

Q&A With Washington's Sasquatch Seeker

Washington **TRAILS**

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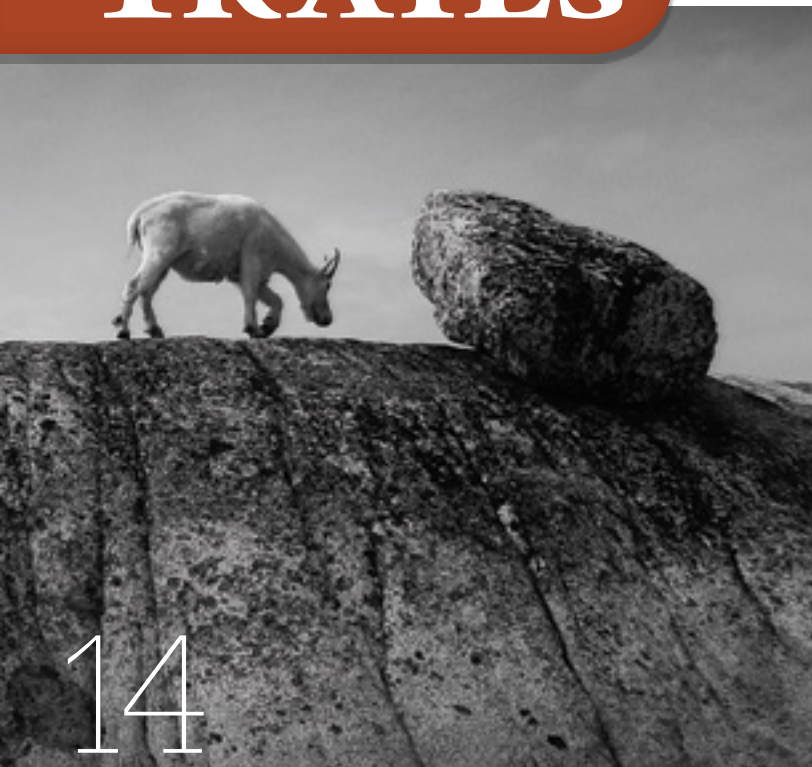
Take Your Best Shot

10 Big View Hikes

**Best Packs for Bagging Summits
Weekend on Whidbey Island**

Sep+Oct 2015

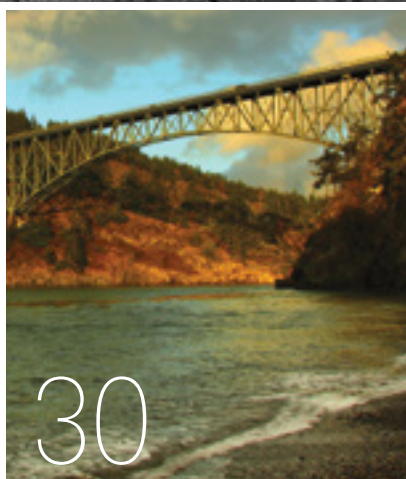




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COVER: Frequent Northwest Exposure finalist Lauren Dawkins used her GoPro action camera to capture this wide-angle view of hikers photographing the sunrise on Mount Hood from Pyramid Rock, near Silver Star Mountain.

Washington's Leading Hiking Resource and the Nation's Largest Volunteer Trail Maintenance Program

Washington Trails Association is a volunteer-driven nonprofit membership organization working to preserve, enhance and promote hiking opportunities in Washington state. We engage and mobilize a community of hikers as advocates and stewards for our trails statewide. Through collaborative partnerships and grassroots advocacy, WTA focuses on state and federal issues, including trail funding, hiker safety and wilderness protection. WTA is committed to leaving a rich legacy of trails and wildlands for future generations to enjoy.

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.

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FRONT DESK

Karen Daubert

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Crosscut Legacy

"1,387 logs in 52 miles of trail." These numbers jumped out at me like a startled grouse on a quiet trail.

As I forwarded this trip report from the Pasayten on to our trails team, I pondered the amount of work that it would take to clear an area that had not received any trail maintenance for years—maybe decades. I could almost hear the crosscut saws singing in the wilderness.

I like to imagine the stories these tools would tell us if they could, but seldom are we lucky enough to know the history of the old crosscuts that are still put to good use by our volunteers today. So it was a rare gift when my hiking friend Michael Shiosaki and his father Fred ceremoniously presented us with a saw that had been in their family for four generations. And the story unfolded.

In 1915, in Hillyard (a neighborhood in the northern part of Spokane), Kisaburo Shiosaki started a laundry business. The laundry's clients included railroad, forest and farm workers. Their dirty, heavy work clothes required steam and hot water to get them clean. The water was heated by wood, and that wood had to be harvested.

Kisaburo's four sons, including Fred, were responsible for cutting the wood to feed the laundry's furnace, which consumed 25 cords of wood each summer. This crosscut saw was a vital part of their lives and livelihood, as it enabled the sons to go to college. Eventually the laundry graduated from wood to gas and the sons graduated from sawyers to engineers. But the business stayed in the family for more than 90 years until it was eventually sold in 2005.

Fred married Lily, and together they raised a family and hiked and fished throughout Northeast Washington. They passed on their legacy to the next generation—their love of the outdoors to Michael and their special crosscut saw to WTA's volunteers. Hopefully it will eventually be used on those 1,387 Pasayten logs!

This is a poignant reminder that while we might come to trails from various paths, it is our love of hiking and desire to protect these special places that bring us all together.

Happy hiking,

Karen & Daubert

WTA Field Program Manager Alan Carter Mortimer (left) inspects the crosscut saw donated by Fred (right) and Michael Shiosaki. This crosscut will soon be put to use by WTA's trail volunteers.



TOP: WTA Executive Director Karen Daubert (center) and members of the outdoor recreation community met with Sen. Patty Murray (left) and Rep. Suzan DelBene (right) in August to discuss how Washington can continue to build its outdoor recreation economy and address funding challenges facing our public lands.

MIDDLE: Fireside Leadership Circle member Holly Smith (right) recently joined WTA Board President Stephen Tan, Executive Director Karen Daubert and other members at the home of Eric Noreen and Suzi Hill for a sneak preview of WTA's new strategic plan.

BOTTOM: Middle schoolers with the Orcas Youth Conservation Corps recently capped a summer of local stewardship with three days of trail work on the Mountain Lake Trail in Moran State Park.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Top Picks from OR 2015

SIGNPOST

Eli Boschetto



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Hiking gear has come a long way from clunky external-frame backpacks and steel army canteens. And every year at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market, we get a chance to see how much farther away we move from that now seemingly-ancient trail gear, as—just like everything else—technology and innovation continue improving on things.

This year was no different at the annual event in Salt Lake City, Utah, which draws gear manufacturers from around the globe to show off their latest and greatest to the media and retail buyers. The experience is often overwhelming, fueled by energy bars and sports drinks, as one navigates the giant convention center to take in as many highlights as possible.

The standout highlight at this year's show was the new collaborations pairing Gregory and Big Agnes with Goal Zero. Gregory's uber-popular Baltoro backpack—even after an amazing upgrade last year—was improved upon again with the incorporation of a Goal Zero solar panel in the pack's lid. This clever innovation will make it easier than ever for hikers to keep their tech charged up without having to pack along a ton of extra batteries. On the Big Agnes side, they've taken two of their popular mid-level tents, the Krumholtz UL2 for backpackers and the Red Canyon 4 for campers, and added a Goal Zero solar panel and recharger to power an internal comfort system that includes lighting, a fan and media pockets for entertainment options. Extravagant? Yes. Frivolous? Maybe. Cool? Very!

Smile for NWX

Fall is one of my favorite times of year. The days are cooling off. The hillsides are turning glorious shades of red, orange and gold. And the Northwest Exposure (NWX) photo contest is in full swing. This year is WTA's 13th annual NWX event, where you, WTA's loyal fans and supporters get to show off your outdoor adventures in this beautiful—and highly photogenic—state for big prizes.

But NWX is much more than just a photo contest. Yes, a small number of photos do get selected for their outstanding technical merits, but so many more photos go on to help illustrate just how amazing Washington's trails and wild areas are. This is especially important for WTA's communications team who rely on photo contributions for producing our newsletters, website and this very magazine. So by participating in NWX, you are essentially helping ensure that *Washington Trails* continues to have access to incredible photos to help inform and inspire hikers across the state—and if you win a prize for one of those photos, well that's just gravy!

In this issue of *WT*, we're even helping you get a leg up in the contest by providing you with a detailed overview of every contest category, and what the judges will be looking for. As a judge myself, here is the most valuable tip I can offer: faces. Photographers—including myself—have a habit of falling behind on trail, usually because we're preoccupied with capturing amazing photos. This typically means that when we see a great scene with our friends or companions in it, we're snapping that from behind—and capturing their backs. But their backs are not really what tells the story of the moment. Their faces do. The looks of enjoyment, awe and challenge are what really convey an experience in a photo—like grinding up a high mountain pass (*ugh!*) to the incredible view obtained at the top (*wow!*).

So jump ahead of the pack. Or, if behind the crowd and presented with an amazing scene, ask them to turn around. Catch those faces in your photos—then enter them in this year's Northwest Exposure photo contest. We're looking forward to seeing all of those smiling faces on trail!

Cheers,



L-R: Who wouldn't love a camp snuggie?! Therm-a-Rest's new Honcho Poncho; Vasque's Inhaler boot (an Editor's Choice favorite) is getting an upgrade in the 2.0 version; The new Gregory Baltoro pack and Big Agnes Krumholtz tent with integrated Goal Zero solar panels. Look for reviews of these and much more in coming issues!



Every year, we look forward to seeing our state's trails through the eyes of photographers who enter the Northwest Exposure photo contest. Get inspired to submit your own photos by checking out a set of sample shots we love from last year's contest entries at wta.org/gallery.



Room with a view on Excelsior Peak; photo by David Austin

ADVICE FROM THE PROS:

Hello, how can I help you?



When you call WTA's Seattle office, chances are, you'll be greeted by Kim Brown. Kim started volunteering with WTA in 1997 and has worked on staff in one capacity or another for more than a decade. She's out hiking or volunteering nearly every week, all year long. She credits her time at WTA with prompting her to study wetland science and environmental policy and maintains a blog detailing history and natural oddities found along the trail at exploringpacnw.net.

Q What are your favorite kinds of calls?

A I like calls that begin with, "I have a dumb question," because there are no dumb questions and I like making people feel comfortable about seeking help. Plus, I learn a lot from many callers, so it goes both ways! I also like calls from people who want to do the right thing.

Q What are the most common questions you get?

A Questions about trail passes are the most common, as well as questions that require explanations of regulations and policies across different lands. I like it when callers have time to hop onto the website and I can teach them how to search for hikes in a certain area.

Q How do you go about recommending hikes to people?

A Every morning, I read the latest trip reports to see what's going on out there. Migrating birds, salmon runs, fall color—all these things change constantly. Trip reports tell me what the flora and fauna are up to so I can recommend the best experience for the season.

To read the full interview with Kim, visit wta.org/kimbrown.

WTA TRIP REPORTS:

Recommitting to Care

We are always in danger of thinking we own what we love in the wilderness, that we deserve to keep covert the very best trails and mountaintops known only to us. But I thought of how much I long to learn from others of where best to hike and have new adventures, of how I trust that others will also give back to me. When we share, we also recommit to care for this fragile environment in our midst.

— marylambe, Paddy-Go-Easy Pass

Read more trail stories in Trip Reports, and help fellow hikers by filing a report of your own at wta.org/tripreports.

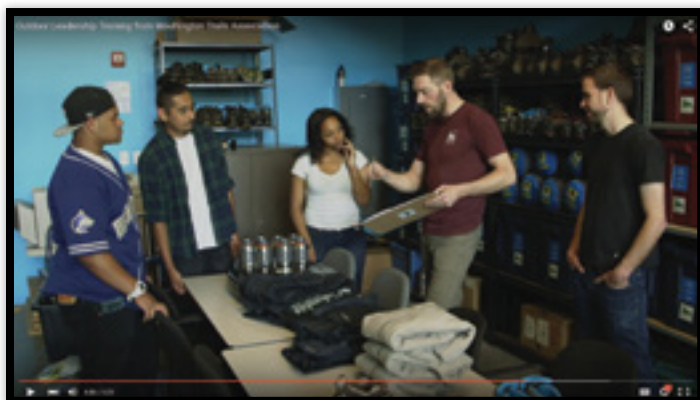




WATCH LIST: Two Inspiring Videos



An extraordinary group of conservation leaders gathered in iconic Yosemite Valley earlier this year for a campfire conversation on improving the diversity of both visitors and staff within our national parks and wild spaces. This must-watch video not only details what's at stake if our wild lands aren't more inclusive, it will leave you fired up and ready to help.



The second video on our watch list this month, filmed a little closer to home, details just one way that WTA is hoping to help bridge the adventure gap. The Seattle Channel's CityStream dropped in on our Outdoor Leadership Training to see how our workshops and gear library are empowering educators and youth leaders to get their youth outside.

You can watch both videos at wta.org/watchlist.

Trip reporter Luke Distelhorst and staffer Ben Mayberry circumnavigated Glacier Peak in 35 hours during July. Read our interview with Distelhorst to find out why and how they tackled this 107-mile beast. Check it out at wta.org/interviews.



PACK IT IN PACK IT OUT

Nothing can spoil a hiking experience more than seeing litter on trail—or worse, finding litter all over back-country campsites. Be extra-diligent to make sure that everything you carry into the wilderness gets carried out with you.

- ▶ Repackage meals and snacks into zip-top bags to minimize waste.
- ▶ Carry a zip-top bag to collect extra food and snack wrappers.
- ▶ Store your food properly to keep it protected from hungry critters.
- ▶ Use a separate bag to collect used toilet tissue and hygiene products.



Illustration by Lindsay Holladay



It is wonderful to see REI modeling corporate citizenship right in their own back yard. With their help, we are [creating] another great connection in the Issaquah Alps trail network. People will walk over REI's section of trail for years to come!

— Zachary McBride, WTA Crew Leader

Photo courtesy of REI

REI Steps Up for Trails

SEATTLE – Great corporate citizenship is more than donating money—though that doesn't hurt! It is passionately giving back time and energy to build a thriving community. Here in the Northwest, we're lucky. We're home to several companies that are also incredible corporate citizens. REI is a great example.

REI knows that Puget Sound's trails see heavy use all year long, so this year they awarded WTA two grants of \$30,000 each to maintain and protect those trails. But their generosity extends beyond these incredible contributions. Earlier this year, 36 REI Media Studio employees took a day away from the office to help construct a brand-new trail on Squak Mountain. With these hardworking REI employees' help, the Margaret's Way Trail was ready to open to the public in June. Now, hikers, joggers and families are able to enjoy this new King County trail.

Also this year, WTA joined REI at their CampUs Day, a chance for REI employees to learn about the company's products and vendors. Raffle tickets sold at the event benefited WTA—and raised more than \$5,000 for trails.

Corporate partnerships come in all shapes and sizes, from grants to volunteering, from workplace giving to product donations. Thank you REI for paving—sorry, treading!—the way for hikers around our region. We couldn't do it without you.

WTA Partner Update

The executive directors of two close WTA partners—Martinique Grigg of The Mountaineers and Glenn Glover of the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance—both recently announced their resignations. Both have proven to be strong leaders of their respective organizations and have worked hard to strengthen partnerships. WTA Executive Director Karen Daubert noted, "Glenn and Martinique have worked with WTA on many issues relevant to the hiking community, including access issues that are at the heart of WTA's advocacy program. We wish them the best."

Grigg will be taking time to be with her family, while Glover is moving to DNR, where he will be working with GIS systems and trail planning. Meanwhile, Mountains to Sound Greenway's new executive director, Jon Hoekstra, started work in July. WTA is looking forward to working with him, and all his staff and volunteers, to enhance recreation throughout the Greenway corridor.

REDISCOVER THE SUIATTLE:

First Season Recap

DARRINGTON – It's been less than a year since the Suiattle River Road reopened after 11 years of closure, setting efforts in motion to begin restoring trails in the valley to their former glory. WTA's final stats for this first season? Over the course of 41 days of working in the area, WTA volunteers contributed an impressive 3,750 hours of maintenance on six different trails.



BEFORE: Fallen logs had taken their toll on the Downey Creek Trail, including this puncheon bridge through a wet area.

Many challenges were overcome in that time. In May, a WTA Backcountry Response Team used crosscut saws to clear downed trees—67 in all—that were blocking the Downey Creek Trail. But that's not all. When volunteers encountered a section of puncheon (boardwalk) that had been smashed by a fallen tree, crew leader Mike Torok led the team in an ingenious repair using a cedar log found on site.

Crew leader Zachary McBride reports that efforts to restore the Suiattle River Trail, which is the backbone of the trail system here, moved more quickly than anticipated thanks to an outpouring of help from volunteers ranging in age from 12 to 83. Crews cut back brush, restored tread and removed downed trees for the increasing number of hikers exploring the area. Their work also cleared the way for packers on mules and horses to haul hundreds of pounds of tools and gear into the backcountry for volunteers working on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and the Miners Ridge Trail.

Each project was planned in careful succession, designed to supplement work by the Darrington Ranger District's own trail crew. Work on the PCT was also coordinated with the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA), whose volunteers tackled a much-needed project of their own, clearing logs, brushing and improving the tread on the PCT south of the junction with the Suiattle River Trail. Months of phone calls, meetings and emails between WTA, the ranger district, the PCTA and the Back Country Horsemen of Washington were needed before the first volunteer crews were ever on the ground.

With the first season of recovery work complete, and a short window before planning begins for next year's efforts, now is a great time to hit the trails and rediscover the Suiattle. Head to the Suiattle River Trail for a delightful river walk. On a clear day, the challenging trail to the historic Green Mountain Lookout rewards hikers with bright fall colors and one of the most spectacular views in all the Cascades. Keep up with WTA for more updates on Suiattle River area trails.



AFTER: WTA volunteers cleared 6 miles of downed logs from the Downey Creek Trail, including the repair of this puncheon, using materials found on site. Photos by Mark Huston



THANKS TO YOU!

Congratulations to everyone involved in Hike-a-Thon 2015. Thank you for making this year's event a huge success!

By mid-August, right before this issue went to press, 276 participants had registered to make their miles count and collectively had raised more than \$75,000 for Washington's trails. By the time you're reading this, that number has likely grown exponentially.

Hike-a-Thoners and their supporters are amazing people. Whether you personally made your miles count, sponsored another hiker or are one of our generous corporate sponsors, you are the heart of Hike-a-Thon and you have helped protect and maintain the trails we all love.



“I volunteer with WTA because I enjoy the opportunities for teamwork that WTA provides, sharing ideas on how to solve issues and provide solutions.”

— Julian Narvaez



Youth Volunteers Earn Trail Crew Vests

Washington Trails Association has amazing and dedicated trail volunteers of all ages. This summer, eight high-school-age youth earned their trail crew vests for volunteering 25 days or more. We asked a few of them why they join WTA on trail.

Youth learn a few things by volunteering on trail for 25 days. Ballard High School senior Jules Wilson shared, “I’ve learned a lot as a WTA volunteer, such as how teamwork is key in trail work and that I need to work well with others in order to succeed. I feel like my biggest highlight is earning my vest because it shows that I have put a lot of hard work into trail work and giving back to my community.”

Trail work provides an opportunity to spend time outdoors. According to Julian Narvaez, a junior at Eastside Catholic High School, “I volunteer with WTA because I enjoy the opportunities for teamwork that WTA provides, sharing ideas on how to solve issues and provide solutions. I also love working outdoors and breathing fresh air; volunteering with WTA provides the opportunity to spend time outside and appreciate natural beauty and hikes in Washington. Lastly, it’s always satisfying seeing what the trail crew and I have accomplished after a hard day of work. Seeing the improvements made to the trail makes even the most difficult trip worthwhile.”

Volunteering with WTA offers connections beyond trails as well. Logan Urrutia, a junior at Kamiak High School, said, “Being a volunteer with WTA has been an awesome experience for me and has made me realize that I really like nature. I have met a lot of people along the way and many new doors have opened for me. Through WTA, I have connected with new opportunities, including those with The Mountaineers and North Cascades Institute.”

“Almost every hiker that passes by says ‘thank you.’ Hikers recognize and love the work WTA and its volunteers do!”



From a young age, Ken Vandver always loved hiking around his home in Sumner. As an adult, his passion for hiking grew. After Ken joined his third WTA work party on National Trails Day in 1998 (also attended by Ira Spring), he was hooked! Says Ken, “If it wasn’t for groups like WTA, trail work just wouldn’t get done.”

For many years, Ken looked forward to being on trail as a way to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and to disconnect from his phone and email. It was also a good chance to get out of the office. Today, though retired, Ken is still giving back to trails—and so is his previous employer, Boeing, which continues to match every gift Ken makes through its corporate matching program. Talk about a two-fer!

Thank you, Ken—and Boeing—for your outstanding support for trails!

Learn about contributing to WTA through your employer at wta.org/support.

Double Your IMPACT

Washington state is so generous!

Check out these amazing organizations that matched their employees' charitable giving and volunteer hours to WTA. Your incredible contributions totaled more than \$177,000 in additional support for trails in 2014. Thank you!



Adobe • Aetna Foundation

Altria Group Inc. • Amgen

Apple • Bank of America

The Boeing Company • BP

Bungie Foundation • Cambia

Capital Group • CenturyLink

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Port of Seattle • Portland General Electric

Precor Incorporated • Russell Investments

SaltChuk Resources • Starbucks

Symetra • Verizon • VISA



Don't see your workplace on this list? Ask your HR team about your company's matching gift program. Or, visit wta.org/support for more info.

It's a great way for your gift to trails to go twice as far!

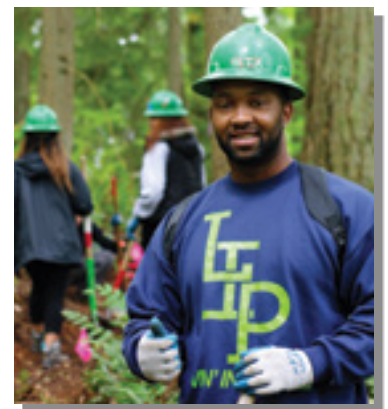


A new barrier-free trail in Vancouver Lake Regional Park is inching closer to reality thanks to WTA volunteers, including an AmeriCorps NCCC crew who pitched in on several recent work parties. Photo by Ryan Ojerio.

Creating New Opportunities for Seattle Youth

On a rare cool day this past July, teenagers from West Seattle and White Center dug through ferns, duff and roots to help WTA crew leaders and staff from King County Parks and Recreation reroute a section of the new Margaret's Way Trail on Squak Mountain near Issaquah. The full day of getting dirty while learning about tools and trail work with WTA was coordinated by Southwest Club Program Director Jeff Poke and Program Coordinator Brandon Shell from the Boys & Girls Clubs of King County. Opportunities for their youth group to get outside and learn new skills are part of a bigger effort by the organization to ensure a sense of community and help these young people reach their full potential.

And for Shell, this was just the latest in a series of outdoor activities supported by WTA. In October of last year, he participated in an Outdoor Leadership Training workshop to learn about planning and leading trips. In December, he and two colleagues borrowed rainwear, waterproof boots and backpacks to lead a youth group on a fun—and wet—hike to Wallace Falls. That hike was for the YMCA's Alive and Free program, which works with youth and young adults impacted by violence as a partner in the larger network that makes up the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. "My work as an outreach worker is about identifying teens who lack opportunities to get engaged," says Shell, "and my work as a program coordinator is about creating those opportunities. This kind of activity opens their eyes to new possibilities and shows them what's really out there."



In addition to participating in WTA's Outdoor Leadership Training program, Brandon Shell also works with the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club of King County. Photo by Andrew Pringle.

2015 Legislative Wrap-up:

How Did Trails Fare?

OLYMPIA – After a record-long session, legislators wrapped up their work by passing 2015–2017 operating and capital budgets, which were signed into law by Gov. Jay Inslee in July.

With a number of large-scale issues to tackle this legislative session, from the state's transportation budget to the Washington State Supreme Court McCleary decision (requiring the legislature to fully fund K–12 education), the outlook for trails and recreation could have been bleak—but it wasn't.

Hikers showed strong support this year during our lobby day and WTA had a regular presence in Olympia all session long. All of that work paid off; legislators heard how important trails are to us! The Legislature exceeded expectations by providing approximately \$101 million that will improve parks and trails and preserve wildlife habitat and family farms—a significant amount of funding that WTA is most grateful to legislators for providing in spite of a very tough budget year. Here are the highlights of where much of that funding will be going.

Wildlife and Recreation Program

The incredibly important Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, which provides outdoor recreation and conservation grant funding, received \$55 million (\$10 million less than the previous biennium), which will leave some worthy projects unfunded. Projects that did receive funding include the following:

► **Candy Mountain:** Benton County will be able to purchase property on Candy Mountain to build a 20-mile ridge trail that will connect Badger Mountain to Candy Mountain and Red Mountain. Badger Mountain is visited by more than 200,000 people a year, making it one of the most-hiked mountains in the state.

► **Mailbox Peak Trail:** The Department of Natural Resources received funding to finish the final phase, a 1.3-mile section of the new 5-mile Mailbox Peak Trail in King County.

► **Willapa Hills Trail:** State parks received funding to develop 9 miles of the Willapa Hills Trail in Lewis County. The 53-mile railway trail travels from Chehalis to Raymond.



Earlier this year, more than 60 hikers from 26 districts converged in Olympia to speak out for trails and encouraged legislators to support strong funding for the outdoors. In addition to the many adult advocates, this year's Hiker Lobby Day also featured the largest group of youth advocates we've ever had!

State Parks

The Legislature showed support for our state parks during the session by investing in them more than in the last biennium. Washington State Parks will receive \$31.1 million in public support for operations. In the 2013–2015 biennium, that number was only \$20.4 million. For park projects, capital budget funding came in at \$60.9 million (\$7 million higher than the last biennium). WTA applauds legislators for supporting our state parks!

Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources, which manages well-known recreation areas such as Mount Si, Gothic Basin and Mount Pilchuck, came away with recreation and conservation funding five times greater than what they have previously received—an impressive feat during a tight budget process! One huge disappointment was the lack of funding for the Teanaway Community Forest, which received only \$282,000 instead of the requested \$2 million. The reduced funding will postpone the recreation planning process. WTA is hopeful that the community forest will receive adequate funding in future legislative sessions; we will be working toward that end in 2016.

Outdoor Recreation Bill

This history-making legislation, signed into law by Gov. Inslee and funded in the capital budget, will provide a senior policy advisor in the governor's cabinet and fund the No Child Left Inside grant program, which hasn't been funded in recent years.

WTA is pleased by the overall outpouring of support for trails and recreation in the state legislature this year. And we're committed to keeping the momentum going in future legislative sessions to ensure that our trails receive the necessary funding to keep them well maintained and provide a great hiking experience for you.

WTA Thanks Its Corporate Partners

Rainier - \$25,000+



Olympic - \$10,000-\$24,999



Cascade - \$2,500-\$9,999



Alpine - \$1,000-\$2,499

Atlas Snowshoes ♦ Carhartt

Cascade Crest 100-mile Endurance Run

GSI Outdoors ♦ Hilleberg, the Tentmaker

Klahhane Club ♦ Northside USA

Perpetual Motion NW ♦ Sagacious Consultants

Wells Fargo

**To find out how your company
can support WTA's work for trails,
please call us at (206) 625-1367.**

Hikers' Voices Heard on I-90 Timber Sale

In late March, we asked for your help to speak up for trails along the I-90 corridor. The Mt. Baker–Snoqualmie National Forest had proposed a timber sale along some of the most beloved trails in the forest. More than 500 comments from our Trail Action Network were sent to the U.S. Forest Service asking for the timber harvest project to be balanced with the protection of recreation and trails. We're happy to say that the Forest Service heard hikers loud and clear and made two major changes to their project:

- ♦ The Ira Spring Trail will not be used as a road for hauling logs for the timber sale.
- ♦ The Pratt Lake–Granite Mountain Trail will not be logged on either side of the trail—the entire unit has been removed from the project.

The Hansen Creek Vegetation Project will occur over a span of six years and include the following:

- ♦ Harvesting trees from 40 to 120 years old across a total area of 1,347 acres between exits 38 and 47 on Interstate 90.
- ♦ Logging next to the Ira Spring, Talapus Lake, McClellan Butte and John Wayne trails.
- ♦ Trail and road closures to recreation sites when tree harvesting activities are taking place in the area.

The final Decision Notice was signed on August 3, 2015. The MBSNF will now move forward on this project.



This summer, the Snoqualmie Ranger District called on WTA to help improve the popular Franklin Falls Trail. Over the course of 20 work parties, volunteers constructed a new overlook, as well as new turn-pike and puncheon structures that will ensure the sustainability of the trail for future visitors. Photo by Erik Haugen-Goodman.

Take Your

A hiker with a backpack stands on a rocky cliff edge, looking out over a vast mountain valley with a river winding through it at sunset. The hiker is wearing a light blue shirt and dark pants, and has a brown backpack. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The mountains are layered, with the closest ones in deep green and the distant ones in a hazy blue. The river reflects the golden light of the sunset.

The 2015 Northwest Exposure (NWX) photo contest is here, and we're excited to see all the photos you've been taking while out on Washington's trails. All of your favorite categories are back—Trailsclapes, Hikers in Action, Flora and Fauna, and Camp Life—and this year we're introducing a new category: Fun on Trail. That's five great categories in which you can enter photos for a chance to win great prizes from Mountainsmith, BlackRapid, Pedco, Manfrotto, Mountaineers Books and Nikon.

To help get you started and give you some inspiration, we sat down with some of our recent contest winners and judges to bring you the best tips and photography talk to help you shoot some amazing photos—and give you a leg up in this year's contest. You don't have to be a pro photographer with the best gear to enter. You can use your phone, a point-and-shoot or your grandpa's old 35mm. After all, it's the photographer who takes the photo, not the camera. Get shooting!

Best Shot

Top Tips From NWX Winners and Judges

By Erik Haugen-Goodman & Eli Boschetto



This photo of a hiker perched atop Mount Storm King, high above Crescent Lake, took first place in the Hikers in Action category in Northwest Exposure 2014. It was selected for its excellent composition, color and lighting. It went on to be used in a number of WTA's promotional materials. Photo by Isaac Gautschi.



TOP: Kristen Elwell's 2013 grand prize winning mountain goat was shot using a pocket point-and-shoot, then converted to b/w and enhanced in post-processing.

UPPER: Mokul Soman's 2014 first-place photo used a shallow depth-of-field to put the focus on a red fox in a Mount Rainier meadow.

LOWER: Nature makes interesting shapes, as captured by Claire Giordano, who took home first place in 2013.

► Flora and Fauna

Objective: Creatively showcase Washington's unique wildlife and colorful wildflowers and seasonal vegetation.

Technique: Exercise Leave No Trace (LNT) practices by keeping a respectful distance from wildlife and not stomping through meadows. Use creative composition and selective depth of field to emphasize your subject. Use a tripod for sharp focus, and remove distracting intrusions.

Encountering wildlife and unique wildflowers while you're hiking can be an exhilarating experience, but capturing that moment in a photo can be challenging. Dealing with living subjects is a lot different than taking a picture of a stationary mountain. But Kristen Elwell makes it look easy. Her spectacular shot of a mountain goat in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness was selected as the grand prize winner of Northwest Exposure 2013.

WT: Kristen, you snapped your winning photo with a point-and-shoot camera. What advice do you have for photographers with similar setups for capturing great photos?

KE: As much as I love my mirrorless ILC, I firmly believe you don't need an expensive camera to get a beautiful photo. "What kind of camera do you have?" is not necessarily a bad question, but it is often a question that implies that the camera is what made the image beautiful—and not the camera operator. Sure, DSLRs and



ILCs allow you to manipulate a variety of factors to get gorgeous shots, but a camera is really just a tool. The photographer is the artist. Point-and-shoots are not designed for constant aperture and shutter speed adjustments, but composition, lighting and editing can definitely be used and manipulated with a point-and-shoot (or smartphone) in order to create frameable art.

WT: *What tips do you have for hikers looking to capture their own images on trails?*

KE: I've found it to be helpful to hike with patient people. On a beautiful hike, your senses are flooded with constant beauty, and you don't want to pass by spectacular scenes without snapping a few photos simply because you are afraid of extra foot-tapping or heavy sighing. Also, many of my favorite images have been taken as the sun is rising or just before it sets. Long shadows, golden light, tranquil water, brilliant alpenglow, curious critters ... the list could go on forever. There is something magical that happens in the outdoors when the world is fresh and new—or when it is sleepy and still.

Another winner in the NWX Flora and Fauna category is Mokul Soman, who received the first place award in 2014 for his photo of a red fox on Mount Rainier. We asked Mokul what it takes to get noticed for a winning shot in this year's contest.

WT: *Mokul, what tips can you give for photographing animals in their natural habitats?*

MS: Photographing animals in their natural surroundings

involves you leaving your comfort zone and getting into theirs. For me, that involves getting to know the environment and behavior of the animal that I am photographing. You have to communicate to the animal that you are not a threat so it will go about its business as if you are not even there. And as always, keep a safe distance and be patient. Remember, it's about your subject giving you a moment, more than you snatching one from them.

WT: *Are some animals easier to photograph than others?*

MS: Every wild animal is different and so is the difficulty bar to photograph them. Also, complexities depend on how you want to photograph them. I like to get as close as I can to my subjects and that can be quite difficult in most cases. Animals that have been exposed to human presence on a regular basis are obviously easier to photograph. But it's the elusive ones that are more difficult to get close to. That motivates me to go out there and photograph them.

WT: *What advice do you have for photographers looking to improve their skills?*

MS: Stop worrying about the technical aspects and concentrate on finding your voice. Clarity of thought and the reasons behind why you want to be a photographer are what matters. So pick an area in photography that you like and are passionate about, and move past making pretty pictures. There are a lot of stories out there that need to be told through your lens.

► Trailscapes

Objective: Present Washington's stunning scenery as seen only from a hiking trail.

Technique: Go hike. Capture an inspiring scene in Washington's backcountry, utilizing the trail as one of the subjects in your photo. Compose your image in a way that lets the trail lead the viewer into the larger scene. Get additional points for having a hiker in your photo.

Capturing a compelling trailscene is more than just pointing your camera at a mountain and clicking the shutter button. It involves considering many aspects within a scene, including lighting, color and composition. We asked pro photographer and 2013 Northwest Exposure contest judge Randall J. Hodges what it takes to create an attention-grabbing trailscene.

WT: *Randall, what tips can you offer trailscene photographers looking to enter the contest?*

RH: Always carry a tripod and shoot from it whenever possible. For landscapes, shoot a small aperture like f/20 or f/22 and a low ISO like 100 to create longer shutter speeds and better depth of field. Use a circular polarizer during the day to remove reflections and a graduated, split neutral-density filter at sunrise and sunset to balance light between sky and ground. Also, use your timer or a shutter-release so you don't shake the camera when you're shooting.

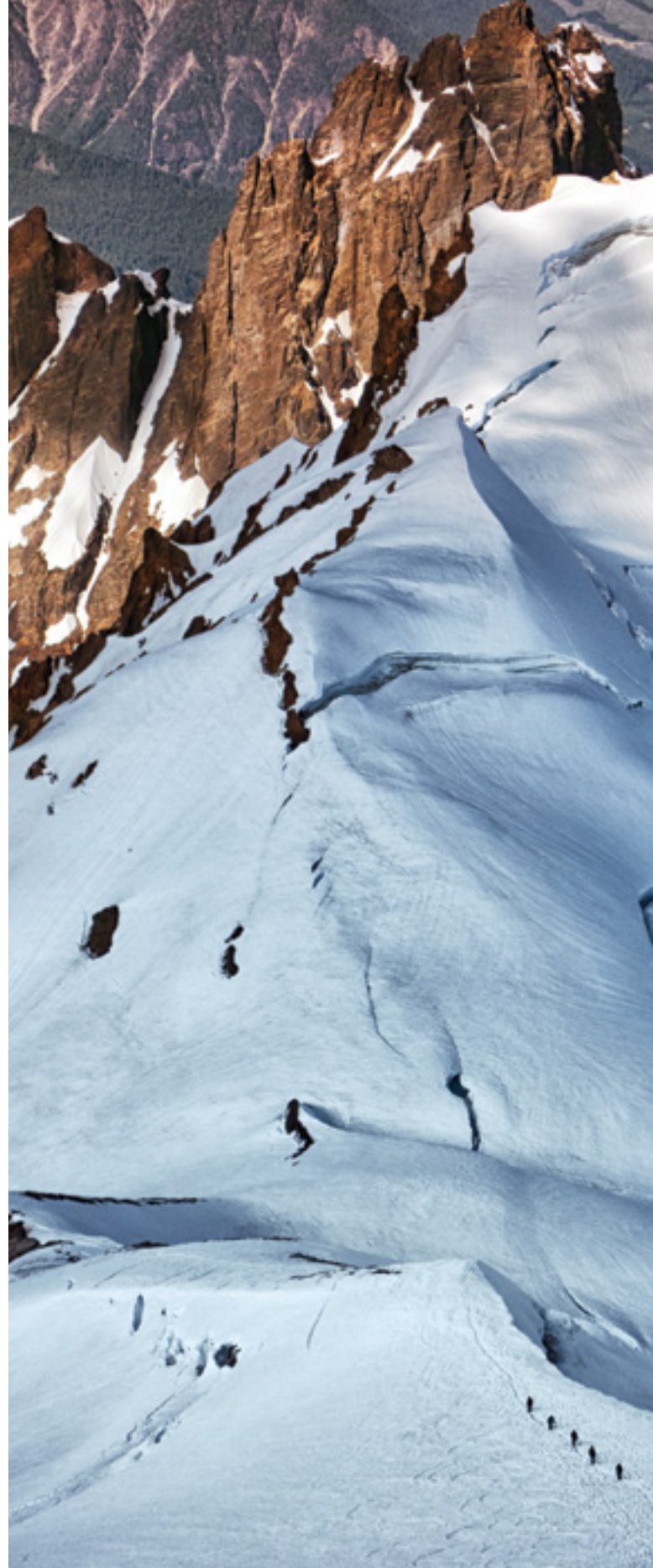
Doug Diekema, a photography hobbyist for more than 40 years, is a regular contributor to *Washington Trails*, a contest winner from 2005 and will be returning this year to help judge the contest for a second time. We asked Doug what he looks for when it comes to judging so many photos.

WT: *Doug, judging the Northwest Exposure photo contest is a big job. How do you differentiate the good photos from the great ones?*

DD: The quality of photos submitted to the contest each year is extraordinarily high. To have a chance of making it into the final few photos, an image has to have nearly perfect exposure, beautiful light, a captivating or interesting composition, no distracting elements and the main subject must be perfectly focused. In addition, the photo really needs to stand apart from the hundreds of other images submitted. There needs to be something about the image that is unique and engages the viewer in a way that the other photos don't.

WT: *If you had to name one thing that photographers can do to impress you this year, what would it be?*

DD: For an image to become a finalist, it must engage the judges emotionally. It needs to make me feel something, invite me into the scene or make me feel like I'm part of a story. It's not enough if it's meaningful to you, the photographer. It has to also make me, the viewer, feel something powerful.



► Hikers in Action

Objective: Display the dynamics of motion in an amazing backcountry setting.

Technique: Focus on the subject of a hiker on trail and use your composition to tell a story about that person's endeavor, from rock-hopping a stream to grinding up a steep climb, traversing a wildflower-laden ridgetop to reaching the pinnacle of a sky-scraping summit.

The act of placing a person into a panoramic scene presents viewers with a perspective that allows them to imagine themselves within that same scene. But it's more than just snapping a photo of someone on a trail. It has to convey their sense of place or movement within the scene. Photographer Lauren Dawkins excels at capturing hikers on trails in stunning settings. One of her photos was recognized as an Editor's Choice selection in 2013, and several of her images have graced the pages of *Washington Trails*. We asked Lauren what the challenges are in capturing photos of people on trail.

WT: Lauren, what do you consider the biggest challenge in photographing the outdoors?

LD: One of the difficult parts of shooting on a hiking or backpacking trip is anticipating all of the variables. When hauling a pack crammed full of clothing, camp equipment and food, all that extra photography gear really starts to add up—and you often only use half of what you bring. Avoid carrying nonessential photo gear by taking a little extra time to research before your trip. Get an idea of what you will likely encounter as far as weather, landscape features and types of resident wildlife, to help determine the type of lenses or filters you'll need. If rain or snow is a possibility, plan how to best protect your gear. Keeping these situations in mind will help you be prepared to capture those perfect shots.

WT: What do you suggest for photographers who want to capture unique scenes with hikers on trails or around camp?

LD: There are so many different elements to incorporate into a shot when you're on trail. From the close-ups with wildflowers to the sweeping panoramic landscape shots, nature provides us with an endless array of photographic features. Keep your camera handy as much as possible, and take some photos as you and your hiking buddies tackle a steep hill, filter water or set up camp. Have fun creating shots with your companions, your surroundings and even with your gear. An artistic picture of your backpack or your hiking boot soles may tell a tale of its own.

LEFT: Arnab Banerjee, recipient of multiple Editor's Choice selections, uses distance and perspective to create an immense sense of scale, as seen in this image on Mount Baker's Roman Wall.

BELOW: By using a tripod, lens polarizer and slow shutter speed, pro photographer Randall J. Hodges created this wispy image of Lewis River Falls, creating an effect called "veiling."



2015



Camp Life

Objective: Show us all the good times in camp, from pitching a tent to roasting s'mores.

Technique: Capture intimate moments like cooking your dinner or picking berries, instructive moments like hanging a bear bag or putting the rain fly on your tent, or fun moments like diving into your favorite swimming hole—just remember to follow LNT!

Camping is fun—from choosing the perfect backcountry tent site to telling ghost stories around the campfire. Capturing both the big and little moments while camping not only leaves you with lasting memories, but when shared with others can illustrate the good times to be had in wild places. Last year, Arnab Banerjee received two Editor's Choice awards for outstanding landscape and trail photos. We asked Arnab what it takes to successfully capture camp life on film.

WT: Arnab, what is the value of capturing photos of people in camp or on trail?

AB: Incorporating people or campsites in a landscape image is a great way to add scale, bring viewers into the image and tell a story. You should think about your strategy to incorporate the human element. For example, to add scale, you don't want the person to be the center point of the image, but more a part of the overall image, where their placement within the image lends a sense of their size in their surroundings (e.g., trees or mountains). On the other hand, if your purpose is to tell a story of how enjoyable a campsite is, you want to capture the facial expression of a person in camp who's enjoying the grand view.

WT: What else should a photographer consider for successful camp and trail photos?

AB: Often, the best images in camp or on trail are not planned but come from spontaneous reactions. So be ready with your camera. When you see a scene unfolding in front of you, you don't want to miss it. For example, as you're hiking, you suddenly see two hikers appear on a ridge in a perfect spot—be ready. Other times, you may want to plan ahead. For backpacking trips, carry a light tripod so that you can shoot during twilight and night. You will need a long exposure to collect all the faint light. I often use my head lamp to paint my tent with light in the dark.



TOP: Getting outdoors is about good times and having fun—even if it's cold and snowy. These happy hikers, captured by Mike Warren, took third place in Northwest Exposure 2014.

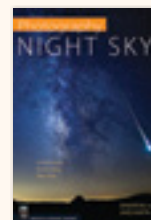
LEFT: Ghost story anyone? Iron Skaggs took second place in the Camp Life category by employing a long exposure to capture the stars, moon and a sparking campfire to create this eerie scene on Rialto Beach.

Northwest Exposure 2015

You can be the next winner in the Northwest Exposure photo contest. Check out some of the cool prizes up for grabs this year.



- **GRAND PRIZE:**
Nikon 1 AW1
- **Mountainsmith**
Swift FX Packs
- **BlackRapid**
Sport R-Straps
- **Manfrotto**
Offroad Trekking Poles
- **Pedco**
UltraPod Grip Tripods
- **Mountaineers Books**
Photography guides



Get more info and details at wta.org/northwestexposure.

NEW: Fun on Trail

Objective: Hiking is fun. Show us how fun!

Technique: There are many moments on trail and in camp that don't fall under a specific category. These are the spontaneous, candid moments that make being in the backcountry such an exciting and enjoyable experience. Show us your trail face!

Next year, WTA is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Part of that celebration will include showing all the good times to be had on Washington's trails. Not only will a select number of images in this new category receive great prizes, but many more will go on to be seen in the pages of *Washington Trails*, on wta.org and much more. You can be a part of the celebration by sharing your fun images from the trail. Exactly what are we looking for? WT's editor, Eli Boschetto, has some suggestions.

WT: Eli, *Fun on Trail* is a new category for NWX. What should photographers be capturing and submitting for this?

EB: So that we can capture the people and personalities of Washington's hikers—and why Washington is such a great place to hike—we really just want to see how much fun people are having outdoors. This category is less about capturing "technically perfect" photos and more about capturing great storytelling photos of having a good time. This can be anything from a selfie on the top of a favorite peak to frolicking on trail with friends or Fido. This is an open category for you to show us how much fun you have while you're outside, so get creative. Anything goes—so long as it's fun, safe and on a trail!

The Northwest Exposure photo contest has already started and runs through October 19, 2015. All photos must be submitted by that date for consideration. Have questions or need more info? Visit wta.org/northwestexposure. Good luck, and we're looking forward to seeing your best photos!



THINGS THAT GO **BUMP** IN THE WOODS

By Charlie Lieu

Men really do need sea monsters in their personal oceans ... An ocean without unnamed monsters would be like sleep without dreams. — John Steinbeck

My head lamp starts flickering as the darkness looms overhead and closes in on me. Panic is tickling the edge of my mind, threatening to take over, but I muster the will to push it back. To drown out the booming silence, I start talking to myself: “You’re fine, Charlie. You’re not lost. You’re still on the trail. You’re gonna catch up to ...”

Without warning, a loud crack echoes in the dark forest behind me. A stench hits my nose—a mixture of gym musk and wet dog. The nearby brush rustles in the still, heavy air. I stop and slowly turn around to meet the gaze of a pair of eyes hanging seven feet above the forest floor.

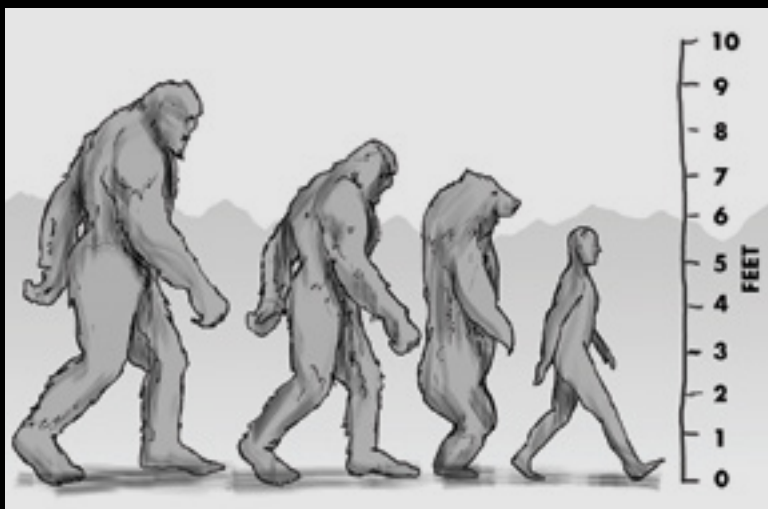
Screaming, I woke up in my tent, and pinched my arm to make sure that I was not still dreaming. “Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out,” I repeated. Cautiously, I peered out from behind my open tent flap, the waning moon dimly illuminating the forest.

There was nothing but trees swaying in the cool breeze.

Fully awake now, I glanced around the inside of my barely lit tent. My copy of *The Sasquatch Seeker's Field Manual* was still folded open to where I had left it when I succumbed to sleep: page 18, with its illustration of two tall, shadowy figures behind glowing eyes, lurking in the dark forest.

Eek! Not going back to sleep tonight.





THE GIGANTOPITHECUS (FAR LEFT), EXTINCT FOR ABOUT 100,000 YEARS, IS THE LARGEST PRIMATE KNOWN TO HAVE EXISTED. THE CHART SHOWS THE RELATIVE HEIGHT OF GIGANTOPITHECUS, SASQUATCH, GRIZZLY BEAR AND HUMAN.

Ten days later, I found myself driving to the Lake City Starbucks in north Seattle. As I closed in on my destination, I saw a familiar image of the tall, ape-like silhouette overhead. “Bigfoot Car Wash,” announced the dark, inky lettering. I chuckled.

Arriving at the establishment, I glanced around and spied the man I was meeting standing in line. David George Gordon’s white hair and wayward beard bore no resemblance to the terrifying Sasquatch. Instead, he seemed to channel Saint Nicholas with his jovial greeting and pleasant manner.

Recently released, *The Sasquatch Seeker’s Field Manual* is Gordon’s 20th book and is a follow-up to his 1992 *Field Guide to the Sasquatch*. His written works range across subjects from edible bugs to the Museum of Flight. In addition to his many published works, Gordon also served as a staff writer for *The Signpost* magazine (predecessor to the current *Washington Trails*) in the early 1980s. After getting our drinks, we sat down for a chat.



LIEU: *How did you become interested in the Sasquatch?*

GORDON: I’m not sure I’m any more interested in the Sasquatch than any other wild thing. All of my books, in their own way, are about human interactions with the natural world. I’m not just writing about animals, but I explore the human relationship with nature. It’s something I’ve been interested in since I was a child.

LIEU: *Sooo ... the book is not really about the Sasquatch?*

GORDON: The book is about citizen science. In general, it’s

a great way to collect lots of data and study things that otherwise wouldn’t get funding for study. Citizen science empowers individuals to contribute to science and broaden their view of scientists beyond those with white lab coats. We are all scientists by nature, with innate curiosity and rational intellect. I’m giving people the skills to get out there and gather meaningful data about the world. I want people to become aware that they can provide valuable contributions so they can make better use of their energy for science if it is something they care about.

The whole aim of the book is for people to go outside and look. I wrote it with the notion that anything you can do to get people more aware of their natural surroundings is a good thing.

LIEU: *How does the Sasquatch play into this?*

GORDON: The Sasquatch is a fun way to deliver all these topics that otherwise would not be very fun. It’s like hiding vegetables in your meatloaf. There’s a lot of science hidden under the guise of “let’s go out to look for a Sasquatch.” People can go out armed with tools and methods, instead of just thrashing and trashing in the woods.

Beyond that, I think the Sasquatch is provocative because it’s a creature that is similar to ourselves. The existence of a mythical ape-man, even as an idea, encroaches on our belief system that we are somehow different than animals. The Sasquatch forces us to think about our place in nature. It forces us to think about our relationship with the wilderness—and our place in it. We need Sasquatches and sea monsters in our collective psyche. It makes our world much more interesting. I think there’s a quote by John Steinbeck that conveys this notion.

LIEU: *What inspired you to write a book like this?*

GORDON: When I wrote the first book, *Field Guide to the Sasquatch*, I didn’t know very many of the Sasquatch experts. After it was published, I went to a conference and met a lot of them. I came away with the sense that it’s a lot of self-taught amateurs. At the time, the biggest name in Sasquatch studies was a retired Canadian post office worker with no scientific training.

Honestly, there was not a lot of coherent science in Sasquatch research: no methodology, no tracking of evidence, no chain of custody, no standardized documentation. I wanted to change that so we can have some hope of figuring out whether the Sasquatch is real or not.

LIEU: *Why now?*

GORDON: I think there’s a movement toward participatory experiences. There’s increasing popularity of ecotourism around cryptozoology called cryptotourism, where people go out searching for “hidden” animals, like the Loch Ness Monster or Bigfoot.

Looking around, there are a lot of books about what we “know” about the Sasquatch (and the natural world in general), but there are not many books that enable people to do it themselves: to get out and find it.

All of my books ... are about human interactions with the natural world ... I explore the human relationship with nature.

Plus, there were a lot of serendipitous factors that pointed me to doing this book. Like moving next to the Bigfoot Car Wash and bumping into an old family friend who happened to love illustrating Sasquatches—and who wound up illustrating my book.

LIEU: *Have you gone out searching for Sasquatch?*

GORDON: I've gone on lots of wilderness outings, but not specifically looking for Sasquatches. If you go through the Bigfoot Field Research Organization's sighting database (bfro.net), you'll find there is no rhyme or reason as to where you might find them. If you think about it, a sighting happens when you have two elements: 1) an observer, and 2) the thing you observe. We only know an animal's range from what people have seen, and we can't always cover an animal's full habitat. To date, there haven't been any methodical studies about the Sasquatch's actual range. I was told that remote thermal springs are the best places to find Sasquatches since they like the heat, but there is no solid evidence to suggest this.

You have to remember that people see evidence in context, and sometimes that skews perceptions. I once heard a statistic that said, "Most sharks attack in less than six feet of water." Of course, that is where people are, so sharks attack humans there. It doesn't mean sharks are only in six feet of water or attack exclusively there.

LIEU: *After all this research, do you have a better idea as to whether the Sasquatch really exists?*

GORDON: I am a fence-sitter. While I wouldn't go to

court with the evidence available on Sasquatches, I do think there is probably something out there. I have talked to a lot of experienced outdoorsmen who are not likely to mistake a rock or bear for something that is ape- or primate-like. There are still mysteries hidden in the wilderness, and we are still discovering new species all the time. It's kind of smug of humans to think that we have seen everything.

LIEU: *How do you think something as big as the Sasquatch has eluded people?*

GORDON: Despite the expansion of human settlements into the wilderness, there are still places that we don't really go, so even very large creatures can hide from humans. For example, a group of experienced scientists was sent into Washington's North Cascades some years back to look for grizzlies. At the time, grizzlies had been absent in the North Cascades for a while, but they thought bears were crossing from Canada into the U.S. through forest corridors. The scientists spent five years tracking the grizzlies. They saw paw prints, scat, scratched trees and pulled-up bark (from bears searching for grub), but they never once saw the bears.

LIEU: *Being a seasoned author, do you think you can predict how successful your book is going to be?*

GORDON: The one thing I learned over the years is that books are like children: you always have a lot of hope for them, but you never really know what will happen. As a purist, I write because I want to teach something to the world, so I do hope that this book serves as a guide to citizen science and inspires people to look at the natural world in a more objective way. Besides that, you just hope your writing will touch people because when it does, it's very gratifying.



Our conversation ended as pleasantly as it began. Passing once again under the shadow of the Bigfoot Car Wash sign, my mind wandered ahead to my weekend, and Gordon's parting words echoed in the hollows between my ears. "If you want to go on a fun trip, it's not a lot of extra stuff to bring with you to go Sasquatch hunting," he said.

I reflected on the checklist of items I would need from *The Sasquatch Seeker's Field Manual*. In fact, in addition to presenting background on the Sasquatch, Gordon outlined all the necessary protocols, from mounting a search to gathering evidence to properly sharing discoveries.

While I still believe that Sasquatch is a myth born of our collective imagination, I decided it wouldn't hurt to try hunting for one on my next outing. Later that evening, while perusing the hiking guide included in *The Sasquatch Seeker's Field Manual*, I circled a few trails that were already on my to-do list.

It seemed Gordon's book did touch at least one Sasquatch skeptic—will it have the same effect on you? ♦

I do think there is probably something out there ... There are still mysteries hidden in the wilderness ...

THE EASIEST WAY TO DOCUMENT ANYTHING YOU OBSERVE OUTDOORS, WHETHER IT'S THE SASQUATCH OR A GRIZZLY PRINT, IS TO CARRY A FIELD JOURNAL.



July 14, 1966



To friends of backpacking:
The first copy of THE SIGNPOST was favorably received - at least by the few people we've talked to since it came out. So we'll try again, and here is the second attempt. We now have two purposes: one, to keep backpackers informed of plans and events and knowledge; second, to discover if there is a general need for an informal news-sharing medium among Mountaineers.
THE SIGNPOST

75¢

Signpost

Sept.-Oct. 1975

and other trail travel.

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A VOICE FOR HIKERS



From printing press to mobile apps: connecting hikers and sharing stories from the trail. | By Loren Drummond

This little newsletter has been an experiment so far, testing a hunch I've had that such a means of communication among walkers is needed. — *The Signpost*, 1966

September 1966. Lyndon Johnson is in the Oval Office, North Cascades National Park won't be established for another two years and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness is still a decade off. In her Lynnwood home, Louise Marshall sits over her typewriter, keys clacking as she records her reflections about the experiment in question, a newsletter she created earlier in the year for a small circle of fellow hikers and backpackers. She records her worry that hikers have no common "signpost" to read about who has traveled the trails before them, no shared place to "scratch a message for others to see."

Within a year, and with the help of a hand-cranked printing press and some volunteers in a little red barn, Marshall's experiment had transformed into a grassroots publication, *The Signpost*. That newsletter eventually grew into the largest statewide hiking organization in the nation, Washington Trails Association, and an even more complete cache of communications tools to help hikers learn the basics, connect with others, advance their skills and advocate for the future of trails. Today, a small, devoted crew of staff and volunteers carries on a modern version of Marshall's original vision, and as a result, WTA members—and hikers all over Washington—can simply check their mailbox, inbox, phone or Web browser to

connect to each other and some of the best information and advice on hiking in our state.

WALKING THE TALK

Contributions wanted: Write up something for *The Signpost* and send it in. Any news and comment of interest to hikers and backpackers. — *The Signpost*, 1966

Since the first *Signpost*, things have changed—an estimated 70 percent of Washington's 7 million residents now use trails, a much larger and more diverse community than in Marshall's day. As the needs of Washington's growing hiking community have grown and changed, WTA has grown and evolved alongside them.

We long ago outgrew our little red barn, and we've traded typewriters for laptops, but maps still hang on the walls, guidebooks stack up on our desks and we track the dust of weekends spent on trail into the office Monday morning. WTA's communications staffers are hikers, all—some fast, some ultra-slow—and, like Marshall, we all love (love) reading and writing about the best hiking spots in the state. But the charge of the communications team at WTA has always been about turning a passion for the outdoors into something greater—a bone-deep responsibility for those trails. And

with so many more people using trails, fostering that sense of stewardship and service is more important than ever.

Serving four million (and growing) people a year with a department of five full-time staff members may seem unfeasible. Technology has helped, but in some ways, we do it the same way that Marshall did. By acting as amplifiers for the community, we turn the work of five into 50.

Hiking Content Coordinator Anna Roth's pace may be well above average, but she couldn't possibly keep tabs on the real-time updates, corrections and additions to our online hiking guide using only her own two feet. She relies on land manager partners across the state, every trip report and update suggestion, plus a team of volunteer contributors to help her. This magazine no longer needs a hand-cranked printing press to land in your mailboxes, but without harnessing the powers of outstanding volunteer writers and award-winning photographers, *Washington Trails* Editor Eli Boschetto wouldn't be able to report in-depth on the history, issues and hiking destinations that WTA members have come to expect and love. Every two months, from a satellite office in Portland, Oregon, he knits together the region's definitive hiking magazine, its rich pages full of trail lore and heart.

When journalists at the *Seattle Times*, the *Everett Herald* or even the *Washington Post* have a question about trail issues or good trails to recommend to their readers, Communications Director Kindra Ramos helps connect them to expert voices and safe, sustainable trail suggestions. Whether walking a reporter down the newly restored Suiattle River Trail or chatting with a brand-new hiker on Instagram, our team of professional writers, editors, photographers and digital strategists spend their days transmitting our passion for trails to the community that will ensure their protection 50 years from now.

YOUR MODERN SIGNPOST

A sign posted on the trail indicates directions and distances, and ... tells us who has passed ... and what (they) found. But always, a signpost conveys information. — *The Signpost*, 1967

Typewriters, phones, photography and the postal service were the cornerstone tools of early *Signpost* editions. But what does a day in the life of a communications staffer at a trails organization look like now? We could be at our desks, scanning Twitter feeds and calling our U.S. Forest Service contacts to track down the latest information on wildfires. We could be editing an article about staying safe while snowshoeing. We read trip reports over coffee and blog about upcoming trail maintenance work parties after lunch. We talk about the very real issues facing trails today—lack of public lands funding, crowded trailheads, pressures on iconic, fragile places—and how to share these stories with our community. We might meet you on a work party, on a summit or at a pub for one of our statewide events, like Trails & Ales or Hike the State. Across all of our channels, we listen, we report, we connect.

Today, *Washington Trails* magazine tells the in-depth stories

behind our trails, delving in detail into the regions and issues a newsletter or blog post just can't match. It lands in the mailboxes of more than 13,000 members as a benefit of supporting WTA, some devoted readers so starved for a whiff of clean mountain air and a Northwest trail community that they receive it as far away as Florida and Australia. It sits on the magazine racks of REI and local bookstores and outfitters around the state.

Online, we strive to connect an even larger community of hikers. New to Washington? You're just as likely to find your new hiking friend on Facebook as you are at your school or office. Wondering how to pack for a Washington winter outing on the coast or who to call when you run across a trail in terrible shape? WTA's digital channels provide hikers with the latest trail news, covering topics as diverse as road access issues, backcountry permits, river fording techniques and Leave No Trace refreshers. Every year, millions visit the website and Trailblazer, our volunteer-built mobile app, to check trip reports and search for seasonal hiking advice. My Backpack accounts on wta.org allow people to save hikes, plan trips and write trip reports. Our digital channels also serve as a listening post so that hikers can ask us questions, alert us to local needs and inform our decisions about where to invest our resources.

When you open your email and see Trail News, Families Go Hiking or an invitation to enter our photo contest in your inbox, our aim is to inspire you to get out and fall in love with your next favorite trail—be it in a backyard city park or far-flung wilderness. In whatever medium you connect with WTA, we hope that the photos of your fellow hikers, the stories of trail volunteers and the information we share about how to help trails will stoke your passion for protecting Washington's trails.

OUR MISSION TO KEEP

The Signpost will feature news of equipment, foods, trail conditions, events of interest to hikers, trip descriptions, and just news of all sorts ... that might interest Northwest hikers and backpackers. — *The Signpost*, 1967

Just like the volunteers who helped Marshall get the first editions of *The Signpost* to press, behind every article or post that pops into your news feed is a crew of WTA staff and incredible volunteers devoted to ensuring the future of trails. We may not be able to predict what the next 50 years will bring—after all, trail funding, climate change, technology and the shift of populations from rural to urban centers are all impacting trails in new ways—but one thing is certain. Behind our cameras and computer screens, we will continue to nurture a community of people who care about trails and each other as much as we do. It's our promise to Louise Marshall—and to you. ♦

Want to volunteer with the WTA communications team? The easiest way to help us, and your fellow hikers, is to write a trip report. If you are looking for more, consider becoming a hiking correspondent or joining our photography team. Just want to send us a suggestion or tip for a story? We're always listening. Learn more at wta.org/connect.

Northwest Exposure

2015

Attention Photographers!

It's time to dust off your lenses, recharge your batteries and grab your extra memory cards—WTA's 13th annual Northwest Exposure photo contest is on!

We have five fun categories sure to suit all photographic styles, interests and abilities:

- TRAILSCAPES
- FLORA AND FAUNA
- HIKERS IN ACTION
- CAMP LIFE
- FUN ON TRAIL

This year's prizes come from great outdoor photography brands, so grab your camera and show us why Washington's trails are second to none. Happy shooting!

BLACKRAPID.



MOUNTAINEERS
BOOKS



Manfrotto

Nikon



Enter your photos by **October 19** for a chance to win great prizes and to be featured in the 2016 *Washington Trails* calendar!

wta.org/northwestexposure



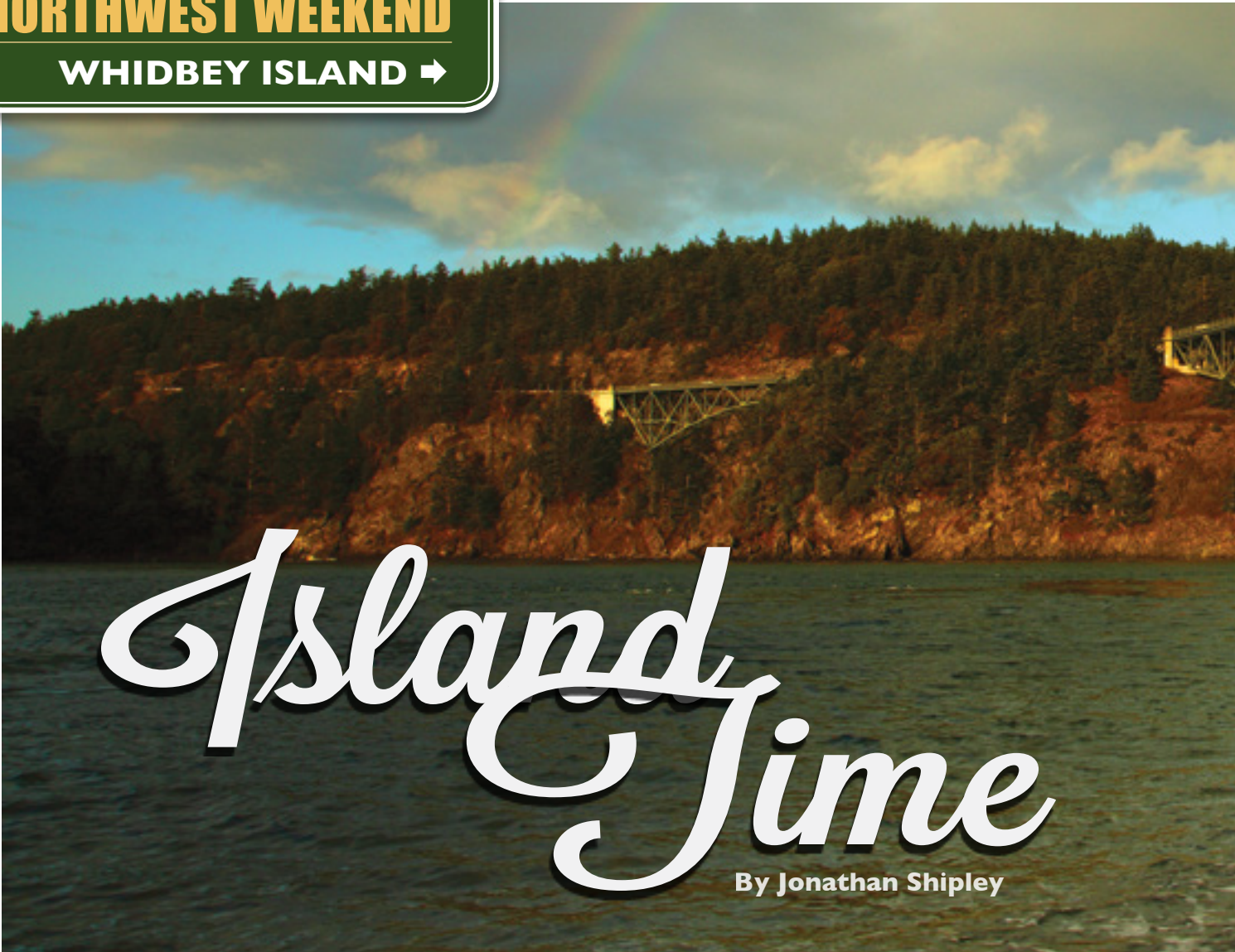
2015 First Place Hikers in Action, by Isaac Gautschi



2015 Third Place Trailscapes, by Jill Xiang Ji

**WIN
THIS!**





Island Time

By Jonathan Shipley

*n*ot far from the mainland is another land. It can be many things: charming—where eclectic shops offer unique finds, from first-edition antiquarian books to locally grown flowers; contemplative—where quiet forests are interrupted only by the singsong hymns of small birds; thoughtful—where long-dead pioneers in ridgetop cemeteries oversee the verdant valley farms they created long ago; and majestic—where wild blue skies gleam over rock-strewn beaches and the blue velvet of the Pacific.



SPREAD: No visit to Whidbey Island is complete without strolling along the seashore at Deception Pass State Park and taking in a view of the Deception Pass bridge. Photo by Randall Hodges.

INSET: Fort Casey State Park offers visitors the chance to explore the fort grounds, take in amazing ocean views, and take a peek inside the historic Admiralty Head Lighthouse. Photo by Anthony Mohr.



Whidbey Island is a place that can be explored a thousand times over without being explored at all. From emerald-crowned forests to chilly beaches and cute small towns to fulgent farmlands, there's plenty to see, plenty to do and plenty of hiking opportunities to get lost in or, perhaps equally, be found in. And with its easy access—from Mukilteo to the south; Deception Pass to the north—there are things to do for those who want to tie up their boots, untie their boats, or simply relax in the back-in-time quiet island vibe, ice cream cone in hand.

DAY ONE: Slow Down

On your first day be prepared to shake off the hustle and bustle of mainland city life and find a softer pace ticking on a slower clock. There's no better way to start than with a stack of pancakes, a stack of bacon and a cup of coffee at **Patty's Eggnest** (pattyseggnestrestaurant.net) in Mukilteo (1), near the ferry harbor. Frequently a King 5 "Best of Western Washington" finalist for best breakfast, this locally owned favorite serves hearty homestyle

meals with a low-key vibe. Try the Elvis French Toast: thick toast fried with peanut butter and bananas and served with bacon. *Thank you very much.*

The ferry ride is a pleasant 30-minute sail across Possession Sound. Once you've disembarked, drive 6 miles to Langley (2). For lunch, grab a slice at **Village Pizzeria** and take your pizza to the picnic tables down by the water, just steps away. After lunch, it's time to get lost in the woods. While most tourists clamor for the state parks, there are spots on the island virtually untouched by anyone but local residents and local wildlife. Just 2.5 miles west of Langley, **Saratoga Woods Preserve** (3; putneywoods.org) offer visitors a network of easy, family- and dog-friendly trails. Meander through second-growth forest adorned with salal and fern, or wander up to **Waterman Rock**, a huge erratic (boulder) left by glaciers millennia ago. You can get a preserve map at Langley's Historical Museum or visitor center.

EXPLORE LANGLEY: There's a 1930s-era movie theatre, jewelers, coffee houses, bookstores (one is particularly well-known for its stock of first editions specializing in 1920s Paris, poetry, Northwest history and signed astronaut material), art galleries and more.



Go for a hike, stay for the views at Fort Ebey State Park; For breakfast, lunch or a quick caffeine fix, stop into Useless Bay Coffee Co; Treat yourself at Kapaw's Iskreme.

Photos by Ethan Welty, John Brew and Jonathan Shipley.

Once your legs are thoroughly stretched, head back to Langley for a nice dinner. **Prima Bistro** (primabistro.com) offers French-inspired Northwest fare in a cozy atmosphere. Wild boar ragout is on the menu, as is trout grenobloise. For a memorable dining experience, make a reservation at the **Inn at Langley** (innatlangley.com), where Chef Matt Costello prepares fresh, seasonal meals with fine wine pairings. Quite the experience, dinners can last up to three hours. After dinner, take a sunset stroll along the waterfront at **Seawall Park**.

DAY TWO: Island Life

On day two, you'll hit up some of the most popular parks Whidbey has to offer. Before you head out, start with good ol' diner food at **Braeburn Restaurant** (braeburnlangley.com). This area favorite uses only fresh, local ingredients and serves up tasty dishes like breakfast bread pudding, apple-stuffed French toast and biscuits and gravy.

BREAKFAST TO GO: For a quicker start, hit up **Useless Bay Coffee Co.** (uselessbaycoffee.com), brewer of small-batch, artisanally roasted coffee. Grab a scone, muffin or sandwich and enjoy it there, or take it with you on your day's adventures

After breakfast, your first stop is just 20 minutes from Langley: **South Whidbey Island State Park** (4; parks.wa.gov). With commanding views of the Puget

Sound and Olympic Mountains, this 347-acre park also has opportunities for bird watching, clamming and crabbing, and offers 3.5 miles of hiking trails in old-growth forest and along a stretch of unspoiled saltwater shoreline. For a morning warm-up, stroll through forests of cedar and pine, with Admiralty Inlet right there. These trails are perfect for families or folks with pets.

For lunch, take a brief interlude in **Coupeville** (5). Try the cozy **Knead & Feed** (kneadandfeed.com). It serves tasty homemade sandwiches, and the clam chowder comes highly recommended. After lunch, go for an ice cream at **Kapaw's Iskreme**. Their scoops are huge and the colorful flavors are varied. Then head out to some of the most beautiful landscapes Whidbey Island has to offer.

Just 2 miles north of town is the **Sunnyside Cemetery**, a pioneer burial ground established in 1865. Complete with blockhouse, it is the final resting place of many of Whidbey's luminary residents of the past, including the Ebey family, the Lovejoys and the Coupes. Head west along the prairie to **Ebey's Landing** (6; nps.gov/ebia), now a national historic preserve, perched majestically on a bluff over Puget Sound. From here, a 5.5-mile trail offers panoramic views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, birding opportunities, chances to see deer and more. With just a slight elevation gain (around 260 feet, give or take), it's perfect for hardy children too. Half of the hike is high above the beach, snaking along

the bluff with forest nearby. The other half is along the beach itself. The only sounds reaching your ears are the wind and the water. Depending on the season, flowers can roar across the bluffs and whale sightings can be fairly common.

The next destination is **Fort Casey State Park** (7; parks.wa.gov), just a few miles south. There is plenty of parking and much to see. Here, you can take in sweeping views of Admiralty Inlet and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, go up inside a lighthouse and explore the cavernous bowels of WWII gun battery placements. Not a hiker's park—there are less than 2 miles of hiking trails—Fort Casey is more a wonderland for exploration and historical discovery, where you can learn about the fort's construction in 1897 and its mission to stand guard over the sound, spin your way to the top of **Admiralty Head Lighthouse** (first lit in 1903 but since deactivated) or simply fly a kite in the giant field outside the fort. Whatever your activity, it's an afternoon well-spent.

AFTERNOON SNACKS: Drive back to Coupeville for treats at **Emily's Sweets & Treats**, or go for a pint at **Toby's** (tobysuds.com) above the shore of Penn Cove where you can have fish and chips, chili and local craft beers.

Next stop: **Fort Ebey State Park** (8; parks.wa.gov). Whether you're packing a surfboard, mountain bike, paragliding gear or sturdy hiking boots, this is the destination for everyone. With 25 miles of biking trails and 28 miles of hiking trails (ask a park ranger for a map), this 645-acre park was once home to Fort Ebey, a coastal defense during WWII. Now, it is forest and beach and old fort grounds open for exploring. This park showcases some glorious sunsets, so be sure to stay and catch one. The best way to view the sunset is from the Bluff Trail—4 miles of shoreline, mountains, water and sunlight. Finish the day back in Coupeville with a late supper at the **Oystercatcher** (oystercatcherwhidbey.com) for a selection of fine seafood dishes.

DAY THREE: Deception Pass

Not to be outshone by all you've done so far, your final day on the island will be spent at one of the prettiest parks in the state: **Deception Pass** (9). Start your day with a donut. Or two. Or a dozen. The place to go is **Donut Master** in Oak Harbor. You'll find bear claws as big as a bear's claw, buttermilk donuts that'll stick to your ribs, and—do those donuts have bacon on them? Yes. Yes, they do. If pastries aren't your thing, Oak Harbor (a town of 22,000 incorporated way back in 1915 and the largest town on Whidbey Island) has plenty of breakfast options. Try **Island Cafe** (islandcafefamilydining.com), which features a full breakfast menu. Country fried steak? If you insist.

Fueled up for the day, drive north 10 miles to Deception Pass State Park (parks.wa.gov). Established in 1923, Deception Pass, at 4,134 acres, offers 14.6 miles of saltwater beach and 6.4 miles of freshwater shoreline along three lakes. Rugged cliffs meet the turbulent waters of Deception Pass here. Whether you like shorelines (kayaking, perhaps?), mountains, forests or sunlit views, this is the place for it all. And there's no better way to take it in than by trail, with more than 38 miles of hiking trails, plus biking trails and equestrian trails. For a 5-mile round-trip journey, try the hike from the Deception Pass Headlands to Rosario Head to Lighthouse Point. It's a walk with great water views, madrone trees and droops of hemlock, with soaring eagles overhead.

Begin your return to "normal life" by crossing the dramatic bridge from Whidbey Island to Fidalgo Island. Take a few moments to walk out onto the bridge and admire the trees, the flitting nuthatch birds and the kelp swaying in the churning waters below. Contemplate your weekend of "island life." It's doubtful that in just a few days you had time to do it all. Cast your gaze skyward to the gulls drifting overhead. Maybe you should start thinking about your next island getaway. ♦



Where to Stay

HISTORIC LODGE: Captain Whidbey Inn

Whether you stay in the inn or in one of the cabins, feel the day's stresses float off in a place surrounded by forests and hugging charming Penn Cove. (captainwhidbey.com)

B&B: Anchorage Inn

Overlooking downtown Coupeville, and with stunning water views, the Victorian B&B harkens back to the city's founders—well-to-do merchants and sea captains. (anchorage-inn.com)

CABINS: Guest House Log Cottages

Tranquility you will find. Romantic and secluded, the cottages include hot tubs, fireplaces, kitchens and more. (guesthouselogcottages.com)

CAMPING: Deception Pass State Park

With three campgrounds to choose from, Cranberry is the largest with 234 sites. Close to all the attractions, it opens seasonally and reservations are recommended. (parks.wa.gov)

Call them fastpacks. Call them summit packs. The important thing is that they minimize weight while not compromising performance. Whether it's from your car or from your basecamp, you want to ascend (and descend) at a comfortable pace, nimbly across uneven surfaces, and not be hampered by a bulky pack that weighs you down or doesn't support your load. Here are our favorite packs for tackling big peaks from the trail, or the trailhead.

CHOOSING A LIGHTWEIGHT PACK:

- ❑ **Capacity:** For quick outings or summit side trips, you don't want to carry anything you don't need—but should still carry all of your Ten Essentials. Choose a pack size that will accommodate the gear you already have.
- ❑ **Features:** You don't need a lot of features in a summit pack, but a few are nice. Gear attachments for trekking poles, bottle pockets and a small zipper pocket for keys, phone and wallet are good things to look for.
- ❑ **Support:** Structural support means adding weight. If you're peak-bagging from a trailhead, you can get away with a little more. If you're side-tripping off of a multiday trek, this only adds weight and bulk in your larger pack. Consider what you need to be comfortable, but what won't weigh you down.

Lighten



Perfect for adding a summit pack to any long-distance trek, the **Osprey Ultralight Stuff Pack** (left) and **Sea to Summit Ultra-Sil Daypack** (right) are two of the smallest, lightest options available.

Packables

For long, multiday treks, packing along a small daypack is extremely handy for quick, peak-bagging side trips, or for exploring from basecamp. Here are two lightweight, compact options that are so tiny we challenge you not to carry one.

UBER-LITE: Sea to Summit Ultra-Sil Daypack

There's small and light, and then there's "you've-gotta-be-kidding-me" small and light. The Ultra-Sil Daypack definitely falls into the latter category. We're talking so small—just 2.4 ounces and about the size of a tennis ball—that it comes with a key ring attachment! Unpacked, however, this little beauty turns into a 20-liter, water-resistant daypack that's perfect for carrying your lunch, jacket and other essentials on any quick trip when you want to leave your big pack in camp. \$30

POCKET PACK: Osprey Ultralight Stuff Pack

Water bottle pocket: check. Zippered stash pocket: check. Breathable, air mesh harness: check. Weighs just 3.2 ounces and packs into its own tiny storage pocket: check! This packalong summit pack is big on features and small in your pack—until you open it up. Then you have 18 liters of storage space for carrying along everything you need to bag a lofty summit, or head down to the lake for lunch and a nap. When you're done, just stuff it back in its pocket and you'll never notice it's there. \$35

Your Load



For short daytrips or longer summit bids, from the car or from the camp, load up your gear in one of these lightweight packs for fast travel. The **Gregory Miwok** (left) and **Klymit Stash** (top left) have plenty of room for all your essentials, while the **Arc'teryx Cierzo** (top right) and Editor's Choice **Black Diamond Nitro** (right) can carry more on longer outings.

Good to Go

When you want to just throw the essentials in a pack and head out for a quick grinder up your favorite local hill, you don't need a lot of space. Here are a couple small, innovative and feature-packed daypacks to help you get out and go.

THE ORGANIZER: Gregory Miwok 18

If you don't want to carry a lot, but what you do carry you want to keep organized, then the Miwok was made just for you. With 18 liters of storage space, this little pack boasts eight fully-functional pockets in a sleek design for light and fast outings. Stash your phone and snacks in the waist pockets, your keys and wallet in the zippered interior pocket, your essentials in the main compartment and your rain gear in the quick-access exterior pocket—and there are still three more pockets for you to fill up! \$99

GET SOME AIR: Klymit Stash 18

The downside with many summit packs is that they don't offer much structural support. Klymit found a way around that by making the Stash's back support as light as air—literally! This simple, lightweight pack—with a large main compartment and small exterior pocket—employs an Air Frame to give it structure and support and keep the weight to a minimum. Just give it a few pumps to inflate the back support to your liking and go. Deflated, you can roll it, stuff it and carry it on longer trips. \$60

High Tech

For longer trails and higher peaks, you need a lightweight pack that can manage more gear without adding more weight. Here are two choice options. One is light and simple, one is feature-packed—both will help you move fast.

FAST PACKING: Arc'teryx Cierzo 25

When you don't need every item in its own place, but want a sleek, lightweight packbag that won't hold you back, the Cierzo is the ticket. This roomy, 25-liter sack weighs in just under a pound, and sports a lid pocket, small internal pocket, and external gear loops and bungee for lashing on poles and rain gear. You can even remove the lightweight back support and roll it up for packing along on longer treks. This pack is quick to load and quicker to go, so you're spending more time on trail. \$99

ALL-PURPOSE: Black Diamond Nitro 22

Whether you want to dayhike a long trail, scramble up a rocky peak, or pedal down some sick singletrack, you can do it all with the Nitro. Start by organizing your gear with smart internal and external pockets. Slip your hydration bladder into the external sleeve—a favorite feature. Then go play! The reACTIVE suspension system works with your own movement to keep your load balanced and comfortable, while the OpenAir back panel keeps you cool, no matter what your activity. \$120

Light It Up

As summer comes to an end, and so do the long hours of warm daylight, we need to pack along a little extra gear to continue enjoying our favorite front- and backcountry camps into the autumn season. This is the time when camp lighting becomes a necessity for setting up tents, cooking meals and scouting for bear bag-hanging trees when the sun has finished its day's work, perhaps before we hikers have. Well, you don't need to lug around that giant propane-powered lantern any more. Here's a selection of compact and efficient lighting accessories for any, and every, camper.

CAMP LIGHTING TIPS:

- ▶ **Head lamps:** Look for models with multiple lighting modes. Floodlights are good for illuminating wide areas, while spotlights are good for cooking and setting up your tent.
- ▶ **Backup:** Pack along extra batteries for every piece of tech you carry on trail. If your item doesn't use traditional batteries, consider packing a small USB battery pack.
- ▶ **Pack Safely:** Outdoor electronics are designed for exposure. However, the combination of dirt and moisture with electronic units is not a good one. Keep your electronics safe in a ziplock bag or roll-top drybag.

HANDHELDS: Ember / Buckshot Pro

There's nothing quite as handy as a good old-fashioned flashlight. Well, today's flashlights are anything but old-fashioned. The **Black Diamond Ember** (\$50) is a 150-lumen powerhouse that's small enough to be carried in any pack, anywhere. But that's just the half of it. The rechargeable Li-Ion battery also serves as a mobile USB charger for juicing up your smartphone or other device. Want more out of your flashlight? The **Outdoor Tech Buckshot Pro** (\$80) features a miniature speaker for playing tunes from your smartphone via a wireless bluetooth connection. Designed for the rugged outdoors, it can be attached to your pack for hiking, or mounted to your handlebars as a headlight for biking.



HEAD LAMPS: Sync / Tikka Plus

When setting up tents in the dark, or perhaps scouting for a private moment in the bushes, you need some hands-free lighting—and that's where a head lamp becomes a true asset. For a simple, reliable head lamp, the **Princeton Tec Sync** (\$30) will light your way with 90 lumens of lighting power. It features an innovative power dial for selecting the lighting mode you want—especially handy while wearing gloves. For more power and versatility, the redesigned **Petzl Tikka Plus** (\$40) emits up to 140 lumens of lighting energy in several modes, including spot, flood and red night vision options. The Tikka Plus has been a long-time favorite of WT's editor.



TENT LIGHTS: Moji / Alki

You don't need a lot of light in your tent—just enough to read by. That's what makes these little portables so sweet. Comparable to similar lamps 2x and 3x the price, the **Black Diamond Moji** (only \$20!) is a durable little dome lamp that puts out 100 lumens of light to help you get situated in your tent, then curl up and read a few pages before bedtime. For a little versatility in your tent lamp, the double-duty **UCO Alki** (\$25) serves as a pocket flashlight in retracted mode, and a dome lamp in extended mode. With a shock-cord hanger that attaches to gear loops, as well as tent poles and small branches, this extra-bright 150-lumen light will help you get all your after-dark chores done.



CAMP LIGHTING: Warrior / NanoGrid

Nothing lights up a camp like a traditional lantern. But like flashlights, lanterns have come a long way from the traditional. The **Eureka! Warrior 230** (\$60) casts up to 230 lumens of light across your campsite—and you can control its operation by remote. For an alternative to common camp lighting, string up the **BioLite NanoGrid** (\$110). This unique lighting system employs the rechargeable, 250-lumen **PowerLight** base torch and powerbank (with up to three smartphone charges!) with a set of 150-lumen **SightLight** hanging lamps. And you can connect up to four SightLight strings to illuminate your entire camp however you like for maximum effect and efficiency.



WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS PICTURE?

(besides the top of the mountain.)

ANSWER: YOU

Get in the picture! Pick up *MAP 332S - Mount St Helens National Volcanic Monument*, brand new for 2015.

Waterproof, tear resistant, ultralight, solar powered, and just mapped by Green Trails boots on the ground crews in 2014. Available at select bookstores and all the best outdoor stores.



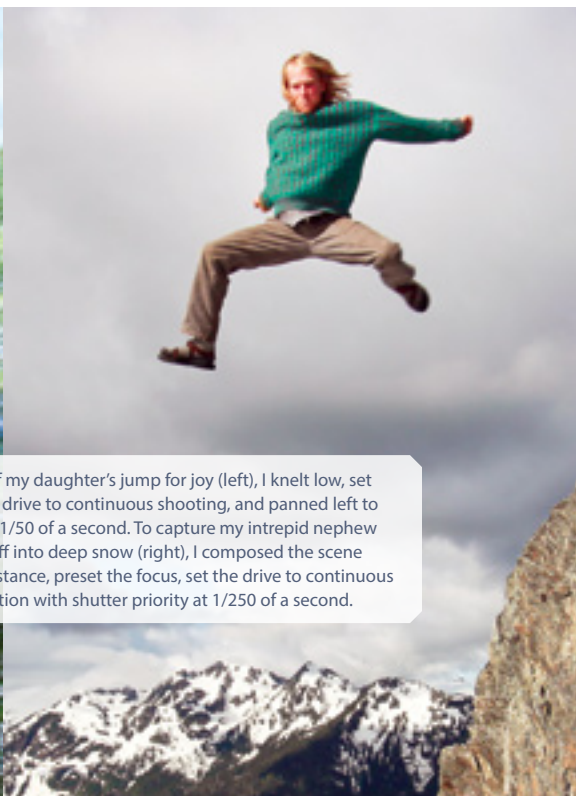
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We love these places

TRAIL MIX

Camera Bag

By Buff Black



To capture the kinetic spirit of my daughter's jump for joy (left), I knelt low, set autofocus to servo mode and drive to continuous shooting, and panned left to right using shutter priority at 1/50 of a second. To capture my intrepid nephew jumping off a 15-foot-high cliff into deep snow (right), I composed the scene with Mount Herman in the distance, preset the focus, set the drive to continuous shooting, and stopped the action with shutter priority at 1/250 of a second.

Capturing Outdoor Action

Whether it's a daring feat or family fun—or both at the same time!—capturing life's action-packed moments is a worthy challenge. Sometimes they only happen once, so be ready. Sure, you can use the sports mode on your camera. But to increase your creative control, here are some tips for bringing home evocative and energetic images.

1. Gain Your Composure While the subject of outdoor action photography will be a person (or other creature) in motion, compose your subject against an interesting background, such as peaks or trees. And look for an interesting perspective. For example, if your subject is jumping, kneel or lie low with your camera so the sense of lift is accentuated.

2. Focus on Focusing While creative blur can be interesting, an action shot that's out of focus rarely is. To help put your moving subject into focus, you can use servo autofocus mode. This mode is made to continuously track and focus on moving subjects. Servo mode can be especially helpful if a fast-moving subject is coming at you, requiring constant, split-second refocusing. But, servo can still miss the focus, because it takes time to track and focus, and sometimes it can't keep up. An alternative, especially if your subject will be predictably traversing across the frame (not approaching or receding), is to preset the focus at the right distance. Before the action starts, autofocus on the area where your subject will be traveling through the frame, then turn on manual focus to lock the focus where you want it. Once set, your camera won't have to track and focus and can immediately start taking pictures when you push the shutter button.

3. Burst on the Scene Unlike stationary landscape photography, action photography requires bursts of multiple

frames. To do this, set your drive mode to continuous, the icon with the superimposed rectangles. Depending on your camera and storage card, continuous mode allows you to capture up to eight frames per second. In sports and wildlife photography, the photographers' adage "spray and pray" is never more applicable.

4. Freeze the Action For some adventure shots, you'll want your subject to be crisply frozen in time. To accomplish stop-action, you can use shutter priority mode. Start with at least 1/250 of a second, but the freezing is better between 1/500 to 1/1000 or more. Another option is to use aperture priority mode and set the aperture to wide-open, represented by the smallest f-stop number, such as 4.0 or 2.8. Like the dilated human iris with a large pupil, a wide-open aperture will let in as much light as possible, allowing the shutter speed (the "blink") to be as fast as possible. In lower light, be sure to crank up the ISO (the sensor's light sensitivity) too.

5. Panning for Gold For other adventure shots, you may want to experiment with motion artifact to create a blurred background that energizes the image. To do this, practice smoothly panning in the same direction and speed as your active subject, often horizontally. This is best done utilizing a tripod. Start by using shutter priority mode set between 1/30 and 1/60 of a second. The goal is to get a fairly sharp subject, especially a person's face, set against a streaked and motion-filled backdrop. Be patient though. This kind of panning, just like for the precious metal, results in a lot of photographic silt. Keep at it to sift out the golden shots.

Got action? Maneuver your camera to compose, focus, burst, freeze or pan—and capture it! Then enter your best action shots in the **Hikers in Action** category in this year's Northwest Exposure photo contest for a chance at great prizes!

Northwest forests are teeming with life—much of which may go overlooked or unseen. On your next hike, look out for the little things and discover something new on your favorite trails.



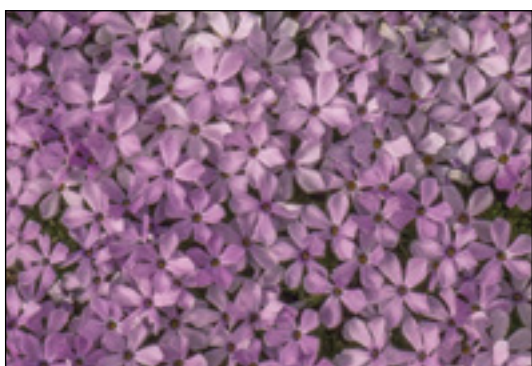
BIRD: Ruby-crowned Kinglet

If you see a tiny songbird with a white-and-black wing bar and chartreuse-colored wings in a thick evergreen forest, you have probably found a ruby-crowned kinglet. While their name implies that these birds have red coloration upon their small heads, this is not the case. In fact, only the males have a ruby crown, which stays hidden unless he becomes agitated or excited. These tiny birds are known for their large egg clutches, producing upwards of 12 eggs in a single nest. During the day, the ruby-crowned kinglet hunts for ants, beetles and spiders to eat. While hikers might need to consume 2,000 to 2,500 calories a day, it has been said that the metabolic rate of the ruby-crowned kinglet allows the little bird to eat just 10 calories for the entire day.



BEAST: Golden Mantled Ground Squirrel

Whatever you do, don't call it a chipmunk. They take great offense at mistaken identity. If you've been hanging out in the high country lately, you may have seen one of these engaging little critters and thought you were looking at a chipmunk. It's easy to do since the color patterns closely resemble that of his smaller cousin. The two main differences are the lack of stripes on the squirrel's face and their larger size, which can be more than 4 inches longer and 8-12 ounces heavier than a chipmunk. Like chipmunks, golden-mantled ground squirrels keep food in its cheek pouches and can often be spotted trotting back to his dirt burrows with a mouthful of delicious berries, nuts, insects or seeds. And they aren't shy! Hold on to your gorp or you might find one scurrying through your food bag.



BLOOM: Spreading Phlox

When you kick back on rocks in the high country, it's not unusual to be sitting near the common rock-garden plant, spreading phlox. As noted by its name, this flowering ground cover creeps its way across rocky slopes, stone ridgelines and boulder fields. The sweetly scented flowers can vary from light blue to purple to white to pink. Interestingly, the word "phlox" comes from the Greek word meaning "flame" or "fire," which might be the result of someone's creative imagination if they noted it overcoming hillsides with bright blooms. Butterflies are often drawn to the colorful plant for a sip of nectar, while deer tend to leave it alone, giving it even better odds of thriving in its short growing season. This plant is quite common and is found in gravel or sandy soils at almost every elevation.

Photos by Tami Asars



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Get Some *Air*

Go for elevation. Try these 10 wow-packed summit and ridge hikes for big workouts and even bigger views!

HIKE IT: Cathedral Rock

DISTANCE: 9 miles, RT

ELEVATION GAIN: 2,200 ft

ELEVATION PEAK: 5,600 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass

DOGS: Leashed

MAP: Green Trails 176



1 CATHEDRAL ROCK *A steady set of switchbacks through old-growth forests, followed with a pleasant romp through wildflower meadows, rewards you with alpine lakes and views of this mammoth rock spire.*

The hike generously begins as a flat and winding trail through the forest but quickly turns into a relentless series of switchbacks. After 2 miles of uphill and 1,100 feet of elevation gain, the grade eases for a stretch—and you’ve only reached the halfway point. At the cleverly named Trail Creek Trail, veer right on the Cathedral Pass Trail. Push on for another 0.5 mile to Squaw Lake, where the backcountry camping is good and the views are even better.

The second half of the trail is 2 more miles and 1,000 more feet of elevation—this is where the trail gets interesting. The scene transitions from condensed old-growth forest to open and lush alpine meadows, replete with wildflowers and shallow alpine lakes. At 4.2 miles you’ll hit the intersection with the Pacific Crest Trail. This point makes an ideal rest stop and turnaround point, with the impressive Cathedral Rock taking center stage.

BIG VIEW: Bagging the summit of Cathedral Rock requires technical climbing skills, but you can bag a sweet view of this impressive spire by continuing to the camp area at Polly’s Pond and ascending a portion of the Mount Daniel climber’s path.



INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/cathedral-rock

TRAILHEAD: From I-90 east of Snoqualmie Pass, take exit 80 and drive 16 miles north on SR 903, through Roslyn and Ronald, to Salmon La Sac. At the fork in the road, veer right and proceed down the bumpy, gravel Cle Elum Valley Rd (FR 4330). Continue, passing Tucquala Lake, to the trailhead at the end of the road.

Hike by Kristen Sapowicz; photo by Doug Diekema

2 **BALD MOUNTAIN** *This rough-and-tumble trail climbs through a variety of landscapes—forests, meadows, talus slopes and alpine lakes—before reaching the rocky summit of Bald Mountain.*

The Walt Bailey Trail was spearheaded by the trail's namesake, a Civilian Conservation Corps veteran who, at age 73, began building the trail in 1991. One of the more challenging trails on the Mountain Loop Highway, it requires you to be prepared for mud, rocks and roots—however, the challenge is worth it. The payoff is incredible views, wildflower- and berry-filled meadows, quaint alpine lakes and common wildlife sightings.

Begin upward through cedar and hemlock into the Morning Star Natural Resource Conservation Area. After 1 mile, the trail descends into a meadow and meanders around tarns and across small streams. Cairns mark the way through a couple of rocky avalanche chutes. Soon after, the trail heads up through the forest again on steep, rough tread.

At just over 3 miles, reach the Cutthroat Lakes, dotting the heather meadows beneath the rocky summit of Bald Mountain. Stick to the widest trail, avoiding the network of social trails around the lakes, and climb to the junction with the Bald Mountain Trail. Head right and crest a ridge offering expansive views to the south, including Spada Lake. The trail continues around the south side of Bald Mountain, eventually petering out before the final scramble to the summit. The 360-degree views from this vantage point extend from Mount Rainier to Whitehorse Mountain, from Mount Pugh to Mount Pilchuck, and everything in between.

STAY ON TRACK: Many social trails braid the upper meadows. Use a map and compass to stay on the correct path, which climbs to a junction on the south side of the summit before running out just below the final scramble to the top.



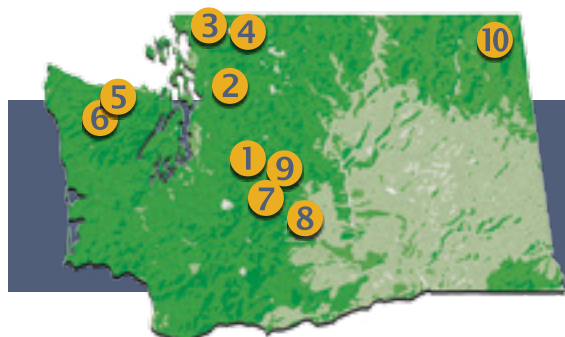
DISTANCE: 10 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 2,300 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 4,800 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 110

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/walt-bailey-to-bald-mountain

TRAILHEAD: From Granite Falls, follow the Mountain Loop Hwy for approximately 18 miles, turning right onto Mallardy Rd (FR 4030), just before the red bridge. Drive this mostly paved road for 1.4 miles and turn right on gravel FR 4032 for 5.5 miles to the trailhead at road's end.

Hike by Lindsay Leffelman; photo by Jason Neuerburg



3 EXCELSIOR PEAK *This grueling trail rewards determined hikers with meadows of flowers and berries, as well as magnificent views of Mount Baker and surrounding peaks.*

With your first glance at the trailhead, you will quickly realize that you have your work cut out for you. As you start climbing, you will quickly be immersed in hemlock, cedar and fir forest, climbing switchback after switchback. If the day is warm, you'll be happy for the shade. Just as you begin to wonder if the switchbacks will ever end, the trail opens up into a meadow full of flowers in early summer or lots of berries in late fall.

The trail then forks—east to the High Divide and Welcome Pass and north to Damfino Lakes. To claim Excelsior Peak, head east on the High Divide Trail for about 1 mile to a well-traveled and easily identifiable boot trail that leads up the east flank to the summit, where you'll be treated to one of the best views in the North Cascades: Mount Baker, Mount Shuksan, Borderline Peaks, Goat Mountain and the mountains of British Columbia. Excelsior!



DISTANCE: 9.2 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 3,900 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 5,700 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 13

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/excelsior-peak

TRAILHEAD: From Bellingham, drive east on SR 542 to the town of Glacier. Continue 7.5 miles past the town to the trailhead parking lot on the left side of the road.

Hike by Mike Morrison; photo by Buff Black

4 TABLE MOUNTAIN *A short-but-steep summit climb from the Artist Point parking lot, Table Mountain pays out in huge views of Mounts Baker and Shuksan.*

With its easy-access trailhead, this trail is often crowded on weekends—but with views like this, can you blame everyone? Begin at the western end of the Artist Point parking area, where a trailhead sign marks the way. The trail switchbacks up the eastern face of the mesa-like mountain, gaining 500 feet in half a mile. Take care, as the trail is steep with loose rocks underfoot.

After reaching the summit, the views are immediate and breathtaking. Mount Shuksan's craggy peak is seen to the east, while Mount Baker dominates the western skyline, earning its indigenous name Kulshan, "the great white one." The trail winds along the backbone of Table Mountain for a mile to its western end. With plenty of great spots for lunch or a snack, choose either a small mountain lake or cairn-decorated rock field. The trail ends with views of the Chain Lakes Trail and snowy Ptarmigan Ridge beyond. Return the way you came.



DISTANCE: 3 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 560 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 5,700 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Not recommended
MAP: Green Trails 14

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/table-mountain

TRAILHEAD: From Bellingham, drive east on SR 542 for 59 miles to the end of the road at the parking area and trailhead at Artist Point.

Hike by Rachel Wood; photo by Brandon Fralic



CARRY A TRIPOD: If you're a summit snapper, pack along a lightweight tripod with a panning handle. This can help you take smooth, clean panorama photos and avoid blurry, handheld shots.

5 MAIDEN PEAK *Enjoy expansive views of Olympic and Cascades mountains, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Port Angeles and Vancouver Island from airy Maiden Peak.*

Begin at the Deer Park ranger station and descend on an old roadbed through stands of subalpine fir and lodgepole pine. Past the roadbed, the trail traverses a series of meadows and then ascends steeply toward Green Mountain. Views improve as you gain elevation. At 2 miles, reach a saddle that looks out at Port Angeles, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Vancouver Island.

Beyond the saddle, ascend through stands of subalpine fir. Views of Blue Mountain and Deer Park are behind. At 2.5 miles, enter a grassy plain and continue climbing to a broad, open meadow. Views now include Mount Baker and Glacier Peak in the Cascades and the Needles and Grand Ridge in the Olympics.

On an outcrop of sandstone and shale, the trail travels around a rocky peak where the Cameron Glaciers, Grand Lake and Valley, and Elk Mountain come into view. Juniper dots the meadows as the trail continues to a saddle next to Maiden Peak.

If you're comfortable doing so, depart off trail and begin the 300-foot scramble on shale to the top of Maiden Peak. Take care not to damage the fragile plants along the way. Atop the summit, exercise caution while taking in the 360-degree views—the northeast slope drops sharply to the Maiden Lake basin.

HIKE MORE: Extend your hike by continuing on the Grand Ridge Trail to Elk Mountain at about 5.6 miles. Here the views are identical to that of Maiden Peak but expand farther to include Mount Olympus and lower peaks such as Christie, Meany, Ferry, Stephen and Carrie.



INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/grand-ridge

TRAILHEAD: From Sequim, drive 12 miles west on US 101. Turn right on Deer Park Loop and right again onto Deer Park Rd. Continue 16 miles to trailhead parking.

Hike and photos by Kelsie Donleycott



HIKE IT: Maiden Peak

DISTANCE: 7 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,600 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,430 ft

PERMIT: Not Required
DOGS: Not permitted
MAP: Green Trails 135



COVER UP: Hiking to high, exposed peaks means more exposure to the sun. Use a sweat-proof sunscreen and wear a hat and sunglasses.



6 GRANDVIEW MOUNTAIN A grand view indeed is what you'll get from this lofty peak on the Elwha–Gray Wolf river divide. The cost of this view is a grand elevation gain of 4,000 feet.

Starting high on Obstruction Point, traverse an open ridge of alpine tundra, taking in sweeping views over the Lillian River to snowy Mount Olympus and the Bailey Range. Grunt 300 feet up a knoll before dropping a little to resume leisurely ridgeline hiking. After about a mile, steeply drop 1,600 feet into Grand Valley.

Now hike past a necklace of sparkling alpine lakes, beginning with Grand Lake. Large in size, cascading waters from high above echo across its placid waters. Next is Moose Lake, a misnomer named for Frank Moose, not the large member of the deer family that doesn't inhabit the Olympics. Surrounded by black-shale pinnacles garlanded with verdant forest, Moose Lake's setting is quite sublime. Roam the lakeshore exploring ledges and grassy pockets.

Leaving most fellow hikers behind, continue to lake number three, little Gladys Lake, set in a high, grassy and moraine-filled bowl. Now it's time to get down to business and start climbing. Traverse heather meadows and subalpine forest before breaking out into scree, rock and lingering snowfields. After 1,000 feet of ascending, come to wide-open Grand Pass. Head right on a 0.3-mile side trail weaving along a rocky ridge, reaching 6,701-foot Grandview Mountain for a mind-staggering view of glacier-covered Mount Cameron and the remote and gorgeous Lillian Lake. Rest up for the return. After your 1,900-foot descent, a 1,600-foot ascent awaits you. It's a grand view and grand adventure at a grand caloric expense.

POST-HIKE: Replenish those spent calories at Gordy's Pizza and Pasta in Port Angeles.



DISTANCE: 12.8 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 4,000 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,700 ft

PERMIT: National Park fee
DOGS: Not permitted
MAP: Green Trails 168S

INFO: *Day Hiking Olympic Peninsula*, by Craig Romano

TRAILHEAD: From the Olympic National Park visitor center in Port Angeles, drive Hurricane Ridge Rd for 17.5 miles. Turn onto gravel Obstruction Point Rd and continue 7.7 miles to its end.

Hike and photo by Craig Romano

SAVE YOUR KNEES: Grinding uphill can be a workout, but breaking on steep downhills can be even rougher. Use trekking poles for support and to reduce shock on your knees.



7 **NORSE PEAK** *If you visit Crystal Mountain only in the winter, you're missing out. Explore it during its snow-free season for a hardy climb to amazing views.*

While this trail is certainly steep, it's surprisingly comfortable for gaining nearly 3,000 feet. Between long switchbacks, a few flat segments dull the pain between climbing sessions. Just 1 mile up, you'll snag your first views of Crystal Mountain, with Mount Rainier peeking out behind it. Keep right at the (sometimes unsigned) junction with the Goat Lake Trail, just past the 3-mile mark. The trail is dusty, but the views of colorful wildflowers will give you something pretty to admire while you climb.

This trail has been rerouted recently in order to maintain the habitat's integrity and limit erosion. Because of that, several misleading side trails remain. Stay on the path most travelled, and avoid those that appear decommissioned. At the 4-mile mark, you'll hit a junction just under the ridgeline. Turn right to follow the Norse Peak View Trail. In just one more scramble mile, you'll reach the summit.

There used to be a fire lookout up here, but the remains are pretty scant at this point. Thankfully, there are plenty of more interesting sights. Look at that view! On clear days, Mount Adams, Mount Rainier, Mount Hood, Glacier Peak and the Olympics are laid out on a perfectly photogenic horizon. You may even spy mountain goats or elk grazing in the meadows or getting water at Basin Lake just below. Return when you're ready, picking a few tasty huckleberries along the way.

TRAIL TIP: This is a dry trail, with significant mileage and elevation gain that take their toll in late summer—bring extra water!



DISTANCE: 10 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 2,900 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,856 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 271

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/norse-peak

TRAILHEAD: From Enumclaw, drive SR 410 east for 33 miles to Crystal Mountain Rd. Turn and drive 4.2 miles to Gold Hill Rd on the left. Park on the right-side shoulder of Crystal Mountain Rd, then cross the road and hike 0.2 mile up Gold Hill Rd to the Norse Peak trailhead.

Hike by Brittany Manwill; photo by Kailey Sparks



BE SEEN: Fall is hunting season in many parts of the state. Wear bright colors on trails, and keep Fido on a leash.



8 BURNT MOUNTAIN *This short, easy ridge walk climbs to a small summit with huge Cascades views and a chance to see mountain goats.*

Start on the Ironstone Mountain Trail, passing the William O. Douglas Wilderness sign to an open bluff with good views. From here, switchback down to the right a couple hundred feet and then traverse just below the ridgeline for 0.25 mile before climbing slightly to the ridgetop and an open area full of boulders and sagebrush. Just beyond is a junction with the Burnt Mountain Trail. Keep left on the Ironstone, traversing a steep slope to a saddle with a nice view of Mount Rainier.

The trail descends to a broad, wooded saddle and then begins climbing up the slopes of Burnt Mountain. The way is steep and forested, but after about 0.5 mile the trail breaks out of the forest and traverses below Burnt Mountain to a saddle on a south-trending ridge. At this point, follow a bootpath about 100 yards to the rocky summit and enjoy the view: south to Mount Adams and the Goat Rocks; west to Shellrock Peak and Mount

Rainier; north to Bismark Peak, Nelson Ridge and Mount Aix; and off to the northeast, the Stuart Range. Watch for mountain goats on the steep slopes below. When you've had your fill, return the way you came.

TRAIL TIP: This area is popular with hunters during the fall hunting season, so wear bright colors to make yourself visible on trail.



DISTANCE: 5 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 500 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,586 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 303, 304

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/ironstone-mountain

TRAILHEAD: From Yakima, drive west on Hwy 12 for 30 miles. Just past Hause Creek CG, turn right on Bethel Ridge Rd. Once on top of the ridge, turn left on FR 199 (signed Cash Prairie) and drive 2 miles to the trailhead at the end of the road.

Hike and photo by David Hagen



9 DAVIS PEAK *Looking for a challenging summit with a big payoff? Try this trail for a 360-degree panorama of more than 10 Cascades peaks.*

The climb to Davis Peak begins with a short jaunt across a sturdy bridge spanning the Cle Elum River before beginning its long, steady ascent up the mountain. Well maintained, the trail climbs through a variety of landscapes: old-growth, meadows, recovering burn zones and open ridgelines. As engaging as the trail is, it is almost overwhelmed by one defining characteristic—its seemingly endless series of tight switchbacks.

Around the 2-mile mark, you'll reach the edge of the burn zone and the last of the tree cover. Continue onward and upward through rocky terrain to the first ridgeline. From here a false summit can lure hikers off the main trail. Keep an eye on the trail. If it suddenly turns into a rocky scramble, you've gone too far. Backtrack to rejoin the main trail as it drops to the northwest, off the ridge and down into a bowl. The route traverses across the bowl and a snow-fed creek before switchbacking up to the next ridgeline.

Once you gain the ridge, look around for a short side trail to the grassy meadow that is a former lookout site. After checking out what is left of the lookout's foundation, push up the last 0.5 mile to the summit. From here the views are enormous: Terrance and Opal Lakes, Goat Mountain, Mount Daniel, Mount Hinman, Mount Stuart, Hawkins Mountain, Jolly Mountain, Sasse Mountain, Red Mountain, Lemah Mountain and Chikamin Peak. Oh, and Mount Adams too.

TRAIL TIP: The steep grade and sun exposure on this trail can pose a challenge. Take your time and stay hydrated on both the ascent and descent.



DISTANCE: 10 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 4,000 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 6,400 ft

PERMIT: NW Forest Pass
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: Green Trails 208

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/davis-peak

TRAILHEAD: From I-90, take exit 80 and drive 16.6 miles north, past Cle Elum Lake to FR 4330. Veer right for 1.6 miles to the Paris Creek trailhead. Drive, or park and walk, 0.25 mile on rocky FR 134 to the trailhead.

Hike and photo by Nate and Jer Barnes



HIKING WORKSHOP: Teachers and youth program coordinators are invited to attend WTA's next Outdoor Leadership Training workshop on October 3rd. Join WTA staff to learn about planning and leading outdoor activities for students and youth groups. Get more info at wta.org/olt.



10 **GYPSY PEAK** *This challenging trail offers panoramic views across Northeast Washington and into Idaho and Canada.*

Eastern Washington's highest peak may not stand particularly tall by Cascade standards, considering it's only slightly more than half the height of Mount Rainier. All the same, the views from the summit of Gypsy Peak make the trip well worth it, with the added benefit of climbing a comparatively small mountain in solitude. Due to its location in the heart of the Salmo–Priest Wilderness, visitors are most apt to share the trail with resident bighorn sheep or bears. After all, the east-side trailhead is named “Bear Pasture” for a reason.

Gypsy Peak is normally accessible from two different trailheads—offering the option of short or long approaches—the shorter approach, from the Bear Pasture trailhead, closes to hikers from August 15 to protect grizzly habitat. Hiking to Gypsy Peak in the fall requires the longer trek from Sullivan Mountain and the Crowell Ridge trailhead.

The route is mostly above tree line, with Canada just a stone's throw to the north and Idaho's Selkirk Range to the east. To the west, Abercrombie and Hooknose mountains are the closest prominent peaks. At approximately 5 miles from the trailhead on Crowell Ridge, watch for the faint climber's trail leading to Gypsy Peak. You'll need to dig out the map and compass to remain on track for the final approach. Consider adding in a 1-mile side trip to Watch Lake, the only place available for refilling water along the way.

TRAIL TIP: This route is considered an advanced trail, requiring the use of map and compass and experience with off-trail travel. In addition, the road to the Crowell Ridge trailhead is rough and rocky; high-clearance vehicles are recommended.



DISTANCE: 16 miles, RT
ELEVATION GAIN: 1,750 ft
ELEVATION PEAK: 7,309 ft

PERMIT: Not required
DOGS: Leashed
MAP: USGS Gypsy Peak

INFO: wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/rainbow-ridge

TRAILHEAD: From Sullivan Lake Rd, drive FR 2212 for 3.3 miles to the junction with FR 245 (Sullivan Mountain). Continue for 6.9 rough miles to the trailhead.

Hike and photo by Holly Weiler

STAY HYDRATED: High elevations and exposure rob your body of precious liquids. Carry plenty of water and drink often.



Poplar Flat Campground host Fay Priest presented a WTA Volunteer Vacation crew with this special welcome when they set up basecamp there in late June. The volunteers spent a week clearing downed trees from several trails in the Lake Chelan–Sawtooth Wilderness, including Twisp Pass and Scatter Creek.

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- **White River Trails** - Mount Rainier
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