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By: Walter Fry, In Charge
Nature Guide Service
Sequoia National Park

COPPERHEADS IN SEQUOIA - BUT SQUIRRELS, NOT SNAKES
GOLDEN-MANTLED GROUND SQUIRREL

The Sierra Golden-Mantled Ground Squirrel, commonly called "Copperhead" from the copper coloring on the head, inhabits elevations of 6,000 feet and above in the High Sierra of California. This strikingly marked and attractive little animal is found in abundance at Giant Forest, Sequoia National Park, and furnishes material for interesting study to the scientists and visitors at the park.

The presence of these animals was first noted in the Giant Forest Camp during the summer season of 1906, when two of the species (one pair) established their residence and reared five of their young under the Government barn in the camp. Since that time they have increased rapidly in number in the camp and in the surrounding forest. When treated with kindness, they soon become very tame, and many campers make pets of them and regularly feed them at table.

They prefer rock piles and old logs for places of refuge. Under these they burrow and rear their young, which are usually five or six in number and are born between the middle of May and first of July; the young have similar marking of pelage to that of the adults, but are somewhat lighter in color, with hairs longer and coarser.

Their principal food is many kinds of seeds, nuts, succulent plants, mushrooms, plant bulbs which grow near the surface, and a few varieties of insects.

They go into winter quarters about the latter part of October or first of November, and remain in hibernation until about the first of March of the following year.

The Golden-Mantled Squirrel's worst enemy is the Sierra Least Weasel, and many of their number fall victim to that graceful and vicious little animal which, however, by destroying rats and mice makes some amends for his raids on the squirrels.

So, watch for the little animal with the copper-colored head, whose friendly disposition and degree of intelligence is bound to win your admiration and respect.