

216 Mendocino Coast Route 1/LOST COAST



Photo by Sam Camp

THE LOST COAST

In the morning sun, lovers stand braced, pondering the steep ridges that plunge into the sea to the north, their feet spread apart for sure footing; hands held tight—hearts beating in anticipation of the discovery that lies ahead. They are poised on the edge of the wildest stretch of coastline left in America. Like memories to be, the horizon is out of focus in the mist where sea meets sky. A hundred yards to the north Route 1 takes a sharp turn east and begins a windy ascent along the edge of the Lost Coast. As they make their way to the car each makes a secret wish. They are bound for a weekend of exploration on the Lost Coast. . . .

The 1,100 mile coastline of California is a spectacle of soaring cliffs, teeming wetlands and particularly in the Southland—mile after mile of dazzling beaches. In northern Mendocino County, Route 1 was diverted inland after some 500 miles of shoreline. The road builders had finally encountered an obstacle they didn't care to conquer—the 75 miles of jagged cliffs and unstable mountain slopes of the range known as California's Lost Coast. Here, where the North American Plate grinds over the Pacific Plate it is as if a fist of mountains were thrust straight out of the surf creating 700 foot cliffs so steep they seem to dive into the sea. On the northern boundary of this region lies the King Range National Conservation Area, the monarch of which is King's Peak at 4,087 feet above sea level. To the south lies the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. The Lost Coast is a genetic reservoir for wild plants, grandfather redwood trees and salmon and steelhead runs set amid primitive and haunting beauty. There are colonies of harbor and fur seals, 2 species of sea lion, elephant seals and the West Coast's largest osprey colony. Just south of the Mattole River is Punta Gorda which is as far West as you can go in the lower 48. Here a lighthouse was erected in the early 1900s as fair warning to mariners of this foreboding coastline. The King Range Conservation Area boasts miles of trails, among them the 16 mile King Crest Trail in the central mountains and the Chemise Mountain trail in the southern area.

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Not without its own legends and mystery, tales include Indian raids and massacres, a curse by Native Americans against any white man who would develop their sacred lands, remains of numerous shipwrecks, huge great white sharks off-shore and the picking of the largest abalone in the world. Strange lights on the beaches at night are perhaps will-o-the-wisps or drug smugglers and there have been several UFO sightings over the years. A more moderate hike is along Black Sands Beach north of Shelter Cove to Big Flat. This 8 mile stretch is full of revelation and discovery. Here you can walk or ride a horse.

There are several campsites along the network of trails in the Lost Coast. At the mouth of the Mattole River, the northern Lost Coast trailhead, is drinking water, picnic tables, grills and restrooms (summer only). Past 4 Corners in the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park's 10,000 plus acres are 2 dozen back country campsites located in protected areas in the northern part of the park. The camps are near streams and offer easy access to secluded black sand beaches. Usal Road meanders along the north and east boundaries of Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. The road has changed little since Jack and Charmian London drove it in a horse-drawn carriage on a trip from San Francisco to Eureka in 1911. Clearings and other openings along the route afford spectacular views. The sea is an overwhelming presence here, and its rhythmic sounds provide a thunderous background for a walk along land's end. The sky is filled with flocks of seagulls, brown pelicans and; sea lions and harbor seals gather at Little Jackass Cove and Bear Harbor to feed and breed and avoid killer whales and great white sharks. California gray whale migration passes near the shore during winter and early spring. A herd of Roosevelt elk roams the park at will.

The region supports a tremendous food-chain. Until the last century, the richness of the land made this stretch of California coast one of the most heavily populated Native American regions in North America. One of the last surviving old-growth redwood groves, the Sally Bell Grove, was named in honor of one of the last full-blooded Sinkyone Indians living on the Lost Coast. At Bear Harbor 3 sites provide near-the-ocean camping in a meadow near Bear Harbor Cove, with fire rings, picnic tables and outdoor toilets. The camp is a gentle .4 mile walk from the parking area. At the southern access point to the Sinkyone Wilderness lies Usal Beach where 15 drive-in-sites in forests and meadows offer fire rings, picnic tables, creeks and toilets. The Lost Coast trail, as it travels through Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, provides a strenuous yet rewarding experience. Rangers recommend 2 nights and 3 days to hike the rugged coast between Usal and Bear Harbor.

The Lost Coast is a place to be free. A place for tanned faces and bare feet scampering over rocks and up broad sandy beaches. It's a wonderful setting for a wild love affair. The Lost Coast is also a perfect friend which helps us set limits and honestly mirrors exactly what we project. Prayer and meditation in the wilderness always has a big payoff. The mind is cleared and the body refreshed. Can you imagine a night so quiet that the only sound you hear is each other's heart beating?! And so clear that thousands of stars are winking overhead. For thousands of years some of the grandfather redwood trees have felt little more than the hoof beat of a deer or bare foot of a Native American over their roots. This is a rare wilderness heritage that belongs to all Americans and hopefully will be left in natural solitude for generations to come. . . .

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LOST COAST: How To Get There

Located 200 miles north of San Francisco, there are several ways to enter the Lost Coast Region. From the north you can enter from Highway 101 through the Victorian community of Ferndale and proceed south to Petrolia and into the King Range National Conservation Area. Lighthouse Road leads to the mouth of the Mattole River and the Lost Coast trailhead. Farther south along the Avenue of the Giants at Weott, where the South Fork of the Eel joins the Eel River, you can exit Highway 101 and head westward through Honeydew and along Wilder Ridge Road/Horse Mountain Road to Shelter Cove Road and into Shelter Cove. From here the shoreline of King Range lies to the north and the Sinkyone Wilderness shoreline to the south. Shelter Cove can also be reached by turning west off Highway 101 at Garberville through Redway and Briceland and along Shelter Cove Road. To reach Bear Harbor and Usal Beach from the north you can come from either Shelter Cove or Whithorn to the 4 Corners. Camping and accommodations are available at Bear Harbor and in the Etter Cabin. (Visitor Information Center - P.O. Box 245, Whithorn, CA 95489). From Westport at the south you can take the unmarked turnoff just past Cottoneva Creek. Two tenths of a mile past the creek bridge you'll spot cryptic messages spray painted on the blacktop at the entrance of a dirt road. Usal Beach lies 8 miles into the Sinkyone Wilderness and Bear Harbor another 30 miles.

What to Bring:

Drinking water, dry matches, flashlight, comfortable bedding, warm clothing or rain gear, swimming suit, hatchet or knife, camera and film, critter proof food containers, litter bag, a clear mind and someone you love. With fishing and foraging gear you can harvest the bounty this wilderness has to offer for extended stays.

Driving Conditions:

Driving time is greatly extended and 4 minute miles (15-20 mph) are common. The roads are often narrow one lane washboards with deep ruts cut by the winter rains. Great clouds of dust blow up behind the car and it's a real test to keep the dust out of even airtight vehicles. It's best not to bring a good car over these roads; and be sure you have a full tank of gas, extra oil (if necessary) and good tires and brakes! The Pacific storms bring down weakened trees and snags and torrents of water cut gullies into the roadbed. Derelict boulders and slides often block the way. You can literally become sealed in on the Lost Coast during a storm unless you have an all-terrain vehicle with a winch, and/or plow and chain saw.

Hazards:

Camp raiders range from squirrels and blue jays to fox, raccoons and bear. There have been more reports of bears attacking campsites than great white sharks attacking divers or surfers. Encounters along the trails with ground bees, poison oak, stinging nettle, blackberry thorns and thistle can be painful. Watch out for crumbling cliffines and be wary of being trapped against cliffs by incoming high tides (bring and heed a Tide Table Book!). Be sure to watch out for rattlesnakes in the rocks and driftwood.

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Things to Do:

Off-shore in a boat you can fish for salmon, ling cod, Pacific snapper or shark and dive for abalone. In shallow sandy bottom waters crab pots can be rigged for dungeness and rock crab. From outcroppings and cliffs you can fish for ocean perch or rock fish and surf net on beaches for night and surf fish. On the Mattole and Eel Rivers steelhead, salmon and trout can be caught. At low tide you can shore and tide pool pick abalone, periwinkle, limpets, mussels and seaweed. Wave, sea lion and whale watching are popular pastimes. You can also surf, open ocean kayak, hang glide, rock climb, beach comb, swim and sunbathe. Inland there is nature crafting and foraging for wild edible plants, flowers and mushrooms; including wild mint, watercress, cat tails, nursturtions, chantrelles, blackberries and wild strawberries. Dozens of varieties of wild life may be encountered including Roosevelt Elk, deer, mountain, bobcat, fox and porcupine. Over 300 varieties of birds inhabit the shoreline, inland prairies and forests.

It is quite a life experience to hike the entire Lost Coast trail. Organized outings are available through a variety of groups and organizations year-around.

Amenities Within 2 to 6 Hours of the LOST COAST:

There are restaurants, motels or bed & breakfast inns and general stores at Ferndale, Garberville, Redway, Shelter Cove, Leggett and Westport. Petrolia and Honeydew also have general stores with gasoline and Briceland has a small winery (**Briceland Vineyards**). I especially recommend a visit to Shelter Cove, located in the heart of the Lost Coast Region, which offers fine seafood restaurants, motels, a couple bed & breakfast inns, a campground and fishing harbor. In Westport you can breakfast & lunch at the **Westport Inn**, dinner at the **DeHaven Valley Farm** and snack food at the **Westport Community Store**. The **Lost Coast Inn** offers beer, wine and espresso. The **De Haven Valley Farm, Howard Creek Ranch, Lost Coast Inn** and **Westport Motel** offer bed & breakfast accommodations. You can wine taste south of Westport at **Pacific Star Winery**. (See the Westport section in this book).

Check search engines for "Lost Coast Outings or Adventures" and the California State Park System for outings. There is an excellent map to the "Trails of the Lost Coast" which can be purchased by writing: Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, P.O. Box 245, Whithorn, CA 95489 or call (707) 986-7711.

SHELTER COVE STORES and ATTRACTIONS

\$\$-\$\$\$ **Shelter Cove General Store**, 7272 Shelter Cove Road 986-7733.

\$\$\$ **Lost Coast Day Spa**, 435 Melville Road, Garberville, CA 95542

\$ **Lost Coast Trail Transport Service**, P.O. Box 248, Whitethorn, CA 95589

986-9909 providing chartered transport service to trailheads of the Lost Coast

Trail in the King Range National Conservation Area and the Sinkyone Wilderness

State Park. \$ **Robin Squire-Shuttle Service** 285 Beach Rd., Whitethorn, CA

95589 923-3184, Shuttle service to the trailheads of the Lost Coast trails.

COMMUNITY RADIO: KMUD 91.1 F.M., P.O. Box 135, Redway, 923-2513,

Save the Eel River Giftshop 665A Redwood Drive, Garberville, CA

9554923-2146 www.eelriver.org (also see www.farmedanddangerous.org)

E.P.I.C. P.O. Box 397 Garberville, CA 95542 923-2931 (Environmental

Protection Information Center); **Save the Redwoods League** 114 Sansome,

San Francisco, CA 94104 415-362-2352

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GARBERVILLE: Redwood Highway (Highway 101)

INTERNET ACCESS

Besides your local Motel or Bed & Breakfast try:

Treats Cafe 764 Redwood Dr., Garberville 923-3554
Open 9am-6pm

Humboldt Library
715 Cedar, Garberville
Open Mon-Sat. 923-2230



Pictured is the main street of Garberville which is a mountain community at the 1,200 foot elevation in southern Humboldt County. Lots of good restaurants and a variety of lodging here. To the west is the Lost Coast and Shelter Cove and to the north are the 1,000+ year old redwood trees of the Avenue of the Giants.

GARBERVILLE - REDWAY DINING: Telephone Area Code (707)

Note: Redwood Dr. is in Garberville \$ **Bagels Naturally**, 817 Redwood Dr., 923-2939; \$\$\$ **Brass Rail**, P.O. Box 225, Redway, 923-3188; \$-\$\$\$ **Cadillac Wok**, 373 Sprowel Creek Rd., Garberville, 923-2343; \$\$\$ **Calico Deli & Trattoria**, 808 Redwood Dr., 923-2253; **Chautaugua Natural Foods**, 436 Church St., Garberville, 923-2452; **Getti Up drive-in & espresso**, 894 Redwood Dr., Garberville, 923-7231; \$-\$\$\$ **Mateel Café**, 3342-3344 Redwood Dr., Redway, 923-2030; \$-\$\$\$ **Nacho Mama**, 375 Sprowel Creek Rd., Garberville, 923-1440; \$-\$\$\$ **Pergamino Espresso**, (by Dazer's Supply in Redway) 3082 Redwood Dr., 923-2112; \$-\$\$\$ **Paradise Grill**, 770 Redwood Drive, Garberville, 923-3551; \$\$\$ **707 Restaurant**, 773 Redwood Dr., 923-7007; \$\$\$ **Sicilito's**, 445 Conger St., Garberville, 923-2814; \$-\$\$\$ **Signature Coffee**, P.O. Box 1789, Redway, 923-2661; \$\$\$ **Treats**, 764 Redwood Dr., 923-3554; \$-\$\$\$ **Waterwheel Restaurant**, 924 Redwood Dr., 923-2031; **Woodrose Cafe**, 911 Redwood Dr., Garberville, 923-3191.

GARBERVILLE - REDWAY LODGING:

\$\$\$-\$\$\$ **Benbow Inn, Restaurant & Bar** 445 Lake Benbow Dr., Garberville, 923-2124 \$\$ **Benbow Valley RV Resort & Golf Course**, 7000 Benbow Dr., Garberville 923-2777; \$\$ **Dean Creek Resort**, P.O. Box 157 Redway, 923-2555; \$\$ **Humboldt House Inn**, 701 Redwood Dr., Garberville, 923-2771 \$\$ **Humboldt Redwoods Inn**, 987 Redwood Drive, Garberville, 923-2451; \$\$ **Lone Pine Motel**, 912 Redwood Dr., Garberville, 923-3520; \$ **Richardson Grove R.V. Park & Campground**, 750 U.S. Hwy 101, Garberville, 247-3380; \$\$ **Sherwood Forest Motel**, 814 Redwood Dr. Garberville, 923-2721.

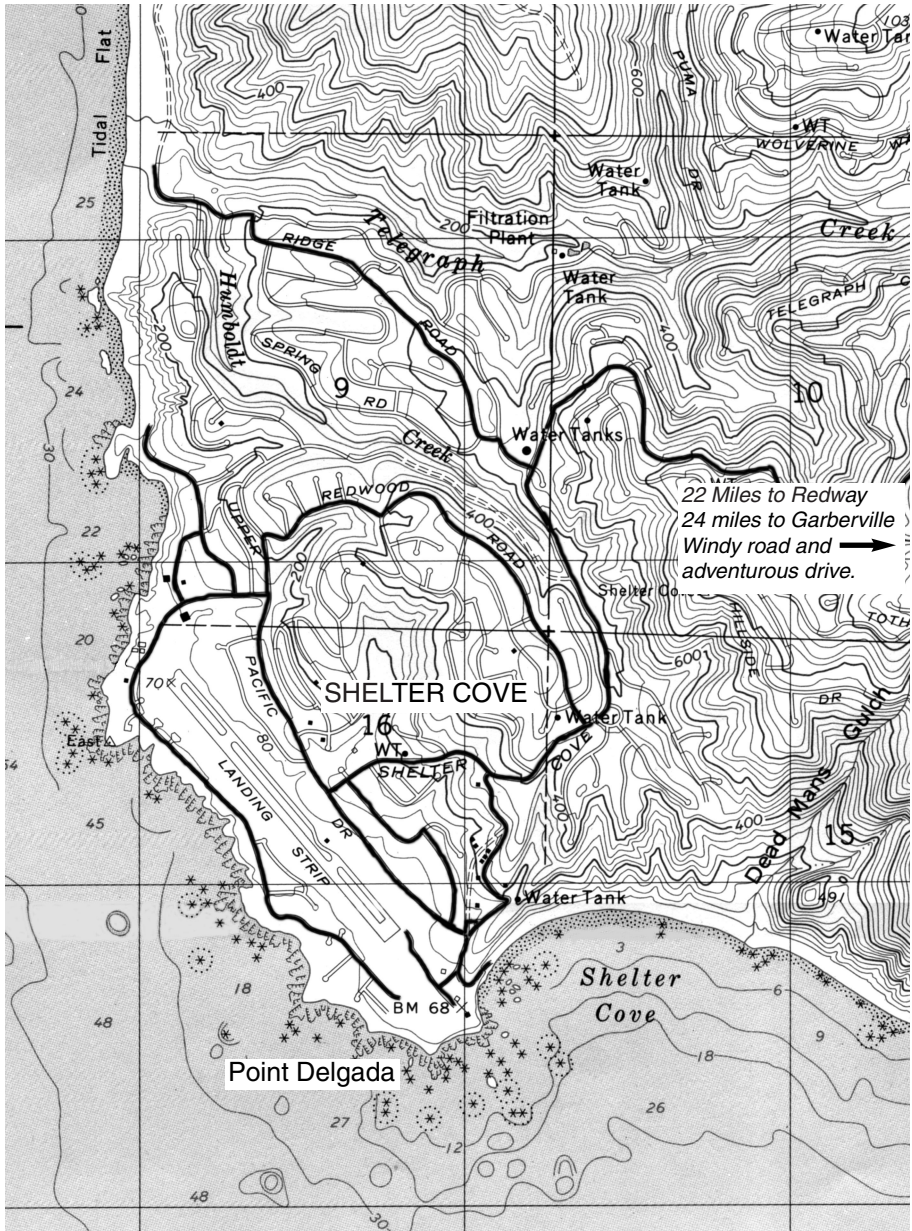
FARMERS MARKET

\$-\$\$\$ **Southern Humboldt Farmers Market**, P.O. Box 218, Redway, CA 95560 923-3590. Southern Humboldt Farmers Market June through October Garberville on Fridays 11-3, Redway on Tuesdays 3-6. 923-3590. Locally grown.

VISIT ALTERNATIVE ENERGY ENGINEERING www.alt-energy.com
AEE, 1155 Redway Dr., Redway, CA 95560 866-717-6527 (707) 923-3009

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SINKYONE WILDERNESS and KING RANGE CONSERVATION AREA



SHOWING SHELTER COVE and SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

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LEFT: Shelter Cove Harbor and beach. TOP: Shelter Cove Lighthouse which is a great place to wave and whale watch. BELOW: A musician plays at the Chart House.

SHELTER COVE EXPERIENCE

After dark the grove feels like an ancient Indian village with firelight dancing in the towering trees. The crackle and pop of wood and the scent of fresh brewed coffee and home cooked dinner is carried on the breeze. Firelight flickers in loving eyes. Above the strength and stillness of century old giants a thousand stars twinkle overhead. The lullaby of ocean waves break on an ancient beach. Only God knows how many wild hearts are beating as one tonight.

SHELTER COVE DINING

\$\$ Cove Restaurant, 10 Seal Court, Shelter Cove, CA 95589 In this oceanfront complex the Cove Restaurant serves fresh seafood, steaks, pasta and vegetarian entrees. 986-1197

Reservations The Cove Restaurant features local artwork and Live Music Every Weekend. You can park your airplane across the street and walk to lunch! Winter Hours are: Thursday thru Saturday 11:30am - 9:00pm, Sunday 11:30am - 8:30pm

\$\$ Chart House, 210 Wave Drive, Shelter Cove, 986-9696

\$\$ Mario's Marina Restaurant Shelter Cove 986-1401 Reservations

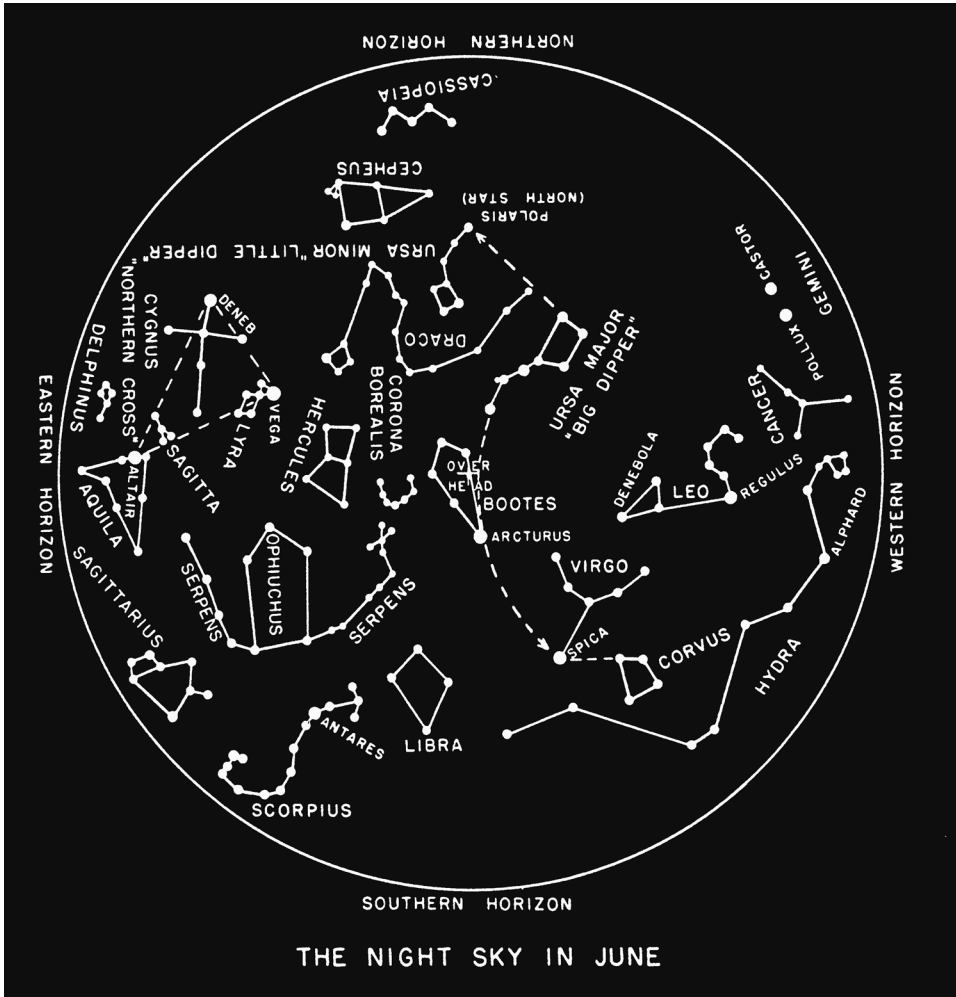


SHELTER COVE LODGING

\$\$\$-\$\$\$ Ashbrook Inn, Bed & Breakfast 578 Hillside Dr., Shelter Cove, 986-7109; **\$\$ Inn of the Lost Coast** Motel Rooms, 205 Wave Drive Shelter Cove, 888-570-9676 Pets Welcome \$10 Seasonal Rates **\$\$\$-\$\$\$ Lighthouse Inn** 62 Seal Court Shelter Cove 986-7002 **\$\$ Mario's Marina** has a restaurant and nine-unit motel in addition to trailer units with kitchens. Restaurant: 986-1401 Motel: 986-7595; **\$\$ Ocean Front Inn** 26 Seal Court, Shelter Cove, Luxury Beachfront Accommodations 986-7002; **\$\$ Shelter Cove Ocean Inn** 148 Dolphin Drive, Shelter Cove, 986-7161; **\$\$\$ Shelter Cove Beachcomber Inn**, 412 Machi Rd., Shelter Cove, 986-7551; **\$ Shelter Cove RV & Campground**, 100 Trailer & RV's sites. 986-7474.

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**LOST COAST TRANSFORMATION
DREAM and STAR WATCH and be IN LOVE**

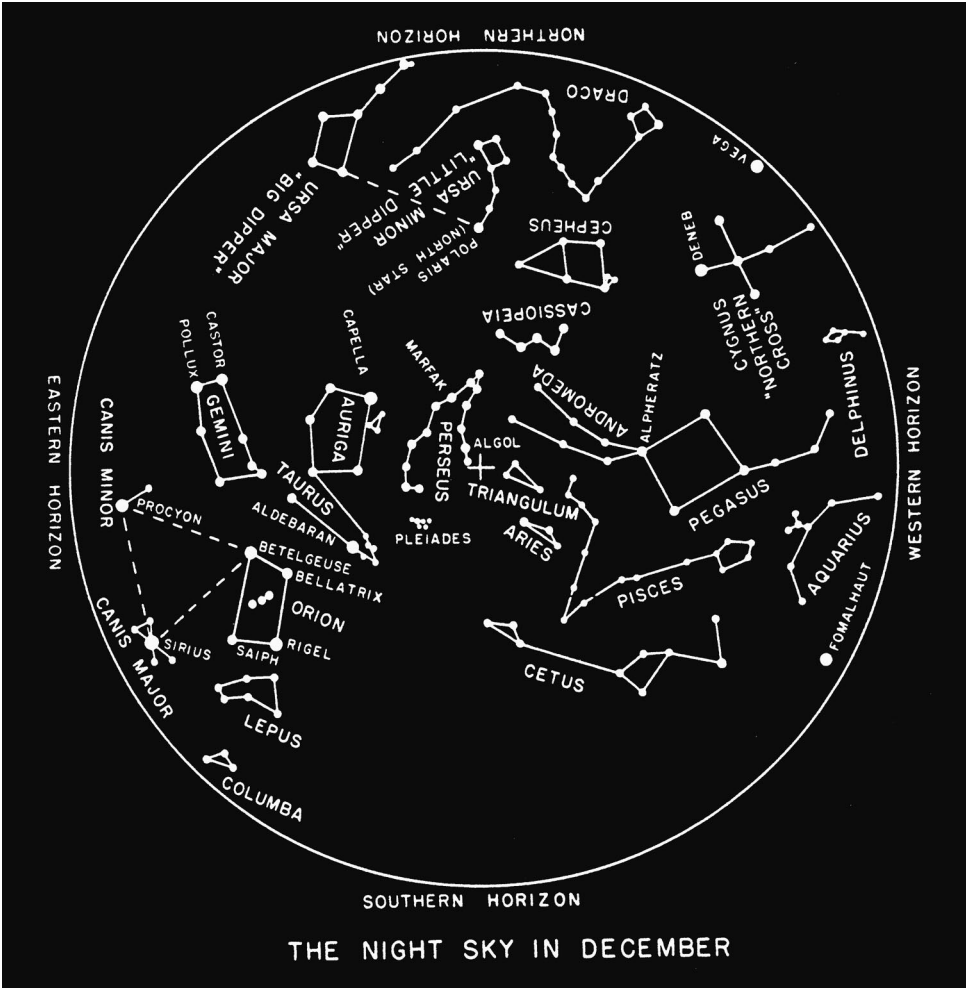


The summer sky above northern California offers views of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major), the Little Dipper (Ursa Minor) and the North Star (Polaris). You can always find true north by locating the Little Dipper.

On any given night up to 15,000 stars can be viewed in a sky unhampered by outdoor lighting. Only about 10% of the USA's population experiences these conditions regularly. Protecting dark skies is as vital as protecting the clarity of the light, pure air, living water, organic-GMO free foods, wildlife and the sounds of nature. Our bodies and souls need these connections to heal and restore sanity. Everyone should be able to see the stars and planets at night. It lessens our fears and promotes good will. Over the past 40 years millions of lights in cities and even in the countryside cause problems for

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LOST COAST TRANSFORMATION
DREAM and STAR WATCH and be IN LOVE



The winter sky above northern California offers views of the Big and Little Dipper as well as the North Star. A special winter time treat is a view of the Pleiades (the Seven Sisters) and Orion.

star watchers. Corporations that promote fear make millions of dollars blocking out the night sky. If you want to promote a love of viewing twinkling stars against a darkened sky at night, then simple encourage your neighbors and communities to install outdoor lights that face downward. There are a number of highly spirited astronomical organizations and movements that can help you. A vigorous leader is the British Astronomical Society and their Campaign for Dark Skies. An example of a small community that lives with dark starlight skies at night is the historically preserved seaside town of Mendocino. Visit the shop Out of This World at www.discounttelescopes.com

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There were times in this country when wilderness emergencies were far more serious than they are today. If you become lost today, there is a very good chance you will be found within a short period of time. Search and rescue teams are trained and on standby with rescue dogs, horses, planes and helicopters 24 hours per day. Because of satellites and intensive mapping, every square mile of the planet is now known. There are people who are addicted to finding "lost people" and are good at it. However, in times of a major disaster resources will be stressed and you may have to be on your own for some time. Savvy search and rescue teams are now using teams of dowers, psychics and remote viewers to narrow the search pattern and dramatically increase the odds of survival. You must also do your part to be rescued. There is nothing more important than getting your loved ones back or at least having closure over their fate. Pictured are Coast Guard and CDF search and rescue teams. They are true heroes who risk their lives to rescue your loved ones.

Survival is an attitude. We have all faced challenges in our lives of varying degrees. One of the first steps is to still the mind to get your wits about you so you can place yourself in a more comfortable situation. Every problem has a solution and every challenge has a way out. You have already faced millions of challenges and solved millions of problems in your life. Remember, pain and pleasure are two of the most powerful sensations we are exposed to. We bounce back and forth between these two day to day, moment to moment. A life threatening environmental challenge such as an earthquake, flood, fire or volcano presents an agenda for immediate attention and release of energy. If you are somewhat prepared with a travelers survival kit and have trained yourself for such situations by taking camping trips you are in a much better comfort zone to manage pain and pleasure. What is your current comfort zone? Are you in denial that such things cannot happen to you? When its your turn to face such a challenge what will you do?

You don't have to be lost in the wilderness or country to be in a survival situation. You can be totally unprepared and lack training for all kinds of scenarios, but if your mind is clear and your attitude is good you will survive. Some people can go into the wilderness with a knife and loin cloth and come out fat weeks later. Others can go into a city full of restaurants and grocery stores and come out broke and hungry. Think about it. What really counts in your life? Remember - survival is an attitude!

As you go about your life establish check in times with trusted friends and loved ones from time to time so that if you don't show up they will know to look for you. Before you go into the wilderness always let someone know when you expect to return, where you are going in and where you plan to come out. If you suddenly feel lost then do something to center your thoughts such as take a few deep breaths, sing a song, splash water on your face or build a fire. This gives you something to accomplish while you get your nerves in order and builds confidence.

The majority of people who go outdoors, even house potatoes and desk-bound workers are tougher physically than they think they are. That is, if they control their mental state and use careful and practiced judgement to arrive at a sensible, cautious course of action. You can live longer than you think without food or on very little. Most people don't know their limits so it is important to practice them and use discipline. Fasting is a good experiment to conduct on yourself. Get to know yourself by spending time alone, because ultimately you'll be responsible for saving yourself and perhaps others. Are you afraid of being outside on a dark starlit night? Do you get light headed at altitude or heights? What plants and foods are you allergic to? What happens to your feet on a long hike? Begin to feel at home. Remember - when you are lost you are only temporarily removed from the place where you feel the most comfortable. Nobody ever really gets lost - it is simply a state of mind. Get to know yourself and your immediate environment. Get to know Planet Earth.