Crater Lake
NATIONAL PARK • OREGON

Ages ago, Mount Mazama was probably a 12,000-foot volcano in the Cascade Range. Successive
flows of molten rock, eruptions of ash, cinder, and pumice gave the mountain its present form.
Howell Williams, in Crater Lake, The Story of Its
Origin, described the tremendous explosion that
created the crater. Lava in the form of a frothy
super-heated pumice was blown out in great quan-
tities, and fine dust was carried hundreds of miles
to the north and east by the prevailing winds. Other,
but smaller, eruptions spewed out lava in a series
of glowing avalanches, cracks opened beneath the
volcano, and several cubic miles of molten rock
drained away. These eruptions and drainings left a
vast cavity beneath the cone which now could not
support its own weight and collapsed into the void.
Thus was Mount Mazama destroyed 6,600 years
ago.

After destruction, additional volcanic activity with-
in the caldera produced the cinder cone known as
Wizard Island.

Over the centuries the great caldera has accumu-
lated water from rain and snow; today evaporation
and seepage are balanced with precipitation, and the
water level remains fairly constant.

The lake was discovered on June 12, 1853, by John
Wesley Hillman, a young prospector and member of
a party in search of a rumored "Lost Cabin Mine." He
named it Deep Blue Lake. Sixteen years later, visi-
tors from Jacksonville gave the lake its present
name.

Only six lakes in the world are deeper than Crater Lake. In the Western Hemisphere, only Great Slave
Lake in Canada is deeper—by 83 feet. A sonic
depth finder has measured the greatest depth of
Crater Lake at 1,932 feet.

FOR YOUR SAFETY
Stay on the trails—especially along the caldera
rim. Footing can be treacherous on this volcanic
rock and soil. Descent to the lake is safe only on
Cleetwood Trail. In winter, stay off snow cornices
on the caldera rim!

Please drive slowly—you will see more and have a
more enjoyable visit.

Wildlife. Do not get near wild animals even though
they may appear tame. Some have become accus-
tomed to humans, but they are still wild and may seri-
ously injure you if you approach them. In camp,
keep food sealed in containers to reduce odors so
as not to attract animals.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS
Many animals can be seen in the park. Birds along
the rim include Clark’s nutcrackers, gray jays, and
the blue Steller’s jay. Eagles and hawks are often seen.
Chipmunks and golden mantled ground squirrels are common.

Remember, those animals are wild; wild animals
are dangerous. They may bite—and a small nip can be
serious. Park regulations emphatically forbid
feeding and molesting wildlife.

At a distance or from the safety of your car, be on
the lookout for deer and bears. Seldom seen are the
Cascade red fox, coyote, pine marten, porcu-
pine, bobcat, elk, and very rarely, the cougar.

Early visitors reported that Crater Lake originally
contained no fish; but several species have been
introduced. Recently the practice of stocking has
been discontinued, but rainbow trout, brown trout
in small numbers, and kokanee salmon are known
to be reproducing. The limited fish population is
due to lack of adequate food and suitable spawning
grounds. The amazingly pure lake water supports
comparatively little life, but an aquatic moss has
been found at a record depth of 426 feet.

Wildflowers and evergreen forests of the park are
principal trees surrounded by Douglas-fir, subalpine
fir, lodgepole and whitebark pine, and in
lower elevations beautiful stands of Douglas-fir
and ponderosa pine. Wildflowers of the high moun-
tains appear late and disappear early, but displays of
phlox, knotweed, and monkeyflowers are brilli-
ant.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK
The south entrance road is open all year. The west
entrance road may be closed from early December
to late March. The north entrance road and Rim
Drive are closed from approximately mid-October
to early July, depending on snow conditions.

From mid-June to mid-September, busses of Crater
Lake Lodge are operated daily from Klamath Falls to
Crater Lake. Klamath Falls and Medford have
airline and transcontinental bus service, and Kla-
math Falls is served by railroad.

CAMPING AND LODGING
Park campgrounds are open from about mid-June
to the end of September, also depending on snow
conditions. Check the map for locations. Trailers
up to 18 feet can be accommodated but there are
no utility connections.

Lodge and cabins at Rim Village are open from
mid-June to mid-September. For information and
reservations, write to Crater Lake Lodge, Inc.
Crater Lake, OR 97604.

National Park Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ADMINISTRATION
Crater Lake National Park, established on May 22,
1902, has an area of 260 square miles. It is adminis-
tered by the National Park Service, U.S. Depart-
ment of the Interior.

A superintendent is in charge of the park, with
offices in the administration building, 3 miles south
of Rim Village. His address is Crater Lake, OR
97604.

As the Nation’s principal conservation agency, the
Department of the Interior has responsibility for
most of our nationally owned public lands and na-
tural resources. This includes fostering the wisest
use of our land and water resources, protecting
our fish and wildlife, preserving the environ-
mental and cultural values of our national parks and his-
torical places, and providing for the enjoyment of
life through outdoor recreation. The Department
assesses our energy and mineral resources and
works to assure that their development is in the
best interests of all our people. The Department
also has a major responsibility for American Indian
reservation communities and for people who live
in Island Territories under U.S. administra-

NATURALIST PROGRAMS
The National Park Service offers naturalist serv-
ices in summer to help visitors gain a greater ap-
preciation of the park. Programs of current inter-
pretive activities are posted. You are invited to
attend the campfire programs held each evening.

WINTER VISITS
Crater Lake National Park averages 50 feet of
snowfall annually. Only the south entrance road
to Rim Village is open all year. On weekends and
holidays, from mid-September to mid-June, light
refractions and souvenirs are available at the
coffee shop in Rim Village. There are overnight
accommodations near the park. Carry tow ropes,
shovel, and tire chains, which may be necessary
at any time.

PROTECT YOUR PARK
Uniformed park rangers are responsible for
the management of park resources and for enforcing
park regulations for your safety. Ask them for in-
formation, direction, or assistance. Help preserve
and protect the park by observing the regulations
and by keeping the park free of litter. A permit is
necessary if you plan an extended back-country
trail trip.

Keep pets on a leash or in your car, to protect
wildlife and in consideration for others. Pets
are not permitted in public buildings or on any trails.
Be sure they do not venture over the rim wall,
where there is loose pumice soil and a 1,000-foot
drop.

Fishing is permitted in park streams and in Crater
Lake, and no fishing license is required. Regulations
are available at park headquarters or from park
rangers.

It is unlawful to hunt, trap, or have loaded firearms
in your possession on park lands. The use of a
camp in the park as a base for hunting outside the
park is prohibited.

Park regulations, as well as good outdoor man-
cals, call for leaving rocks, flowers, and wildlife
undisturbed for others to enjoy.
HOW TO SEE THE PARK

The most popular lake overlook is the Rim Village area. A park naturalist is on duty in the Exhibit Building along the rim wall; here you can buy literature concerning the park.

In front of and below the Exhibit Building, on the caldera wall, is the Sinnot Memorial Overlook Building, with a broad terrace presenting a magnificent panorama. Here, talks explaining the origin of Crater Lake are presented throughout the day in summer.

Two nearby trails afford breathtaking vistas from precipitous vantage points: 1.7-mile Garfield Peak Trail runs east along the rim wall beginning behind the lodge and ending at the peak 1,900 feet above the lake; 1.5-mile Discovery Point Trail begins at the opposite end of Rim Village and leads to the point where prospector John Wesley Hillman discovered the lake in 1853. This is an easy walk to the Discovery Point Rim Drive turnout.

Rim Drive, a 33-mile route circling the caldera’s edge, offers unexcelled observation points. Picnic areas along the way are available for short stops. Fires are prohibited. This drive is one-way clockwise.

The Watchman, the first prominent peak along the Rim Drive beyond Discovery Point, looms 1,800 feet above the lake. An 0.8-mile trail from the parking area leads to the summit and a fire lookout station. Exhibit signs at the lookout base locate notable park features. There are exceptional views in all directions, including 14,000-foot Mount Shasta, about 100 miles away.

Neighboring Hillman Peak, named for the discoverer of the lake, at 8,156 feet is the highest point along the rim.

At North Junction the north entrance road joins Rim Drive. The area was devastated by glowing avalanches of frothy pumice that spewed from the volcano and only now is gradually being reclaimed by lodgepole pines.

SERVICES

Food and supplies. The dining room at Crater Lake Lodge is open from mid-June to mid-September. In summer the cafeteria serves meals daily. On weekends and holidays in winter, it is operated as a coffee shop, serving light refreshments. Some groceries can be purchased at Rim Village.

Mail. In summer, there is a branch post office in the administration building at park headquarters. Visitors not staying at the lodge or in cabins in Rim Village should have their mail addressed to General Delivery, Crater Lake, OR 97604.

Tours. Several times each day, launches at Cleetwood Cove make trips to Wizard Island and around the lake. Bus trips around Rim Drive begin at the lodge. There are no winter tours.

Gasoline. A gasoline station is open in summer near park headquarters. No storage, towing, or repair facilities are available within the park.