



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

A slice of the good life on Loch Lomond. Regulars and retirees can be found there on weekdays, while families and daytrippers come on weekends.

## Loch Lomond

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to work out in nature to follow her passion for wildlife, and she can take credit for establishing the new and so far successful fishing-line recycling system that helps prevent wildlife from getting tangled in old line.

"I'm a mammal person," she says, listing the deer, raccoons and bobcats that make their home in the hills surrounding the lake.

But she may have to change to birds, especially as her favorite osprey dips and wheels around the lake.

Soon it flies right overhead, a squirming trout clutched in its claws, patchy white and black wings flashing. The osprey reels around the lake, taking a victory lap or two, probably showing off its skill to a mate sequestered nearby.

Cole sighs as it goes by, "Did you see that?"

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### Loch Lomond history and wildlife

The canyon that holds Loch Lomond was originally inhabited by the Zayante tribe of Ohlone Indians. The Spanish and missionaries brought an end to their way of life and the land was then owned by a succession of wealthy families, who heavily logged the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Among them was Addison Newell, for whom the creek feeding Loch Lomond was named, according to a brochure available at the reservoir's entrance.

The city of Santa Cruz purchased the land and developed the reservoir in the late 1950s, and the recreation area was opened in 1963.

The lake holds 2.8 billion gallons of water when full, but this year did not fill up because of below-normal rainfall. Water is currently being pumped from the San Lorenzo River to fill the lake.

Though the trees in the area are relatively young (100 years), the forest is re-establishing itself. Trees include redwood, Douglas fir, tanbark oak, madrone and live oak. Understory plants include sword, bracken and coast wood ferns, wood sorrel, two-eyed violets, vetch and poison oak. Huckleberry grows thickly along the shore and wild lilac is currently in bloom.

Black-tail deer, gray squirrels, rabbits and gray foxes roam the recreation area, while skunks, raccoons, bobcats, coyotes and mountain lions are active at night.

While lizards, snakes, turtles and frogs call the lake area home, the most noticeable wildlife is the birds. Ospreys patrol the skies and fish for trout, along with cormorants and great blue herons. Grebes, ducks and coots migrate through and kingfishers, woodpeckers, steller's jays, juncos, flickers and chickadees dominate the forest.

### Things you should know

- Boats must be at least 6 feet long.
- Rafts must be rubberized and utilize at least three inflatable chambers.
- No swimming, gasoline engines, sailboats or windsurfers.
- No alcohol or firearms.
- Dogs on leash only.

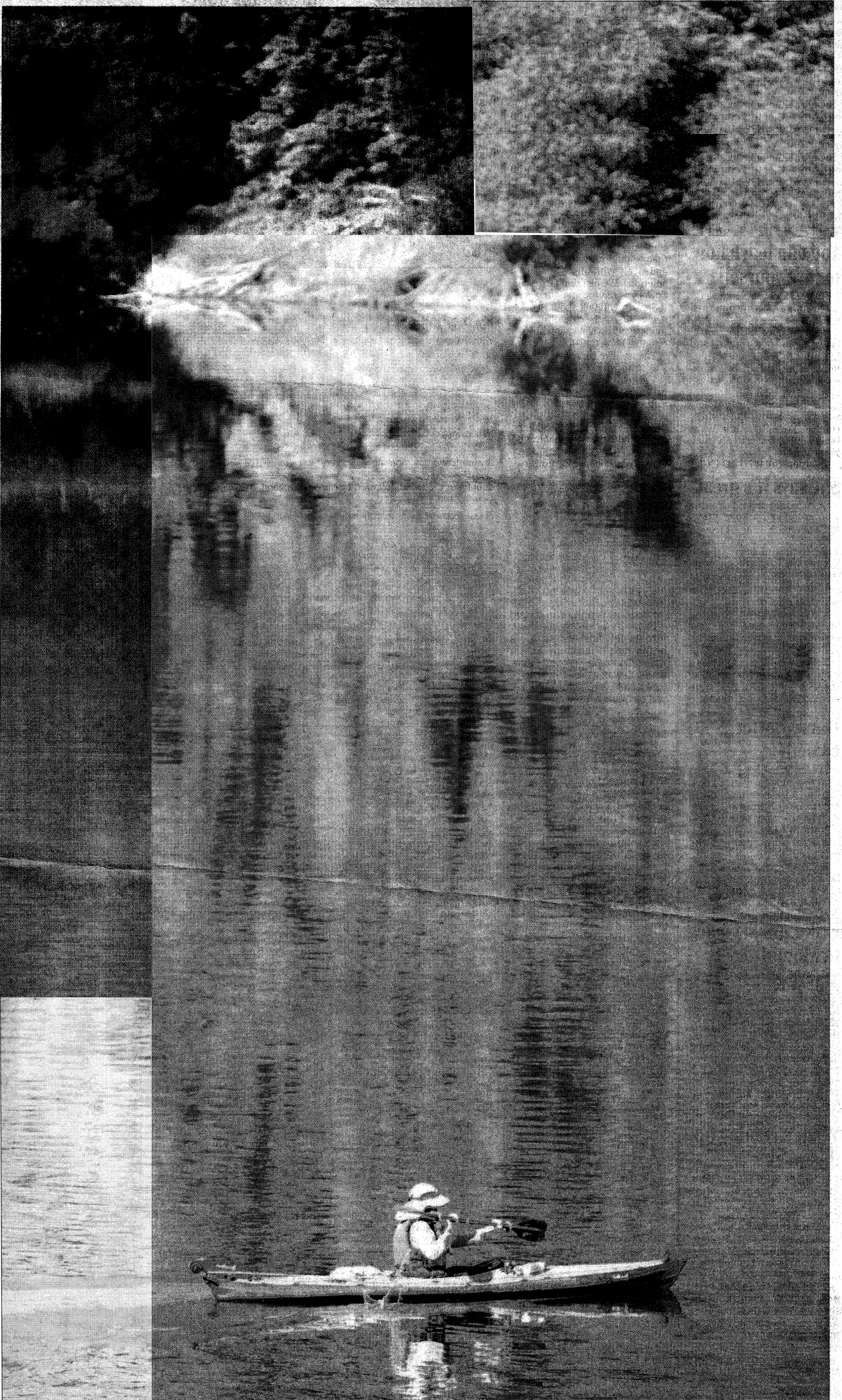
### Hiking trails and picnic facilities

Loch Lomond Recreation Area: Features picnic areas with tables, barbecues, water and restrooms. Smoking and barbecue fires in designated areas only.

**HIGHLAND LOOP:** 4 miles through extremely rugged and steep terrain. Offers shoreline, redwood and knobcone pine environments, features views of Loch Lomond and San Lorenzo Valley.

**MACLAREN LOOP:** 1 1/2 miles with a slight climb offers shoreline, redwood and oak environments.

**BIG TREES NATURE TRAIL:** 3/4 mile extremely steep trail. Accompanying booklet helps you explore natural features of redwood forest as you climb up the southern ridge of the recreation area.



A kayaker plies Loch Lomond's early-morning surface last week. Visitors appreciate the peace and serenity of the nearby recreation area.