational outreach:** The Cold Creek Docents offer interpretive programs for thousands of students annually from local schools; various university classes use the site, including not only UC students, but other universities as well.

**Environmental monitoring:** Plans include establishing a weather station, stream gauges, fixed plots, transects, and photo points.

**Field courses:** Site is visited by university courses in biology, archaeology, social sciences, ecology, biogeography, others.