

Discover a trail: Mary Lake Park and Trail offer quiet retreat

By Arlene B. Kallis Special to the Record Searchlight

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Note to readers: This is the first in an occasional series exploring area trails.

Mary Lake Trail provides an ideal trail for a quick jog before work, a leisurely walk around the lake with kids and dogs, a way to meet new neighbors, or a place to enjoy a beautiful evening sunset.

There's even a number of picnic tables around to enjoy a bag lunch or a good book while watching the ducks and geese on the lake.

Everyone I met on this trail was quick to say it's a great trail. Brook New, a nearby resident, was walking mid-morning with her two kids and said they go for a walk about once a week and enjoy seeing the big turtles.

Tom Prout, from the Juniper area, was there walking his black Labrador retriever and said what he likes about this trail is it's so peaceful, the people are friendly and it's beautiful to watch the scenery change around the lake with the changing of the seasons.

Walking on this pleasant, paved loop you are likely to see lots of geese and ducks, quail, turtles, a beaver lodge and many songbirds including red-wing black birds singing in the marshy areas among the cattails. Local residents say Mary Lake was home to a number of playful otters up until a few years ago.

Blackberries are plentiful, providing a tasty snack in the summer, and there are frequent tree-shaded areas along the trail to keep hikers cooler on a hot day in Redding.

Of historical interest is the fact that Mary Lake is a man-made lake created in 1861 during the gold-mining era, built as a reservoir for the 40-mile-long plus Clear Creek ditch. In those days it was named Falkes Lake after gold-miner August Falkes, who operated a store in the area.

Mary Lake Trail also offers a paved connection to the more extensive Westside Trails system. Just follow the signs connecting to Kilkee Drive where you will find the trail head at the end of the street.

Details

Type of trail: Hiking and biking trail

Length: 3/4 mile loop around Mary Lake

Terrain: Flat and paved all the way around the lake

Restrooms: No

Amenities: Drinking water, picnic tables, viewing benches

Park Area: 30 acres

Dogs: Yes, with leash requirements

Location: 1696 Lakeside Drive, West Redding, close to Mary Lake, West Gate, Rolling Hills and Kil Dara Ridge neighborhoods

Access: Mary Lake can be accessed from Placer Street, turning onto Mary Lake Drive, or from Buenaventura turning onto Lakeside Drive



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