



Coast Range Chronicles 13: “Creepers”

by

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The surf spot is located along a rural stretch of coast amidst artichoke and pumpkin farms. There’s a dirt parking lot and a trail leading to the beach. The lot is littered with broken glass. Car break-ins are frequent. Assorted creepers perpetually lurk in the coyote brush around the parking lot.

The creepers are junkies and miscellaneous derelicts with back-stories eliciting varying degrees of sympathy or lack thereof but they all have one thing in common: dogs. They all have a dog. Every one of them. The dogs always look healthier than the owners.

Identifying the source of the break-ins does not require intensive mathematical modeling or cold-eyed detective work.

The surf spot is a fine wave breaking in a scenic cove and there’s a sprawling marsh to appreciate while walking to and from the ocean. Willow and tule and cattail grow in the freshwater upstream, saltgrass and pickleweed near the brackish outlet.

Coastal scrub covers the bluffs like shag carpet. Harriers, turkey vultures, hawks, kites, and kestrels weave and soar. The wave is great and the scene is gorgeous.

It would be perfect if not for the creepers.