

Angel's

*Be Alive!*Angel Gomez,
Director of
Member
Services

WHITE POINT TIDE POOLS

Hello again everybody! This month we visit White Point Tide Pools (White Point/Royal Palms County Beach). The White Point/Royal Palms Shoreline Complex is off Paseo del Mar at the base of a 100-foot bluff in the harbor area. You will enjoy glittering ocean vistas and the sights of Santa Catalina Island in the distance.

History

The area known today as White Point/Royal Palms Beach was discovered by Spanish explorers around 1770. They encountered a group of native people later known as the Gabrielino, named after the San Gabriel Mission founded by the Spanish.

In 1784, the area became part of California's first private land concession when a Spanish soldier named Juan Jose Dominguez received 75,000 acres in recognition for his service to the crown. The land grant was named Rancho San Pedro.

In 1827, Manuel Dominguez, the nephew of Juan Jose Dominguez, sold about two-thirds of the Rancho to Jose Dolores Sepulveda. Sepulveda named it Rancho de los Palos Verdes and used it primarily as a cattle ranch. By the 1860s, flood and drought had ravaged the Rancho's cattle and crops. In 1898, 12 fishermen arrived from what was the small town of Los Angeles and discovered the abundance of lobster and abalone at the reef. The then-owner, Ramon Sepulveda, built housing for them and leased the beachfront land to the fishermen. Soon they were harvesting two tons of abalone a day. They also harvested lobster, octopus, red crab, sea urchins and sea snails. In 1906, with the stock of abalone close to depletion, the state legislature restricted the take of abalone and the operation folded. Then, the discovery of geothermal sulfur hot springs soon revived the area. In 1917, Tojuro Tagami and his brother, Tamiji, in partnership with Ramon Sepulveda, built a bathhouse and resort around the natural sulfur spring. They blasted roads and dug out the sulfur hot springs.

By 1925, the resort was completed and consisted of a two-story hotel and restaurant, three saltwater plunges, an enclosed boating area and the bathhouse. The White Point Hot Spring Hotel, as it was called, was highly popular in the 1920s and 1930s. It was a favorite place for Japanese-Americans to come for picnics and entertainment. Then, in 1933, the Long Beach earthquake closed the vent from which the sulfur water

Aden, Angel, and Angel Jr.
with our friends the Star Fish.

was pumped out to the baths. This, along with economic depression, forced the resort to close in the late 1930s. The Japanese farmers at White Point were forced to leave following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. On Feb. 7, 1942, federal agents raided the community and by April the families had been moved into internment camps.

During World War II, White Point was taken by the federal government and incorporated into the Coastal Defense system of Fort MacArthur. The spa and resort were demolished. After the war, Fort MacArthur still served as a training base and eventually became an anti-aircraft missile site. By 1974, the missile sites had become obsolete and were shut down. In 1978 the Federal Government transferred the 30 acres that comprise White Point Beach over to Los Angeles County under the "Federal Lands to Parks" program. On June 5, 1997, a new park complex was dedicated on the site. Palm-shaded picnic tables, new restrooms facilities, and a new children's play area were built by the Department of Beaches and Harbors with \$2 million in bonds funds. The dedication's guests included descendants of the Tagami family, who built and operated the hotel and spa that made the area so popular decades before. Wow! That is a history lesson.

The Tide Pools

I have been to White Point Tide Pools many times and my family loves to visit, especially because of all

the marine life in the tide pool area. Start exploring, you will find lots of crabs, hermit crabs, small fish and also starfish.

The tide pool area is like a great big treasure chest; there is so much to see you will lose track of time. I was taking photos for this story and noticed that waves were getting pretty high, so I told my boys to stay close and not to go out too far. I noticed a guy walking all the way out to where the tide pools ended and the ocean began, so I stopped what I was doing and said, "Be careful." I also noticed he was wearing shorts, a tank top and simple flip flops (sandals) on his feet; it looked like trouble. He was walking too far out; I could see the area he was walking on was wet from previous waves, but he just kept going. Within about a minute a big wave came in, crashed on the rocks and took him for a ride. I was not surprised; he was very lucky. He could easily have cut himself on the rocks. He swam back in and climbed back on the rocks. When he walked back to shore, I could see a bunch of scratches on his arms. I asked him if he was okay, and he said "Yes, it's dangerous out there." Please use your common sense when you go!

Just as a reminder, be sure to bring sunscreen and old shoes because you will get wet. And please don't go all the way to the end of the tide pools.

We stayed in the area where the rocks were easier to walk on because they weren't so wet. My boys love to explore. So we brought fishing hooks and tied them on small sticks. We caught a few crabs (you can use hot dog slices as bait). We found lots of starfish, and hermit crabs were everywhere.

You can sunbathe or get in the water. I saw people bringing their barbecues, sandwiches, beach blankets and beach balls.

There is plenty of space for parking, as you can see.

So, if you don't want to spend a lot of money and want to enjoy yourself for \$10 or less, drive down to White Point Tide Pools. I recommend this outing for you and your entire family. Bring plenty of water and snacks, and maybe spend a little time at the waterfall having a picnic.

There is a small playground right next to the entrance, and restrooms are also available. You may also notice lots of cats; please don't feed them.

If you also take your family or friends, I would love to see your pictures. So send them to me at agomez@cityemployeesclub.com.

**As always,
be safe and Be Alive!
— Angel**

San Pedro



A view of the tide pools below.



White Point/ Royal Palms Beach Sign.



Aden and his first catch of the day, Mr. Crabbs.



People enjoying their day at the tide pools.



Aden and Angel's collection of starfish.



Aden, the starfish and I say goodbye.



Angel Jr., me and Aden with our buckets in hand. The tide pools are to the left, and the beachside is on the right.



View of White Point Hot Springs Hotel, 1920s.

White Point Tide Pools

HIGHLIGHTS: Great views, a reef, marine life, beach areas, restrooms and lots of parking.

LOCATION: 1799 Paseo del Mar, San Pedro, CA 90732

PARKING: The paved road to the beach is steep, so it's best to drive down the hill and park in the public spaces. Parking is \$10. (We decided to save the \$10 and get some exercise by just walking down to the tide pools.)

DIRECTIONS: Take 110 Freeway south until it ends

on Gaffey Street in San Pedro. Exit left onto Gaffey Street. Follow Gaffey Street until it ends and veers right at Paseo del Mar. Turn onto Paseo del Mar and travel about a mile and a half until you see an entry point to White Point/Royal Palms. There's a guard shack there and a gate. Pay for parking and proceed all the way down the hill. When you reach the bottom, turn right and park all the way at the end.



Parking sign.