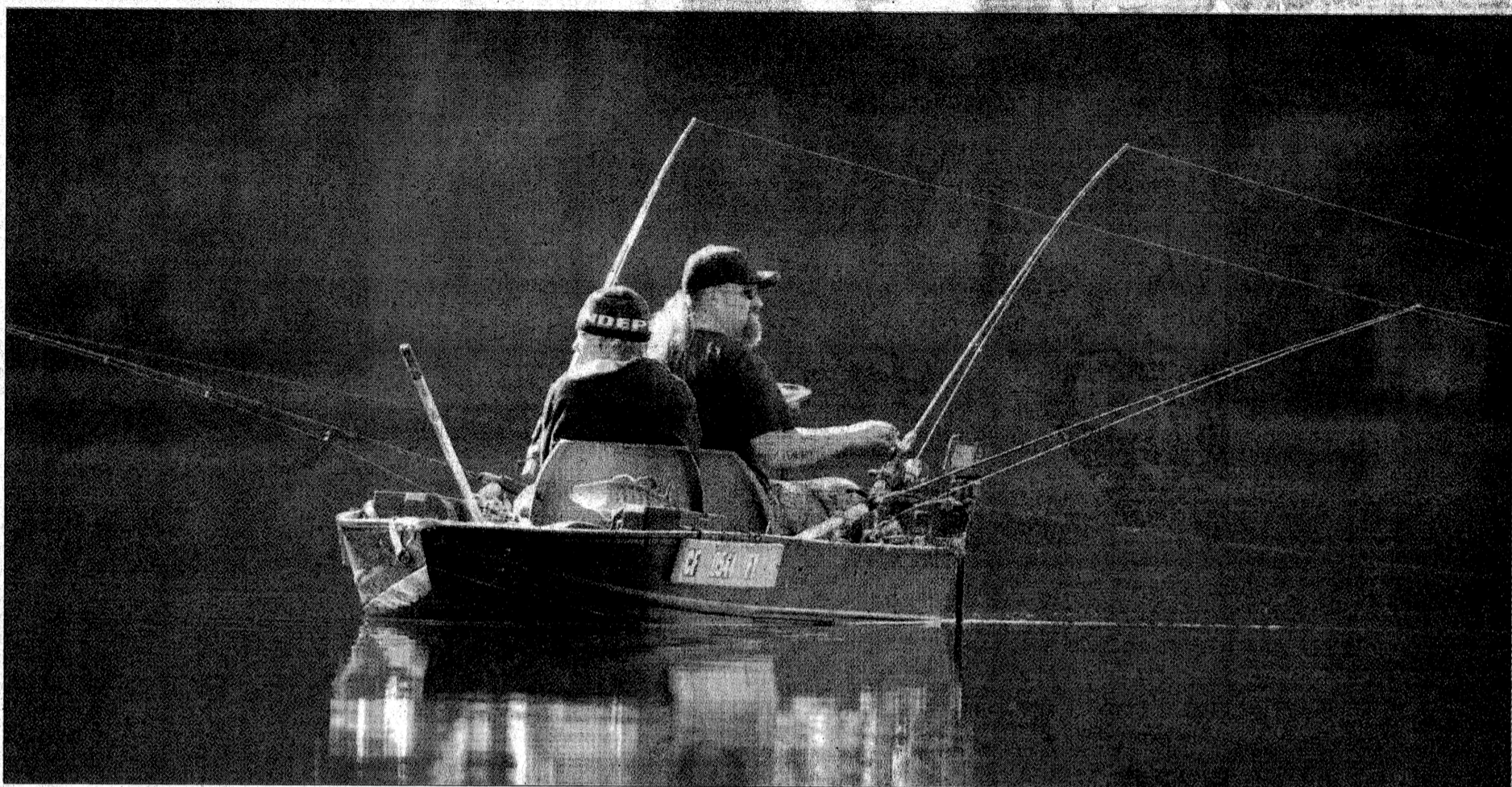


Luck Lomond



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

Fishing poles bristle from a boat on Loch Lomond. Season, one-day, two-day and second-rod stamp fishing licenses are available at the park store.

Fish, hike, relax at nearby recreation area

By **STACEY VREEKEN**

Sentinel staff writer

When you visit Loch Lomond, be sure to listen.

The lake laps against shore and boat; a breeze rustles through the redwoods, fir, madrones and oaks; insects buzz — while across the water, mallards, herons and kingfishers can be heard calling.

The predominance of the sounds of nature is what Ranger Judie Cole says is special about the recreation area in Felton. The manmade lake, built to supply water for the city of Santa Cruz and run by the city's Water Department, is far from any major roads or developments. When you visit, it's just you and nature. And everyone else who's come for the same thing.

Weekdays are quiet at the 166-acre lake, where regulars and retirees fish, from both shore and boat, for rainbow trout, largemouth bass and bluegill. The state Department of Fish and Game stocks the reservoir with about 2,000 pounds of trout about once a month from March to July, and the spot's popular enough for the park store to sell approximately \$40,000 in fishing licenses a year, says Mike Daly, a facility attendant who's working his first season at the lake.

You don't need your own boat to fish, though; row boats, electric-motor boats and paddle boats are all for rent by the day or hour. But know that the reservoir supplies drinking water, so no swimming or gas motors are allowed.

Weekends get busier as visitors from farther away, daytrippers and families with kids move in to hike

and picnic. The 6¼ miles of trails wind up and down the hillside and along the shore, offering lakeside vistas or views across the mountains worth the steep hike up. Redwood sorrel is already in bloom, and soon the native Pacific iris will cast its blue gaze across the hills.

"It's like working in a postcard," says Daly, who gave up working over the hill in San Jose for less money and a shorter commute at Loch Lomond.

Cole feels the same way.

"This is my office," she says with a sweep of her arm. She's sitting in her new patrol boat in the middle of the lake, checking to make sure no one's stranded, and letting boaters know that they need to be off the lake an hour before the recreation area closes.

Kayakers glide by and a man rests along shore, hat pulled low over his face, fishing pole tucked in the crook of a branch stuck in the ground.

Cole talks about how she wanted

If You Go

WHAT: Loch Lomond Recreation Area.

WHEN: Open March 1 through Sept. 15 at 6 a.m. Closes 6 p.m. in March, 7:30 p.m. in April, 8 p.m. in May, August and September, and 8:30 p.m. in June and July.

WHERE: From Felton take Zayante Road to Lompico Road, turn left on West Drive. Lake is at the end of road.

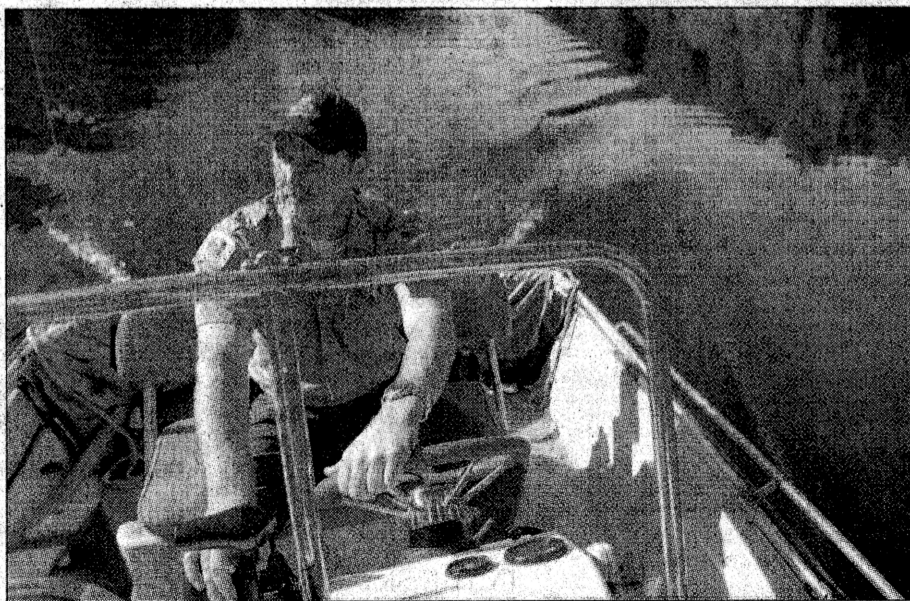
COST: \$4 parking fee; \$6 for car-top boat; \$9 car and boat trailer. \$5 an hour for row or paddle boat, \$35 full day; \$10 an hour for electric-motor boat, \$65 full day. Two-hour rental minimum. Season, one-day, two-day and second-rod stamp fishing licenses available. Park store also sells bait and light tackle, and hot and cold drinks and snacks. Electric boats rent out quickly on weekend mornings, and paddle boats can be a bit balky in the afternoon wind.

DETAILS: 335-7424 or <http://www.ci.santa-cruz.ca.us/wt/llra/llra.html>. Information line at 420-5320.



A pair enjoy a quiet row in a Loch Lomond cove last week.

See **LOCH LOMOND** on **PAGE B5**



Josh Laeder patrols Loch Lomond one morning last week.

Find it online

See more of Loch Lomond in a slideshow at <http://www.santacruzsentinel.com>.