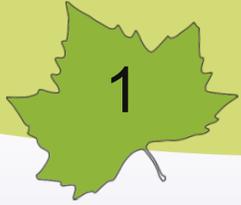


COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL



Welcome to Coyote Creek Visitor Center at Anderson Lake County Park

Coyote Creek's water has sustained generations of families while providing homes for a diversity of wildlife.

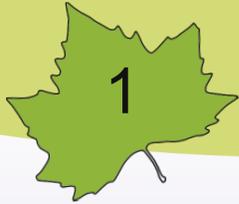
Explore our nature trail and discover how people and wildlife call Coyote Creek Parkway and Anderson Lake County Park home.



Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Department's Mission is to provide, protect, and preserve regional parklands for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.



COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL



Coyote Creek Nature Trail:

The 1.5 mile level trail returns you to the visitor center.

Safe Hiking Tips:

- Bring water.
- Wear sun protection.
- Watch for snakes.
- Avoid touching poison oak.
- After walking through tall grass, check for ticks.
- Keep dogs on a 6-foot leash at all times.



gopher snake



poison oak



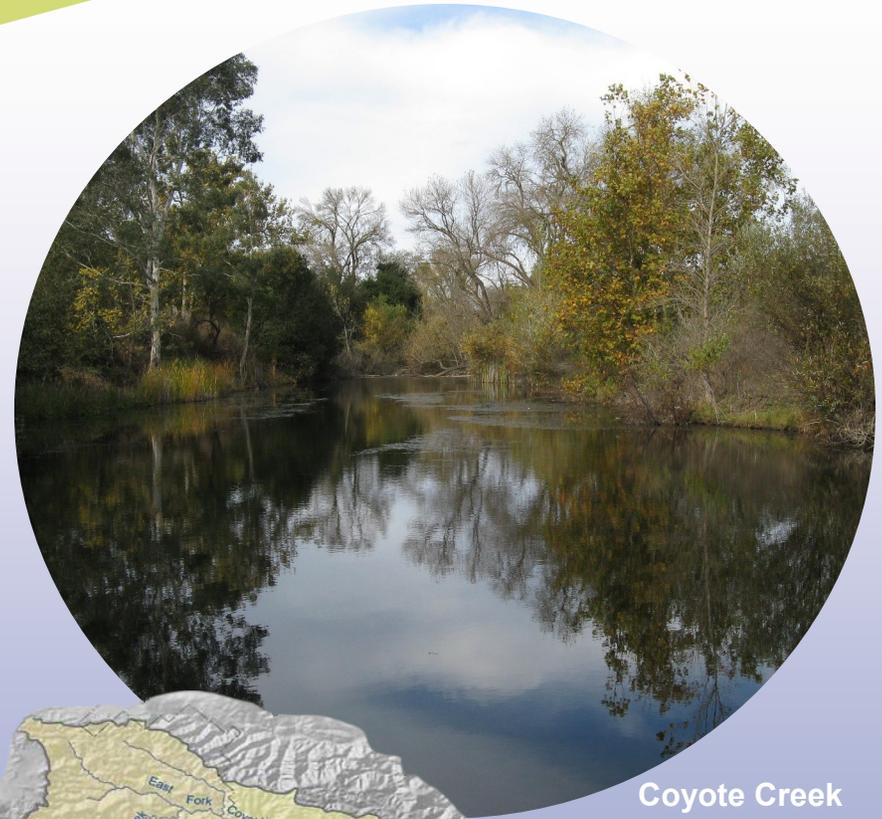
COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

2

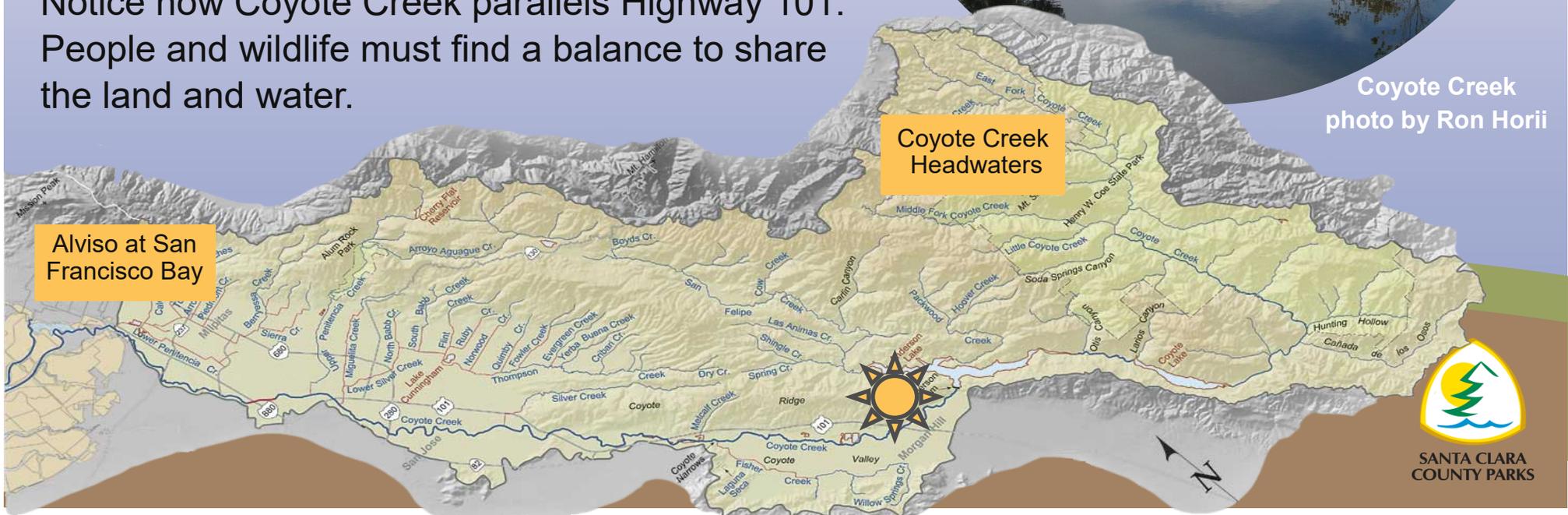
Wandering Along Coyote Creek

Anderson Lake County Park is located along Coyote Creek. The creek originates in the hills of Henry Coe State Park, travels 60 miles through Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Jose before flowing into San Francisco Bay at Alviso.

Notice how Coyote Creek parallels Highway 101. People and wildlife must find a balance to share the land and water.



Coyote Creek photo by Ron Horii



SANTA CLARA COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

3

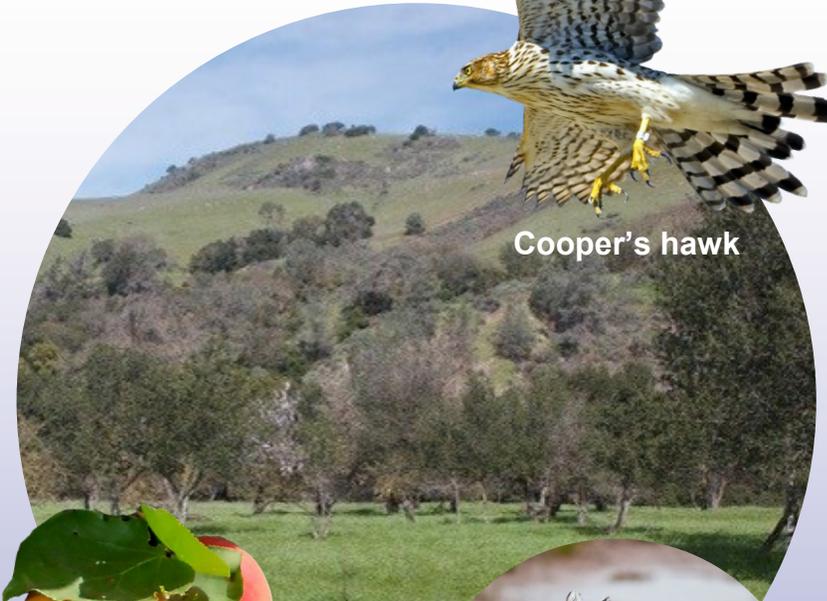
Watersheds for Life

Seismic activity along the Calaveras Fault created the surrounding hills and Coyote Creek. The creek acts as a wildlife highway allowing travel between the hills, valley and bay. Along the way wildlife find food and shelter to sustain themselves and their families.

The orchard before you provides food for people and wildlife. Can you find wildlife food sources such as fruits, seeds, nuts and other animals?



Cooper's hawk



brush rabbit



California ground squirrel



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

4

Anderson Dam Rises Above the Creek

Before crossing the bridge notice the flat top of Anderson Dam rising above the roof tops. The dam was built in 1950 creating Anderson Lake. Its water supplies county residents with clean drinking water and provides water for wildlife and a resting stop for migrating birds.

As you cross the Coyote Creek bridge, look into the creek below. The creek water is still used to irrigate valley farms while nurturing Central California coastal steelhead. The presence of steelhead is an indicator of a healthy creek ecosystem.



View of Anderson Dam



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

5

A Creek Nurtures Generations

Coyote Creek and its rich flood plain has nurtured generations for centuries. The native Matalan people harvested trout, steelhead and salmon from the creek. They tended the natural resources by setting fires to keep meadows clear of trees and spread wild plant seeds. Imagine collecting seeds in the field while hawks circle above looking for mice, rabbits and snakes.

Turn to the right on the trail for a longer walk or turn left for a shorter walk.



Spawning steelhead courtesy
of Oregon State University.



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COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

6

Klinke Barn and Wildlife

The Klinke Barn was constructed by the last family to reside on this land. At one time, Morgan Hill was a significant supplier of fresh eggs and meat chickens to the growing markets of San Jose and San Francisco.

A large barn filled with hens laying eggs would have been very attractive to coyote, fox, raccoon and skunk families who also like an egg breakfast. The wildlife still have homes here, but have to look a little harder for eggs.



raccoon



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

7

Malaguerra Winery

Swiss immigrant Jose Maria Malaguerra purchased 211 acres of land on which he built his house and winery. He raised grapes, tomatoes and hogs. Constructed in 1869 with stones from Coyote Creek, the building before you is the oldest remaining commercial winery building in Santa Clara County. Cleverly built into the hillside, there was no need for internal staircases. One entered the bottom or top rooms at grade level.

To help preserve this piece of history, please notify a Park Ranger of suspicious activity or graffiti. Inquire at the visitor center to volunteer to remove graffiti.



Malaguerra Winery Illustration by Edith Hanson



COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

7

Malaguerra Family

Married in 1869, Jose Maria Malaguerra and his wife Alvina built their house in the flat area near the winery building. At the time of their marriage, Alvina was 20 and Jose was 48. Over the course of 20 years, Alvina gave birth to twelve children. When Jose died in 1902 from bronchitis, they had been married 33 years. After his death, Alvina moved off the land, settling in Palo Alto with various daughters. She was 90 years old when she died.

The house at the winery was destroyed by fire in the 1920s. Can you imagine the sounds of 12 children playing in the fields?



Malaguerra House



Alvina Collins Malaguerra,
wife of Jose M. Malaguerra



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COUNTY PARKS

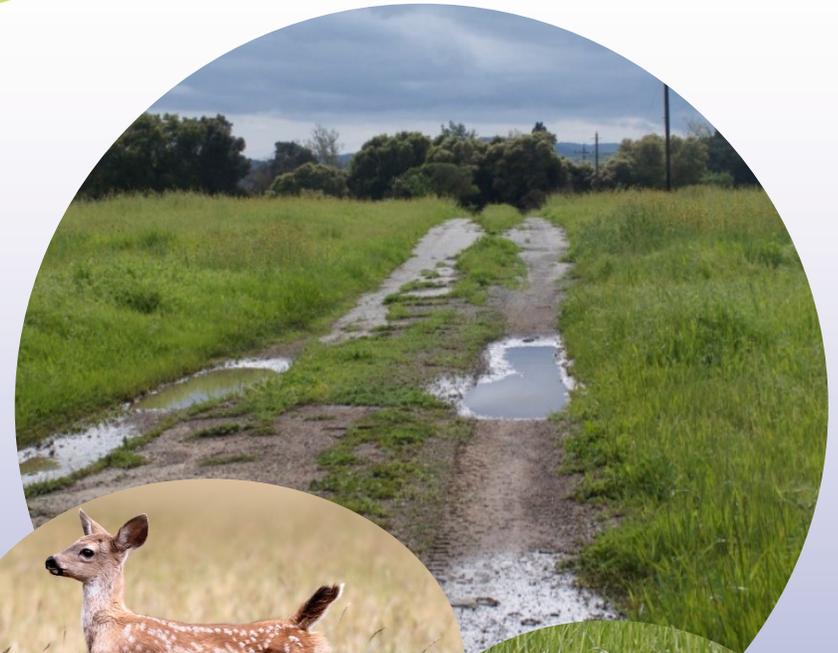
COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

8

A Historic Site of Industry

Crossing the open grassland, imagine an aerial conveyor system once used to haul magnesite mined from Coyote Ridge. It was loaded on wagons that crossed the creek to the Madrone railroad station for shipment. Magnesite was used in furnace bricks, which was important to the gold and silver booms.

These ruts are remnants of a time when humans dominated the area. Today it is slowly being reclaimed by nature. Can you see evidence of wildlife making pathways to food, shelter or wa-



black-tailed
deer fawn



bobcat



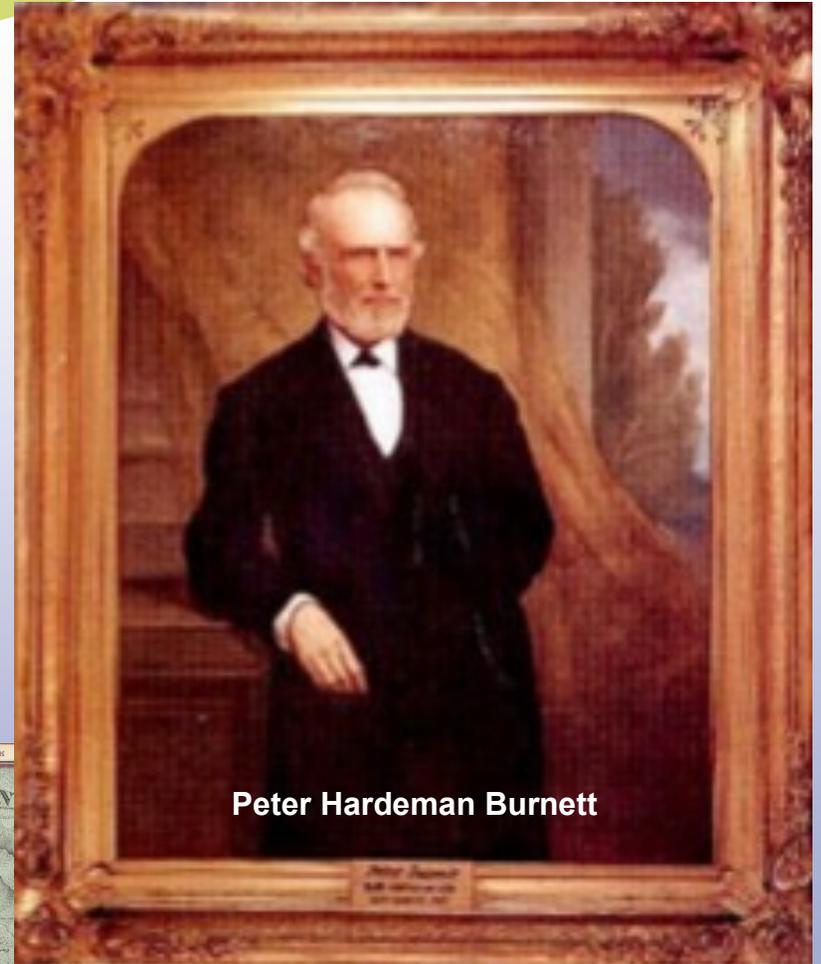
COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

9

Burnett Township & Statehood

In the late 1800's, the villages of Madrone and Morgan Hill were sparsely populated. The area was known as Burnett Township in honor of the first governor, Peter Hardeman Burnett. The Gold Rush made enforcing civil law and organizing state government challenging. Burnett lasted one year as governor, yet his name survives.

The residence nearby was built by the Klinke family and once used as the Park Office.



Peter Hardeman Burnett



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COUNTY PARKS

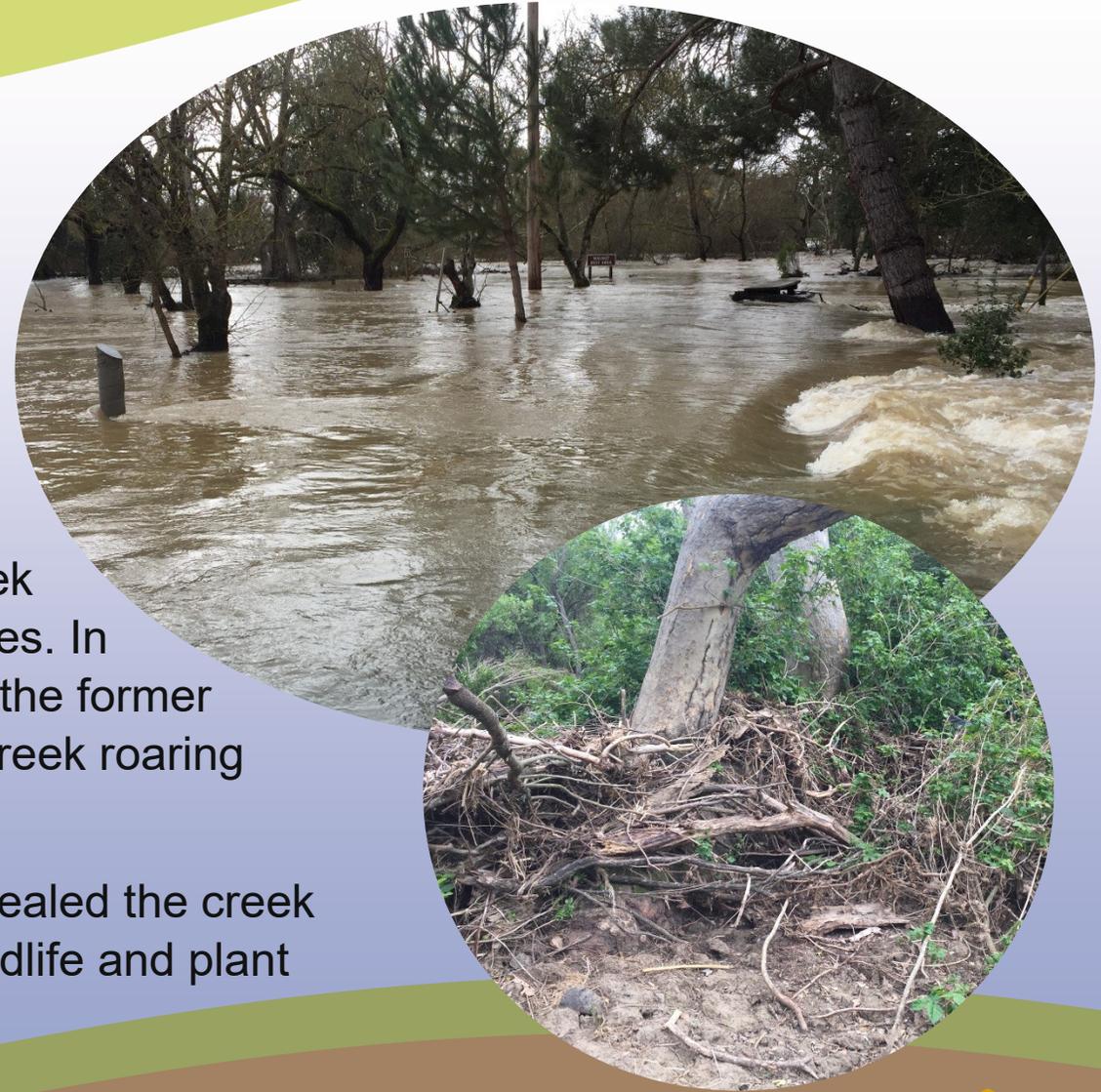
COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

10

Creeks Are Life and Death

The presence of Coyote Creek has shaped settlement in the valley for centuries. Humans and animals found survival easy with the fertile soil, mild climate and water. Some years the creek floods, washing away bridges and homes. In the 2017 spring storms, water reached the former Park Office. Imagine the sound of the creek roaring compared to today's softer sounds.

Prior to the winter storms, bushes concealed the creek and the surrounding animal homes. Wildlife and plant life are already returning to the area.



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

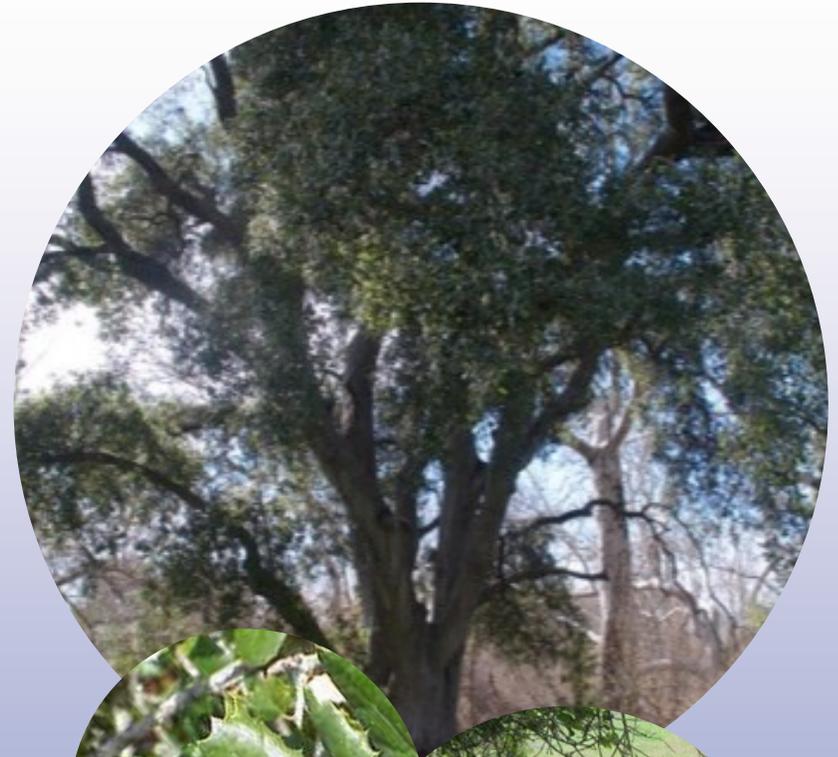
COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

11

Many Uses of Coast Live Oak

Harsh heat makes live oaks a welcoming shady place. Wildlife and humans compete for this valuable resource. Oaks provide humans building lumber and firewood, while wildlife find shelter and food amongst its branches.

Growing up to 75 feet tall, coast live oaks produce nutritious acorns enjoyed by deer, birds, raccoons and even the native Matalan people. Sharp prickles on leaf edges deter nibbling wildlife and a tough, waxy surface helps conserve water during hot summers.



black-tailed deer



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COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

12

Walnut Orchard

Once known as the Valley of Heart's Delight, almost any crop could be grown in Santa Clara County's fertile soil. Early farmers removed the oaks making way for prunes, apricots, cherries and walnuts. The oaks left a soil fungus behind which requires farmers to graft the larger English walnut stock onto the native black oak root stock. This orchard was probably planted by the Malaguerra family.

Look at a walnut tree trunk to see where the English walnut is grafted onto the black oak. See if you can find bird nests and small parallel lines of holes made by sapsuckers.



red-breasted
sapsucker



English
walnut

black
walnut



COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

13

Western Sycamore Sentinels

With their roots dug deep into the creek banks, western sycamores are an important tree for the creek habitat. Perched 100 feet in the branches, heron and egret nests are protected from ground dwelling predators. It's also a short commute to the creek to find fish for the nestlings. Wood ducks nest in hollow tree cavities. Sycamore roots keep the creek banks intact while the leaves shade the water.

Early explorers looked for sycamores knowing they would find water. We know we'll find a shady resting spot.



great egret



great blue
herons



wood duck
chicks



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

14

Poison Oak: Friend or Foe?

Brushing up against poison oak causes us an itchy rash. Wildlife eat the berries without ill effects and use it as protective cover from hunting predators. The native Matalan would use the stems for basket weaving and could make a black dye for tattoo ink.

In spring and summer watch out for shiny green leaves of three. They turn red in the fall. Even after losing leaves in winter the twigs can still spread the rash-causing oils. Can you hear animals scurrying in the bushes?



plain titmouse



COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

15

Historic Tule Elk Return

Herds of tule elk once ranged freely across California. After the Gold Rush, they were almost hunted into extinction. In 1874, Cattle Baron Henry Miller set aside land near Bakersfield for some of the last survivors. Tule elk were returned to Santa Clara County's Mount Hamilton Range in the 1970s by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Tule elk visit these hillsides in the fall when you can hear their eerie bugling call. The elk share the land with deer, turkeys and coyotes, as well as mountain lions. Stop to look and listen for any nearby wildlife.



tule elk



turkeys



coyote



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

16

Wonderful Wildflowers

Spring wildflower displays are a sight to behold. While nourishing our spirits, animals rely on their seeds, petals and leaves to fatten spring babies. Historically, wildfires cleared invading bushes and trees from meadows and hillsides, allowing wildflowers to flourish. Today, grazing animals and controlled burns provide this service in County Parks.

Pick up a wildflower brochure at the visitor center to identify some of our local flowers.



controlled burn

goats graze grasslands



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

17

Buckeye Hunting Grounds

Growing beneath larger creek bank trees is the buckeye. It's the first to leaf out in late winter and drop leaves in mid-summer. The large flower cone is an insect's paradise. Northern Orioles and woodpeckers prey upon this insect buffet. In fall, large brown nuts are eaten by deer and squirrels.

Because of the toxins in the nut, the native Matalan flung the ground up nut on the water to catch fish. The toxins could be leached from the nuts and eaten by humans when other foods were scarce.



California
Buckeye
Aesculus californica

Drawing by
Robert O'Brien



black-tailed deer



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COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

18

Bay Laurel Uses

In the same family as avocados and cinnamon, the California bay has smooth bark and strongly aromatic leaves. The leaves contain up to 40% umbellulone, which the Matalan people burned to repel insects such as fleas. Bay laurel nuts are harvested in the fall and are edible when roasted. They were consumed as a condiment, digestive aid and stimulant that acts like caffeine.

Along the creekside, bay laurels may grow to 100 ft. in height with multiple trunks. Wildlife love the nuts just as the Matalan did.



scrub jay



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COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

19

Providing Lost Habitat

As our thriving population grows, we often build our homes and neighborhoods in historic wildlife habitats. As trees are cleared, wood ducks, bats, raccoons, squirrels and birds lose important tree cavities and branches where they raise their young. Droughts and floods also cause trees and bushes to fall and die.

Birds and bats eat pesky insects that bother us and destroy crops. In order to restore the balance, bird and bat boxes have been built and placed in County Parks for western bluebirds, wood ducks and bats.



SANTA CLARA
COUNTY PARKS

COYOTE CREEK NATURE TRAIL

20

Learn More at the Visitor Center

Thanks for hiking along the Nature Trail.

Remember to:

- Check yourself and friends for ticks. 
- If you borrowed a laminated copy of the Nature Trail Guide, please return it to the visitor center.

Stop by the visitor center:

- Plot sightings on the magnetic map.
- Learn about environmental stewardship of our County Parks.

Check back often for new Nature Trail stories.

