

Are banana slugs native to this [Foothills] park?

Yes. Banana slugs are native to the Pacific Northwest as far south as Central California; therefore they are native to Foothills Park. Banana Slugs like wet forested areas i.e.: redwood groves and riparian corridors (streams/creeks).

It can grow 8 – 10 inches in length, and color can range from butter yellow to almost brown. Banana Slugs are the second largest slug in the world, growing up to 10 inches long. They get their name because very often their coloring resembles a banana, bright yellow body with black spots. They can change their color slightly over time, becoming more intense or paler as the light, moisture and food allows.

Slugs are slimy for a reason (actually several reasons): the slime helps them move along on the ground, slugs breathe, partially, through their skin slime helps them exchange gasses, the slime tastes bad many predators will spit them out, when it is time for the slug to mate the slime contains pheromones that help slugs find each other. If a slug has climbed up high they can descend on a slime rope.

Banana Slugs eat a wide variety of vegetation on the forest floor: lichen, algae, roots and fungi.

Banana slugs may mate several times a year, baby banana slugs are born ready to go and are not cared for by their parents.

The Banana Slug is the official mascot of UC Santa Cruz.