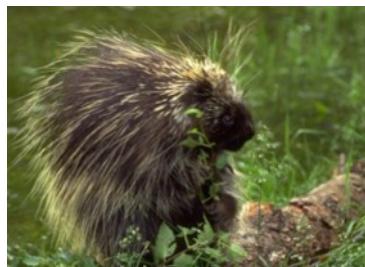


Middle Elevation Forest: Chinquapin Band

Porcupine / Kaschiip / *Erethizon dorsatum*



Gerald and Buff Corsi © California Academy of Sciences

Cultural Importance

Kaschiip's quills are used by Karuk people in the production of basketry and regalia. Ideally the quills are harvested via non-lethal methods, and then the porcupine is re-released. Kaschiip has historically held important ecological roles as a species that maintains oaks woodlands and reduces conifer encroachment, and as important prey for the Pacific fisher. The Karuk Tribe aims to restore a healthy local porcupine population, which may in turn assist the recovery of other habitats and species. (Karuk DNR 2010)

Life Cycle & Habitat

Kaschiip depends on early seral, hardwood/forb dominated, and post-fire habitats in summer, while relying on coniferous stands in winter. During the winter, Kaschiip commonly dens in congregations in rock outcroppings. The porcupine diet consists of herbaceous plants, twigs, and particularly in the winter, coniferous bark and needles. As a result of habitat loss, naturally low reproductive rates, and former Federal and State eradication programs to protect timber harvests, porcupines are now rare in much of California. (Karuk DNR 2010, Lewis 1993, Sweitzer 2012, Yocom 1971)

Kaschiip and Fire

While kaschiip inhabits and can thrive in post-fire habitats, high severity burn areas that significantly reduces vegetative cover and potentially destroys entire coniferous stands can affect survivability by increasing chances of predation and reducing their winter food supply.

Effects of High Severity Fire Across Time

Immediate	2-Year	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire may kill individuals who are unable to escape • Reduced vegetative cover resulting from fire may increase chances of porcupine predation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter porcupine habitat and diet may be compromised by the burning of entire coniferous stands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High severity burned watershed with little cover or foraging vegetation can reduce porcupine habitat quality.
Sources: Band 1996	Sources: Band 1996	Sources:

Effects of Karuk Cultural Burning Across Time

Immediate	2-Year	Long-Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale patch burning reduces the threat of mortality to individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-fire habitats that are critical to porcupine can be promoted using low-intensity burns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural burning regimes foster landscape patch diversity of multi-aged and diverse forests.
Sources:	Sources:	Sources:

Effects of Federal Fire Management Strategies on Species' Climate Change and Fire Resilience

Prior to Fire	During Fire	After Fire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suppression practices make scarce the post-fire habitats that are important to kaschiip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire exclusion practices that increase tree density and fuel loads threaten beneficial fire-vegetation diversity, increase drought stress and fire risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive high severity burn areas reduce habitat quality for porcupines and dispersal/foraging.
Sources:	Sources:	Sources: