Malakoff Story: May Edition of the Auburn Journal’s Foothills Entertainer

**Doins at the Diggins**

*Kid’s Fishing Derby - May 10*  
*Humbug Day - June 14*  
*Park Hours & Programs*

_Fishing Par Excellence_  

Volunteers Needed 530-265-2740
Annual

Kids Fishing Derby

Saturday, May 10, 2014
10 a.m.
Blair Pond
Malakoff Diggins
State Historic Park
23579 N.Bloomfield Rd.
Nevada City, CA 95945
(Google Map)

Kid’s Only Raffle
Hot Dog Roast to Follow

Maximum 100 Entrants Under Age 16
Must Sign Up Prior to the Derby

Contact
malakoffdiggingsparkassociation@hughes.net
Debbie Dejas
530-432-1962
Malakoff Diggins SHP
530-265-2740
To
Sign Up
Or To
Volunteer
Humbug Day Classic
Saturday June 14, 2014
Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Blacksmith at Work
Historic Buildings Open for Inspection
Goldpanning

Music, Games, Crafts
World’s Shortest Parade
Horse Drawn Wagon Rides
Food Shack:
Burgers, Hot Dogs, Chili, Vegan,
Salads, Ice Cream, Pop Corn, Soda
& More

Tour Guides Available for Your Convenience
Volunteers Call: 530-265-2740
malakoffdigginsparkassociation@hughes.net
May be In-Costume or Not
found throughout the U. S., Ospreys may be seen hovering over waterways, looking for fish.

As they plummet toward a trout, their incredible eyesight is both binocular and telescopic, to help compensate for the bending of light rays through the water, so they can hit underwater targets.

One talon of the four on each foot is reversible, (3 forward, one back, or two forward and two back) to grasp fish or branches conveniently.

Ospreys may completely submerge in pursuit of prey. Some fish are too heavy to fly with and are dragged across the water to shore.

Osprey nests can be massive as pairs will return year after year for decades. Some are found over 300 ft. high in the tops of Redwood Trees. Telephone poles and other man-made poles are readily used.

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Scientific Classification
Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Aves
Order: Falconiformes
Family: Accipitridae
Genus/Species: Pandion haliaetus
Common Name: Osprey

Airborne, fish are usually carried nose pointing ahead. Once, I asked a group of kids if they knew why that was? A youngster called out, “So the fish can see where he is going!”

Editor

photos courtesy Google
One day the 80s while working as a ranger at Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area in Southern California, I was patrolling a dirt road above the lake. About 200 yards below me I saw a tent on the shore in a No Camping area. Near the tent was a campfire, also prohibited. Two men appeared to be fishing.

Tossing on my day pack I started hoofing and skidding down-slope toward the scene. What I thought was going to be a routine contact escalated when I heard a whoop as one of the men had a “fish-on”. Wondering if he had hooked a Stripped Bass I stopped and groped the pack for binoculars.

Putting eyes on the pair revealed one was fighting the fish while the other danced around, whooping and gulping from a Jack Daniels bottle. The dance continued as the fish was reeled onto bank revealing it to be a decent size catfish.

The fish continued to squirm on shore, but the other man made his way to the tent, entered, then reemerged waving a long barrel handgun. Armed with the bottle in one hand and the gun in the other, he danced around the still agitated catfish while he whooped and pointed the gun at the fish then the sky then the fish.

I decided this was a good time to watch and wait, so I snuggled up behind a granite boulder and “observed”. The fish finally gave up the fight allowing the fisherman to say something to the gunman, who obediently returned the gun to the tent. When he had moved a safe distance from the tent, I brazenly left “cover” and moved on down. On contact, the inebriated gunman fessed up that he was going to shoot the fish lest it escape, but the fisherman had deterred him.

After citing the pair and confiscating the firearm, I asked the man why he had brought a gun to the park? His eyes got wide, he slowly looked around, and softly said, “You never know when you might meet a couple of wierdos.”

Editor
Last winter, Matt Ceccarelli was fishing at the shores of Pyramid Lake, like he had since childhood, when his line caught on something. “At first I thought it was a snag,” he said. “Some of the other 10- to 15-pound fish fight way more than this one did. This fish came to me. I think it just came right up from the deeps that day; right place, right time.” Weighing almost 20 pounds, that fish belonged to the original strain of Lahontan Cutthroat Trout that had died off in Tahoe by the 1940s. For the first time in 70 years, an angler hooked one in Pyramid Lake. Its presence there was nothing short of a miracle, some say.

A relic of the Pleistocene era, the giant trout’s name derives from the lake that once covered much of what we now know to be Reno. Lahontan, one of the largest lakes in North America, shrank over the millennia due to a warming climate. Pyramid Lake, a high-alkaline body of water east of Reno played a key role in the lives of Paiute Indians for thousands of years. At the turn of the 20th century the healthy Lahontan cutthroat trout population supported a commercial fishing industry. Dubbed the “salmon trout” by explorer John C. Fremont, the fish gained a reputation for its succulent pink meat, and voila, a market of trout connoisseurs stretching to the San Francisco Bay. The influx of settlers in the 19th Century set in motion a chain of events that stressed the ecosystem of Pyramid and other natural lakes, including Tahoe. Within a few decades, logging took a toll on natural waterways. Loggers dumped wood pulp and other pollutants into rivers and streams to the extent that, on some days, the water became too thick for even fish to swim through.

But the demand for water to irrigate dry Nevada ranchland—leading to the 1905 construction of the Derby Dam on the Truckee River east of Reno—became the Lahontan cutthroat’s death-knell.

This ancient monster of a fish can survive freezing temperatures like those found in and around Lake Tahoe. It can thrive in high-alkaline waters that choke other species. It can live 20 years and grow as heavy as 40 pounds. But it cannot reproduce without swimming upstream to spawn, and the dam became the ultimate concrete obstacle.
By the 1940s, except the native populations that still exist today in Independence Lake, near Truckee, and Summit Lake, in northwestern Nevada, the species died out. The Pyramid strain, driven to extinction in the lake that shares its name, would have never returned if not for the foresight of some unknown benefactor who carried it east and planted it in the fishless streams of the Pilot Peak Mountains on the Nevada-Utah border. The issue remained unresolved until the mid-1990s, when DNA tests revealed The Pilot Peak fish genetically matched the Lahontan variety. At a hatchery near Reno the fingerlings began feeding on other fish early, in confinement and quickly grew.

Critics were indeed surprised when this strain grew fast and very large when planted into Pyramid Lake. It looks like the giant trout of old may be back.

“Amazingly, they are growing to be these monsters,” said Mary Peacock, Biology Professor at UNR. “These are trophy fish.”

For proof, look no further than Ceccarelli, who made history with last year’s catch: the first of the tagged hatchery fish caught in Pyramid Lake. Crosby Lodge, the historic fisherman’s hangout at Pyramid, was so thrilled with the catch that owner Fred Crosby had it mounted and hung on the wall of the bar for all to see.

Above Tahoe, in Fallen Leaf Lake and the streams that feed it, the evolutionary dance continues. Last fall, a UNR graduate student observed a pair of Lahontan cutthroat trout spawning in the tributaries to the lake, a feat that Peacock greeted with all the excitement of a mother with her newborn.

“When you’ve worked with a species as long as I have, you really start to root for the fish,” she said. “You’re like, ‘C’mon buddy!’ And we’ve gotten this fish to stick!”

If the miracle at Pyramid Lake is any predictor of things to come, fishermen might one day see the “salmon trout” back in cold, clear waters of Lake Tahoe.

*Mark Twain preferred his Tahoe Lahontan Trout fried in bacon.*  

**Taxonomy:**

- **Kingdom:** Animalia
- **Phylum:** Chordata
- **Class:** Actinopterygii
- **Order:** Salmoniformes
- **Family:** Salmonidae
- **Genus:** Oncorhynchus
- **Species:** *O. clarki*
- **Subspecies:** *O. c. henshawi*
One day Mark Twain was fishing. A stranger came along. “Good morning,” said the stranger. “Good morning,” said Mark Twain. “It’s a fine day, isn’t it?” “An excellent day. Are you catching any fish?” “The fishing is good. I caught three trout here in an hour.” “Is that so?” said the stranger. “Yes and I’m very fond of trout.” “By the way,” said the stranger, “Do you know who I am?” “No, I don’t.” said Mark Twain. “Well, I am the game warden of this country.” “And trout are out of season.”

Mark Twain paused a moment. Then he said, “By the way, do you know who I am?” “No, I don’t.” “Well, I am the biggest liar in this country!”

“Do not tell fish stories where the people know you; but.....

particularly, don’t tell them, where they know the fish.”

On Tempting Trout in Lake Tahoe

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From: Roughing It

“So singularly clear was the water that when it was only twenty or thirty feet deep the bottom was so perfectly distinct the boat seemed floating in the air. Yes, where it was even eighty feet deep. Every little pebble was distinct, every speckled trout, every hand’s-breadth of sand.

We fished a good deal, but we did not average one fish a week. We could see trout by the thousand winging about in the emptiness under us, or sleeping in the shoals on the bottom, but they would not bite---they could see the line too plainly, perhaps.

We frequently selected the trout we wanted, and rested the bait patiently and persistently on the end of his nose at a depth of eighty feet, but he would only shake it off with an annoyed manner, and shift his position.”

From: Roughing It
Was Mark Twain Using The Wrong Bait?

Even in the 1870s fishermen would have known the value of Mayflies for enticing a hungry trout, if the flies were in season, and the trout hungry?

Of the 2500+ species of Mayfly, only a few species are found on lakes, but they are the most prolific. As indicators of clean water (Lake Erie folks practically count the millions that appear there), they reveal that efforts to “clean up” that body of water are succeeding.

Quite an accolade for a bug that lives only a few hours, just long enough to mate, once it evolves to the adult stage. The name is a misnomer. Mayflies “hatch” throughout the spring and fall. Their common name came from folks observing some species that hatched when the Mayflowers bloom, usually in May.

Most of us would not want to belong to the genus: ephemerella. It literally mean, “lives for only a day”.

Scientific classification
Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Arthropoda
Class: Insecta
Subclass: Pterygota
Division: Palaeoptera
Superorder: Ephemeropteroidea
Rohdendorf, 1968
Order: Ephemeroptera
Hyatt & Arms, 1891

Homemade Mayfly fishing lures have been around since Roman Times and likely before that. In 1496 a book called The Treatyse of Fysshyng wyth an Angle (i.e. with a hook) was published in St. Albans, Scotland by Dame Juliana Berners, of which an original manuscript exists. The Treatyse contains the descriptions of twelve patterns of artificial flies, materials, and details of how to tie them. Or........ you can bounce a bait off the trout’s nose.
Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park Schedule of Operations 2014

Visitor Center / Museum

Hours: 9am - 5pm
Weekends: 5/3 - 6/8 & 9/12 - 9/28

Miner’s Cabins: Open 5/2 - 9/28 Reservations Available Through Reserve America
Campgrounds & Group Camp: Open 5/23 - 9/28 Reservations Available Through Reserve America
Trails, Restrooms, Picnic Sites & Campgrounds should be open all summer
For Further Information Call: 530-265-2740

On Going Projects
by Don Schmidt - Supervising Ranger

We hope to have the Humbug Trail completely open by May 1.
(Damage to the Independence Trail kicked this back a month)

DPR is working with our Accessibility Section to design and construct an ADA accessible trail at the Overlook Trailhead by 2016. The plan is for a 1/3 mi. trail with interpretative signage and a raised viewing platform.

The Park Master Interpretive Plan should be completed by Fall 2014.

Water line problems have kept the maintenance staff and Tom Stark busy this winter, but most repairs are complete.
The new maintenance worker at Malakoff is Dan Martin.

Cleanup and water system maintenance has started in the campgrounds and ELP site in preparation for coming school group programs. Improvements this year included new roofing for the Gray House and the Museum and new paint on the Gray house.

The solar / generator project continues in the planning phase, though we’re going to try to purchase a new energy efficient generator as soon as possible.
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“So singularly clear was the water that every speckled trout.................”
Name: _______________________________________________________

Mailing Address: _______________________________________________

City, St., Zip: __________________________________________________

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Phone: ________________________________________________________

Membership Fee: $10       New_____       Renewal X _____

Please check the volunteer opportunities you may be interested in!

____ Docent          _____ Trail Work          ____ Sales Center / Museum

____ Humbug Day       _____ Publicity          ____ Fundraising / Donor

MDPA Membership
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