

Looking at this California ranch land, in a hot summer day it is easy to think can live out here. Yet when these shallow depression fill with water from the winter rain a myriad of life spring into existence, including the California Tiger Salamander. One of the more unusual inhabitants of this California Vernal pools, is the Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp. A federally listed endangered species that has lived virtually unchanged for 2 million years. With a medieval looking shell, 30 pairs of legs , and the ability to complete its life cycle in less than a month.

The vernal pool Tadpole Shrimp will lay its eggs that will survive in the hot dry mud of the vernal pool when the water is gone, ready to spring into life , the next winter when more rain comes to fill the shallow depression with rain water.

Today nearly 75% of California vernal pools have disappeared. It is only with our help and cooperation that this 2 million year old species will survive to dazzle and delight new generation of people of California.