

# Olympic

NATIONAL PARK • WASHINGTON

**OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK** is a 1,400-square-mile expanse of wild, forest-clad and glacier-studded mountains, with—at lower elevations—coniferous rain forests, lakes, streams, a 50-mile seacoast with rocky headlands and beaches, and a thriving wildlife population.

### **MOUNTAINS AND GLACIERS**

The Olympic Mountains are composed almost entirely of sedimentary rocks, such as sandstone and shale, formed from sand and silt deposited in the shallow seas that many millions of years ago covered western Washington. These rocks were later uplifted, and carved by erosion and glaciers into the present rugged range. Mount Olympus, at 7,965 feet, is the highest peak. Several other peaks rise above 7,000 feet, but elevations of the ridges and crests are mostly between 5,000 and 6,000 feet.

There are about 60 glaciers, with an aggregate area of about 25 square miles, in the Olympic Mountains. 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 and streams. Most of the lakes are small, their beauty adding much to the charm of the Olympic land-

scape. Lake Crescent, which is nestled at the foot of the mountains of the park's northern extremity, is relatively large—about 10 miles long and 1½ miles wide.

### **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 landscape of many shoreline needles, offshore rocks, and islands. Some of these are used by nesting colonies of birds, as a rest stop by migrating birds, and by seals and other marine mammals.

### **WILD ANIMALS**

Olympic National Park protects many species of wild animals—invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals—and their habitats. Of the larger mammals, the Roosevelt elk is the species most commonly seen, especially in the rain forest valleys from late autumn to early spring. Black-tailed deer, bear, raccoon, and skunk live in the park, including the Pacific Coast Area. Seals are frequently seen in the water or on offshore rocks. Visitors to higher and more open country can expect to observe many kinds of animals. About 140 species of birds have been identified in a variety of habitats in the park.

### **CLIMATE**

The west side of the Olympic Peninsula has the wettest winter climate in the conterminous United States, with yearly precipitation exceeding 140 inches in some sections. Mount Olympus and all the high country in the western part of the park receive much more precipitation, mostly in the form of snow. In contrast to the wetness of the west side, the northeast side of the peninsula is one of the driest areas on our Pacific coast outside of southern California.

### **RAIN FOREST**

An extraordinary rain forest growth has developed under the conditions of abundant moisture that have existed for many centuries in the western valleys of the park. Sitka spruce and western hemlock dominate this environment; Douglas-fir and western redcedar are present, too. Some Douglas-fir and Sitka spruce here attain a height of nearly 300 feet and a diameter of 8 feet or more.

### **PRESERVATION OF THE PARK**

Do not damage or collect vegetation. Except for the beaches of the Pacific Coast Area, the collection of rocks and minerals is prohibited.

Hunting and trapping are not allowed: the park is a sanctuary for all wild animals.

Be careful while driving at dusk or after dark. Drive slowly to avoid hitting wild animals.

*Pets* may be taken from your vehicle providing they are on a leash; they are not allowed on park trails or in public buildings.

*Fires.* Be careful with fires. Be sure your campfire is out! Be careful with cigarettes; make sure they are completely out before you dispose of them.

*Camping and picnicking.* Campers and picnickers are required to maintain and leave the areas they use in a clean condition. All unburnable trash must be packed out from the back country. A trail registration permit, required for all back-country camping, can be obtained from the nearest ranger station.

*Trails.* Vehicles are not allowed on the trails or in any back-country area.

*Careful driving.* Park roads are low-speed introductions to the enjoyment of Olympic National Park. Please drive courteously; signal when pulling over to park your car; keep to the right; do not park on curves; and pass only when the view ahead is ample and unobstructed.



Campground	Number of Sites	Trailers Permitted <sup>2</sup>
Altaire	29	X
Deer Park <sup>1</sup>	10	
Dosewallips	33	
Elwha	23	X
Erickson's Bay <sup>1</sup>	15	
Fairholm	90	X
Graves Creek	45	X
Heart O' the Hills	100	X
Hoh	95	X
July Creek	31	
Kalaloch	195	X
Mora	91	X
North Fork <sup>1</sup>	10	
Boulder Creek	50	X
Queets River	12	
Soleduck	84	X
Staircase	50	X

<sup>1</sup>Primitive type—no fee.

<sup>2</sup>Very few campgrounds in the park will accommodate trailers of 21 feet or longer.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

**Campgrounds.** Most park campgrounds consist of individual campsites with tables and fireplaces; piped water and toilet facilities are usually near a cluster of campsites. Neither showers, laundries, nor utility connections are provided in these campgrounds. For more detailed information on campgrounds in Olympic National Park, write to the superintendent. Inquire at the Pioneer Memorial Museum in Port Angeles before attempting some of the approach roads with a trailer.

Some campgrounds at lower elevations are open all year, but high-elevation areas are covered by snow from early November to late June or early July. It is not possible to reserve campground space prior to your visit. Fire permits are not required in the automobile campgrounds. Fees are charged for overnight camping in all but the primitive-type campgrounds.

**Cabins, lodges, and trailer parks.** For information about concessioner-operated cabins, lodges, and trailer parks at Sol Duc Hot Springs, Lake Crescent, La Push, or Kalaloch, write to the park superintendent.

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

## WHAT TO SEE AND DO

**Interpretive programs.** As an introduction to understanding and enjoying Olympic National Park, the National Park Service has three visitor centers—the Pioneer Memorial Museum near Port Angeles (open all year), Storm King Visitor Center at Lake Crescent, and the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center. At these centers are audiovisual programs, talks, exhibits, and numerous interpretive publications and maps. Self-guiding nature trails, located throughout the park, sample many different life communities. In summer, rangers lead guided walks and present evening campfire pro-

grams. For a printed program of interpretive activities, write to the superintendent.

**Motoring.** U.S. 101 provides the main access to the park, with numerous spur roads leading to the rain-forest valleys, the higher country, and the Pacific Coast Area. Since the main body of the park is dedicated for preservation in its natural state, no roads pass through the rugged heart of the Olympics.

Rain forests can be seen along Hoh, Queets, and Quinault River roads. Two nature trails begin at the Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center. On the north side of the park, there is a good road from Heart O' the Hills to Hurricane Ridge. The approach to this road is from Port Angeles past the Pioneer Memorial Museum. Hurricane Ridge affords visitors an excellent opportunity to look into a superb part of the Olympic wildland. On clear days, the sculptured, ice-clad peaks of Mount Olympus and the Bailey Range delight photographers. The wildflower display in the fragile sub-alpine meadows is best seen about mid-July. This high country is a delicate environment; please help us to perpetuate it undisturbed for future generations.

The Pacific Coast Area is accessible from U.S. 101, directly at Kalaloch and by spur roads to the mouth of the Hoh, to La Push, and to Rialto Beach.

**Hiking.** Roads provide access to about 600 miles of trails. Some short trails provide easy trips requiring 1 day or less; longer, more difficult trails may take up to 1 week or more.

Trails are cleared of obstructions as snow melts and summer progresses. Trail conditions vary from year to year, depending on the severity of the previous winter and the rate of snowmelt in late spring. Inquire at any visitor center or ranger station for the current trail conditions.

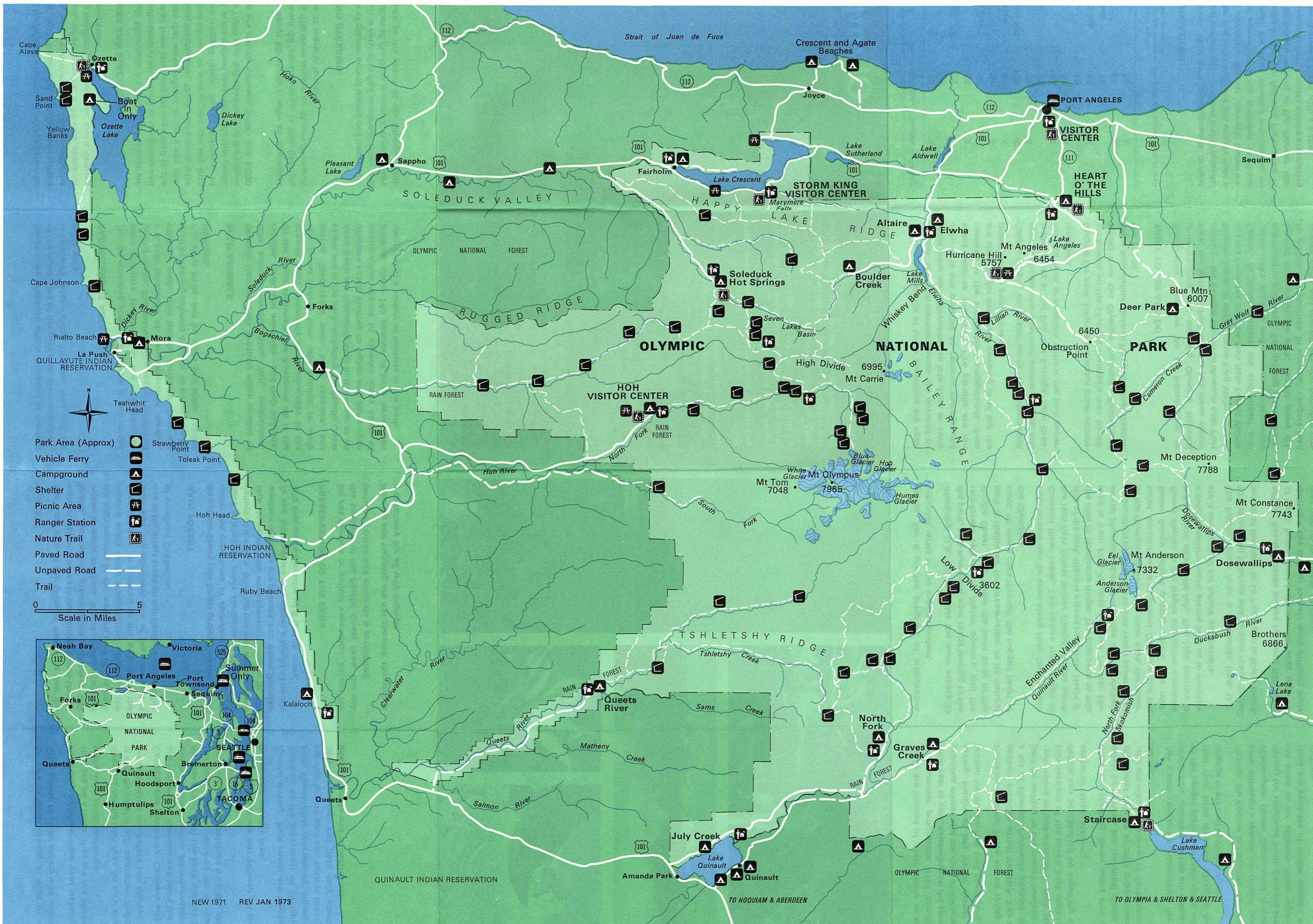
**Horseback riding.** There are no riding stables or packers available within the park. You can obtain a list of Olympic Peninsula packers outside the park by writing to the superintendent. There are restrictions on and closures to pack stock in certain sections of the park's back country; further details can be obtained by inquiring at a visitor center or ranger station.

**Mountain climbing.** Some peaks may be climbed safely by novices, but technical climbs should be attempted only by or with experienced climbers who are wise in the ways of Northwest mountaineering.

Ask a park ranger for information. For their own protection, climbing parties are asked to register at the ranger station on their route and to show that they have standard climbing gear. Never engage in off-trail activities alone.

**Fishing.** No license is required for fishing in the park, although a special punchcard issued by the Washington Game Department is required for fishing for steelhead trout. Seasons are generally the same as for adjacent State waters. Regulations are available at visitor centers and ranger stations.



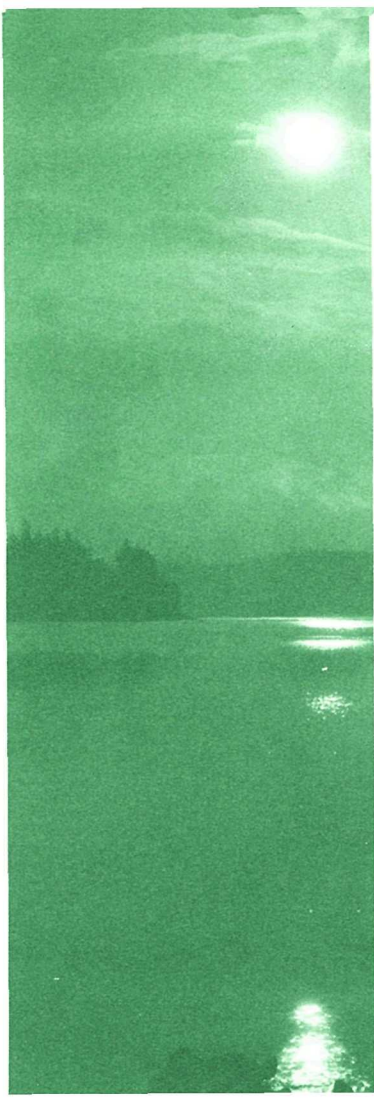
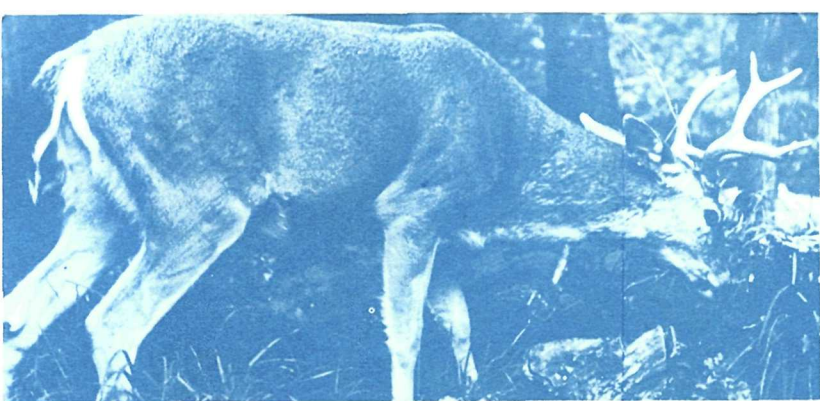


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#### FOR A SAFE VISIT

Never take shortcuts across switchbacks on foot and horseback trails. Besides leading to erosion, this is dangerous to you.

Be sure to put out your campfire; be sure cigarettes are out before you dispose of them; don't smoke while traveling on trails.

Register for mountain-climbing trips; never climb alone.

Remember that all park animals—including bears—are wild; do not feed or molest them.

#### ADMINISTRATION

Olympic National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is 600 East Park Avenue, Port Angeles, WA 98362, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

**National Park Service**  
**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

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