



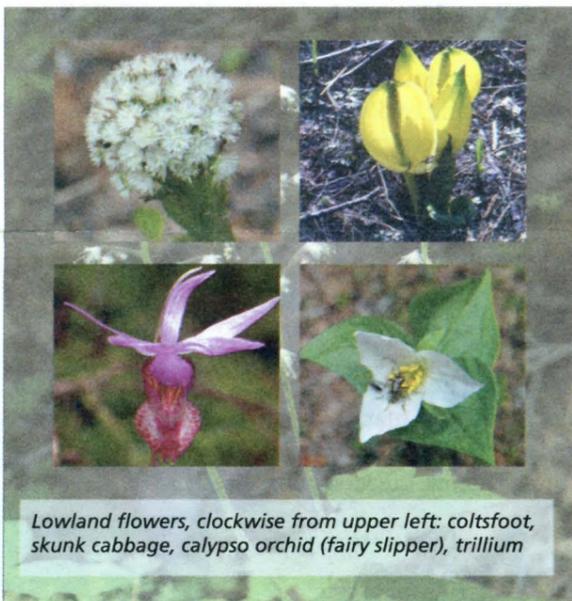
The Tahoma News

May - June 2014



Mountain in Springtime

Spring comes slowly to the mountain. The sound of falling water marks the warmer days, (though snow flurries in May may have you questioning the season). Yet in time, spring does arrive. You should watch for its signs while traveling through the park. Make time to let Mother Nature entertain you and you will be richly rewarded. For example, this is perhaps the best time of year to view waterfalls such as Christine and Narada Falls, as they brim with sparkling clear water fed by melting winter snow. Green leaves burst from their buds, mushrooms carpet the forest floor, and birds arrive back at the mountain.



Lowland flowers, clockwise from upper left: coltsfoot, skunk cabbage, calypso orchid (fairy slipper), trillium

Don't overlook the forest wildflowers that bloom much earlier than their subalpine counterparts. You'll find white, bushy coltsfoot and the three-petaled trillium blossoms in lowland forests, and yellow skunk cabbage blooming in marshy areas. Look carefully for the elusive fairy slipper or calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*), a great springtime discovery; they grace us with their presence for only a few short weeks.



Spring is a time of new birth. You may find wildlife with their young offspring in tow around the Trail of the Shadows at Longmire. Geese and goslings glide quietly on beaver ponds and black-tailed deer browse the meadow with their spotted fawns, while the chorus of frogs and songbirds fill the air.

What springtime treasures does the mountain have waiting for you to discover?

Nisqually Road Travel Advisory



Construction began in early March on the historic Nisqually to Paradise Road. This essential project will advance in two phases. The first phase begins at the Nisqually Entrance near Ashford and ends approximately seven miles inside the park at Longmire. The second phase should begin in 2016 at Longmire and end in Paradise.

Major construction components include removal and replacement of the current road surface, in-ground utility work, cleaning approximately 90 historic culverts, and rehabilitating sloped turnouts. Approaching the National Park Service's centennial, this effort is an important investment in Mount Rainier's next hundred years.

More than 200,000 vehicles, including cars, buses, and RVs use this historic road annually to reach viewpoints, overlooks, and trailheads. In addition to damages caused by traffic, tree fall and snow clearing equipment, the meandering Nisqually River and Mount Rainier's extreme weather affect the surfaces and ultimately your safety along this heavily travelled road.

Due to the extreme winter, construction must occur during the milder spring and summer seasons, at a time when visitation is at its peak. *You may experience delays up to 30 minutes and slow travel through the construction zone on weekdays during daylight hours.*

Turn off your vehicle while stopped and stay inside. Watch out for changes in road surfaces, and follow all signs and directions from pilot cars and flaggers. Slow down and drive safely in construction zones.

Park specialists continue to monitor the project with the utmost concern for the preservation of the historic landscape, as well as the park's nationally significant natural and cultural resources.

Naturalist Programs

Join a park ranger or volunteer for a talk, guided walk, or evening program. These free programs explore the park's natural and cultural history. Find out who else has come to Mount Rainier and why. Discover what this mountain really is and what it may become. Meet some other users of the park's resources—from owls to elk—and find out why they are here. Check at a visitor center for program times and locations.

Hey Kids!

Ask for a Junior Ranger Activity Book. It's FREE at all park visitor centers. Complete it to learn lots of cool stuff about your park and earn a badge and certificate.



Welcome...

...to spring at Mount Rainier National Park!



Superintendent
Randy King

As you travel through the park you will note that spring arrives slowly on the mountain. At Paradise, 600 - 700 inches of snow falls in an average year and persists into July.

The spring opening of facilities is an annual rite of passage at Mount Rainier, one of the snowiest places on Earth. Between March and July, roads completely snowed in since last fall are cleared by park and state road crews using heavy equipment and rotary snow blowers; snow is removed from park buildings; water and utility systems shut down since fall are reactivated; damage from winter's harsh conditions is repaired; and many other maintenance activities that ready facilities for summer use are accomplished. Concurrently, National Park Service and concession employees are hired, trained, and prepared to operate the park and serve visitors. By summer, over 500, mostly temporary, employees are on board. Many people working together, including numerous volunteers, are needed to "start up" Mount Rainier National Park each spring!

May and June are great times to experience the rebirth of the mountain. Please be attuned to the potential hazards of the season before heading into the park's backcountry, and ensure your visit is memorable and safe.

Thank you for choosing to visit Mount Rainier!

Randy King
Superintendent

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rainier National Park

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Websites
Mount Rainier National Park: www.nps.gov/mora
North Coast and Cascades Science & Learning Network: <http://nwparkscience.org/>

Official Social Media Sites
Facebook: www.facebook.com/MountRainierNPS
Flickr: www.flickr.com/groups/MountRainierNPS
Twitter: www.twitter.com/MountRainierNPS
YouTube: www.youtube.com/MountRainierNPS

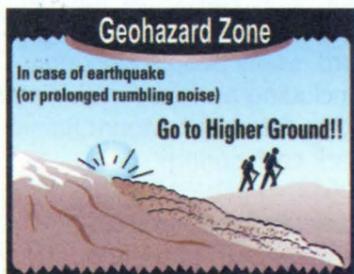


EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Mount Rainier: An Active Volcano

Active steam vents, periodic earth tremors, and historic eruptions provide evidence that Mount Rainier is sleeping, not dead. Seismic monitoring stations around the mountain should provide days or weeks of advance warning of impending eruptions. Other geologic hazards, however, can occur with little warning. These include debris flows and rockfalls.

The more time you spend in an area with geologic hazards, the greater the chance that you could be involved in an emergency event. While most people consider the danger to be relatively low, you must decide if you will assume the risk of visiting these potentially dangerous locations.



If you are near a river and notice a rapid rise in water level, feel a prolonged shaking of the ground, and/or hear a roaring sound coming from upvalley—often described as the sound made by a fast-moving freight train—move quickly to higher ground! A location 200 feet or more above river level should be safe. Detailed information is available at park visitor centers or from scientists at the U.S.G.S. Cascades Volcano Observatory, 1300 SE Cardinal Court, Building 10, Suite 100, Vancouver, WA 98661, or visit the U.S.G.S. Cascade Volcanoes website: vulcan.wr.usgs.gov.

Help Us Enhance Mount Rainier National Park



Turn your passion for Mount Rainier into action that will benefit visitors today and tomorrow! Washington's National Park Fund serves as the park's official philanthropic partner.

Founded by Governor Daniel Evans in 1993, the Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, accepts charitable gifts that are then given back to the park for projects focusing on these four main areas:

- Improving Visitors' Experiences by maintaining trails, supporting the park's Search and Rescue program, and improving campgrounds.
- Bringing more Youth and Families—many of whom might otherwise never visit—into the park.
- Funding necessary Science and Research on glaciers, rivers, flora, and fauna.
- Strengthening Mount Rainier's Volunteerism and Stewardship activities (the Fund provides \$50,000 each year so the park can support nearly 2,000 volunteers whose efforts are valued at \$1.8 million!).

Whether you adopt a trail mile, include Mount Rainier in your will, drop a few coins in the donation boxes at Mount Rainier's visitor centers, or purchase a Washington State license plate for your vehicle, they all add up and have a major impact on this beloved place. Please consider giving back to Mount Rainier National Park through Washington's National Park Fund.



For more information please go to the Fund's website: www.wnfp.org or email Washington's National Park Fund at fund@wnpf.org.

Protect Your Park

Mount Rainier National Park was established in 1899 to preserve the natural and cultural resources in this area and to provide for public benefit and enjoyment. To protect yourself and your park, during your visit please follow these rules:

- Pets must be on leashes no longer than six feet and are not allowed in buildings, on trails, or on snow.
- Do not feed or disturb the wildlife.
- Hunting is prohibited.
- Stay on designated trails.
- Make fires only in a fire grill. Collecting firewood is prohibited.
- Fires are prohibited in the backcountry.
- Bicycle only on roads, not on trails.
- Camp in designated campsites only. Sleeping in vehicles outside of campgrounds is not permitted.
- The use of firearms is prohibited within Mount Rainier National Park. Also, federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in this park; those places are posted with signs at public entrances. People who can legally possess firearms under federal, Washington State, and local laws may possess them in the park.

If You See a Black Bear or a Mountain Lion

Among Mount Rainier's largest and most feared wildlife are the black bear and the mountain lion. Though you are not likely to see them, they are powerful animals, and your safety depends on how you act around them. Be aware of your surroundings, and follow these guidelines while in the park.

Close Encounters With Black Bears

- Never feed a black bear, either intentionally or by leaving food unsecured.
- Do not approach bear cubs. An adult may be nearby to protect and defend the cubs.
- Back away from a nearby bear, even if it appears unconcerned with your presence.
- Do not run. Back away slowly. Talk loudly.
- A defensive bear will appear agitated and will often give visual and vocal warnings like swatting or stomping the ground, exhaling loudly, huffing, snapping teeth, or lowering the head with ears drawn back while facing you. This response may escalate to a charge.



If Charged by a Black Bear

- If the bear stops, slowly back away while talking, keeping the bear in view while leaving the area.
- If it continues, act aggressively, shouting and throwing rocks or sticks.
- If the bear attacks and you have food, distance yourself from the food.
- If the bear attacks and you do not have food, fight back aggressively.

Close Encounters with Mountain Lions

Mountain lions (also known as cougars) usually do not like confrontation. If you see one, give it plenty of space so it can get away. Never approach lion kittens. Leave the area immediately.

- Do not run or turn your back on a lion.
- Gather children with adults. Quickly pick up and hold small children.
- Stand in a group with your companions.
- If the lion moves toward you, wave your arms and make noise. Make yourself look large, intimidating and in control: stand up tall, open your jacket, yell, throw things.
- Back away slowly while facing the animal.
- If attacked, fight back aggressively. Stay standing. Hit as hard as possible especially to the head. Use a stick or rock as a weapon. Throw dirt in the eyes. Protect your head and neck.



Report all bear and mountain lion sightings to a ranger.

Park Partners

Who's responsible for protecting Mount Rainier National Park? Everyone! Here are some groups that deserve special thanks; for more information on these partners, and how to join the effort, please visit their websites.



Mount Rainier National Park Volunteers
www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm



Discover Your Northwest
www.discovernw.org



Washington's National Park Fund
www.wnfp.org



Mount Rainier National Park Associates
www.mrnpa.org



Student Conservation Association
www.thesca.org



Washington Trails Association
www.wta.org



Mount Rainier creates its own weather which causes sudden and drastic changes in conditions. A beautiful day on the mountain can turn into dangerous whiteout conditions in a matter of minutes. Knowing what to do and making the right decision can be the difference between life and death.

Hazards of the Season

Winter snowpack lingers late on the mountain. As of March 25, the season snowfall total is over 400 inches with upwards of 13 feet on the ground at the 5,000-foot elevation. Snow may be found covering portions of trails well into August. History shows that heavy snowpack conditions significantly increase search and rescue incidents that occur in the backcountry. Many early season hikers are not prepared for the route-finding challenges encountered by a lingering snowpack. Conditions change rapidly during the day and footprints in the snow quickly disappear. This has left many day hikers disoriented upon their return trip, expecting to simply follow their own tracks back to the snow-free trail. This results in many lost individuals, injuries, and fatalities.

Snow avalanches are common in the spring. The greatest danger to you is an avalanche that you trigger by skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or climbing. Be prepared for travel in avalanche terrain. Carry a transceiver, probe, and shovel and know how to use them. Determine if the location you are traveling is avalanche prone. When in doubt, ask questions or don't go. Unstable snow may slide at any time . . . not just in winter! Remember, even small avalanches can be deadly.

Be aware that mountain weather changes rapidly—a pleasant outing can quickly be transformed into a survival ordeal. Having proper gear (adequate boots, ice axe, the ten essentials, etc.) is a must. Navigation in spring storm conditions can be extremely difficult. If you're ascending and clouds or fog start rolling in, turn around and head back to the trailhead. If that's not possible, stop moving, dig in, and wait for better weather.

Also consider the steep snow slopes, melt holes, thinning snow bridges, and other early season hazards that you may encounter, and be honest with yourself in assessing your skills and experience.

Be prepared for route-finding conditions. Trails may be snow-free at lower elevations but anticipate and prepare for snow at higher elevations. If you plan on retracing your route back to the trailhead consider using wands on snow-covered trails. Always carry a good map and compass, and actively use them on snow-covered trails. Also consider supplementing your map and compass with an external antenna GPS for best coverage beneath a forest canopy. Again, it is extremely important that you know how to use these tools.

Most importantly, plan your route ahead of time, have a backup plan, and never travel alone. When route-finding, note important landmarks. If the trail becomes difficult to follow, stop and find where you are on the map before continuing. If at any point you feel uncomfortable or unprepared, turn around.

Secrets to a Safe and Enjoyable Hike

Hiking at Mount Rainier National Park can mean adventure, exploration, learning, or just plain having fun! The secret to a great hike? Staying safe!

Hikers need to emphasize personal safety as they journey by foot through the backcountry and along many of the popular trails. For trail information, talk with a ranger at any visitor center or wilderness information center. Use the following tips to keep your journey safe:

Use Common Sense

- Protect yourself by wearing appropriate outdoor clothing including footwear.
- Be prepared. Carry the ten essentials even on a short sightseeing hike.
- Always tell someone of your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return.
- Do not travel alone. If visibility is poor, do not travel at all.

Plan and Prepare for Changeable Weather

At Mount Rainier, the weather can change rapidly. Hikers who aren't prepared for weather conditions increase their risk of becoming lost or injured.

Crossing Streams Safely

Many hikers underestimate the power of moving water and some consider their former successful stream crossings as a ticket to the other side. This may not be true. Use these pointers in making wise decisions when crossing a stream.

- Early morning when river levels are generally at their lowest is the best time to cross.
- Look for an area with a smooth bottom and slow moving water below knee height.
- Before crossing, scout downstream for log jams, waterfalls and other hazards that could trap you. Locate a point where you can exit if you fall in.
- Use a sturdy stick to maintain two points of contact with the ground at all times.
- Unfasten the belt of your pack so you can easily discard it if necessary.
- Staring down at moving water can make you dizzy. Look forward as much as possible.

Taking these few precautions could save your day . . . and your life!

Climbing

Each year, approximately 10,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier. Nearly half reach the 14,410-foot summit. Climbing permits are required for travel above 10,000' and/or on glaciers. Climbing information—including fees, routes, and conditions—is available at ranger stations and climbing information centers. (See page 4 for locations and hours.)

Guided climbs and climbing seminars are available through:

Alpine Ascents International (206) 378-1927
International Mountain Guides (360) 569-2609
Rainier Mountaineering, Inc. (888) 892-5462

Wilderness Camping

Wilderness camping permits are required for all overnight stays in the park's backcountry. Permits and backcountry information are available at all wilderness information centers and most visitor centers. (See page 4 for locations and hours.)

Although permits are free, there is an optional, fee-based reservation system for campers and climbers in effect May through September. Backcountry reservations are \$20 per party (1-12 people) for 1 to 14 consecutive nights. Seventy percent of all backcountry sites and zones are available for reservation. The remaining 30 percent are issued on a first-come, first-served basis the day of or one day before the trip begins.

Before you step off the trail...

... consider this: each step into a meadow crushes an average of 20 plants!



When exploring Mount Rainier's fragile meadows...

Please hike only on maintained trails or thick patches of snow.

Leave No Trace

Plan ahead & prepare
Travel & camp on durable surfaces
Dispose of waste properly
Leave what you find
Minimize campfire impacts*
Respect wildlife
Be considerate of others

*Fires are for emergency use only; they are not allowed in Mount Rainier's Wilderness

Keep Wildlife Wild

- Please don't feed the wildlife.
- Store your food in an animal-proof container, or inside your car.
- Don't leave food, beverages, pet food, or toiletries unattended for any length of time.
- Clean up picnic areas after you eat.



Human food puts animals at risk and some die as a result. Birds like jays or ravens are effective nest predators—eating the eggs or young of other birds. By feeding birds, visitors concentrate

these nest predators near roads and trails and inadvertently contribute to the death of songbirds in the same area.

Still, one of the most common mistakes people make at Mount Rainier National Park is to feed the wildlife. Visitors seeking a personal connection with animals think they are "helping" them. In fact it harms them in many ways.

Beggar squirrels, foxes, deer, and jays learn to approach people and busy areas. They often get hit and killed by cars. Animals that become accustomed to humans and human food may also pursue and injure visitors. Biologists and rangers must intervene, with killing the animal as the last resort.

Carry the "10 Essentials" and know how to use them!

1. Map & compass
2. Sunglasses, sunscreen, & hat
3. Extra clothing (warm!) & rain gear
4. Flashlight or head lamp (extra batteries)
5. First aid supplies
6. Waterproof matches or lighter
7. Repair kit & tools (for gear)
8. Extra food
9. Extra water
10. Emergency shelter

Visitor Facility Hours

Visitor Centers

Longmire Museum (360) 569-6575	May 1 - May 23 9:00 am - 4:30 pm daily May 24 - June 8 Closed June 9 - June 29 9:00 am - 4:30 pm daily June 30 - September 1 9:00 am - 5:00 pm daily	Ranger programs, exhibits, information, books
Paradise Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center (360) 569-6571	May 1 - May 2 Closed May 3 - June 13 10:00 am - 5:00 pm daily June 14 - September 1 10:00 am - 7:00 pm daily	Ranger programs, exhibits, information, theater, books, food, gifts
Ohanapecosh Visitor Center (360) 569-6581	To be determined Check the park website or ask at a visitor center for hours.	Restrooms will be open beginning May 23
Sunrise Visitor Center (360) 663-2425	Scheduled to open July 3	Exhibits, information, books

Wilderness & Climbing Information Centers

Longmire WIC (360) 569-6650	May 23 - October 13 7:30 am - 5:00 pm daily	Wilderness camping & climbing permits
Paradise Climbing Information Center (Guide House) (360) 569-6641	May 10 - May 11 6:00 am - 3:00 pm Saturday - Sunday only May 17 - September 1 6:00 am - 3:00 pm Sunday - Thursday 6:00 am - 5:00 pm Friday - Saturday	Wilderness camping and climbing permits, exhibits, information
White River WIC (360) 569-6670	Scheduled to open May 23 7:30 am - 5:00 pm daily	Wilderness camping & eastside climbing permits
*The NEW! Carbon River Ranger Station (360) 829-9639	Call for hours *Located on the Carbon River Road 5.5 miles east of the Mowich Lake (SR165) junction.	Wilderness camping & northside climbing permits (including Ipsut Creek campground)

Food & Lodging

For in-park lodging reservations, call Mount Rainier Guest Services at (360) 569-2275 or go to www.mtrainierguestservices.com

National Park Inn at Longmire	Open year-round Front Desk: 7:00 am - 10:00 pm daily	Lodging, dining room
Longmire General Store	May 1 - June 13 10:00 am - 5:00 pm daily June 14 - August 31 9:00 am - 8:00 pm daily	Gifts, snacks, firewood
Paradise Inn	Open for the season May 21 Front Desk open 24 hours daily	Lodging, dining room, cafe, gift shop
Paradise Jackson Visitor Center Snack Bar & Gift Shop	May 1 - May 2 Closed May 3 - June 13 10:00 am - 4:45 pm daily June 14 - September 1 10:00 am - 6:45 pm daily	Food, gifts, books
Sunrise Day Lodge Snack Bar & Gift Shop	Scheduled to open July 3 10:00 am - 7:00 pm daily	Food and gifts. Day use only, no overnight lodging

Gasoline, lodging, dining, recreation equipment rentals, and other services are available in local communities. A list of these services is available at park visitor centers and on the park's website at www.nps.gov/mora. Religious services are available in local communities.

Accessibility

Most comfort stations, visitor centers, picnic areas, and designated campsites are accessible or accessible with help for wheelchair users. Accessible lodging is available inside the park and in local communities. In the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise, the audiovisual programs are captioned; assistive listening devices are available for the park film; an audio described tour of the exhibits is available; and the building and exhibits are accessible to wheelchair users. The Kautz Creek Boardwalk Nature Trail is accessible when snow-free. An accessible trail leads to the base of the Paradise meadows, and a portion of the trails at Paradise are accessible with help; inquire at the Jackson Visitor Center for more information. TDD: (360) 569-2177

Become a Volunteer Mount Rainier Ranger

As you visit Mount Rainier, keep your eyes open for people wearing hats, shirts, and jackets with a "volunteer" logo. You'll see volunteers working in the visitor centers and assisting visitors in the meadows. Even more are busy behind the scenes, organizing the park's collection of historic photos and taking care of plants in our greenhouse.

Last year, almost 1,800 people worked in partnership with the National Park Service to protect the natural and cultural resources of Mount Rainier and serve its visitors. These invaluable partners help us accomplish far more than we could have alone.

Have you ever dreamed of being a park ranger? You still can—for a day, for a summer, or on winter weekends as your schedule permits. Opportunities abound. Ask how you can become part of our team!

www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm

Road Opening Schedule

Estimated Dates (subject to change)

Nisqually to Paradise (nightly closures through April 13)	Open
Westside Road to Dry Creek	Open
Paradise Valley Road	June 20
Stevens Canyon Road	May 23
State Route 410/Chinook Pass	May 23
Cayuse Pass via State Routes 410 & 123	May 2
White River Road to White River Campground Parking Lot	May 23
Sunrise Road	July 3
Mowich Lake Road	July 3

Use caution while driving.

Drive-in Campgrounds

Campground	Open Dates	Elev.	Sites	Fee	Group Sites	Group Fees	Toilets	Dump Station	Maximum RV/Trailer Length
Cougar Rock*	June 13 - Sept. 29	3,180'	173	\$12/15*	5	\$40-64	Flush	Yes	RV 35'/Trailer 27'
Ohanapecosh*	May 23 - Oct. 13	1,914'	188	\$12/15*	2	\$40	Flush	Yes	RV 32'/Trailer 27'
White River	June 27 - Sept. 29	4,232'	112	\$12	0	N/A	Flush	No	RV 27'/Trailer 18'
Mowich Lake	Primitive walk-in campground, tents only. 10 sites, 3 group sites (max. group size 12). No fee (must self-register at campground kiosk). Chemical toilets, no potable water. No fires allowed. Elevation 4,929'; generally open July through early October, depending on road and weather conditions. Call 360-829-9639 for information.								

*Advance reservations are recommended for individual sites at Cougar Rock and Ohanapecosh Campgrounds from June 26 through the night of August 31. These can be made up to six months in advance. Reservations for group sites are recommended and are available throughout the season. These can be made up to one year in advance. To make a reservation online, go to www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777.