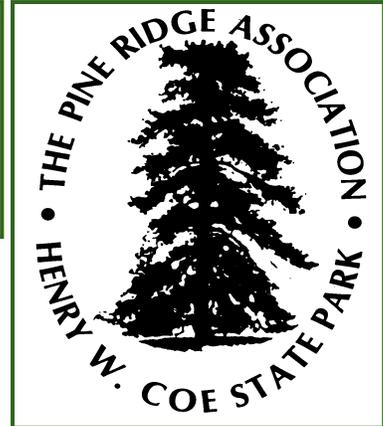


The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park



Summer 2011

In Memory of Kevin Gilmartin, 1947-2011

By Barbara Bessey



Kevin, my husband and best friend for 40 years, died on May 12, 2011; he was 63 years old.

Kevin always enjoyed nature and wildlife. I remember him telling the story of how as a child he raised a baby raccoon whose mother was killed—feeding it green grapes and carrying it around on his shoulder until it became more of a wild animal than a pet. I think that both he and the raccoon understood at that point that the time had come for the raccoon to return to the wild. At the end, Kevin left it a huge pile of green grapes in a forested area, and hurriedly returned home alone.

My first car camping trips were with Kevin in parks in Pennsylvania. These were the days before Google, so we didn't really know what the terrain of a park looked like from a paper map. One time, we thought we were following the directions to a camping area provided by park staff. However, as we drove, the road gradually became more wild and narrow, finally ending in brush. Kevin jumped out and started clearing away the brush, running alongside the vehicle and removing fallen limbs from the path of the vehicle (which had no clearance), so that we could continue to our destination.

At some point, we finally realized as we came face to face with a huge tree and no more path, we probably had gotten off the road somewhere. So we backed up for the mile or so we had come until we finally found the right road. After that auspicious beginning, I have no recollection about what we ate for dinner or even if we enjoyed that weekend. We often remarked over the years that sometimes the journey itself is what's memorable and not the destination.

In the mid-1980s, a friend introduced us to Henry W. Coe State Park. Remembering our adventures in Pennsylvania, we thought it might be safest to send an inquiry to the ranger at Coe Park asking for some guidance about which backpacking trips he would recommend. To our delight, then-ranger Barry Breckling sent back a letter in which he provided some suggestions for trips, and he provided a park map. His final comment was: the miles at Coe Park are long, and they may be longer than you anticipate. Well, he was definitely right about that. In the summer of 1988, we did two backpacking trips during the long Memorial Day and July 4th weekends. The same volunteer checked us in for both trips. And as

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In Memory of Kevin Gilmartin continued....

we were leaving for the second trip, this one to Mississippi Lake, he said that he remembered us from the previous trip the month before. He then remarked that, if we enjoyed the park so much, would we consider becoming volunteers. Well, no, we said, we thought we didn't have enough time to do all of our work tasks and home tasks as it was. But he gave us an application form and some information about the volunteer program that he said we could read once we got out to Mississippi Lake.

Once set up at Mississippi Lake, we were enjoying the lovely songs of birds and the beautiful views. We were surprised to see that there were no other hikers or backpackers there that weekend. Then, as the sun was getting lower in the sky, a healthy-looking coyote trotted slowly along the other side of the lake. The coyote exploded in a burst of brilliant colors from the late afternoon sun's rays. At that point, Kevin suggested that we read what information we had been given at the visitor center. As we were reading the materials, we looked at each other and said, what were we thinking? Where were our priorities? Here we were in an absolutely beautiful setting with our "own" private coyote and wildlife. Did we really think that we couldn't squeeze in a total of 50 volunteer hours a year?

Well, that fall we took the volunteer training and in February 1989 we graduated to become uniformed volunteers. By the end of 2010, together we had been on the board of directors of the Pine Ridge Association for 41 years, each of us serving as president and secretary of the board for many years. Between us, we had donated more than 10,000 hours to the park as co-editors of *The Ponderosa*, training other volunteers, putting on evening programs for the public, carrying out resource inventories, working on proposals to expand the visitor center building, among other activities.

Kevin always loved learning and teaching, and being involved with Coe Park gave him so many opportunities to do both. The park was part of the fabric of his life and he enjoyed every minute he spent there and every activity associated with the park that he was involved in. We know Coe Park is a special place; perhaps Kevin's spirit lingers in the dappled shade on Pine Ridge beneath ponderosa pines alive with the birdlife that brought him so much pleasure.



Kevin Gilmartin and Barbara Bessey



News from Friends of Gilroy Hot Springs

By Laura Dominguez-Yon

“Things change...” After four years, Friends of Gilroy Hot Springs (FoGHS) has finally reached a point where we’re seeing the rewards of our efforts for the protection, preservation, and restoration of Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs:

- **Protection:** Security cameras, more presence on site, plus increased surveillance by State Park rangers have deterred trespassers and vandals, and resulted in more citations of violators. We continue to greet new visitors who are curious about what’s here, and others who visited many years ago and want to see it again.
- **Preservation:** Tarps over roofs, dirt removed from baseboards, pathway maintenance, and the California Conservation Corps trimming back overgrowth help protect what exists and deter deterioration. Maintenance is an ongoing need, and every bit helps. Many thanks to all the volunteers who lent a hand and their time!
- **Restoration:** Water and septic tank installation for the camp host site is almost complete. Thanks to Joan Carpenter, State Park engineer, for writing the project evaluation form, and Mat Fuzie, California State Parks Monterey District Superintendent for funding the project. Plans, budget, and project proposal are being readied for the Minnesota cabin restoration and visitor/activity center, thanks to a collaboration with Eddie Guaracha, Superintendent, Gavilan Sector, Monterey District, Matt Bischoff, Monterey District historian, Mike Zuccaro, Monterey District architect, and Tim Lantz.

Tim Lantz, president and founder, California Foundation for Architectural Preservation (CalFAP) and artisan builder, is leading our restoration efforts now. CalFAP, a 501(c)(3) organization, shares the same mission as FoGHS: to protect, preserve, and restore historic sites important to California. By September 2011, FoGHS will transition from the Pine Ridge Association (PRA) to become a subgroup of CalFAP. In turn, CalFAP is applying to become a nonprofit concessionaire with State Parks, assuming responsibility for the maintenance, management, and restoration of Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs. This move will ensure that restoration activities adhere to State requirements and remain authentic.

“...And things stay the same.” FoGHS will continue its close, collaborative relationship with the PRA. New memberships will continue to support both organizations. We’ll continue offering PRA members discounted and special events, reporting to the PRA board, and submitting articles for publication in *The Ponderosa*. All membership funds and donations continue to support the protection, preservation, and restoration of public access to this area of Henry W. Coe State Park. [Please join us](#) as we embark on this new stage of our journey. Comments and suggestions are most welcome; please email info@FriendsOfGilroyHotSprings.org

FoGHS volunteer of the year: Dean Yon. In addition to being the supportive spouse every active volunteer appreciates, Dean designed and implemented protective procedures (tarping cabins, repairing pathways and decking, canopies, and camping equipment, and transporting equipment), spreads the word about our activities and opportunities, and encourages membership. Dean did above-and-beyond service recently: washing out the vandalized chemical toilets so that the full moon campout could continue as scheduled! Who goes camping with a hazmat suit?! Dean says it’s all worth it after seeing how much the participants enjoyed the weekend and soaking.

Up in Coe

By Mike Meyer

I was supposed to meet friends and go on a hike one Fall Saturday but there were two hitches: I had a visitor center shift, which wasn't really a hitch, and it was supposed to rain and the people from work might not show.

I was early and got the key and opened up the visitor center. I hung up the Open sign, pulled up the flags, put in the money trays, and got the registers on. Soon Nancy came, and Jodie and Linda, and we sat on the stools back there in the space behind the counter and drank some coffee. We did chores, shared the "work," and generally hung out. I read a little in Sierra magazine and helped a few hikers and backpackers. That was the payoff, getting to talk about the places you know and have great interest in.

One backpacking foursome, two men and two women, were at the park for the first time. They wanted to walk about six miles then set up their camp. Another thing they wanted was trails, not roads. I told them of Poverty Flat and that it would be beautiful and they would have their choice of camps since there were no slips in any of the zone slots on the big board on the wall, no one anywhere in the park at all. I told them they could take Fish Trail and then Middle Ridge, which would both be awesome too, and it would be five or six miles.

Another man was leading a bunch of Boy Scouts on a backpack to China Hole. I walked out and saw the boys and could see that they knew what they were doing. They all had good tight packs and the right clothing for the day and they weren't horsing around but talking quietly among themselves under the olive tree and over by the funny little palm tree.

Later, I walked down through the campground. There was no one there and it was cold, maybe 42, 43. Like I said, there was rain forecast. The sun had shone earlier but it was gray air cells now. Blue gray bunches dark as smoke out past the ridges and gray white bands soft as suede, and the ridge itself all colored up like Christmas. At campsite 10, I stopped and was under trees that were blue oaks and whose leaves were green and yellow and the yellow ones were rusting through, and the trees were being rushed at by the breezes. It was a community in there with the breeze, you felt close, and I believe I got there just in time because I was in it too.

I saw a light path people took downhill to below the trees for a view of the ridges and canyons and went

down a little way. It was Cordoza Ridge across from us and you followed the face that was rippled with bands of thin little ridges and below were twisting canyons one into the other. Most of it was thick with forest but you could see a big patch of grass and a lone oak tilted against the sky, and the oak was like a bullseye, the center of the universe right there on top of Cordoza ridge. All the trees were turning colors so that, in the green green and blue green of the pines and live oaks, you saw reds and oranges and yellows in there. It was good and Christmassy to me, a poetry of color, and the clouds you'd never seen that were like the rest of the family that had come and you with the sense that it was all just breaking out, it kept coming and you were in it too.

Then I went back and tried to help Eric change a light up on a ladder. He is the park maintenance man. He stood down on the ground near the drinking fountain holding the sides of the ladder and I went up under the eave. I got the two screws off but the plate wouldn't loosen, so then Eric tried and got it. I kept wondering if the people from work would come and what I'd do if they didn't. Nancy was busy putting some laminated pages on a ring and then she took them out to the Forest Trail. Then Jodie and I went with Eric and we got firewood from behind the metal barn and put it in Eric's little gator. The wood was in stacks under the shed and we pulled pieces out and handed them along to the bed of the gator. Back at the visitor center we put the chunks and wedges in the firewood rack in the back room. Eric took off the lids of the stove and opened the door and scooped the old ashes into a bucket with a little shovel. He balled up some paper and put it through the holes and then old wood and a chunk of oak and threw in a match.

It started to rain, little flurries that came and went that we saw through the windows. Nancy came in with wet feet. She was flushed in the face with the cold and exertion of the walk to the Forest Trail. I envied her coming in like that and wondered if I'd go out too. I hoped the people I was waiting for would show because I thought it would be a good time to show them the park. We'd tried it once before but something came up. I didn't really expect them.

The visitor center was warming up good and we ate our lunch by the stove. Then I learned the people from work weren't coming and I went out the Corral Trail alone. I had thought to just go home and sit on the couch and watch football but I thought to go out the trail a little first to see what would happen. You think it's just the Corral Trail and you've been on it a hundred times, but another little part of you is thinking, "you better not get in that couch potato rut."

Up in Coe Continued.....

It was the kind of day when you pull the zipper to the top and make sure the collar is up. There were some little bursts of light rain and the trees were wet and sometimes you had a big drop on your neck, a fat jolt of cold. Once I was out and passing by the big bay tree and made the first turn where the gully comes down and you step across the water I was glad and forgot everything else. I'd do the loop I had in mind, and so after the Corral Trail I crossed the road and kept going on the Forest Trail.

The new trail went east through the forest but not straight east for sometimes it jogged to the south also. Blue Ridge would come in view. It was over past the canyons and up above and behind Middle Ridge. It was high on the horizon, higher and farther out and you saw the ponderosa pines on its horizon jutting up like little spikes. Then you were back going into the thickness of all the trees and didn't see out but only the up close of the limbs and trunks with moss and the green shoots down in the grass. There were hanging branches and lichen on the boulders and the gray pine trunks were rusty and black.

Then I had to take care of some business and so I went off the trail down a pig path into the woods proper, and I stood behind a tree. Down there I looked around and started to see things. I stood and kept myself from going though the urge was to keep going. I saw an old pulpy trunk with no bark, it was whitish and gouged with scars and woodpecker holes and it was tilted on a live tree branch. Everything was wet and the leaf litter was soft and you smelled the earth and felt the wind. The manzanita leaves with a good live green as though the weather suited them, their trunks slick with water and dark like old saddles; the black oaks with a physicality, bulging and charcoal colored and up close brushed on the bark tips with gray lichen. It was hard to stand still for more than a few seconds yet to move seemed like you would be throwing dishwater on a resting dog or shouting in someone's bedroom while they were dreaming so I stayed awhile longer.

Then I got back on the trail. You look at things sometimes but have thoughts and your mind sees what happened yesterday and moves to what will happen tomorrow. Then about 12 people passed by all scattered in twos and threes. No one really looked up and they were talking about "where she lived" and how bad work was, and probably barely noticing outside what was in their heads sorta like me. I was in the same kind of mental set though, the mind rattling here and there and you just traveling, just moving. But when I was past the big old broken madrone tree and the wooden bench set into the hillside, then I saw on the

shelf under the trees there was a large patch of madrone leaves and without thinking walked softly down.

It was gray pines and madrones and large spaces underneath and the gray sky coming through. After a few steps I noticed the deer down on the leaves. It browsed the ground layer, young and tan and eating through the leaves. I was pretty sure it saw me but it didn't stop but went on lowering its head to eat.

You get like that, not paying attention to what you should pay attention to when you want a thing. The deer wanted to eat and was too distracted by it to be cautious. Once it looked up quick like, "dang!," but I was not moving and it only looked worried.

I saw the red madrone berries in all the trees and the sprigs that were on the leaves. I scanned around just gazing and walked a little and got lower. It was open and some big wrangling manzanitas put up a wall on the far side and only fallen stuff was on the ground, and the pine needle ssshhh ssshhhhhing and the tree trunks and their branches hanging low around the perimeter. In the center was a madrone with several trunks and all under it and around it was the bed of many colored leaves. I wasn't conscious of one fifth of it, and vaguely wondered if maybe the deer was dumb or couldn't see well the way it browsed toward me. I wanted to get closer to it but then after about another minute of browsing and glancing up, then it went into snort mode. It straightened reaching all four feet of its height. Turning away and lifting each leg high it went slow into its prance. It shot steam and I heard them. I wondered what might happen if I went closer—would it charge and could I duck—such a fool thought but I took a step and then it bounded. It went left then right so it could see back moving down across the floor, and then was gone.

I went to the edge and saw the grass starting to green down the slope. Then back and onto the leaves yellow like sweet lemon cream and soft pure pink and rusty tan all tossed out under the madrone. I don't know what I did but I remember the pine sound and the balls of them bobbing and then, turning again to another thing that was always there but you hadn't seen, it was that you felt still, settled, a composure regained, and it was eons since it had been like that.

I went back on the Springs Trail not moving fast nor pausing to stop, and then was back on the Corral Trail coming around the last bend and seeing the flags were gone and how the light was less now in the gray sky and no one was around. I got in my truck and drove slow down the hill. You never know the things you can find up in Coe in the fall.

News from the Board of the Pine Ridge Association

By Paul Nam

The Board of Directors of the Pine Ridge Association (PRA) met on August 11, 2011 in the EOC room, Morgan Hill Police Department.

The PRA's mission is to serve visitors to Henry W. Coe State Park by providing interpretive programs. Over the years, the PRA has supported different activities, but interpretive programs remain its main purpose. Every time the PRA commits funds to an activity or a purchase beyond interpretive programs, that expenditure always benefits the park directly. Support has included new recycling bins, payment of a park aid's salary, and repair of a park ranger's vehicle.

Now, the PRA board contends with the closure of Coe Park. If the board does nothing, the park will close on July 1, 2012 so the board has supported the creation of the Coe Park Preservation Fund (CPPF), which has been established to fund the operation of Coe Park. At present, the PRA hosts an account for the CPPF and acts as its fiduciary agent until the CPPF incorporation process is complete. The CPPF is pursuing two objectives:

1. Fund park operations and keep the park open in the shorter term.
2. Build an endowment to fund park operations in the long term.

The CPPF is cautiously optimistic that funding may be found to keep Coe Park open for at least a few years.

The CPPF has an excellent website developed by long-time park supporter Bob Patrie. See: <http://coeparkfund.org/>. The CPPF is also developing materials for prospective donors; board member Ann Briggs showed the board galley of an excellent new brochure.

Other topics discussed at the meeting were as follows:

- The new PRA website should be up and running by late September 2011. The content from coepark.org has been migrated to the new site, and new content is being created by volunteers. We seek creative content managers to represent the many facets of the Coe Park activities. Contact volunteer Manny Pitta (pitta@sbcglobal.net) if you can help.
- The PRA is supporting the development of an interpretive master plan for the park by Interpretive Specialist Sheila Golden. This plan will document park activities and usage patterns for the Department of Parks and Recreation and may be crucial for obtaining future funds and grants for the park. Sector Superintendent Eddie Guaracha has managed to keep funding for this work in place, thus relieving the PRA of the need to support it.
- The ADA-accessible trail in Hunting Hollow is still in development. However, funds from the Recreational Trails Program and the California Conservation Corps are uncertain at the moment because of the State's budget crisis.
- By September 2011, the Friends of Gilroy Hot Springs (FoGHS) will transition from the PRA to become a subgroup of California Foundation for Architectural Preservation (CalFAP). This move represents major progress in the mission of the FoGHS, which will continue its close, collaborative relationship with the PRA. (See the FoGHS article on page 3.)
- The Trails and Springs Committee reports that repairs by volunteers to the Bowl Trail are now underway and are expected to be complete by spring 2012. A section of the trail between Lyman-Willson Trail and Willson Camp almost disappeared below a muddy spring and pond last winter when rain saturated soils. A slow-moving mud slide caused the pond levee to slump, thus reducing the trail to a narrow track that became almost impassable. Park Maintenance Chief Randy Neufeld has approved a plan to reroute part of the trail above the spring.

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News from the Board of the Pine Ridge Association Continued....

- Winslow Briggs told the board that a reporter from the Los Angeles Times interviewed him for an extensive article about what it will mean to close California's second largest State Park. Supervising Ranger Stuart Organo took the reporter for a ride-along through the park on August 3rd. We look forward to the publication of this article, likely in a Sunday edition.

The date of the next PRA board meeting is not yet firm because of schedule complexities, but we'll keep you posted about any and all developments.

Paul Nam
President, Board of the Pine Ridge Association

The PRA Calendar

Mark your calendars—important dates and other announcements

Gilroy Hot Springs Full-Moon Campouts

September 9-11 (Friday-Sunday). For information and to register, visit <http://friendsofgilroyhotsprings.org/2011FullMoonCampOuts.htm>, email info@friendsofgilroyhotsprings.org or call 408-314-7185.

Mounted Assistance Unit Event

Saturday, September 10, moonlight ride and potluck, 6.00pm Hunting Hollow. \$6.00 parking fee. For more information, contact Chere Bargar, 408-683-2247

Mounted Assistance Unit Training Weekend

October 15-16, for more information, contact Chere Bargar, 408-683-2247

Tarantula Festival

Saturday October 1, the annual Tarantulafest. Mark your calendars for the fun-filled day. More information is available at www.coepark.org, be sure to order you tickets early, they sell out fast.

Trail Day

Saturday September 10, visit www.coepark.org for more information.



Vote, Vote, Vote..... Help Coe Win

I read in our daily news stories from Sacramento that Coca-Cola is having a contest for America's favorite parks. The top three winners receive from \$25,000 to I believe \$100,000. Go online to www.livepositively.com and follow instructions. The deadline is September 6th and people can vote as many times as they like.

Ranger Jen Naber

(Publishers note: At the time of publishing we are in 15th position, please keep voting, and watch Coe Park rise to the top.)

Hunting Hollow 5K/10K Fun Run and Walk

By Ken Howell

Saturday June 11th was a grand overcast and cool day for the Henry W. Coe State Park 5K/10K Fun Run and Walk. Late spring flowers could still be found adding color to the hills that had already turned a golden brown for the summer. Hunting Hollow Creek still flowed gently, leaving water in most of the creek crossings for the runners to cool their feet.

On the Friday before the event volunteers gathered in Hunting Hollow for pizza and to fill the bags that are handed out on race day. These bags contain a T-shirt, the runner's bib that has each person's assigned number, safety pins, and labels with the runner's information. As 6:30am is the starting time for the volunteers on race day, some volunteers camp overnight in Hunting Hollow.



Bright and early Saturday morning, volunteers arrive to start setting up for the race. First the tent and table are set up for registration.

Soon the participants start to arrive and the parking crew performs miracles squeezing all the cars in the parking lot.



As the runners arrive, they go to the registration tent to either pick up their preregistration packages or register for the run. The colors of the bibs indicate which race they are participating in, red for the 5K and black for the 10K. A total of 237 people registered this year.



Trophies and medals waiting for the runners.

Volunteer Linda Keahey displays some of the refreshments for the runners and walkers when they finish.



And they're off! The run starts at 9:00am. 205 runners and walkers head for the first of 13 creek crossings along Hunting Hollow. The distance between the Hunting Hollow gate and the trail junction at Wagon Road is exactly 3.1 miles, which is just enough to fit in a 10K run. No other event in the Bay Area provides a run that includes a dirt trail with wet creek crossings after a rainy winter.

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Hunting Hollow 5K/10K Fun Run and Walk Continued.....



Tasia Siegal crosses the creek just before reaching the 5K finish line. She is wearing one of the T-shirts created for this event. Each year, the T-shirt has a photo of some natural feature of Henry Coe State Park; this year, it's a golden eagle.

Gary Muroka checks the result board to see where he finished as Bruce Tanner posts the tags from the recent finishers, watched by Ranger Jan Naber and volunteer Rick Leonard.

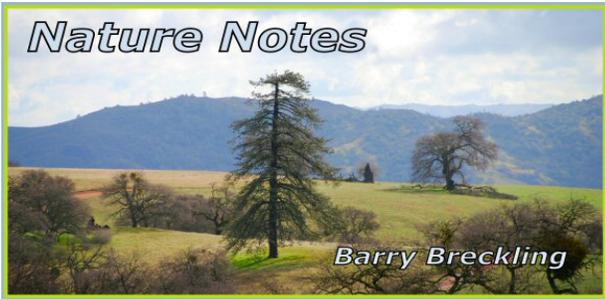


Timer Criss England records the times of walkers Martha Smith and Patricia Stabile as they cross the finish line after walking the 6.2 miles.

Overall it was a great race that went very well and I'm already looking forward to next year. Below are some comments from the participants:

- "Thanks for hosting the race. It was my first time doing this race. I know you have no control over the creek. The comment I would like you to put on the website is if you are running the race, please bring a change of socks and shoes to put on after the race in case of water in the creek. I did see from the photos that people can get wet but I didn't think of bringing extra socks and shoes to change into. That would be helpful for people to prepare. I would like to run again next year if the park stays open. I hope so. I will tell my congressperson. Thanks." Lorraine Myers, ACS, ALS
- "Thanks for a fun event. I had to leave before the awards ceremony, so can you let me know where and when the results will be posted? Thanks!" Art Swift
- "Outstanding event. I know how much work it takes to put this on and I think it was just outstanding. Maybe list it as a dual swim/run? I do lots of runs and I think this is one of my most favorite runs of all. It really does not fit any category. It is not a true 'trail' run and I think that is one of the biggest assets. I enjoy getting out in the woods, but I really do not want to run up a mountain! Thank everyone that was involved." Wayne Aune
- "Thank you for a fun event!" Alison
- "From the pizza to stuffing the bags the night before and the encouragement, crossing the last stream to the finish line was wonderful. It seems everything ran itself. Even parking cars this year seemed to run smoothly. Looking forward to next year." Jim Brady, Coe Park volunteer.

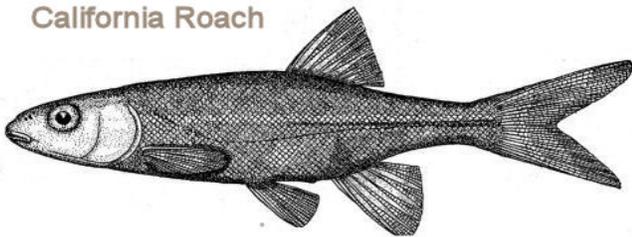
Photographs by Rosemary Rideout



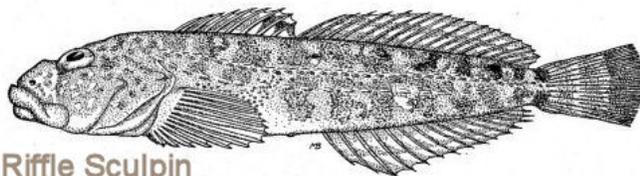
Native Fish of Coyote Creek

The three major drainages in Coe Park, the Coyote, Pacheco, and Orestimba creeks, all contain native species of fish. Occasionally a non-native Large-mouth Bass or a Green Sunfish will escape a pond and live in the creeks, but they usually don't survive long (none of lakes or ponds in the park are natural and the fish in them are non-native species that were planted). The Coyote Creek has more permanent water than the other creeks and thus had the larger number of native fish.

California Roach



The smallest native fish is the 2–3 inch California Roach. They do well in Coe Park's intermittent streams. As the water dries up, they move to permanent water where they are able to survive even with very low oxygen levels, and with high temperatures that can be as high as 95° towards the end of summer.

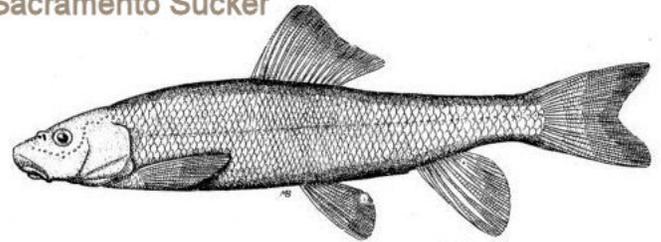


Riffle Sculpin

Riffle sculpin are small, funny-looking, big-headed, seldom-seen fish with bodies flattened top to bottom—as if someone had stepped on them. They feed in gravelly areas with running water and eat small aquatic animals.

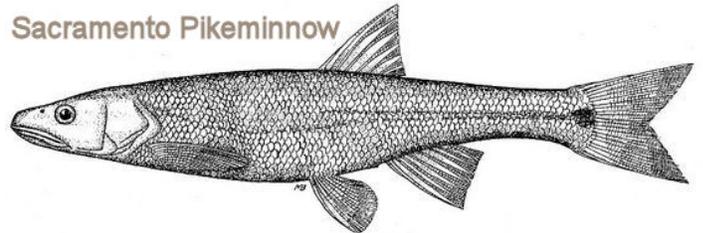
A good place to see Sacramento Suckers is China Hole. They are not as wary as other fish and you will see them cruising along the bottom sucking algae off of rocks with their bottom-facing sucker-like mouths. Another fish you can often see in China Hole is the

Sacramento Sucker



Sacramento Pikeminnow (previously called Sacramento Squawfish). In large rivers they can be up to 3 feet long, but in Coe Park, fully grown fish are mostly 12 to 18 inches. They are often mistaken for trout, having a similar shape, but their fins are often reddish-orange, they have a noticeable forked tail, and they don't have the dark speckling seen on Rainbow Trout.

Sacramento Pikeminnow



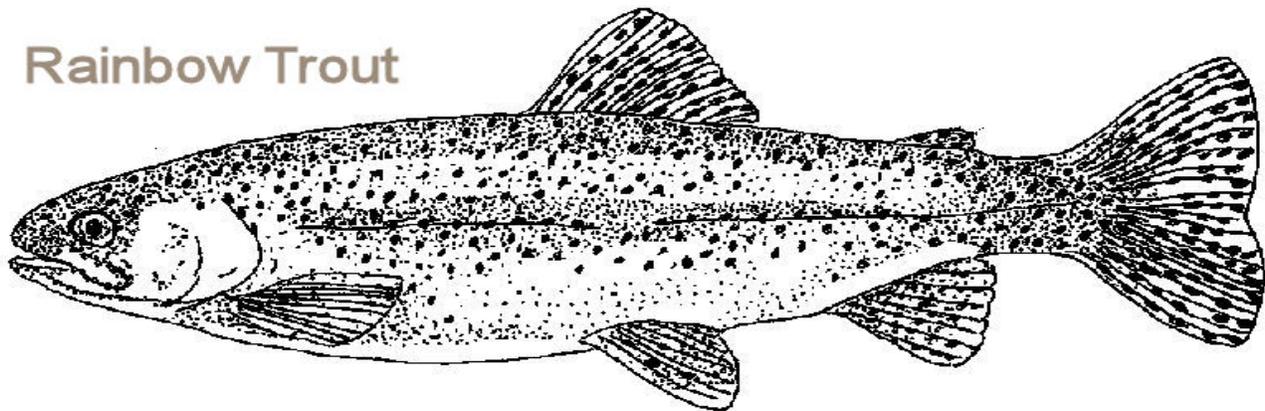
Before Anderson and Coyote reservoirs were built, Steelhead Trout would come up Coyote Creek to spawn. Like salmon, Steelhead Trout are anadromous—living in the ocean and entering freshwater streams to spawn. Steelhead Trout are still found in the lower stretches of Pacheco Creek but not within the park as there is no suitable habitat to be found there. Chinook Salmon are occasionally seen in some of the lowest stretches of the Coyote Creek but it's believed that they never came up into what is now the park. Another anadromous creature that still is found in the Coyote Creek is the Pacific Lamprey, an eel like animal. They have been able to use Coyote Reservoir as their "ocean" and still spawn in the upper stretches of Coyote Creek. They spend their ocean time as parasites attached to fish and go without food as they lay eggs in sandy, freshwater areas of creeks.

Continued on page 11.....

Native Fish of Coyote Creek continued.....

Rainbow Trout are found in the Middle Fork of the Coyote Creek where there is permanent flowing water. They can also be found in a few of the larger pools downstream in the main Coyote Creek. In wet years, they have been seen in the East Fork, up to the waterfall on the Little Fork, and even in Kelly Cabin Canyon.

With polarized sunglasses and binoculars you can get good views of fish in Coyote Creek pools. Just sit quietly until they come out of hiding.



Artist, Saelon Renkes

Tool Locker for Volunteer Trail Crews

By Paul Liebenberg

After discussions with fellow trail workers Paul Nam and Rob Glover, I volunteered to modify a standard construction industry “gang box” for use as a tool storage locker at remote work sites in Coe Park. The need for a gang box became clear as work on the Jim Donnelly Trail reroute proceeded farther up the hill from Hunting Hollow. People working on the trail spent too much time and effort hauling tools (an average of three tools per volunteer) for a couple of miles uphill to the work sites. Also, the need to move the State’s only tool storage trailer to other locations in the park required us to explore options for tool storage on this particular trail.

The PRA provided funding of up to \$400 for the gang box project (thank you, Dan McCranie). Supplies included the box itself, three padlocks, two wheels, paint, and miscellaneous hardware. I donated some sheet steel and the welding consumables. The modifications included mounting the wheels, providing a receiver for a tow bar when the box is being towed by a 4WD quad, sockets for wheelbarrow-style handles, and an extension sleeve to accommodate tools like shovels with handles longer than four feet.

The PRA gang box, which weighs just under 200 pounds when empty, is towed or pushed to the work site. The wheels and handles/tow bar are then removed and stored inside, which makes the box hard to steal. Further protection is added by chaining and padlocking the gang box to a tree. The gang box can hold enough tools for a crew of six doing trail construction work, and it could probably hold enough brushing tools for up to twelve people.

There are at least four ongoing trail projects scattered throughout Coe Park, so more gang boxes could be made available if necessary.

Coe Supporters

“I am so very upset about the planned closing of the park in July 2012. It’s hard to explain, but I have a deep emotional attachment to that place. I just can’t accept that my hike in Coe Park late last month may turn out to be the last time I can replenish my spirit there. I have made a donation to the Coe Park Preservation Fund. I hope enough individuals, foundations and corporations feel strongly enough to donate the necessary funds to keep the park open.”

Jack Hollender and Lynn Weitzke enjoying a hike on the Hartman Trail.
Photo by Heather Ambler



Mother’s Day Breakfast Thank You

I just wanted to say, on behalf of my two sons, my daughters-in-law, and my darling grandson Logan, thank you to everyone who was involved in putting together the Mother’s Day Breakfast. This was our third time attending the event but it was the first time I have ever attended as a grandmother and I was so looking forward to sharing this day with my new seven-month-old grandson, Logan. Unfortunately, the weather was less than cooperative and we arrived too early; between the wind and the cold, damp fog it was quite uncomfortable to say the least. We tried our best to keep Logan out of the wind to no avail, then one of your wonderful volunteers came over and offered a very large beach towel which helped quite a bit. And then another volunteer came and offered us his van to sit in until breakfast was ready which helped immensely.

I’m only sorry that I did not get the names of these people but please know that it was most appreciated and I and my family do thank them for their generosity and help.

It was so important to us to bring Logan Keith to Coe Park because his dad (my son Chris), Chris’s stepdad, Keith Shugart, and I had spent many, many weekends at Coe Park back in the early 1980s. Chris was probably about 11 or 12 when we first discovered Coe Park and the three of us explored miles of trails. I will always remember the hot and dusty hike to China Hole, wild pigs, Bass Pond at Manzanita Point, tarantulas, and even a snake or two. We were also very privileged to have met Ranger Barry. Those were special times for us because we only had Keith in our lives for nine short years, but we have some fantastic memories and so many of them involve our camping trips together.

So, needless to say, we are all planning Logan's first camping trip to Coe Park in the very near future, but we are waiting for a bit warmer weather!!!!

One last thing, we are all so distressed to hear the Coe Park is on the list to be closed. Please do all that you can to preserve this beautiful park and we will do all we can to help support the park.

Thank you.

Irene Thornberry and family

(Link to the Coe Park Preservation Fund <http://coeparkfund.org/>.)

News from the Uniformed Volunteer Committee

By Bill Frazer

Yes, we're going to be training new volunteers this fall!

The volunteer committee and park staff have decided that even though the park is on the closure list, there is a good chance that, with outside support, especially that of the Coe Park Preservation Fund, there is still a good chance that we'll be operating next year.

So far, about 15 applications for new volunteers have been received. Interviews have been scheduled for August 11, 13, and 14. Training is being set up for September 10 and 17, with the ride-along taking place on the weekend of October 8 and 9. The Coe-Ed day (for all volunteers) is scheduled for October 22. Further training options will be offered in November and December, details will follow.

We are pleased to acknowledge the mid-year advancements of Kevin McDevitt, Kenneth McDevitt, and Julian Isacco from trainee to volunteer status.

Also, Joanne Rife, Ken Hulick, and Rosemary Schmidt advanced from volunteer to senior volunteer status.

As a final note, we are pleased to announce that Mike Meyer has joined us, finally filling the last committee vacancy. Mike comes to us with over 14 years' experience as an active volunteer. Thank you, Mike!

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the new members listed below. Thank you for your support.

Rochelle Arellano, Gilroy
Dirk De Bruyker, San Jose
Susan Radach, Felton
Kathryn Strachota, Menlo Park

We need your help to keep our membership list current and accurate. If you are a paid annual member, your *Ponderosa* mailing label includes an expiration date. (No expiration date for life members, electronic mailing or organizations.) If you have any questions regarding your membership or to let us know of any change of address, please contact us:

Email: membership@coepark.org
US mail: 9100 East Dunne Avenue, Morgan Hill, CA 95037
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The Ponderosa is a quarterly publication of the Pine Ridge Association. The PRA's mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the natural history, history, and management of the park are welcome. Also, interested in volunteering? Email Linda Keahey, jodiellindak@sbcglobal.net

Please send submissions and ideas to the editor at: PRAnewsletter@wildblue.net.

Deadline for the next issue: October 31, 2011

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