Red fox thought extinct sighted near Sonora Pass

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

A rare Sierra Nevada red fox has been located in the Stanislaus National Forest near Sonora Pass, confirming that the species continues to survive in a region where it was thought to be extinct for nearly a century.

“It’s really exciting,” said Adam Rich, a wildlife biologist with the Stanislaus National Forest. “It’s one of the Holy Grails for a wildlife biologist in California.”



A rare red fox.
Photo/CDFG

The Sierra Nevada red fox is one of the rarest mammals in North America. Until now, only about 20 were known to exist in a small area of Lassen Volcanic National Park – a number considered too small to support the species long-term.

Read the whole story

5 lakes, lush flora make 12-mile hike memorable

By Kathryn Reed

MEEKS BAY – Only 172 more miles and we would have been in Tuolumne Meadows. It's a good thing we never intended to go to Yosemite National Park.

Plenty of people with the proper equipment were headed out of the wilderness with full packs. All ages, and many families had clearly spent at least one night under the stars.

Instead, this particular Sunday in August we spent the afternoon visiting the first five lakes out of Meeks Bay along the 180-mile Tahoe-Yosemite Trail. The entire trek ranges in elevation from 5,200 feet to 10,000 feet. Between the end points it crosses the Eldorado and Stanislaus national forests.



Stony Ridge Lake along the Tahoe-Yosemite Trail. Photos/Kathryn Reed

What sets this apart from so many routes in Desolation Wilderness are the abundance of ferns and other lush vegetation. Many West Shore routes are best accessed later in

the season because the snow lasts longer here.

A few wildflowers are still in bloom. (This was before last weekend’s freezing temperatures.) It’s the array of flora that is captivating.

With a good portion of the trail not being riddled with roots or rocks, it allows hikers to take in the beauty without worrying about tripping and falling.

Don’t be fooled by how the trail starts. It’s wide enough for a vehicle, flat and lulls one into believing this is an easy hike. I imagine the meadow is hiding a bevy of animal life that has taken cover with the plodding footsteps of humans.

Not far up, the trail juts to the right and becomes single-track. The hiking really begins. It’s not hard – it’s just not flat and wide.

Still, the mix of plant life in this section is mesmerizing. We are thankful for the tree canopy. Without it we would have created puddles of sweat.

Much of the time Meeks Creek can be heard rumbling nearby as it tumbles over rocks in its path. On occasion, it even comes into sight. It eventually flows into Lake Tahoe at Meeks Bay.

First stop is Lake Genevieve. The tranquil water beckons. Sue dips her hat to keep her head and therefore rest of her body cool as we carry on to the other lakes.

If you only have time for a short hike, this is a perfect spot to stop, have a bite to eat, even wade in to the alpine water.

Next up is Crag Lake. The rock island with a tree growing out of it makes me marvel at how Mother Nature works.

We skip Hidden Lake. It’s a hike down. And what goes down must come up. We didn’t want anything to do with that.

Shadow Lake is the least appealing of the five we came across. The plant life in it makes it seem unapproachable.

It was Stony Ridge Lake that called to us. After traipsing across downed logs we came to the east side. The manmade rock wall that looks like a dam of sorts is not crossable.

A slight breeze sends ripples across the lake. Sparkles of sunlight dance across the water. The clarity is stunning.

Perfect lunch boulders had us sprawled out as we soaked in the sun and scenery. The heat got the better of us and in the water we went. And I thought Lake Tahoe was cold. Sue was braver and went all the way under.

It was our secluded lake at least for one summer afternoon.

To get there:

From the South Shore, take Highway 89 to Meeks Bay. Just past the fire station that is on the right, there is parking on the left in the dirt. A small paved lot exists where the actual trailhead starts. Be sure to fill out the free Desolation Wilderness permit.

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Concussions at prep level treated seriously, but still pose a concern

By Chris Gabel, Reno Gazette-Journal

Connor Talbott waved his hand in front of Bishop Manogue

quarterback and teammate Zach McElroy’s face following a particularly brutal hit last season. There was no response.

Coaches and trainers arrived at McElroy’s side moments later, and the junior eventually came to. He was loaded onto a gurney and placed in an ambulance, but not before he gave a thumbs up to his concerned teammates.

All told, it was a 20-minute ordeal on the Douglas Tigers’ field. McElroy doesn’t remember a second of it.

“I remember getting the play from Coach, running out to the huddle and calling it. And that’s about it,” he said. “I don’t remember the hit at all.”

McElroy had suffered a concussion.

Read the whole story

Tahoe Queen – beauty of Tahoe mixed with history

By Kathryn Reed

A look of awe comes across people’s faces as they glide across Lake Tahoe for the first time. Seeing why it’s called the Jewel of the Sierra, with it’s various shades of blue. Marveling that snow lingers in September on the higher peaks. Taken in by the other activity on the lake.

For 2.5 hours the Tahoe Queen churns across the water, which barely has a ripple on it from the gentle breeze. The sun beats down on us. Summer has returned to the basin – at least on Thursday and for this long weekend.

For my aunt Norma from Pennsylvania, this was her first time to Lake Tahoe. For my Mom, this was her first time on the renovated 27-year-old paddle-wheeler. For me, it was the first time in a few years to enjoy a scenic day cruise.



People relax and take in the views from the Tahoe Queen. Photos/Kathryn Reed

None of us was disappointed.

Although Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller and Lillie Langtry were on board to dispense stories about Lake Tahoe from the 19th century, a bit of current day info was told. As the boat made its way out of the channel from Ski Run Marina it was pointed out how the shiny items in the water were clams – not the kind anyone wants to eat.

This invasive species turned up last week at Lake George in New York. They are destructive. Scientists are trying to eradicate them in Lake Tahoe.

Much of what Capt. Jerry Summers and the historical figures share dates to the 1800s when John Fremont and Kit Carson were the first white people to lay eyes on Lake Tahoe. Thousands of years before 1844, the lake had been home to the Washoe Indians. Though their presence is still at the lake, for the most part the white man did like he always did and ran the

Indians off their land.

What makes this cruise more than just a ride across the lake into Emerald Bay is all the history that is given. It adds a depth that renting a boat for the day can’t deliver.

Back to current history, on the port side the scar from the 2007 Angora Fire is pointed out. Gardner Mountain and its charred trees are clearly visible. Though no one mentions it, the remains of the 2002 Gondola Fire are more glaring. People started both fires.

“That ridge was an inferno three summers ago,” Twain tells the guests. “It was an incredible site from the Tahoe Queen.”

Most of the boat activity is in Emerald Bay, including kayakers and a paddleboarder. Kids are jumping off the rocks at Fannette Island. People are visiting Vikingsholm. A few of the boat-in campsites are occupied.

The high water mark on the granite proves California and Nevada continue to be in a drought.

Before entering the bay, an osprey flies in front of the bow. They, along with bald eagles, have nests in this area.

To give an example of just how much water is in Tahoe, which has a maximum depth of 1,645 feet, Twain explains if the alpine lake were drained it would cover the two states it calls home with 4.5 inches of water.

Details:

• The Tahoe Queen has a variety of cruises that change seasonally.

• Website

• Phone: (530) 543.6191

• Address: Ski Run Marina, 900 Ski Run Blvd., South Lake Tahoe

• Cost: $46 adults, $15 children

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UNR QB throws under the radar despite his stats

By Adam Himmelsbach, New York Times

When Colin Kaepernick interned at a University of Nevada-themed sports apparel store this summer, he sold Wolf Pack clothing to people who often did not know that he plays for the football team. One customer even asked Kaepernick to help her find the jersey of the quarterback, unaware she was speaking to him.

“Colin goes, ‘I’m pretty sure it’s No. 10, and it’s right over here,’” said Shane Stuart, a manager at Silver and Blue Outfitters at Meadowood Mall in Reno. “He rang up her purchase and everything.”

Despite being the second player with consecutive seasons of 2,000 yards passing and 1,000 yards rushing in the N.C.A.A.’s Football Bowl Subdivision, Kaepernick enters his senior season in relative anonymity. He is overshadowed in the Western Athletic Conference by Boise State quarterback Kellen Moore, and he is overshadowed at the mall by the food court.

But it seems inevitable that his profile will rise with his yardage totals.

Read the whole story

Kids Fishing Derby canceled

To the community,

The South Lake Tahoe Moose Lodge is sad to report that due to unforeseen state regulations and new inhibitory costs, this year's 9th Annual Kids Fishing Derby must be canceled. The Lodge is working diligently to resume the Fishing Derby in 2011, and we look forward to being able to resume this free annual event for our local kids next year. We apologize for any inconvenience this cancellation may cause, but due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to obtain the approval to continue the event this year as we have done for the past eight years.

Thank you to all our supporting sponsors, and be assured that we will apply our current funds to next year's Kids Fishing Derby.

Sincerely,

The Moose Lodge

Swim lessons for all ages, year-round at South Tahoe pool

Year-round swimming lessons are offered at the South Lake Tahoe Parks & Recreation Swim Pool Complex.

Sign ups are going on now for all levels, adult & me through Level 6. Group lessons are for kids 3-13 years of age and classes last 25 minutes. The cost is $26.25 for any of the six-class sessions.

Upcoming sessions: Sept. 14–23 between 1:30-4pm; Sept. 14–30 between 6:05-7:05pm; and Sept. 18–Oct. 23 between 9:30-10:30am.

Private swim lessons are ongoing for all ages and abilities. Prices begin at $20 per 25 minutes for one student.

Register for all classes at the South Lake Tahoe Recreation & Swim Pool Complex, 1180 Rufus Allen Blvd., Monday–Saturday.

If you have questions, call (530) 542.6056 or drop by to sign up.

Tahoe bear, human interactions on the rise

By Carlos Alcalá, Sacramento Bee

Officials from the California Department of Fish and Game and USDA Wildlife Services showed up at dawn at Lake Tahoe's Fallen Leaf Campground early this week, looking for a bear sow and cub with a reputation for nonchalant visits to the tents.

The same bear had been trapped, tagged and run out of the campground with dogs and rubber bullets four weeks earlier in hopes of teaching her to avoid humans.

She didn't learn.

In the middle of the night, as the busy Labor Day weekend approached, she swiped at a camper in his tent, injuring his arm. Officials decided they had to act before hundreds of people, and pets, showed up for the holiday.

Read the whole story

Danger warning for people re-creating in Angora burn area

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is urging the public to use caution within the Angora Fire area and avoid areas with large concentrations of dead standing trees.

Forest Service staff working in the area report that trees are falling on a regular basis. Windy conditions increase the hazard.

Hikers, bikers, and other recreationists are advised standing dead trees and damaged live trees weakened by the fire may suddenly snap or fall without warning.

Portions of the fire area remain closed through Oct. 7 to allow for the completion of the Angora Hazard Tree Removal project.

For more information on the closure, click here and look for the closure order under Angora.

For additional information, visit the Forest Supervisor’s office at 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe, or call (530) 543.2694. The office hours are Monday through Friday, 8am to 4:30pm.

STHS tennis court overhaul to be done by mid-October

By Kathryn Reed

By the last day of the month, three of South Tahoe High School's tennis courts are expected to be playable. The other three will be ready for action by mid-October.

With the building at the school and limited space to put heavy equipment, the courts became a parking lot and staging area for construction crews. In turn, the courts were destroyed. But they weren't in good condition to begin with – with dangerous gaps in the playing surface.



By October tennis will return to South Tahoe High School. Photo/Kathryn Reed

New will be all six having lights. In the past, only half had been lighted.

"Those will be open to the public, just like at the middle

school," Jim Tarwater, superintendent of Lake Tahoe Unified School District, told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Rumors were going around town that the courts would be limited to high school teams and people who rented the facility, with the public locked out. Tarwater promised that is not the case.

About $350,000 is being spent on the courts through the facilities bond.

In the not too distant future, Tarwater would like to form a partnership with the city and Lake Tahoe Community College to renovate the four courts at South Tahoe Middle School.

He would also like to create two more courts near the middle school and St. Theresa School.

"Tennis is big in South Lake Tahoe. I could see tournaments coming up here," Tarwater said. "My dream would be to cover the six at the high school."

This way tennis could be played year-round on the South Shore. The only indoor court is at Ridge Tahoe. Owning a time-share or staying as a guest are requirements of using that court.