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Moraga under water?

By Vera Kochan

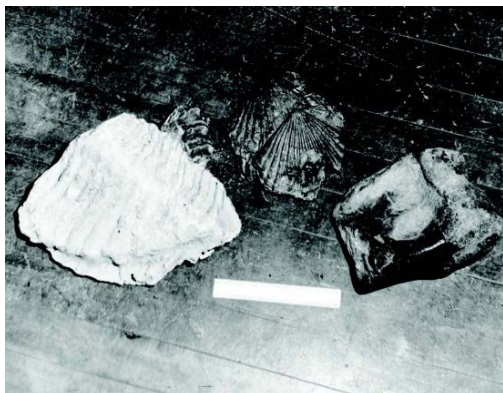


Photo Bob Yost From left, hip bone of mastodon, scallop shell, lower molar of mastodon compared to a six-inch ruler. Fossils discovered in Bollinger Canyon cliffs.

According to an article by Moraga historian Gladys Shally, "The oldest known fossils in the Bay Area are microscopic animals, known as radiolaria, and are found in marine deposits." While drilling for an oil well in Lafayette brought up rock specimens rather than oil, the specimens contained radiolaria with an age date "estimated at 40 to 50 million years old."

Shally continues, "Ancient sediments found in the Burton area, in Bollinger Canyon and Las Trampas Ridge, contain fossils of clams, snails, scallops, sand dollars etc. Even a whale vertebra was found near Rheem."

One of the best fossil beds still lies in the Moraga Bluffs where, due to volcanic action, wave ripples that once lay along the ancient lake's perimeter, have been upended to form sandstone cliffs or walls.

So, the next time it rains three inches in 24 hours remember, it could've been worse.

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