

TILDEN WILDLIFE

Naturalist Alan Kaplan on some of the larger wildlife in Tilden Park:

■ **MOUNTAIN LIONS:** "People have seen mountain lions. I haven't. We have found deer killed a particular way. The thigh muscle is severed, the entrails have been pulled out."

■ **BOBCATS:** "The bobcat is more speculative" than the mountain lion. The Tilden area is known as Wildcat Canyon for a reason. "In the 1930s hundreds of bobcats were trapped here for their pelts. A \$5 or \$7 fee was paid for the pelts, which was a generous sum of money during the Depression. It's been 70 years and the population never came back."

■ **WILD TURKEYS:** "Wild turkeys are back." The birds have made their way into Tilden from the area around the California Shakespeare Festival's Bruns Amphitheater in Orinda. "The marvel of the East Bay Regional Park District is that it provides a big continuous space for wildlife to move around in."

■ **COYOTES:** Can be found in Tilden "sometimes in big numbers. In the evening you can hear them howling."

Treadway

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things," he says. That includes the red-legged frog and the Western pond turtle, both species of special concern.

The park district took an active role to preserve pond turtles by removing other turtle species from the lake, he says.

As the trail goes by Jewel Lake, he notes the number of pond turtles sunning today. Nine are visible, about one-third of the lake's total population. He mentions that two of them were born this year. "I'm always glad to see reproduction, whether it's snakes or turtles or birds. It's good because it means we're doing something right. We've provided the right environment for males and females to find each other."

Kaplan got his first naturalist experience after he graduated from Bronx Science School in 1968. That he worked as a naturalist at a camp in RI N.Y., before heading beginning entomology st

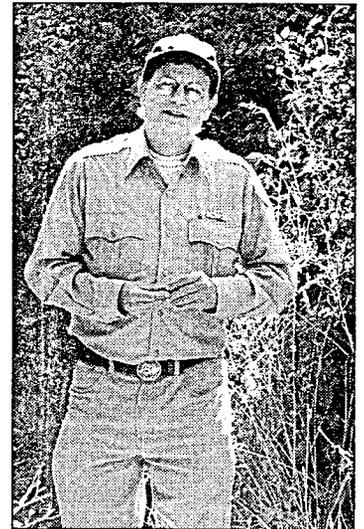
UC Berkeley. By 1972 he was near graduation and figuring he would become a classroom instructor when serendipity struck. He happened to be in the department office where a secretary was typing a letter regarding a part-time opening with the park district.

"I kind of read over her shoulder and copied the phone number," he recalls. He called, then took the No. 7 bus — he didn't have a driver's license — from the campus to the old Civillian Conservation Corps building that once stood near where Tilden's Environmental Education Center is today.

"They took me on a hike and I picked up scat, flowers and insects and talked about them. They said, 'You can start on Saturday.'"

He was hired as an interpretive student aide, then began giving nature programs at the park's new environmental center in 1974. In 1977 he was hired as a naturalist and reas-

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MARK DUFRENE/TIMES

ALAN KAPLAN TAKES one last walk along Packrat Trail in Tilden Park on Tuesday. The naturalist conducted more than 500 bird and nature walks in the park, which he says has changed little in 25 years.

birds," Kaplan says. "A naturalist can find things anywhere. (Tilden) has always been special to me. It's where I first started."

Plus, it's close to home. Ka-



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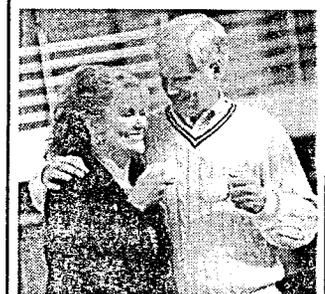
Point Molate Restoration Advisory Board Meeting

The Department of the Navy (Navy) has partnered with environmental agencies and the community to coordinate the environmental restoration and cleanup of Point Molate under the Navy's **Installation Restoration (IR) Program**. The Point Molate **Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)** supports the IR Program. RAB meetings are **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** and are intended to provide an open forum for the community to attend and participate in the IR Program at Point Molate.

Join us on **Wednesday, October 5, 2005, at 7:00 PM** at the **Richmond City Library, Madeline F. Whittlesey Community Room, 325 Civic Center Plaza**, for the next RAB meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Michael Bloom, BRAC Environmental Coordinator, Base Realignment and Closure, Program Management Office – West, San Diego, CA, at (619) 532-0967 or by e-mail at michael.s.bloom@navy.mil

For more information on the Navy's environmental program at Point Molate, please visit the Navy's BRAC web site at: <http://www.navybracpmo.org>



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