



Early August 2011



Pacific Madrone with peeling bark

Lindsey Brown

This month on the Monument

Free ranger programs will be offered each day. Check the blackboard in the Visitor Center for fascinating topics. Explore the cave in the old style - candlelight tours take place on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Want to get muddy? Make your reservations now for the Off-Trail Adventure tour.

Be sure to stroll through the historic Chateau at the Oregon Caves. Lodging, fine dining, gift gallery, 1930's era coffee shop, a relaxing lobby, and more are just across from the cave entrance. Inquire at The Chateau or visit their website for information about entertainment and events:

<http://www.oregoncaveschateau.com/>

Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)

Have you noticed the tree with the peeling bark? There's nothing unhealthy about it: it's the Pacific Madrone.

The Madrone's smooth bark peels in summer. Various chemicals in its sap permeate the bark layers, so that each layer takes on a new color, from bright green to a rosy terra cotta. As the tree's bark peels, a variety of colors delights the eye. Even on hot days, the bark feels cool to the touch. Unlike most

deciduous trees, the Madrone's oval, waxy leaves do not drop in the winter.

Naturalist John Muir wrote that the tree looks like "some lost wanderer from the magnolia groves of the South," but instead it calls the Pacific Northwest home. Enjoy the Pacific Madrone: just one example of the Monument's biodiverse plant life.

Help protect our native trees – clean your boots!



Boot Cleaning Station (above)
Port-Orford-cedar foliage (below)

Since the mid-1900s a root-rotting fungal parasite (*Phytophthora lateralis*) has become a serious killer of Port-Orford-cedars. Fungal spores spread naturally by flowing or splashing water, or where spore-laden soil is moved by humans, animals, or automobile tires. This parasite kills Port-Orfords of all ages, and there are no signs yet of any natural resistance.

You can help prevent the spread of this parasite by visiting the boot cleaning station at the trailhead near our Visitor Center.

It's simple: Knock off excess mud and debris by stomping and using the boot brush.

To prevent this disease at the Monument we ask that you please clean your boots before hiking.

Once widespread, the Port-Orford-cedar is now only found naturally in a small area of Southwest Oregon and Northwest California. This tree has a narrow crown, faintly drooping branches, and deeply fissured brownish-gray bark. The lacy foliage is yellow-green to dark green. On the reverse is a series of small white Xs. Look for this native tree on many of the Monument's trails, especially the No Name Trail.

Douglas Squirrel
(*Tamiasciurus douglasii*)



Douglas Squirrel

Franco Folini

A common inhabitant of old-growth forests, the Douglas Squirrel is a small, lively, bushy-tailed squirrel found in the treetops at Oregon Caves National Monument. This rodent is active during the day (diurnal), year-round, often gathering food: acorns, fruit, mushrooms, bird eggs, and cones of the Douglas-fir and other trees. The squirrel does not eat the entire cone – just the seed inside. Occasionally the Douglas Squirrel enters the cave - look for piles of pinecone pieces as evidence one was visiting!

As you hike through the Monument listen for the noisy chatter of the Douglas Squirrel!

Bracken Fern
(*Pteridium aquilinum*)



Bracken Fern

USFS

Bracken ferns can be found in shady, moist forested areas of the Monument. Just look around and effortlessly spot their huge triangular, highly-divided leaves (fronds). The majestic Bracken Fern can grow over six feet tall, but the ones you will see around Oregon Caves are less than three feet.

Ferns have stems, leaves, and roots. Unlike most plants, they do not use flowers or cones to reproduce – they use spores. If you look closely at the undersides of the leaves you might see clusters of these spores called sori. The Bracken Fern grows back year after year and is deciduous, losing its fronds during the winter.

Golden-Mantled Ground Squirrel
(*Spermophilus lateralis*)



Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel

Dave Herr

Often mistaken for a chipmunk, the Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel is a commonly seen animal at the Monument. It features stripes on its sides and a light colored belly. Unlike a chipmunk, this squirrel does not have stripes that continue down its face.

As the name suggests, this squirrel spends much of its day on the ground filling expandable cheek pouches with seeds, fruit, insects, berries, and bird eggs. This species is a true hibernator – it eats enough throughout the summer to sleep all winter long, nourished by stored fat. After a long winter's nap, it will wake up to find a mate and search for food all over again!

No Name Trail
1.3 mile loop

*Moderately strenuous,
some steep climbs*

Walk alongside No Name Creek and Cave Creek as you look for Douglas Squirrel, Pacific Madrone, Port-Orford Cedar, Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel, and many species of ferns.



Covered bridge on No Name Trail

NPS

This loop trail takes you behind and below the Chateau lodge through dense mixed forests and among mossy rock outcrops. **Be sure to stop at the boot cleaning station before hiking.**

Directions:

Option 1: At the main parking lot, either from the picnic area or the far end toward the highway, follow the trail down into the drainage.

Option 2: At the upper parking lot (Chateau lodge parking), access the trailhead at the far end, past the Chateau lodge and garage.

Option 3: Behind the Chateau lodge, walk down the service road to reach the trail.

Note: Follow dead end trails off of No Name Trail to enjoy small waterfalls on the creek.

Time: Allow 45-60 minutes

Climb: 268 feet (82 m)