

Where to Find Washington's Best Fall Color

Washington **TRAILS**

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Discovering the Pasayten

Things That Go BUMP in the Woods

Duckabush: Back From the Burn

Prep for Fall in Cozy Baselayers

Sep+Oct 2012





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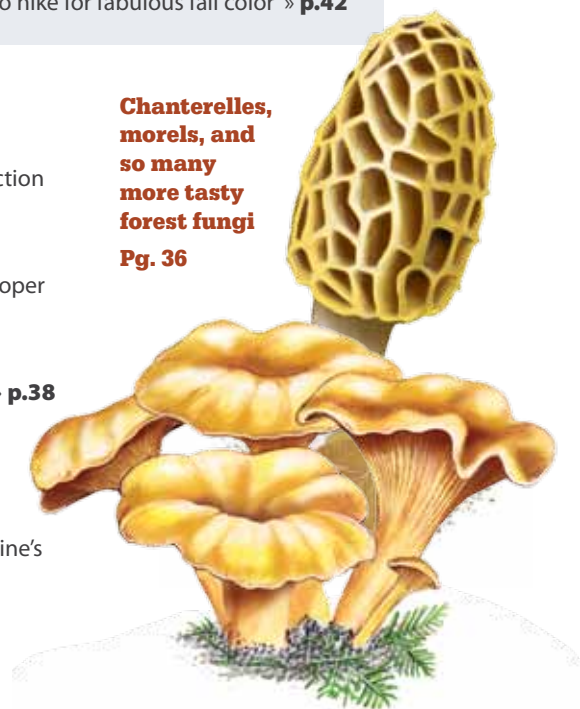
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TAMI ASARS is a writer, photographer and career hiker. When not working on her hiking guidebooks, she puts her trail skills to work selecting the perfect spiderweb-whacking sticks, determining time and distance traveled by the position of the sun, and identifying bird calls. Tami hikes at every opportunity, wherever there is trail, and always finds something charming—even on the snoozers. Look for

Tami's new book, *Hiking the Wonderland Trail: The Complete Guide to Mount Rainier's Premier Trail*, at local retailers and at tamiasars.com.

ANDY PORTER has always associated outdoor travel with photography. In 1976, he and two friends hitchhiked from eastern Pennsylvania to the Northwest and hiked the Pacific Crest Trail through Oregon. At the time, he was using a borrowed Nikkormat camera to capture his adventure. Since then, Andy has traveled across the U.S. and overseas, but finally settled on northwest Washington as his residence of choice. His favorite places to hike and photograph are the North Cascades and Olympic coast. You can check out Andy's work at northwesternimages.com.



CHERYL TALBERT is an avid hiker and backpacker who loves extended high-country treks in the U.S. West and abroad. A retired forester, she lives in Issaquah



with her husband and dogs, and ventures often with The Mountaineers on hikes, backpacks, snowshoes and long-distance treks. Cheryl teaches Mountaineers classes on backpacking food planning and preparation. You can check out some of her stories, recipes and trail food tips on her blog, happytramper.wordpress.com.

KRISTIN HOSTETTER has been *Backpacker* magazine's gear editor since 1994. She has put thousands of camping and hiking products through rigorous gear testing programs. Her travels have taken her all over the world—from Alaska to Iceland, from Wales to Wyoming—in search of the best testing conditions, which often means the worst weather! Author of several guidebooks, Kristin is known as the "Gear Pro" on backpacker.com. She lives in Massachusetts with her husband and two sons, all of whom join her adventures whenever possible.



PAUL RAYMAKER discovered nature photography when he spent a summer in the mountains of Colorado. Since then, he hasn't put his camera down. In 2007, he moved from Wisconsin to Seattle to work as a geologist at an environmental consulting firm, while shooting Washington's trails in every spare moment he had. Nature photography is now Paul's passion, his goal being to show others the beauty that surrounds all of us, and encouraging people to care more for their environment and where they live. He has been a long-time contributor to *Washington Trails*, and has placed several winning images in WTA's Northwest Exposure photo contest.



AARON THEISEN is a Spokane-based freelance writer and photographer who specializes in the wild places of the Inland Northwest.



Among Aaron's many hats—besides being a *Washington Trails* correspondent—he is the editor of the Friends of the Columbia Highlands website, and works with the Washington Native Plant Society. He is currently working on a wildlife-viewing guide to be published by Conservation Northwest. His primary job is as a stay-at-home father to his 10-month-old son.

JANICE VAN CLEVE is a foodie, wine taster and writer, with a focus on Mayan archeology. She was introduced to the joys of hiking in the Cascades in 1994; in 2004, she joined WTA. Janice is now a Fireside Circle member and has earned her saw for more than 50 days of trail maintenance. She enjoys day hiking in the I-90 corridor, but for backpacking heads for the Teanaways. Her books and research papers can be found at mayas.doodlekit.com.



Cover Shot

Two years ago, outdoor photographer Andy Porter spent the fall roaming the Pasayten Wilderness in search of the eastern Cascades' glorious color-changing larch. On a 4-day journey along the Boundary Trail, he was met by a landscape of wide valleys and rocky peaks, all in the throes of autumn transformation, and accentuated by brilliant skies and golden sunsets. This image of **Amphitheater Mountain** is but one of the stunning landscapes he captured on his trip. See more, and read his story, on page 20.



What's Your Story?

Have you taken an amazing hike in Washington or the greater Northwest? Captured some gorgeous photos? Perhaps had a riotous good time on a Volunteer Vacation or BCRT? Or maybe you're an expert on marmot behavior; wilderness first-aid or repairing gear on the fly? Then we want to hear from you.

Washington Trails welcomes editorial and photography contributions of sorts. Share your adventure with us, some history, some know-how or some great imagery.

For more information on how you can contribute to *Washington Trails*, email editor@wta.org.

WTA Highlights »

A few things we wanted to share



TOP: WTA's Karen Daubert and Loren Drummond, along with friends and family, kick off Hike-a-Thon 2012 with an outing on the new Grand Ridge Trail.

BOTTOM: The Mountaineers Books' guidebook author Craig Romano leads a Hike-a-Thon outing to Mount Rainier's Palisades Lakes.

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Full Team Ahead

Whether backpacking in the Pasayten, day hiking in the William O. Douglas Wilderness, or working on a Volunteer Vacation in the Teanaway, team members make all the difference.

This was well-illustrated on my summer scramble up a seldom-climbed peak up the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie. When one member of our team was injured six hours in, it took all of us working collectively to get him out to safety.

Similarly, it takes a strong team of professional staff here at WTA to support the growing numbers and increasing needs of Washington's hiking community.

I am very proud to announce that for the first time in a very long time, WTA's trail maintenance team is complete. This summer, we welcomed Michael Stubblefield as our director of trail programs to fill the missing thread in our tapestry of key staff leadership positions. Michael is leading our largest WTA program, trail maintenance, which is on track to post more than 100,000 hours of volunteer work again this year. He is also heading up WTA's youth and regional programs, both of which have grown considerably over the past few years. This critical position had been vacant for more than a year, and as a result, the entire trail team had been pulling extra shifts to keep the program thriving.

Michael brings to WTA not only his passion for the outdoors, but also years of experience in personnel management, corporate accounting and commercial litigation. We all look forward to continued growth of the trail maintenance and youth programs under Michael's leadership.

Other WTA teams are thriving as well. Under the new leadership of Susan Elderkin (formerly WTA's website editor), our communications and outreach team brings cutting-edge technology to all aspects of their job, including the recently redesigned website and magazine, blog posts with late-breaking news, and savvy implementation of social media. This team is at the top of their game.

WTA's other programs are succeeding under veteran guidance. The advocacy team, led by Jonathan Guzzo, continues to address the complex federal, state and local issues affecting trails. Three articles in this issue describe the important work WTA is doing in the policy arena. Rebecca Lavigne leads WTA's development team, fresh off a successful Hike-a-Thon. And Deb Hemingway, who heads up our finances and office staff, keeps everything at WTA running smoothly.

The work we do is challenging and complicated, and it takes a great team. I am thankful every day that I work with such a talented, passionate and dedicated group of people. I'd hike that Middle Fork peak with any of them!

This fall, I invite you to visit the office and meet our team.

Karen & Daubert

Washington Trails Association is a volunteer-driven nonprofit membership organization working to preserve, enhance and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state through collaboration, education, advocacy and trail maintenance.

WTA was founded by Louise B. Marshall (1915–2005). Ira Spring (1918–2003) was its primary supporter. Greg Ball (1944–2004) founded the volunteer trail maintenance program. Their spirit continues today through contributions from thousands of WTA members and volunteers.





Eli Boschetto

Editor
editor@wta.org

PLAY IT SAFE

Right before this issue of *Washington Trails* went to print, I spent several days roaming Salt Lake City's Salt Palace Convention Center at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Marketplace. This is the mega-sized gear expo where every outdoor adventure brand showcases their latest and greatest to buyers and media. There were definitely some highlights, which I'll be reporting on via wta.org's Signpost Blog, and items we'll review in upcoming issues, so stay tuned for that.

While there, I attended a breakfast presentation hosted by the Conservation Alliance, with special guest speaker Aron Ralston. You have probably read or seen Ralston's story, *127 Hours*, in which he became trapped by a falling boulder while solo hiking in Utah's Canyonlands. After five days with no hope of rescue, he proceeded to free himself by cutting his arm off with a dull pocket knife. He had not told anyone where he was going, or what he was doing, and it was only by his family and friends' diligent investigative work—and a lot of luck and determination—that he lived to tell his tale.

Ralston's experience made me think of many of my own solo outings—though I always leave a very detailed itinerary of where I'm going, what I'll be hiking, and when I expect to return. But accidents happen. It doesn't necessarily have to be a dangerous or technical route, nor caused by ignorance or carelessness. The earth is a living planet, shifting, moving, breathing, and we're simply going for the ride on top. It was sheer, dumb chance that Ralston's boulder loosened when it did. The key is to be prepared.

Several years ago, my wife and I purchased a **SPOT Satellite Communicator**. This small device transmits a signal indicating its precise location via Google maps. This location can be read by anyone you wish to share it with. It also has the ability to transmit a distress signal, which is relayed directly to local emergency services. Not a bad little piece of equipment for a lot of piece of mind—both for us in the backcountry, and for our families back at home.



At the time of Ralston's incident, SPOT devices weren't yet available, and he would have had difficulty transmitting a signal from deep in the slot canyon he was trapped, but upon his exit, he could have immediately signalled for emergency services instead of hiking for miles, nearly bleeding to death. I carry my SPOT device every time I head into the wilderness, alone or with others, on short day hikes and multiday backpacks. Not only does it offer a sense of security, but it's a fun way for friends and family to track where our adventures take us.

Have fun. Be safe.

From OR 2012: Gear to Watch For

BioLite CampStove

Cook your dinner and charge your electronics with just a handful of kindling.

BioLiteStove.com



EDITOR'S CHOICE



Breathe Easy

Two summers ago, I set out to hike the entire 220-mile length of the John Muir Trail in California's Sierra Nevada. This trail had been at the top of my life-list, and I had been preparing for years. Three weeks and 134 miles into my trip, I bonked hard.

What happened? The first thing to go was my appetite. Even though I had packed all of my favorite foods, eating was an unpleasant chore. Next came the sleepless nights, tossing and turning in my bag, despite my exhaustion from hiking long days over 11K and 12K passes, only to get an hour or two of shuteye each night. In the last few weary days, the nausea struck.

When I arrived at my last resupply station, I was completely bedraggled and deflated. The station attendant immediately recognized altitude sickness. She gave me lots of electrolyte drink and encouraged me to get rehydrated and try to eat. I spent an extra day working on mending myself, knowing that the bigger, higher passes were still to come. After no noticeable improvement the next day, I decided not to risk my health and safety and exited the trail. But I would be back.

The following summer, just before my planned return to the JMT, I was introduced to a product called **Accli-Mate**. This all-natural drink supplement employs a formula of vitamins, minerals, electrolytes and herbal extracts to assist in dealing with prolonged high elevation exposure. It was worth a shot; in just a few weeks my wife, Mitzi, and I would be tackling the next section of the JMT, near where I had exited the year before. We would be at constant elevations of 11K and 12K feet. Mitzi was known to have issues with elevation above 10K feet, and from my experience the year before, I was now too.

We started a regimen of **Accli-Mate** the day before our hike, and every morning and evening during our hike. We felt great! We ate well, we slept well, and we practically ran up 12K-foot Glen Pass. Now, with a little **Accli-Mate** in our water bottles (Cran-Razz is our favorite), prolonged elevation exposure is no longer an issue on our favorite trails.

— Eli Boschetto

There are more than 300 million lakes on planet earth. WTA's Karen Daubert recently sat down with author John Fahey to discuss his new book, *Lake Chelan: The Greatest Lake in the World*.

When did you first come to believe Lake Chelan was the greatest lake in the world?

I fell in love with Lake Chelan from the first moment I saw it. But at the time, I was a young kid with no frame of reference. It was only years later, as I got to venture out around the planet, that I realized Lake Chelan and the surrounding mountains were world-class.

In 2006, you set out around the globe to prove Lake Chelan is the greatest lake in the world. In the end, how far did you travel and how many lakes did you visit?

We did around 120,000 miles of total travel. We visited just over 200 lakes.

A big part of your argument is that the greatest lake in the world has to be surrounded by some of the most extraordinary mountains in the world, and that the North Cascades fit the bill. That's a bold claim.

It is. Many people call our mountains the "American Alps." But no one is calling the mountains in Switzerland "The North Cascades of Europe." I make the case in my book that maybe they should. Our mountains here in Washington present themselves with an extraordinary amount of vertical relief. We have 9,000-foot-high nonvolcanic peaks that drop straight down to valleys with just 1,000 feet of elevation. Because of our climate and location, we get glaciers at lower elevations, deep forests and outrageous wildflowers. Mount Baker holds the record for the most snowfall in one year on the entire planet.

Throw in five volcanoes that range from 8,000 to 14,000 feet high, and you have some of the most visually stunning mountains in the world. More importantly, we have really excelled in terms of conservation. So much of the North Cascades has been set aside and remains untouched. The Alps are beautiful, but in terms of protecting wilderness, we have been far more successful than the countries of Europe. We should take great pride in that and be inspired to do more.

What kind of response have you received from readers? Do they share your opinion?

Many people agree with me 100%. Others tell me they were amazed to learn so much about Chelan, and that the case I make is very

compelling. Still others tell me they like the book, but I'm flat-out wrong, then tell me why their favorite lake is the greatest. I expected that. People are passionate about their lakes.

Considering you expected this kind of reaction, what would you say your ultimate purpose was in writing this book?

I set out to make the book entertaining, and I knew it would have some funny stories, but I didn't expect to find so many funny stories. That seems to be the part of the book that resonates with people. I've had so many people tell me that their spouse has asked them to leave the room because they were laughing too loud and making it hard to sleep. I love to hear that.

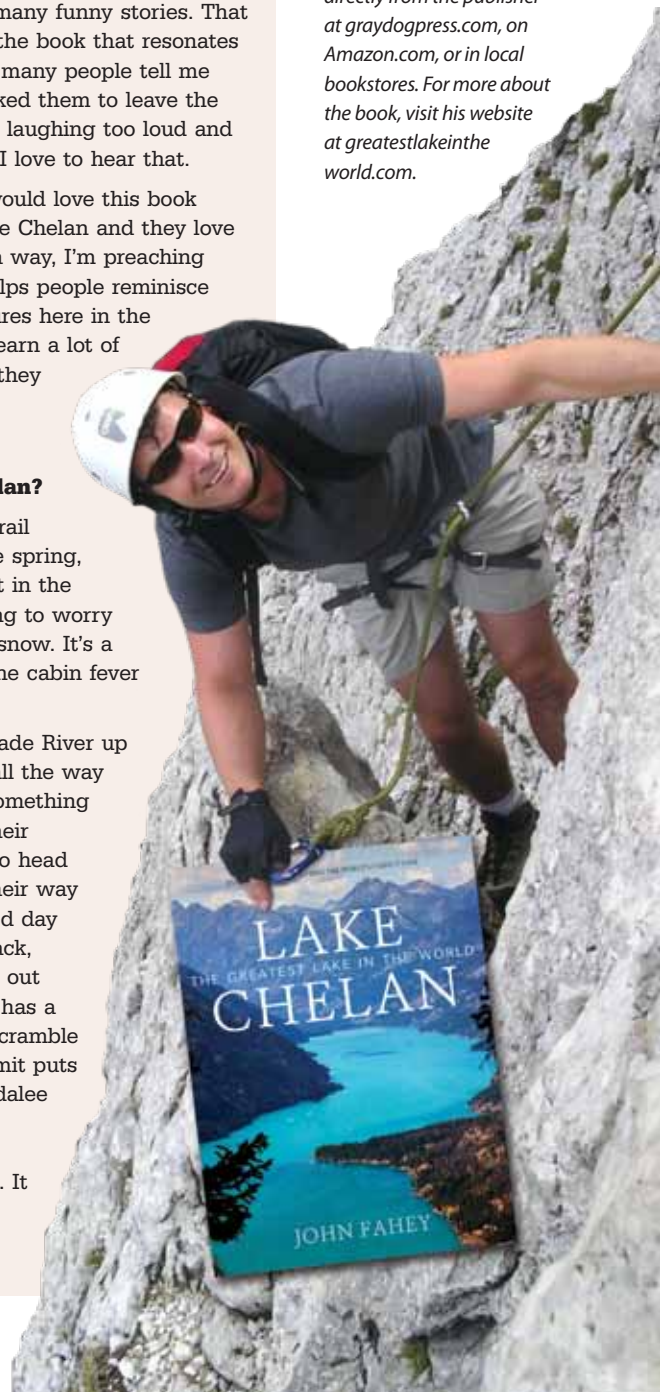
I really felt like people would love this book because people love Lake Chelan and they love the North Cascades. In a way, I'm preaching to the choir. I think it helps people reminisce about their own adventures here in the Northwest, and maybe learn a lot of things about the region they didn't know.

What are your favorite trails around Lake Chelan?

The Chelan Lakeshore Trail is great, especially in the spring, because it puts you right in the mountains without having to worry about trudging through snow. It's a great way to shake off the cabin fever of winter.

The route from the Cascade River up over Cascade Pass and all the way through to Stehekin is something everyone should do in their lifetime, and they need to head up the Sahale Arm on their way through. For a really good day hike or overnight backpack, McGregor Mountain just out of Stehekin is perfect. It has a scary but nontechnical scramble at the top—and the summit puts you right above the Sandalee Glacier looking into the national park and across the head of Lake Chelan. It doesn't get much better than that!

Author John Fahey is a Washington native who is an avid hiker and mountain climber in the Cascades. He divides his time between Lake Chelan, where he owns a small business, and Seattle, where he works in the finance industry. You can purchase his book directly from the publisher at graydogpress.com, on Amazon.com, or in local bookstores. For more about the book, visit his website at greatestlakeintheworld.com.



Major Milestone for North Cascades Highway

NORTH CASCADES—This month, Washington celebrates the 40th anniversary of State Route 20, the North Cascades Highway. The ceremonial scissors that snipped the ribbon on September 2, 1972, signified the culmination of a 100-year-long struggle to find and build a route over rugged mountains steeped in Native American culture and Euro-American pioneering history. For hikers and photographers, this road made accessible one of the Northwest's most amazing landscapes.

Before the highway, Native Americans used ancient routes through the Cascades for hunting, fishing, medicinal plant gathering and trade. European-American exploration for a commercial route from the Columbia Highlands to the Skagit River began with Alexander Ross in 1814, who explored the mountains for the North West Company. Early routes stabbed into the mountains, but none went all the way through.

When gold fever struck in the mid-1800s, miners and enterprising rascals were enticed to find a passage. One such character built a cabin in the middle of a difficult route and demanded a toll from passers-by. This business plan was not popular, and the gatekeeper and his cabin mysteriously disappeared. One of the most infamous routes traversed is the "Devil's Elbow," a portion of an early wagon road blasted out of a cliff high above the Skagit River and fortified by a rickety wooden catwalk.

Early explorations identified three probable wagon routes: Cascade Pass, Hart's Pass and Ruby Creek, then over Sourdough Mountain. In the late 1800s, a wagon route over Cascade Pass was partially built, but abandoned due to the difficult terrain. The route over Sourdough was eliminated when the era of robust transportation—cars—dictated a more durable route. Though identified in the 1930s, the Rainy Pass route wasn't added to the list of possible highway routes until the 1950s.

In 1957, the Rainy Pass route was selected. Some of the considerations that went into its selection were number of switchbacks, number of miles of steep grade, length of major snowslides, sharp curves and cost. While the Cascade Pass route included 25 switchbacks, Rainy Pass had none. Harts Pass included 17 miles of 7 percent grade; Rainy Pass only had 1.5. Cascade Pass had 14.5 miles of potential snowslide area, Hart's Pass 8 miles, and Rainy Pass only 3 miles.

Surveyors and engineers traveled on horseback, fighting devil's club, difficult terrain and mosquito hordes to determine the exact location of the road and bridges, with construction finally beginning in 1959. Work camps were

built along the route, supplied by horseback from Winthrop. During the construction, pioneers, explorers and advocates for the highway were memorialized in the names of many topographic features: Twisp, Ballard Mountain, Ross Lake, Hart's Pass and John Pierce Falls, to name a few. Upon its final completion in 1972, eastern Washington met west, through one of North America's most rugged landscapes.

And though nothing remains of the work camps today, the locations are still used—Lone Fir and Early Winters Campgrounds and the Cutthroat Lake trailhead. Remnants of old wagon or pack routes can be found on the Ruby Creek and Early Winters Trails. Mining history can be found on Ruby Creek, Cascade Pass and Hart's Pass Trails.

Thanks to the building of North Cascades Highway, hikers have access to all of these great hiking destinations. Every spring, the highway opening is a festive occasion. Bookies take opening date bets, and Tootsie Clark, a descendent of a pioneer family, enjoys her long-standing tradition of doling out her famous cinnamon rolls to those lined up on opening day—all for those eager to enjoy one of the Northwest's most spectacular landscapes.

— Kim Brown

Newspaper clipping on the new North Cascades Highway from September 1968 *Wenatchee World*, with snapshots of highway surveyors and work crews, courtesy of WSDOT



More on the Historic North Cascades Highway

North Cascades Highway: Washington's Popular and Scenic Pass, by JoAnn Roe; Montevista Press

WSDOT: wsdot.wa.gov/Traffic/Passes/NorthCascades

Aggressive Mountain Goats Close Mount Ellinor Trail

QUILCENE—After a hiker was fatally attacked by a mountain goat in Olympic National Park in 2010, land managers have become increasingly cautious about aggressive goats near hiking trails. This summer, Olympic National Forest closed the popular Mount Ellinor trail for several weeks in response to four separate incidents on the same day, when hiking parties reported aggressive encounters with goats. No one was hurt, but the agency didn't want to take any chances and closed the trail immediately.

The tribe of 20 goats, including six kids, had been getting increasingly persistent in seeking food and salt from hikers. Mountain goats are not generally aggressive by nature, but they are powerful and inquisitive. During the summer, they have a biological need for the minerals found in salt. For goats that have become accustomed to humans, our sweat, urine and salty snacks are a powerful magnet. After having success with so many people, the goats at Mount Ellinor had become unwilling to take "no" for an answer from hikers.

WTA talked with Donna Nemeth of the Olympic National Forest about her advice for hikers when coming upon mountain goats. "People have got to be part of the solution and not the problem," said Nemeth. "When encountering a mountain goat, don't feed them, don't let them lick you and urinate well off the trail. Your actions with the goats will impact how the goats respond to the next hiker up the trail."

The general rule in mountain goat country is to urinate 50 feet off the trail and stay at least 50 yards away at all times. We call it the 50/50 rule. That way they won't see hikers as giant salt licks.

If a goat persists in approaching, do what you can to discourage it from following you. Yell at the goat and wave clothing at it. These actions should move the goat away. If you can't successfully get around or away from the goat, back away slowly, keeping your eyes on the goat at all times. If you perceive a threat from the goat, throw rocks at its body. Report any aggressive goat behavior to the ranger station.

These rules will be essential for hikers to follow as the Mount Ellinor trail reopens, but should also be followed in places like Lake Ingalls, Marmot Pass and the Enchantments. There are an estimated 2,800 mountain goats in Washington state, ranging throughout the Cascades and Olympics. As hikers, we must learn to respect their habitat and enjoy them from afar.

— Susan Elderkin, Comm. Director



Mountain goats, by Dale Blair

Meet Our Members!



Sylvia Peckham (fourth from left) and friends hiking at White Pass.

Sylvia Peckham

(1931-2012)

Washington's trails recently received an extraordinary gift from friend and lifelong hiker Sylvia Peckham. Raised in the Midwest and Northeast, Sylvia traveled across the country and then around the world to Peru and Saudi Arabia with her nursing career. Eventually settling in Seattle, Sylvia completed the family nurse practitioner program at the University of Washington and worked at Group Health until retirement.

Her lifelong passion for hiking was kindled by a scrambling course with The Mountaineers. The trails that Sylvia hiked and backpacked read like any hiker's life list: Wonderland, Pacific Crest Trail (Washington section), Chilkoot and Annapurna, to name just a few. She was part of a group of friends who hiked together regularly and took annual backpacking trips in Washington and beyond. When pulmonary fibrosis kept her off the trails in her final years of life, these friends were among those who cared for her. This summer they gathered on Mount Catherine to spread her ashes.

Sylvia was a longtime WTA member. It wasn't until after her passing that we learned of her generous bequest to Washington Trails Association in her will. Sylvia's legacy lives on in the remembrances of friends—and in Washington Trails Association's work to protect the trails and wild places she loved.

— Rebecca Lavigne and Marcia Broyles

Hike-a-Thon 2012

August may already feel like a distant memory, but this year's Hike-a-Thoners are anxiously awaiting word of our winners.

Last month, **180** Hike-a-Thoners volunteered their time to hike and make their miles count in support of Washington's trails. What could be better than spending your summer raising money for the trails we love to hike? How about winning sweet gear from our generous sponsors for hiking those trails!

Winners will be announced later this month, so to find out who made it into Hike-a-Thon's Hall of Fame visit wta.org/hikeathon.



Finally, a big **THANK YOU** to everyone—including Carianna Gischer, hiking her third Hike-a-Thon—who participated in this year's event, and donated their energy and support to our campaign!

The Yakima Basin Integrated Plan proposes two new National Recreation Areas that encompass landscapes like Esmerelda Basin in the Teanaway. WTA is working to ensure that the plan supports and enhances hiking opportunities in the region.

Photo by David Hagen



WTA Endorses New Yakima Basin Water Plan

For decades, water has been an issue in the Yakima Basin. Irrigators need it for their crops, salmon and steelhead runs need it for survival, and tribes need salmon and steelhead runs to sustain their traditional ways of life. But cyclical drought and the impacts of climate change, together with the way water is managed in the West, make for long-term challenges for everyone depending on water in the region. An ambitious plan developed by agencies, irrigators, tribes, elected officials and conservation advocates now aims to change the reality of the water supply in the Yakima Valley.

The Yakima Basin Integrated Water Plan grew from the wreckage of the Black Rock Reservoir, which would have created a new water supply basin charged with water from the Columbia. Among the many problems with Black Rock was the potential that toxic materials under Hanford Nuclear Reservation could have migrated to the Columbia due to soil saturation. Stakeholders in that project joined opponents to develop a plan that could deal with water needs in the basin while implementing long-term conservation plans.

In January, the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Plan Working Group developed a strategy to stabilize water supply by increasing water storage and access at three dams, pumping groundwater into existing aquifers for storage, and modifying existing dams to allow more water release during low-flow conditions. Fish passage would be added to five dams in the watershed that currently lack such structures, which has the potential to increase salmon runs tenfold, from 30,000 returning fish to 300,000. On a landscape level, the plan would protect threatened parts of the Yakima Basin watershed by acquiring timberlands in the Upper Yakima—around 46,000 acres in all—as well as adding around 21,000 acres to the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

In addition, the plan would set up two new national recreation areas (NRA). The Upper Yakima NRA, which encompasses most of the Teanaway area, would cover 100,000 acres, including 6,000 acres of motorized recreation and 1,000 acres of nonmotorized. The second, known as the Taneum-Manastash NRA, would be roughly 41,000 acres, 35,000 of which would be motorized and 6,000 nonmotorized. This acreage roughly corresponds with current usage. Finally, the plan would designate thirteen rivers and streams as Wild and Scenic Rivers.

WTA supports the broad goals of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. While there is a significant trail component, particularly in the NRAs, it's important to note that this plan includes several elements that are critically important from a conservation perspective. This may be one of the few chances we have to designate new wilderness in the Teanaway area. And acquiring checkerboard lands in the Upper Yakima is critically important, since the waning timber industry means that development pressures bear down hard on landowners.

We do have concerns about the makeup of the national recreation areas in particular. The plan is still a draft. There will be opportunities to work with other stakeholders to craft a proposal that makes more sense for hikers and could develop new nonmotorized areas in the Teanaway. Over the next several months, WTA will coordinate with the organizations who have developed the plan to ensure that hikers are heard every step of the way.

– Jonathan Guzzo, Advocacy Director

5 Tips for Hiking in Hunting Season

Autumn brings out huckleberries, seasonal color and hunters. Hikers exploring Washington's public lands this fall—in particular September and October—should be aware of hunting seasons (open in most state lands and national forests), and take precautions to help ensure their safety.

Here are five tips for safe hiking during hunting season:

- **Dress to be seen during hunting season.** Wear bright clothing, making yourself more visible. Choose colors that stand out like orange, red and pink, and avoid blacks, browns, and earth-toned greens. You can also use safety orange backpack covers and vests.
- **Make noise.** Whistle, sing or carry on a conversation as you walk to alert hunters to your presence. Sound carries well across mountain basins, and hunters should be listening for any sounds of animal movement.
- **Make yourself known.** If you hear shooting, raise your voice and let hunters know that you are in the vicinity.
- **Know when hunting seasons are.** Continue to hike, but learn about where and when hunting is taking place. Bear season begins in August, followed by grouse, deer and several other species in September. October is the high point of hunting season.
- **Know your comfort level.** If hunting makes you uneasy, choose a hike in a location where hunting is not allowed, like state or national parks.

For more information on hunting regulations and seasons from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, visit <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations/>

Meet Michael Stubblefield

WTA's New Director of Trail Programs



Michael comes to WTA with extensive experience in accounting, civil law practice and business management, and lifelong work as volunteer nail-bender and board member with Habitat for Humanity and other non-profits.

"At this point, I'm pinching myself to make sure I'm not dreaming—working with WTA is that good," says Michael. "Even as the busy summer season unfolds, excitement with WTA's strategic planning efforts runs high as we plan for the future. Our leadership and creative staff vibrate with 'possibility thinking' about ways to enhance the experience of our large and growing core group—and the volunteers, from youth to 'old hands,' who drive WTA's mission and accomplishments are magnificent. We are focused on building and improving avenues to ever-better hiking, resource conservation work and outdoor educational opportunities in our amazing state."

Michael recharges his batteries through backpacking, tour cycling, and nature and landscape photography. He has backpacked in Idaho's Sawtooths, California's Sierras, and the North Cascades; his cycle-touring includes a self-contained cross-continent ride, and touring the Washington and Oregon coasts.

WTA.org Launches

My Backpack

Frequent visitors to WTA's website will have noticed some changes over the summer. In June, we gave wta.org a much-needed face-lift. With a streamlined appearance and simple navigation, it's now easier than ever to check the latest Trip Reports (or create your own), upload photos from your recent hikes and stay current with the Signpost Blog. We even made it more mobile-friendly for all you hikers on the go. And just last month, we put the icing on the virtual cake with the introduction of My Backpack.

Last summer, WTA sat down with several website users, both frequent visitors and some new to the site. What we heard loud and clear from everyone was that they wanted to have a place on the website where they could view all of their own trip reports and photo uploads, and save a list of hikes they were interested in taking at a later date. My Backpack does just that.

Now, when you read a hiking guide entry that you find intriguing, you can save it to your own Backpack. Forget about scribbling down the name of the hike on a piece of paper that will inevitably



My Backpack

Save hikes, plan trips,
write Trip Reports

get lost. Now you can store all of your trail selections in one place. Return later and choose the one that fits the time, season and weather for your next outing.

In addition, My Backpack is a place where you can view all of the trip reports you've submitted over the years, as well as the photos you've posted to the photo gallery. You can customize your page with your own profile and photo, along with notes about your hiking styles and preferences, and find pack lists, the Ten Essentials and ideas for where to go.

Ready to load up your own Backpack? Visit wta.org and look for the orange My Backpack hiker icon in the upper right corner. Create an account or sign in, then find an interesting hike. To save it to your Backpack, just click the orange button on the hiking guide entry. Return to your Backpack page to view all of your hikes and your hike selections in one easy location. Now you just need to get out and hike!

Gov. Gregoire
opts into RTP.
Funds will
continue to be
used for trail
maintenance
and statewide
recreation.

Boeing Awards Major Grant for Trail Work

Washington Trails Association recently received a grant from The Boeing Company as part of a continued partnership with WTA's volunteer trail maintenance program.

The \$50,000 grant will support work on 65 trails between Glacier Peak and Mount Rainier through spring 2013. Volunteers are expected to contribute 50,000 hours of stewardship to keep popular trails open for hikers, reduce erosion caused by neglect and overuse and improve the health of Puget Sound watersheds.

Boeing's grant will leverage support from other public and private funders including WTA members.

RTP Gets Green Light

OLYMPIA—Earlier this summer, Congress agreed on a surface transportation funding bill, the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012. This budget had been at a stalemate for three years—funded through a series of continuing resolutions—as lawmakers were unable to come up with an agreed-upon compromise.

This matters to hikers in Washington because a small program deep within the budget called the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds off-highway recreation and trail projects throughout the country. As decision-makers have debated the transportation bill, RTP has consistently been in jeopardy of being left out of the transportation project. We have detailed this saga in *Washington Trails* and the Signpost Blog over the past three years, asking members to weigh in on behalf of this program that helps fund WTA's trail maintenance program.

In late June, it was reported that negotiators were close to agreement on the final bill, and that the RTP and Transportation Enhancements—including bicycle and pedestrian funding, and Secure Routes to Schools—would be eliminated. WTA had been working with the offices of conferees in Washington and Oregon, most notably Rep. Jaime Hererra Beutler, a very active supporter of RTP. Rep. Hererra Beutler went to the mat for the program, with the result that RTP would likely be included in the final transportation package, funded at \$85 million per year for the bill's two-year life.

WTA didn't let up there. We urged members to call Sens. Murray and Cantwell with a request to coordinate with Sen. Barbara Boxer of California, chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, to make the case for RTP. On June 29, one day before the deadline, RTP was put back in the final proposal. The bill passed both chambers of Congress that day, and President Obama signed the legislation.

However, there was a devil in the details. For the first time since RTP was first authorized in the 1990s, governors were granted the discretion to opt out of the program and spend those funds on highways and other surface transportation options.

Into summer, WTA heard murmurs that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) was urging

Governor Gregoire to opt out of putting Washington's \$1.8 million allocation in RTP. Fortunately, in mid-August, just as this issue was going to print, Governor Gregoire made the decision that Washington would opt in to RTP, ensuring that RTP funds continue to be used to maintain trails for recreationists statewide.

This is very good news for hikers. This year the Recreational Trails Program comprises approximately 20 percent of WTA's trail maintenance budget, helping to fund Volunteer Vacations, Backcountry Response Teams and our youth program. Every dollar WTA receives from RTP is leveraged four times, since we have a motivated and skilled volunteer work force that grows each year, and it allows WTA to work with agencies where we have no cost-sharing agreements.

WTA is not the only beneficiary of the \$85 million per year program. Seventy-two other projects have been funded for this year, including backcountry crews for several districts in the Okanogan-Wenatchee and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forests, trail maintenance efforts by our partners at the Back Country Horseman of Washington, the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway, Sno-Park trails by Washington State Parks and many other motorized and non-motorized projects.

— Jonathan Guzzo, Advocacy Director

WTA uses RTP grants to fund Volunteer Vacations and Backcountry Response Teams, such as this one in Olympic National Park. Without RTP dollars, our trail maintenance program would have far fewer resources to dedicate to these important projects.

Photo by Laurie Hill





Robert Walton “Bob” Spring 1918-2012

BELLINGHAM—Outdoor photographer Bob Spring passed away in July at the age of 93. His vivid photography of Washington’s spectacular scenery, wildlife, flowers and mountaineering inspired generations of hikers and climbers to explore the outdoors and protect the environment.

In collaboration with his twin brother, Ira Spring (a founder of WTA), Bob Spring published several picture books and hundreds of photographs for the Seattle Times throughout the mid-1900s. He was a co-author with Ira and Harvey Manning on early editions of the 100 Hikes series for The Mountaineers Books. While Ira continued to focus on outdoor photography, Bob and his wife Norma turned an interest in Alaska and international travel into a new career producing travel articles, brochures and books.

He spent his final years living in Bellingham. As the last of his generation, Bob Spring leaves a treasure-trove of historic outdoor photographs and a powerful legacy with his passing.

New Office Space Serves Southwest Hikers

This summer, WTA opened its first field office in Southwest Washington. Near the gateway to the Columbia River Gorge, the new Vancouver office is intended to better serve hikers and volunteers in this part of the state. The new space will boost capacity by providing work space not only for our regional coordinator, Ryan Ojerio, but also room for volunteers and interns.

Since the inception of the Southwest Washington program in 2007, WTA’s impact on the trails in the area—and particularly in the Columbia River Gorge—has skyrocketed. The number of work parties has more than doubled during that time, and benefits hikers every day at Beacon Rock State Park, the Cape Horn trail and most recently at Catherine Creek and Coyote Wall, among other trails. The program has also allowed WTA to engage members on advocacy issues in the Gorge and Mount St. Helens, as well as provide opportunities for hikers in the area to meet and talk trails.

Come visit us! The new office is right in downtown Vancouver, at 408 W. 9th Street. Call Ryan Ojerio at (360)722-2657 beforehand, as he is often in the field.



State Parks to be Self-Sustaining?

OLYMPIA—In the March-April issue of Washington Trails, we examined some of the jewels of the Washington State Park system and how recent budget and staffing cuts have impacted the stewardship and service at our parks. Now, on the eve of the 2013 State Parks Centennial, the cash-strapped agency has been asked by the legislature to determine if, and how, it could be financially self-supporting—funded entirely by user fees and other agency-generated revenue sources.

In August, Washington State Parks issued a mandated draft report to the state legislature outlining its progress on this issue. The report contends that moving to a no-general-fund model would be unsustainable and would require changes to staffing and facilities that the public would find unacceptable.

Washington Trails Association agrees.

Washington State Parks, like many state agencies, has taken some radical hits in the past two budget cycles. In 2007, the agency received \$98 million in general fund dollars, about 72% of its budget. In 2011, the operating budget only included \$17 million in general fund revenue for State Parks, totaling only 12% of its budget. Now, the agency is being asked to move to an entirely fee-for-service model. All while the Discover Pass is bringing in only about half of the expected \$32 million in revenue.

This will likely shape up to be a defining issue in the 2013 legislative session. It’s a budget year, in a continuing recession, and there are legislators who believe that our parks should pay for themselves. And while it is unlikely that we will see the glory days of 2007 any time soon, it is unreasonable to expect State Parks to make a transition from \$98 million to zero in just six years. It’s also unprecedented. No other state park system in the country funds itself.

So what will be the fate of our state parks as the agency turns 100 years old? With 40 million visits each year, what value will our legislators place on our state public lands? What kind of legacy will we give to the children who spend their summers camping at state parks and hiking their trails? Stay tuned for more details from Olympia this winter as this budget showdown takes place.

– Susan Elderkin, Comm. Director



Sarah Rich

Program Assistant
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BRINGING THE DUCKABUSH BACK FROM RUIN

Where the trillium and rhododendron bring timid specks of light to the charred forest of the Brothers Wilderness, trail crews wield their own light—in the form of crosscut saws and shovels—on a section of the Duckabush Trail that was ravaged by fire last year.

To stand in the quiet, amidst blackened giants, you might think that the forest—and the trail with it—died in the fire. But it has been a year since the Big Hump Fire tore through this land, and little green sprigs of new growth are beginning to gather the courage to pop up here and there between the burned tree roots and charcoaled snags. And if the paintbrush and salmonberry are brave enough to come out of hiding, then WTA crews are too.

The Duckabush Trail is a vital asset to the eastern Olympic Peninsula, being one of the few trails left that venture into the interior of the Olympic Mountains. Jennifer Fujii, the recreation director with the Hood Canal Ranger District, says that it is one of the U.S. Forest Service's top priorities to open up the Duckabush every year, as it is a highway that leads to other trails in the heart of the Olympics.

This summer, WTA led three Backcountry Response Team (BCRT) trips, as well as weekend work parties, to help restore the Duckabush Trail to its former glory. Volunteers were eager to pitch in, unwilling to let this popular trail die out with the fire that devastated it. They were not alone, as help also came from the Back Country Horsemen of Washington and the Student Conservation Association.

THE FIRE

The Big Hump Fire began on August 31, 2011, after a month of warm weather and low humidity, when campers at the Five-Mile Camp neglected to completely extinguish their campfire. It was two days before the fire was reported, so by the time fire crews responded, the fire had spread, latching onto the area's layer of dry, highly flammable duff. Initial attack crews tried to control the fire, but within just a couple of days it grew and tore through The Brothers Wilderness.

This was the second fire to occur in just three years. In 2009, the Tenmile Fire in Olympic National Park was sparked by lightning and spread across 750 acres. Because of the wet climate and rocky terrain of the region, fires are rare; another one wasn't expected to occur from a natural source for another 35 to 100 years. But just two years later, the Big Hump Fire devastated more than 1,300 acres, making it the first significant human-caused fire in the region, since before the Olympic National Forest and National Park were even designated.

For weeks, smoke billowed from the forest and firefighting crews returned day after day to douse the fire with water from helicopters. By the time the weather changed and the fire finally died out after a few weeks, it had managed to wreak havoc along 3.5 miles of the Duckabush Trail.

THE DAMAGE

The Big Hump Fire, like most naturally-occurring fires, burned in a mosaic pattern, affecting some areas more than others. Andrew Fish, the volunteer and

**Trail
Open**

The Duckabush Trail reopened
to hikers in July 2012, thanks
in part to WTA
and their dedicated
volunteers. Enjoy!



trails coordinator at Olympic National Forest, explains that “even within the burned area, the landscape can change from downed old-growth logs and charred rock to a barely-touched patch of moss and huckleberry within a few feet.”

Fires also tend to climb, so the Big Hump Fire raced uphill above the trail to the top of Big Hump. This meant that as hundreds of trees burned, their charred and smoldering limbs fell downhill, blockading the trail. The force of falling trees also took a toll on rock structures that trail crews had built in previous years. Rich Tipps, a longtime WTA volunteer crew leader on the Olympic Peninsula, explains that when crews put in rock cribbing years ago, they built the cribbing around tree roots. So when the roots burned, the cribbing no longer held up. Similarly, in areas where roots had grown under the trail and then burned out, or where the trail was built on wood cribbing that burned, the trail slumped and the tread was no longer even.

Wildfires also cause trail erosion. When fire sweeps through an area, it makes soil particles repel water, so that rather than sticking to the soil, the water runs off the trail, carrying the soil with it. Another effect of fire is to chemically change the composition of mineral soil so that it becomes muddy and difficult to walk on. If that weren't enough, as the fire burned through much of the moss and duff that held rocks in place, these loosened rocks now fell freely onto the trail. All said, by the time trail crews got around to venturing out onto the Duckabush to survey the damage, they were on a completely transformed trail.

“The Duckabush Trail is quintessential Olympics: the green, raging river, the lichen-draped fir and cedar, the switchbacks up basalt slopes dressed in seeping moss and that most blissful of all trail commodities: solitude.”

– Meagan MacKenzie
Duckabush volunteer



THE DANGER

Needless to say, WTA crews heading into this burn zone faced a number of challenges, not least of which was the threat to their physical safety. The roots of many standing trees in this area were charred and eroded, so that they sometimes fell over, even without any wind. Thus WTA volunteers donned their hard hats on the first day of each BCRT and wore them for the rest of the trip—even while they ate lunch. Volunteers were eager to eliminate the trees that had fallen across the trail, but before whipping out their crosscuts and going to work on a blowdown, they carefully assessed each cut they made, projecting where the tree might fall when they released it and what other snags it might bring down with it.

Meagan MacKenzie, a Duckabush crew volunteer cautions, “Hikers need to be aware that branches, trees and rocks will be falling for some time on this trail. I [wouldn't suggest] hiking this trail when the forecast includes wind.”

FROM TOP: Gary Zink and Wayne Siscoe buck a large log across the trail; Phil Cook bucking a large burned tree; Mark Clark, Gary Zink and Wayne Siscoe lever a large section of cut log off of the trail

NEXT PAGE: Ken Vandver hikes along a cleared section of Duckabush trail

Photos by Meagan MacKenzie

THE WORK

But WTA crews were prepared to brave these dangers to put the Duckabush back in order. And there is no disputing that they had their work cut out for them. One group of experienced sawyers attacked the logs blocking the trail. In some places, several logs were piled on top of each other, making it even more difficult and dangerous to saw them out. Volunteers had to watch out for “widow-makers,” or logs that are precariously holding up other logs; if a widow-maker breaks it will release all of the other logs with it.

Many of the smaller trees and branches across the trail had burned through, so it was only the gigantic limbs that remained for crews to log out—some as big as 54 inches in diameter. A few times, Mason White, the WTA crew leader on one party, made the executive decision to walk away from a log that was too dangerous to cut. In the meantime, another group of volunteers worked their way down the trail, restoring the tread. They cleared loose rock and debris from the trail and propped up the tread in places where it had eroded. In spots where cribbing had burned out, they built new cribbing, this time out of rock.

THE AFTERMATH

While the Big Hump Fire changed the landscape of the Duckabush Trail, perhaps forever, not all those changes were for the worse. As Andrew Fish puts it, “Fires are a natural and essential process for a healthy forest.”

He explains that fires throw off the ecosystem by thinning the dominant species so that other living things have a chance to grow and thrive. They also renew wildlife habitats, providing homes for birds, insects and rodents in the snags of burned trees. “In the Olympics, dead plants take a long time to decompose,” says Fish. “A fire accelerates the release of nutrients to the soil, enabling new growth to be stronger and healthier.”

Gone forever are many of the ancient old-growth trees that have inhabited this land for centuries. But since the fire, Fish has noticed deer, birds and rodents flourishing in the burn area, and new shoots of ferns and wildflowers pop up every day.

As for the trail, it will continue to shift and change in the coming years as it continues to react to the effects of the fire. But one thing is certain: as long as WTA volunteers are around, the Duckabush Trail will be too. ♦

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WTA's work for trails, please call us at (206)
625-1367 or email lisac@wta.org.



COMET FALLS

It only takes a little bit of snow and ice to wipe out an entire trail. This is exactly what happened this year to the Comet Falls Trail, showcasing one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Mount Rainier National Park.

In early June, Mount Rainier's superintendent, Randy King, closed the Comet Falls Trail after a spring washout destroyed a stretch of trail 10 feet across and 30 feet deep. The icy slopes surrounding the washout made it extremely treacherous to attempt passage. Five days after the trail was closed, WTA crews set out to put it back together.

Most of WTA's maintenance efforts in Mount Rainier National Park have been focused in two locations: four years on the epic Glacier Basin reroute that crews completed last summer, and helping to repair the Wonderland Trail in the Carbon River area. But when this new need for trail work arose at Comet Falls, WTA responded resoundingly.

Through the summer, WTA worked on the Comet Falls Trail, where volunteers installed steps and crib structures, completed a temporary reroute of the washout section, logged out downed trees, and brushed the trail corridor.

For the reroute, volunteers used yellow cedar that they found near the work site to build a 45-degree crib ladder that directs hikers away from the washout. To prepare to install the steps, they had to use rope to ascend and descend the rocky slope. They then drilled the steps to the ladder and rebarred them in the only accessible place—into the rock on the inside of the trail. "It's the only structure of its kind in the park," said John Longsworth, WTA's Mount Rainier crew leader. "Pretty cool stuff."

Just when we thought the trail was ready for reopening, Mother Nature demonstrated that she wasn't done yet, as an unstable snow avalanche across the trail started presenting potential safety issues, keeping the trail closed. But WTA's volunteers are determined, and work continues to get this park favorite cleared and opened to hikers once again.

— Sarah Rich, Program Assistant



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY TRAIL WORK PARTIES

September 29 is National Public Lands Day. What better way to show your support for Washington's public spaces than to get out and enjoy a hike on one. Or better yet, pitch in on a work party!

Heather Meadows and Artist Point: Spend a day or two lopping and digging on the side of a mountain, with stunning views of Mount Baker and Mount Shuksan.

Sunrise: The trails in this popular section of Mount Rainier National Park have lain dormant under the snow for the past months and need your help to bring them to life again.

Stevens Pass: Get your fill of backcountry vistas from the front country! Lend a hand and a pulaski on this Skykomish-area section of the epic Pacific Crest Trail.

Snow Lake: This popular North Bend-area hike is the most heavily-used trail in any wilderness area in Washington. Needless to say, it's also in need of a little brushing and tread work.

Liberty Lake: Eastern Washingtonians, join us for a day of leveling tread and opening up this beautiful Spokane County Parks trail.

WTA has day, weekend and weeklong work parties through all of September and October. Find one near you, in one of your favorite hiking haunts, and come support Washington's trails. For info, visit wta.org/volunteer/trail-work-parties



Jonathan Guzzo

Advocacy Director
jonathan@wta.org

Washington Recreation and Access Coalition Addresses Forest Road System

Washington's public lands road system has been hit hard by a double-whammy of budget cuts and storm damage over the past decade. Recently, we highlighted the State of Access Project, an ambitious effort by WTA to address the many threats that continually impact our wildland roads and the trailhead access that they provide. The project will culminate in a panel discussion and report that can then be used as a template by land managers and elected officials to fund, maintain and preserve our recreational access roads, while responsibly decommissioning those that have no recreational or administrative value.

From this, a group of recreation and conservation organizations have joined WTA's efforts, including Washington Wild, The Wilderness Society, American Whitewater and The Mountaineers. Together, we have formed a new partnership, the Washington Recreation and Access Coalition (WRAC), with the goal of demonstrating the value of our recreational access roads, and to speak in one voice for their long-term preservation.

Each of these organizations take a nuanced look at the road system on our public lands. Not all roads should stay on the landscape. On the Olympic National Forest alone, there are 2,124 miles of road, and just a fraction of these miles actually access trailheads, campgrounds or other recreational facilities. The coalition is committed

to preserving roads that give key access to the lands we protect and enjoy.

This is merely the beginning. We are reaching out to other conservation and recreation organizations who might join the new coalition's efforts. The WRAC coalition is tracking Forest Service planning processes that might impact recreation opportunities so we're able to be responsive and act when the time is ripe. The coalition is also working with local, state and federal officials to ensure that recreational access roads are properly funded. Maintenance dollars, in particular, are in a downward spiral (see chart) across Washington's national forests. The impacts of deferred road maintenance are not just limited to access, but crumbling roads pose a threat to the environment as well.

Over the next year, you can expect to see an expanded coalition that can be an important countervailing force against the many pressures on our wildlands roads. Even more importantly, the coalition will issue a strong call for the importance of recreational access to wildlands. Making sure that people can experience the places that need protecting is an essential element to ensure that we have a substantial base of thriving wild areas to enjoy. ♦

For more information about the Washington Recreation & Access Coalition, contact Jonathan Guzzo at (206) 625-1367, or jonathan@wta.org



WHAT: Exploring road issues and the impact on hiking trails

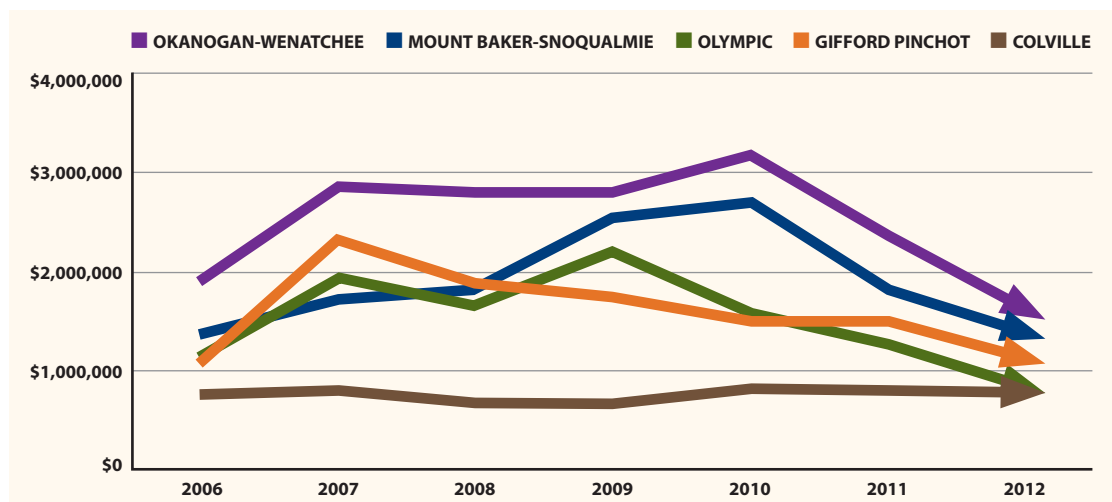
WHEN: September 26, 2012 from 6pm - 8pm

WHERE: Seattle REI

Join WTA and land managers from several forests as we take a closer look at this emerging recreation challenge. Washouts, lack of funding and changes in forest management practices means that access to your favorite hiking trails are going to become a growing challenge. The Panel will discuss current road issues impacting recreation and will explore potential solutions. The public is encouraged to attend this event and be a part of this important conversation.

This chart shows the trend in Capital Improvement and Maintenance for Roads (CMRD) funds, which are appropriated by Congress to pay for road repair and reconstruction.

Due to policy changes at the federal level, there were moderate increases in 2007 over previous years, but the CMRD funding continues to trend downward.



The ~~Three~~ R's of Back-to-School Season

Even with students heading back to school, there's still opportunity to embrace the changing season and experience the wonders of nature. Here at WTA, we'd like to share some of the ways you and your youngsters can get outdoors this fall. Whether it's taking in the autumn colors on a local trail, sharing your experiences with the WTA community, or fulfilling school requirements, we want you to get out there and enjoy the trails this season.

READING: Nature is a living, breathing storybook, and now is the perfect time to recognize her spectacular transformation that comes in autumn each year. Take your family on an autumn observation outing. Hike a trail with larches and note their unique shapes with yellow and gold needles. Stroll down a trail with bigleaf maples and listen to the crunchy rustling of the fallen leaves. Look for the morning dew clinging to spiderwebs. Ramble along a salmon stream and spot these native swimmers returning home to spawn. Refreshing, crisp, cool air and tasty blueberries are other treats to enjoy outdoors in the fall.

(W)RITING: WTA wants to hear from you about what makes a hike fun with your kids. Many families are searching for great places to hike with their own children. The Hiking with Kids section of WTA's Trip Finder and recent Trip Reports contain a wealth of family hiking information, but they need your support and participation. Submitting a trip report is easy as 1-2-3:

- 1) Visit wta.org/go-hiking/trip-reports and click on "Write a Trip Report."
- 2) Find the hike you did using the easy drop-down menus and write a summary of your experience on the trail: what made it great, or not so great, for you and your kids. If you have photos from your hike, you can include those too.
- 3) Click "Submit." That's it. Now it's ready for other families to learn from your experience. Your trip could be included in the next Family Trip Report section of the *Families Go Hiking* newsletter.

REQUIREMENTS: School is back in session and that means teachers will be establishing service learning assignments. Students looking for ways to complete these are welcome to join WTA on trail. National Public Lands Day, on Saturday, September 29, will kick off the fall season for youth trail work parties. Once a month, WTA will host a trail work party for youth ages ten and up. These one-day work parties are great ways for students to earn their community service hours while having fun outdoors and giving back to hiking trails.

REWARDS: What's better than spending time outdoors? Winning prizes for spending time outdoors! WTA is looking for your submissions to the 10th Annual Northwest Exposure Photo Contest. There are some great categories, including *Families on Trail*. Consider sharing your family hiking photo with us, and who knows, you might be published in an upcoming issue of *Washington Trails* magazine. Photo submissions will be accepted through October 14. Visit wta.org/northwestexposure for all the details, and let's see your best photos of hikers young, old and every age in between.

So as you and your kids enjoy the outdoors this fall, keep in mind WTA's four R's of back-to-school, and you'll find that summer's not the only season for having fun. ♦

Krista Dooley

Youth Programs Manager
krista@wta.org



TOP: A family hike along the Trail of the Cedars in Newhalem; BOTTOM: Young hiker taking a closer look at a pond in Sharpe Park in Anacortes

Photos by Catherine Price

Join a family work party!

Pitch in and support trails this fall. Several opportunities are open to families with children 10 and up.

- ▶ Sept 29, Nat'l Public Lands Day
- ▶ Oct 13
- ▶ Nov 10

Visit wta.org for times and locations near you!



The setting sun cast long rays across Cathedral Basin, turning the larches a brilliant golden orange. Their radiance gave the impression that they had been electrified by an unseen power. The sight was only enhanced by the mirror-still waters of the Upper Lake, perfectly reflecting the glowing larches under the ragged exposure of Cathedral Peak, reaching into a twilight sky. Framing the scene, I adjusted my aperture and shutter to capture the breathtaking display.

CHASING AUTUMN

Story and photos by Andy Porter

My first visit to the Pasayten Wilderness was in the summer of 2010. It had been a heavy snow year and the approaches to my favorite Cascades routes were still inaccessible, prompting me to look east, to warmer, drier climes. Eager to find some trail time, I came up with a new plan. From Skagit Valley I made the long drive through Omak, Tonasket and Loomis, heading deep into the Okanogan, toward the Canadian border. My destination: the Boundary Trail.

During these six days in the Pasayten, I was greeted by snow-free trails, an abundance of wildflowers, awe-inspiring views and lots of bugs. Despite the last, it was a fantastic trip. The Cathedral Lakes were particularly spectacular, a prime setting for some wonderful photography. As I admired the soaring cliffs of Amphitheater Mountain and Cathedral Peak, clearly reflected in the lakes' calm waters, I took note that the entire basin was filled with larch trees. Realizing what this location had to offer come autumn, I vowed to make a return trip.

Later that year, the hiking gods smiled on the eastern Cascades. It was early October, and the weather was crisp with the changing of the season,

yet winter's gloom had not yet reared its dreary head. Wanting to take advantage of this rare window of favorable skies, I quickly planned my return to the Pasayten. It was perfect timing to revisit the larches on the Boundary Trail, now at the peak of their autumn transformation, and attempt to photograph some of their vibrant seasonal beauty.

I gathered up my trusty Canon, the requisite backpacking gear and my friend, Em. Together, we headed up the North Cascades Highway, over Loup Loup Pass and onto the Touts Coulee Road to the Iron Gate Trailhead. As we approached our destination, we took notice that autumn was in full bloom. I began recalling my favorite locations from my earlier trip, eagerly anticipating my second encounter with the Upper Cathedral Basin, and wondering what its new, seasonal face would reveal—and how I might capture it on digital film.

From the 6,000-foot trailhead, under a brilliant blue sky, we made quick work of the first 4 miles up the old mining road to Sunny Pass. The transformation of the area from just a few months prior was striking. The wildflowers were gone, and the vibrant green meadows of early summer were

LEFT: Sunset lights up alpine larches and Amphitheater Mountain in Cathedral Lake Basin

BELOW: Amphitheater Mountain draped in autumn larches, from the Boundary Trail





now a patchwork of reds and golds; the aspens and maples now glimmered with riotous color. Just below the pass, we noted a fine campsite with a nearby stream sheltered in a small cluster of spruce.

We mounted Sunny Pass, where the landscape metamorphosed into alpine tundra, the wide expanse of Horseshoe Basin spread out below us. The contrast of colors was striking: golden meadows of dry grasses, emerald fir and spruce dotting the slopes of Arnold Peak, all under a cloudless cobalt sky. In the distance we could see traces of the brilliant autumn larches we were after. It was time to get out the camera. The next hour was spent framing one exposure after another, seizing the dramatic panorama.

We descended into the meadows and our junction with the Boundary Trail. Pausing at a nearby brook, we lunched on trail pizza and luxuriated in the scenery. After, we stepped onto the Boundary Trail, heading west. We passed Loudon Lake, mounted a shallow saddle on the north flank of Rock Mountain and skirted the southern slopes of Haig Mountain. Across the valley we could see Windy Peak blanketed with radiant alpine larches. The sinking sun painted the landscape in brilliant shades of oranges and golds. The last miles of the day saw many stops: setting up the tripod, composing images, moving to the next opportunity.

We made camp at Teapot Dome, in the shadow of Bauerman Ridge. I recalled our camping at this spot several months ago and how we had beat a hasty retreat into the tent to escape the hordes of mosquitoes. Not this time. Now we took our time, dining on kung-pao chicken and enjoying the last rays of sunlight fading from the surrounding peaks. Darkness fell upon us rapidly, and the stars soon shone fiercely in the moonless sky.

The next morning was clear and crisp. The meadows were glazed with frost; the silence was mesmerizing. The sun had yet to reach us, so we hurriedly ate breakfast and broke camp to warm ourselves. In short order we were back on the trail.

Gaining elevation, we traversed the south slope of Bauerman Ridge. If it was possible, the scenery only kept improving. Apex Mountain jutted starkly above the surrounding forest, golden larches here and there. Above, the azure expanse was now strewn with wispy clouds, creating a perfect juxtaposition between earth and sky. We hiked through Scheelite Pass and along Wolframite Mountain. The vastness of the Pasayten opened before us: an undulating sea of forest, creased with streams; islands of rugged peaks projecting here and there.

We took our lunch break at the abandoned Tungsten Mine, with its old bunkhouse, long and low, empty except for an old, rusted woodstove. Every wooden surface inside was covered—practically every square inch—with carvings of the names and dates of hikers once passed through. Nearby was an A-frame structure with a cast-iron bathtub sitting out front. I expected that we might have company here, being such a popular rest stop, but it remained just the two of us. We ate mashed potatoes and pepperoni and enjoyed the warmth of the sun, while our packs rested nearby. Our respite wasn't long, however, with Apex Mountain's raised head above the ridge urging us on.

Our route turned south with a gentle climb to 7,800-foot Apex Pass. The views were even more spectacular than we remembered from our earlier trip. Amphitheater Mountain and Cathedral Peak grasped for the sky; to the southwest Rammel Mountain followed suit. Each peak was painted across its midsection with a fiery orange stripe—autumn larch. This was the scene I returned for. I began taking countless photos from every conceivable angle—low, lying on the grass; high, perched in a tree; carefully composed from the tripod. Here is where we witnessed the truly awesome beauty of the Pasayten's autumn glory.

The late afternoon sun pressed us to hurry on to Cathedral Lake. There were numerous photo pauses as we traversed the eastern slope of Cathedral

Creek to Cathedral Pass; the southeast face of the peak vaulting skyward as a sheer, towering wall. The rocky monolith stood strangely out of place, surrounded by the region's assemblage of gentler, more rounded mountains, appearing as if it belonged with its more jagged alpine brethren farther to the west.

We crested the pass between Cathedral Peak and Amphitheater Mountain, and there found heaven. The Cathedral Basin lay below us, the arms of Amphitheater Mountain spread wide, welcoming us back. The landscape once again began taking on a rich, golden hue as sunset approached.

We hurriedly descended into the basin and set up camp alongside a snowmelt pond. Our exhaustion from our two-day, 30-mile trek evaporated, now reenergized by the magnificent scenery surrounding us. Taking the camera and tripod, we descended farther to Upper Cathedral Lake, in hopes of taking advantage of the fading daylight.

Cathedral Peak, lording majestically over the basin, afire with alpenglow, reflected off the still water of the lake; the larches appeared as if they were electrified, positively glowing in the fading light. The scene set my emotions in overload: feelings of freedom and space, peace and solitude, wonder and excitement. How could I possibly capture all of this beauty with my camera? It was a challenge I accepted, and for the next two hours found a joyful balance between progressing from

one location to the next, setting aperture, shutter speed, filters, reflections and compositions, with the opportunity to simply sit and enjoy a perfect moment in a perfect setting.

As the sky darkened and color turned to shadow, we finally realized that we hadn't yet had dinner. We returned to camp, extolling the wonders of the day and the beauty of our surroundings. With the evening chill settling in, we enjoyed a warm, hearty meal and sipped coffee as the stars began to reveal themselves. Finally, perfectly content, we retired.

We arose early the next morning to begin our return journey. We were again blessed with favorable weather as we made our way back through Apex Pass, revisited Tungsten Mine and returned to our camp at Teapot Dome, incorporating as many photo opportunities as the day offered. Our final day was gray and chilly, the colder temps quickening our pace. Late in the afternoon we crested Sunny Pass, under very un-sunny skies, and made quick work of the last few miles to the trailhead and our waiting car. Packs off and on the road, it was back to Tonasket for dinner, then the long drive home, all following a spectacular four days of chasing the autumn light in the Pasayten Wilderness. ♦

LEFT: Alpine larches reflected in Cathedral Lake

BELOW: Late afternoon sunlight illuminates alpine larches at Cathedral Pass

Iron Gate Trailhead to Upper Cathedral Lake (miles)

0: Iron Gate Trailhead

4.7: Sunny Camp

5.2: Sunny Pass

7.7: Horseshoe Pass and Boundary Trail junction (camp & water)

15.7: Teapot Dome (camp & water)

19.3: Scheelite Pass (campsite & water)

22.8: Tungsten Mine (shelter)

25.5: Apex Pass

28.5: Cathedral Pass

29: Upper Cathedral Lake (camp & water)



NORTHWEST WEEKEND

Winthrop →

Enjoy Cascades scenery and brilliant autumn color on a pleasant hike to Upper Eagle Lake.

Photo by Austin Smith



Meet You in the **METHOW**

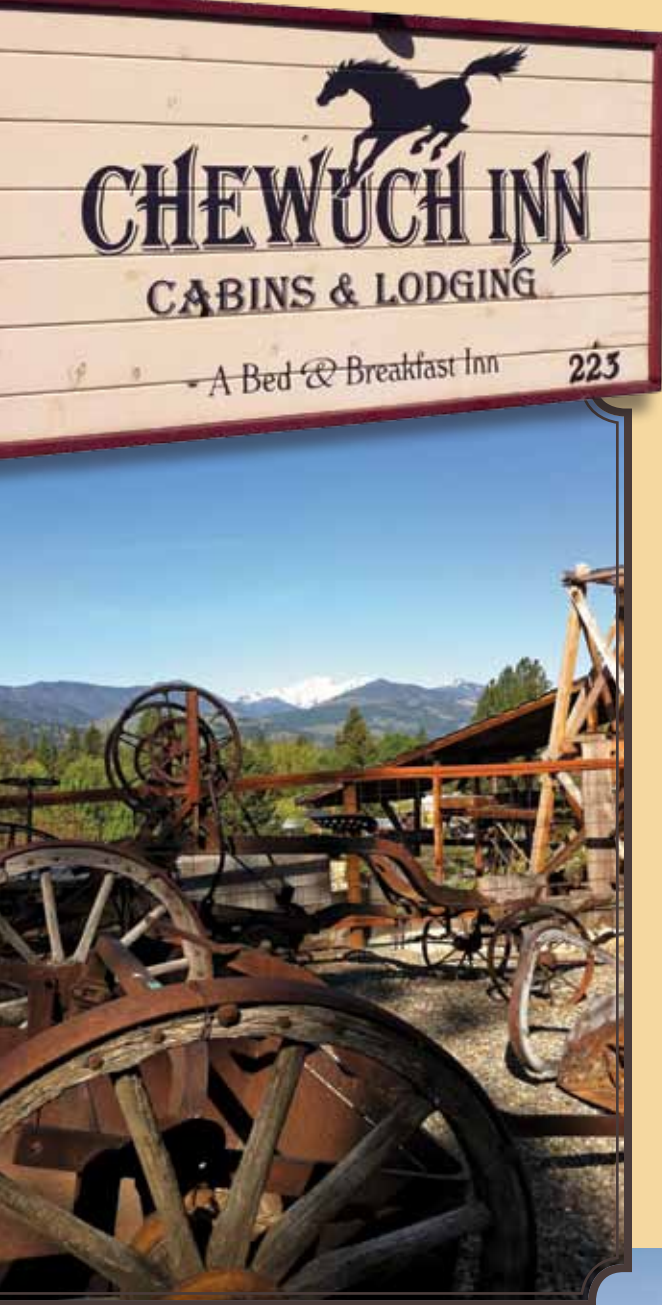
by Aaron Theisen

On the sun-kissed east slope of the North Cascades, the Methow Valley has become a multisport mecca. The lure of gold ore attracted early settlers. Today, gold of another sort—the iconic spring-blooming balsamroot, abundant summer sunshine and awesome autumn larch—has recreationists seeing riches.

The centerpiece of the Methow Valley is Winthrop, a scenic two-hour drive east along the North Cascades Highway from Burlington (the pass is usually open from May through October), or four hours north or west from Yakima or Spokane. On the banks of the wide-flowing Methow River, which drains the Methow Valley, Winthrop has fashioned itself in an Old West aesthetic, complete with wooden sidewalks and old-time storefronts.

More importantly for outdoor enthusiasts, Winthrop has positioned itself as a hub for year-round recreation. Although the area's Nordic ski system—the second largest in the country—is justifiably acclaimed, hikers have plenty to celebrate, with access points to the Pasayten Wilderness, Chelan-Sawtooth Wilderness and North Cascades National Park all within an hour's drive.

Begin your visit to Winthrop (1) with a history lesson at the Shafer Museum (shafermuseum.com). Situated on a small bluff overlooking downtown Winthrop, the Shafer Museum (free, although donations are accepted) explores the history of the Methow Valley. The museum grounds are located on the site of "The Castle," former home of pioneering businessman Guy Waring, who owned nearly all of the buildings on Winthrop's Main Street during the town's nascency. Several of these buildings have



been relocated to or re-created on the museum grounds. Be sure to check out the museum's extensive open-air collection of old mining equipment, which makes even the heaviest backpack feel airy in comparison.

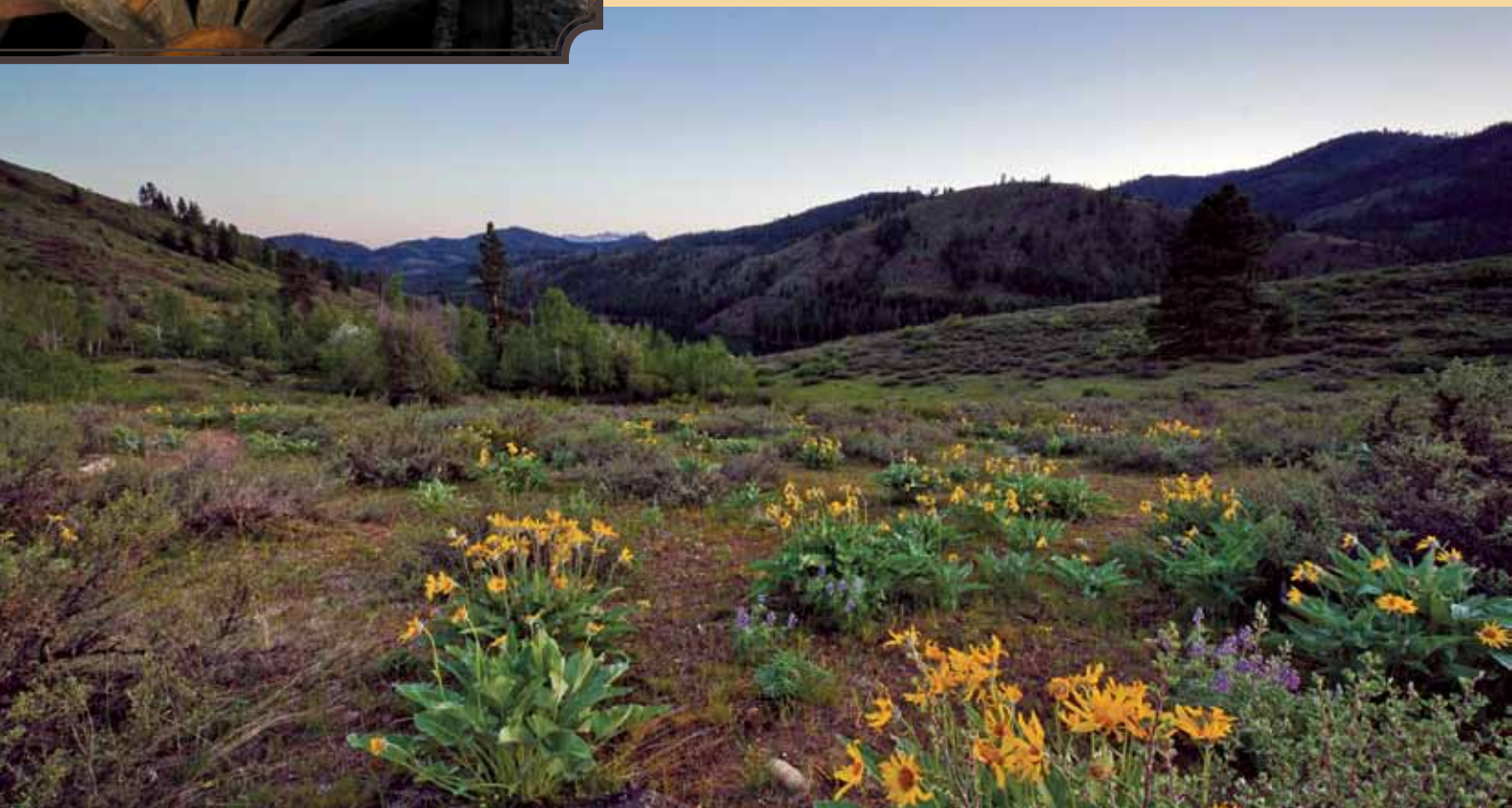
For your weekend supply run, Winthrop Mountain Sports (winthromountainsports.com) boasts an impressive array of outdoor clothing and equipment behind its tiny storefront for anything that may have been forgotten at home. Whether or not you decide you need that new titanium cookset, be sure to peruse the store's extensive selection of USGS topographical maps of the region. To load up on edibles, drop into the Winthrop Red Apple (winthropredapple.com) on State Route 20, with an impressive deli featuring local meats, in addition to other grocery staples.

After strolling the shops on Riverside Avenue, acquaint yourself with the Methow Valley on a 4-mile hike to Patterson Mountain (2). Part of an extensive network of trails around Sun Mountain Lodge, the hike to Patterson Mountain dazzles in the spring with its wildflowers, but autumn features its own charms as colonies of aspen simultaneously light up with yellow leaves. The views are unbeatable year-round; hike in the evening to watch the sun dip behind the North Cascades' showcase peaks.

By the end of the day you've probably worked up quite an appetite. Carlos1800 Mexican Grill and Cantina (carlos1800.com) makes a great post-hike stop; try the *pollo pipian*, a traditional Yucatecan dish with a rich pumpkin-seed-based sauce. The Old Schoolhouse Brewery (oldschoolhousebrewery.com) serves up a large menu of craft beers brewed on-site. Or belly up to the bar at Three Fingered Jack's (3fingeredjacks.com), the oldest legal saloon in Washington, for a bit of history with your drink.

Lodging options abound in and near Winthrop, from frugal to four-star. Campgrounds dot the length of each of the major tributaries of the Methow River; the closest to Winthrop is the Chewuch River, which originates high in the Pasayten Wilderness to the north and joins up with the Methow in Winthrop. The Chewuch Campground (3; fs.usda.gov/activity/okawen/recreation) features spacious sites in an open forest of towering ponderosa pines. Arrive early on busy summer weekends to secure one of the choice riverside spots.

The Chewuch Inn and Cabins (chewuchinn.com) offers "gourmet rustic" lodging with reasonable prices—splurge on a cabin—and a full breakfast in a spacious



wood-adorned dining area. The home-made scones are unbeatable; stuff a couple in your pocket for a trailside treat. Innkeepers Dan and Sally Kuperberg are serious outdoors enthusiasts and have the inside line on adventures throughout the Methow Valley.

After a good night's sleep—whether on an air mattress or Egyptian cotton—stock up on supplies in town. Before hitting the backcountry, grab a hot cup of locally roasted Backcountry Coffee Roasters joe at the Rocking Horse Bakery (rockinghorsebakery.com). The Cowboy Mud blend will fire you up. The Rocking Horse also serves up sandwiches on its on hearty housemade bread; make room in your daypack for one.

Fully fueled and ready for a day on trail, drive south on State Route 20 through Twisp to one of two hikes to choose from. The Twisp River is the launching point for numerous climbs into the Chelan-Sawtooth Wilderness, including Copper Pass (4). Over 5 steep miles, follow an old prospectors' route to a high heather-clad pass and the headwaters of the Twisp River and wide panoramas. A little farther south, the 6-mile trail to Eagle Lakes (5) climbs among ponderosa pine and pocket meadows to a couple of enchanting alpine lakes amid granite spires. The gold in the area is long since gone, but your efforts are rewarded with views of North Cascades peaks and golden larches.

After hiking Copper Pass, satiate sore knees and empty bellies at the Twisp River Pub (methowbrewing.com) in Twisp (6). High-end pub fare and beers—brewed on-site in small batches—fill the menu. Secure a patio seat for an intimate view of the Twisp River.

On your final day in Winthrop, hike to a local landmark. Lookout Mountain (7) looms over the town of Twisp, a relatively pristine island of roadless land only minutes from State Route 20. From the end of Lookout Road, the unmarked—but obvious—Lookout Mountain Trail angles 1.3 miles (one way) through airy forests to a rock-garden summit and a still-staffed lookout. Look down for the striped Columbia Lewisia growing among the rocks; look out for panoramic views of the Methow Valley and its encircling summits.

If you're ready for a change of pace, rent a mountain bike from Methow Cycle and Sport (methowcyclesport.com) and explore the area on two wheels. The Methow Valley features biking for all abilities, from family-friendly dirt roads in the Methow Wildlife Area to miles of steep alpine singletrack. Try the Lightning Creek Trail (8), near Loup Loup Pass, for sandy, swoopy riding through ponderosa parkland. Or go on a guided ride; this Sept. 30 through Oct. 2, the Methow Valley Sport Trails Association hosts the 25th Annual Fall Bike and Film Festival (mvsta.com/bikefest.html).

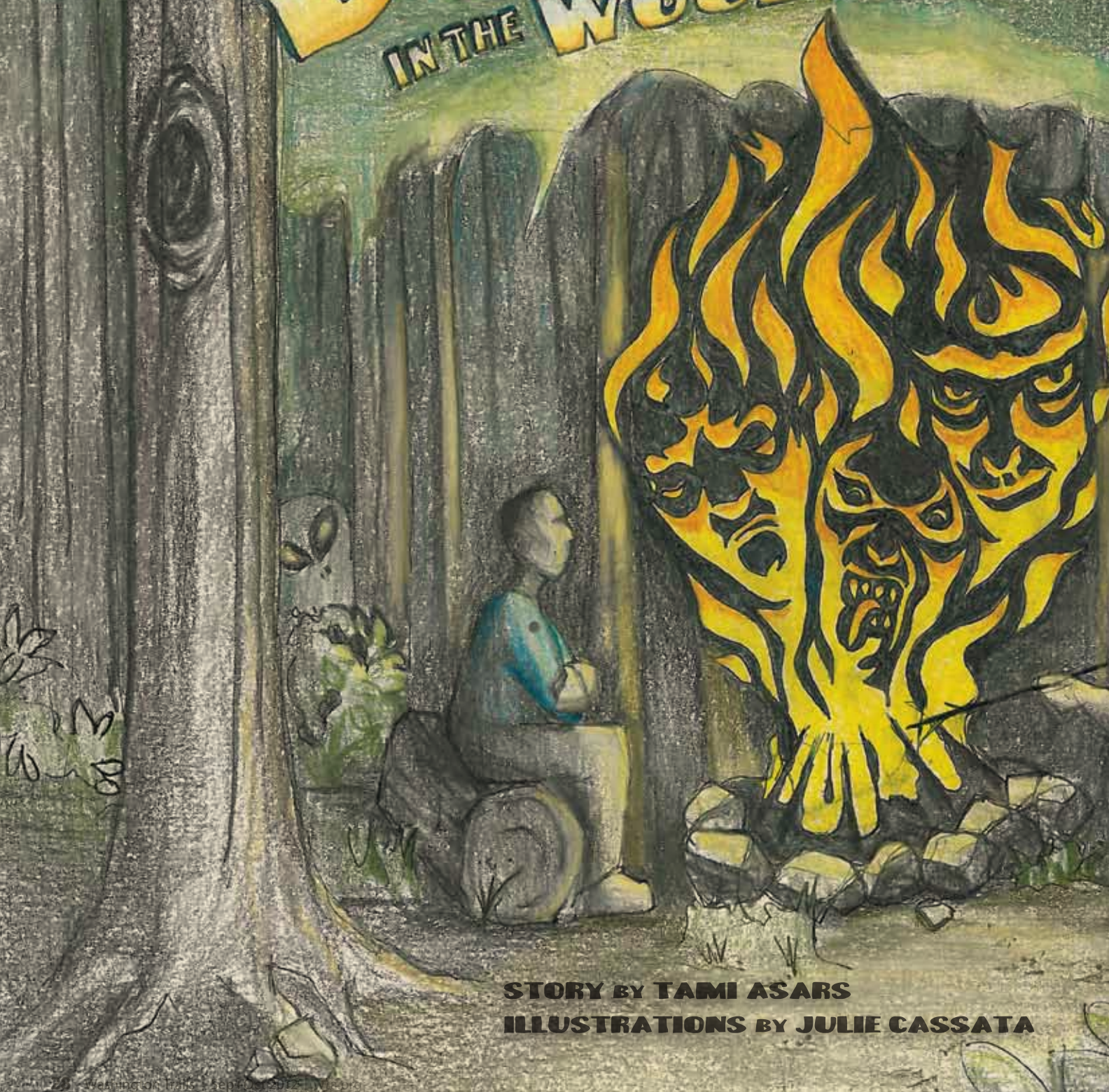
Sore, satisfied and perhaps a little sunburned, head home with dreams of future adventures in and around the Methow Valley—to the Pasayten, perhaps, or the Tiffany Highlands. Unlike the gold rushes of years past, these treasures are here to stay. ♦

PHOTOS, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Soak up panoramic views of the Methow on a 1.3-mile hike to the top of Lookout Mountain; Learn some of the region's early mining and homesteading history at the Shafer Museum; Enjoy homestyle comforts at the Chewuch Inn and Cabins in Winthrop; Campers will find pleasant accommodations among shady, riverside forest at the Chewuch Campground; Enjoy mountainside meadows and alpine views on a 5-mile trek to Copper Pass.

Photos by Aaron Theisen; except Copper Pass, by Mark Weeks; map illustration by Kara Chin



THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE WOODS



STORY BY TAMI ASARS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JULIE CASSATA



THE DAYS ARE GETTING DARKER.

THERE'S A DREARINESS IN THE AIR.

HALLOWEEN IS UPON US...

It's the time of year when creative costumes come out of every closet, teens watch scary movies while eating popcorn after midnight, and chain stores are filled with gory props. So what would a good outdoors magazine be without a handful of spooky stories to help you kick off the haunting season? Here are a few that might just keep you awake the next time you find yourself deep in the back woods. Don't say you weren't warned ...

I'll begin with my own story. Years ago I had a very vivid dream about a specific location. One I had never been to. In this dream, I stumbled back and forth in a snow-filled creekbed trying to find a large lake. It was eerily quiet. I knelt down, defeated, only to realize that I was kneeling on the frozen lake and it was cracking around me. Startled, I woke.

Now, imagine the creepy feeling I got when I went for a snowshoe trip years later with some friends, only to realize that the place I had dreamed about was real! As we snowshoed to Lake Eleanor on the outskirts of Mount Rainier National Park, I stared in disbelief at the lake that had haunted my dream. Needless to say, I stayed far away from the edges. How had I seen this place in my dream so long before I'd ever physically been there?

• • • • •

From Bigfoot to ghost towns, the wild is full of odd, haunting stories. A friend we'll call "Harry" claims he heard footsteps behind him as he backpacked for days in a remote canyon in Arizona. He was solo hiking off-trail where people rarely visited. On hearing the footsteps, he welcomed the thought of company to share stories. No one ever materialized. When he stopped, the footsteps stopped.

Day after day, Harry suspected he was being followed. When he'd stop for lunch or to make camp, he'd do it out of sight to see if someone came along after him. No one ever did.

"Maybe it was an echo?" I skeptically questioned. Harry had thought of that too, but nothing else echoed—not his own footsteps or even his voice. He tried shouting to the mysterious person several times, "Who's following me?" but no one ever answered. At one point, the footsteps sped up and became very loud. He shouted again, but still, no person appeared.

By the fourth day of his trip, the situation felt so odd that Harry decided to finish early and headed up a different route than originally planned. The footsteps followed him nearly all the way out to his waiting vehicle. Years later he was reading about the history of the canyon where he hiked and came to learn that there had been many battles fought by Native Americans in the area.

Were the ghosts of those who passed on accompanying him on his trip? He's never been able to explain who—or what—had been right behind him as he hiked that lonely canyon in Arizona ...

• • • • •

If you start asking people about supernatural experiences while camping or hiking, it's amazing how many have encountered something baffling or peculiar. I recall from my childhood a story of some family friends and their unexplainable, uneasy feelings as they camped along a river in the Canadian backcountry.

10 TIPS TO STAY HAUNT-FREE IN THE WOODS

1. Never, with wide eyes, shine a flashlight under your chin around a campfire.
2. Avoid darting off into the woods trailing gargantuan footprints.
3. Keep fermented beverages out of your CamelBak.
4. Never carry a camera. Proof of the supernatural takes away the imagination.
5. Don't eat spicy food prior to retiring to your sleeping bag.
6. Avoid hiking under a full moon, especially if it's casting shadows.
7. Never approach unfamiliar spaceships.
8. Avoid horseplay in ghost towns.
9. Keep camping near burial grounds to a minimum.
10. Be sure to make a positive ID of the mushrooms you picked before adding them to your noodle pot. (See page 36)

During their trip, their senses had been heightened, but no one could point to any obvious reasons for feeling jittery. They went on about camp chores and finished the evening by sitting around the fire, eating dinner and taking pictures. When they returned home and developed their film from the trip, they were in creepy disbelief. There in the fire, they saw faces. Very clear faces, coming up from the flames.

I recall seeing those picture as a kid, and to this day, I can remember the very evident eyes, noses and mouths of the phantoms that burned toward the sky ...

• • • • •

Whether or not you believe in ghosts, there are plenty of stories out there to make you question their existence. One such story comes from WTA regional correspondent Kimberly Craig, about a supernatural encounter she experienced while camping in Cement Basin, near Crystal Mountain.

In August of 1989, she was reeling from the death of her beloved brother, who had passed on from an extended illness the previous winter. She'd been doing a lot of solo hiking to come to peace with his death. When she was asked to backpack into the wilderness to collect trash as a favor to a wilderness ranger friend, she naturally agreed. It was her first solo overnight trip since her brother's death, and she hoped to find healing in the quiet arms of Mother Nature.

However, a late-night storm had other plans. As thunder roared in ebony skies, she swore she heard her brother calling her name. "I must be dreaming," she thought, but again and again she heard her brother's voice, loudly calling her.

As the storm subsided she decided to get some fresh air and shake the voice out of her head. As she stepped out of her tent, she was in complete disbelief. There, right in front her, with an outstretched hand, stood her brother.

Numbed by shock, she reached out to take his hand. He explained he was at peace, and asked her to take comfort in the fact he was no longer suffering. She went back inside her tent, feeling a tremendous sense of comfort and gratitude in the visit.

The next morning, the experience sank in and she was overcome with fear. She rapidly tore down her camp and left so quickly that she forgot the trash she'd collected. She has not been back to the area since ...

• • • • •

If those stories aren't enough to give you chills, consider the unexplainable things that are reported on a daily basis across America, such as UFO sightings and alien encounters. One such experience happened to none other than the editor of this very magazine.

It was late in the evening when Eli Boschetto and his wife, Mitzi, pulled into a campground in Northern California's redwoods. The forest seemed to enjoy a sinister game, as chilly coastal fog mixed with campfire smoke swirled through the trees, casting strange shadows in the canopy and undergrowth. Tired, they found a spot to set up camp under the lights of their car's head lamps. In the distance, muffled voices and laughter from unseen campers wafted through the filtered darkness. Focused on getting an early start the next morning, they opted to skip a campfire and went about bedtime routines.

Conveniently, the restrooms were only about 100 yards down the road, a short walk for washing up before retiring. With bag in hand, Eli set off down the black pavement, his headlamp's light reflecting off the drifting smoke and fog. Suddenly a movement caught his eye.

At the side of the road, something stood there looking at him. Through the haze and darkness, he tried to discern what the creature was before him. It stood about 2 feet in height, completely gray, with a large round head and curious eyes. "It must be a raccoon," he thought.



But ... no. There was no mask. And no fur. And no tail! The creature cocked its head, looking back. Eli took a tentative step closer to get a better look. The creature withdrew slightly, peering cautiously back. What was this thing?

Time seemed to halt as the two stared at one another. Remembering his head lamp, Eli reached up to set the light brighter. The movement startled the creature, and Eli particularly noticed that the creature walked off on two legs, dissolving into the misty, shadowy darkness.

Every hair on his arms and neck was electrified, and chills ran down his spine. What had he just seen? He scanned the underbrush with his head lamp, seeking to comprehend what he'd just witnessed, but the small, gray, upright creature with no fur and no tail was nowhere to be seen. Had he just seen an alien?

It was a sleepless night, as every creak and crack in their pitch-black tent seemed to alert him to the possible presence of interstellar beings, watching them from the woods nearby ...

• • • • •

And speaking of things watching you from the woods nearby, this collection wouldn't be complete without a story about Bigfoot. Washington state has the highest number of Bigfoot sightings in all fifty states. Don't believe in Bigfoot, aka Sasquatch? Steve "Mojo" Wilkins, co-founder of the Washington Sasquatch Research Team (wasrt.com) challenges you to consider otherwise.

Since 1941 there have been 532 reported Bigfoot encounters in Washington. Even if 90 percent of those are made-up or misidentified stories, that still leaves 10 percent as credible. Wilkins also makes a point to note that sightings are incredibly underreported, and many people have seen or heard one and not bothered to give the stats.

According to Wilkins, Bigfoot, or Sasquatch, is a species like any other animal that roams the forest. There are estimated to be between 500 and 1,000 of these creatures living in the forests of Washington, hunting meals, eating fish, raising young and living amongst us as we roam the hillsides. He points out that Native American lore is filled with stories of the hairy men stealing fish from nets and warding with tribal members. These run-ins, he explains, are the reason they avoid humans.

"But why haven't they ever found a dead one?" I skeptically ask.

"Have you ever seen a dead bear in the woods?" Wilkins responds. "If you were dying in the woods, would you go lie on a trail or would you seek out a quiet hiding place?"

"Good point. So, how would I find a Bigfoot?" I ask.

"You don't find them," he replies. "They find you."

He proceeds to tell me how they've been watching me for years as I've hiked through the hills, quietly curious about my presence, hiding from my sight and following me to learn more. Hikers have seen and heard Bigfoot on trails near Mount Rainier, Rattlesnake Lake, Tinkham Campground, Snow Lake, Grass Mountain, the Enchantments, Holden, Wallace Falls, Rock Creek Campground, Chopaka Lake ... the list goes on and on. Could it be that these creatures do in fact live amongst us? And watch us as we wander down trails?

• • • • •

From premonitions to Bigfoot, the unexplainable occurrences in the outdoors will likely always remain a mystery. If nothing else, the shrouded veil of obscurity can jog our imaginations as we continue to venture into the wilderness on some of the most beautiful trails in the country—perhaps with more company than we're aware of ... ♦



COVERING THE BASES



Alas, the brisk days of the waning summer are upon us. To get the most out of these last few months on trail before the Northwest autumn fully kicks in with chilly temps and moisture-filled skies, you'll want to think about layering up. Fortunately for you, the WT gear team has got you covered.

For the last nine months, the team has been testing the latest and greatest in baselayer style and technology—wool, synthetic, fleece, and even some crazy new stuff, like coconut fiber and heat-reflective components. From winter snowshoes and soggy spring trails to those mild summer outings, they put these layers to the test to help determine which offered the optimum in comfort, breathability and warmth, coupled with the all-important stink factor—how long they could go on trail without washing or changing before an item started funkying up. It was a tough challenge, with lots of grubby trail days, but one they were up to and in the end, they came out with their top selections to help you layer up and keep warm on the trails during our cooler seasons.

This Isn't Your Dad's Wool Sweater

Tried and true for its durability and warmth, wool is a classic baselayer material, and the tradition continues with **SmartWool's Lightweight Hoodie and Bottom (1)**. The natural, 100% merino wool regulated our tester's body temperature in a variety of conditions, transferring moisture away from the skin and allowing the legs and core to remain warm and cozy. After many long days in the mountains, these pieces remained odor-free and comfortable. Our tester found the hood especially nice when the wind picked up and absolutely dreamy at bedtime; the leggings were noteworthy for employing a different weave on the lower section to provide additional compression for the calves, keeping the muscles extra-warm on really long days. Simply put, this is wool at its finest. Lightweight Hoodie \$115; Lightweight Bottom \$70

When the temperature demanded a heavier layer, the easy choice was **Icebreaker's Quantum Zip and 200 Sprint Leggings**.

A team favorite, this stylish wool long-sleeve kept our crew toasty and stink-free during many of their cold weather, high-activity pursuits. The Quantum's athletic cut provides a perfect fit, with a looser weave in high-perspiration areas (under arms and center back) ensuring prolonged comfort. New for fall 2012, the Quantum Zip has become the **Quantum Hood (2)**: same great features, but now with a full-length zipper and shaped hood. Complementing the top, the Sprint Leggings feature strategically designed seams to hug the muscle contours of the legs, providing optimal fit no matter what activity is thrown at them. With excellent warmth and wicking properties, this Icebreaker duo will not disappoint. Quantum Hood \$180; 200 Sprint Leggings \$100

Top-of-the-Line Synthetics

Dependable for being lightweight and fast-drying, synthetic layers offer a more affordable option than wool, while still ensuring warmth in the backcountry. A hikers' favorite for years, the **Patagonia Capilene Shirt** offers a variety of layering options, from lightweight to expedition weight. Our team continued to find the Capilene 1 shirts to be all-around great performers, comfortable and exceptionally breathable, at a nice price. While Capilene has been known to get stinky after a few days on trail, Patagonia's nipping that with their new Gladiodor technology, making an already great shirt even more amazing. \$39 and up

If you're looking for a baselayer that you'll instantly fall in love with, just try on the **Sherpa Tsepun (3)** or **Dikila Quarter-Zip**. Our entire team was amazed by this ultra-comfortable and technically powerful layer. The unique Dry Zone nylon-polyester fabric is silky smooth against your skin, while the face is soft and comfy. Most notable were these shirts' light weight, fantastic wicking properties and quick-drying capability. Plus, the unique material also blocks 99% of UV rays and is woven with antibacterial silver ions to minimize odor. You'll find the Tsepun (men's) or Dikila (women's) to be your go-to baselayer when the mercury starts dropping. \$55

For a baselayer in high-activity cold or a midlayer when the



temps really plummet, our testers found the **Outdoor Research Radiant Zip** to be the layer of choice. Constructed of a micro-grid fleece, it proved to be highly effective for moisture transfer and extremely comfortable against the skin. The athletic fit and thumb loops added heat retention, while the deep chest zip provided nice venting options when working extra-hard. Up cold climbs and powdery snowshoes, the Radiant kept our crew warm and dry. \$80

Mixing It Up

What do you get when you combine the performance of merino wool and the breathability of Cocona coconut fiber? According to the *WT* gear team, you get one of the best baselayer products available with **Rab's MeCo 120 Tee (4) and Pants**. The Cocona natural fiber helps increase the breathability in wool and speeds up drying time; it also aids in UV protection. Both articles were noticeably light, hugging the body well, with no awkward seams causing hot spots or chafing. Our testers found the shirt stayed comfortable—not clammy—mile after mile, even when drenched in sweat. And after a solid week of wear on the trail, these layers remained practically odor free. Hands down, the RAB MeCo series are some of the best baselayers on the market. \$60

Eddie Bauer also recently teamed up with Cocona technology to create a hooded baselayer that works very hard to keep you comfortable: the **First Ascent Hangfire Hoody**. Our team tester wore it as both a baselayer and a midlayer, and it never failed to impress. The Cocona polyester material wicked moisture beautifully and the three-quarter-offset zip hood allowed for comfort across wide temperature ranges. Warm when you need it, cool when you want it, and a hoody when it's really howling, the Hangfire proved to be a very versatile, do-it-all baselayer. \$90

For a quality, no-frills, long-sleeve top, the **Redington RediLayer Wool Crew (5)** hugs the body with a soft and stretchy combination of wool and nylon. Our tester found this top so comfortable that it became his go-to winter sleepwear—both on the trail and at home. The 55% wool content helped regulate body temperature and keep

HIGH-PERFORMANCE CLEANERS FOR HIGH-PERFORMANCE LAYERS

You spend a lot of money on your outdoor apparel, so you want it to last. And just like you wouldn't wash a Porsche with a Brillo Pad, you don't want to wash your expensive baselayers with regular household detergents. These contain oils, perfumes and other ingredients that can inhibit their wicking capabilities, reduce their performance and accelerate breakdown.

To ensure that your baselayers continuing performing from season to season, it's worth using a quality, specialized detergent, made specifically for hiking apparel. These can thoroughly clean, remove odors and revitalize articles to like-new condition and performance—saving you money in the end.

NIKWAX BASEWASH

Formulated specially for synthetic articles, BaseWash cleans and deodorizes any item worn next to the skin, ideal for baselayers and underwear. It even works on socks. Your layers stay fresh, quick-drying and will last longer.



GEAR AID MIRAZYME ODOR ELIMINATOR

This stuff works, and you can use it on just about anything—underwear, socks, even your tent!. Simply soak your articles in the sink with the proper amount of formula, hang dry and voila! You'll think your item was brand new.



REVIVEX WOOL, SILK & BAMBOO

Specially-formulated for wool and natural fibers, this Gear Aid cleaner freshens and revitalizes performance layers. It even softens wool articles, making them less itchy and more pleasant to wear.



odor at bay, while the 45% nylon fiber allowed the layer to hug every inch of the body, giving a truer next-to-skin feel. \$70

Serious Space-Age Tech

It keeps you warm like a midweight, and "midweight" is right in its name, but the **Columbia Midweight Half-Zip (6)** is so super light, you'd swear they misnamed it. The reason it kept our testers so warm on those chilly spring hikes is due to Columbia's new Omni technology. They strategically placed Omni-Heat (reflective dots) in areas that need more heat (e.g., the body's core) and Omni-Wick (a highly wicking fabric) in areas where body temperatures need to be released (e.g., armpits). The minimal seams and polyester and elastane fabric made this an aesthetically pleasing as well as super-comfortable piece of gear. The result: a high-performance lightweight midweight layer for any Northwest outing. \$55

So whether you prefer the durability and warmth of wool, or the lightweight breathability of synthetics—or any combination thereof—any one of these baselayers is sure to keep you moving and motivated as you head up and down the trails this fall and winter. Toss one in your pack as one of your Ten Essentials, or layer up for your favorite outings. Stay warm, stay dry and stay safe. ♦

BEWARE THE “BONK”

There's nothing worse than crashing partway through a life-list hike by packing the wrong foods. Here's a simple guide to help you load up on the good stuff to keep you fueled through your adventure, all the way to the finish. | **Cheryl Talbert**

Most of us have experienced it. We've thrown a mix of trail foods into the pack or bear can, trying to stay within a weight limit or space allowance, but after a few days on the trail nothing looks appetizing and our energy levels crash. For short trips you can often “carbo-load” beforehand, live on energy bars and ramen and a calorie deficit, and come out pleased with a little weight loss. But on extended trips (more than 3-4 days), an ongoing calorie deficit will mean a steady deterioration in your energy and capacity and a high likelihood of a serious “bonk,” potentially spoiling a life-list trip.

So how many calories do I need?

Based on research on metabolic rates for different activities, hikers need to consume from 3,500 to 8,000 calories per day for overnight backpacking trips. This depends largely on their individual pace, the total weight they're carrying, and the conditions (terrain, elevation, temperature) of their route to keep up with the rate of energy burn.



Make sure to carry plenty of calorie-dense foods like nut butters, nuts and meal bars. Add olive oil to your prepared foods for an extra calorie boost.

Total Weight (Body + Pack)	Calories/8 Hrs. (low end)	Calories/8 Hrs. (high end)
150	3,273	4,364
175	3,818	5,091
200	4,364	5,818
225	4,909	6,545
250	5,450	7,273
275	5,999	8,000
Calories/Hr.	Lbs./2.2 x 6	Lbs./2.2 x 8

With careful planning you can create a menu delivering 2,000 to 2,500 calories per pound of food weight per day by diligently aiming for a balance of 40-45% carbohydrates, 40-45% fats and 10-15% protein. Fats are particularly important because they pack nine calories per gram, whereas carbs and protein provide only four. An emphasis on complex carbs and fats is a good strategy for sustained, steady energy delivery. The bonus: this is one situation in which you don't have to worry about a high-fat, high-carb diet—you will burn it all off!

Modest amounts of protein are enough to

maintain muscle, and protein uses more water to metabolize, so a lower percentage is needed in your backpacking diet. Fiber delivers no calories, so in this situation it's unproductive weight. Also, water content in your trail food drastically reduces the calorie efficiency of the food you carry—and adds pack weight. Instead of fresh fruits, veggies and meats, use freeze-dried or dehydrated versions that can be eaten as is or rehydrated at camp. These components can be dehydrated at home or purchased from many sources online.

How do I design a trail menu to deliver the highest energy and the lowest weight and bulk?

Begin by building a simple spreadsheet to plan daily menus and drill down to the lowest weight for your target calories (see sample menu). Look up your own preferred foods from the website caloriecount.about.com, or from product websites or package labels. Fill in the total serving weight and the weight of carbs, fiber, fats and protein, then experiment to achieve the best overall calories-to-weight ratio that meets your daily calorie target.

What are the most calorie-dense foods to help me keep my food weight down?

Check product labels for these quick indicators of high calorie density:

1. Low water content
2. High nutritive content (% of total weight in carbs, fats and protein, not including fiber)
3. High percentage of grams in fats
4. Lower percentage of grams in protein
5. Low percentage of grams in fiber

Items like olive oil or squeeze margarine can be added to most any meal to boost the calorie density. Many high-density foods also have the advantage of being very compact and durable, such as nuts. Others require practice to pack for easy dispensing and minimum mess, such as nut butters or spreads. Some meal bars and dehydrated meals also have moderately good calorie density and are very simple to pack, but check the labels. They are quite variable in

calorie density as well as costly—and you will want to leave the bulky packaging behind.

Conversely, some backpacking staples will surprise you with their low calorie density, such as jerky, oatmeal, brown rice and beans. For beans and oats, this is due to their high fiber content. For others, it is due to their high water content—cooked chicken breast is a good example. Foods in this latter group can be brought to a higher calorie density by dehydrating them or purchasing dried versions.

A low calorie density doesn't mean a food is "bad." Any trail menu needs a mix of lower

and higher calorie density foods for variety and enjoyment. First and foremost, you need to pack foods that you love to eat, because the least efficient trail foods per unit of weight are those you carry and choose not to consume. Just spend some time evaluating your menu to arrive at the highest average calorie density you can reasonably achieve. It's time very well spent to ensure that you provide your body the fuel to succeed on the trip you're planning. ♦

Make sure you're packing the right foods for your next trip. Download your own menu-planning worksheet at wta.org/menuplan.

Planning Your Own Perfect Menu

- ▶ Plan ahead to provide the calories to fuel the trip you're taking.
- ▶ Make it light by choosing calorie-dense foods and driving out water weight.
- ▶ Maintain a balance of simple carbs for quick energy, complex carbs and fats for steady mid- and long-term energy, and protein to mend muscle along the way.
- ▶ Check the label before you toss a dehydrated meal or energy bar in your pack. Some are much better for calorie density than others.
- ▶ Include a mix of foods to make tasty, enjoyable and varied meals.
- ▶ Finally, bring foods that you'll want to eat.

Calorie-Dense Foods	Servings (gms)	Calories	Cals/Gm	% Nutritive Weight*	Fiber (gms)	Fat (gms)	Protein (gms)
Flavored olive oil (2T)	28	252	9.0	100%	0%	100%	0%
Walnuts (1/4C)	58	400	6.9	86%	0%	80%	20%
Almonds (1/3C)	78	521	6.7	90%	5%	68%	27%
Almond Butter (2T)	31	201	6.5	94%	21%	59%	21%
Peanut M&Ms (15)	58	335	5.8	99%	49%	37%	14%
Cheese straws (9 straws)	28	159	5.6	92%	35%	42%	23%
Cashews (1/4C)	57	317	5.6	85%	27%	51%	22%
Cheddar cheese powder (2T)	24	132	5.5	75%	0%	67%	33%
Choc. covered almonds (9 pcs)	40	219	5.5	93%	52%	38%	11%
Fruit/nut trail mix (1/2C)	104	564	5.4	92%	46%	38%	17%
Cheez-It crackers	30	156	5.2	97%	59%	28%	14%
Mtn House Scrambled Eggs w/ Ham	72	372	5.2	94%	24%	29%	47%
Banana chips (1oz)	28	146	5.1	87%	58%	39%	3%
Nutella (1T)	18	92	5.1	89%	59%	34%	6%
Whole powdered milk (1/2C)	60	288	4.8	87%	42%	31%	27%
Apple chips (1oz)	28	138	4.8	88%	72%	28%	0%
Chunky peanut butter	70	328	4.7	74%	27%	46%	27%

Sample Menu	Serving (gms)	Serving (lbs)	Calories	Carbs (gms)	Fiber (gms)	Fat (gms)	Protein (gms)	Cals/Gm	% Nutritive Weight*	% Carbs	% Fats	% Protein
Whole powdered milk (1/4C)	60	0.1	288	22	0	16	14	4.8	87%	42%	31%	27%
Tang OJ powder (2T)	24	0.1	88	22	0	0	0	3.7	92%	100%	0%	0%
VIA packet with 1T cocoa mix powder	14	0.0	54	12	1	1	1	3.8	91%	88%	4%	7%
Cheddar cheese powder (2T)	24	0.1	132	2	2	12	6	5.5	75%	0%	67%	33%
Scrambled eggs, dehydrated (2)	47	0.1	193	2	0	15	13	4.1	62%	5%	52%	43%
Bacon slices, dehydrated (2)	30	0.1	130	0	0	10	10	4.3	67%	0%	50%	50%
Chunky peanut butter (2T)	35	0.1	164	10	3	12	7	4.7	74%	27%	46%	27%
Nutella (1T)	18	0.0	92	11	1	6	1	5.1	89%	59%	34%	6%
Oroweat English muffin (2 halves)	59	0.1	134	27	4	2	6	2.3	53%	74%	6%	19%
Nut-sesame mix (1.5 servings)	242	0.5	1502	62	15	129	38	6.2	89%	22%	60%	18%
Dates (pitted, 1/4C)	38	0.1	108	30	4	0	1	2.9	71%	96%	0%	4%
Banana chips (2 oz.)	113	0.2	605	66	9	40	4	5.3	89%	57%	40%	4%
Peanut M&Ms (30 pcs.)	116	0.3	666	56	0	42	16	5.7	98%	49%	37%	14%
Dehydrated black beans (1/4C dry)	63	0.1	154	41	20	2	13	2.4	57%	58%	6%	36%
Ground beef (1/2C dry)	114	0.3	300	0	0	20	30	2.6	44%	0%	40%	60%
Dried mixed veggies (1/3C)	30	0.1	44	11	2	0	2	1.5	36%	82%	0%	18%
Flavored olive oil (2T)	28	0.1	252	0	0	28	0	9.0	100%	0%	100%	0%
Full-fat tortillas (2)	116	0.3	330	54	2	10	8	2.8	60%	74%	14%	11%
Full-Day Total	1171	2.6	5235	427	62	344	170	4.5	75%	42%	39%	19%
http://caloriecount.about.com			2028	Cals/lb								

Nutritive weight is defined here as the weight of carbs (less fiber), fats and protein. Other nutrients and minerals in small amounts are not counted for simplicity.

Hunting Fungi

Wild mushrooms have long gotten a bad rap, but our Northwest forests are filled with tasty little morsels just waiting to be plucked—you just need to know which ones to go for. | Janice Van Cleve

Come autumn, huckleberries are all the rage in the Cascades. What people often overlook or shy away from are the mushrooms. There is a bounty of tasty fungi in our mountains if you just know where to look—and can distinguish the edible from the toxic ones. While hiking, identifying mushrooms can be just as much fun as identifying birds or flowers or geologic formations. It is a great education and builds confidence toward the next step in mushroom hunting: eating.

The first step for any mushroom hunter is a good guidebook. *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America* by David Fischer and Alan Bessette is a good choice. Very thorough, it contains loads of photos and, most importantly, tells if an edible has a poisonous look-alike. Another recommendation is *The Mushroom Trail Guide* by Phyllis Glick. This guide is more technical and groups fungi by scientific family. This will turn into your go-to guide for identification once you get the hang of using it. You should avoid the mushroom section in the *Field Guide to the Cascades and Olympics*, by Stephen Whitney and Rob Sandelin, as it is too limited for serious mushroom hunting.

The **oyster mushroom** is probably the most common edible that hikers encounter. Usually found on downed, moist logs, these clusters of white fleshy fungi are a staple at the dinner table. They have a delicate, peppery flavor and readily pick up the essences of any sauces with which they are cooked. They can be identified by their smooth, white to pale brown or gray cap and gills that extend down the stem, which itself grows out sideways under the cap. Oysters can be found in spring, summer or fall in moist woods at lower altitudes.

Chanterelles have long been the mushroom of choice for gourmets. Their yellow or reddish-orange trumpets with

curled-in edges can be found under several varieties of conifer throughout most of the state. Particularly noticeable are the ridges under the cap. Not to be confused with gills, these are blunt ridges that fan out and braid as they reach the edge of the cap. This distinguishes the true chanterelle from the toxic Jack O'Lantern, similar in color and shape but with real gills that do not braid. The other toxic to avoid is the Scaly Vase, which has a scaly cap. True chanterelles have smooth caps.

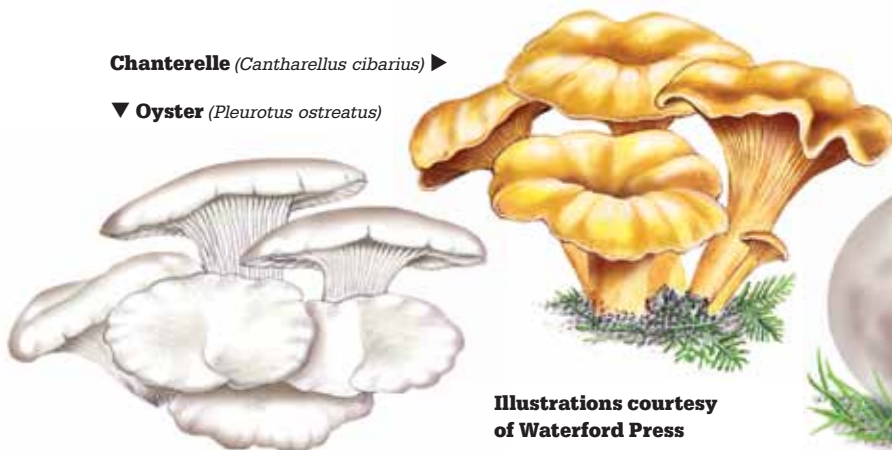
A fun little mushroom, **puffballs** are delicious when slowly sautéed in butter until they become slightly brown. Puffballs grow in small clusters, and their little knobs can easily be mistaken for gravel. Key factors to look for are white or tan knobby caps with no gills or pores, white flesh throughout as revealed by a longitudinal cut, and a surface covered with tiny grains that brush off easily. Make sure to inspect closely for interior gills or stalk, as these indicate a young *Amanita* button which is definitely poisonous.

The cream of the crop, and a top prize for mushroom foragers, are **morels**. These are usually found in spring and early summer where forest fires have left plenty of good ash in the soil. One such location is the Chelan lakeshore. The distinct spongelike honeycomb head on the morel can be yellowish or black, but the key characteristic is that a longitudinal cut from base to top will reveal a single hollow chamber throughout.

The king of forest mushrooms is the **bolete**. These big, meaty fungi can grow up to 8 inches across! Boletes are polypores, which means they have spongy little tubes under the cap instead of gills. A key characteristic of the edible varieties is that this tubular mass is yellow or white (not pink, orange or red) and can easily be scraped off with a

Chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*) ▶

▼ **Oyster** (*Pleurotus ostreatus*)



Morel (*Morchella Esculenta*) ▶

▼ **Giant Puffball**
(*Calvatia gigantea*)



Illustrations courtesy
of Waterford Press

Start your own mushroom hunt on your next hike using one of these guides: *Edible Wild Mushrooms of North America*, or Waterford Press' illustrated *Mushrooms* pocket guide



dull knife. Look for a smooth, dry cap of either white, pale gray or dull tan, with netlike ridges around the upper neck. The *Boletus mirabilis* has a maroon cap and is quite choice. Be sure to read up on bruising characteristics before harvesting boletes, because there are toxic varieties.

Tooth fungi go by many names: bear's tooth, comb tooth, bearded tooth. They appear as white masses resembling stalactites or clumps of coral bursting out of living or dead trees. Nothing else looks like them, and they are all delicious. Harvest them close to the wood and sauté them alone as fresh as possible.

My personal favorite is *Lyophyllum decastes*, a tasty mushroom I found in the Stevens Pass area. Using my technical guidebooks, I first identified it, then confirmed it with the help of my friends at the Mycological Society. This grayish-brown mushroom grows in clumps in disturbed soil—even right in the middle of the trail. Just looking at it I wanted to eat it. First I took photos top, side, and underneath. Then I carefully harvested it and put it safely in a sample bag. Back home, I sent the photos to the Mycological Society while at the same time checking off the identity factors. When the society confirmed the identity, I cooked up one of the buds and ate it. After 24 hours I was still alive, so I ate three more. Still good. The next day, I sautéed the entire mass with a juicy steak and finished it with a fine syrah. I'm not sure which I enjoyed more—this tasty new mushroom, or the triumph of successfully mastering a new variety.

This is just a small sampling of the many colorful, fascinating mushrooms awaiting discovery in our Cascade Mountains. The information in this article offers several notable identifiers for each variety, but these are by no means complete. Use one of the guidebooks and the services of the Puget Sound Mycological Society for the best identifications. Have fun, and enjoy! ♦

Bear's Head Tooth (*Hericium coralloides*) ►

▼ **King Bolete** (*Boletus edulis*)



The Puget Sound Mycological Society is a wonderful resource of friendly experts who teach classes, lead field trips, and help identify mushrooms. Their annual show in the fall is a must-see. Their website lists five rules before eating a new mushroom:

1. Always be 100% sure of identification.
2. Always cook mushrooms thoroughly.
3. Only eat a small portion when trying a new type of mushroom.
4. Only try one type of new mushroom at a time—and wait 24 hours for reactions.
5. Only eat mushrooms that are in good condition.

For more information, visit psms.org

And I have a 6th rule: Always leave one whole specimen on the table with a note that this is what you ate. It saves the coroner a lot of time.

PLEASE NOTE: Neither the author nor Washington Trails magazine serves as a mushroom guide and should not be solely relied upon for detailed identification or safety. Consult an experienced guide before attempting any mushroom harvesting.

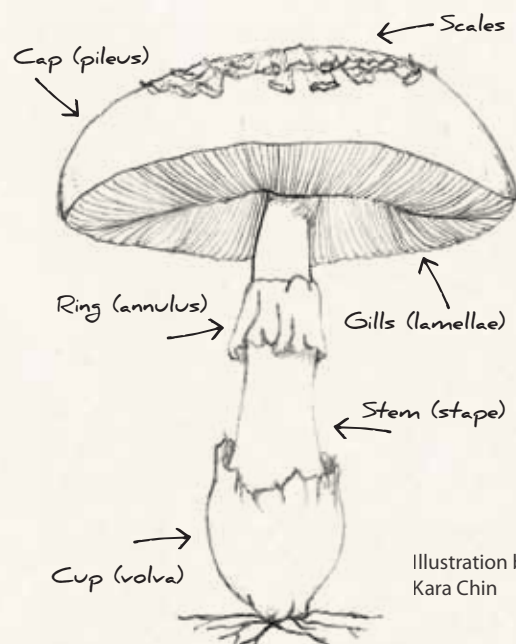


Illustration by Kara Chin

CAPTURING A WINNER

You don't have to be a pro, and it's not rocket science, but here's what it takes to compete in WTA's Northwest Exposure photo contest. | **Paul Raymaker**

Washington's gorgeous landscapes are unnumbered, and so are the many photographers trying to capture that beauty. With the start of WTA's Northwest Exposure photo contest, here are some pointers on how to improve your photography in order to make your photo stand out from the rest—and catch the critical eyes of the judges.

TRAILSCAPES

This one should be easy, right? Take a nice landscape, put a trail in it—boom! Not so fast. This category has the most submissions, and it will take a special image to pop for the judges. A trailscape that makes it to the finals starts with great light and a unique composition. Look for a distinctive scene, one that countless other photographers haven't already captured. Utilize the trail in your trailscape; use it as a path for your eyes, a line that leads the viewer through the image. Maybe even get a hiker on the trail in your image; however, you might want to check out the Hikers in Action category to see if your photo works better there.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Washington has a plethora of flora and fauna along its trails, but if you're going to enter this category, don't just submit a snapshot with a pretty flower in it. For close-ups of flowers, try to capture nature's artful design by using a macro lens to get the fine details that the casual observer overlooks; on the other hand, go for a wide angle to capture the vastness of some of our alpine meadows. For fauna, check out nearby national wildlife refuges or state wildlife areas with trails that are known to have interesting creatures to shoot (with a camera, of course!), and get out on the trail around sunrise or sunset, when wildlife is most active.

HIKERS IN ACTION

For this category, the judges will be looking for hikers doing what they do best—hiking! Not hikers lounging trailside enjoying a mountain vista. Capturing an effective and impressive image for this category takes effort and quick thinking. All too often, photographers lag behind groups, taking photos along the trail, looking up from time to time to take a shot. This results in pretty scenics full of hikers' backsides—not what the judges are looking for. Instead, try getting ahead of the group; far enough ahead to plan their path, compose a shot, and capture their faces. Also, a well-placed hiker in a photo can demonstrate scale in nature.

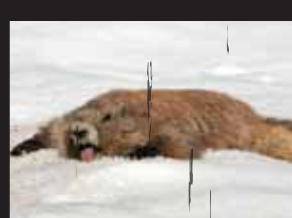
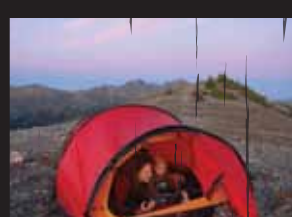
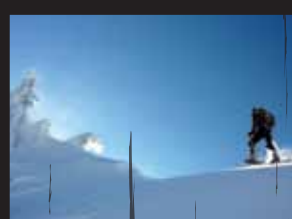
FAMILIES ON TRAIL

This category is all about families having fun outdoors. The challenge is how to catch that joyous smile on your kids' faces while they're rambunctiously bouncing around the trail or camp. This is where your autofocus skills come into play. Make sure you are using your camera's continuous autofocus function, so that your kids stay in focus as they're enjoying their time in nature. Also, be warned: these photo judges don't consider your four-legged companions as "family" subjects.

OFFBEAT

Anything goes with this category, so get creative. There are so many interesting things that happen on the trail, you just have to be ready to catch that remarkable moment. Or, as many have done in the past, create your own remarkable moment or scene. Get away from the ordinary and expected—but remember to be safe and practice Leave No Trace.

Finally, the most important part of capturing a great photo on the trail is to actually get out and hike! Keep your camera accessible and ready; it doesn't do you any good stashed away in your pack. That way you're guaranteed not to miss a unique wildlife opportunity or a spectacular sunset. You can submit your photos under any of these five categories through October 14, 2012. For more information, visit wta.org/northwestexposure. ♦



Northwest Exposure

2012

2011 Editor's Choice Winner, *Columbia Hills*, by Todd Mortensen



Attention Photographers!

It's time to dust off your lenses, recharge your batteries and grab extra memory cards when hitting the trails this summer—WTA's 10th annual Northwest Exposure Photo Contest is on!

Last year, we had a record number of entries—and this year we're looking to beat that! We have five fun categories sure to suit all photographic styles, interests and abilities:

- **TRAILSCAPES**
- **FLORA & FAUNA**
- **HIKERS IN ACTION**
- **FAMILIES ON TRAIL**
- **OFFBEAT**

And this year, besides great prizes, we have something extra-special planned for the winners, so this is the photo contest you don't want to miss! So grab your camera and show us why Washington's trails are second to none. Happy shooting!



Enter your photos by **October 14** for a chance to win great prizes and sweet gear, and to be featured in the Jan+Feb *Washington Trails!*

wta.org/northwestexposure



Visit wta.org/northwestexposure for contest details and entry rules. Contest ends October 14, 2012. Winner will be revealed in the Jan+Feb 2013 issue of *Washington Trails!*

Trail Eats

Whether you're going lightweight or just don't like camp cooking, here are some suggestions for quick and tasty trail meals



PACKIT GOURMET

Many of my backpacking trips are solo, and it used to be challenging to find tasty single-serve meals. Problem solved with **Packit Gourmet**. If I'm really hungry and put in long miles, the Texas State Fair Chili is hearty and tasty, and satisfies my biggest appetite. When it's cold in camp and I want something to warm me up good, I go for **Austintacious Tortilla Soup** (pictured). With lime, cheese, hot sauce and tortilla strips, it hits the spot just right. And for a tasty lunch or dinner, Packit's **Trailside Bean and Cheese Burritos** (BYOT) make a great alternative to the usual trail fare.

— Janelle Walker

A staple on all my overnights, Packit's **Jumpstart Fruit Smoothies** make a quick and easy breakfast to get me going. For hearty servings of fill-me-up goodness, I go for the **Tuscan Beef Stew** with polenta and veggies (yum!), or the **All-American Burger Wrap** (BYOT)—get it with "the works."

— Eli Boschetto

PackitGourmet.com



TRADER JOE'S

For a fast, flavorful meal after a day on trail, I like spicing up my standard fare with one night of prepackaged Indian food. While the packages aren't light (they come ready-to-eat in their own sauce), they're affordable and will only use a few minutes of fuel to heat.

Among my favorites are **Tasty Bite** and **Trader Joe's Indian Fare**. With ingredients like chickpeas, lentils and paneer, these one-dish meals provide a great source of protein in a meal packed with flavor. I eat with instant rice to add heft, or pack naan (Indian flatbread) to mop my bowl clean.

Some of the dishes that I've found especially tasty are the **Channa Masala** (chickpeas with onions, tomatoes and spices), **Paneer Makhani** (cubes of cheese in a creamy, spiced sauce) or **Madras Lentils** (lentils, red beans and spices in a creamy tomato sauce). Give one of these a try and spice up your own camp cooking with minimal effort.

— Loren Drummond

TraderJoes.com



LOCAL GROCERY

After long days on the trail, I like quick, no-fuss meals without hassling with a bunch of preparation, and without resorting to dehydrated packages. **Sea Bear Smoked Salmon** packets make a great source of protein, is high in calories and a good source of Omega-3s. I'll add a pouch of this to some of my favorite quick-cooking rice or noodle dishes (**Lipton** and **Pasta Roni**) and, in just minutes, dinner is done!

— Kim Brown

For short trips where counting ounces isn't required, I splurge a little and bring some good ol' comfort food—something I like to call "Karen's Crunchy Chicken Stew." Cook up a packet of **Lipton Cream of Chicken Soup**, add in some diced chicken (**Valley Fresh White Chicken** pouches work good if you don't have leftovers from before your trip), then crumble in a handful of **Tim's Original Potato Chips**. What really makes this dish great is topping it off with some fresh, diced avocado!

— Karen Daubert

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FIX IT GOOD *by Kristin Hostetter*

Let's face it: shiny new gear is awesome, and who doesn't love browsing outdoor shops brimming with shelf after rack of enticing new products touting the latest technologies? But whether it's budgetary constraints, environmental concerns, or your inner MacGyver coming out, there are loads of reasons to keep your old gear in good working order. Enter **Backpacker's Complete Guide to Outdoor Gear Maintenance and Repair** by Kristin Hostetter. It's bursting with dozens of DIY fixes and life-prolonging tips on everything from rain gear to shelters to packs, bags, boots and stoves. Here are a few quick tips to get you started.

Zipper Fix

After years of use, a zipper slider can become misshapen. A simple (but strong) squeeze with needle-nose pliers can get it back in the race, albeit temporarily. Back the zipper all the way into the open position, then squeeze one side at a time, gently at first. Keep trying the zipper to see if it closes, and then apply increasing pressure as needed. Be sure to apply equal pressure on both sides of the slider. Eventually that slider will need to be replaced, but this trick can eke some more life out of it.

Restoring Worn Heels

Many people experience undue wear in the heels of their hiking shoes and boots. There is an easy, three-step way to restore worn heels to help maintain traction. 1) Apply a piece of clear tape to the perimeter of the heel to make a dam. Squirt a generous amount of Gear Aid Freesole into the cavity. 2) Use a plastic knife to gently feather the adhesive, then set the boots perfectly level so the goo can spread evenly. Let it cure for 48 hours. 3) Remove the tape and you have a brand-new heel.



Patching Holes and Tears

Most sleeping pad problems happen in the middle of a backcountry trip, so the fix needs to happen fast. After a gruelling night of sleeping on your flat pad, start this simple, four-step fix. 1) Use a round adhesive patch (e.g. Gear Aid Tenacious Tape, or Tear-Aid). Remove the backer and mix a dollop of Seam Grip and a few drops of water. 2) Apply the mixture to the hole. 3) Apply the patch with firm pressure. 4) Weight it down with the heaviest rock you can find and go hiking for the day. When you come back, it should be good to go.

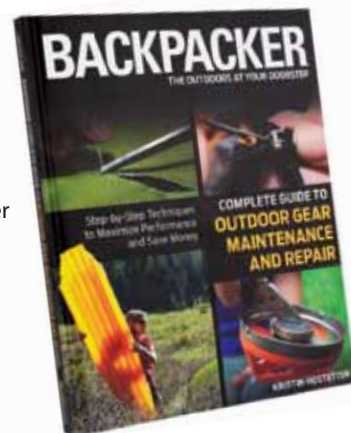


Keep Head lamps Shining

If your head lamp or flashlight gets wet (all too often in the Northwest) and water finds its way into the battery pack, the contacts can develop corrosion. You can prevent this by immediately drying out your lamp; just open the battery pack, remove the batteries and towel-dry the inner chamber, as well as the batteries. Let it rest for a few hours so any residual moisture can evaporate. If corrosion develops—often vivid blue gunk where the batteries meet the metal contacts—use a dry, stiff metal brush or sandpaper to gently scrub it off. Be sure that you don't bend the contacts in the process. ♦



Excerpts from Backpacker's Complete Guide to Outdoor Gear Maintenance and Repair. Photos by Meg Erznosnik and Kristin Hostetter, courtesy of Falcon Guides. \$19.95



Take a Hike!



Where to get the best *Big Fall Color*

The days are growing shorter, and there's a chill in the air, but that doesn't mean that hiking season is over yet—Nature is about to put on her grand show. Here are 10 trails to get you outside this autumn for all the brilliant huckleberry, oak, maple and larch displays your senses can handle.

- ❶ **Snoqualmie Pass:** Bandera Mountain; 7.6 mi. day hike
- ❷ **Mount Baker:** Watson Lakes; 6 mi. day hike or backpack
- ❸ **Mountain Loop:** Perry Creek; 11 mi. day hike
- ❹ **Teanaway:** Tieton River Canyon; 3–4 mi. day hike
- ❺ **Mount Rainier (east):** Shriner Peak; 8.5 mi. day hike
- ❻ **Indian Heaven:** Bird Mountain Loop; 8.5 mi. day hike or backpack
- ❼ **Salmo-Priest:** Sullivan Lakeshore; 8.2 mi. day hike

WEB BONUS!

Visit wta.org/bonushikes for three more stunning trails!

- ❽ **North Cascades:** Maple Pass; 7.2 mi. day hike
- ❾ **Stevens Pass:** Beckler Peak; 7.4 mi. day hike
- ❿ **Mount Rainier (south):** Skyline; 6 mi. day hike

And for even more great autumn hikes, check out wta.org's Hike Finder. Select the area, mileage, elevation and scenery you want, then browse the selections to find a hike just right for you!

Leave No Trace

PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT We've all experienced it. You hike up to a gorgeous lake or peak, seeking views or inspiration or solitude, longing to be one with Nature and bask in her splendor. As you pull out your lunch, or begin setting up camp, you notice an energy bar wrapper blowing past you. Then you spot some discarded tent guylines. And then, the worst, a scattering of toilet paper. What was to be your pristine wilderness retreat is now marred by the carelessness of those before you.

Carry a ziplock baggie in your pocket or pack and use it for all your snack and meal trash.

Wrap a ziplock bag with duct tape to use for toilet paper and personal waste; or use a WAG Bag.

Double-check your camp and break locations for items that may be forgotten. Don't just leave it as you found it, leave it *better* than you found it.

SAFETY NOTICE Neither *Washington Trails* magazine, the Washington Trails Association, nor their personnel or agents accept any liability for accidents or injuries in connection with articles, trail or road reports published in *Washington Trails* magazine. The reports provide updated information of interest to the region's trail users; readers are cautioned to supplement the reports with detailed trail maps and other sources of information when planning a trip. Additionally, readers should be aware that reported conditions may change, that there may be errors in the reports, and that certain hazards are inherent in backcountry travel.



Hike and photo by Tami Asars

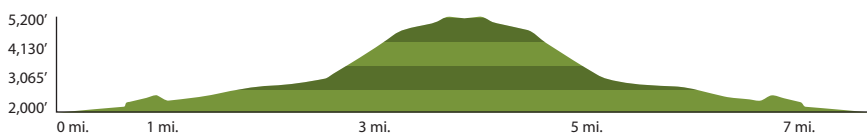
Hike: Bandera Mountain

There's no better time to bag this trail than autumn. The hillside foliage lights up with deep reds, oranges and yellows, creating a vision fit for a postcard, while the 3.8-mile climb off I-90 is sure to get your ticker talking.

Your hike starts up the Ira Spring Trail from the parking area on a very gentle grade. Pass several cascading waterfalls and notice the trail getting steeper about 1.5 miles from the trailhead. From here on, the trail will get you huffing and puffing, but your efforts are rewarded with views of McClellan Butte to the south and the brightly colored hillsides above you.

Before long, the trail picks its way through a large boulder field and you find yourself deep in hillsides of reds and golds—autumn huckleberry and thimbleberry. Following a long eastward traverse and a few switchbacks, approximately 2 miles from the trailhead, arrive at a junction for the Mason Lake Trail to the west (left). Take a breather and a drink of water—the tough part is next. Continue straight ahead on an easy-to-miss trail that heads steeply upward. Watch your footing as you climb up, up, up, using plenty of gumption. As you work your way over boulders and open hillside meadows, be sure to stop for plenty of air and water breaks, as the 1,000 feet of elevation gain will get you gasping.

Gain the ridgeline and don't linger too long; there are better views up ahead. The trail leads you east (right) into the protection of the forest before placing you onto more boulder fields with more climbing. Use caution with footing and follow the path of least resistance through the rocks until you arrive again on a spine with an obvious trail made of soil and boot prints. Enjoy the views of Mason and Kulla Kulla Lakes far below you. Mounting Bandera's 5,200-foot summit, enjoy the panoramic views of autumn-colored mountains in all directions. Break out lunch, snap a photo, grab your water from your pack and toast to fall!



► SNOQUALMIE PASS

LOCATION: Baker-Snoqualmie Nat'l Forest

TOTAL MILEAGE: 7.6 miles RT

ELEVATION GAIN: 3,000 feet

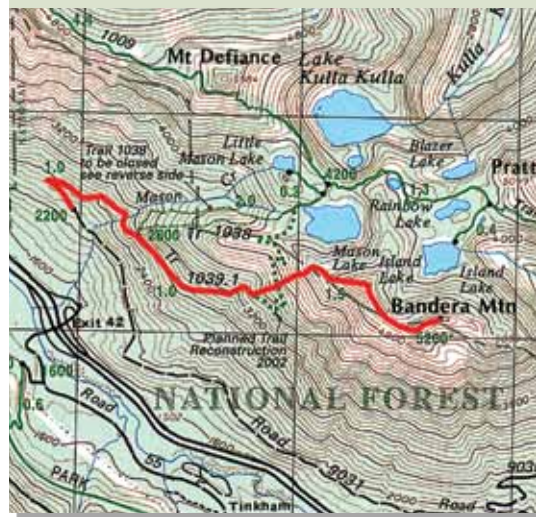
HIGHEST ELEVATION: 5,200 feet

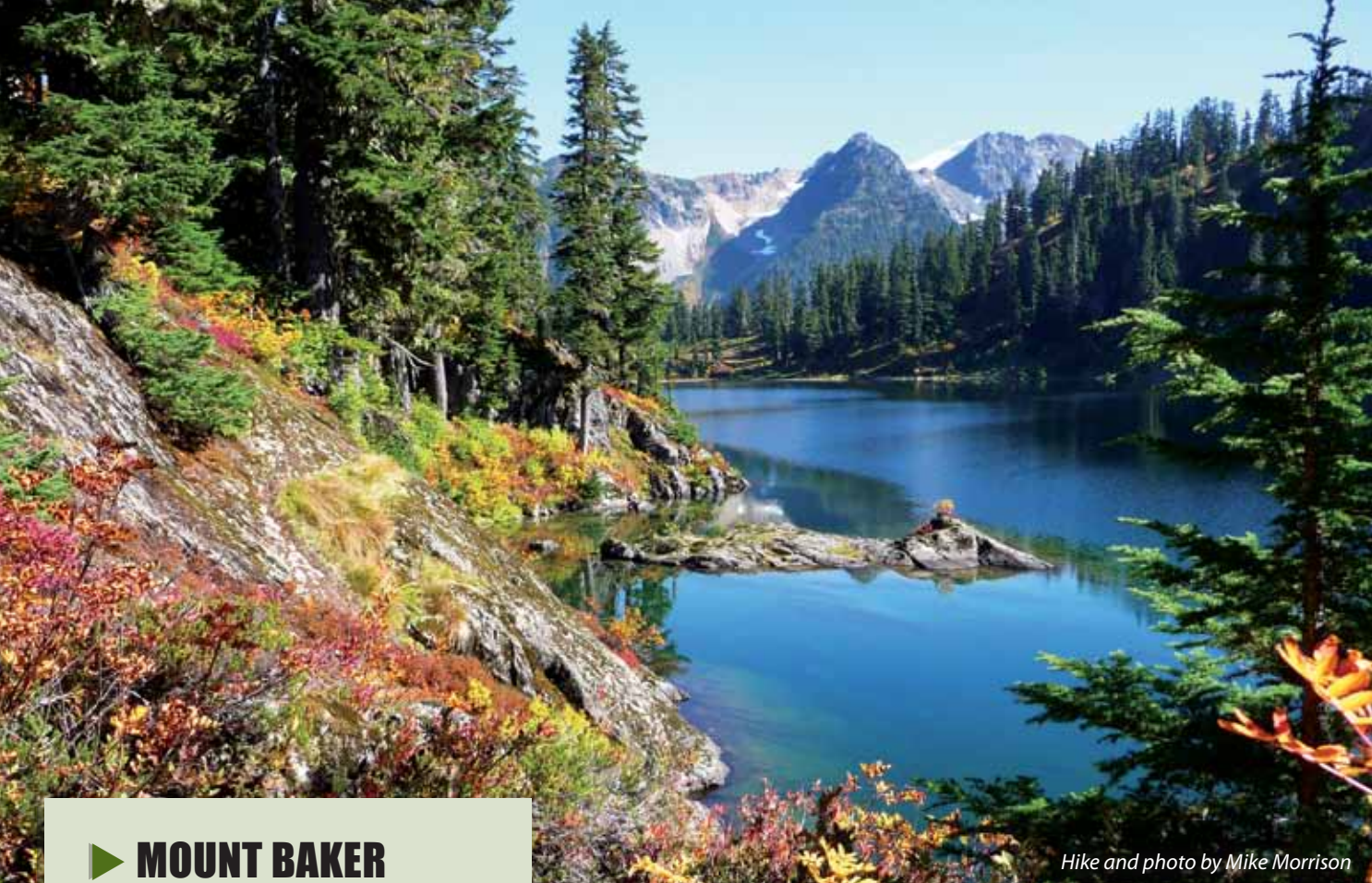
MAP: Green Trails 206: Bandera

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

DIRECTIONS: From I-90 take exit 45. Turn left onto FR-9030, then left onto FR-9031. Continue to the end at the Ira Spring trailhead that accesses Bandera Mountain and Mason Lake trails.

POST-HIKE: After your big climb, enjoy big food and a cold brew at the Snoqualmie Brewery and Taproom.





Hike and photo by Mike Morrison

► MOUNT BAKER

LOCATION: Noisy-Diobsud Wilderness

TOTAL MILEAGE: 6 miles RT (*profile one-way)

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,100 feet

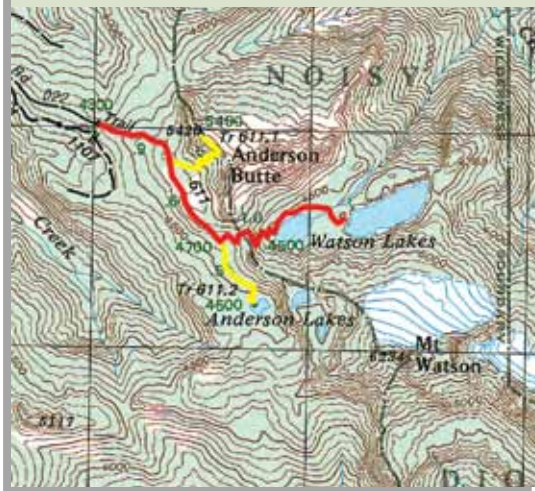
HIGHEST ELEVATION: 4,900 feet

MAP: Green Trails 46: Lake Shannon

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

DIRECTIONS: From Concrete, drive north on Baker Lake Rd. for 14 miles; turn right on FR 1106 for Baker Lake Dam. Pass Kulsan Campground and cross the dam. Continue 9 miles on FR 1107, then left on Spur 022 for 1 mile to trailhead.

POST-HIKE: Stop back in Concrete for a hearty meal at the Buffalo Run Restaurant.



Backpack: Watson Lakes

This moderate out-and-back comes alive with autumn color in Mount Baker's backyard. Add a couple of side trips and turn it into an overnight backpack.

From the trailhead, plunge through hemlock forest southeast for 1 mile to a wide meadow. In late summer you can snack on juicy huckleberries; later in autumn, when the berries are gone, the area is illuminated with flaming red bushes. A signed junction breaks east for Anderson Butte. This 1-mile side trip climbs steeply 800 feet to the site of an old lookout. From the top, there are fantastic unobstructed views of Mount Baker, Mount Shuksan and Baker Lake.

Continuing on the main trail, pass through more huckleberry meadows. Keep in mind that this is a vital food source for black bears and other creatures, so snack sparingly and be aware that you may have company. Don't forget to occasionally turn around and catch a view of Mount Baker. Crest the high point of the trail at 4900 feet then descend into another wide meadow. Wooden boardwalks cross this next section to help preserve the vegetation. At the far side, come to another junction, this one south for Anderson Lakes. This 1-mile side trip is worth taking to capture a photo of Mount Baker across the mirrorlike water.

For the Watson Lakes, veer left at the junction, heading east, and huff up a 200-foot rise that eventually levels off in a saddle between Anderson Butte and Mount Watson to the south. Then it's downhill to the first of the Watson Lakes. As you descend you'll be entering the Noisy-Diobsud Wilderness, established in 1984 and consisting of 14,100 acres. When the lakes come into view in their broad basin, it is a sight to behold.

The fall colors around the lakes are spectacular. A variety of animals roam through this area, such as bears, elk and black-tailed deer; look to the trees for the northern spotted owl. For backpackers, the ideal campsites are located between the two lakes.





Hike by Dawn Erickson; photo by Mark Whitesell

Hike: Perry Creek

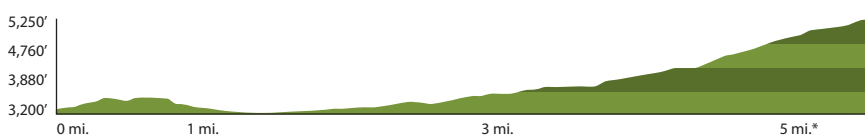
Hike up a lush valley bursting with waterfalls and mountain views. In fall, vine and big-leaf maple, alder and huckleberry put on a dazzling display of seasonal color.

The Perry Creek Trailhead now coexists with the Dickerman Mountain Trailhead, just off the Mountain Loop Highway. This new location solves the sketchy parking situation that plagued the old Perry Creek Trailhead, but adds 3 miles to the round trip.

The Perry Creek Trail starts at the lower corner of the new parking lot and begins with a gentle climb through an impressive stand of old-growth Douglas-fir and western redcedar forest. Windows across the valley offer views of Big Four, red with huckleberry in the fall. At 1.2 miles, the trail meets and follows the now-closed road to the old trailhead. Here, one enters the Perry Creek Research Natural Area containing many rare plants, including male fern, leathery grape fern, and maidenhair spleenwort.

After a brief turn in the woods, trees give way to open valley. The trail climbs steadily through talus fields and across creeks and avalanche chutes, all relatively easy to navigate in the later season. At 1.9 miles from the old trailhead (3.4 from the new trailhead), Perry Creek Falls is reached. This gushing cataract can be tricky to cross earlier in the year, but by autumn is an effortless hop. This in itself is a fine destination and turnaround point for many; the trail beyond quickly steepens, plunging into dense forest and deteriorating around numerous roots and rocks.

After another 1.7 miles (5.1 miles from the new trailhead), the path begins its transition from forest to meadow on a braided wet mess of a trail. At an unmarked junction, veer right and climb a steep 300 feet to reach a bench. At the top, the lovely meadows here are resplendent in fall with huckleberries. Enjoy views of Glacier Peak, Big Four and Mounts Pugh and Forgotten. Here, the maintained trail ends, but climbers can continue on to Mount Forgotten and Stillaguamish Peak.



► MOUNTAIN LOOP

LOCATION: Darrington Ranger District

TOTAL MILEAGE: 11 miles RT (*profile one-way)

ELEVATION GAIN: 3,200 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 5,250 feet

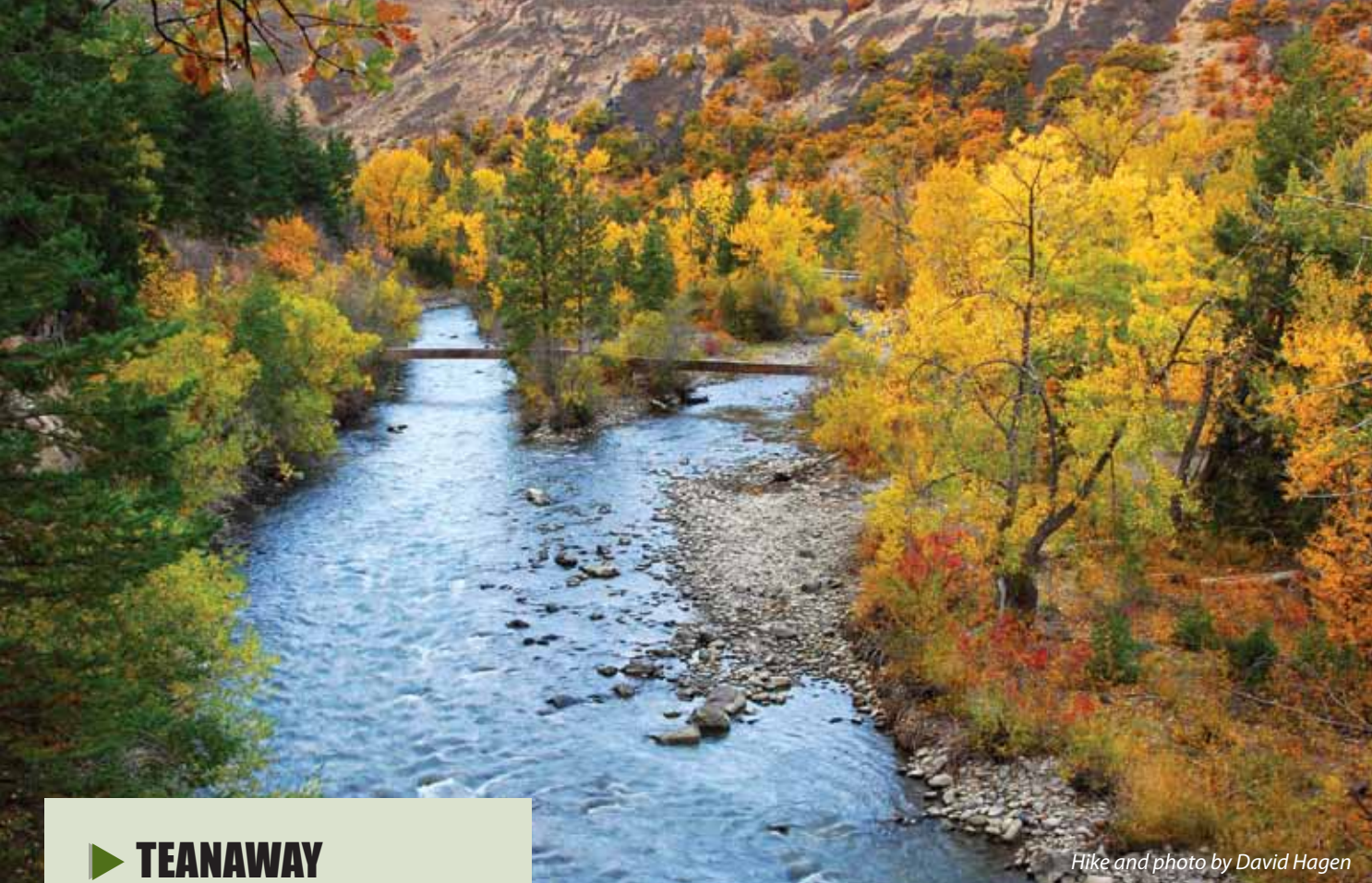
MAP: Green Trails 111: Sloan Peak

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

DIRECTIONS: From Granite Falls, take the Mountain Loop Highway 26 east miles to the Mount Dickerman trailhead. Use the new connector to access the Perry Creek.

POST-HIKE: Have a tasty dinner at Rhodes River Ranch in Darrington.





Hike and photo by David Hagen

▶ TEANAWAY

LOCATION: Oak Creek Wildlife Area

TOTAL MILEAGE: 4 miles RT (*profile one-way)

ELEVATION GAIN: minimal

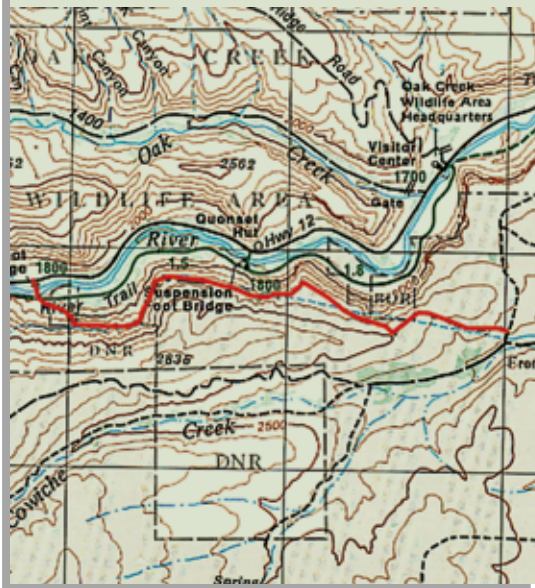
HIGHEST ELEVATION: 1,860 feet

MAP: Green Trails 305: Tieton

PERMIT: Discover Pass

DIRECTIONS: From Yakima, drive 21 miles west on US-12 to Oak Creek Wildlife Area.

POST-HIKE: Find a cozy spot to kick back and watch the climbers take on the Royal Columns.



Hike: Tieton River

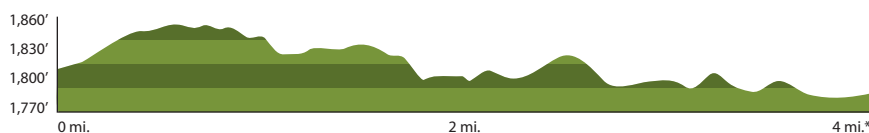
Take a leisurely stroll up the Tieton River Canyon among color-changing cottonwoods, aspens, Garry oaks and shrubby willows, all putting on one of the most spectacular autumn displays you'll ever see.

In mid-October, just as the color in the alpine meadows is starting to fade and the mountains are filling with snow, an even more colorful show is beginning along the eastside rivers and streams. The lush riparian vegetation of cottonwoods, aspens, water birches, willows, oaks, and deciduous shrubs is as colorful as anything you'll find anywhere—and a fantastic location for fall photography.

This gentle trail follows the south side of the Tieton River from the Oak Creek Wildlife Area Visitor Center. To access the better part of the trail, drive 3 miles past the visitor center to a large pullout—make sure to display your Discover Pass. Cross the river on a footbridge to connect to the trail, and turn left. The route cuts across the hillside directly above the river, then drops into a giant meadow ringed with cottonwoods, Garry oaks, aspens, red-osier dogwoods and wild roses.

Leaving the meadow behind, the trail winds up and down through the floodplain, immersed in lush riparian vegetation. At just the right time of fall, this portion of the trail can be an ever-shifting kaleidoscope of yellow, gold, bronze, maroon, red, orange and green. After about 1.5 miles, the trail reaches a suspension bridge and shortly beyond climbs to a broad sagebrush flat. The next 1.8 miles to the visitor center winds through dry sagebrush, away from the river. The lack of color through this section is compensated by the awesome views of the Royal Columns, dramatic cliffs of columnar andesite popular with local rock climbers.

Wander as far as you like, then return by the same path. Notice how the light, color and perspective are different each way, making for some creative photo opportunities.





Hike by Brittany Manwill; photo by Wendy Witkowski

Hike: Shriner Peak

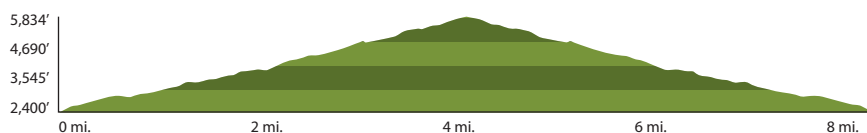
Summer gets all the glory, but gorgeous weather and late-season color make this one of the most beautiful autumn hikes in the national park. The hike is a challenging 4-mile grinder, but the payoff is great views and lots of solitude.

The under-appreciated Shriner Peak is one of the loneliest trails at Mt. Rainier. It's long, steep and exposed, making it nearly intolerable in the stale summer heat. But enter fall, when the change of season ushers in majestic color and cooler temps, it's the ideal time to hit this high-alpine trail before the snow starts falling again.

From the get-go, the Shriner Peak Trail steadily ascends 3,424 feet in 4.25 miles. Bring lots of water—you'll need it, and there aren't many sources along the way. The trail runs parallel to Panther Creek through shady Douglas fir, cedar, and hemlock for 0.75 miles before entering an old burn area. Traverse this shadeless stretch for another mile to a steep series of switchbacks to the top of a ridge under Shriner Peak.

This is where things get incredible. At 2.5 miles, catch your first view of the east side of The Mountain. Sprawling with wildflowers just weeks ago, it's now carpeted with autumn color: vine maple, mountain ash, golden larch, and crimson huckleberries transform Mount Rainier's hillsides into deep shades of red, yellow, and orange. After another 0.75 mile of steep climbing, you're rewarded with a high view of Shriner Lake far below. From here, the final mile to the summit turns dusty and rocky.

Just 0.25 mile from the summit, catch your first view of the lookout tower standing tall on Shriner Peak. Once the first line of defense for forest fires, the two-story tower now serves as a rest area for weary hikers taking in the view from the summit: Mount Rainier, Little Tahoma, Sourdough Ridge, the Cowlitz Divide, Mt. Adams, Goat Rocks, and Mount St. Helens. With high-elevation panoramas, a historic landmark, and gorgeous autumn color, you'll be thankful you gave this lonely trail a chance.



► MOUNT RAINIER

LOCATION: Cayuse Pass

TOTAL MILEAGE: 8.5 miles RT

ELEVATION GAIN: 3,434 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 5,834 feet

MAP: Green Trails 269S: Wonderland

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

DIRECTIONS: From Enumclaw, drive SR-410 east, then south, for 40 miles to Cayuse Pass. Continue south 7.5 miles on SR-123 to trailhead and parking.

POST-HIKE: Drop into Cliff Droppers Cafe for burgers, hot dogs, pizza and 16 flavors of ice cream.





Hike by Ashley Morrison; photo by Eli Boschetto

▶ INDIAN HEAVEN

LOCATION: Mount Adams Ranger District

TOTAL MILEAGE: 8.5 miles RT

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,200 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 5,200 feet

MAP: Green Trails 365: Lone Mtn. Butte

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass; self-register at trailhead for overnight wilderness permit

DIRECTIONS: From Trout Lake, drive west on SR-141 for 8 miles to Peterson Prairie Campground. Turn right onto FR-24 and drive 8 more miles to the Cultus Creek Campground. Trailhead parking at back of campground loop.

POST-HIKE: Stock up on more berries at the Sawtooth Berry Fields, or grab a huckleberry milkshake in Trout Lake for the drive home.



Backpack: Bird Mountain Loop

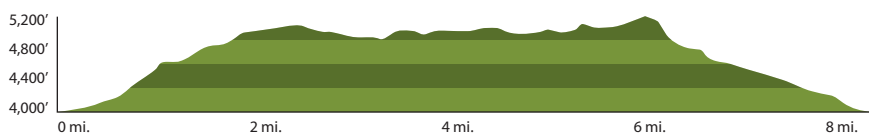
Brilliant autumn color, moss-cloaked forest, a maze of ponds and small lakes, mountain heather and huckleberries everywhere—Indian Heaven is the place to hike when summer starts slinking away.

You've likely heard of Indian Heaven for one of two things: the swarming clouds of mosquitoes that assault summer hikers, and its bounty of juicy berries come fall. Avoid the bugs and go for the berries, when foliage hues peak and a chill is in the air. Watch for wildlife, as this is active bear and elk country.

From the trailhead at Cultus Creek Campground, start uphill on Trail 33, switch-backing the ridge to the first view of Bird Mountain. Bright vine maple jumps out in color splashes from the rocks of the talus slopes. Following this initial 2-mile grind, the trail is fairly level and you're soon at a junction at Cultus Lake. A 0.5-mile fork left offers a short jaunt to Deep Lake, with a couple of nice campsites on the northwest side.

Continue south through shaded, mossy forest for another 0.5-mile to an easy-to-miss junction. Fork left, staying on Trail 33 and descending to Clear Lake; the fork right turns into Trail 179 and continues south to Junction Lake (ideal for more lakes and more berries). Pass Clear Lake, sitting pretty in its basin, and come to another junction, the Pacific Crest Trail. Turn left, heading south for 0.5-mile, passing first Deer Lake, then Bear Lake. Find a sweet campsite on the peninsula at Bear Lake. (Continuing another mile south leads to Junction Lake and the connector with Trail 179.)

For the hike out, retrace your steps on the PCT, heading north. Continue past the Clear Lake junction, skirting the west side of Bird Mountain. Near Wood Lake, watch for Cutoff Trail 108 and fork right, making a short climb to cross Bird Mountain's north ridge; look for views of Mounts Rainier and Adams near the top. Finish with a steady descent in and out of less dense forest, back to the trailhead.





Hike and photo by Aaron Theisen

Hike: Sullivan Lakeshore

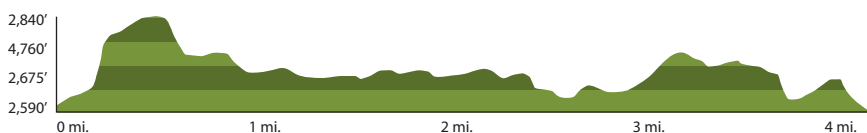
Wander woods reminiscent of eastern hardwood forest, filled with aspen, hemlock and birch along the largest natural lake in the Colville National Forest—plus enjoy one of the best western larch displays in Eastern Washington.

Western larch is the only species of larch whose distribution is largely confined to the inland Northwest. Like other larch, the western larch is a deciduous conifer, meaning that it loses its needles every fall and produces a completely new set in the spring. In the fall, the needles go out in a blaze of glory, lighting up mid-elevation slopes with yellow and gold. Time your hike here for the last half of October for peak larch luminescence.

Start your hike at the East Sullivan Campground at the north end of the lake, taking a short path through aspen and shrubs to a junction. The way left leads to the Sullivan Nature Trail, a 0.6-mile self-guided interpretive trail detailing the natural processes at work in the forest. Instead, turn right, and travel up through a damp and mossy forest of hemlock and western redcedar on the lower slopes of Hall Mountain.

Pass several long-decrepit mining roads before briefly breaking out of the trees. From the rocky benches—some with real wooden benches laid into the stone—peer out over Sullivan Lake. Despite the lake before you, the larch display is likely to keep your attention. From here, descend to the shores of Sullivan Lake, where quiet coves and beaches await. Keep an eye out for critters; one of Eastern Washington's largest bighorn sheep herds frequents the steep slopes of Hall Mountain, and wolves have been reported near the lake in recent years.

Cross Noisy Creek before climbing another bluff, then drop down to Noisy Creek Campground. If you have a second vehicle, here's where your trail ends; if not, just return by the same route.



► SALMO-PRIEST

LOCATION: Colville National Forest

TOTAL MILEAGE: 4.1 miles one-way

ELEVATION GAIN: 250 feet

HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,840 feet

MAP: USGS Quad: Metaline Falls

PERMIT: none

DIRECTIONS: Drive SR-31 north to Metaline Falls. Turn right onto Sullivan Lake Road; continue to East Sullivan Campground and trailhead access.

POST-HIKE: Check out a performance at the Cutter Theater in nearby Metaline Falls. Built in 1912, it's on the National Register of Historic Places.



Community Corner

Latest Trip Reports



Lake Stuart – Bob and Barb

"Near the lake is a grove of aspen trees which will be beautiful in the fall! Monkshood, cow parsnip, paintbrush, Indian pipe, forget-me-nots, pyrola, bog orchid, and blue-eyed grass were some of the flowers seen."



Shriner Peak – Hikingqueen

"I saw a coyote about 2 miles in right when the views get good. Up top I spotted a big healthy cinnamon bear in the meadow below. If you haven't done this one, add it to your list and make it happen! It's also great in the fall. There will be a TON of berries this year."

Search Trip Reports, find hikes, check conditions and share your latest hiking adventures and photos at wta.org



Washington Trails Association

July 2012

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

Your favorite trail snack?

Like • Comment • Share



Charis Weathers Apple slices with Justin's chocolate hazelnut butter, rolled in a tortilla!



Kim Denning String cheese and Pirate's Booty



Rueben Baca Bacon, Kind bars, honey packets, jerky, smoked salmon...



Randy Orsborn What ever I can forage



Mark Martinez Summer sausage, gouda cheese & Triscuits



River Waite Beechers cheese curds and buffalo jerky; and blueberries for a sweet treat—mmmmm



Paul Kuhn Leftover pizza!



Matt Caldwell Starburst and Cheetos. Breakfast of Champions.



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Lil'Looney @chelsea_looney

I'm looking to explore the Olympics this wknd. Any tips on good places to go @WTA_hikers?



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@chelsea_looney check out our Hike of the Week this week. It's in the East Olympics. <http://bit.ly/MQ037Z> Tell us about your hike.



Lil'Looney @chelsea_looney

@WTA_hikers ended up doing a backpack trip up to Marmot Pass. It was BEAUTIFUL. Thanks again. pic.twitter.com/fqfls10U



Washington Trails @WTA_hikers

@chelsea_looney That's awesome. Incredible shot!



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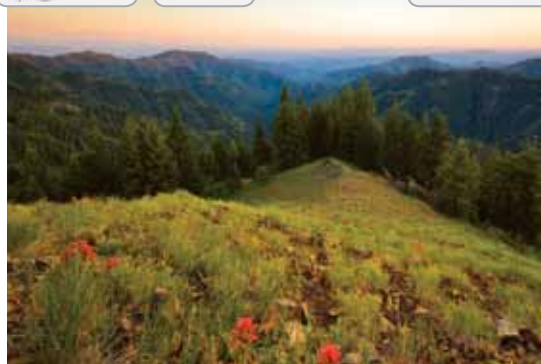
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Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness dusk. Photo by Aaron Theisen. Taken on Jul 09, 2012 in the Eastern Washington region. Dusk over Ray Ridge on the eastern edge of the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness.



Get inspired by photos of stunning views, wildlife and flora from Washington's trails. Follow WTA's board at pinterest.com/wtahikers

Ancient Lakes



Flanked by the Columbia River and warmed by the sun, the Ancient Lakes are the remnants of a violent flood that took place when an ice dam broke, unleashing over 500 cubic miles of glacial water into Eastern Washington—the Missoula Floods. Millions of years before, lava flows covered most of the Columbia River Basin, forming enormous basalt columns. As those floodwaters scoured and carved through the region, the columns were revealed and shimmering pools now fill wide basins.

We began our trek on the Judith Pool Trail, hiking alongside towering basalt columns and an old mine. We descended the waterfall at the end of the Judith Pool Trail and gazed at a vast landscape illuminated by the setting sun. I shot a few photos in hopes of capturing the Ancient Lakes' majestic beauty in the golden sunlight. After camping on the lakeside, we hiked out on the Ancient Lakes Trail, completing our loop, and a well-spent weekend.

— Nathaniel Middleton

Have an amazing landscape photo you'd like to share with Washington Trails readers? Send a hi-res sample with a brief description to photos@wta.org, with "Featured Landscape" as the subject.

HIKE IT ►

Ancient Lakes

Location:

Quincy Wildlife Area

Distance:

4.5-mile loop

Elevation Gain:

400 feet

Map:

USGS Quad:
Babcock Ridge

Permit:

Discover Pass

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for trails**



**...supports over
2,600 volunteers**



**...helps you find
your next adventure**



**...gets families
outside**



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