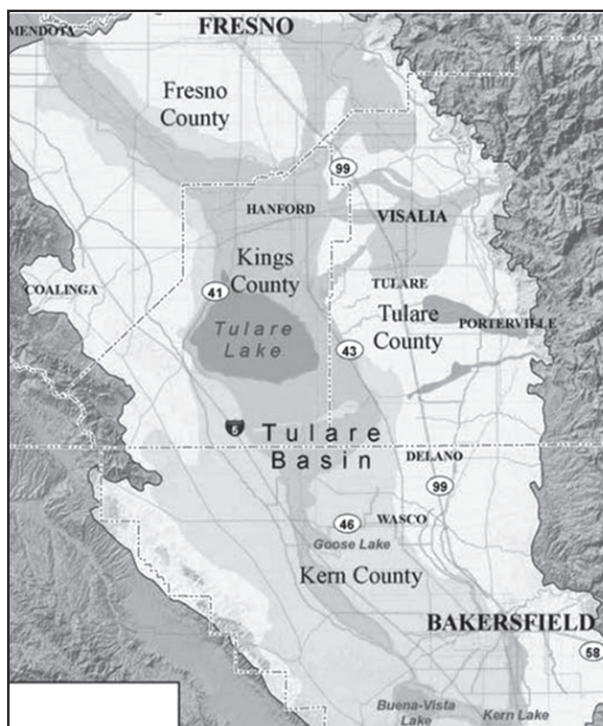


NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA WITH SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY

# When the Valley was Young

By **DOUG BROTEN**  
Sierra Foothill Conservancy docent

I've always been pretty much of a nature nerd, spending weekends and vacations in the mountains. Since retiring, I've started to appreciate the rivers and foothills around us more, and eventually started asking myself, "I wonder what this place looked like before people showed up?" So I decided to find out. [In this series of articles] I will look at the three distinct sections of the Central Valley, starting on the valley floor, moving up into the



Map shows the extent of the former Tulare Lake and Tulare Basin. Tulare Lake dried up after its tributary rivers were diverted for agricultural irrigation and municipal water uses.

foothills, and ending in the mountains.

Let me start with how the Central Valley was formed. In the far distant past, the valley was a big trench in an inland sea surrounded by the growing Coast Range on the west and Sierra Nevada on the east. The "sea water" came from the only opening to the ocean available—what we today call the Delta. Over the millennia, those two mountain ranges eroded as they grew and what had been an extremely deep trench in an inland sea became filled with sediment. Today we call it the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valley.

Once the valley was formed, snow continued to melt, rain continued to fall, and the mountain ranges continued to grow and erode away. What was left is a wide flat plain filled with eroded mountain sediment with several rivers feeding the San Joaquin River as it heads toward the Delta.

The San Joaquin River flows west out of the Sierra, runs past Fresno, heads east to the Coast Range and then makes a big right turn and heads north to the ocean through the Golden Gate. Along the way it is fed by eight other rivers flowing out of the Sierra. It is one of the two major rivers in California. What's less well-known, or at least thought about, is that there are four rivers flowing out of the Sierra south of the San Joaquin River that in most years never reached the ocean.

I can still remember looking at a relief map one day and noticing that the Kings River didn't reach the ocean. Neither did the Kaweah, Tule, or Kern riv-

(NAPSI)—**Simplify your kitchen time.** There are so many delicious recipes that don't keep you working away all day. For an appetizer, snack or dessert option, try these tangy and salty **Feta Herb Bites**, or these sweet and savory **Blueberry Brie Bites**.

### Feta Herb Bites

Servings: 4

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 4 oz cream cheese, at room temperature
- 6 oz herbed feta cheese, at room temperature
- 1 can Lindsay Medium Black Ripe Pitted Olives
- ¾ cup finely crushed walnuts

#### DIRECTIONS:

*In a medium bowl, combine cream cheese and herbed feta cheese. Coat olives with the cheese mix and form them into balls, completely encasing them in the cheese mixture. Roll the balls in the walnut crumbs to lightly coat them. Chill for at least 30 minutes. Let the cheese balls sit at room temperature for a few minutes before serving. Serve with toothpicks.*

### Blueberry Brie Bites

Makes 15 bites

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 box (15-count) mini phyllo shells
- 4 ounces Brie cheese, rind removed
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- ½ teaspoon chopped, fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup

#### DIRECTIONS:

*Preheat oven to 350° F. Arrange phyllo shells on a baking sheet. Cut the Brie into small pieces (about ½-inch). Mix the blueberries, thyme, and maple syrup together in a bowl. Place a piece of cheese in each phyllo shell and top with a spoonful of the blueberry mixture. Bake in the oven 16-18 minutes, until blueberries start to soften and Brie is melted.*

**FAST FACTS:** Fresh blueberries are a source of four essential nutrients: fiber, vitamin C, vitamin K and manganese. One serving—a handful or a cup—contains only 80 calories and naturally occurring sugars. Keep fresh or frozen blueberries on hand to add a quick boost of nutrition to dishes like oatmeal, yogurt, smoothies and sauces.

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Our services are all located outside in shaded cooled areas with fans and water misters.

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In these trying times you need God. He is not sheltered in place. He is available to help you in your time of need.

#### Sunday:

- Bible Study-8:00
- Worship- 9:15
- Evening- 7:00

#### Wednesday:

- Evening-7:00

## CALENDAR

**Aug. 8: Munahoo Market**, 5-8:30pm, Rocktree Center in Auberry.  
**Aug. 10: SUSD board meeting**, 5:30pm on Zoom.  
**Aug. 10: Free food program**, available to all, Big Sandy 2-4/Cold Springs 1-3.  
**Aug. 11: PROFS Raffle** drawing, benefits local kids at Christmas. 841-7002.  
**Aug. 15: Lions paper drive**, Prather PO, 9am-1pm.  
**Aug. 17: Sierra Unified** schools scheduled to open.  
**Aug. 19: Big Creek School** scheduled to open.  
**Aug. 19: Pine Ridge School** scheduled to open.  
**Aug. 29: Trade Days** at Cressman's in Pine Ridge, 9am-4pm.  
**Sept. 14: SUSD board meeting**, 5:30 pm on Zoom.  
**Sept. 26: Trade Days** at Cressman's 9-4.  
**Oct. 17: Lions paper drive**, Prather PO, 9am-1pm.  
**Oct. 31: Trade Days** at Cressman's 9-4.  
**Nov. 7: Lions Club Turkey Shoot**, 30800 Spearhead Road, 349-4308.

**Monthly:**

**Food Bank**, 2nd Saturdays, 9-10 am, Sierra Lutheran Church, 855-8989.  
**MountainWear**, 2nd Saturdays, 9am-2pm, Sierra Elementary Schl bus barn.

## COMMUNITY

*There is no charge for stories about your non-profit organization's community events, or human interest stories such as sports achievements, recognitions and awards, wedding and birth announcements, and obituary notices. Call (559) 855-8100, or email mountainpress@netptc.net*

### Fresh and lively at Munahoo

Munahoo Market will hold its monthly farmers market event on Saturday, August 8 from 5-8:30 pm in Rocktree Center at 32980 Auberry Road in Auberry. There will be fresh produce from local farms and families, delicious food, fresh flowers, crafts and jewelry, soaps and more. Lonesome Jem and the Luna-

tics and the Autumn Leaves will provide live music as well! Come enjoy a night in the community with this outdoor event.

Organizers say, "We look forward to seeing you. Everyone is invited and welcomed! Reminder—do what you need to do to feel safe during this pandemic."

### Help to prevent dog attacks on mail carriers

(NAPSI)—Can you picture a member of your family attacking a mail carrier? Of course, you couldn't, but it happened 5,803 times last year across the nation.

Dearborn, MI, letter carrier Tameka Toliver recalls being pinned on a porch by a dog that bit her above her knee. "It happened so fast, I barely had time to react," Toliver told co-workers. "I'm still scared when I get close to that house because I remember the attack so vividly."

When a dog attacks a mail carrier, the dog owner could be held liable for all medical expenses, repayment of lost work hours, replacement of the uniform and other costs, which can run into thousands of dollars. Here are three simple tips to prevent

dog bite injuries that should be enforced all year round:

**•Door Delivery:** If a carrier delivers packages to your front door, place your dog in a separate room and close that door before opening the front door. Some dogs burst through screen doors or plate-glass windows to attack visitors. Dog owners should keep the family pet secured. Parents should remind their children and other family members not to take mail directly from carriers in the presence of the family pet, as the dog may view the person handing mail to a family member as a threatening gesture.

**•Electronic Fencing:** Carriers may assume, when they see no physical fence around a property, the property is animal-free. This can be a dangerous mistake. Postal of-

### Valley

CONT. FROM PAGE 3

ers. None of these four rivers make that northern turn to the ocean.

I wondered, What happened to all that water? I quickly discovered that the Kings, along with the other rivers were the major sources for what was Tulare Lake.

Many people have heard that Tulare Lake was the largest body of water west of the Mississippi. In a normal year the lake would cover approximately 700,000 acres. What most people don't know is that Tulare Lake was only one of several lakes formed by those four

southern rivers to nowhere: Kern Lake, Buena Vista Lake, Goose Lake and Summit Lake also were formed when Tulare Lake was full.

Tulare Lake was also sometimes empty. In fact, there were years when it totally disappeared. It all depended on the Sierra snowpack. In the last 100 years (when statistics are available), the total annual flow of the Kings River ranged from 380,000 acre feet of water in a drought year to over 4 million acre feet. To give those numbers some perspective, during a drought year the annual flow would only fill 70 percent of Millerton. In a wet year it would fill Millerton eight times over. It was in those drought periods that Tulare Lake disappeared, and drought was not uncommon; about a third of the years in the last century were considered drought years in the Valley. During heavy snow years (about 20 percent of the time), Tulare Lake grew to about 30 miles wide and 50 miles long and a maximum depth of about 40 feet. At that point the lake was overflowing and ran through a series of sloughs in the Lemoore area into the San Joaquin River and out to the ocean.

I am starting with Tulare Lake and rivers because nothing lives without water, and the rivers flowing out of the Sierra allowed life to flourish for thousands of years in the valley.

Next: Where water flows ...

*This series of articles is taken from a research paper written and presented by Doug Broten to a group of individuals who research topics and write papers to share with each other.*

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