

ICE AGE MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE OF THE BAY AREA

Fossil plant remains indicate that during the last Ice Age, the climate in the San Francisco Bay area was not much different than it is today. Both then and now the bay area had a Mediterranean climate, characterized by warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. However, Ice Age winters in the bay area were probably longer, a bit wetter and slightly cooler than present winters. In effect the Ice Age climate of the bay area was similar to the present climate of Eureka, in Northern California. Today, Brewer spruce, a conifer tree that cannot tolerate summer drought, grows in Oregon and northernmost California, and its absence from the Ice Age flora of the bay area indicates summers were dry at that time, as they are today. During the Ice Age, oaks and redwoods were rare in the bay area, but are common today. Fossil redwood remains from the Labrea tar pits in the Los Angeles basin indicate the Ice Age climate of Southern California was similar to the present climate of the San Francisco bay area.

ICE AGE FOSSIL PLANT REMAINS OF THE BAY AREA

COMMON:	INCENSE CEDAR (LEAVES) CYPRESS (WOOD, LEAVES) MARSH PLANTS (SEEDS) DOUGLAS FIR (NEEDLES) JUNIPER SHRUBS (NEEDLES) PINE (NEEDLES) OAKS (POLLEN)
RARE:	REDWOOD (POLLEN, WOOD)
MISSING:	BREWER SPRUCE

DERIVED ICE AGE MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE OF THE BAY AREA

WINTERS: COOL, WET, LONG

SUMMERS: DRY, SHORT