

Coyote Lake- Harvey Bear Ranch

Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Department
County of Santa Clara- Environmental Resources Agency



Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park
Gilroy, California

Can't-Miss Mammals!

A large variety of mammals inhabit the woodlands and grasslands this 4,598-acre park east of the cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill in southern Santa Clara Valley. They range in size from tiny shrews to the massive wild pigs, which can reach 500 pounds in weight. Mammals are different from other animals in that they have *hair or fur on their bodies, they produce milk for their young, and they are warm-blooded.* Some mammals in the park can be seen during the day, but many don't come out until the cool of the night using the cover of darkness to hunt or graze. Early morning and dusk are they best time to see many mammals in the park.

Do not approach, harass, or feed mammals at Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch; or any other park or protected area you visit. Many visitors in the U.S. are injured or killed each year by the same "Can't-Miss Mammals" that can be found in this park. Appreciate mammals, and all wildlife, from a safe distance.



Coyote



Wild (Feral) Pig

This is the largest commonly seen mammal in the park. Wild pigs are *omnivores*-eating just about anything!. These mammals were introduced by man into this area from Russia at the turn of the century. Wild pigs can be quite dangerous if harassed. They have a combination of poor eyesight, a bad temper, and males have long-sharp tusks. But, they have a great sense of smell, and they have lots of cute babies. Therefore, visitors should keep all food, including "alcoholic beverages," secured in car *trunks* or park-provided "pig-proof" storage cabinets.

Black-tailed Deer

This is largest native mammal in the park. Males (*bucks*) can weigh up to 250 pounds and sport large racks of antlers. Deer are *herbivores*, feeding on grasses, shrubs, seeds and trees. In autumn, one of their favorite foods are oak tree acorns. Deer can be commonly seen at dawn and dusk near the Ranger Station, and in the campgrounds grazing grasses and shrubs wet with morning dew. October through December, bucks can be seen fighting for a harem of females (*does*'). In May and June, *does*' give birth to tiny white-spotted fawns. Their spots provide camouflage against predators.



California Ground Squirrels

Most of the burrows seen along park trails; and in picnic areas and campgrounds have been dug and inhabited by these fast-eating and fast-breeding native *rodents*. Rodents are mammals that have constantly-growing teeth that must be kept-worn down through constant eating and gnawing of plant material. Ground squirrels are also notorious for spreading "weed seeds" along park trails. Because there are fewer predators like coyotes and bobcats, they also make tons-o-babies each year leading to too many burrows. Though park staff tries to fill these in, they can still be "ankle-breakers" to inattentive visitors- "So Watch Here Your Step!"





Striped Skunk

Hard to find by day, the striped skunk can't be missed (or smelled) by night. Night time is work time for skunks, and that means looking for food. Being omnivores, skunks can be found munching everything from berries and seeds to bugs and lizards. Just don't get caught behind them while their tail and back legs are up in the air. That means you've scared them, and are about to get "SKUNKED...& STUNKED!"

Tree Squirrels (Western Gray-Eastern Gray- Fox)

Seeds and nuts are the favorite food of these chipper little rodents. Of the three kinds found in the park, only one (the western gray squirrel) is native to this area. The eastern gray and fox squirrels have been transplanted from the eastern United States of America by people in the last century. In fact, the transplants are more commonly seen now than the native squirrel species. Eastern gray and fox squirrels are larger and more aggressive than western grays, out-competing them for habitat and food. So, if you see a tree squirrel with brown or red in their fur it's a transplant. But, if you're lucky you might catch a glimpse of the native western gray squirrel!

Western Gray Squirrel



Eastern Gray Squirrel



Fox Squirrel



Coyote

This, the only native wild dog found in the park, is one-half the namesake of Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park. In fact, many place names in Santa Clara County have "coyote" in them. Why? Explorers and pioneers in the 1700's and 1800's found so many of them in some areas, they couldn't help themselves. The famous Spanish explorer Juan Bautista De Anza in 1776, named the stream that now feeds Coyote Lake-"arroyo de los coyotes"-because of the abundance of coyotes found in this area. Though primarily carnivores, coyotes will eat a berry or an acorn in a pinch. I guess that might make them "carbivores!"

Hit-Or-Miss Mammals For The Lucky Visitor To Discover!



Bobcat (not common)



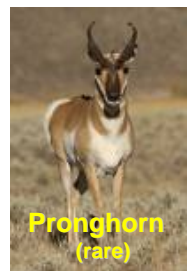
Gray Fox (not common)



Opossum



Tule Elk (rare)



Pronghorn (rare)



Mountain Lion

(not common)



Deer Mouse (not common)



Trowbridge Shrew (rare)



Wood Rat

(rare)

We hope, during your visit to Coyote Lake-Harvey Bear Ranch County Park, you will have the opportunity to observe and enjoy some of the mammals that call this special place home. Remember to take only pictures or memories of these wondrous creatures that share the planet on which we all live. Please see a Park Ranger should you have any more questions about the "can't-miss" and "hit-or-miss" mammals of the Coyote-Bear!