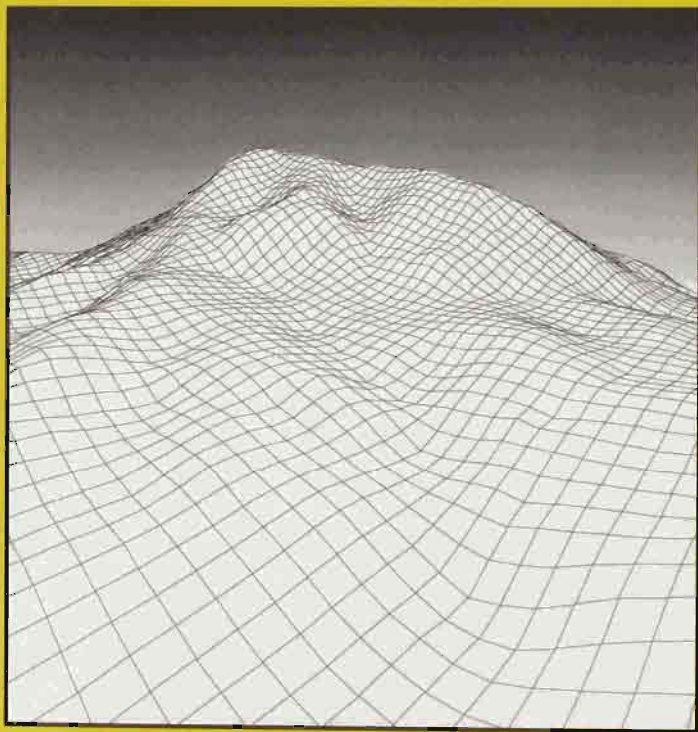


\$6.00

*A Guide to*  
***Trails in the  
Corvallis Area***



*Phillip R. Hays*

**Corvallis** \ kòr-val'lis \ n : a remarkable little town nestled in the eastern foothills of a rather unremarkable range of mountains on a small blue planet far out in the unfashionable end of the Western Spiral arm of the galaxy. The planet is called Earth, for no apparent reason. The mountains are known as the Coast Range, so named because of their proximity to the coast -- isn't that clever?

The town is remarkable for two reasons. The first is the people, who are among the most highly educated human populations in the galaxy. One unfortunate side effect of being so highly educated is that the people must thoroughly examine every subject, no matter how simple, before arriving at a decision. Say, for example, they should want to know the sum of  $2+2$ . First they must debate the existence of the first 2. If it is determined reasonable that this 2 exists, then the second is given equal study. Satisfied that both 2s actually exist, and are capable of being added, they will then launch into a deep investigation of whether or not addition is the desirable method of arriving at the sum. Having decided that addition is proper, they then perform the task, arrive at an answer, and hire a consultant to check the results. The consultant then reports that their answer is correct, but that they could have accomplished the same result by shifting the first 2 left two places and then dividing by the second. Immediately after the people proudly announce their answer, the local chapter of the Knights Who Say No publish a flyer describing in great detail why the answer is wrong, and file a lawsuit requiring the City to correct the mistake. Eventually the people tire of waiting for their government to find an answer, and on a sunny spring morning a group of volunteers gathers, solves the problem in a few minutes over coffee and croissants, and goes out for a hike to enjoy the day.

The other remarkable thing about this particular small town is the extensive network of trails that have appeared in the surrounding hills, fields and marshes. The people of Corvallis spend a lot of time hiking.

**A Guide to**

**Trails in the**

**Corvallis Area**

Phillip R. Hays

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*A Guide to Trails in the Corvallis Area* is a sequel to the earlier book *A Guide to Hiking in the Corvallis Area* (1986) by Phillip R. Hays

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## **Preface**

I have tried to make the contents of this book as accurate as possible, although perfect accuracy is very improbable. I have walked all of the roads and trails described in the text, most of them many times, and I think my descriptions are accurate. However, even though I have attempted to express my ideas unambiguously, because we come from different backgrounds, and possibly different cultures, you may get a different meaning from my words than I intended. Proceed with caution. If you become uncertain where you are, and cannot determine your location on the maps, turn back before you get lost! The trails will still be there the next time you are ready for an outing.

The maps are based upon US Geological Survey 7.5 minute series topographic maps. Elevation and line (road, stream, etc.) information from these maps was digitized and converted into a regular grid using a minimum curvature algorithm. Contour (2D) maps and surface (3D) projections were generated from this digital elevation model grid. Most of the trail data is from my own surveys. I have checked the maps carefully, and I think they accurately represent the terrain and the routes of roads and trails.

Each section of the book has been reviewed by people responsible for managing the area. Many of the introductory comments were suggested by the reviewers. I wish to thank the following people for contributing their time and ideas: Jerry Davis, Benton County Parks; Doug Maxwell, Bureau of Land Management; Rene Moye, Corvallis City Parks; Mary Rellergert and Stan Dill, Oregon State University College of Forestry; Paul Mortenson, Starker Forests; Chris Hartman and Steve Lucas, USDA Forest Service; and Laurel Devaney, US Fish and Wildlife Service, William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge.

Special thanks go to Mary-Lynne Yamada and Dave Regan, who read the text and corrected spelling and grammar errors and inconsistencies in the format, and Cynthia Yee for suggestions about layout and other details to improve the readability of the book.

# INTRODUCTION

It has been seven years since I wrote *A Guide to Hiking in the Corvallis Area*. I wrote mostly for gonzo hikers -- people who would happily climb over or push through any obstacle, and be glad for the challenge. This *Guide to Trails* is intended for a broader audience. I met a woman who was carrying a copy of the *Guide*; her doctor had prescribed it as part of her therapy during recovery from a heart attack. On another occasion a couple was walking with their children; they were visiting from Europe, and the *Guide* was their introduction to outdoor recreation around Corvallis. Many have succumbed to the lure of the mountain bike, and they are an audience I address, as are equestrians and casual walkers.

## **Trail Descriptions**

Trail descriptions start with a summary table that gives distance, elevation gain, the maximum grade along the route, a trail rating, usage information, and the starting point. A trail rated **easy** is short, has little elevation gain, slight grade, and a good solid surface. Trails rated **moderate** are longer, steeper, or have narrower or rougher surfaces. **Demanding** trails are very long, have large elevation gains or long steep grades, poor surfaces, and may be unmarked along part of the route.

3D surface representations are included for hilly and mountainous areas. These give an "aerial" view of the land surface, and may help you decipher the accompanying topographic contour map. Also provided are trail profiles showing the elevation gain or loss along the route described in the text. Note that the horizontal and vertical scales are different for each profile, so the slope shown is relative only to the scale of the particular profile; it is not necessarily as steep as it appears on the graph.

In addition to a brief description of the trail route and the highlights of the trip, "editorial comments" are added to some of the trail descriptions. This extra text is printed in *italics* to set it apart from the descriptive text.

## **Native Plant Drawings**

I have included drawings of native plant species found along the route. A "common" name is given for each species, but a single common name is often applied to several species, or a plant may have several common names. The scientific name is included for those who desire a detailed description. These names have the same meaning world-wide. However, as the relationships between different species are better understood the scientific terminology is occasionally changed, so a plant may have a history of different scientific names. I have chosen to use the nomenclature found in *Flora of the Pacific*



## Introduction

*Northwest* by Hitchcock and Cronquist, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1973 (eighth printing 1991). This book is available in local bookstores.

## Access

The map of Benton County on the facing page shows the locations and major traffic routes to the points of interest described in the following chapters. Additional locator maps may be found at the start of the chapters covering the Corvallis City Parks and McDonald Forest. Each chapter has descriptions telling how to get to trailheads.

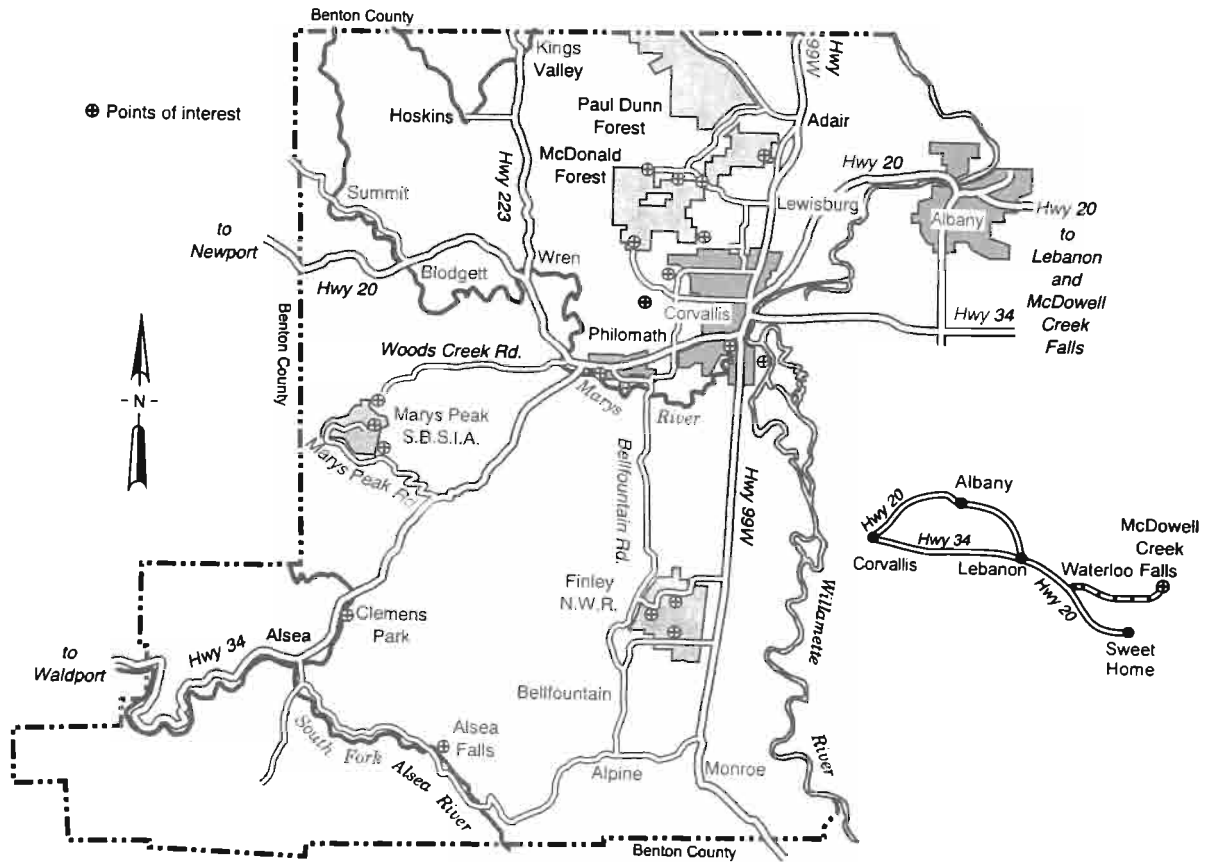
## Founders

We are very fortunate to have so many places to walk/hike/jog/bike/ride in the Corvallis area. Few towns of any size have such a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. These lands were acquired for public use through the efforts of many civic-minded individuals, and we all owe them a debt of gratitude.

The Brandis family contributed land on Timberhill for Brandis Park. The Coon family donated a sizable portion of the original Bald Hill Park. The Lamberton family gave a part of the West Bald Hill addition to the Greenbelt Land Trust. Mrs. Mary McDonald contributed the largest part of the McDonald Forest property to Oregon State University. The Nelson family contributed a part of the Chip Ross Park lands. The greatest part of this park was given by the Ross family, and they also gave the Benton County Open Space Park. The Starker family donated land for Starker Park.

*The population of Corvallis is predicted to increase 50% by the year 2010, and the surge of development will consume much of the surrounding open space land. **The Greenbelt Land Trust, Inc.**, is a private non-profit corporation that was established in 1988 to acquire and preserve open space property around Corvallis and Philomath. The organization purchases land on the open market, relying upon individual contributions and grants for funding. The group's first project added about 40 acres to the west side of Bald Hill Park, enclosing the West Side Trail and a substantial area of native grass prairie in the park. For information about the Greenbelt Land Trust, or to become a member, write to:*

*The Greenbelt Land Trust  
PO Box 1721  
Corvallis, Oregon 97339-1721*



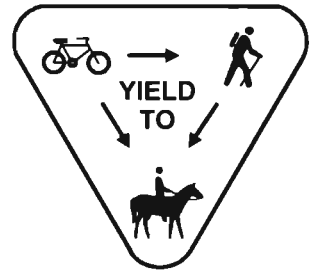
## SHARE THE TRAILS

No one likes rules. This is especially true for those of us who enjoy hiking, biking and riding outdoors. We take to the trails to get away from the hassles of our work, school and homes. The last thing we want is a list of rules that limits our freedom. Unfortunately, each of us does not have an entire planet for our sole enjoyment. Like it or not, we must share the Earth with each other. I offer the following ideas not as rules, but as suggestions how we can cooperate to improve the outdoor experience for all.

A recreation study conducted by the OSU College of Forestry in 1989 revealed that 87% of recreationists in the Corvallis Area walk or hike, 10% ride mountain bikes, and about 2% ride horses. In recent years the mountain bicycle population has grown rapidly, and now may make up a fourth of all users of our trails. One result of this change has been a significant increase in accidents and injuries, not only of the cyclists, but of other users as well.

The main problem is the difference in speed between fast moving bicycles and slower walkers and equestrians. Add to this the unpredictability of trail surfaces (mud, loose gravel, blind turns), skittishness of horses, and the possibility that people will be looking at nature (what we are out there for) and not concentrating on traffic (what we are trying to get away from), and problems are certain to arise.

The sign at right offers a suggestion how some of the problems can be avoided. A frightened horse may behave unpredictably, and can kill you. Bikers should **never** approach at high speed, or slide to a stop in front of a horse; it may perceive such actions as threats, and act defensively. As you approach a horse, be certain that the rider knows you are there, and pass only after the rider tells you it is safe. Keep in mind that the steep



trails attract bikers and equestrians; bikers like the fast downhill run, and riders use the uphill climb to exercise their horses. Hikers should get off the trail and allow the horse to pass, and should always keep dogs under close control.

Bikers also should be watchful for pedestrians (or animals, downed trees, etc.), and always be able to stop in half the distance that you can see ahead. People may not be able to get off the trail quickly, or they may not want to step off into poison oak. Stop and allow others to pass safely.

It is usually easier for walkers to step off trail to allow others to pass than it is for a bike or horse to get off the trail, and a hiker is certain to cause less damage to the surroundings.

We have two types of trails in this area, official and unofficial. Official trails are constructed and maintained by some individual, group or agency. The unofficial trails have appeared over the years because people wanted to get from where the trail starts to where it ends, and no one bothered to build an official trail to take people where they wanted to go.

Not all trails are equal. Many are muddy in winter, or have surfaces that will not hold up under heavy use by horses or bicycles. Some were constructed for all-purpose or all-weather use, and some are restricted to foot traffic only to protect wildlife, habitat, or provide a safe place for handicapped recreation. Use restrictions are placed on trails for good reasons, and are not imposed just to inconvenience you personally; please respect them! Everyone can use the trails, it is how you use them that may be limited. The signs at right mark trails for use by foot traffic, bicycles and equestrians; similar signs are used by all agencies in this area to mark official trails.



Resources for trail work are very limited; they can be used to repair damaged trails or build new trails. Some trails may be closed during the rainy season, or while maintenance is being performed. These restrictions are necessary to control maintenance costs and protect trail users. In several instances bikers and equestrians have ridden on unfinished trails during the rainy season; the resulting damage made reconstruction necessary, and delayed or cancelled the construction of other trails.

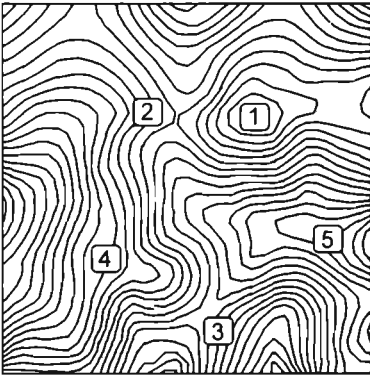


Two problems have limited the number of official trails. First, construction costs money. Most agencies do not have large recreation budgets. In recent years the Forest Service recreation budget has been slashed, and state, county and city governments are being forced to divert funds to other uses.



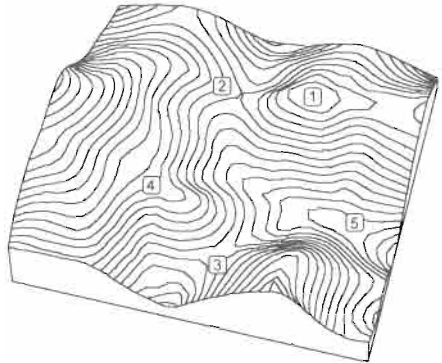
One partial solution is volunteer labor to build and maintain trails. The Forest Service has used volunteers in the construction and maintenance of trails on Marys Peak. OSU College of Forestry has established a Trails Advisory Committee of local trail users, and seeks volunteers for trail maintenance. Volunteers have constructed several trails over the past few years, and many more are planned. If you would like to help, call 745-6332 ext. 8 or 5 to volunteer.

## HOW TO READ A MAP

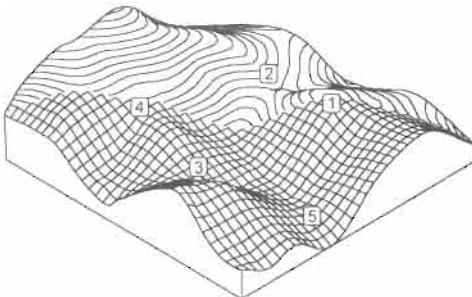


Topographic maps use contour lines to represent places on the ground that are all at the same elevation, like the icing between layers of a cake. Even for an experienced cartographer a complex map like the one at left can be confusing. For example, is the feature labeled "1" a hilltop or a hole in the ground? Are features "4" and "5" ridge lines or valleys? On a normal map you would find elevation information on some of the lines to help you distinguish hilltops and valleys.

It would be very unusual (but not impossible) to find a hole in the ground like feature "1," but not unusual to find a hilltop. You need to learn to distinguish ridge lines from valleys, because it is usually easier to climb a ridge line, and valleys often are filled with thickets. Features "2" and "3" are called "saddles" because they resemble the seat of an ordinary saddle, with two sides higher than the seat (the front and back) and two sides lower. But which sides are higher elevation?



If we tilt the map a bit the picture becomes clearer. The "layers in the cake" are easier to see. Now we see that point "1" is really a hilltop, and point "5" is in a valley. Point "4" is on a ridge, and high and low sides of the saddles at "2" and "3" are readily apparent.



The third picture shows the relationship between the contour lines on the map and the ground surface, represented here by a "fishnet" pattern. This is a picture of the land around Lewisburg Saddle (point "2") in McDonald Forest. North is to the upper right.

## HAZARDS OF THE TRAIL

The woods and fields in our area have no really serious threats that we must avoid. Poisonous snakes are uncommon in the Corvallis area (although a den of rattlesnakes has been reported near Monroe). However, you occasionally may see a skunk, bear or cougar. Most likely they will hear or smell you coming and be gone before you see them, but should you confront any wild animal, back away and leave it alone. Porcupines are probably the most serious animal threat; they are often attacked by dogs running off leash, which invariably come away with a face full of barbed quills that must be removed by a veterinarian.

### Poison Oak

The most common hazard is poison oak, *Rhus diversiloba*. The plant carries an oil on leaves and stems that causes a very discomfoting rash that may persist for weeks after the initial contact. This is the one hazard that everyone must learn to recognize and avoid. It is found almost everywhere, in woods and fields. The plant has many different forms, making recognition difficult for the novice.

In winter the stems and buds carry the noxious oil; **stems are light brown, with a slight reddish cast**, often almost velvety in appearance. In the early spring the opening buds produce very shiny (oily looking) leaves that often have an attractive deep reddish color like fine Japanese Kamakura lacquer ware. Later green **leaves in groups of three** grow from each leaf stem. The leaves vary greatly, growing up to 3 inches (7 cm) long, with almost smooth edges to those with deeply lobed edges quite similar in appearance to oak leaves. In late spring large bunches of small white flowers appear: by late summer yellowish-white berries form, which are eaten by birds. In the fall the leaves may change to a reddish color, varying from dark reddish-green to a beautiful bright scarlet. After the leaves are shed in winter, the plant may still bear clusters of berries along the stems.

In wooded areas (coniferous or deciduous) poison oak most commonly appears as a single stem ranging from a few inches (5 cm) to 2 feet (50 cm) tall, with a few short branches. The plants often grow in patches from 2 to 20 feet (1 to 6 m) across. Where well established in the forest understory, the plants grow into shrubs up to five feet tall (2 m) and several feet across, and may form



*Rhus diversiloba*  
**Poison Oak**

## Hazards of the trail

thickets covering acres. Another common form in wooded areas is a climbing vine trailing up a tree trunk to expose the leaves to sunlight high up in the tree.

In open areas the plant forms a broad spreading shrub, commonly only 1 or 2 feet (50 cm) high. However, in some places the bush may grow 10 feet tall (3 m) and 6 to 8 feet (2 to 3 m) across.

A complete mythology has formed around the susceptibility to poison oak and treatment of the rash. Many of the tales are conflicting, some are silly, and a few can lead to dangerous consequences! Almost everyone has some degree of susceptibility to poison oak, but the effect varies from virtually no noticeable effect to a potentially life-threatening allergic response. Likewise, response to treatment differs greatly from person to person.

The irritating oil soaks through the dead upper layer (epidermis) of the skin slowly; when it reaches the lower layer (dermis) containing blood vessels it causes an irritating reaction with the living tissue. The rash appears from within a few hours to as long as five days after contact, and may persist for two to three weeks. In some the irritation is minor, or even nonexistent. More commonly, the oil causes blister formation, with redness of the surrounding tissue and severe itching. An extremely severe reaction may result from breathing the oil-bearing smoke produced when the plant burns, or from eating any part of the plant.

A second and much more serious reaction occurs if you develop an allergy to the oil. You may be relatively immune to the irritation caused by poison oak for much of your life, then, for no apparent reason, you suddenly may find that you have become very susceptible. Allergies result from exposure to an allergen (the oil) with a subsequent immune reaction in your body that results in life long susceptibility; the encounter that triggers the allergy may not even produce symptoms. You may spend all day chopping down poison oak and have no reaction, and a few months later be hospitalized for merely brushing against a plant!

Many people believe that the liquid from poison oak blisters can spread the problem. I have deliberately spread the liquid to unexposed areas, with no subsequent reaction. One possible reason for this belief is the delayed reaction from the initial exposure. Later, before symptoms appear, the oil may be spread to surrounding areas. The rash appears first at the initial site of exposure, and later on the surrounding areas, after itching starts at the initial site. Then the sufferer observes the itching spreading and assumes it was caused by liquid from the initial blisters.

Treatment starts with a thorough cleansing of the exposed area to remove the oil **as soon as possible** after contact. Ordinary soap is adequate, although a few cleansing products exist that contain mixtures of solvents selected specifically for the poison oak oil. The soap or cleanser carries the oil from exposed areas,

but may later deposit it on unexposed skin if the soap itself is not washed away; the exposed area should be washed twice in running water. Washing in a shower is recommended; sitting in a tub full of soapy water may actually spread the problem.

Exposed clothing (shirts, trousers, hats, jackets, belts, shoes, everything) carries the oil and should be washed thoroughly. The oil remains potent for a long time, and contact with contaminated clothing may cause reappearance of the rash weeks or months later.

### **Wash everything!**

If you suffer only from the basic irritation caused by the oil, hydrocortisone cream will help relieve the itching. A calamine cream or ointment may work better; the calamine dries the blisters. The much more severe allergic reaction should be treated by a doctor.

If very large areas are affected, fill a bath tub with warm water, add half a cup each of corn starch and baking soda, and soak for 15 minutes. This relieves the itching for up to 8 hours, but actually does nothing to cure the rash. Smaller areas can be treated by applying cloths soaked in this solution.

In most cases the rash and allergic response are only minor nuisances. However, the open wounds caused by scratching may become infected, causing a life-threatening situation. Poison oak lesions are typically light to deep pink in color, and have small blisters of clear fluid. If the lesions turn deep red or purple, produce colored liquid or bleed, or become surrounded with a golden yellow crusty material, see a doctor immediately!

### **Stinging Nettle**

One of the nasty surprises you may encounter is an innocuous-looking plant, *Urtica dioica*, the stinging nettle. The plants have long strings of tiny greenish-white flowers growing from the leaf axils (where the leaf stems branch from the main stem). The leaves and stems are covered with tiny, sharp, hollow hairs filled with formic acid (like ant stings). When you brush against the plant you suffer an immediate burning rash, accompanied by minor swelling and redness. The



*Urtica dioica*  
**Stinging Nettle**



## Hazards of the trail

irritation lasts from less than an hour for some people to several days with others.

Wear long pants when hiking off trail, and learn to recognize the plant. They appear in early spring and continue to grow through summer; the plant may grow to 8 feet (2.5 m) tall. It is common in damp shady areas near streams, but may grow in the open along roadsides. In some places it forms dense thickets.

### ***Stinging Insects***

A variety of stinging insects can be found in the Willamette Valley and the Coast Range; they pose a real threat to those allergic to their stings. The most common stinging insect is the yellow and black paper wasp. It nests on the ground or low in the branches of shrubs, building a honeycomb of cells enclosed in a light gray paper bag with an opening near the bottom. The nests are egg-shaped, from 2 inches (5 cm) to more than a foot (30 cm) in diameter. They pose the greatest threat to hikers who may step on them in tall grass.

As a precaution you may want to carry a few **sting kill insect bite swabs** in your first-aid kit. These are small ampoules of pain relieving liquid. If you are stung, open the package and rub the swab on the wound to relieve the pain and itching.

### ***Ticks (Lyme Disease)***

The most serious threat to outdoor recreationists is **Lyme Disease**. It is new to the Pacific Northwest, and not yet common. This disease is carried by small ticks that infest deer and other animals. Ticks are blood-sucking insects that burrow their heads into the skin of their victims. The organism that causes Lyme Disease passes from the tick into the victim's blood stream.

You should take the precaution of inspecting yourself thoroughly after each hike. Remove a tick by grasping near its head with tweezers and slowly pulling it out. Pulling suddenly may break the head off, and squeezing the body will force fluids under your skin. Save the tick. If you develop a rash, red blotches or flu-like symptoms in the following month, take yourself and the tick to your doctor.

### ***Giardia***

Giardia is a protozoon (single cell organism) carried by many animals, including beavers; it is often called "beaver fever" (no connection with rubber ball bouncers). It is excreted in the animals' urine, and pollutes streams. It causes the disease **giardiasis**, which causes diarrhea and painful stomach cramps. The way to avoid this problem is simple; **DON'T DRINK WATER FROM STREAMS**. Carry clean water with you when you are recreating.

## **CITY PARKS**

Corvallis and Philomath city parks provide opportunities for a wide variety of activities. Corvallis has thirty parks, ranging from small neighborhood parks to larger open space areas, and Philomath has two. This chapter describes the parks that have trails for walking, biking or horseback riding. The accompanying map shows park locations.

Parks are open to the public from sunrise to sunset all year long. All trails are open to walking and bicycling, but some are unsuitable for horses. These trails are much more heavily used than those described in other chapters. They are used by the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with small children; bicyclists should ride slowly and be prepared to stop and allow others to pass.

Avery Park is in south-central Corvallis. The park can be reached from Philomath Blvd. (US 20 and Oregon 34) by turning south onto 15th St. and crossing the bridge over Marys River. Avery Ave. leads west from 3rd St. (US 99W) to the park. The Corvallis-Philomath bike path crosses 15th near the park. Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department offices are located in the park, and the Benton County Parks Department is on Avery Ave.

Bald Hill Park is on the west side of Corvallis, west of the Benton County Fairgrounds. You can get to the park by following the bike path from the southwest corner of the Fairgrounds parking area, or from a parking lot on Oak Creek Drive about 0.8 miles (1.3 km) west of the Walnut, Harrison, 53rd St. and Oak Creek Drive junction.

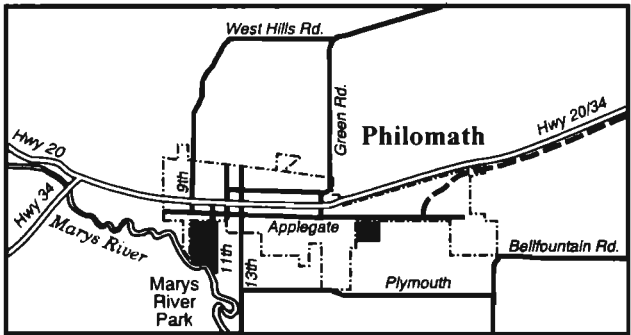
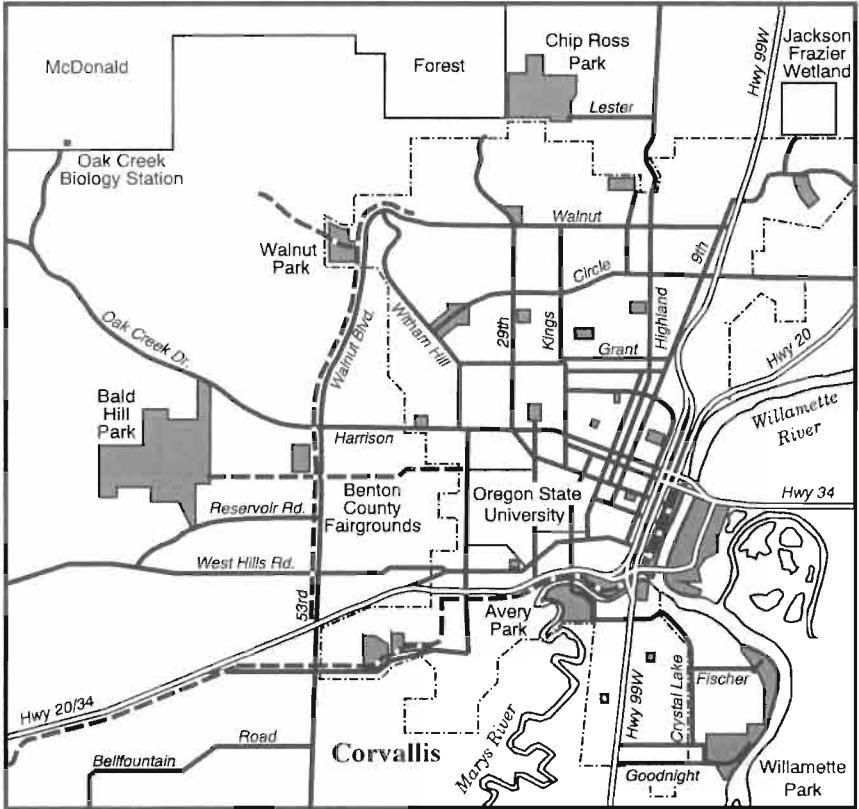
Chip Ross Park is in north-central Corvallis. The parking lot is at the end of Lester Ave. Drive north on Highland Drive, and turn west onto Lester at the crest of the hill.

Marys River Park is near the west end of Philomath, adjacent to the Public Library. From the stoplight at the intersection of Philomath Blvd. (US 20 and Oregon 34) and 13th St., drive south on 13th one block, turn west on Applegate St. for two blocks, and turn south on 11th St. at the library. You may also turn south on 11th from Philomath Blvd.

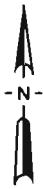
Walnut Park is in west Corvallis, on Walnut Blvd. Drive north from the Harrison, Walnut, 53rd St. and Oak Creek Drive intersection, or west from the intersection of Witham Hill Drive and Walnut Blvd.

Willamette Park is in southeast Corvallis. A trail system for walking and bicycling runs the length of the park. Playing fields and picnic shelters are located at the south end, and a boat ramp is at the north end. From 3rd St. (US 99W) drive east on Goodnight Ave. to reach the south end of the park. The north end is accessed from Crystal Lake Drive by turning east on Fischer Lane.

City parks



- - - - - City limits
- - - - - Bike paths
- City parks



## Avery Park

This 75 acre Corvallis city park has several trails, bike paths and sidewalks that loop around the park. Tables, fireplaces, covered sheds and restrooms make this a favorite group picnic spot. You will find parking and picnic facilities throughout the park, all near the trails and paths. The park also sports a cultivated rose garden, children's play areas, playing fields, horseshoe pits, a children's zoo, and an old steam locomotive.

A sidewalk and bike path loops around the east side to connect the rose garden with the children's zoo. From there a foot path parallels the south boundary, leading past the horseshoe pits to the road near the City Parks and Recreation Department Offices. Behind this building a fine trail follows the river to the Maple Grove shelter and back to the rose garden.

### Wildflower Trail

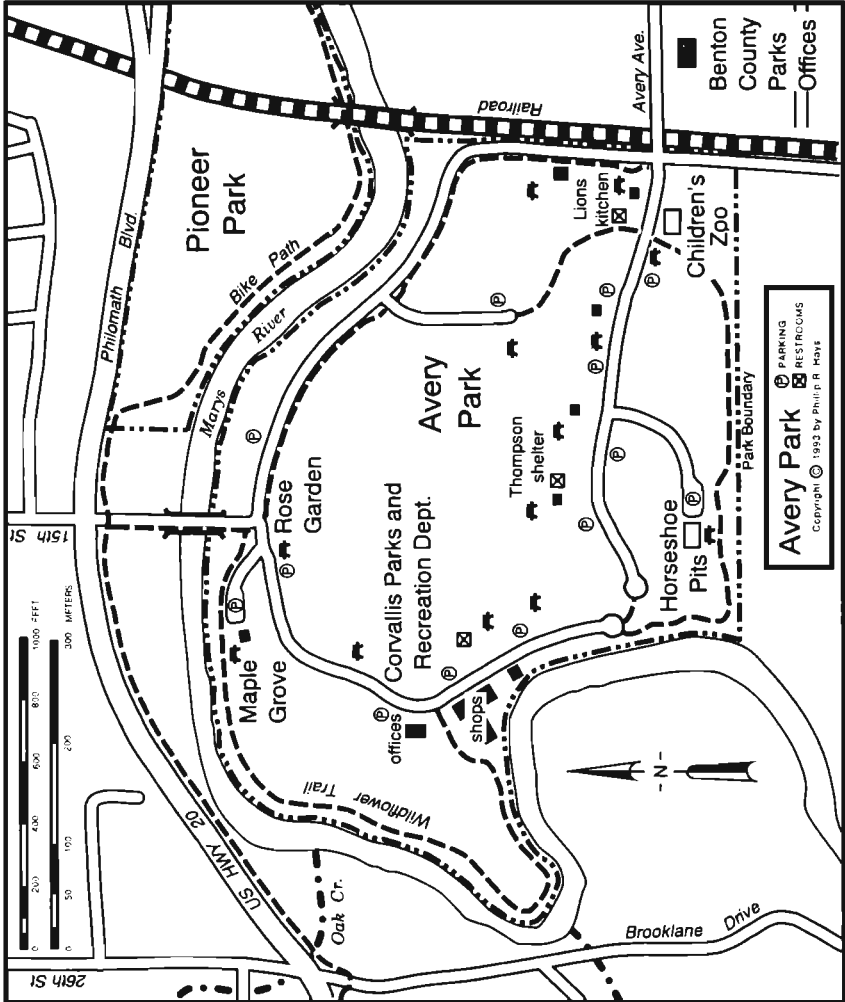
<b>Distance:</b>	0.5 mi. (0.8 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	10 ft (3 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Walnut Grove or the City Parks and Rec. Dept. offices		

This short walking trail at the west end of the park winds along the bank of the Marys River. Here, in spring, you will find one of the most splendid wildflower displays in this area. Under the trees are thousands of giant fawn lilies, sessile trilliums, wood trilliums, violets, fringe cups, fairy bells, meadow rue, delphiniums, tiger lilies and other native riparian (stream side) woodland species. Rich soil deposited by the river supports this extraordinary natural garden.

The trail is flat except for one short grade (about 10 feet, 3 meters) behind the Parks and Recreation offices. The trail is covered with shredded bark and is usable year round.



*Erythronium oregonum*  
Giant Fawn Lily



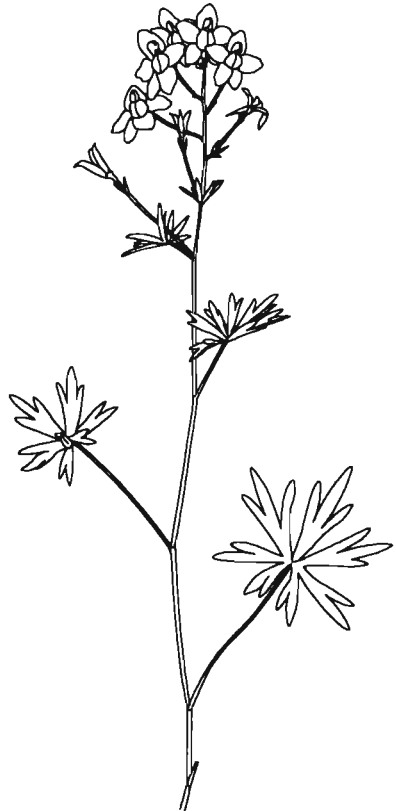
## Bald Hill Park

This 284 acre park is west of the Benton County Fairgrounds and south of Oak Creek Road. The park encompasses a prominent hill with a 360° panoramic view from open grassy meadows at the top. The hill got its name ("Old Baldy") from the expanses of open grassland that cover it, but in the last half century oak woods have crept up its north side, so it is not as bald as it once was.

From the parking lot off Oak Creek Drive, cross the bridge over Oak Creek and follow the gravel road 0.5 mile (0.8 km) to the barn. You can also get to the park by following the bike path west from the Benton County Fair Grounds parking lot. The hikes described below start at the barn, so be sure to add another mile (round trip) to the total distance from the parking lot. It is advisable to stay on the trails in the woody areas because the majority of the ground cover and low shrubbery is **poison oak!**

The barn is all that remains of the Coon family farm; the farmhouse once stood near the barn. Mr. Ken Coon and his family donated a large portion of the land to the city to help create Bald Hill Park. The latest addition is the 40 acres where the West Side Trail loops around the end of the hill. The Greenbelt Land Trust, Inc., bought this land in 1989 and donated it to the city in 1993 to expand the park.

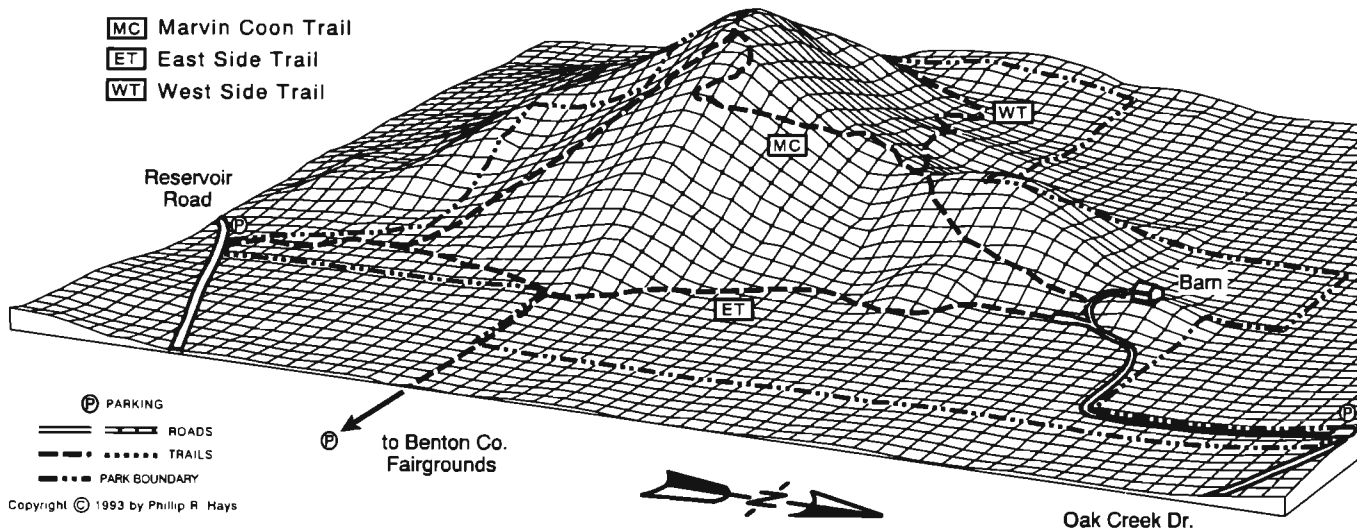
Bald Hill Park is a prime example of urban open space, and Corvallis is very lucky to have it for a park. Throughout spring and summer the woods and meadows sport a profusion of wildflowers, including some very rare species Federally listed as Threatened or Endangered. The largest known population (about 200 plants) of the Willamette Daisy (*Erigeron decumbens*) is found here; this species was thought extinct for nearly a half century before it was rediscovered. It grows only in the southern Willamette Valley. Nelson's Checkermallow (*Sidalcea nelsoniana*), another threatened species, is found here; it grows only on the west side of the Willamette Valley between Portland and Corvallis.

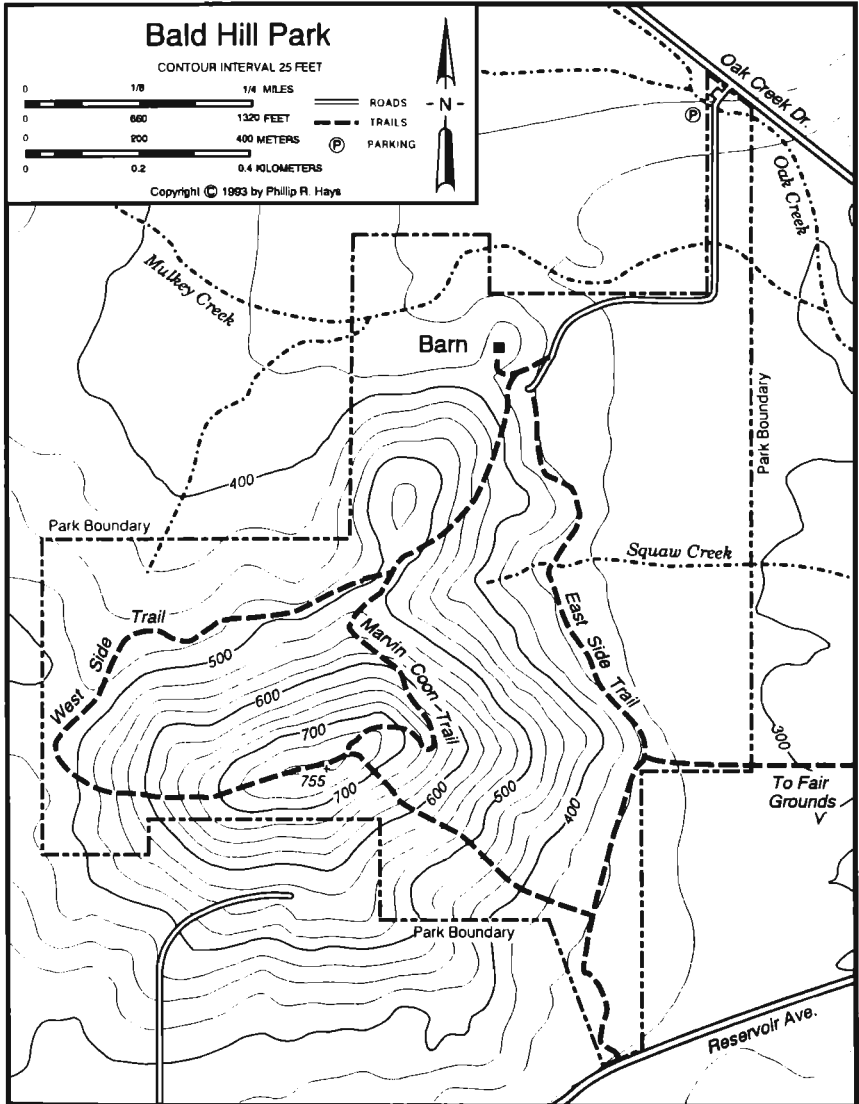


*Delphinium menziesii*  
**Menzies' Larkspur**

# Bald Hill Park

- MC** Marvin Coon Trail
- ET** East Side Trail
- WT** West Side Trail

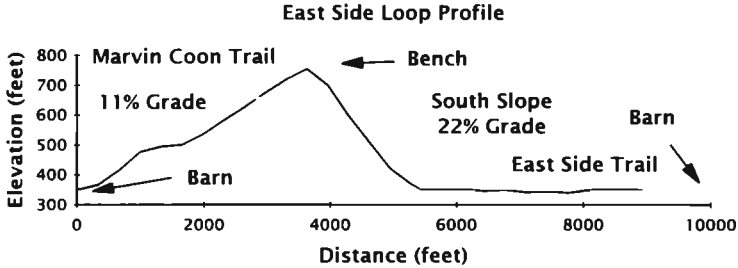






### East Side Loop

<b>Distance:</b>	1.7 mi. (2.7 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	400 ft (123 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	11%-22%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	at the barn		



The East Side Trail has a very steep climb to the hilltop, so it is easier to ascend along the Marvin Coon Trail, and return by the East Side Trail. From the barn follow the old road that climbs the hill on the north side. At the top you come into open grassy meadows with a fine view. From the bench walk eastward (toward Corvallis) along the south side of the hilltop and look for the place where the trail starts down the southeast face of the hill; this trail is steep. At the bottom of the hill is a junction with the East Side Trail. Turn left (north) to follow the trail back to the barn; the right branch leads to Reservoir Road.

*One sunny spring morning I was enjoying the wildflowers along Squaw Creek when I saw a couple walking along the East Side Trail. They had with them a small child, just old enough to walk, who was busily ripping apart every flowering plant it could find. As the parents watched in amusement, it destroyed the last plant of a native sunflower (*Wyethia angustifolia*) on the east side of the park. The population had been in decline for several years, and that plant was the last source of seed for regenerating the population. *Wyethia* has large yellow flowers that would brighten the East Side Trail. You can no longer enjoy them there, because of the ignorance of a child and the stupidity of its parents.*

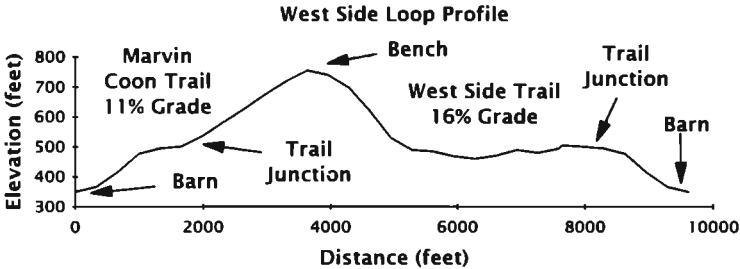


*Zygadenus venenosus*  
**Death Camas**

**Please do not pick  
the flowers!**

## West Side Loop

<b>Distance:</b>	1.8 mi. (2.9 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	400 ft (123 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	11% - 16%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	at the barn		



From the barn follow the Marvin Coon Trail that climbs through the woods on the north side of the hill. About 1/4 mile (400 meters) up the road the West Side Trail leaves the road on the right (west) and loops around the end of the hill. Because the trail up the west end of the hill is steep, the walk is easier if you continue up the old road to the top, and return by the West Side Trail.

From the bench at the top of the hill, follow the trail west (toward Philomath) and down through grassy meadows. The trail loops north around the end of the hill and passes through a fine example of a native grass prairie. It then enters the oak woods and climbs to rejoin the road.

### CAUTION!

Stay on the trail in the woods.  
Nearly everything here that isn't  
trees is **POISON OAK!**

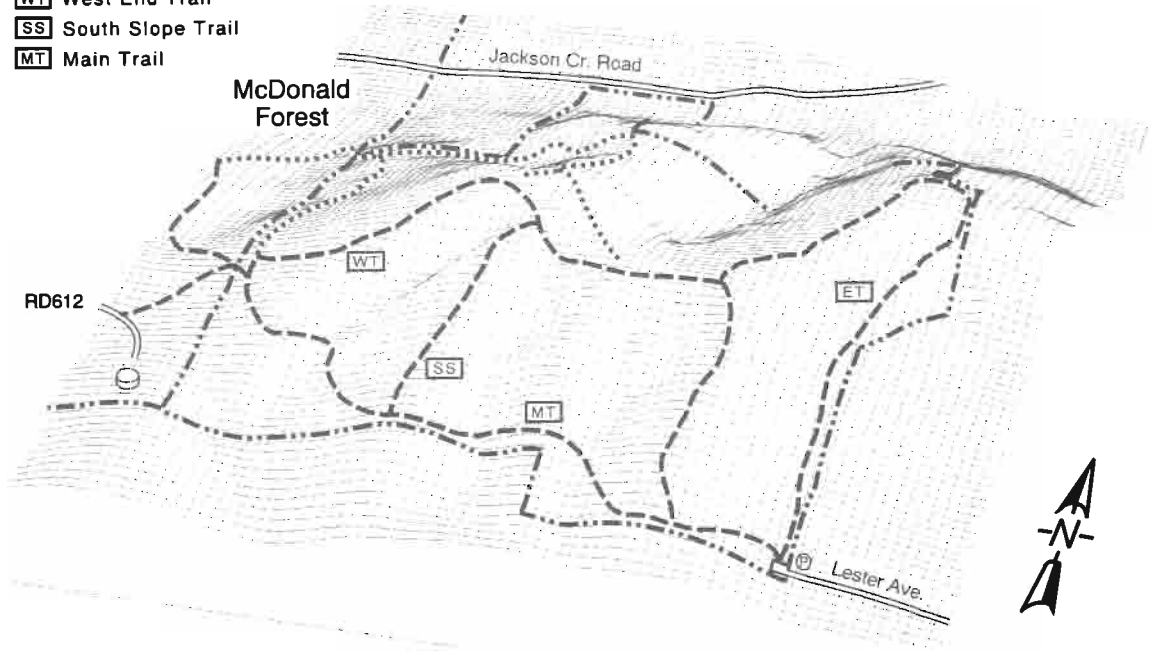
*The meadows at the west end of the park contain a native plant community that has become quite rare. Much of the Willamette Valley was once native grass prairie, and early explorers recorded that these fields were covered with wildflowers. Farming, grazing and urban development have eliminated most of the original plant communities. A small part remains at Bald Hill, a reminder of what this area was like 150 years ago.*

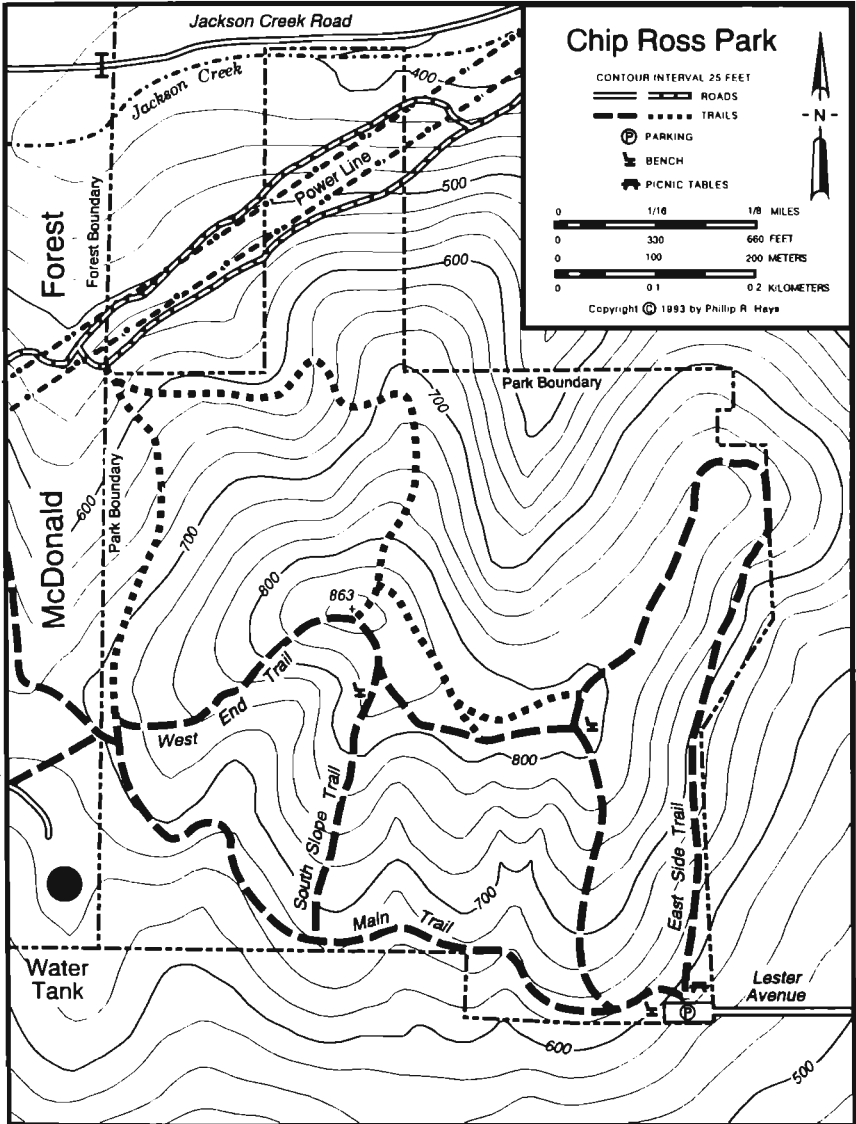


*Wyethia angustifolia*  
**Wild Sunflower**

# Chip Ross Park

- ET** East Side Trail
- WT** West End Trail
- SS** South Slope Trail
- MT** Main Trail





## Chip Ross Park

This 121 acre park encompasses IV Hill, the prominent hill with open meadows rising north of the Timberhill area. The hill gets its name from the two ravines on the south face. One is straight, and the other forks; from town the vegetation in these gullies has the appearance of the letters "IV." From the top you have an excellent view of the town. You may see deer in the woods, and owls patrol the meadows at dusk. At the parking lot at the end of Lester Avenue is a picnic area. Several trails loop over and around the hill; most of them are muddy in winter.

The park is a starting point for hikes into the Jackson Creek area of McDonald Forest. Several roads and trails will lead you from the park into the surrounding forests and meadows. Some will lead you to Dimple Hill for one of the best scenic views in the Corvallis area (see the McDonald Forest Jackson Creek section).

*I began exploring the hills and fields around town soon after coming to Corvallis, in 1974. Eventually I found my way to the top of IV Hill. As I stood there, looking at the vista from the Cascades across the Willamette Valley to Marys Peak, and at the city spreading around the base of the hill, I wondered how long it would be until bulldozers destroyed this prize open space resource. When the hill was added to the city park system I was delighted that the people of this town actually had the sense to preserve it!*

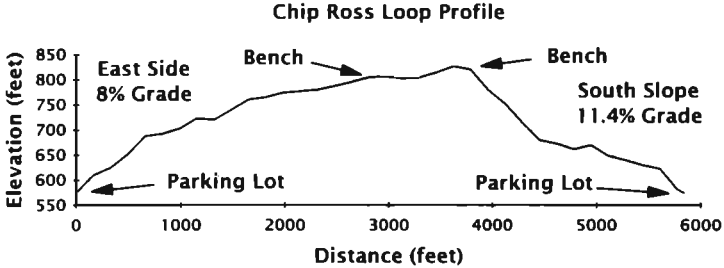
*For our prized open space parks we owe a debt of gratitude to a few civic-minded individuals. This park was the first acquisition as part of the City's Open Space Plan, and was made possible through the generosity of Charles and Elsie Ross. The park is named after their son. Dan and Dorothy Petroquin also contributed to this acquisition by making the land available through a bargain sale agreement. Harold Nelson and others donated property to enlarge the park to its present size. Without their efforts, this would be just another house-covered hill, to be enjoyed only by a few.*



*Brodiaea elegans*  
**Elegant Brodiaea**

## Chip Ross Loop

<b>Distance:</b>	1.1 mi. (1.8 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	250 ft (76 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	8% to 11.4%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Lester Avenue parking lot		



The park has several trails, but the easiest way to the top of the hill is to take the East Side Trail to the top of the north ridge, and follow the trail as it doubles back to the top; this route has an easy 8% grade. The trail crosses the top of the hill, passing two benches where you can rest and enjoy the view. Take the trail from the second (higher) bench straight down the South Slope Trail (steep 11.4% grade) to where it joins the Main Trail at the base of the hill. Turn left and follow the Main Trail back to the parking lot.

If you want a longer walk, follow the trail across the top of the hill to where it leads down the West End Trail. There it joins the Main Trail that runs across the south side of the hill back to the parking area. This makes a 1.6 mile (2.6 km) loop.



*Silene hookeri*  
**Hooker's Pink**

## Marys River Park

This 28 acre Philomath city park is at the end of 11th St., just south of the Philomath Public Library, extending to Marys River. The land has a great variety of native vegetation, including many wildflowers, that has managed to survive in a heavily urbanized area. It is a gem set in the middle of town.

The land for the park was purchased by Ms. Betty Olson, to preserve it from development, and then resold at cost to the **Project Philomath 2000** organization to turn it into a city park. The city is fortunate to have such civic-minded people willing to give time, energy and money to improve the quality of life for future citizens of Philomath.

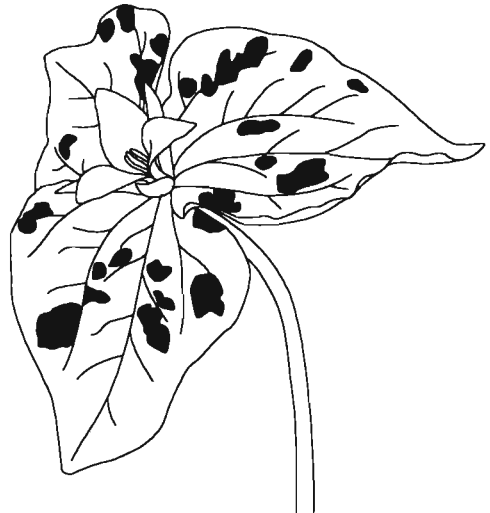
The group has created parking and picnic sites, and constructed a nature trail loop at the south end of the park. In summer additional paths are mowed through the fields in the north part of the park. Many native wetland plant species grow along the intermittent stream that runs across the north end of the park.

### Arboretum Trail

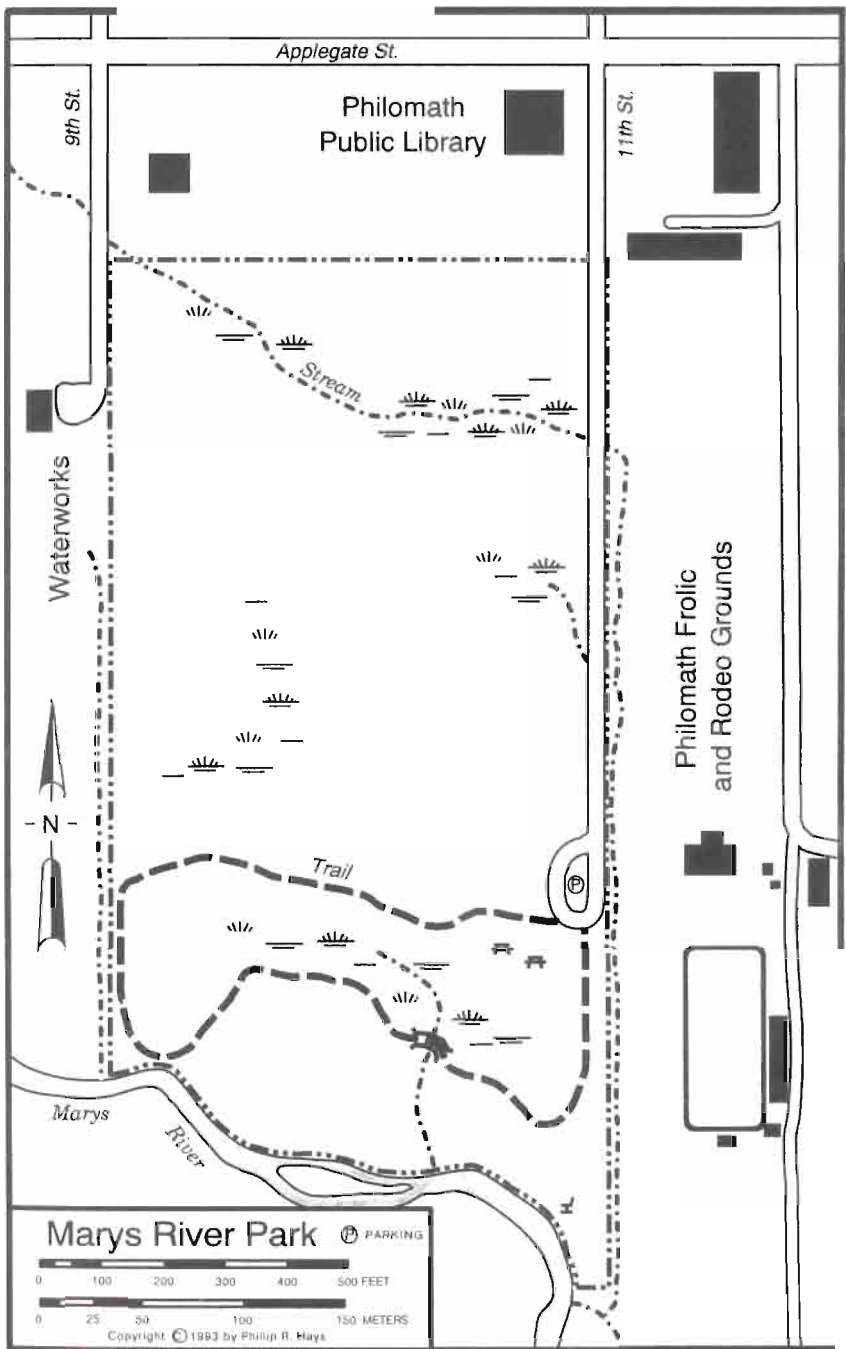
<b>Distance:</b>	0.4 mi (0.6 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	6 ft (2 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	parking lot at the end of 11th St.		

The short trail forms a loop around a depression that was once a channel of Marys River. It passes through woods and meadows, with a variety of vegetation types and habitats. The trail is covered with shredded bark, and a sturdy bridge crosses the creek draining the old channel. There are no steep grades, so the trail should be manageable by nearly everyone. You should stay on the trail at the southwest corner of the park, for quite a bit of stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) grows at the edge of the trail.

An arboretum is being developed in cooperation with the Oregon State Department of Forestry, including signs describing more than 100 native plants growing along the trail.



*Trillium chlorpetalum*  
**Sessile Trillium**





## Walnut Park

This 30 acre Corvallis city park is in the northwest part of town on Walnut Blvd. A converted barn serves as a picnic shelter on the north side of the park, and on the south side are several picnic tables and fire places. A trail loops around the park, and a bike path crosses the park, connecting the path along Walnut Blvd. with Ponderosa Ave.

### Camas Prairie Trail

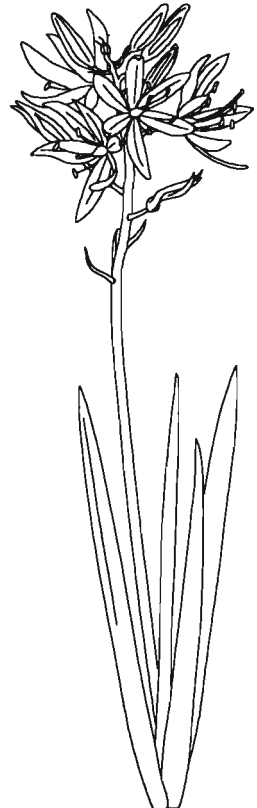
<b>Distance:</b>	0.6 mi. (1.0 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	6 ft (2 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round, when dry
<b>Start:</b>	parking lot off Walnut Boulevard		

This is a small park, but the trail passes through a field that is covered with yellow buttercups and purple camas in spring. On good (wet) years the trail offers an exceptionally colorful and rewarding walk. The trail is wide and easy to follow, and the part that passes through marshy areas is covered with a thick layer of shredded bark that makes the trail useable year round (although it may be submerged after heavy rains).

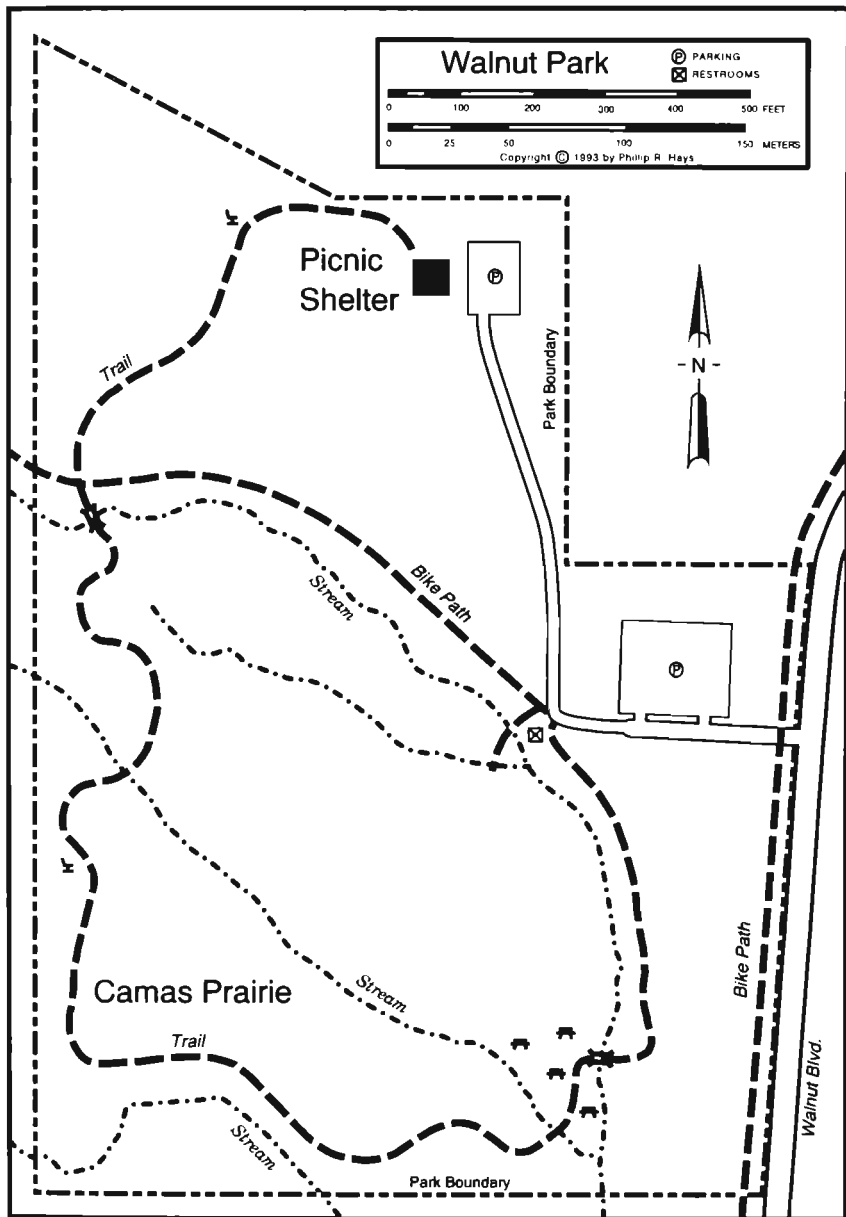
From the parking lot follow the gravel road 100 feet (25 meters) to where it turns toward the picnic shelter. The trail runs south along a stream full of cattails, and the paved bike path runs west. The trail loops around the south end of the park and connects with the bike path to form a loop back to the parking lot.

An extension of the trail climbs the hill at the northwest end of the park (about 70 feet or 20 meters elevation) and descends to the picnic shelter. From here you have a good view of this part of town. This trail is moderately steep and is muddy when wet.

*Much of the Willamette Valley was covered with camas fields before settlers drained and plowed the lands. Native Americans valued camas as an important food, and vied for control of camas prairies. The prairies were burned regularly to eliminate shrubs and trees that invaded the camas fields. This is one of the few remaining places where camas grows in abundance, and where the public has easy access.*



*Camassia leichtlinii*  
**Large Camas**



## Willamette Park

This city park, located in southeast Corvallis, occupies 161 acres of Willamette River flood plain stretching along 1 1/2 miles (2.4 km) of the west bank of the river. The south end of the park has large grassy fields and picnic tables, fireplaces, restrooms and a campground. The north end has a boat launching ramp. A mile of undeveloped riparian woodland lies between these areas.

One main trail runs the length of the park, with many side trails winding through the brush; only a few of the lesser trails are shown on the map. If you leave the main trail, pay attention to where you are going; it is easy to get disoriented in the tangle of thickets and maze of trails. This area has numerous small ponds surrounded by thick brush, and is home to many types of birds, animals and native plants.

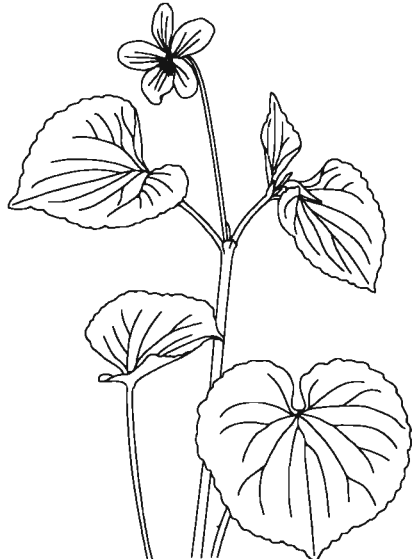
### Willamette Park Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	1.0 mi. (1.6 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	13 ft (4 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	all year
<b>Start:</b>	north or south parking areas		

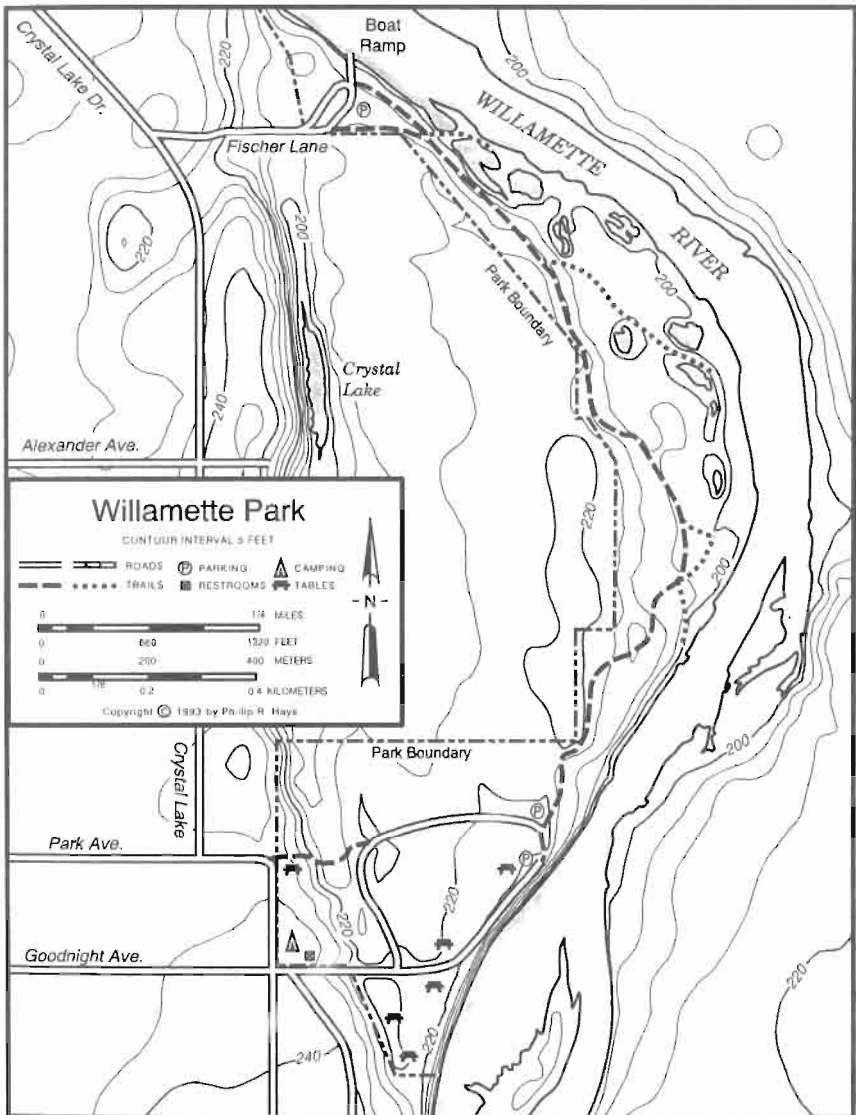
The main trail is wide and easy to follow. The north end is an abandoned graveled road that once led to a mill on the banks of the river. Several side trails lead into the brush between ponds and marshes and run to the river edge. These provide excellent opportunities to observe the many types of birds that inhabit the park.

This area is designated as a place where dogs can be exercised off leash.

*In late summer, after fields and woods have dried under the hot sun and most wildflowers have gone to seed, many late blooming plants can be found along the river's edge, especially on the gravel bars that form along the river bank. These flowers aren't as showy as many of the spring wildflowers, but they offer an interested observer new variety and pose a challenge to those trying to identify them.*



*Viola glabella*  
**Wood Violet**



## The Unseen Forest

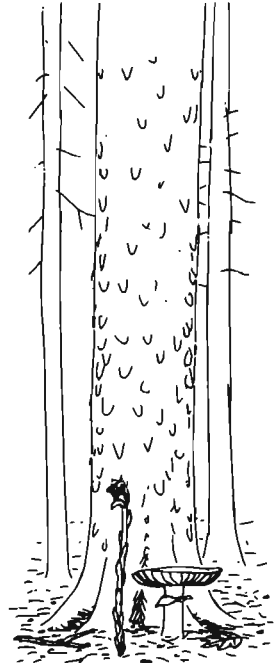
Have you noticed the dead limbs, leaves, twigs and needles lying on the forest floor? These were made by trees, from gasses in the air and minerals from the soil. If this litter continued to pile up, eventually all the soil minerals would be locked up in the debris, and tree growth would stop. How do the minerals get recycled into the soil?

Quite a variety of mushrooms grow in the forests, especially in spring and fall. What you see is only a very small part of a much larger organism, often 30 to 50 feet (9 to 15 m) across, that exists below ground. The "body" of the fungus is a large mass of hair-thin filaments, called hyphae, that penetrate the soil. It is these organisms that eat the dead limbs, leaves, twigs and needles, and recycle the nutrients into the soil. If you lift a stick or leaf you may see the cottony white threads of a fungus. These filaments may be a part of a nearby mushroom. Without fungi to recycle the minerals in woody debris, forests would not be possible.

Fungi play another role in the forest; their large hyphal mass makes an efficient system for gathering nutrients and water from the soil. The hyphae often grow around and into the roots of forest plants, and supply them with nutrients. In return, the fungi take nourishment from the plants, absorbing the products of photosynthesis. Most (all?) of our native orchids require a fungus in the soil for the seeds to germinate and grow.

The associations between plants and fungi can be very strange. You may have noticed Indian pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*) that grow in the forests. These flowering plants have no roots, nor are they capable of photosynthesis. The Indian pipe gets its nourishment from nearby trees, through an interconnecting fungus!

Even trees benefit from associations with fungi. The roots of Douglas fir form an association with a mycorrhizal fungus that extends the root system enormously, allowing the tree to grow much faster. The fungus produces underground fruiting bodies, called truffles, that are eaten by mice, voles and flying squirrels that make their homes in the trees. These animals help spread the fungus spores through the forest. Fungi, plants and animals are all essential parts of a forest.



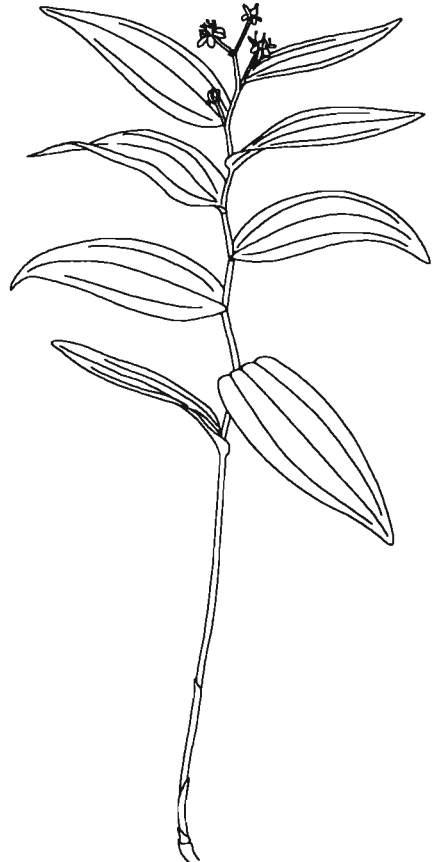
## COUNTY AND REGIONAL RECREATION AREAS

These parks are more distant from Corvallis and Philomath than the other sites in this book. Each has walking trails and other features that make them worth visiting. See the Benton County map in the Introduction (page 1-3) for locations of these areas.

Alsea Falls Recreation Area is located in southwest Benton County. Take Oregon 34 (Alsea Highway) from Philomath to Alsea, and turn left (south) on Oregon 201 (Deadwood Highway) toward Lobster Valley. After about 1 mile (1.6 km) turn left on the South Fork Alsea Road; watch for the sign to Alsea Falls. The road is unpaved for a few miles, but pavement starts again before reaching the recreation area. You may also take Bellfountain Road south to Alpine, then turn right (west) on Alpine Road, pass through Glennbrook, and continue on to the South Fork Road. A third route is to take US Highway 99W south for 15 miles (24 km) and turn west on Alpine Road (County Road 45120); follow this road for 5 miles (8 km) to Alpine and continue west 9 miles (14 km) to the recreation area.

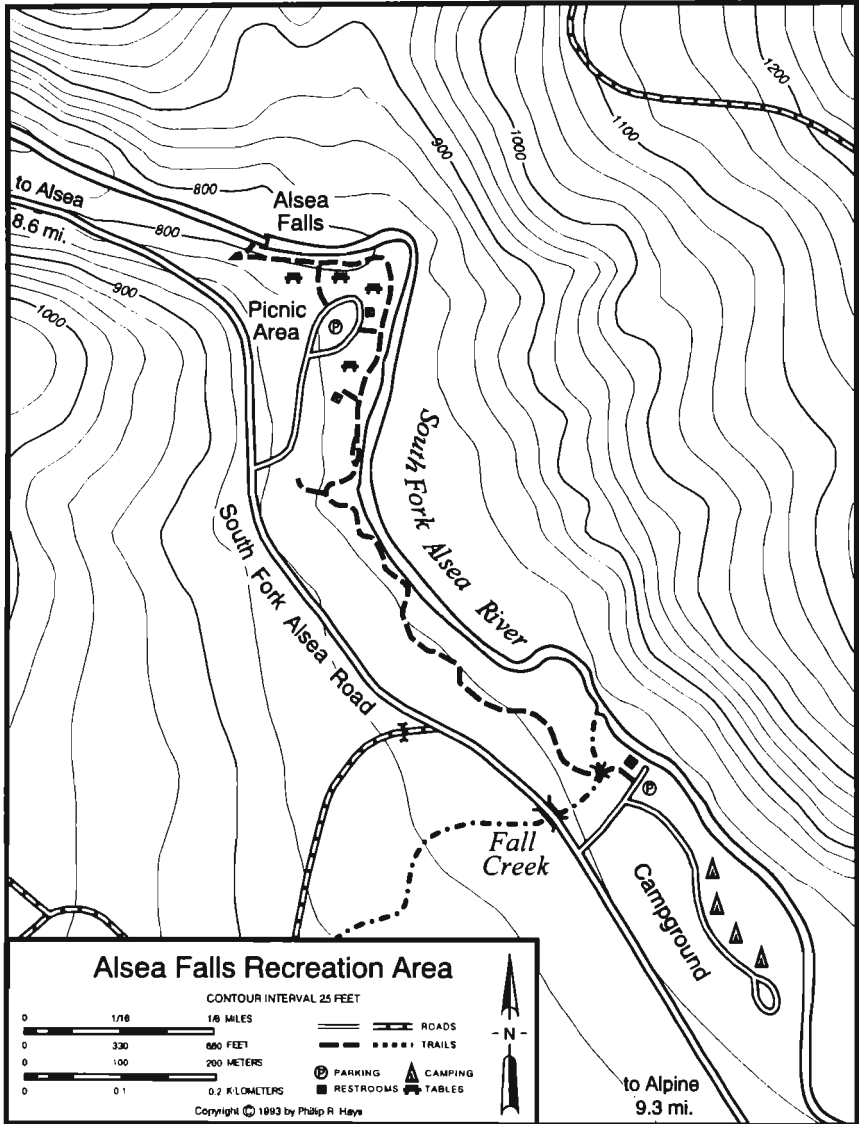
Clemens Park is located in southwest Benton County. From the junction of US 20 and Oregon 34 at the west end of Philomath, follow the Alsea Highway (HWY 34) 14 miles (23 km) until you see the Benton County Park sign just east of Alsea. Turn left (south) and follow the road about 1/8 mile (200 meters), then turn right and cross the bridge over the North Fork of the Alsea River to the parking lot.

McDowell Creek Falls Park is located in central Linn County. To get to the park take Oregon Highway 34 east for 17 miles (27 km) to Lebanon, and continue on highway 34 east 3.7 miles (6 km) past the city limits to Waterloo. Be certain to take the second Waterloo turnoff (don't take first turnoff to Waterloo Park); turn left at the McDowell Creek Falls Park sign. Follow the paved road 8.2 miles (13 km) to the park.



*Smilacina stellata*  
**Star-flowered Solomon's Seal**

County and regional recreational areas



## ***Alsea Falls Recreation Area***

This 26 acre Bureau of Land Management recreation area is on the South Fork of the Alsea River 8.6 miles (13.8 km) south of Alsea, and 9.3 miles (15 km) west of Alpine. The site has a short walking trail, 22 picnic sites, water, restrooms, and a 16 site campground. The campground and maintained facilities are open from May 15 to September 30.

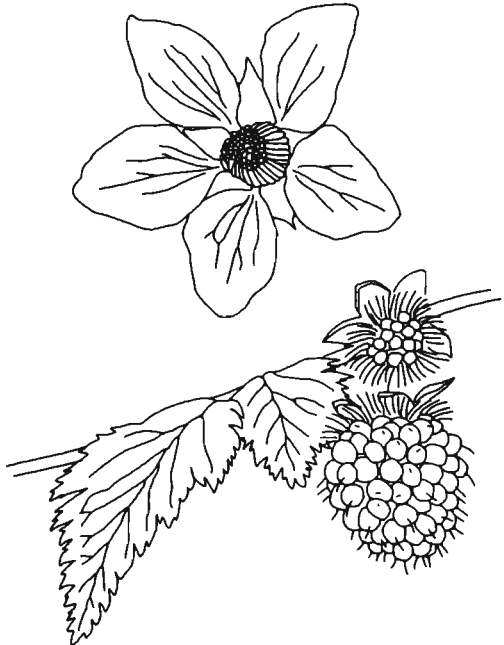
A short trail winds along the bank of the South Fork of the Alsea River, passing through riparian vegetation, and ending below Alsea Falls. Another trail crosses the river below the falls and leads to McBee Park and Green Peak Falls downstream.

### ***Alsea Falls Trail***

<b>Distance:</b>	0.6 mi. (1.0 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	30 ft (10 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Campground or picnic area parking lots		

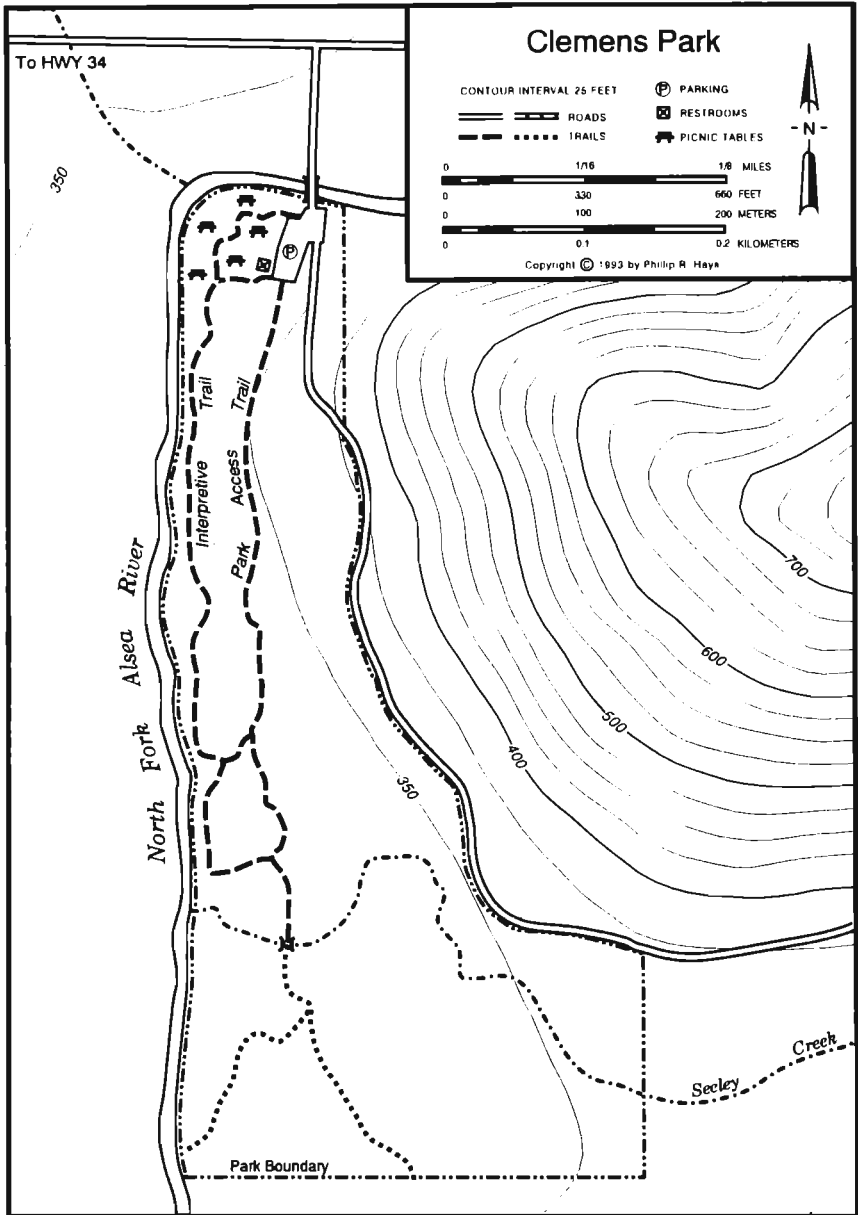
You may start at the larger picnic area parking lot, or at a small parking area at the entrance to the campground. The trail is easy to follow, but it has one short dead-end branch at a sharp bend just south of the picnic area. The trail surface in the picnic area is barrier-free, smooth and covered with packed gravel. Outside the picnic area it is narrower, steeper, and has numerous roots and other low obstacles. At the north end the trail makes a short but steep descent over some rough stone steps to the edge of the river below the falls.

This is a pleasant easy walk, with spring wildflowers, the sounds of the river, and the waterfall. It is an excellent place for a picnic on a hot summer day.



*Rubus spectabilis*  
**Salmonberry**





## Clemens Park

This Benton County park has a short walking trail that winds along the bank of the North Fork of the Alsea River and loops back to the parking lot. This place is especially nice in the spring, when native wildflowers cover the ground in the riparian woodland. An interpretive trail parallels the North Fork of the Alsea River; a brochure available at an information kiosk at the parking lot explains the numbered marker posts along the trail. Tables, fireplaces and restrooms near the parking lot make this a good picnic spot.

The land for this park was donated to Benton County in 1968 by Rex and Ethel Clemens so the area would be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

### Clemens Park Loop

<b>Distance:</b>	0.7 mi. (1.1 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	10 ft (3 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	at the parking area off Oregon Highway 34		

From the corner of the parking lot near the information kiosk or the corner near the restrooms, follow the trail through the picnic area to the Interpretive Trail. This trail passes through lush riparian (river) vegetation, and is an excellent place to observe spring wildflowers. The interpretive brochure explains the different kinds of vegetation and habitat that the trail passes through.

At about 1/4 mile (400 meters) a short side trail connects to the Park Access Trail, and a short distance beyond this the Interpretive Trail loops back to join the Park Access Trail at a bridge over Seeley Creek. The Park Access Trail returns to the parking area; this trail is a wide barrier-free hard-packed gravel access road.

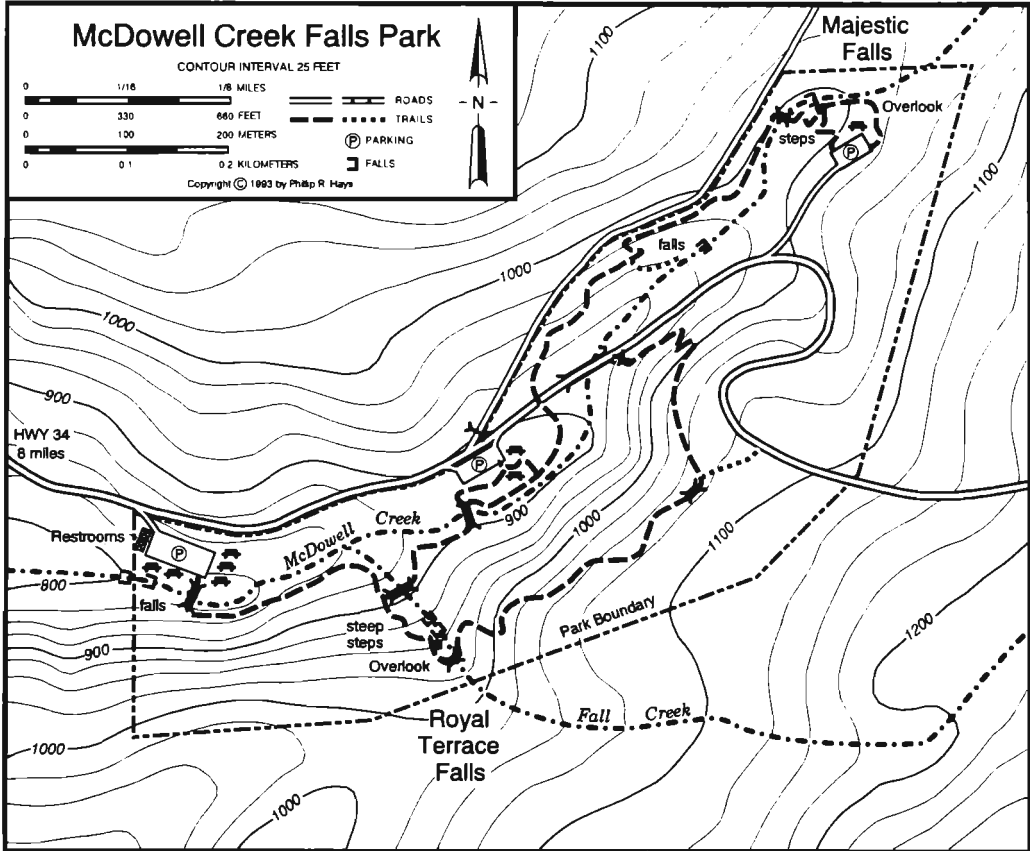
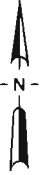
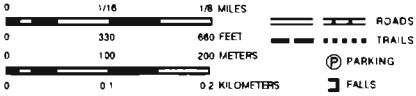
Across the bridge an unmaintained trail forks, with the right branch leading to the river, and the left fork continuing to the south end of the park. These trails may be quite muddy after rains.



*Maianthemum dilatatum*  
**False Lily-of-the-Valley**

# McDowell Creek Falls Park

CONTOUR INTERVAL 25 FEET



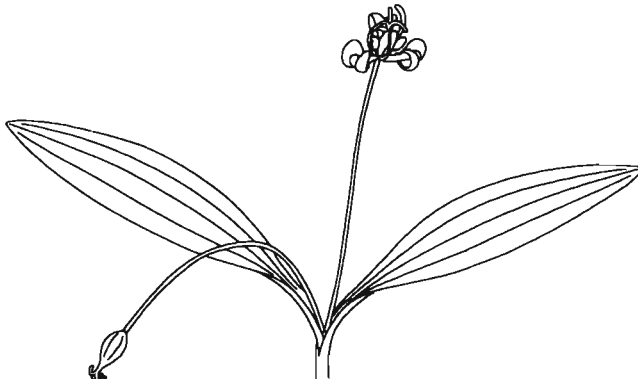
## **McDowell Creek Falls Park**

McDowell Creek Falls Park is one of the hidden jewels lying in the foothills of the old Cascades north of Sweet Home. The park is in a deep valley containing two large waterfalls, many smaller falls and pools; the falls fill the valley with mist, and even in late summer, after long periods of drought, water may be dripping from the thick coat of moss covering the trees. The valley is home to an outstanding collection of riparian (streamside) wildflowers. The flowers are most impressive from late March through May. If you are quiet and watch closely you may see dippers (Water Ouzel, *Cinclus mexicanus*) "flying" in the pools along the stream.

The park has ample parking, picnic tables, restrooms and two trails complete with overlook platforms offering superb views of the waterfalls. Three paved parking areas (lower, middle and upper) are connected by the Main Trail, with bridges over the creeks and well-constructed steps leading from the upper viewing platform at Majestic Falls to a lower platform at the base of the falls. Drinking water is not available in the park, but restrooms are located at the lower parking lot. All three parking areas have picnic tables. Do not leave valuables in sight in your car.

The main trail has a fairly smooth barrier free surface of packed gravel at the lower end; the upper end has a much rougher surface, and a steep set of stairs below Majestic Falls. The High Trail has a very steep set of steps of rough stone at the west end, and is very steep at the east end.

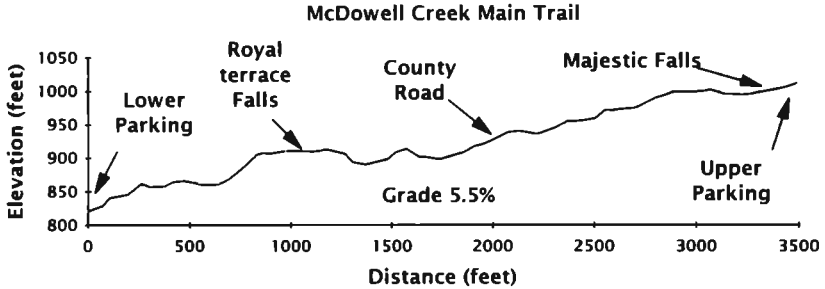
The park is maintained by the Linn County Parks and Recreation Commission. Even though it is all the way across the Willamette Valley, it is only 31.5 miles (50 km) from downtown Corvallis, an easy 45 minute drive. Perhaps I am stretching it a bit by including the park in the "Corvallis area," but this place is too good to pass by!



*Scoliopus hallii*  
**Fetid Adder's Tongue**

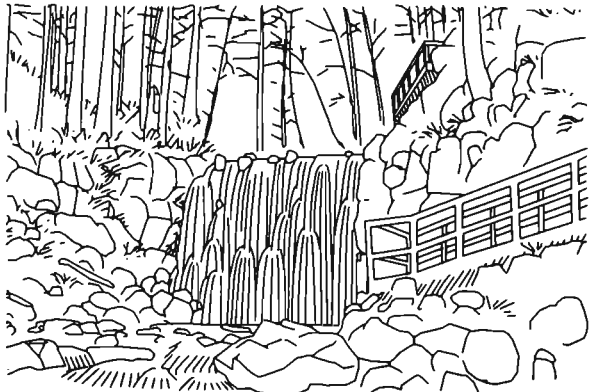
### **McDowell Creek Main Trail**

**Distance:** 0.7 mi (1.1 km)      **Trail rating:** easy (see text)  
**Elevation gain:** 1012 ft (308 m)      **Grade:** 5.5%  
**Trail use:** foot      **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** all three parking areas



This trail parallels McDowell Creek, running the length of the park from the lower parking area to the upper. Short (but steep) trails connect to the middle parking area. Wide, sturdy bridges cross McDowell Creek and Fall Creek, with wooden stairs (69 steps) climbing from the bottom to the top of 40 ft. (12 m) Majestic Falls. A 15' x 20' viewing platform hangs over the top of Majestic Falls, and a smaller ramp offers an excellent view of the falls from below. The bridge below Royal Terrace Falls offers an excellent view of this 119 ft. (36 m) cascade.

The trail climbs from the lower parking area at a very gentle grade of about 5.5%, but a steep climb up about 50 ft. (15 m) of steps below Majestic Falls may be too much for some. The trail descending from the upper parking area at Majestic Falls to the lower parking area should be manageable by all but the most frail. The trail south of the county road is covered with packed small gravel and the bridges have sloping ramps, so it should be manageable by wheelchair; however, the access trails to the middle parking area are quite steep. An alternate route follows the paved county road from the middle parking area to where the trail crosses the road; from there descend along the trail to the lower parking lot.

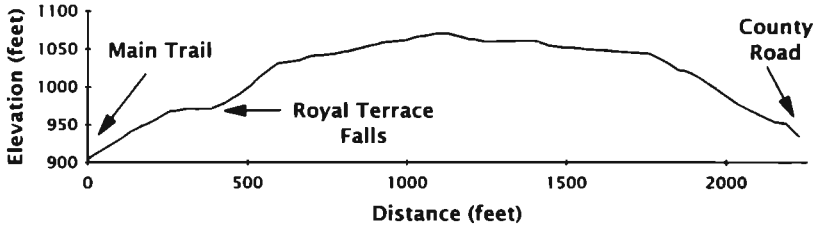


**Majestic Falls**

**McDowell Creek High Trail**

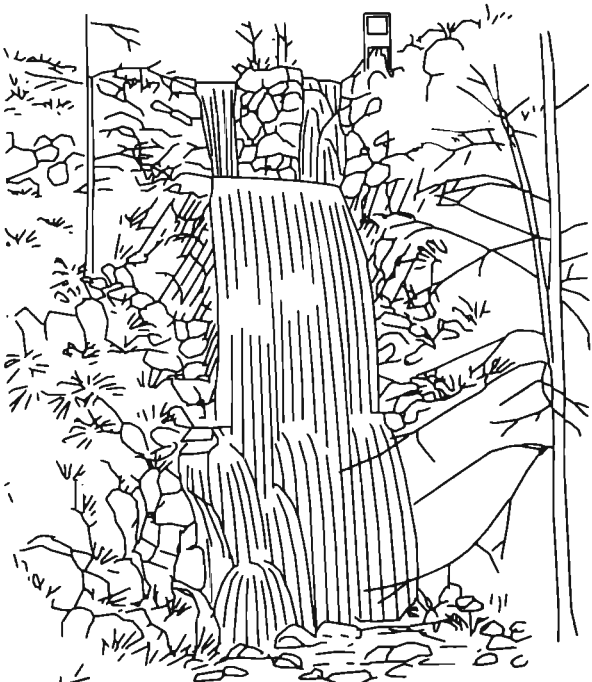
**Distance:** 0.4 mi (0.68 km)    **Trail rating:** demanding  
**Elevation gain:** 935 ft (285 m)    **Grade:** 24%-27% in places  
**Trail use:** foot    **Open for use:** year round, when dry  
**Start:** main trail or county road

McDowell Creek High Trail



This trail offers an alternate loop and a fine view from a small platform at the top of Royal Terrace Falls. However, it is not as well maintained as the main trail, and steep climbs at both ends make it accessible only to the most fit. Rough stone stairs (123 steps) lead upward at a very steep 27% grade to the viewing platform. The climb is worth the effort, for this waterfall is divided into two main parts; the upper falls drops 20 ft. (6 m) into a secluded pool, and the stream pours from there another 100 ft. (30 m) to splash upon rocks at the bottom.

From the top of the falls the trail leads upward through woods to a small bridge over a marshy area complete with skunk cabbage. From there it descends steeply to join the county road at the east end of the bridge across McDowell Creek. The eastern end of this trail has a very steep 24% grade, and the short bridge across the deep ditch at the road edge was missing in 1992.

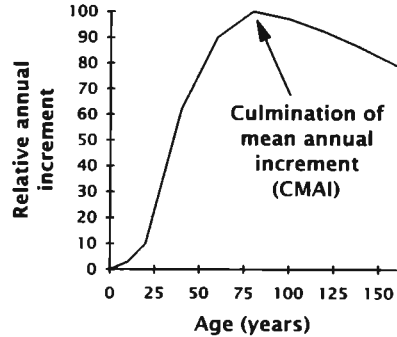


**Royal Terrace Falls**

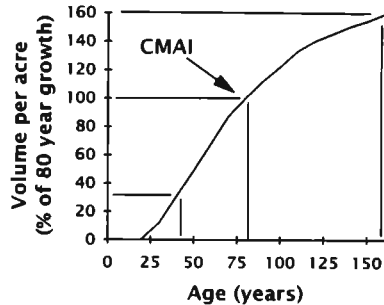
## Timber Management

How do foresters determine when to harvest trees? Some companies cut timber to feed their mills, and others schedule harvests to produce a favorable quarterly profit for stockholders. Some follow good forestry practices and manage their lands for maximum sustainable yield (maximum wood products, jobs and long term profit). Here are some basic principles of timber management.

The **annual increment** is the amount of wood added each year. In an average western Oregon plantation the greatest increase occurs at about 80 years; at some places it occurs earlier, and some peak much later. Small, evenly spaced trees with lots of room and plenty of sunshine grow rapidly. When they get larger they compete for soil nutrients and shade each other from the sun, so their rate of growth slows. The stage at which they reach their maximum growth rate is the **culmination of mean annual increment (CMAI)**.



The second graph shows the relationship between plantation age and the volume of harvestable wood (relative to that of an 80 year old stand at CMAI). A 160 year old stand has 160% of the volume of an 80 year stand, but a 40 year stand has only 31%. The yield from two successive 80 year harvests will be 20% greater than the harvest from a single 160 year old stand. Two 40 year rotations produce only 60% of the volume of a single 80 year crop.



Successive harvests at CMAI theoretically produce the greatest amount of wood product (and the most jobs). Other considerations, such as wood quality, desired log size, and investment costs may influence harvest decisions. All of this is based upon the assumption that the soil can support repeated harvests. This premise has never been proven for trees, and it is not true for other crops, so it may not be possible to sustain yield with rotations as short as 80 years.

# **MCDONALD FOREST**

## **Oregon State University College of Forestry**

McDonald Forest is a large (more than 7000 acres) publicly owned open space immediately north of Corvallis. It is a prize recreational resource; very few communities are so fortunate to have such a resource. The property is managed by the College of Forestry of Oregon State University. It is a research forest, where OSU scientists study everything from timber harvesting methods to butterfly reproduction.

Recreation is an important part of the management plan for McDonald Forest. The College of Forestry recreation staff has supervised construction of eight miles of foot trails, and manages 60 miles of road and multiple use trails. The forest is open year round, except when closed because of fire hazard during extreme drought. Campfires and camping are not allowed in the forest. Permits are required for firewood cutting, plant collection, and motor vehicle access.

The College of Forestry has conducted research to determine the extent of recreational use of McDonald Forest. At least one person in 80% of Corvallis households has visited the forest, and about 90% of users live within 10 miles of the forest. The forest has about 35,000 visits each year, and use is increasing. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the use is by walkers and hikers, nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  is by mountain bikers, and equestrians make up about 2%. Most travel alone, or with a single companion.

A citizens Trails Advisory Committee makes recommendations for trail locations and other recreational facilities, and volunteers from the community help build and maintain a growing trail system. You can help the research staff and citizen volunteers by staying on routes designated for your mode of travel (foot, bike, horse). *Please* stay off muddy trails to reduce erosion damage (join the volunteer trail crew and you will understand why)! Off-road/trail travel is permitted, but you should try to cause the minimum impact upon the land; try not to trample vegetation, and do not create new trails. Of course, you can volunteer for trail construction and maintenance, and help improve recreational opportunities in McDonald Forest (for information call 745-6332 extension 8 or 5).



*Trillium ovatum*  
**Wood Lily**



## McDonald Forest

I have divided McDonald Forest into five areas, based upon geographic features and entrance points. Each area is covered in a separate section; adjacent areas overlap. Each section has a detailed topographic contour map and a "3D" aerial view. The accompanying locator map shows the relationship of these areas.

The Oak Creek area is accessed by following Oak Creek Drive west from the intersection with Harrison, 53rd, and Walnut; after 2 miles (3.2 km) you will come to the junction with Cardwell Hills Road. Turn right and follow Oak Creek Drive one mile (1.6 km) to the gate at the parking area.

The Jackson Creek area is accessed from two points. The first is Chip Ross Park; follow Highland Drive north to Lester Ave., turn left (west) and continue to the parking area. The Chip Ross Park map (City Parks section) shows the trails leading into McDonald Forest. Another access point is Lewisburg Saddle. Follow Highland Drive to the intersection with Lewisburg Road, turn left (west), and after a short distance turn right onto Sulphur Springs Road. Follow this road to the parking area at the crest of the ridge.

The Vineyard Mountain area also is accessed from Lewisburg Saddle.

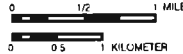
For outings in the Soap Creek area, continue on Sulphur Springs Road past Lewisburg Saddle and down into Soap Creek Valley. Continue straight at the junction with Soap Creek Road until you come to the gate across Sulphur Springs Road.

To get to Peavy Arboretum, drive north on US Highway 99W one mile (1.6 km) past Lewisburg, and turn left (west) onto Arboretum Road. Continue for 0.8 mile (1.3 km) to the entrance to the arboretum on the left (west) side of the road.

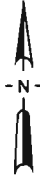
In the Oak Creek and Soap Creek areas some roads and trails pass out of McDonald Forest and into private lands owned by Starker Forests, Inc. The company requested inclusion of the following statement:

*Starker Forests welcomes visitors and issues permits to hikers, bikers, horse riders, hunters and fishermen at our Corvallis office at 7240 SW Philomath Blvd., weekdays, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. We encourage recreational users to visit our other forests as well as those near McDonald Forest. During periods of high fire danger and certain harvesting or construction activities, we may restrict access to our lands. While visiting our property you will notice the constantly changing vistas of managed forests. We ask visitors to help us protect our lands by not smoking, littering or causing erosion. Permission to enter Starker property does not allow one to also enter adjoining private lands. Please be aware of where you are at all times.*

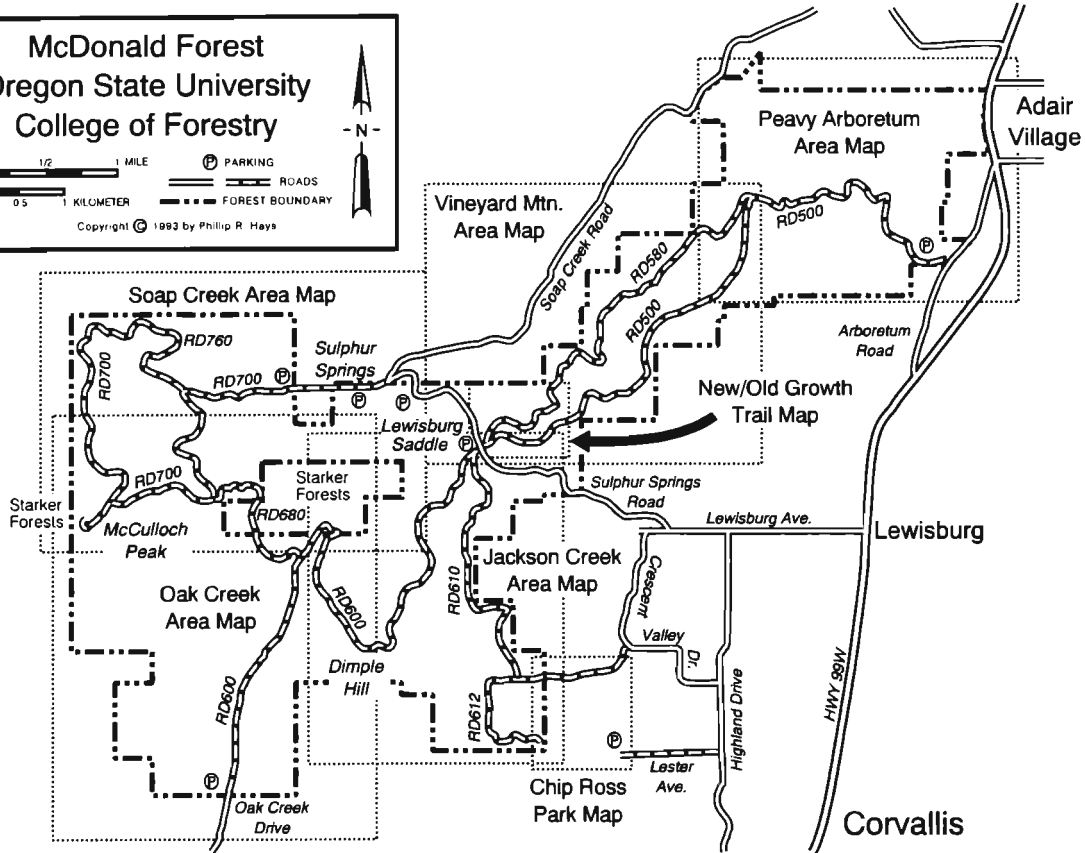
McDonald Forest  
Oregon State University  
College of Forestry



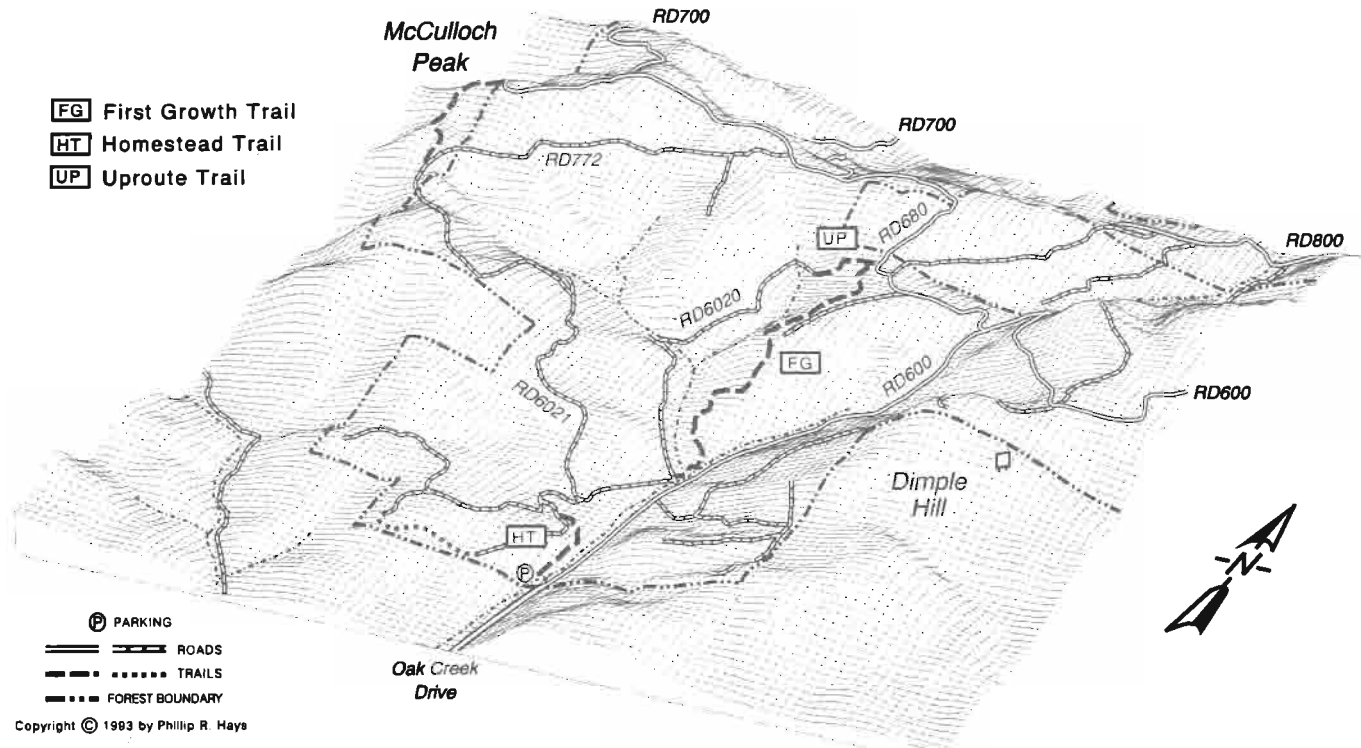
PARKING  
ROADS  
FOREST BOUNDARY



Copyright © 1993 by Phillip R. Hays

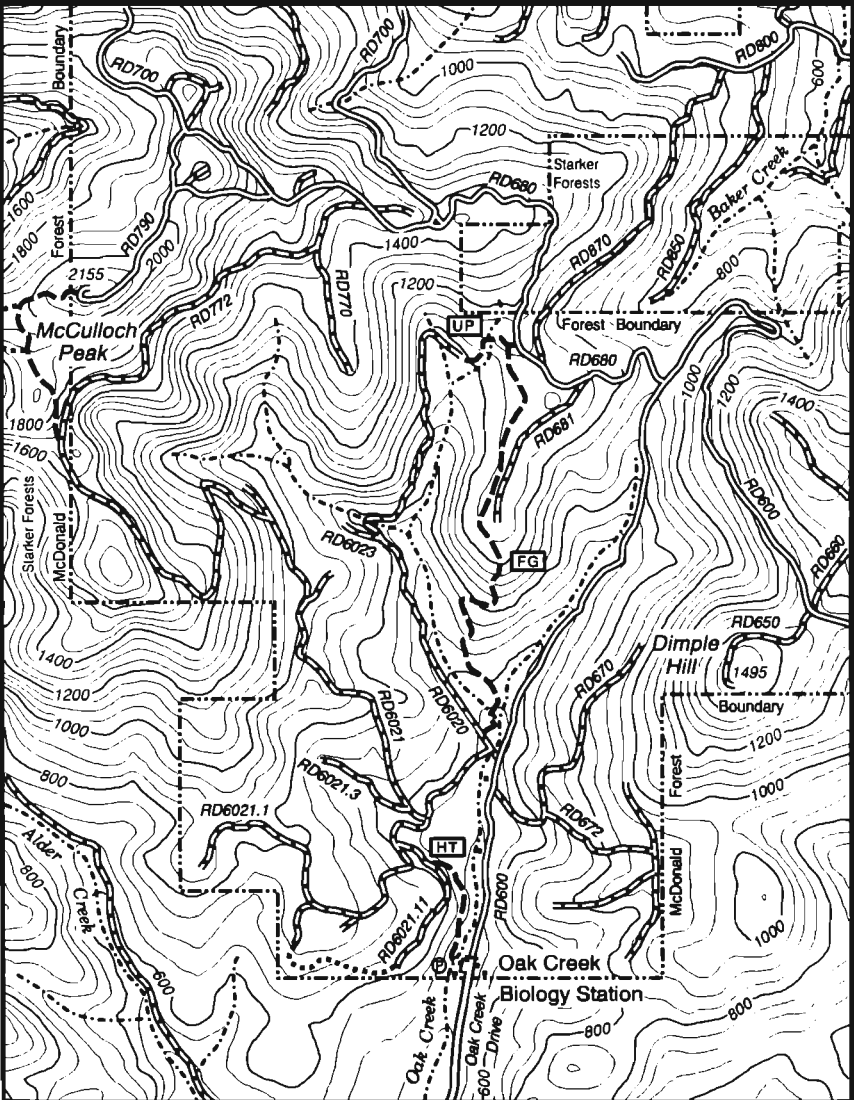
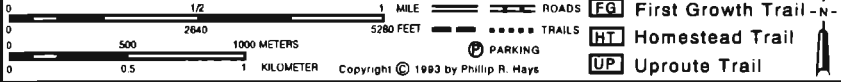


# McDonald Forest Oak Creek Area



# McDonald Forest Oak Creek Area

CONTOUR INTERVAL 50 FEET



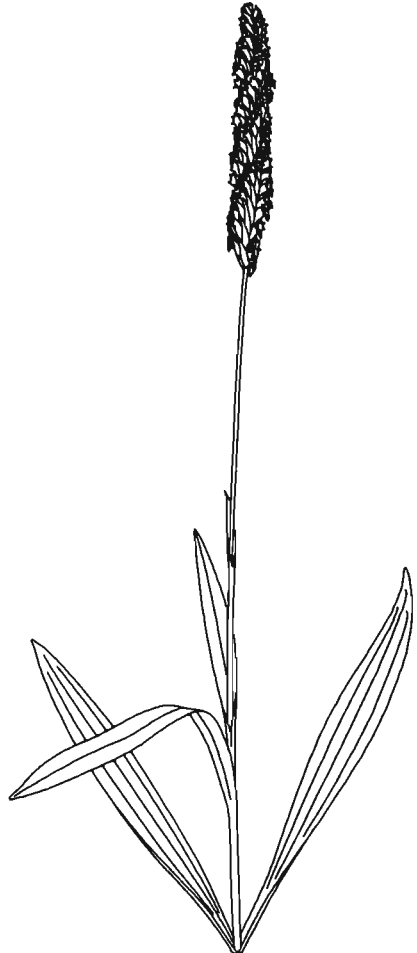
## McDonald Forest Oak Creek Area

The Oak Creek area is the most popular entry point into McDonald Forest. The area is used by walkers, hikers, joggers, equestrians and mountain bikers, and on some days the traffic on RD600 is relatively heavy. The main attractions in this area are the Oak Creek riparian (stream side) areas, Dimple Hill and McCulloch Peak. Oak Creek is home to many native plants, fish, birds and mammals, and is a good place for nature watching. The vistas from Dimple Hill and McCulloch Peak are superb.

The collection of roads and trails in Oak Creek valley allow you to make many different trips, of varying degrees of difficulty, including many loops. The College of Forestry has plans to construct several new trails and improve existing routes to provide an even greater range of outdoor experiences.

Research is an important part of the activities in McDonald Forest. Oak Creek Biology Laboratory at the end of Oak Creek Drive is operated by the Oregon State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. The original buildings were constructed about 1940 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Several other OSU research projects are located along Oak Creek and RD600. Some monitor stream sediment and rock movement in the creek. Others monitor insects, animals and plant growth in the valley, and various aspects of forest growth. Several weather stations are located in the valley, and one experiment studies the effect of weather on building materials. The large experimental structures are obvious, but some other experiments use materials as inconspicuous as orange juice cartons. It may look like trash or junk to you, but may have a non-obvious purpose.

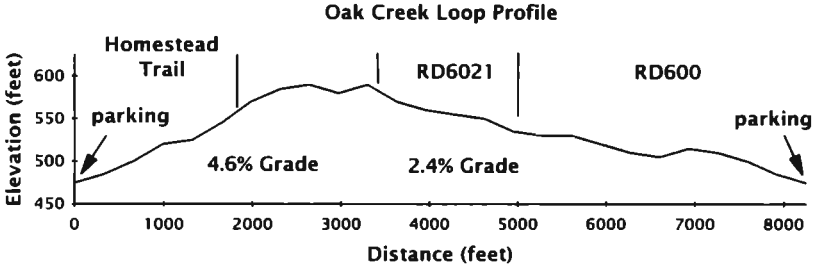
**Please do not disturb  
experimental equipment.**



*Spiranthes romanzoffiana*  
**Hooded Ladies-tresses**

## Oak Creek Loop

<b>Distance:</b>	1.6 mi. (2.5 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	115 ft. (35 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	4.6%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	all year
<b>Start:</b>	Oak Creek Drive parking area		



This is an easy short walk that can be managed by nearly everyone. It makes a loop around the lower Oak Creek area, passing through woods and meadows. It is a good place for a stroll with children, or to walk the dog. It is advisable to keep dogs on a leash, for there are deer and other wild animals in the area. Dogs sometimes make the mistake of getting too close to porcupines, which are very common here, and their curiosity may be rewarded with a face full of quills.

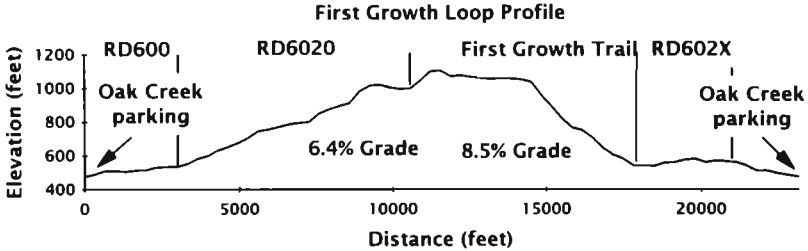
As with most loops, you can take this one either way. Arbitrarily, I'll describe the west side first, and return by RD600. The **Homestead Trail** starts at the Oak Creek Drive parking area, and runs west across a substantial bridge over Oak Creek. This is an all-weather multi-purpose trail, constructed in part with volunteer help. The trail winds through woods for 0.4 miles (0.6 km) to connect with the road system on the west side of Oak Creek. An off-road interpretive trail has been proposed along the west bank of Oak Creek; this would lead across the meadows to the junction of RD6020 and RD6021.

The route follows old road RD6021.11 a short distance and joins RD6021.1. A few hundred yards (meters) further you come to the "T" junction of RD6021.1 and RD6021 (aren't road numbers great -- just remember to turn right at each junction). Follow RD6021 for 0.3 mile (0.5 km) to the junction with RD6020; the **First Growth Trail** joins RD6020 near this junction, if you are looking for a longer trip. Turn right onto RD6020, and after a short distance right again onto RD600 to return to the Oak Creek Drive parking area.

About 0.4 miles (0.7 km) from the gate at the parking area you will notice an odd-looking wooden structure in an open field on the east side of the road. This is an experimental exposure fence. Different materials, with a variety of finishes, have been placed here to monitor the long-term effects of weathering. Along the creek are several structures for monitoring stream sediment.

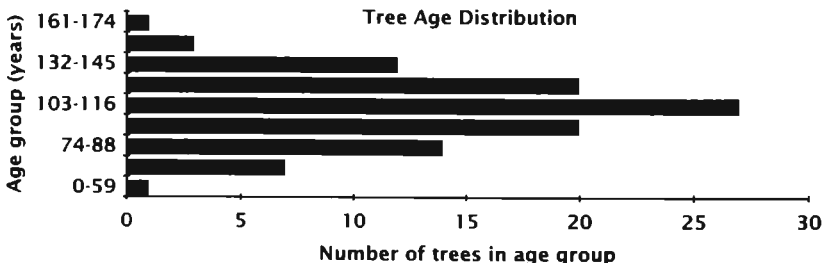
**First Growth Trail**

**Distance:** 4.4 mi. (7 km) loop    **Trail rating:** moderate  
**Elevation gain:** 630 ft. (192 m)    **Grade:** 6.4% to 8.5%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike, horse    **Open for use:** seasonal, when dry  
**Start:** Oak Creek Drive parking area



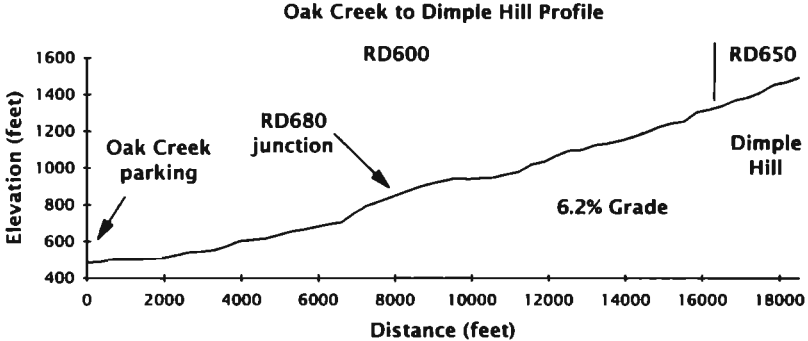
Follow RD600 for 0.5 mile (0.8 km) to the RD6020 junction. Turn left and follow this road for 1.5 miles (2.4 km) to the end. Take the **Uproute Trail** connecting RD6020 to RD680 to the top of the ridge and turn right on the **First Growth Trail**. Follow the trail downhill to return to RD6020. If you prefer you can return by the west side of the Oak Creek Loop.

*The trail down the ridge is called "Extendo" by mountain bikers. I call it the "First Growth Trail" because the forest here is new. Until 150 years ago this was a grassy meadow. The Kalapuya population native to this area regularly burned the Willamette Valley to kill off young trees to keep fields open for their wild plant crops and to maintain forage for native animals. After settlers homesteaded the valley, regular burning stopped and forests started spreading into grassland. There is a small stand of native forest on the west side of the ridge that survived the annual fires; it was the seed source for the spread of the forest onto the ridge. The chart shows the age distribution of the trees harvested in the 1985 clearcut on RD681, with ages adjusted for 1993. The average age of these trees is about 107 years, and the oldest tree started growing more than 160 years ago.*



**Oak Creek to Dimple Hill**

<b>Distance:</b>	3.5 mi. (5.6 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	1020 ft. (310 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	6.2%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Oak Creek Drive parking area		



This is an easy route to Dimple Hill. The road is not steep, but the 7 mile (11 km) round trip may be too long for some. This is a nice walk on a warm spring day, and the top of the hill is an excellent place for a picnic. Winter snows occasionally are deep enough for cross-country skiing. Cyclists may want to return to town via RD600 and Sulphur Springs Road (see the Jackson Creek area map), or continue on RD500 from Lewisburg Saddle (Vineyard Mountain area map) to Peavy Arboretum (Peavy Arboretum area map) and return to town by Highway 99W.

From the Oak Creek Drive parking area follow RD600 nearly all the way, passing the RD6020 junction at 0.5 miles (0.8 km), and the RD680 junction at 1.7 miles (2.7 km). About 3 miles (5 km) up the road you will come to a four-way junction of RD600, RD650 (right) and RD660 (left). Turn right onto RD650 and climb to the top of Dimple Hill. A short, but steep trail leads up the north side of the hill from the road, if you are tired of walking on gravel and would like to get off-road for a while.

*Several trails run down the south face of the hill across private land. Some of this land is posted "no trespassing."*

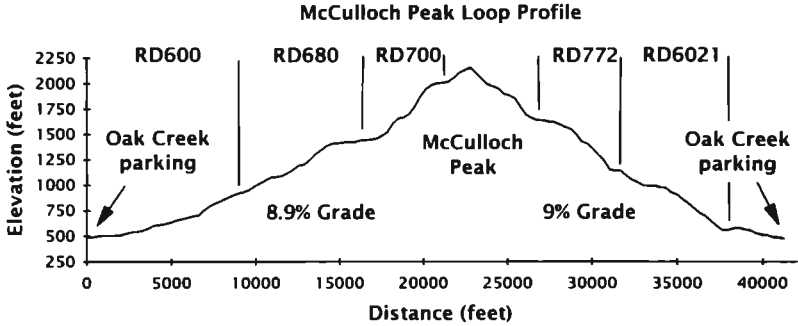


*Campanula scouleri*  
**Scouler's Harebell**



### McCulloch Peak Loop

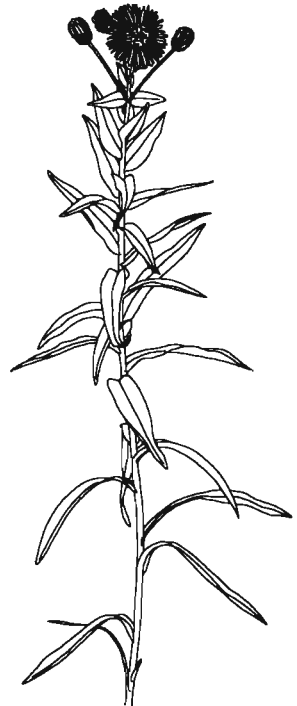
**Distance:** 7.8 mi. (12.6 km) loop    **Trail rating:** demanding  
**Elevation gain:** 1680 ft. (512 m)    **Grade:** 9%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike, horse    **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** Oak Creek Drive parking area



This route up McCulloch Peak a test of endurance for bikers, a good climb for horses, and a long walk for hikers. Road conditions are much better for climbing (by any means) on RD680 and RD700. To make up for the poorer road conditions, the downhill route passes through a collection of meadows and forests, and makes a much more pleasant trip.

From the Oak Creek parking area follow RD600 1.7 miles (2.7 km) to the RD680 junction. Turn left on RD680 and climb for 1.5 miles (2.4 km) to the RD700 junction (you could also take RD6020 and/or the First Growth Trail to get to RD680). Turn left on RD700 and climb for 0.7 mile (1.2 km) to the junction with RD790. Turn left and follow this road 0.4 mile (0.7 km) to the top of McCulloch Peak.

The return trip follows an unofficial trail that leads through Starker Forest lands west from the peak for about 1000 feet (300 m), then turns left, then left again in another 600 feet (180 m), and descends to RD772 (or RD6021) in McDonald Forest. Continue on RD772 for 1.1 miles (1.8 km) to RD6021, and follow this road 1 mile (1.7 km) to the "T" junction with RD6021.1. Turn right onto RD6021.1, then left onto RD6021.11, and left again onto the Homestead Trail to return to the Oak Creek Drive parking lot.



*Erigeron speciosus*  
**Showy Fleabane**

## Jackson Creek Area

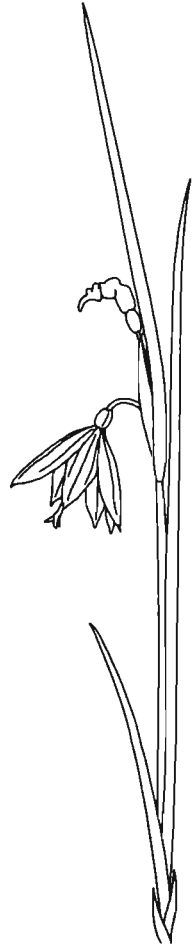
Dimple Hill is the main attraction in this part of McDonald Forest. This is the prominent hill northwest of town, with a large open meadow on the south side. The view from the top includes Corvallis and Philomath, the Willamette Valley south to Eugene and Fern Ridge Reservoir, Marys Peak and the Coast Range, and the southern Cascades. This hill originally was called Jackson Hill by early settlers, Baldy by others, and was named Mitzie Point by people in the College of Forestry. The name Dimple Hill may have been given originally to the hill that is now known as Chip Ross Park. Later, when that hill became known as IV Hill, the name Dimple Hill was transferred to the higher hill to the west.

The name Jackson Hill came from the first settlers in the upper end of Jackson Creek valley, today a part of McDonald Forest. The original homestead was near the fork of the creek at the site known today as Jackson Place. The house that stands there today is used by the College of Forestry.

A century ago the ridge from Peavy Arboretum to Dimple Hill was open meadow, with a few scattered trees and small patches of forest nestled in valleys. Regular burning by the native Kalapuyans kept the fields open. After settlers moved into the area the burning stopped, and the forest slowly spread over the hillsides. The meadow on Dimple Hill and a few smaller meadows are all that remain.

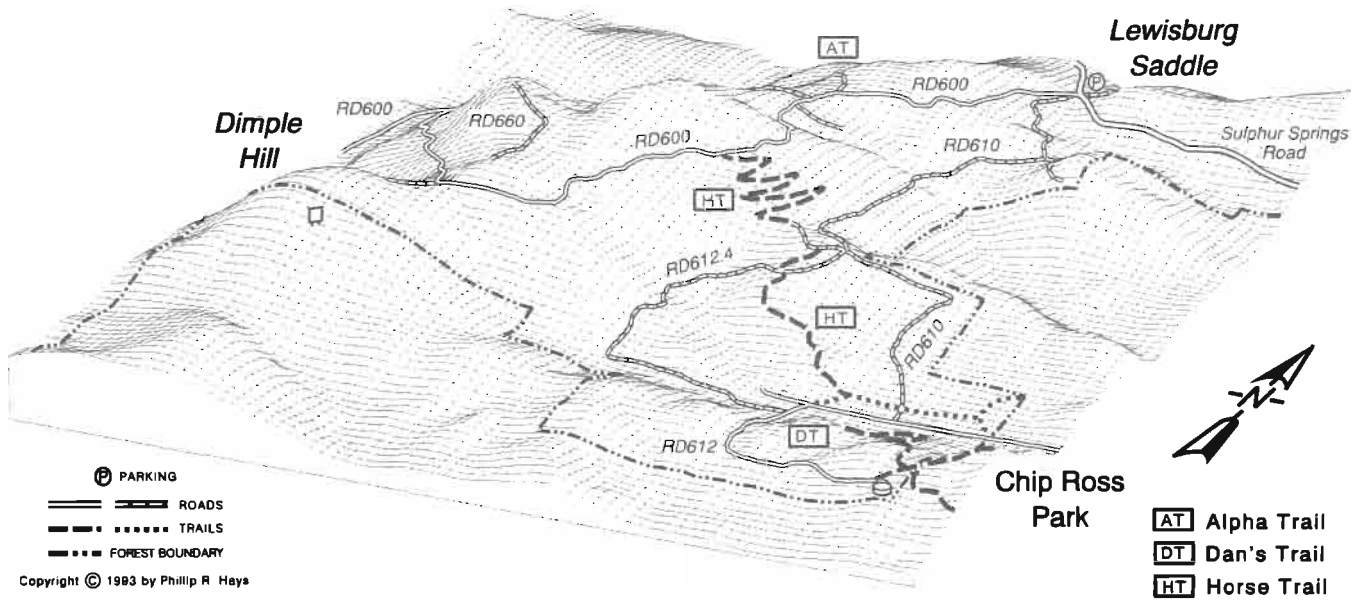
One of the consequences is the loss of habitat for species adapted for sunny grassy prairies. As habitat was reduced, their numbers dwindled, and some have disappeared from the Corvallis area. Grass widow (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*) is a species once common but no longer found here. The last reported specimen was seen in 1948 on Coffin Butte. This relative of the iris has bright reddish-purple tulip-like flowers. Once found from Puget Sound to California, it survives in Oregon in the Columbia River Gorge and in parts of Douglas County. It is no longer found in the Willamette Valley.

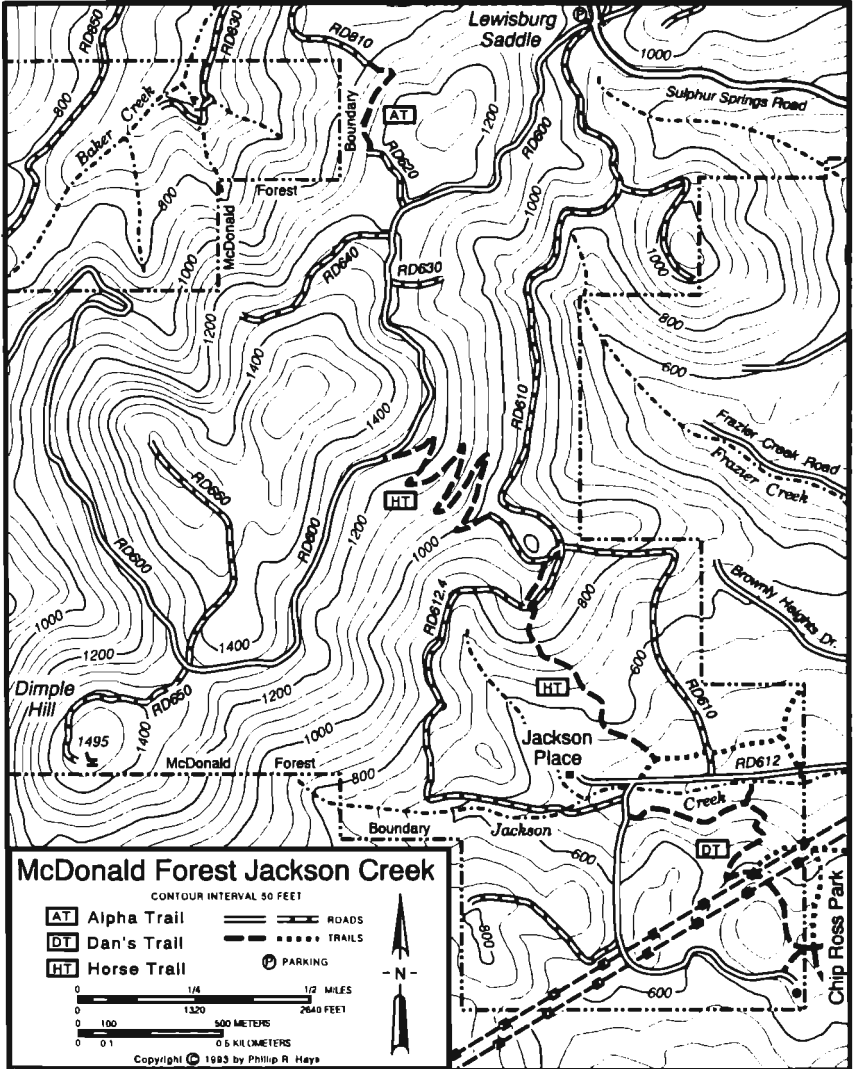
Jackson and Frazier Creeks flow out of McDonald Forest, across Crescent Valley, and into the Jackson-Frazier Wetland. This is one of the last intact wetlands in the Willamette Valley. For it to survive, the flow of water from the two creeks must not be interrupted by logging operations in McDonald Forest, or farming and urbanization in Crescent Valley. Plans to protect the wetland are pointless unless the flow of water that makes it a wetland is also protected.



*Sisyrinchium  
douglasii*  
**Grass Widow**

# McDonald Forest Jackson Creek Area

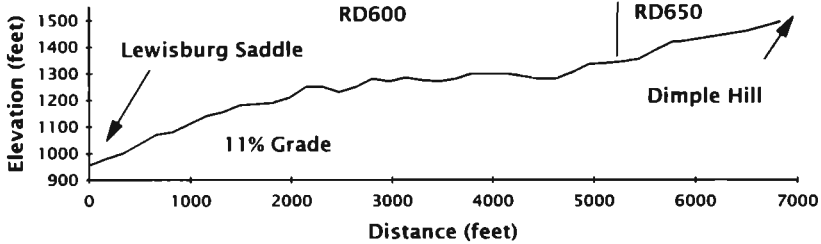




### Lewisburg Saddle to Dimple Hill

<b>Distance:</b>	1.3 mi. (2.1 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	540 ft. (165 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	11%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	all year
<b>Start:</b>	Lewisburg Saddle		

Lewisburg Saddle to Dimple Hill Profile



This is the easiest route to Dimple Hill. From Lewisburg Saddle go southwest past the orange gate. You come immediately to the junction of RD600 (right) and RD610 (left). Follow Patterson Road (RD600) for 1 mile (1.6 km) to the four-way junction of RD600, RD660 (right) and FD650 (left). Turn left onto RD650 and follow it around the north and west sides of Dimple Hill to the top.

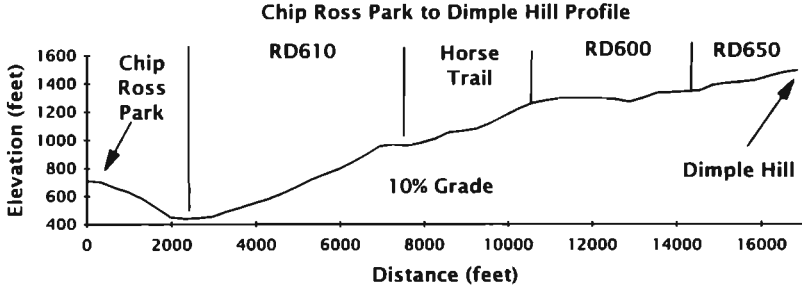
*Ten years ago this hilltop was one of the nicest places on Earth. It was covered with dense native forest, with an ankle-deep carpet of thick green grass beneath the trees. Orchids, lilies, violets and many other wildflowers blossomed here in spring, and young redtail hawks learned to fly on its slopes in summer. The dense tree canopy and thick grass made a perfect place for a cool picnic on hot days. It was not possible for humans to improve the place!*

*In 1986 the OSU College of Forestry clearcut the forest on the west slope at the top, and in subsequent years stripped the trees from the remainder of the west side. Roads and landings were gouged into the hill, making it possible for vehicles to drive to the top and destroy what remains of the meadows. Without the shade of the trees the hilltop bakes under the summer sun; the soil has dried and the wildflowers are mostly gone. Blackberry, thistle and poison oak are invading the clearcut. In a relentless effort to totally destroy this once perfect place the College is hauling away the hilltop truckload at a time from an ever-growing quarry.*

*Nowhere is there a better example that people who measure the value of land by the profit they can take from it are completely unfit to determine the fate of our nation's most precious open space. When you visit Dimple Hill, ask yourself this: were society's best interests served here?*

**Chip Ross Park to Dimple Hill via Horse Trail**

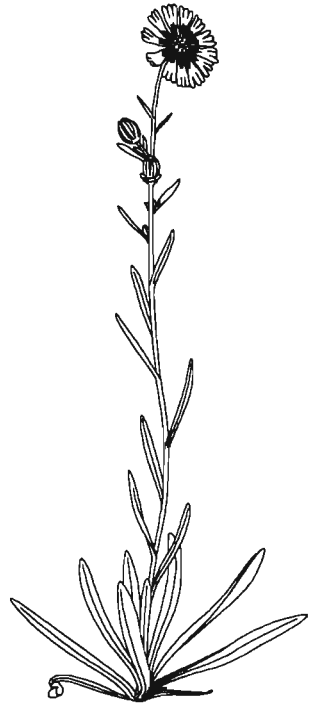
<b>Distance:</b>	3.2 mi. (5.1 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	1050 ft. (320 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	10%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	West side of Chip Ross Park		



This route starts at the west end of Chip Ross Park (see the Chip Ross Park map), crosses Jackson Creek Valley, climbs the ridge north of the valley, and follows RD600 and RD650 to the top of Dimple Hill.

Starting at the west end of the park at the entrance to McDonald Forest, follow the start of **Dan's Trail** (see next page) down into Jackson Creek Valley. A short side trail crosses a culvert over Jackson Creek, leading to RD612. The lower part of **Horse Trail** parallels RD612, then winds through woods and meadows up the hillside to RD600 near the top of the ridge line. After rains, when the lower part of the trail is muddy, you can follow gravel road RD610 part of the way, and then join the trail. Turn left onto RD600 and follow it 0.75 mile (1.2 km) to the four way junction with RD660 and RD650. Turn left (south) onto RD650 and follow it to the hill top.

*The upper part of Horse Trail was constructed with the help of volunteers in fall 1992 and spring 1993 to provide a link between RD610 and RD600, making a fairly straight route from the park to the road along the ridge line. It is an official (maintained) trail that replaces a former unofficial trail that climbed straight up the hillside. The route has been used by equestrians for decades, and is also used extensively by cyclists.*

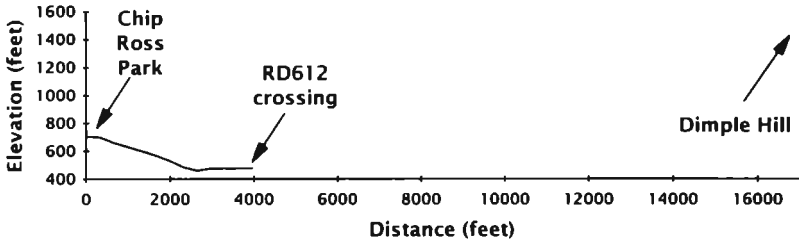


*Madia elegans*  
**Showy Tarweed**

### **Dan's Trail from Chip Ross Park to Dimple Hill**

<b>Distance:</b>	to be determined	<b>Trail rating:</b>	to be determined
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	1050 ft. (320 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	to be determined
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	West side of Chip Ross Park		

Dan's Trail Profile



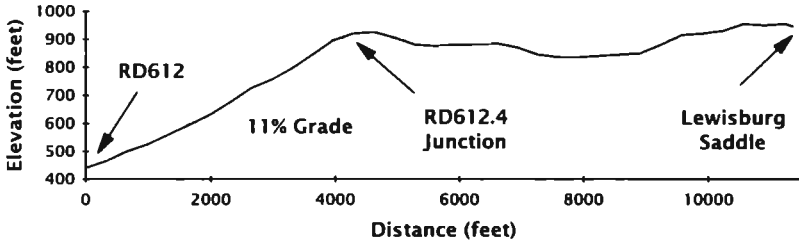
*This is a trail in the making. The existing route to Dimple Hill leaves much to be desired, but the shortcomings are being overcome with the help of volunteer trail building crews. A new trail is planned for a more direct route from Chip Ross Park to Dimple Hill. Part of this route already has been constructed. The trail will cross RD612 near the junction with RD612.4, and climb the ridge west of Jackson Place up the east side of Dimple Hill. Existing trails will provide a loop for the return trip.*

*The new trail may be named **Dan's Trail**, after Dan Petrequin, a member of the McDonald Forest Trails Advisory Committee who put in many hours helping build trails throughout McDonald Forest. I first met him in the mid 1970s, on a sunny spring day on top of Dimple Hill. He was an equestrian, and the hill was a favorite destination. After his untimely death in 1992, the Trails Committee voted to name this all-season multiple use (hikers, bikers and equestrians) trail after Dan. It will be the finest trail in the Corvallis Area.*

**If you would like to be one of the volunteers building Dan's Trail and more than a dozen other trails planned for McDonald Forest, call the Research Forests Office at 745-6332 ext. 8 or 5. The more volunteers we have the sooner the new trail network will be completed.**

**Chip Ross Park to Lewisburg Saddle via RD610**

**Distance:** 2.1 mi. (3.5 km)      **Trail rating:** easy  
**Elevation gain:** 500 ft. (155 m)      **Grade:** 11%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike, horse      **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** RD612 in Jackson Creek Valley or Lewisburg Saddle

**Road 610 Profile**

This road serves as a link between the Chip Ross Park and Timberhill area to Lewisburg Saddle. The upper end of this road (at Lewisburg Saddle) and the lower end (in Jackson Creek Valley) have been in existence for many years. The middle part was constructed in 1992 to complete the route.

**Alpha Trail**

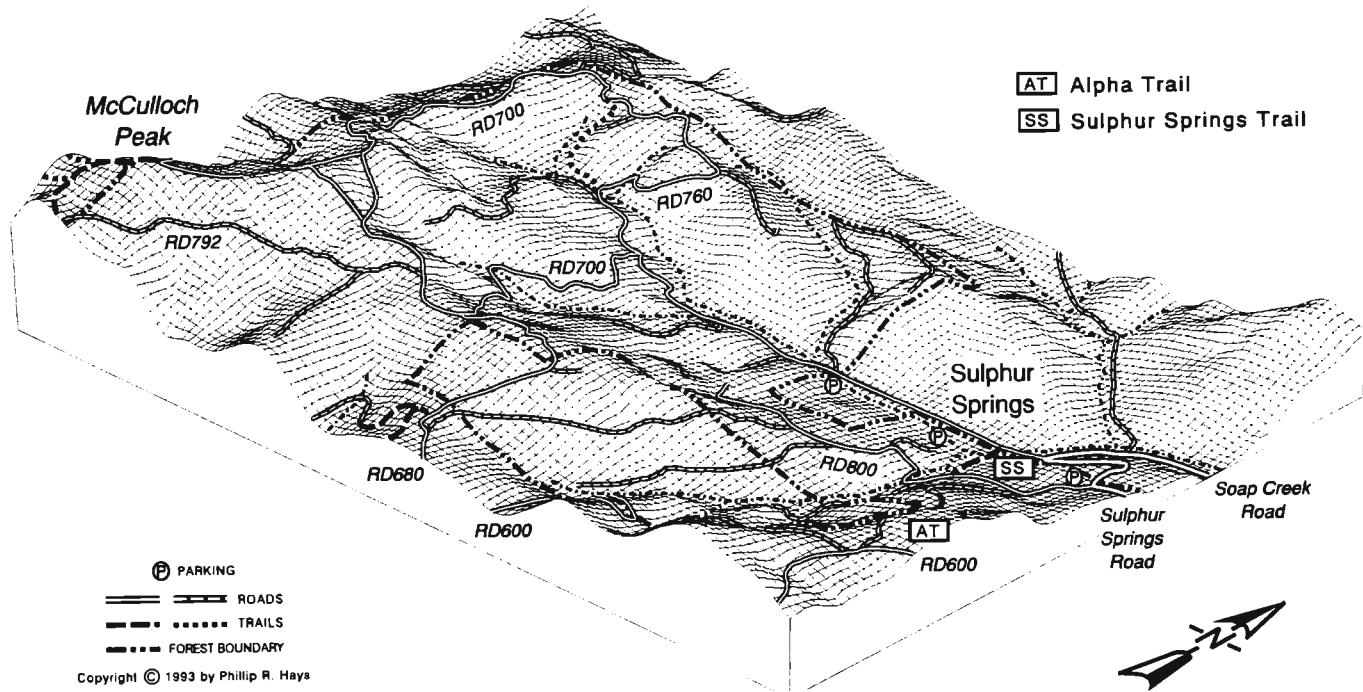
**Distance:** 0.2 mi. (0.4 km)      **Trail rating:** easy (downhill)  
**Elevation gain:** 160 ft. (49 m)      **Grade:** 14%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike, horse      **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** RD620 or RD810

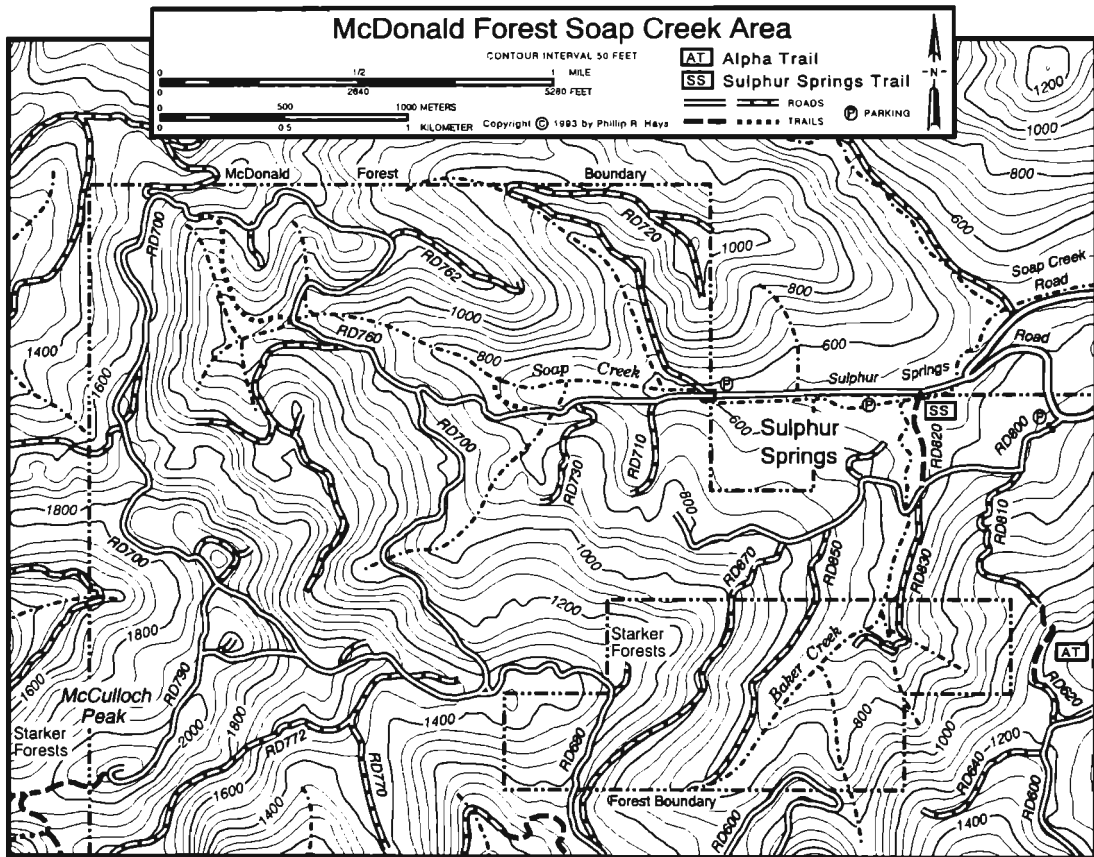
The main significance of this trail is that it was the first constructed in McDonald Forest by volunteers, under the supervision of the Forest Recreation staff. It serves as a link between the 600 road system (Jackson Creek Valley) and the 800 road system (Baker Creek Valley). It was constructed primarily to make it possible for hikers, bikers and equestrians to loop the west end of McDonald Forest without using Sulphur Springs Road. The trail is short and steep, especially at the RD620 end where the hillside is covered with loose gravel.

This was an experiment in trail construction. First, it was a learning experience for the Recreation Staff, to see just how much could be accomplished by a volunteer work force. Second, it is a test of construction techniques and materials to learn how to build an all-weather, all-use trail. And it is being watched to see how much maintenance such a trail will require.



# McDonald Forest Soap Creek Area





## Soap Creek Area

This is the most "remote" part of McDonald Forest. Consequently, it receives much less use than other areas, so it offers a better chance of solitude and quiet, undisturbed outings. This area has several attractions. Sulphur Springs was a "destination resort" early in the century, complete with cabins. Trails from there and the RD800 gate lead into Baker Creek Valley. The road system forms numerous loops along the ridges around the valley, and climbs to the top of McCulloch Peak. Mountain bikers enjoy the long and extensive road system.

Soap Creek Valley is about 6 miles (10 km) long and 1.5 miles (2.4 km) wide, stretching from Coffin Butte north of Adair Village (north of Peavy Arboretum) southwest to McCulloch Peak. The valley separates McDonald Forest to the south from Paul Dunn Forest to the north. The creek flows from the slopes of McCulloch Peak to join the Luckiamute River near its junction with the Willamette River, about half way between Corvallis and Salem. The west end of the valley forms a box canyon.

To get to the Soap Creek part of McDonald Forest from Corvallis, drive north on Highland Drive to Lewisburg Avenue and turn left (west). Take Sulphur Springs Road over Lewisburg Saddle and down into Soap Creek Valley. You can also follow Highway 99W north, and turn left onto Tampico Road just north of Adair Village. Turn left onto Soap Creek Road and follow it to the junction with Sulphur Springs Road.

Three access points create many opportunities for outings. The first access point is at the gate to RD800, just off Sulphur Springs Road about 0.6 mile (1 km) below Lewisburg Saddle. Follow Sulphur Springs Road to the junction with Soap Creek Road, and continue west on graveled Sulphur Springs Road about 0.2 mile (0.3 km) to the Sulphur Springs parking area, or continue to the end of Sulphur Springs Road (0.6 mile or 1 km) to a parking area at the gate on RD700.



*Veratrum insolitum*  
**Siskiyou False Hellebore**

## Sulphur Springs Trail

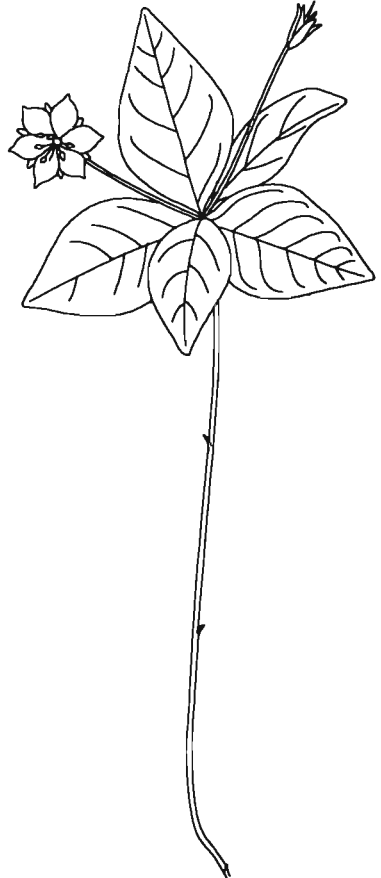
<b>Distance:</b>	0.5 mi. (0.75 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	60 ft. (18 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	2%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	all year
<b>Start:</b>	Soap Creek Road parking area at Sulphur Springs		

Sulphur Springs has been a recreation area for more than a century. It was a "destination resort" for Corvallis back in the days of horse and wagon. It was an all day trip over "the saddle" (Lewisburg Saddle) on the rough wagon trails of the day. Several cabins were constructed for overnight lodging.

A concrete fountain, wooden platform and benches were built around the spring. The waters were thought to be "healthful." Small dams occasionally were built across the stream to form wading pools. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps built tables and benches. After World War II the area fell into disrepair. Vandals filled the stream with broken bottles, the fountain was shot to pieces, and the wooden platform, benches and tables have been burned for firewood. All that remains today is a concrete slab with the words "Sulphur Spring" that marks where the odorous water bubbles from the ground.

A walk up the **Sulphur Springs Trail** (old RD820) is worthwhile. Near the junction of RD820 and RD800, where RD800 crosses Baker Creek, is the Bonneville of beaver dams. In the mid 1970s an 80 foot (25 m) beaver dam crossed the valley, damming up a large pond that was about 6 feet (2 m) deep. In the late 1980s the dam washed out and the beavers moved upstream in Baker Creek and Soap Creek. Early in 1991 the dam was repaired and the pond was back again. However, the pond has filled with silt and probably will be abandoned again.

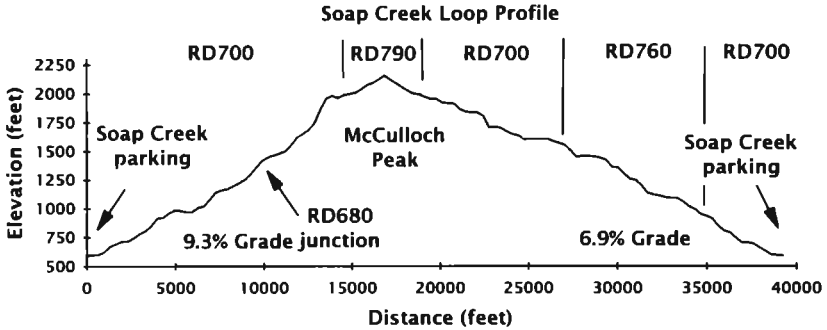
If you are looking for a longer and more demanding trip you can follow roads and trails from Sulphur Springs to the top of McCulloch Peak.



*Trientalis latifolia*  
**Starflower**

### Soap Creek Loop

**Distance:** 7.4 mi. (12 km) loop    **Trail rating:** demanding  
**Elevation gain:** 1565 ft. (477 m)    **Grade:** 9.3%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike, horse    **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** Soap Creek Road parking at the gate to RD700

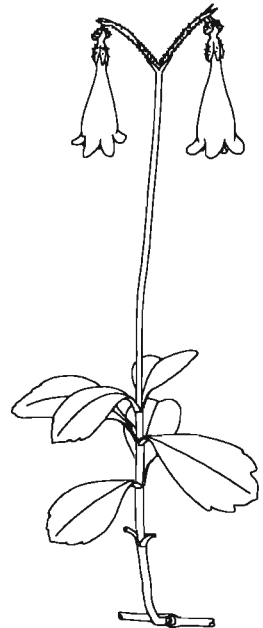


This is another good long distance route. It has a respectable elevation gain, and you can choose an "easy" route or a steep route, depending upon your needs. The main attractions are the view from McCulloch Peak and the riparian woods along Soap Creek.

The easy route follows the longer and gentler slope (6.9% grade) up RD760 and RD700 along the north ridge line to McCulloch Peak. The steep route takes RD700 directly up the northeast slope of the mountain (9.3% grade). Road conditions are about the same both ways.

Starting at the Soap Creek Road parking area, follow RD700 0.8 miles (1.3 km) to the RD760 junction. Turn left and continue on RD700 for 1 mile (1.6 km) to the RD680 junction at the top of the east ridge. RD680 leads down into Oak Creek valley toward Oak Creek Biology Labs. Continue climbing on RD700 another 0.8 mile (1.3 km) to the junction with RD790 at the top of the ridge line. Turn left and follow RD790 for 0.5 mile (0.8 km) to the top of the mountain.

Return by RD790 to the RD700 junction. This time take the left fork, following RD700 along the top of the north ridge. After about 1.3 miles (2 km) the road descends the upper end of Soap Creek Valley; at this point RD700 becomes RD760.



*Linnaea borealis*  
**Twinflower**

## Vineyard Mountain Area

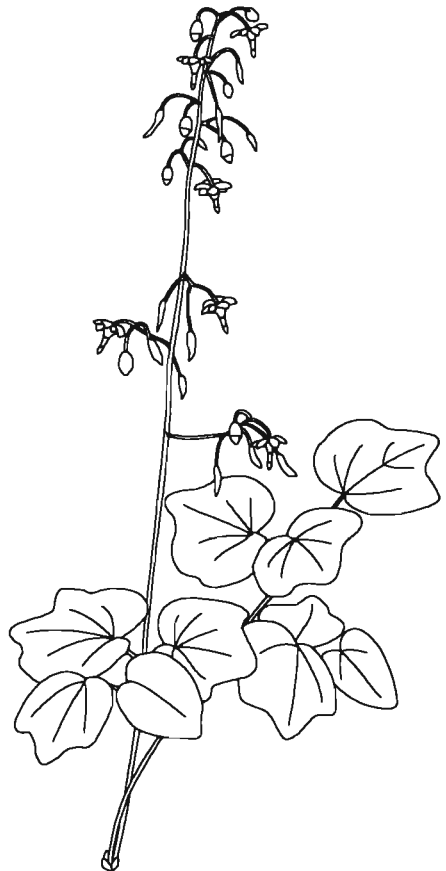
The Vineyard Mountain part of McDonald Forest is a narrow strip of land connecting the Peavy Arboretum area with the western end of the forest properties. The upper parts of Vineyard Mountain and the adjoining ridge line are within McDonald Forest. The east and south sides of the hill are covered with housing developments that grow year by year.

This area has three main attractions. First, and foremost, is the New and Old Growth Trail. This was the first "official" trail outside the Peavy area. It starts at Lewisburg Saddle, passing first through a tree farm in a recent clearcut, then rounds a ridge and enters one of the finest examples of low elevation native forest surviving in the Willamette Valley. The contrast between tree farm and forest is striking.

The second attraction is the long loop (7 mi., 11 km) formed by Nettleton Road and Davies Road. This is a popular jogging and walking loop, with moderate elevation gain and a gentle grade. The roads also provide a biking link between the east and west ends of the forest

The third attraction is Vineyard Mountain; from the top you have a good view of the Crescent Valley area and north Corvallis. However, an antenna farm has been growing steadily over the last few years, detracting from the aesthetic value of the site.

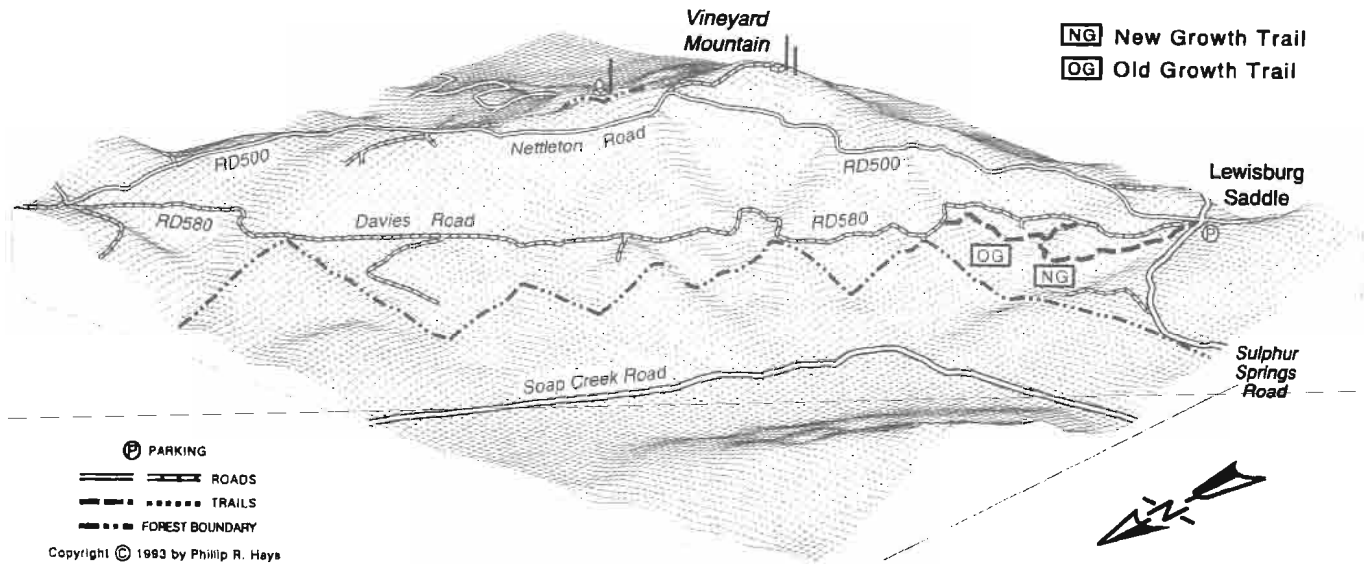
Lewisburg Saddle is the low spot along the ridge line between Crescent Valley and Soap Creek Valley, a short distance west of Lewisburg. To get there, take Highland Drive north and turn left (west) on Lewisburg Avenue. Follow this road about 0.4 miles (0.7 km) and angle right (north) on Sulphur Springs Road. At the top of the ridge line (the saddle) is a parking area.



*Vancouveria hexandra*  
Inside-out Flower

# McDonald Forest Vineyard Mountain Area

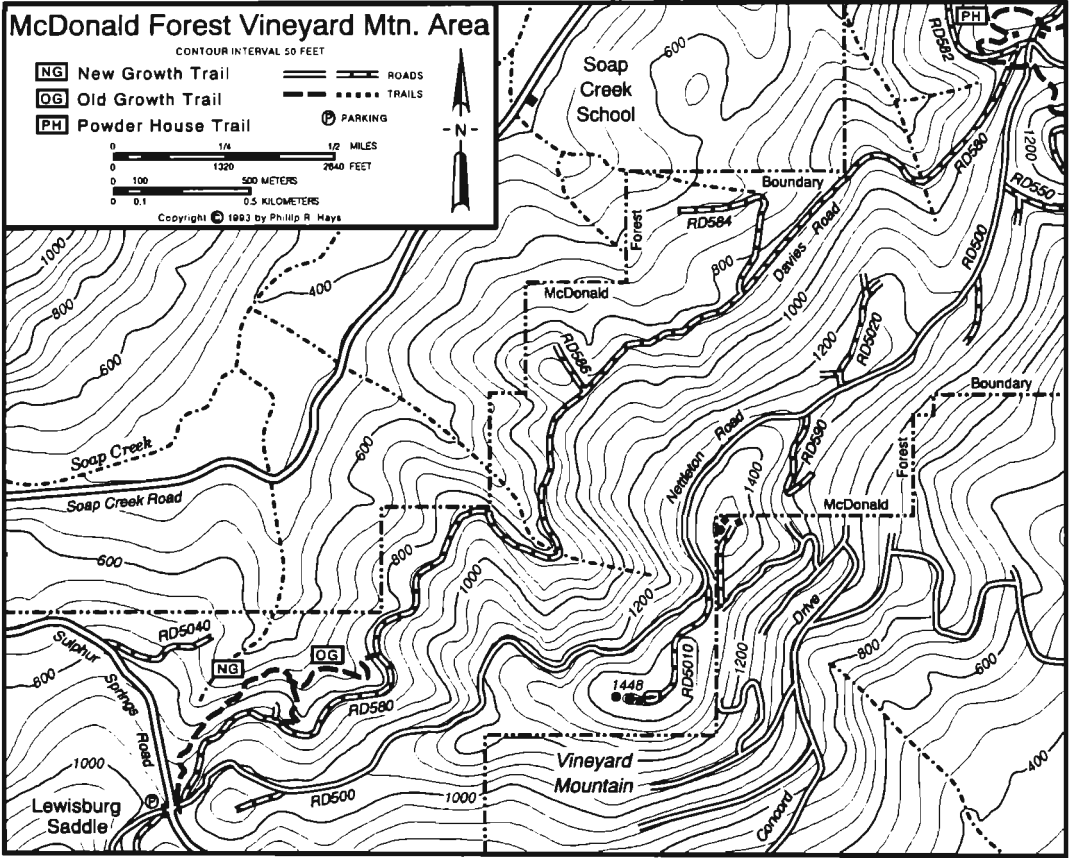
64



**NG** New Growth Trail  
**OG** Old Growth Trail

**P** PARKING  
 ——— ROADS  
 - - - - TRAILS  
 - - - - FOREST BOUNDARY

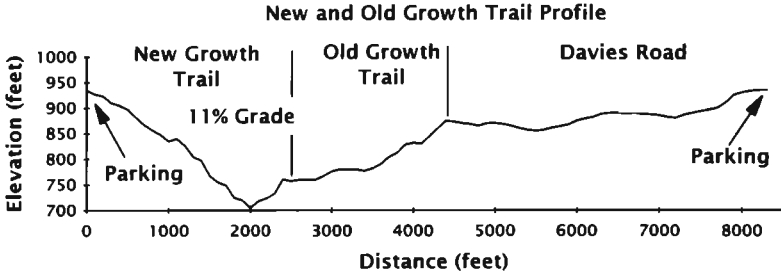
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### New and Old Growth Trails

**Distance:** 1.6 mi. (2.5 km) loop    **Trail rating:** easy  
**Elevation gain:** 235 ft. (72 m)    **Grade:** 11%  
**Trail use:** foot, bike    **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** Lewisburg Saddle

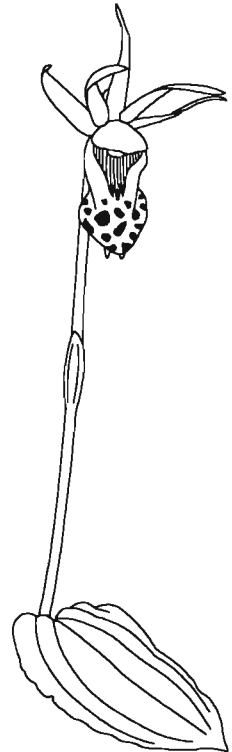


The Old Growth Trail is perhaps the finest nature trail in this area, and one of the best anywhere! The trail passes through an outstanding example of low elevation native forest. In the spring the woods are filled with wildflowers native to Oregon's forests.

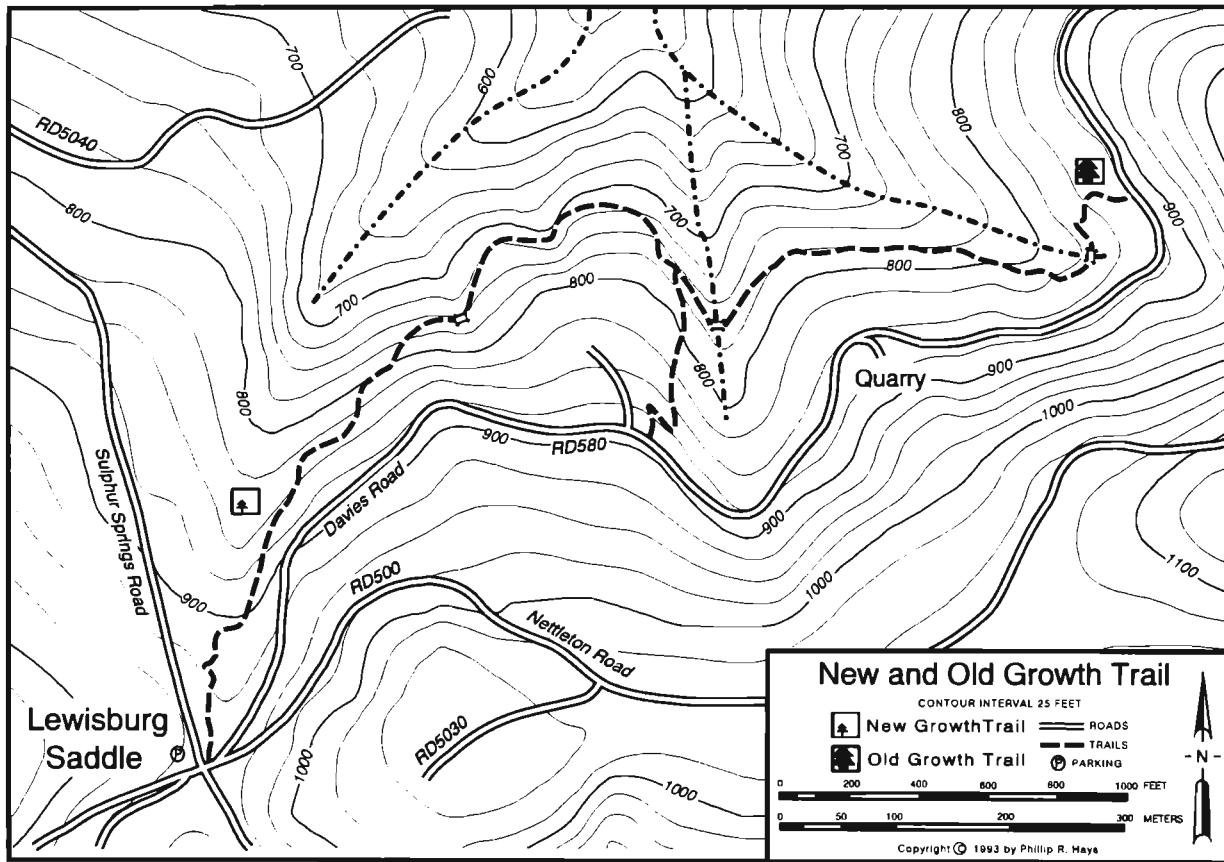
The New Growth Trail presents, in stark contrast, a managed tree plantation. Perhaps nowhere else is the difference between forest and tree farm so obvious. The trail passes through a 1989 clearcut that has been planted with Douglas fir seedlings as part of a wood quality research project. The area is divided into plots with different spacing between seedlings, ranging from 8 ft (2.4 m) to 21 ft (13 m) apart, to see what effect spacing has upon tree growth rate and wood density. This tree farm is more intensely managed than most plantations. On the open hillside of the New Growth trail you are exposed more to hot sunshine and blowing winds.

You have several options for traveling these trails. The New Growth Trail, Old Growth Trail and Davies Road form an easy loop. The grade on the New Growth Trail is steepest, so this is the best way to start, going downhill to meet the Old Growth Trail.

If you prefer to pass up the tree farm, you can follow Davies Road for about 1/3 mile (0.6 km) to where a short side trail leads downhill 1/8 mile (0.2 km) to the junction of the New and Old Growth Trails. From there turn right (east) and follow the Old Growth Trail, returning by Davies Road.



*Calypso bulbosa*  
**Fairy Slipper**



## What Is A Forest?

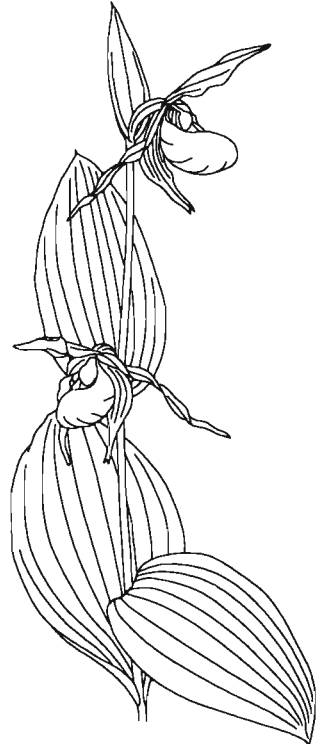
The timber industry boasts that it is regenerating Oregon's forests by planting seedlings in areas clearcut for timber harvests. The New Growth Trail provides you the opportunity to observe first hand the results of a variety of techniques being tested. They call it "reforestation," but will the result actually be a forest?

The Old Growth Trail passes through one of the last tiny (30 acres) fragments of low elevation Coast Range forest. This is a real forest, with individual trees more than 300 years old. It is not an even-aged Douglas fir monoculture; hundreds of native plant species make their home here, including several dozen types of trees and shrubs that have been exterminated systematically from tree farms throughout western Oregon.

Botanists<sup>1</sup> have counted 339 species of plants in McDonald/Dunn forests; all but one are not Douglas fir. Some are meadow species, others are alien imports, but most are native forest plants. More than 90% are not trees or shrubs. It is this entire collection of plants, and the animals dependent upon them, that make up a forest. A forest is more than just a stand of trees.

Timber management practices have done little, if anything, to ensure the survival of the entire collection of creatures that make up a real forest. As a result, species like the Mountain Lady's Slipper have virtually disappeared from Western Oregon, where they were once common. Real forest regeneration requires more than just sticking Douglas fir seedlings into holes in the ground.

With current management practices, in 80 years the New Growth Trail will again look as it does today, passing through the seedlings of a new tree crop. With luck, the Old Growth Trail will also look much the same as today, but the forest will be 80 years older. That is the difference between a tree farm and a forest.

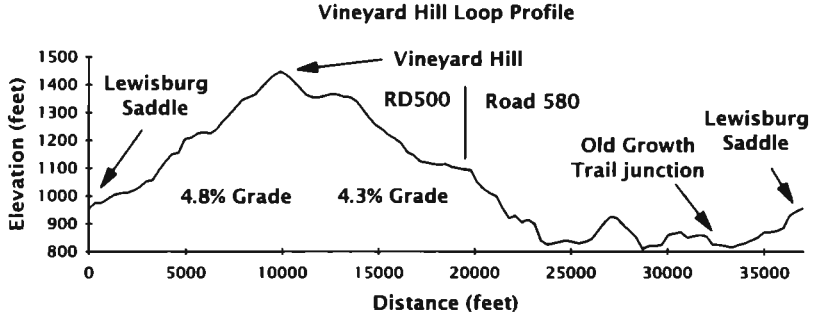


*Cypripedium montanum*  
**Mountain Lady's  
Slipper**

<sup>1</sup>. Preliminary Checklist of the Vascular Flora of McDonald and Paul Dunn State Forests, J. K. Hall and P. B. Alaback, Forest Research Laboratory, College of Forestry, Oregon State University, Special Publication 3, July 1982.

## Vineyard Hill Loop

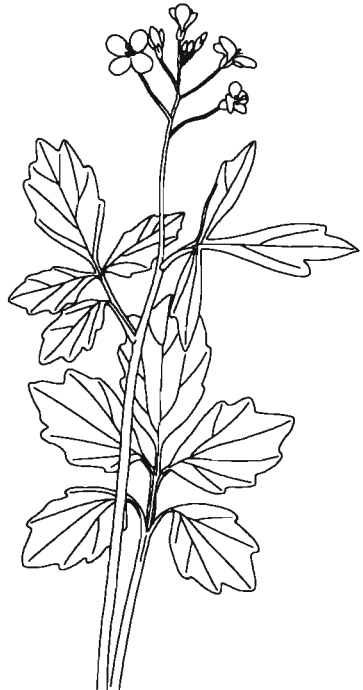
<b>Distance:</b>	7.0 mi. (11.3 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	650 ft. (198 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	4.8% max
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, horse	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Lewisburg Saddle		



From the gate at Lewisburg Saddle take the upper (right) road, Nettleton Road or RD500. The road climbs gently but steadily along the ridge to Vineyard Hill, crossing the north side of the hill before coming to the junction with RD5010 at 1.6 miles (2.5 km). Take RD5010 (right) and climb 1/4 mile (400 meters) to the top of the hill. If you do not want a long trip you can return to Lewisburg Saddle the way you came on RD500. Round trip distance is about 3.7 miles (6 km).

For a longer (7 miles, 11.3 km) walk/jog/ride continue east (right) on RD500 to the four-way junction of RD500, RD560 and RD580 above Peavy Arboretum. If you are on bicycle you might consider continuing on RD500 to Peavy Arboretum (see the Peavy Arboretum Map), and returning to Corvallis via Arboretum Road and Highway 99W. Otherwise, turn left onto Davies Road (RD580) to return to Lewisburg Saddle.

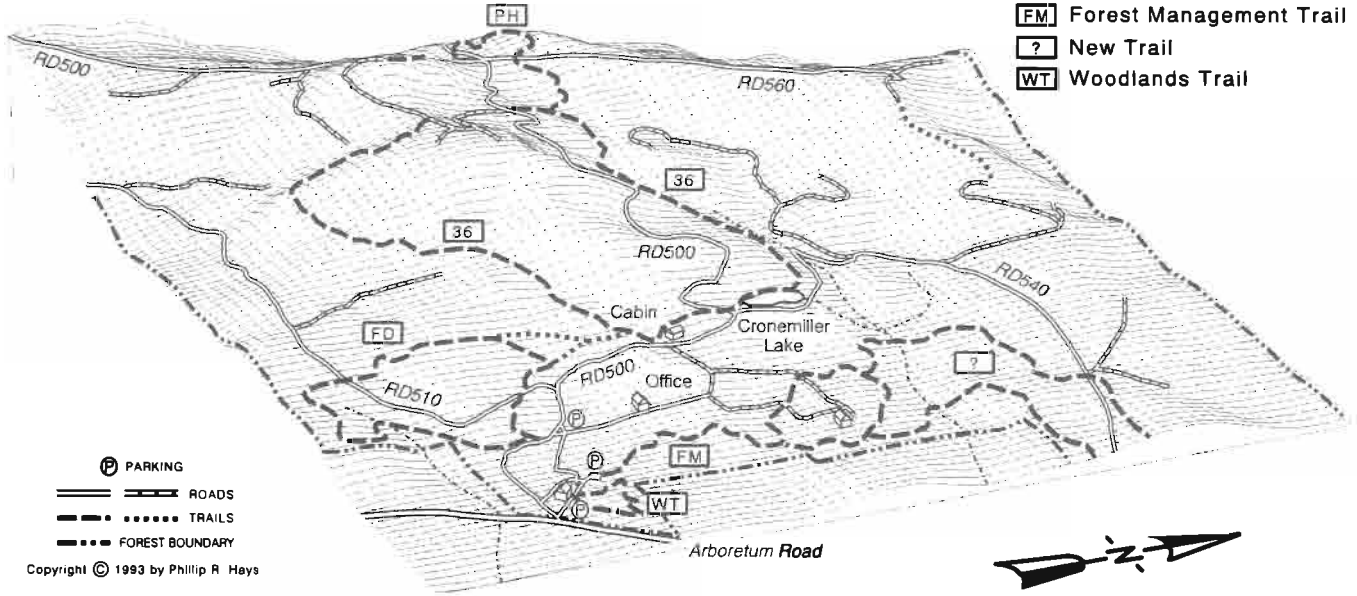
A short distance beyond the RD500/RD580 junction you will come to another junction, RD580 and RD582. Take the left fork on Davies Road (RD580) to return to Lewisburg Saddle. Poison Oak Road (RD582) descends to a gate on Soap Creek Road (see the Peavy Arboretum area map).



*Cardamine pulcherrima*  
**Spring Beauty**

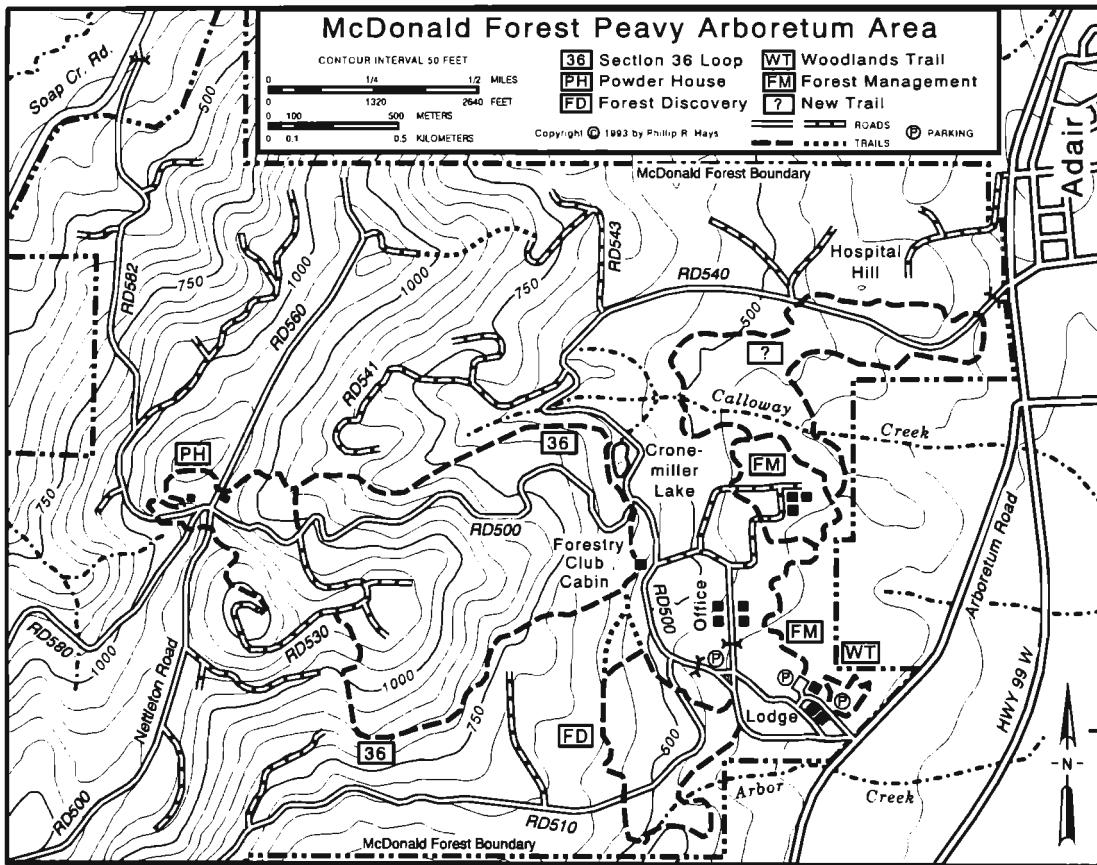
# McDonald Forest Peavy Arboretum Area

- 36** Section 36 Loop Trail
- PH** Powder House Trail
- FD** Forest Discovery Trail
- FM** Forest Management Trail
- ?** New Trail
- WT** Woodlands Trail



- P** PARKING
- — — — —** ROADS
- - - - -** TRAILS
- - - - -** FOREST BOUNDARY

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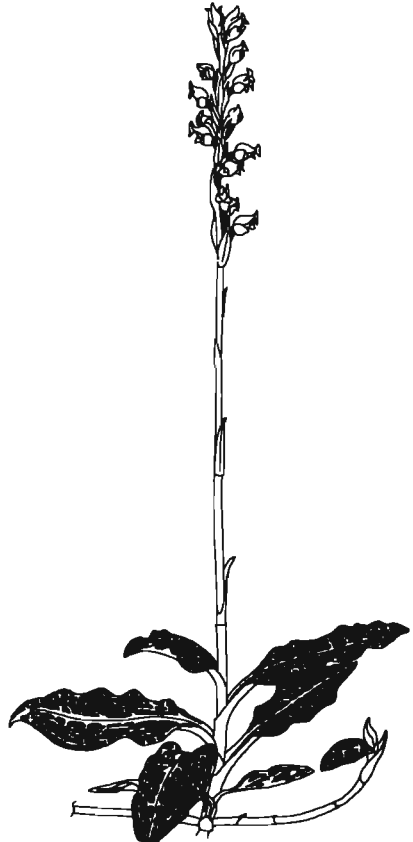
## Peavy Arboretum

This is the site of the original 80 acre tract acquired by the Oregon State University College of Forestry for research into forest management practices. It was named for George Peavy, first Dean of Forestry. The original State Forest Genetics Nursery was located here. It was established early in the century to provide seedlings for replanting after clearcutting. Unfortunately, its product was not in great demand<sup>1</sup> (Oregon had no effective reforestation laws until the 1970s). After the College of Forestry acquired the land the arboretum was developed, with about 160 species of trees and shrubs native to North America. An index of the plant collection is available at the Research Forests Office.

In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had a work camp here with 39 buildings. The CCC constructed the dam that holds back Cronemiller Lake to supply water to the nursery, and planted the first tree plantations in Benton County. After the CCC was disbanded, the Benton County Regional Office of the Oregon State Department of Forestry was located here; it has since moved to the present site west of Philomath on Highway 34. Peavy lodge was originally part of the regional office complex.

The road forks immediately inside the Arboretum. To go to Peavy Lodge, Forest Management Trail, or the Woodlands Trail parking lot go right at the junction and follow the road to the parking lot. For all other trails take the left fork (Road 500) and continue for about 0.4 mile (0.6 km), going left at all junctions, until you arrive at a parking area where a gate blocks the road. The Forest Discovery Trail starts near this parking lot.

The Forestry Club Cabin is about 1/4 mile (400 m) beyond the gate on Road 500. The original cabin was constructed in 1925; it burned to the ground in 1949. The existing lodge was built by forestry students and dedicated in 1950. The Section 36 Trail starts behind the Cabin.



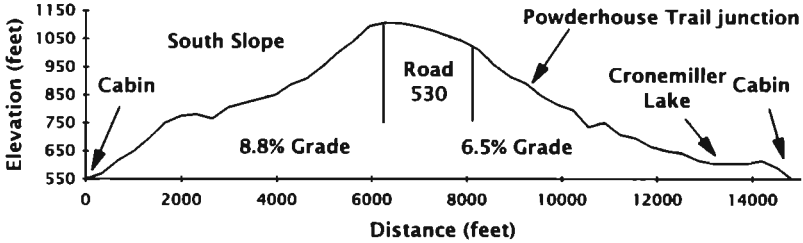
*Goodyera oblongifolia*  
**Rattlesnake Plantain**

<sup>1</sup> *Forests, People and Oregon, A History of Forestry in Oregon*, Oregon State Dept. of Forestry, 1980.

## Section 36 Loop Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	2.8 mi. (4.5 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	550 ft. (170 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	8.8%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Forestry Club Cabin		

Section 36 Loop Trail Profile



This trail was completed in 1982 by connecting the Pine Race Study Trail (south side) and the Calloway Creek Trail (north side), both constructed in the 1930s. It is called Section 36 Loop because it is located in Section 36, Township 10 South, Range 5 West. Township and Range measurements are relative to a marker stone in Portland. Townships are divided into 36 Sections, each approximately a mile square.

The trail starts behind the Forestry Club Cabin. Cross the bridge and follow the trail into the woods. The south slope of the ridge was burned regularly by native Americans until about 150 years ago. As a consequence, the hillside was covered with open grassy meadows. After settlers arrived the burning stopped, and trees began invading the meadows. A few of the older trees remain; you can identify them by the large branches growing close to the ground. This is characteristic of trees that grow in the open; younger trees that grew later in crowded stands have limbs only in their crowns.

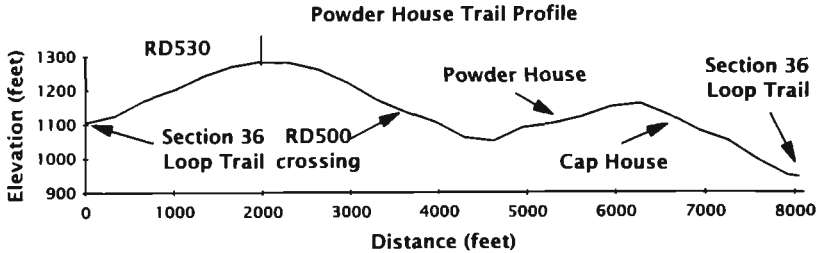
About half way up the south slope is the Ponderosa Pine Race study plot. In this four acre plantation ponderosa pine seedlings from ten different locations in the western US were planted in 1928. The purpose was to find the variety that grows best in this area; some died out completely, while others grew rapidly.

At the top of the hill you will come to Road 530; follow it downhill to continue Section 36 loop, or climb to the top of the hill to take the Powder House Trail. At the junction of Road 530 and Road 500 the Section 36 trail descends into Calloway Creek valley, where it soon rejoins the Powder House Trail. Then you follow the creek down into a small stand of old-growth Douglas fir; some of these trees are more than 300 years old. Beyond this you come to Cronemiller Lake and the logging sports competition area. The trail curves around the lake, crosses Road 500 again, and leads back to the Forestry Club Cabin.



## **Powder House Trail**

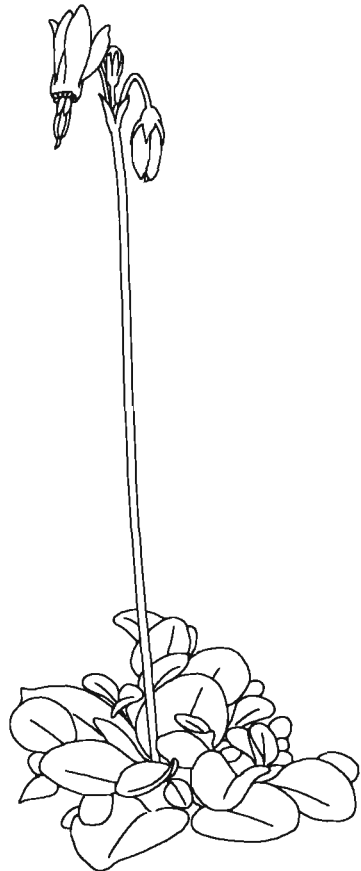
<b>Distance:</b>	1.5 mi. (2.5 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	340 ft. (104 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	12%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Section 36 Loop Trail		



The Powder House Trail climbs to the top of the hill above Peavy Arboretum, where you will see an excellent panorama of the Willamette Valley and the Cascades. The trail also leads through pleasant woods that are filled with wildflowers in spring.

This trail is an extension of the Section 36 Loop Trail. Starting where the trail crosses Road 530, Powder House Trail follows Road 530 to the top of the hill, then winds down into Calloway Creek valley to rejoin Section 36 Loop Trail again. You can follow the trail in either direction, but the easiest route is along RD530, climbing at a 9% grade. The trail descends into Calloway Creek valley at a 12% grade. The combined Section 36 Loop Trail and Powder House Trail loop is 3.9 miles (6.2 km) long.

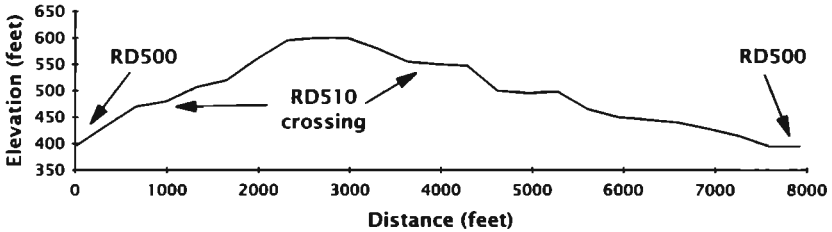
The trail takes its name from the old powder house built in the 1930s to store explosives used for road building and logging. The foundation is still visible near the junction of Road 580 and Road 582. Where the trail crosses Road 560, it passes the old cap house used to store blasting caps.



*Dodecatheon hendersonii*  
**Shooting Star**

**Forest Discovery Trail**

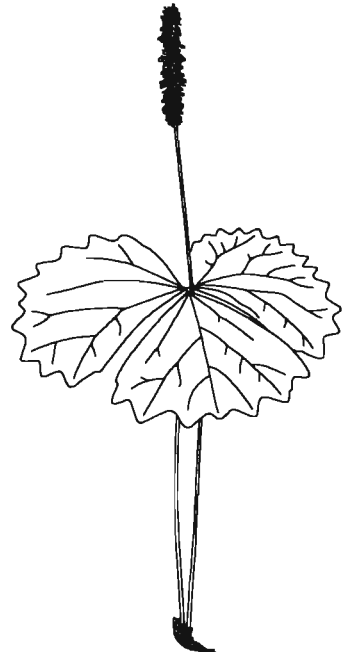
<b>Distance:</b>	1.5 mi. (2.4 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	200 ft. (61 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	9%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	parking area on Road 500		

**Forest Discovery Trail Profile**

This is one of the most pleasant walks in the area. The trail loops through several different woodland habitats, and a brochure at the trail start describes many of the things to see here. The trail follows an abandoned road for much of its length, and is wide with a firm surface. Other parts of the trail are covered with shredded bark. There are a few short steep parts, but it is mostly easy going.

The trail starts near the parking area at the gate on Road 500. Walk back along the road about 100 yards (100 m) past the junction with the road to the Research Forests Office and look for the sign at the trailhead (north fork). The other end of the trail (south fork) returns to Road 500 another 100 yards up the road. Since it is a loop you can travel either way. The uphill grade on the north fork is steeper (9%) on the average than if you climbed the south fork (4%), but there are a few steep sections that you will be descending if you return by the south fork.

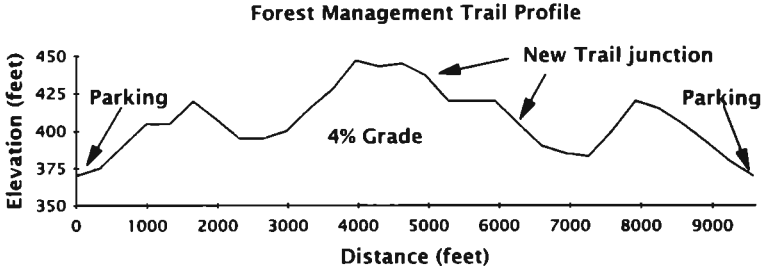
The brochure describes this trail as a "forest sampler." This area was once a part of the State Nursery, and many different types of trees were planted here, in some rather unnatural associations. The trail passes through even-aged Douglas fir plantations, Port-Orford cedar groves, stands of long-needled pine, and mixed deciduous riparian zones. Scattered throughout are woodland wildflowers.



*Achlys triphylla*  
**Vanilla-leaf**

**Intensive Forest Management Trail**

**Distance:** 1.8 mi. (2.9 km) loop    **Trail rating:** easy  
**Elevation gain:** 80 ft. (24 m)    **Grade:** 4%  
**Trail use:** foot    **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** parking lot west of Peavy Lodge

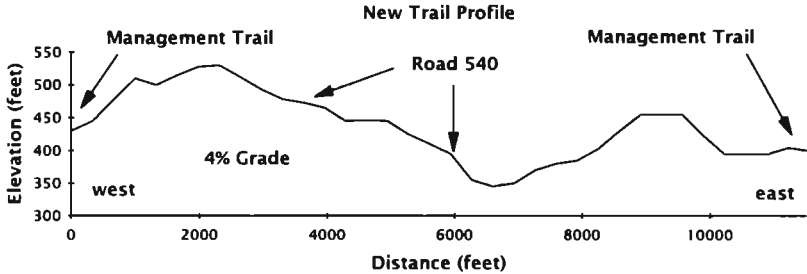


The trail starts at a large parking lot west of Peavy Lodge. From there it climbs gently through test plots and over a low ridge. The trail forks in the middle of another test stand; the route profile shown above takes the left fork, and returns by the right. At about 0.9 mile (1.5 km) another trail branches off to the north (see the New Trail description); this trail rejoins the Management Trail at about 1.1 miles (1.8 km). The loop trail rejoins the original trail to the parking lot at 1.3 miles (2.2 km).

*This trail passes through one of the early forestry genetics research areas in McDonald Forest. The research is mainly on Douglas fir, using varieties gathered from all over western North America. Because trees grow slowly, a project may last for many decades from the initial planting until the necessary data can be collected. The trail passes through test plots to determine the effects of stand density (spacing between the trees), pruning, thinning, and nitrogen fixation by alder trees scattered between Douglas firs. Interpretive signs along the route explain the management practices being tested.*

**New Trail**

**Distance:** 2.1 mi. (3.5 km)      **Trail rating:** easy  
**Elevation gain:** 185 ft. (56 m)      **Grade:** 4%  
**Trail use:** foot      **Open for use:** year round  
**Start:** from Forest Management Trail or RD540 gate near Adair

**NOTICE**

Construction of this trail was just starting when this book went to press. The trail will not be open for use until summer or fall 1993.

Not only has this trail not been built, it doesn't even have a name. The route winds around the Calloway Creek basin through a natural area for most of its length. The forest understory along the creek has a great variety of wildflowers, especially in the spring.

The trail starts and ends on the Forest Management Trail. It can also be accessed from the gate on RD540 near Adair Village. The trail profile shown above starts at the west junction of the trails.

*The northeast part of the Peavy area is of historical interest. The original California Trail from Fort Vancouver to Sacramento passed through this area. The southern end of the Applegate Trail passed near here. Later the Portland to Umpqua Valley Road curved around Hospital Hill and then south to Marysville (Corvallis). Hospital Hill gets its name from the old Army and Navy Hospital that stood on the hillside above RD540 near the gate on Highway 99W. A sawmill once stood west of the hill near RD540. One of the early towns in this area was Tampico; it was larger than Marysville for a while. The center of the town apparently was north of Hospital Hill near the junction of Tampico Road and Soap Creek Road.*

## McDonald Forest

### **Woodlands Trail**

<b>Distance:</b>	0.3 mi. (0.5 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	25 ft. (7 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	10%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	parking lot behind Peavy Lodge		

This short nature trail was one of the first "official" trails in McDonald Forest. The Arboretum has been planted with trees from all over North America, and many along this trail are marked with descriptive labels. Along the way you will find interpretive signs describing interesting features.

The trail leaves the parking lot at the east side; you may notice a "bee tree," with bees flying in and out of a hole at ground level on the right (south) side of the trail. The route climbs over a low hill, passing through a meadow and mixed conifer and deciduous woods, then circles back to the parking lot.

This is a perfect place to start learning the many different types of trees of Oregon. Several publications are available (especially at the Oregon State University Bookstore) to help you identify trees, shrubs, and other plants.

*Trees to Know in Oregon*, Charles R. Ross, Extension Bulletin 697, August 1978, Oregon State University Extension Service, 96 pages. General information and photographs, no key.

*Manual of Oregon Trees and Shrubs*, Randall, Keniston and Bever, 1975, O.S.U. Bookstores, 311 pages. Key and general description.

*Handbook of Northwest Plants*, Gilkey and Dennis, 1975, O.S.U. Bookstores, 505 pages. Key and description of native plants of Oregon.

*Flora of the Pacific Northwest*, Hitchcock and Cronquist, 1973, U. of Washington Press, 730 pages (condensed edition). Key and description of native plants of Oregon. This is the definitive taxonomic reference for the plants of the Northwest. Unfortunately, for people in Washington, Corvallis is at the southern "edge" of the Northwest, and the list does not include all plants native to this area and regions further south.

*The Jepson Manual, Higher Plants of California*, James C. Hickman, editor, 1993, U. of California Press, 1400 pages. Key and description of native plants of California. Taxonomic reference for plants of California, including many species found in southern Oregon.

# WILLIAM L. FINLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

This 5325 acre wildlife refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain wintering habitat for dusky Canada geese and other waterfowl. It is also of great value for the recreational opportunities it provides, but you should remember that the main purpose is wildlife sanctuary. Portions of the refuge are closed to visitors (this means you) for much of the year. **Trespassers will be prosecuted!** Wildlife Refuge Road and Bruce Road are open all year, but you should stay in your car in areas closed to recreation.

Take US 99W south 9.8 miles (15.8 km) from Harrison Boulevard to Finley Road, or continue 2.7 miles (4.3 km) to Bruce Road. From Philomath travel south on Bellfountain Road 8.7 miles (14 km) from the junction with Plymouth Road to Wildlife Refuge Road.

The western 1/4 of the refuge is open all year between sunrise and sunset; check the information kiosks and signs at trailheads for current information. This includes Bald Top, Woodpecker Loop and Mill Hill Trail. The remainder is open from April 15 through October 31, except for a small area closed to the public around the equipment yard and the railroad right of way along the eastern boundary. Trails are open for foot traffic only; horses, bicycles, and motorized vehicles are prohibited. Because of problems with pets harassing wildlife, they must be leashed and can be walked only in the parking lots at the headquarters, information kiosks and at trailheads. **Leave pets at home!**

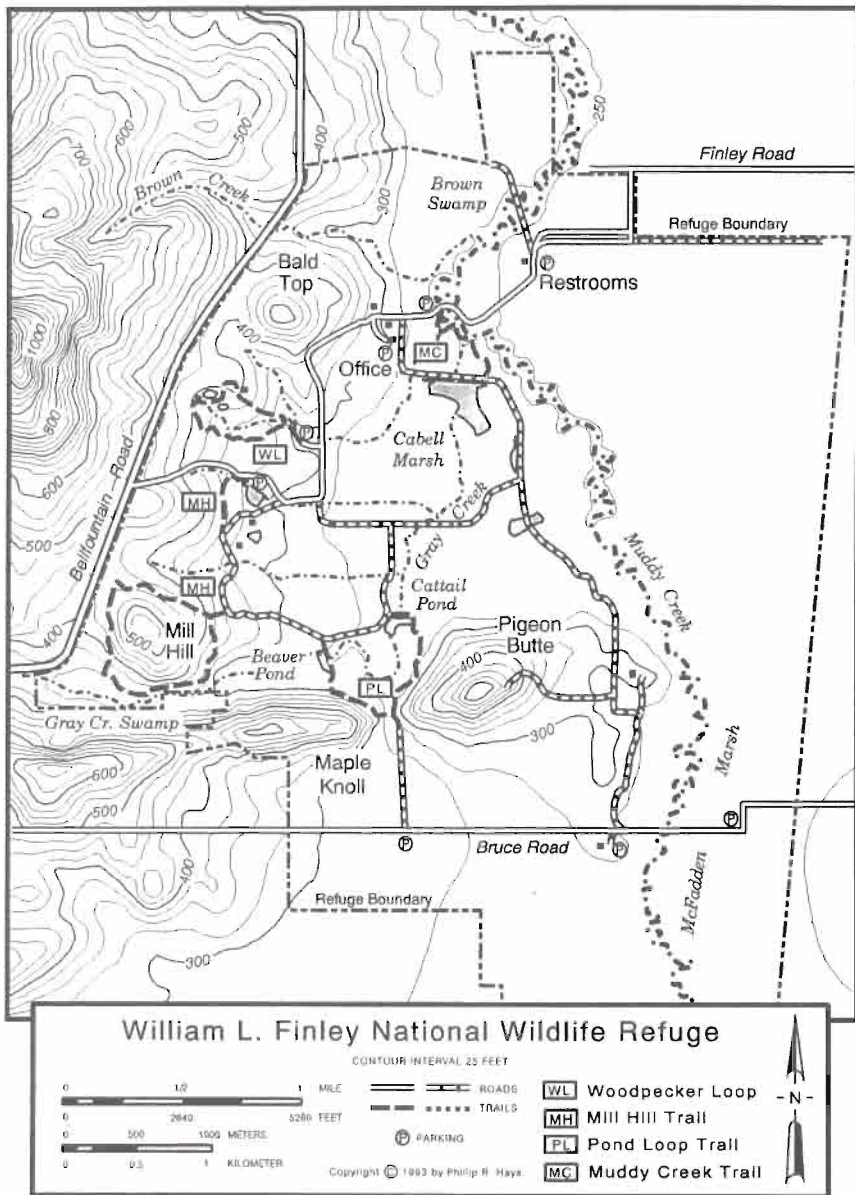
The refuge is a haven for birds; 239 species have been observed. A variety of mammals live here, from beaver, ground squirrels and skunks to deer, black bear and otters. In recent years a small herd of elk has appeared in the refuge and is growing.

Supporting this great variety of animal life is one of the largest and most diverse populations of native plants in the Willamette Valley. The largest remaining wetland in the valley is at Finley; it is home to species that have been exterminated nearly everywhere else. A portion of the refuge is being managed as a wild camas prairie, and there are several native grass prairies in the refuge as well. It is an amazing place!

**Plant collecting is prohibited  
in the refuge.**



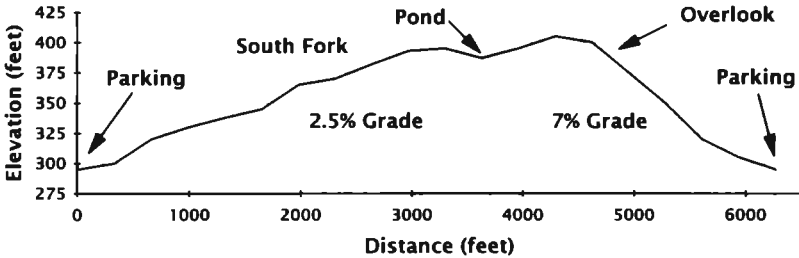
*Mimulus tricolor*  
**Three-color  
Monkeyflower**



## Woodpecker Loop Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	1.2 mi. (1.9 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	120 ft (37 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	7%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	parking lot off Wildlife Refuge Road		

Woodpecker Loop Trail Profile



Five species of woodpeckers can be seen along this trail, if you are observant, and are there at the right time of year. Acorn, Hairy, and Pileated Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, and Red-Breasted Sapsuckers hunt for food in the woods and fields in this part of the refuge.

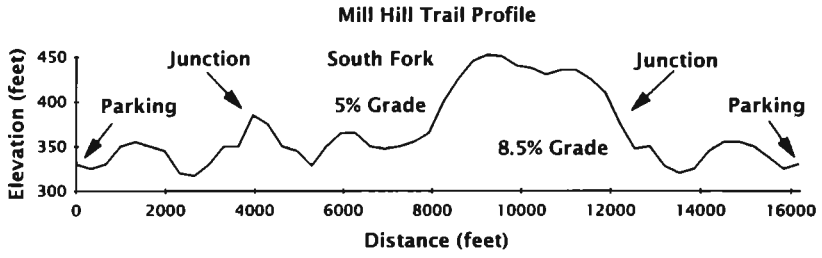


The trail is well maintained, with sturdy bridges over creeks and duckboards raising the trail above marshy areas. The surface is hard packed gravel. The trail forks just a few hundred feet from the parking lot, with the north fork leading across a bridge over a creek and up a hill (7% grade). The 2.5% grade is much easier on the south fork, which climbs steadily through mixed deciduous woods, a young stand of Douglas fir, crosses a marsh in an ash swale, passes a pond, then arrives at the hilltop in an oak savanna. Here, on a viewing platform with benches under a large Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) perhaps 200 years old, you will find a splendid view of the refuge.



### Mill Hill Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	3.0 mi. (4.9 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	100 ft (30 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	8.5%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	parking lot off Wildlife Refuge Road		



This trail loops around Mill Hill at the southwest corner of the wildlife refuge. It is a wide, well-maintained trail with signs marking turns and junctions. The major attraction is Gray Creek swamp on the south side of the hill. From the trail on the hillside you can observe the swamp below. Parts of the trail may be very muddy in wet weather.

The trail starts at a parking area on Wildlife Refuge Road. From the Refuge information sign walk west parallel to the fence. The trail turns south, crosses a creek on a bridge, and leads through meadows for 0.4 mi. (0.6 km) to join a gravel service road. A few hundred yards (meters) farther, the trail turns off to the right (west) at a bend in the road. Beyond this point the road is closed to the public from November 1 through April 15.

A short distance from the road the trail splits at a junction. The extensive growth of **poison oak** on the ground and climbing into the trees is most impressive! The south (left) fork has the most gentle elevation gain (5% grade). Follow the trail around the hill and past Gray Creek swamp. At the southwest corner of the loop watch for the sign marking a sharp turn to the north, where the trail starts to climb the west side of the hill. The path leads up and around the north side of the hill, returning to the junction.



*Lysichitum americanum*  
**Skunk Cabbage**

## Pond Loop Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	2.2 mi. (3.5 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	15 ft (5 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	<1%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	Apr 15 to Oct 31
<b>Start:</b>	parking area on Bruce Road		

This trail has some of the best wildflowers in the refuge, and offers an excellent opportunity to observe marsh wildlife. The trail is open from April 15 through October 31. It is one of my favorite trails, and is easy enough that almost anyone can enjoy it; however, after heavy rain parts of the route may be submerged.

From the information kiosk at the McFadden Marsh parking area on Bruce Road, drive west 1.4 mi. (2.2 km), past the parking area at the road east of Pigeon Butte, to the gate on the left (south) at the trailhead parking area.

Across Bruce Road from the parking area is a gate on a service road; the road is marked with a hiking trail sign. Follow the service road north to the gap between Pigeon Butte and Maple Knoll. The original California Trail from Portland to San Francisco passed through this gap 150 years ago. The trail forks, the two branches forming a loop. The two trails lead to Beaver Pond (left fork) and Cattail Pond (right fork). Beyond the ponds a service road connects the two trails to finish the loop.

*As you approach each pond be as quiet as possible, and move slowly. If you are lucky you will see waterfowl on the ponds, and perhaps otters or other members of the weasel family playing (or hunting) in the water. Beaver Pond gets its name from the population of beavers on Gray Creek. Pigeon Butte is named for the flocks of pigeons often found there. In spring the cattail marshes ring with the territorial songs of the red-winged blackbird. The prairies around the ponds are filled with native plants and have anthills scattered throughout. The ponds are lined with cattails and bright pink Douglas spiraea (*Spiraea douglasii*). Watch for the green bee that feeds on the spiraea, or the scarlet Red Baron dragonfly that hovers above the ponds. You will have to look long and hard to find a finer place than this for a picnic!*



*Calochortus  
tolmiei*  
**Cats Ear**

### **Cabell Marsh Loop Trail**

<b>Distance:</b>	1.3 mi. (2.0 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	50 ft (15 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	3%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	Apr 15 to Oct 31
<b>Start:</b>	Muddy Creek Trail or Refuge Headquarters parking lots		

Cabell Marsh is a large pond that backs up behind a man-made dike. The pond was constructed as a wildlife habitat, complete with artificial islands, and the marshes and fields around it are filled with native flora and fauna. Here you may see river otters, herons, egrets, wood ducks, and many other birds and mammals. The marsh just north of the dam is full of native plants. The area is closed to the public from October 31 through April 15.

You can start the loop at two places, either the parking area on Wildlife Refuge Road just west of the bridge across Muddy Creek, or the parking lot at the Refuge Headquarters. The loop consists of the service road that crosses the Cabell Marsh dam, Muddy Creek trail, and a short section of Wildlife Refuge Road connecting them. Muddy Creek Trail winds through the woods along Muddy Creek, connecting the parking area near the bridge with the service road across the Cabell Marsh dam.

Finley is home to several plant species that exist only over a very small range. Nelson's checkermallow (*Sidalcea nelsoniana*) exists only on the west side of the Willamette Valley between Portland and Corvallis. The peacock larkspur (*Delphinium pavonaceum*) grows between Corvallis and Salem. Bradshaw's parsley (*Lomatium bradshawii*) is found between Corvallis and Eugene. The three-color monkeyflower (*Mimulus tricolor*) has been exterminated from most of Oregon, and apparently survives now only around Corvallis, with the largest population in Finley.



*Sidalcea nelsoniana*  
**Nelson's Checkermallow**

## ***Other Adventures***

The maintained trails allow easy access to some of the finer features of Finley Wildlife Refuge, but they are not the only places to go. The entire refuge (except the maintenance area and railroad right of way) is open to the public, depending upon the season, and you can spend many an enjoyable day wandering off the prepared path. Here are a few possibilities.

### ***Bald Top***

Bald Top is the hill at the northwest corner of the refuge. From the top you get a fine view of the southern end of the Willamette Valley, especially Finley Refuge. Park at Woodpecker Loop Trail or at the parking area at the Feichter House near Refuge headquarters. Follow Wildlife Refuge Road to the base of the hill, and climb. This area is open to the public all year long.

### ***Muddy Creek to Pigeon Butte***

If you want a longer walk, away from the "crowds" that sometimes fill the other trails, you might consider walking the service roads that link Wildlife Refuge Road and Bruce Road. There are parking areas on Wildlife Refuge Road near the Muddy Creek bridge, and on Bruce Road across from the service road gate. Pigeon Butte is aptly named for the flocks of pigeons found in the oak woods some parts of the year. However, you should also notice the **poison oak** that fills the understory. This area is open to the public from April 15 through October 31.

### ***Gray Creek Swamp***

This area just south of Mill Hill is reached by a small trail that branches from Mill Hill Trail near the sharp turn at the southwest corner of Mill Hill loop. Swamps are typically wet, so you may need waders to get across Gray Creek. If you do explore the trails in the swamp, be careful not to wander too far east in winter. The area around Beaver Pond is open from April 15 through October 31.

### ***McFadden Marsh***

This marsh straddles Bruce Road. It is a good place for bird watching, especially from November through March, and for observing aquatic plants. You can park at a small lot by the information sign at the sharp turns in Bruce Road. The area off the road is open to the public from April 15 through October 31.

## **The Measure of the Beast**

*The Siuslaw National Forest promotes a series of outings on Marys Peak in the summer (when money can be found in the budget) that they call **Discovery Walks**. Each walk focuses on some aspect of the mountain, including birds, native American history, geology, astronomy, and wildflowers. I have led some of the wildflower walks.*

*I arrived early one beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon, and met with the person from the Alsea Ranger District who was organizing the walk. She was most enthusiastic about providing opportunities for the public to enjoy the wildflowers of the Scenic Botanical Special Interest Area. As is often the case with the people who manage these special places, hers was a very personal interest -- she had been married on the mountain.*

*While we were waiting for the walk to start, a small group of people came down the Summit Trail to the parking area. One of them, a girl of about 16, was carrying a huge bouquet of flowers picked along the trail. She had Indian paintbrush, Cardwell's penstemon, blue field gillias, tiger lilies, fawn lilies, wallflowers, and at least one of everything that grows on the peak.*

*My friend from the Forest Service, who had just been handing out Smoky the Bear tokens to children at the parking area, saw the girl with the handful of flowers, and turned on her like a mother bear protecting her cubs. She made it clear that the wildflowers are to be seen, but not touched. The forcefulness of her lecture probably had the girl wondering if she could go to jail for picking the flowers! I was appalled at the wanton destruction of so many plants, but found the stern reprimand, and the effect it was having on everyone within hearing, somewhat amusing. I doubt that anyone else picked flowers on the mountain that afternoon!*

*When I think about that incident, and the many other times I have seen people pick a flower, sniff it, and toss it away with no further thought, I always remember the lame excuse the girl gave, when she finally had a chance to speak. "We didn't know," she said, "we're from California!"*

*Oregonians seem to take special pleasure at ridiculing Californians, as if we are somehow better. Are we any different from that girl, who assumed, without thinking, that those flowers grew there just so she could pick them? Do we give any more thought to the future consequences of our actions, be they wildflower picking or old growth timber harvesting, than cattle grazing on the grass at their feet? Or are we just dumb animals taking what we can from the land?*

## **MARYS PEAK**

Marys Peak is special. Only a few places in the Coast Range can boast equal botanical attractions, none offers a better vista or better trails, and Marys Peak is far more accessible. More than 75,000 people visit the mountain each year. Marys Peak is the highest point in the Coast Range. From the 4097 foot (1250 meters) top you can see the Pacific Ocean to the west, as far north as Mt. Rainier (275 mi., 445 km), south to Mt. Thielsen (114 mi., 183 km) near Crater Lake, and all the north and central Oregon Cascade Range. Spread out below lay the cities, fields and forests of the southern Willamette Valley.

An extensive trail system offers a wide variety of outdoor experiences. In winter covers the top of the mountain with deep snow, and the Forest Service keeps the road open for recreationists (Snow Park permits required).

Marys Peak Road leads to the parking area at the top of the mountain, as well as the East Ridge Trail parking area, Parker Creek Falls, and winter Snow Parks. From the junction of highways 20 and 34 at the west end of Philomath, turn left on Oregon 34 (Alsea Highway) and drive 9 miles (14 km) to where Marys Peak Road turns off to the right (north). Follow the paved road to the East Ridge Trail parking lot (5.5 mi., 8.8 km), Parker Creek Falls (6.7 mi., 10.7 km), Campground turnoff (8.6 mi., 13.8 km), and the parking area at the top (9.5 mi., 15.3 km).

Woods Creek Road is the access for the North Ridge Trail. From the junction of US 20 and Oregon 34 at the west end of Philomath, travel west on US 20 (Corvallis-Newport Highway) for 1.7 mi. (2.7 km) to where Woods Creek Road turns off to the left (south). The road is paved for a short distance, then continues as a gravel road to a parking area (7.5 mi., 12 km) at a gate blocking the road.

### ***Marys Peak Scenic Botanical Special Interest Area***

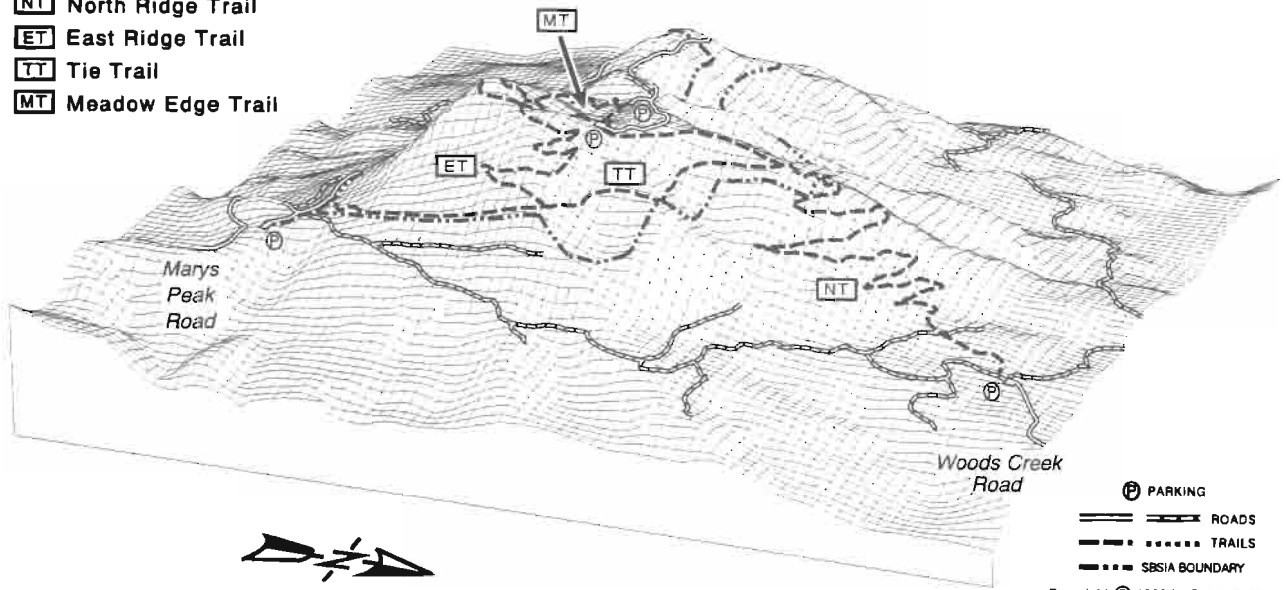
The USDA Forest Service has designated 924 acres as the Marys Peak Scenic Botanical Special Interest Area (SBSIA), including most of the mountain above 3000 feet elevation. The purpose is to ensure that these lands are managed to protect the unusual and outstanding features, especially the rare plant communities and the scenic beauty of the mountain. The Forest Service created the SBSIA in response to public demand to preserve the area.

### ***Marys Peak Recreation Area***

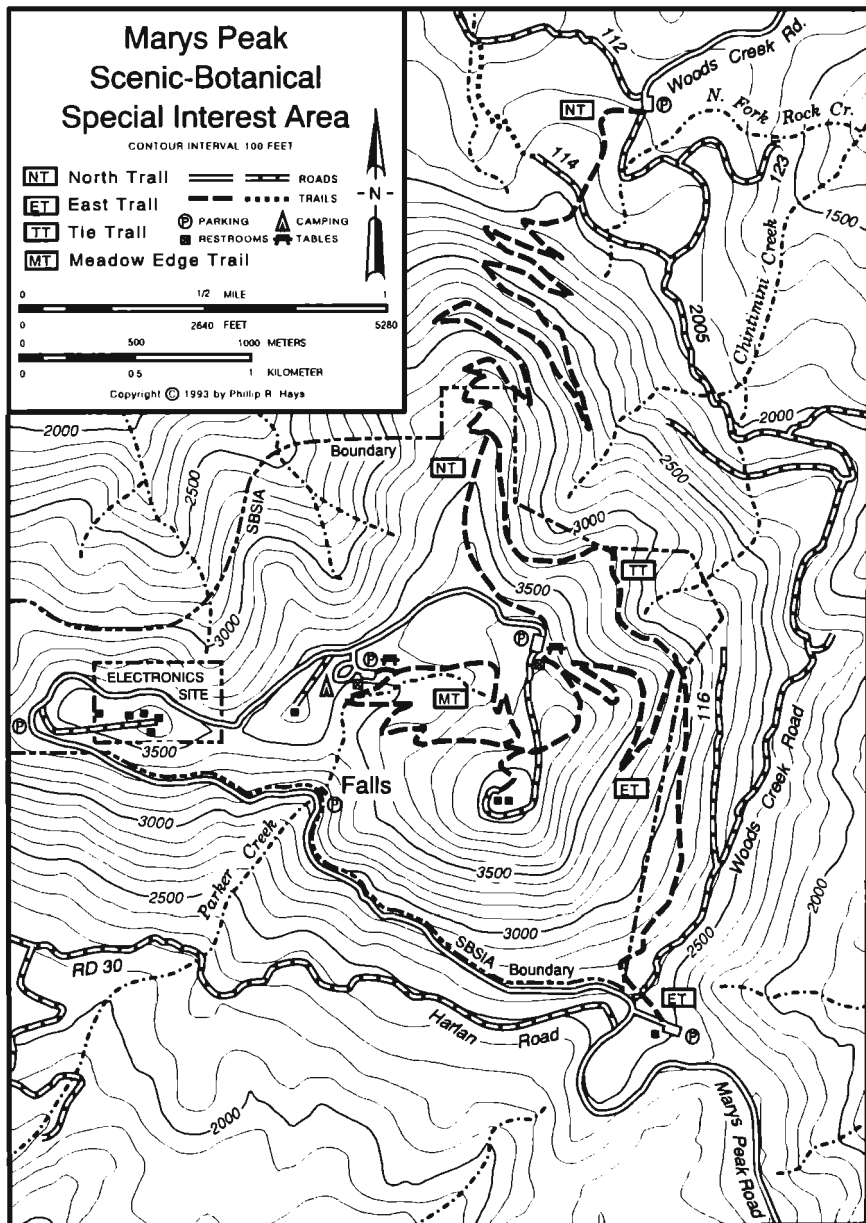
In 1990 a citizens' group called the Marys Peak Alliance proposed including essentially all the mountain above 1500 feet elevation in a 20,000 acre recreation area. This is a grass-roots effort to preserve the mountain (3.2% of the total area of the Siuslaw National Forest) as a recreational and natural resource for the enjoyment of future generations.

# Marys Peak

- NT** North Ridge Trail
- ET** East Ridge Trail
- TT** Tie Trail
- MT** Meadow Edge Trail



PARKING  
 ROADS  
 TRAILS  
 SBSIA BOUNDARY  
 Copyright © 1993 by Phillip R. Hays





## Marys Peak

### Summit Trail

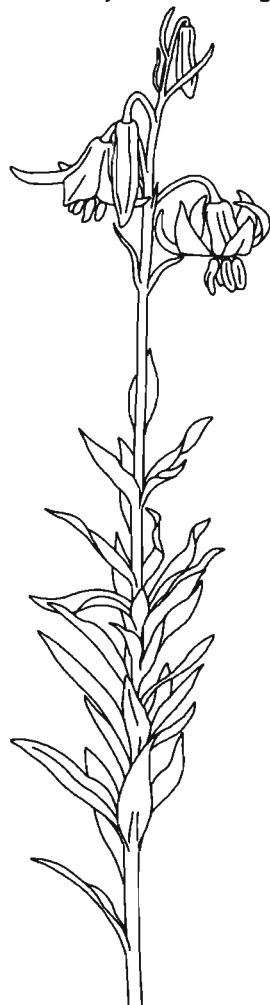
<b>Distance:</b>	0.67 mi. (1.1 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	350 ft (104 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	10%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, ski	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Marys Peak Road parking lot near top of mountain		

This is the shortest and easiest walk on the mountain. Follow the gravel road that leads from the parking area at the upper end of Marys Peak Road to the top of the mountain. The panorama from the top is spectacular! It is the reason for the Scenic designation in the Special Interest Area. You can return by a trail leading down the north side of the peak that connects with the Meadow Edge Trail and returns to the Peak Road, or you can continue down the East Ridge Trail a short distance to a junction at the first switch back; the left (north) fork returns to the parking area near the restrooms.

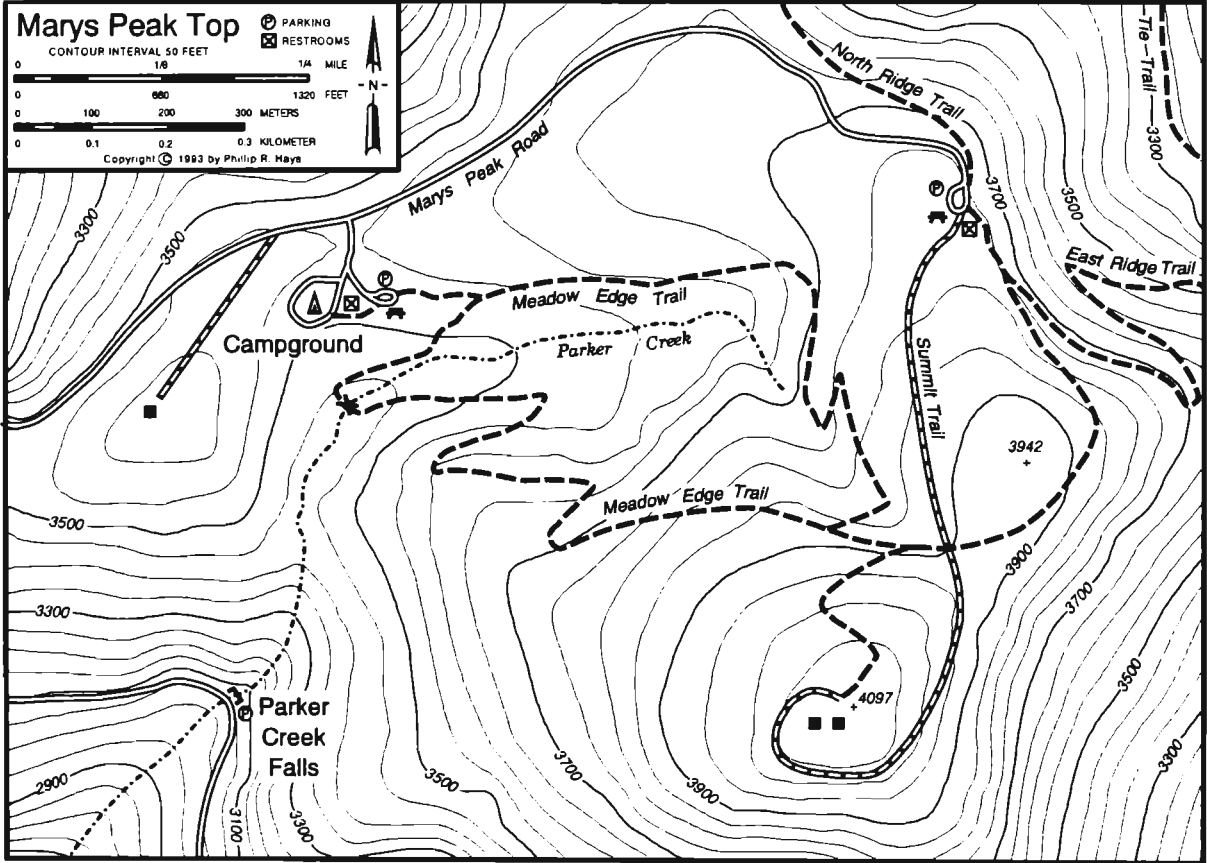
*The peak accumulates more than 10 feet (3 meters) of snow in winter. Spring comes late (June) on the mountain. Soon after the snow melts, the meadows and rocky slopes along this road are covered with brightly colored wildflowers. At each turn of the road a new plant community comes into view. The angle of the sun, direction of prevailing winds, soil types and moisture content create tremendous variety in this small area. The flowering display continues throughout summer.*

*The plant community on Marys Peak is unique; this rare collection of plants is the reason for the Botanical designation in the Special Interest Area. Many of the species are common only in subalpine habitats and are found nowhere else in the Coast Range. Some inhabit areas of only a few acres extent, and the populations of several species number only in the dozens. The loss of a single plant could effect the survival of the species on the mountain.*

**Please stay on the trails  
and  
please do not pick the flowers!**



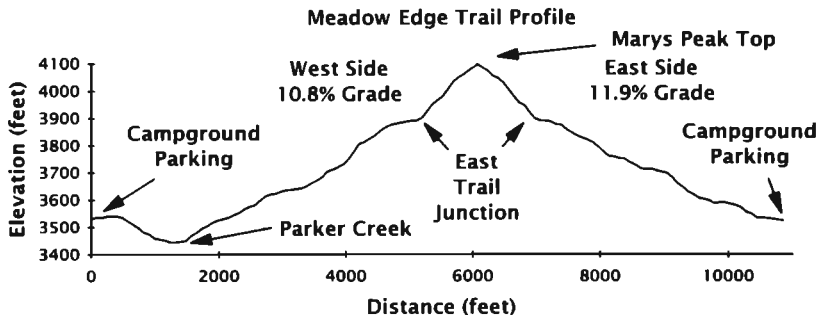
*Lilium columbianum*  
**Tiger Lily**



# Marys Peak

## Meadow Edge Trail

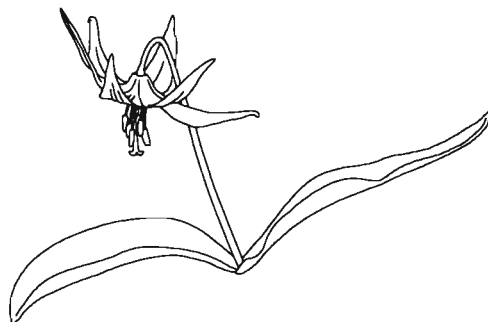
<b>Distance:</b>	2 mi. (3.3 km) loop	<b>Trail rating:</b>	moderate
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	570 ft. (174 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	10%-12%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Campground parking lot or Summit Trail		



One of the largest stands of noble fir (*Abies procera*) on Earth grows on Marys Peak, and this trail winds through it. The forest floor is covered with many different kinds of wildflowers, and Parker Creek trickles through it.

You can start this trail from two places. From the parking lot at the end of Marys Peak Road follow the gravel road (Summit Trail) about 1/4 mile (1300 m) to where the East Ridge Trail crosses the road. Turn right (west) and follow the trail into the woods. Just inside the woods the trail forks, with the left branch climbing to the peak, and the right continuing on the Meadow Edge Trail. You will soon come to another junction; both branches are part of the Meadow Edge Trail loop. The east side branch (turn right) is shorter and steeper than the west, and is the best route for descending into Parker Creek valley.

The other starting point is the picnic area parking lot near the campground. A short side trail leads to the main loop trail. The west branch (turn right) is not as steep as the east, and is the best choice for climbing. After about a mile you will come to another junction. The east branch of the Meadow Edge Trail angles left and downhill, returning to the campground parking lot. The right fork continues uphill a short distance to a junction with the East Ridge Trail. From here you can switch back (right) and continue to the top of the mountain.

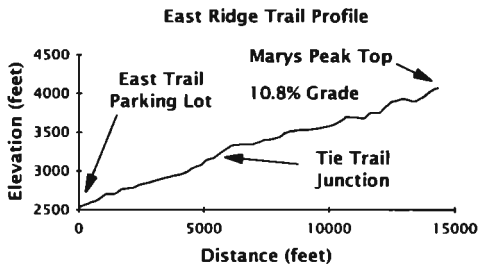


*Erythronium grandiflorum*  
Glacier Lily

## East Ridge Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	2.7 mi. (4.4 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	demanding
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	1600 ft (486 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	10.8%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	East Ridge Trail parking lot off Marys Peak Road		

The east side of Marys Peak has one of the finest native (old growth) Douglas fir forests in the Coast Range. This trail climbs through the forest, then leads into the open meadows at the top of the mountain. The views through the dense forest on the steep mountainside and the open vistas at the top make this a very rewarding hike.



The trail starts at the East Ridge Trail parking area just off Marys Peak Road 5.5 mi. (8.8 km) from the Alsea Highway (Oregon 34) junction. About a mile along the trail, at the first sharp switch back, you come to a junction with the Tie Trail (see below). This side trail climbs to the North Ridge Trail. This makes a nice 6.2 mile (10 km) loop, climbing to the top of the mountain on the North Ridge Trail, and descending by the East Ridge Trail.

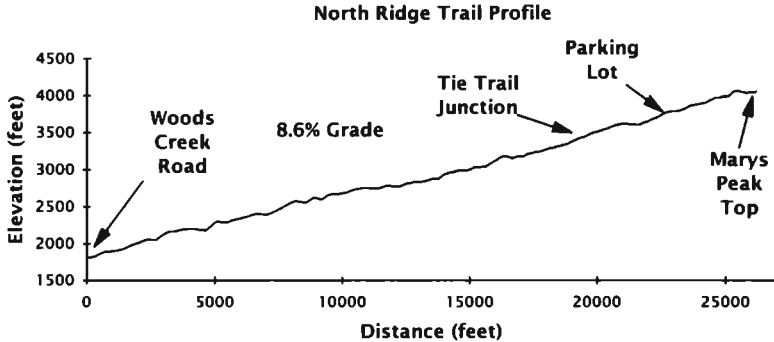


**Nurse log**

# Marys Peak

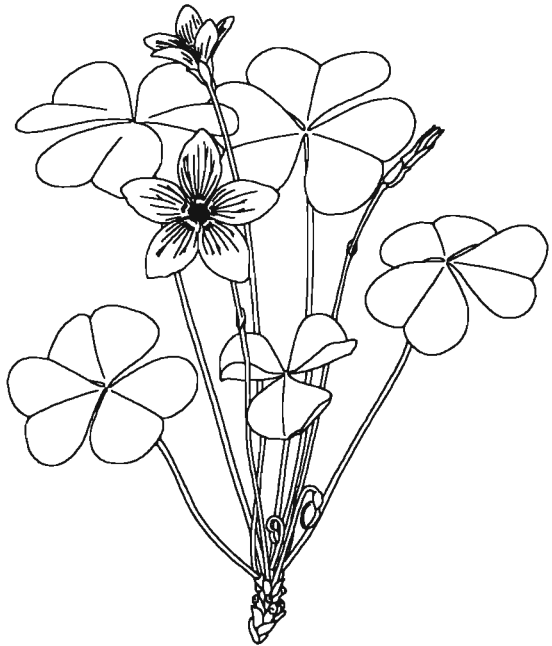
## North Ridge Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	5 mi. (8 km) to top	<b>Trail rating:</b>	demanding
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	2300 ft. (700 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	8.6%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	Parking area at gate on Woods Creek Road		



The North Ridge Trail (Woods Creek Trail, Marys Peak Trail) is the most demanding trail in this area. It is our longest trail, and has the greatest elevation gain. The trail climbs the steep north ridge in fourteen switchbacks, passing through one of the finest native Douglas fir forests (old growth) in the Coast Range.

At about 3.4 miles (6 km) you come to a junction with the Tie Trail (see below) at the last switch back on the top of the north ridge. You can make a loop by descending from the top of the mountain on the East Ridge Trail to its junction with the Tie Trail, and then cross the mountain's east slope along the Tie Trail to the North Ridge Trail, before returning to the Woods Creek Road parking area. This makes a 11.3 mile (18.2 km) round trip.

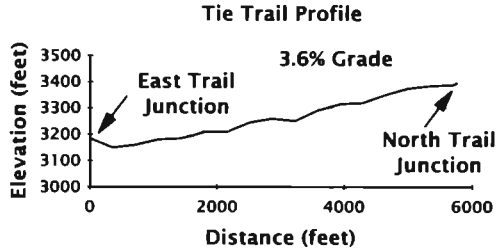


*Oxalis oregana*  
**Wood Sorrel**

## Tie Trail

<b>Distance:</b>	1.1 mi. (1.75 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	210 ft (64 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	3.6%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	East Ridge Trail or North Ridge Trail		

The Tie Trail was constructed in 1989-1991 to connect the East Ridge Trail and the North Ridge Trail. This offers hikers the opportunity to extend their walk in a loop across the east slope of Marys Peak.

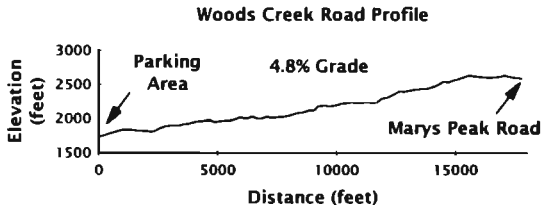


Though the trail is short and makes an easy walk, getting to it requires more strenuous exertion.

## Woods Creek Road

<b>Distance:</b>	3.3 mi (5.3 km)	<b>Trail rating:</b>	easy
<b>Elevation gain:</b>	850 ft (269 m)	<b>Grade:</b>	4.8%
<b>Trail use:</b>	foot, bike, ski	<b>Open for use:</b>	year round
<b>Start:</b>	gates on Woods Creek Road or Marys Peak Road		

Woods Creek Road continues past the gate at the parking area near the start of the North Ridge Trail, crossing the base of the mountain to join Marys Peak Road near the East Ridge Trail parking lot.



The road passes through an uninspiring assortment of clearcuts and young second growth plantations, and has little to offer except a connection between the North Ridge and East Ridge Trails. Together, the three routes make an 11 mile (17.75 km) loop. Starting at the Woods Creek parking area, you can climb the mountain via the North Ridge Trail, descend on the East Ridge Trail, and return along the road.

In the winter this road occasionally gets enough snow for cross country skiing; then it makes an excellent ski trail. When we have a few inches of snow on the ground in Corvallis or Philomath, the road will have enough snow for skiing.

## Of Slugs and Seasons

Most people have little interest in slugs, unless the slimy things are ruining their garden. However, I have discovered an interesting thing about slugs over the years. If I did not hike year round I would never have noticed.

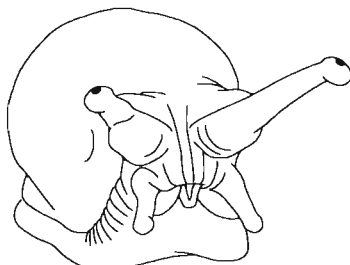
Slugs are the epitome of sluggishness; even when one is in a terrible hurry it is barely moving at all. One day I stopped for a moment to watch one. It was a chilly but sunny winter day, and the slug was moving quite slowly. About thirty seconds after I stopped, the slug suddenly withdrew its eyestalks, as if it had just seen me. Why did it wait so long, I wondered?

Believe it or not, slugs exhibit a great deal of curiosity. This particular animal eventually peeked out from beneath its mantle, and decided there was no danger. To my surprise, it then turned from the course it had been traveling and crawled in my direction. It slithered near me, stopped, raised its front end, and reached upward with its eyestalks to have a better look. Then, just as slowly, it lowered itself back to a crawling position, turned, and continued on its original course.

You have to be very patient if you want to observe slugs. During the several minutes while this episode was taking place, I wanted to resume my hike. But curiosity held me there until the slug no longer seemed interested in me. As I continued on my way I passed several more slugs, and learned that if I blocked a large part of their view of the sky, they eventually noticed me, and withdrew their eyestalks just as the first slug had done, after about 30 seconds.

I didn't think much more about the sluggishness of slugs until a warm day next spring. On that day, if I stopped, hovering over slugs, they responded as before, only faster. I repeated this observation all summer long, and found that when the air temperature was about 80° F (27° C) a slug would duck for cover in the unsluggish time of only two or three seconds!

I relate all of this to illustrate one small way that nature changes with the seasons. If I hiked only on warm summer days, I would not know how each place changes character in winter.



*Ariolimax columbianus*  
**Banana Slug**

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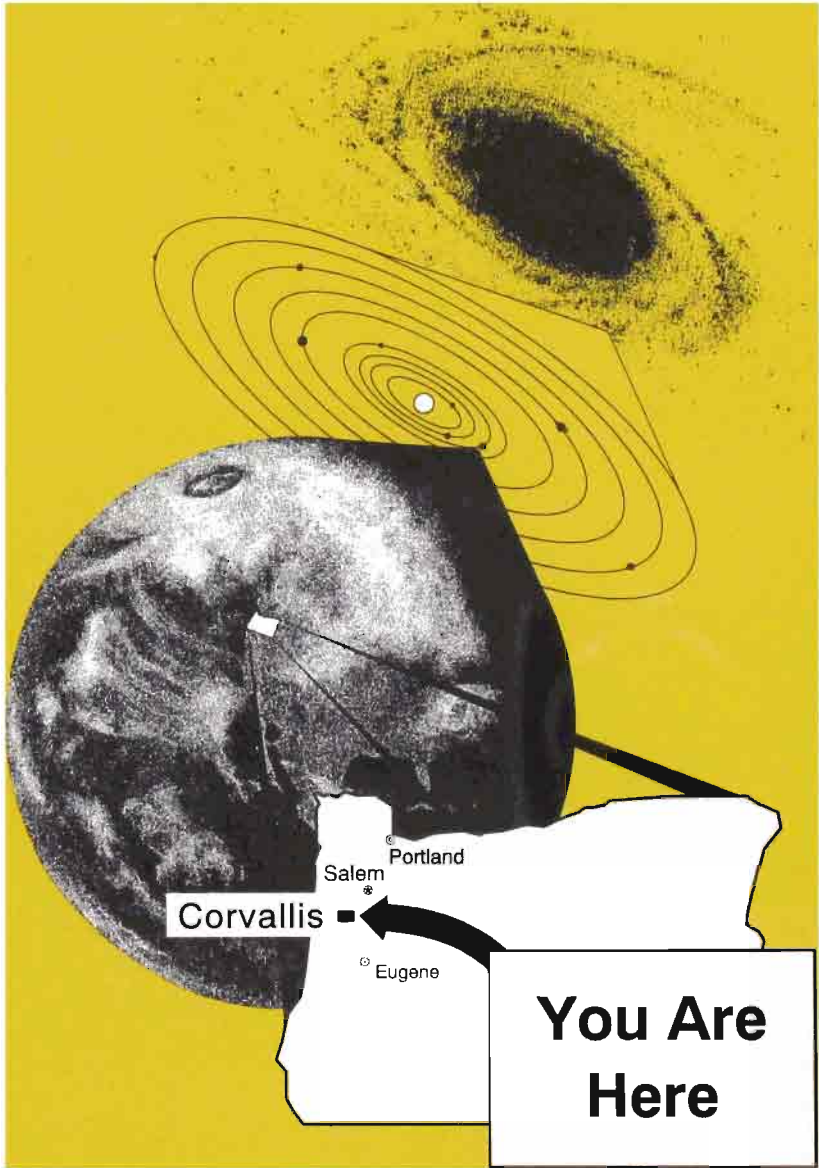
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