



## **A WORLD OF NATURE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS**

### ***Experience the Natural Beauty of Washington County, Oregon***

Imagine having all of the amenities of a city within close proximity to pristine, rural wetlands, nature parks, wildlife refuges, with hundreds of miles of hiking and biking trails. In Washington County, Oregon, this is reality, as more than 200 parks, several wetlands, which serve as preserves for wildlife, and a host of outdoor recreational opportunities inhabit the area.

The natural surroundings of Washington County offer outdoor enthusiasts, birders and all-around nature lovers the chance to experience beauty of Oregon, all within the 727 square miles of Washington County. Found only minutes from any area of the county, verdant forests, tranquil waters or open fields are within reach.

The first state park to open in Oregon in more than 30 years, **L.L. “Stub” Stewart State Park** is a 1,654-acre full-service park with hiking, biking and horseback riding trails, for day use or overnight camping. Lush rolling hills, forests and deep canyons make up the park allow for great bird watching, wildflower walks and other relaxing pursuits. In addition, a stretch of the linear **Banks-Vernonia Trail** runs through the park. Overnight guests have a choice of setting up camp at one of several drive-up, hike-in and RV campsites, or in one of the park’s rustic cabins. Equestrians have the option of settling into the region’s only full-service horse camp.

**Jackson Bottom Wetlands** is a 725-acre wetlands preserve located in Hillsboro that is home to bald eagles, egrets and a host of mammals. Trails allow birders and other animal watchers to explore the wetlands for a chance to catch a glimpse of indigenous and migrating creatures in their own habitats. At the Educational Center, on exhibit is the only known eagle’s nest to be rescued from the wild. The 11-foot tall nest has drawn numerous visitors, including more than 1,000 who were on hand at the grand opening, January 2007.

Located near Gales Creek, just outside of Forest Grove, the 600-acre **Fernhill Wetlands** boasts a variety of wetland types, marshes and other open water sources which provide safe haven to eagles, hawks, herons and migrating waterfowl, as well as beavers, minks, otters and many other species. Trails throughout the wetlands grants birders unobstructed views from raised dikes and two viewing shelters.

Tucked inside Beaverton is the **Tualatin Hills Nature Park**, a 220-acre site that offers a respite from the city. The nature park has nearly five miles of walking and biking trails that meander through the evergreen and deciduous forests, which serve as home to a variety of birds, mammals and small animals. The park also has numerous water features, such as creeks, wetlands and ponds. An ideal location for families, the park also has an interpretive center, which educates visitors more about the area.

Fisherman, hikers, bikers, boaters, birders and swimmers and other outdoor aficionados will enjoy the calm of **Hagg Lake and Scoggins Valley Park**. The lake provides abundant recreational opportunities. In addition to water sports and activities, 15 miles of hiking and biking trails, picnic areas and a disc golf course round out the activities that make Hagg Lake a perfect getaway during the late-spring and summer months.

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Located in Sherwood, **The Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge** is a sanctuary for indigenous and migrating birds, waterfowl and mammals. As one of only a handful of urban refuges in the U.S., the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge restored much of the natural landscape of the area that were common to western Oregon prior settlement of the area. This restoration has attracted animals back to the area in great numbers, and with a keen eye, birders and animal watchers can catch a glimpse of these creatures year round. Trails and viewing locations allow visitors to experience the beauty of nature that is a part of Oregon's history, as well as its future.

A world away, but yet so close, Washington County offers an up-close-and-personal view of nature and its creatures. These are experiences that will create lasting memories.

### **ABOUT WASHINGTON COUNTY, OREGON**

Washington County, Oregon, is scenically situated between Portland and the Oregon Coast, and is only minutes away from downtown Portland. The county spans 727 square miles, and includes the growing communities of Banks, Beaverton, Cornelius, Forest Grove, Hillsboro, North Plains, Tigard, Tualatin, Sherwood and Wilsonville. Washington County is home to world-class golf courses, award-winning wineries, an array of outdoor recreation opportunities, lush, natural and scenic wetlands and wildlife preserves, superb dining and myriad shopping, from boutiques to antiques. Its thriving corporate business parks house some of the largest high-tech and industrial companies in the world, such as Nike, Columbia Sportswear and Intel. For more information on the region, visit the Washington County Visitors Association's website, [www.visitwashingtoncountyoregon.com](http://www.visitwashingtoncountyoregon.com), or call 503-644-5555, toll-free, 800-537-3149.

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