

# OLYMPIC

NATIONAL PARK • WASHINGTON





**O**LYMPIC NATIONAL PARK, on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, is a unique wilderness of rugged mountains, coniferous rain forests, wildlife, glaciers, lakes, streams and seascapes. It contains nearly 1,400 square miles.

The Spanish sea captain Juan Perez is credited with discovering the Olympic Mountains when, in 1774, he named the Olympic peaks El Cerro de la Santa Rosalia. Capt. John Meares of Great Britain, on a voyage of discovery in 1778, named the dominant peak Mount Olympus. This name, charted by Capt. George Vancouver, has remained on all subsequent maps.

The first major exploration of the Olympic Mountains was by the Press Party in the winter of 1889-90. This expedition, financed by the Seattle Press and led by James H. Christie and Capt. Charles A. Barnes, crossed the mountains from Port Angeles to Quinault by way of Low Divide.

Conservation of the Olympic region began in 1897 with establishment of the Olympic Forest Reserve by Executive order of President Cleveland.

In 1904, a bill to establish Elk National Park was introduced in Congress by Representative Francis W. Cushman, of Tacoma, but the bill failed to pass.

In 1909, Mount Olympus National Monument, an area of 615,000 acres, was established by Presidential proclamation. Efforts to establish a National Park on the Olympic Peninsula were renewed in 1935. In 1938, Congress passed the bill establishing Olympic National Park, and it was signed by the President on June 29.

#### CLIMATE

The wettest winter climate in the conterminous United States prevails on the west side of the Olympic Peninsula. Yearly precipitation exceeds 140 inches in some sections. Mount Olympus and all the high country in the western part of the park probably receive much more than that, but mostly in the form of snow. In contrast to the wetness of the west side, the northeast side of the peninsula is the driest area on the west coast outside of southern California.

Olympic National Park occupies the center and the western edge of the peninsula. The peninsula is almost an island, being nearly surrounded by water. "Within this area," wrote John Yeon, "rivers have their source and major being before their confluence with the ocean. The circuit of moisture, lifting from the sea, detained in glaciers, and flowing through streams and rivers back to the sea, is complete, like a diagrammatic functioning model of the workings of earth forces, and almost within the range of observation from a single vantage point."

#### RAIN FOREST

An extraordinary forest growth has developed during centuries of wetness in the western valleys of the park. Sitka spruce and western hemlock dominate this forest, but Douglas-fir and western redcedar are also common. They are big trees, some of them reaching a height of 300 feet and diameters of over 8 feet. The largest known individual tree of three of these four cone-bearing species is found in the rain forests of the park.

Bigleaf maple, red alder, and black cotton wood grow near the streams. Moss-covered vine maple forms an understory beneath the giant conifers. Mosses softly carpet the forest floor and upholster tree trunks and fallen trees, while draperies of clubmoss hang from the branches. Ferns mingle with the mosses and delicate flowers on the forest floor and accompany the mosses to the upper branches of some of the trees. The forest appears to be filled with warm, green light.

Rain forests can be seen in the valleys of the Hoh, Quinault, and Queets Rivers.

#### LIFE ZONES

Whereas the rain forest is found only in the lowlands of the west slope, all its trees except Sitka spruce are more widespread. Douglas-fir and western hemlock, especially, are abundant throughout, and extend considerably above most of the lowland forests. Between 1,500 and 3,500 feet, these species grow in association with western white pine and Pacific silver fir. Douglas-fir and its new associates continue upward to near timberline. Alaska-cedar, alpine fir, and mountain hemlock, together with Douglas-fir, are the most prominent species near timberline. Generally, timberline is at about 5,000 to 5,500 feet, but it is not always an even line. Above timberline, vegetation consists mostly of low-lying plants. As you travel from sea level to the ridgetops, you can see this changing pattern of plantlife—a pattern that is arranged in horizontal belts known as life zones.

#### WILDLIFE

In Olympic National Park there are about 56 species of wild mammals. While many of them, for various reasons, are difficult to see, visitors to the densely forested valleys can expect to catch at least a glimpse of some of the animals. Travelers in the high, more open mountains should see a larger number of them. Black-tailed deer are frequently seen in the lowlands as well as in mountain meadows, especially when they are feeding during morning and evening. At Hurricane Ridge they appear regularly in the meadows at these times. The Olympic marmot is also abun-



dant here. From surrounding high vantage points, the black bear can be seen frequently in mountain meadows, its black coat contrasting with the lighter foliage. About 6,000 American elk live in the park, mostly on the west side. About 50 percent of the elk herds migrate to the high-country headwater basins of their "home valleys" in summer. The others remain in the lower valleys all year.

Rocky peaks, alpine meadows, forests, streams, and ocean shore provide a variety of habitat for birds. In summer, there are about 140 kinds of birds in the park.

#### WILDFLOWERS

Wildflowers are found everywhere from the lowlands to the rocky peaks—different kinds in different habitats. In the meadows near timberline and above, they reach the greatest variety and abundance, and bloom from June to October. E. B. Webster wrote about these flower meadows in his book, *The Friendly Mountain*: "Mountain parks and mountain slopes filled and covered with flowers. Flowers of every shape and hue. Flowers standing shoulder to shoulder, as thick as daisies in a pasture, or clover in the field. Red columbine, yellow and blue asters, scarlet paint brushes, blue lupine, white valerian and others, all thrown together in one gorgeous blanket of thoroughly mixed color." The northern side of the park—the region including Hurricane Ridge and Mount Angeles—is especially rich in mountain wildflowers.

#### MOUNTAINS AND GLACIERS

The Olympic Mountains are composed of sedimentary rocks, such as sandstone and shale, and of lava. These rocks derived from materials which accumulated in shallow seas that covered western Washington and then were uplifted into the highest mountains of the Coast Range. Mount Olympus, the highest peak, is 7,965 feet. Several other peaks rise above 7,000 feet, but altitudes of the ridges and crests are mostly between 5,000 and 6,000 feet.

The present rugged shape of the mountains is due mainly to work of ice and water. Precipitation on Mount Olympus and neighboring high country is estimated at 200 inches a year. Not all the snow melts in summer. What remains accumulates and, compressed by sheer weight into ice, adds to the glaciers that have scoured the Olympic Mountains for thousands of years.

There are about 60 glaciers, with an aggregate area of 20 to 25 square miles, in the Olympic Mountains. Most of these are small, but the three largest on Mount Olympus are 2 miles or more in length.

#### LAKES AND STREAMS

In a region of glacier-carved basins and heavy precipitation it is natural to find numerous lakes. Here, most of them are small, but their beauty adds much to the charm of the Olympic scenery. A few lowland lakes are of considerable size. Lake Crescent, nestled in the mountains in the northern part of the park, is considered to be one of the most beautiful lakes in the United States.

From the melting snow and ice of the peaks, swift streams plunge down the mountainsides, then flatten out in the valleys, and complete the water cycle as they empty into the sea.





Pacific Ocean coastline

### PACIFIC COAST AREA

This 50-mile-long strip of coastline is one of the most primitive remaining in the conterminous United States. The encroaching sea has produced a scenic oceanscape here with many shoreline needles and offshore rocks and islands. Wild animals, including deer, bear, raccoon, and skunk, are found here, and elk are sometimes observed in remote sections. Seals are seen frequently in the water or on the offshore rocks. Numerous sea birds nest on the islands, and many migrating birds make this a rest stop, for the strip lies on the Pacific flyway.

### SEASONS IN THE PARK

Although Olympic National Park is open all year, the most favorable weather is in the summer and early autumn. Usually by the first of July most of the high-country trails and roads are free of snow. Summer in the northwest is mostly cool and sunny, although it may rain. September and October are often delightful, with warm Indian-summer weather. Hurricane Ridge Road is open to the ski area on weekends from after Christmas to the end of March. The lower elevation roads in the valleys are open all year. Ocean beaches remain popular in winter.

### WHAT TO WEAR

Informal outdoor clothing, including a warm windbreaker, is appropriate and satisfactory for summer and autumn. In addition, it is advisable to bring rainproof garments, especially for camping or extended hikes.

### WHAT TO DO

To help you understand and enjoy the park, the National Park Service provides interpretive facilities and services. These include museums, nature trails, guided walks, and campfire programs. Maps and publications are available.

**Motoring.** A study of the maps in this folder will reveal many places that can be reached by automobile. U.S. 101 runs inside the park along Lake Crescent and through the southern end of the Pacific Coast Area, where it parallels a sandy coastal beach for 11 miles. From this highway, spur roads penetrate the park by way of river valleys, through virgin forests, and often along swift mountain streams.

Rain forests can be seen along the Hoh, Queets, and Quinault River roads. The Rain Forest Nature Trail is at the end of the Hoh River road.

On the north side of the park, there is a high-standard road from Heart O' the Hills to Hurricane Ridge. The approach to this road is directly from Port Angeles and past the visitor center (Pioneer Memorial Museum). From vantage points along Hurricane Ridge, the mountain views are superb.

Also on the north side of the park, a narrow, steep, and winding dirt road leads to Deer Park and Blue Mountain. This road is generally open by early June, when the wild-flower display is best. Both Hurricane Ridge and Deer Park areas afford excellent opportunities for photographing mountain scenery, wildflowers, and wildlife.

**Hiking.** Roads provide access to nearly 600 miles of trails that are numerous and varied. They permit short, easy trips requiring a day or less, and longer and more difficult ones that take several days to a few weeks.

Trails are opened as soon as possible, but some high-country trails may not be entirely free of snow until mid-summer. Maps and trail guides are available. *Ask a park ranger for trail information.*

**Mountain climbing.** Some peaks may be climbed safely by novices, while others should be attempted only by or with experienced climbers. If in doubt, ask a park ranger for information. For their own protection, climbing parties must register at the ranger station on their route.

**Fishing.** Streams contain cutthroat, rainbow, brook, Dolly Varden, and, in winter, steelhead trout. Some mountain lakes have rainbow or brook trout. No license is required for fishing in the park; seasons are generally the same as for adjacent State waters. Regulations are available at park headquarters and ranger stations.

**Horseback trips.** Horses and guides are available in Port Angeles and Forks, burros in Port Angeles.

### THIS IS YOUR PARK—HELP PROTECT IT

Certain restrictions are necessary to protect this park for you and future visitors. Park rangers, who will help you to know and enjoy the park in safety, also enforce regulations. They should be consulted when you are in doubt as to what you may do.

**Vegetation.** No trees, flowers, or any other plants may be carved, cut, picked, removed, or injured. Only dead and down logs and limbs may be used for firewood.

**Camping and picnicking.** Campers and picnickers are required to maintain and leave the areas they use in a clean condition. All debris, including cans, should be burned in campfires. Unburnable refuse and burned cans should be placed in containers, if provided, or in the camp garbage pit. All burnable refuse and burned cans should be thoroughly buried or carried out from trail camps. Camping is not allowed outside designated trail camping areas, unless you have a *fire permit* from park headquarters or a ranger station.

**Pets** are permitted if they are under physical restraint at all times. But they may not be taken on trails or cross-country trips, into swimming pools, public dining rooms, or community kitchens in campgrounds.

**Hunting, feeding, or the disturbance of wildlife** in any manner is not permitted in National Parks. Unless adequately sealed, cased, broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use while in the park, firearms are prohibited except upon written permission from the superintendent. Firearms are not necessary for protection.

**Trail travel.** Hikers and riders must not make shortcuts across switchbacks, but must confine their travel to the trail at all times. Saddle and pack animals have the right-of-way and should not be crowded or frightened by hikers. If hikers plan difficult mountain climbs or trips to remote or unfrequented areas, they should inform the superintendent well in advance. Park rangers can then furnish information about conditions, check adequacy of equipment and experience of the hikers and climbers, and be on the lookout for them upon completion of the trip. A campfire permit is required for all overnight back-country trips.

Motor vehicles and bicycles are not allowed on trails.

**Automobile travel.** Motor vehicle operators should drive carefully, with due consideration of others who may be driving slowly to enjoy and observe scenery or wildlife.

Do not throw trash, cans, bottles, or papers along roadsides and parking areas. Keep them in your car until you can place them in a trash can.

Do not drive into, or across, alpine meadows, but remain on roads, road shoulders, or parking areas.

### HOW TO REACH THE PARK

The main approach road to the park is U.S. 101 (Wash. 9). This road may be entered from Olympia or the Grays Harbor cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam without ferrying.

Ferry service is available the year-round between Victoria, B.C., and Port Angeles, Wash.

Port Angeles and the west side of the Olympic Peninsula are served by bus, Puget Sound and Grays Harbor cities by train, and there are daily round-trip flights between Seattle and Port Angeles.

Tours in the park are offered in summer by Gray Line of the Olympics, 107 East Front, Port Angeles, Wash. 98362.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

**Campgrounds.** Most campgrounds have piped water, garbage cans, and individual campsites with tables, benches, and cooking facilities. Some campgrounds have community kitchens, but none have showers, laundries, or utility connections for trailers.

A fee is collected in some campgrounds. The Federal Recreation Area Permit will admit the driver and passengers of a private automobile, or the purchaser, regardless of mode of travel. Alternate short-term permits can also be purchased.

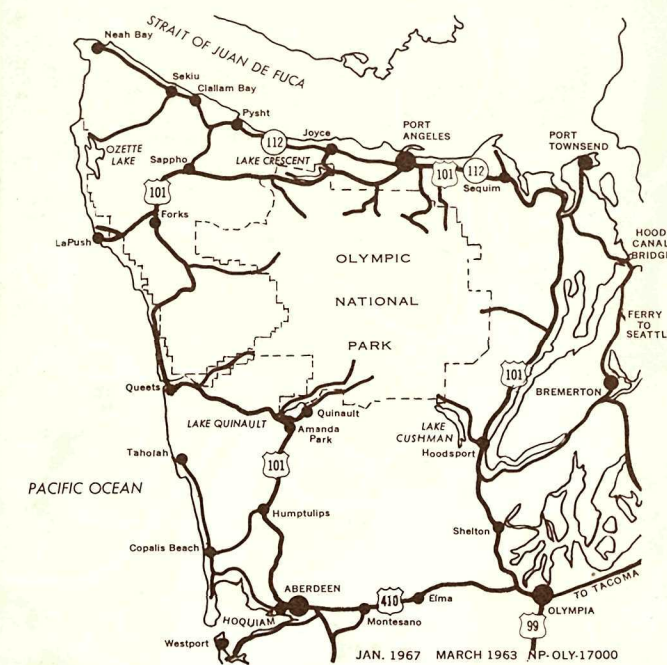
Large trailers can be accommodated at Heart O' the Hills, Fairholm, Hoh, Mora, and Kalaloch campgrounds, medium-sized trailers at Elwha and Altaire campgrounds, and small camp trailers at most of the campgrounds. Road conditions prevent pulling trailers into Deer Park, Dosewallips, and some other areas. It is advisable to make inquiry at park headquarters in Port Angeles before attempting some of the outlying approach roads with a trailer.

Some campgrounds at lower elevations are open all year. High-elevation areas are covered with snow from early November to late June or July. It is not possible to reserve campground space prior to your visit. Fire permits are not required in the automobile campgrounds.

**Trailer village.** This concessioner-operated facility (with water, restrooms, and utility connections) on the north shore of Lake Crescent is open only in summer.

**Cabins and lodges.** For information about concessioner-operated cabins and lodges at Sol Duc Hot Springs, Lake Crescent, La Push, or Kalaloch, write to the park superintendent at 600 East Park Ave., Port Angeles, Wash. 98362.

**Outside the park.** Information about accommodations on the Olympic Peninsula may be obtained from the Olympic Peninsula Resort and Hotel Association, Colman Ferry Terminal, Seattle, Wash. 98104.



### ADMINISTRATION

Olympic National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which this park is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

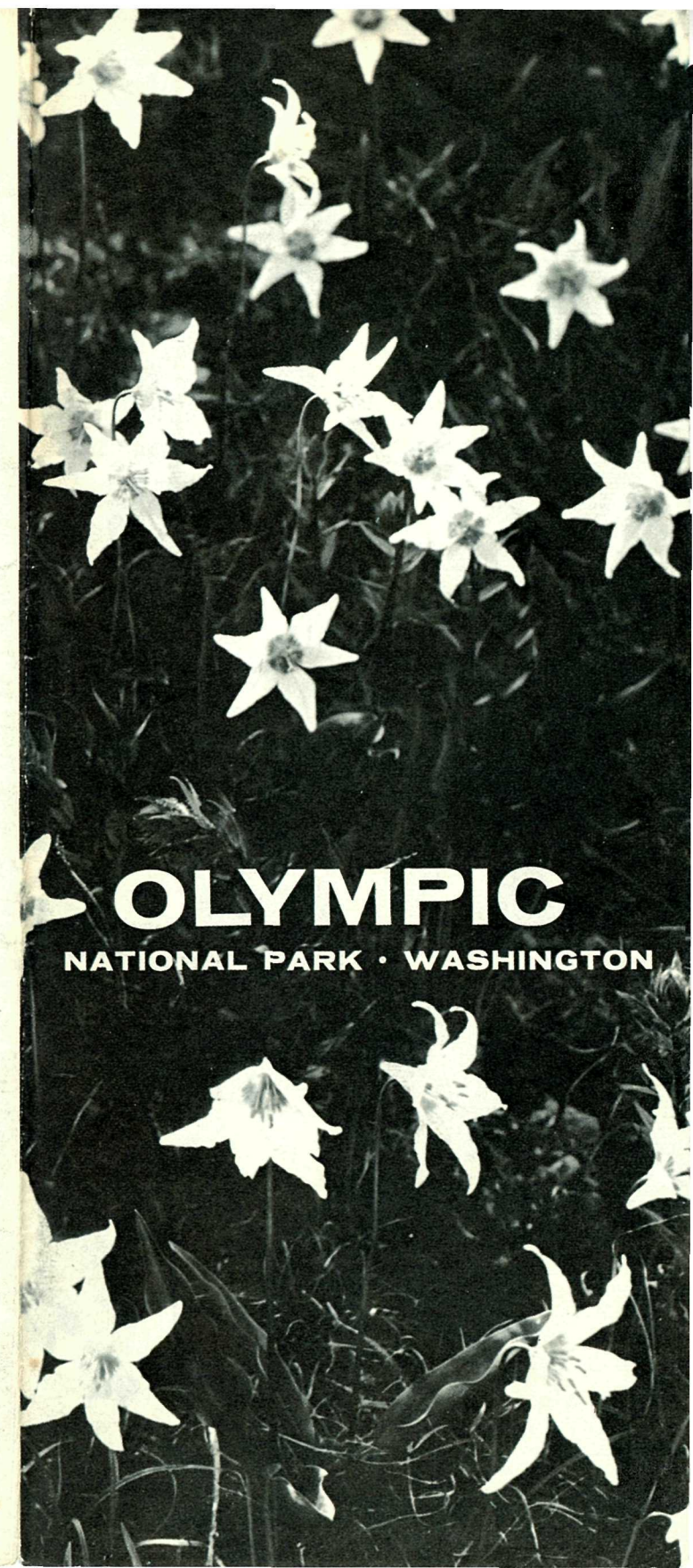
A superintendent, whose address is 600 East Park Avenue, Port Angeles, Wash. 98362, is in immediate charge.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—bears a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that our renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1968—306-122/90  
REPRINT 1968

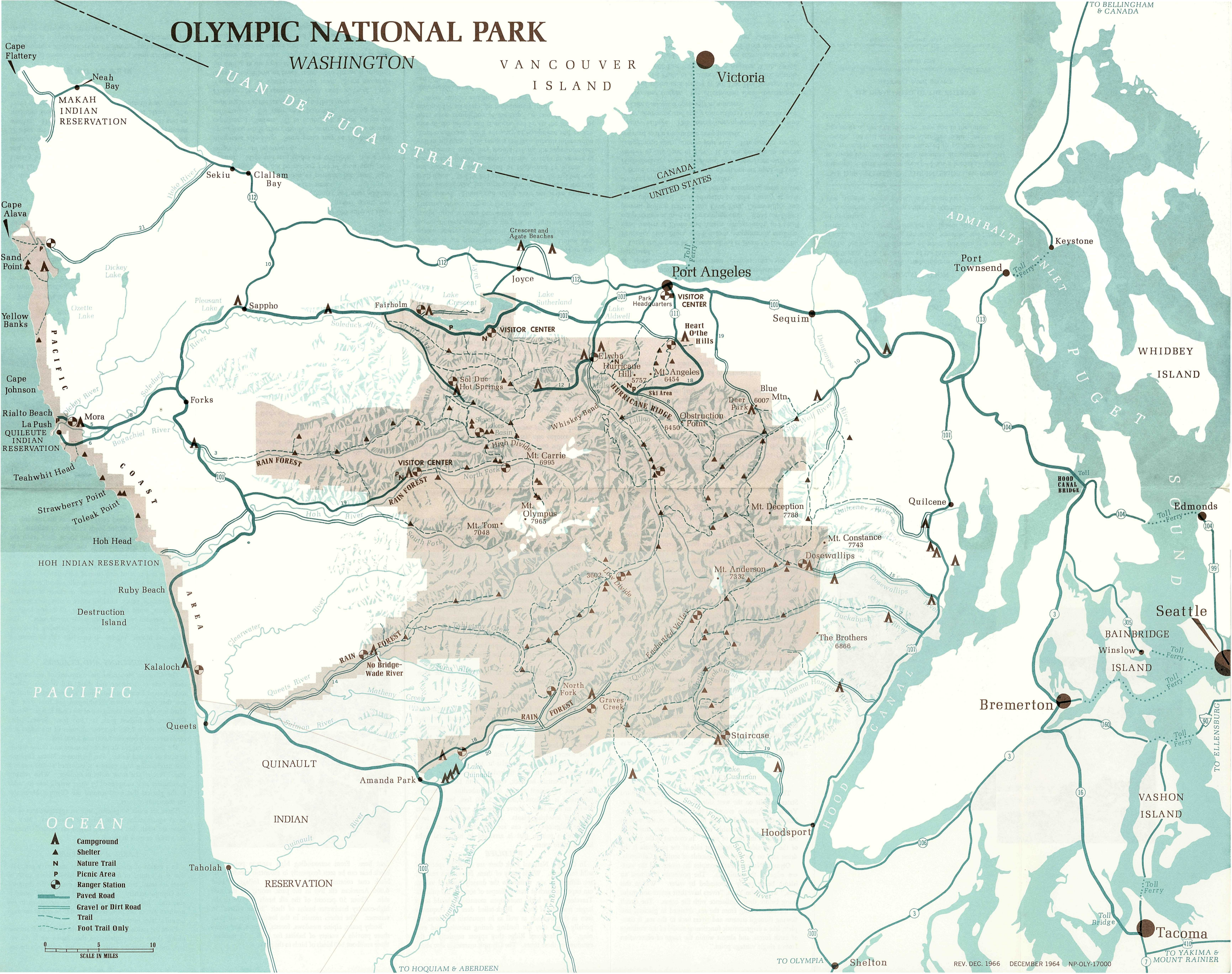
For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office  
Washington, D.C. 20402 · Price 15 cents



**OLYMPIC**  
NATIONAL PARK · WASHINGTON



# OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK



WASHINGTON

VANCOUVER ISLAND

Victoria

JUAN DE FUCA STRAIT

CANADA  
UNITED STATES

Port Angeles

ADMIRALTY INLET

WHIDBEY ISLAND

SEASOUND

Seattle

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

VASHON ISLAND

Tacoma

Cape Flattery  
Neah Bay  
MAKAH INDIAN RESERVATION

Cape Alava  
Sand Point  
Yellow Banks  
Cape Johnson  
Rialto Beach  
La Push  
QUILEUTE INDIAN RESERVATION  
Teahwhit Head

Strawberry Point  
Toleak Point  
Hoh Head  
HOH INDIAN RESERVATION

Ruby Beach  
Destruction Island  
KALALOC  
PACIFIC COAST AREA

PACIFIC OCEAN

OCEAN

- ▲ Campground
- ▲ Shelter
- N Nature Trail
- P Picnic Area
- Ranger Station
- Paved Road
- Gravel or Dirt Road
- Trail
- - - Foot Trail Only

0 5 10  
SCALE IN MILES

TO HOQUIAM & ABERDEEN

TO OLYMPIA Shelton

REV. DEC. 1966 DECEMBER 1964 NP-OLY-17000

TO YAKIMA & MOUNT RAINIER