

Ashland Newcomers Hiking Group

Hike Schedule for May 23 through June 19, 2002

Meet in Safeway parking lot in Ashland at 9:00 am; car pools will leave for trailhead around 9:05 am. We take a lunch break to allow for social interaction, so bring something to eat and drink. Be prepared for cool and/or damp weather. TH = trailhead
Note: the May 23, May 30, and June 6 hikes are on Thursday; the June 12 and June 19 hikes are on Wednesdays. All hikes thereafter will be on Wednesdays.

Coordinator: Alex Maksymowicz 482-1964; maksym@jeffnet.org

May 23, 2002: Rogue River East Trail: Grave Creek to Whiskey Creek

TH: Take I-5 north to Merlin (Exit 60); drive thru Merlin and follow Galice Rd (paved) 19 mi to far side of Grave Creek bridge; turn left downhill to boat ramp and trailhead
Est. drive time: 90 min

Hike description: Follow east rim of Rogue River canyon past Rainie Falls to Whiskey Creek cabin and back; the scenery is spectacular but the trail is somewhat rough, and there is considerable exposure—walking stick highly recommended

Distance: 7 mi; elev gain: 300 ft

Thursday, May 30, 2002: Rogue Gorge Trail: Union Creek to Woodruff Bridge

TH: Hwy 62 east from Medford to Union Creek; leave shuttle car at Woodruff Bridge
Est drive time to trailhead: 90 min

Hike description: Follow Rogue River from Union Creek to Woodruff Bridge

Distance: 7 miles; elev gain: should be mostly downhill

Comments: There is no elevation gain on south side (Hwy 62 side) of trail; there is a steep elevation gain and subsequent loss on north side if one crosses the bridge at mile 2 to get to Natural Bridge area. It was early spring along the Rogue—dogwoods in full bloom, otherwise mainly white flowers except for some patches of Calypso and some yellow violets.

Thursday, June 6, 2002: South Fork of Rogue River, Middle TH to Upper TH

TH: Crater Lake Hwy from Medford 14.5 mi; right on Butte Falls Hwy 16 mi (1 mi past Butte Falls); left towards Prospect 9 mi; right on Road 34 8.5 mi to parking area

Est. drive time: 75 min

Hike description: Trail goes thru woods along S Fork of Rogue R; return via car shuttle

Distance: 6 mi; elevation gain: 450 ft

Comment: We skipped this one; trail didn't warrant the long drive of 90 minutes.

Heading north, the trail kept close to the river for some 2 miles, then climbed away from the river and became an uninteresting walk through the woods. Heading south, the trail petered out completely after reaching the river at around 0.5 miles. Very few flowers were in bloom at this time.

Substitute hike for Thursday, June 6: Brown Mt Trail: FS #3705 TH to PCT & back
TH: Dead Indian Rd 22 miles to FS road #37; left on FS #37 for 6 miles to FS #3705; right on FS 3705 for 3.5 miles to trailhead. All roads are paved.

Estimated drive time to trailhead: 45 to 60 minutes

Hike Description: quiet, level walk through the woods

Distance: 6 miles (3 miles each way); elev gain: minimal

Comment: this hike does have a few up and downs, although overall elevation loss and gain is slight. Trail does have lots of roots and rocks in some places, which proved to be considerable impediments to Willow Dean (blind lady). Only early post-snow melt flowers were in bloom. We ate lunch in the middle of the PCT; however, Cheryl Ugland discovered a truly magical spot at a bridge over a small stream some 100 yards north on the PCT.

Wednesday, June 12, 2002: Pacific Crest Trail (PCT): Pilot Rock to Little Pilot Rock

TH: Take Mt Ashland exit 6 off I5; follow old Hwy 99 under the freeway 2.3 mi; make left onto Pilot Rock Rd 2.8 mi to parking lot at second crossing of PCT

Est. drive time: 30 min

Hike description: Hike west on PCT to Little Pilot Rock; climb of Pilot Rock is optional (elev gain 800 ft, considerable exposure, some climbing)

Distance: about 7 miles; elev. gain: about 500 ft (trail only)

Comment: access spur to Pilot Rock is very steep and some ¼ mile long; the downhill return stretch is very slippery, due to the grade and gravel on the trail. Brian Gorham and Neal Thompson attempted to climb Pilot Rock but gave up when they reached the 8 foot high slippery chute. We did not reach Little Pilot Rock, but the hike towards it was lovely, with many flowers in bloom. While everyone else huddled in shade on the trail, Brian, Charley Pagani, and I ate lunch on a rock outcrop with a magnificent view, including Mt Shasta. A butterfly landed on Brian's finger tip and stayed there for several minutes. It then moved on to the arm of Steve Spelman, who had come to join us.

The previous Sunday Lillian and I came up to pre-hike the trail but ended up going south on the PCT away from Pilot Rock rather than toward it. The flowers on this stretch were magnificent, including a steep slope covered with Trillium albidum. It would probably be worth an early season hike, although it heads downhill towards I-5, so that the return stretch would be uphill. Need to check the mileage to see if we can leave a shuttle on the way up at old 99 where the PCT crosses it.

Wednesday, June 19, 2002: High Lakes Trail: Great Meadow to PCT (Not done)

TH: Hwy 140, approx 2 mi east of Dead Indian Rd; leave shuttle car at PCT crossing

Est drive time: 60 min

Hike description: walk thru meadows, past lakes, over lava flows

Distance: 7.5 miles; elev gain: about 200 ft

Substitute hike: RT on PCT north through Sky Lakes Wilderness Area to junction with Mt McLoughlin trail (comments on next page, q.v.)

Comment: we did not take the trail described above, because we walked right by the PCT heading south. Instead we ended up on the PCT going north into the Sky Lakes Wilderness Area some 3.5 miles to the junction with the Mt McLoughlin trail, where we had lunch, before heading back the same way. Freye Lake was supposed to be somewhere along the way at around 3 miles, but we did not see it. The trail was

somewhat dull but easy to walk on, heading steadily uphill through Douglas Fir; no flowers were out, except at the very beginning.

How to find the PCT heading south: from the far end of the Summit parking lot off 140 (4.2 miles east of its junction with FS 37) take the PCT access trail some 1/8 mile to a bridge across a small stream. The PCT junction is some 20 yards beyond the bridge, although the signs are old and easy to miss. Turn left to head south to 140 and cross the highway to continue to the intersection with the High Lakes Trail.