

Metro Parks and Nature Field Guide

BROUGHTON BEACH

STORY BY *Jim Caudell*

PHOTOGRAPH BY *Sofia Basto*

Broughton Beach is one of the few sandy beaches in Portland, attracting a steady stream of visitors to enjoy the Columbia River. Broughton Beach is just east of the busy M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp. Upon entering the parking area, look to the left to see a number of double-crested cormorants lined up on a wire. These birds are a natural wind gauge; visitors can always tell which way the wind is blowing by the direction the cormorants are facing.

Today, visitors might see artists standing at their easels, capturing the movement of the wind across water, or sand against the backdrop of Mount Hood. Light from the rising and setting sun drapes across the mountain as airplanes departing from Portland International Airport seem to jockey for air space with kites chased by breezes that play at the west end of the Columbia Gorge.

Broughton Beach was previously called Dittler's Beach and was long known as a meet-up place for groups partying around bonfires, often leaving garbage and broken glass behind. Recent cleanup efforts included using a machine called



the Beach Tech 2800 to finely sift through the sand, removing 110 tons of debris. The cleanup, combined with new bathrooms, evening security, and rules prohibiting alcohol and beach fires, have helped create a family-friendly destination.

The river is the backdrop to all that goes on as it brings relief to picnickers, sunbathers and waders during hot summer months. Colorful canopies and tents splash new colors on the beach as fishermen launch from the adjoining boat ramp to chase spring, summer and fall salmon.

These fish runs that once fed Native American tribes and early explorers are now a symbol of environmental change. Today from the comfort of one's sand chair, it is possible to watch line fishermen compete with gill-netters and sea lions in an age-old contest with environmental and economic consequences.

Watch osprey dive under water, often emerging with a struggling salmon clenched in its talons. Early on a quiet morning as fishing boats line up in the "hog line," it is possible to hear the anglers' voices carried across the water.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!



NOOTKA ROSE



BUFFLEHEAD DUCKS



STREAMBANK LUPINE



GREAT BLUE HERON

BROUGHTON BEACH

4325 NE MARINE DRIVE, PORTLAND
oregonmetro.gov/broughton

DIRECTIONS

Minutes from downtown and across Northeast Marine Drive from Portland International Airport. Broughton Beach and M. James Gleason Memorial Boat Ramp are accessible only on North Marine Drive. Popular nearby access points are from Interstate 5 exit 307, Northeast Sixth Drive, and Northeast 33rd and 122nd avenues in Portland. Single-car vehicles should park in the eastern portion of the parking lot closest to Broughton Beach. Or bike to the beach along the Marine Drive Trail.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO

Open sunrise to sunset. Dogs allowed at Gleason Boat Ramp, on leash at Broughton Beach. \$5/vehicle/day; free with annual pass. *No alcohol, please.*

AMENITIES

Restrooms, drinking fountain, workout station. Gleason Boat Ramp offers wheelchair accessible docks and a seasonal river patrol station.

METRO PARKS AND NATURE

Whether you're in the mood for a short hike or a weekend camping trip, a boat ride or a picnic, Metro has a destination for you. You'll share the landscape with salmon swimming in restored streams, birds streaking across the sky and giant, old oak trees towering overhead. Thanks to voters, you can explore 17,000 acres of parks, trails and natural areas across the Portland metropolitan region.

If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we've already crossed paths. *So, hello. We're Metro – nice to meet you.*

Metro Council President

Tom Hughes

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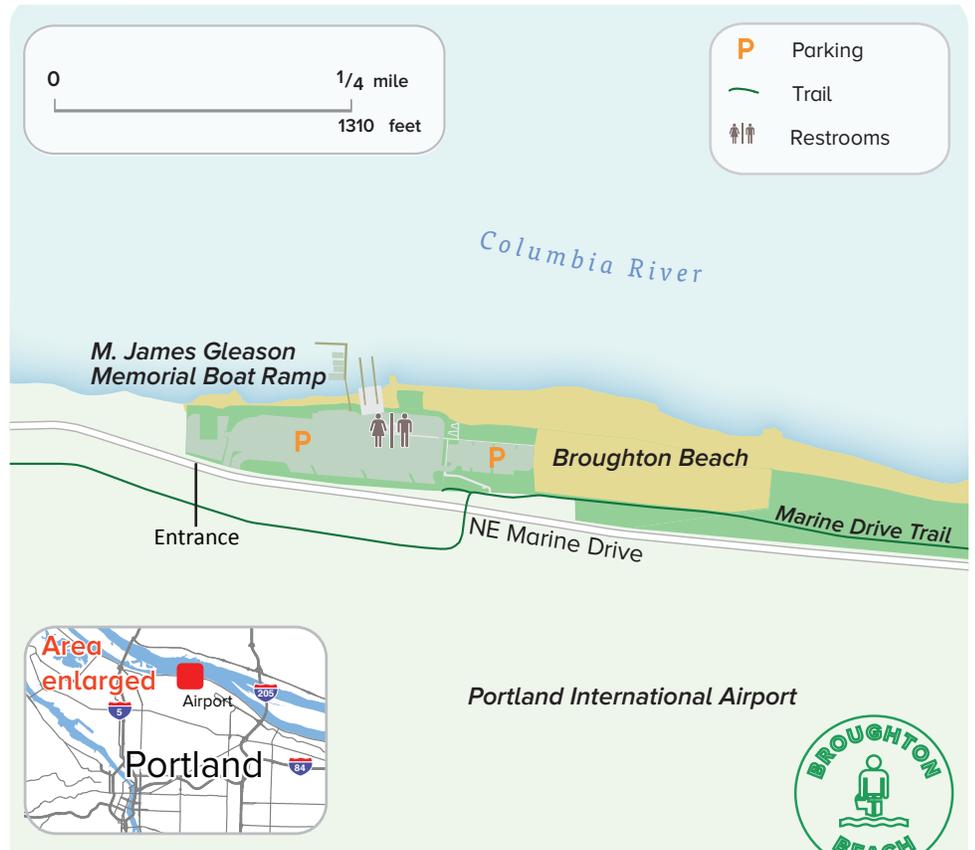
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IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Need some food or refreshment at the end of a long day of fishing, sunbathing or cycling? Stop in at the Sextant Bar & Galley for a burger and beer just to the west end of Gleason boat ramp. Or stop by Salty's on the Columbia, just west of the Sextant, for weekend brunch or a romantic dinner. Both offer prime views of the river. Or head east and around the airport to Cascade Station, which offers plenty of shopping options.

3 WAYS TO ENJOY BROUGHTON BEACH

CANOE OR KAYAK

History intersects with commerce, recreation and sport at Broughton Beach. At River Mile 110 on the Lower Columbia River Water Trail, it is not uncommon to see tugboats pushing barges loaded with logs and grain through a fleet of sail boats while listening to the grunts of the Columbia River Outrigger Canoe Club members paddle their boats. Bring your own canoe or kayak to enjoy a unique perspective from the river.

MARINE DRIVE TRAIL

Cycling is a popular way to visit Broughton Beach, with a separate, asphalt path alongside Marine Drive from Northeast 33rd Avenue to Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview. Cyclists must briefly return to the shoulder of Marine Drive near Northeast 185th Avenue. Be sure to check out the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail sign that commemorates the Lewis and Clark expedition.

BIRDWATCHING

The impulses that cause seasonal movement of fish below the water can be seen in the varieties of birds spotted above. Visitors can see great blue heron, greater and lesser scaup, killdeer, common loon, cackling goose, yellow-rumped warbler, pied-billed grebe, bufflehead ducks, northern shrike and Wilson's phalarope and more than 150 other birds.

oregonmetro.gov/broughton