

Porcupines a rare find in Sierra

By Alex Breitler, Stockton Record

It is one of the most recognizable creatures wandering our woods.

But in more than 50 years exploring the Sierra Nevada, Steve Stocking has spotted the squat, prickly porcupine perhaps three times.

“One was, maybe, 10 or 15 years ago. But I haven’t seen any recently,” said Stocking, an outdoor enthusiast who lives in San Andreas and volunteers at Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

The slow-moving rodent – once despised for snacking on valuable timber – is a rare find in the Sierra Nevada these days, according to an unscientific survey by a Twain Harte-based environmental group.

The group asked thousands of people to report porcupine sightings last year, across millions of acres of public and private land from Lake Tahoe to the southern Sierra.

Only 14 living porcupines were spotted waddling across roads or clinging to trees.

[Read the whole story](#)