

Rising more than 700 feet above Happy Valley, Scouters Mountain gives you an opportunity to stroll under a forest of Douglas fir, big leaf maple and Oregon white oak.

After a relatively easy, few-minute walk from the parking lot, you arrive to the top of this extinct volcanic dome, a perfect area to have a picnic on the open grass or at the comfortable shelter. On a clear day, the stunning view of Mount Hood is one of the best in the region.

As you walk through the easy 1.5 mile twisting trail, take some time to rest on one of the five benches with beautiful miniature botanical art, listen to the birdcalls and take a few healing deep breaths. Many of the huge trees that surround you have been here before the arrival of the first white settlers to this area.

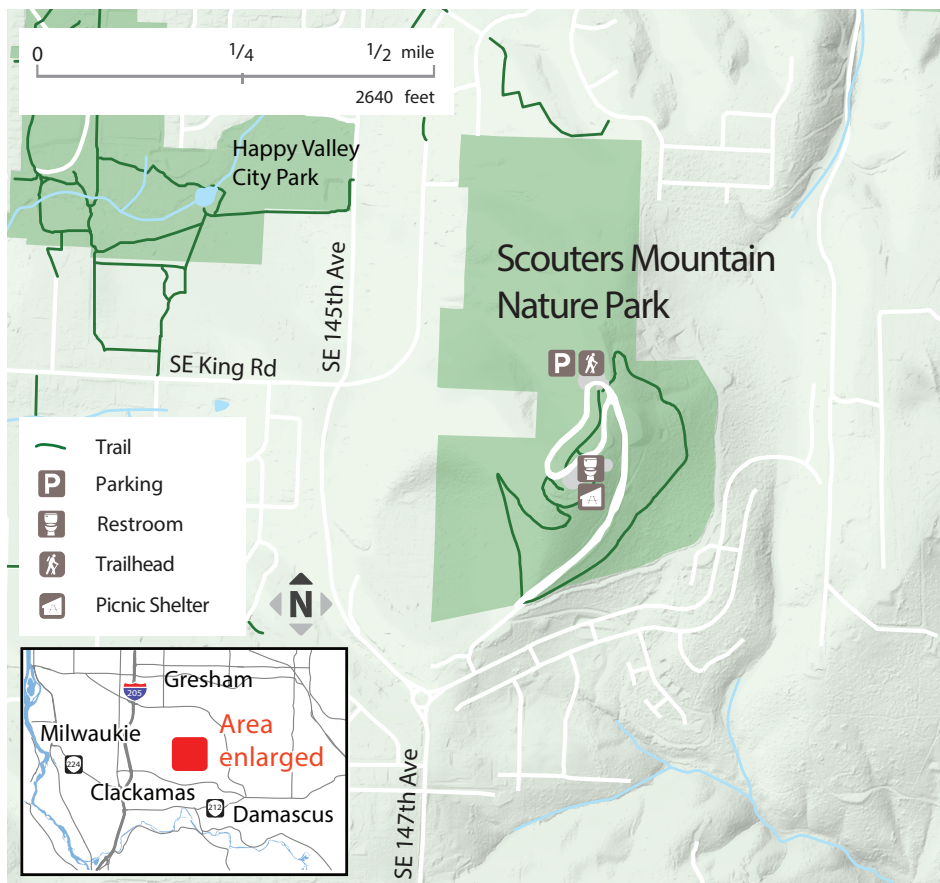
The Clackamas people, the namesake for both the county and the river that

crosses it, have lived in this area since time immemorial, and sustained thriving river cultures along the Willamette and in the valleys of the Clackamas and Sandy rivers. Today, descendants of the Clackamas are part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, a sovereign nation.

Hotter, drier summers have killed many trees at the park, especially red alders, showing a visible effect of climate change. Growing urbanization around the park has increased pressure on the wildlife that use Scouters Mountain as a pathway to other forests and natural areas. Metro has removed invasive weeds from the mountain's northern slopes and planted some 30,000 native trees and shrubs so the forest will continue to thrive for years to come. Restoration efforts have helped create an amazing nature park to explore, as well as habitat for sensitive species such as migratory birds.

Be on the lookout!





Season-by-season highlights

Spring: Spring invites fresh, vibrant green growth in the understory plants; look for blooming trilliums and wood violet flowers. With the warmer weather and longer days, the songbirds return from their winter locations; keep an eye out for warblers and other songbirds eating bugs and foraging in the new tree foliage.

Summer: When the Portland area dries out and heats up, the shade of the forest can be a perfect break. With the clear summer days, you can see all the way to the Columbia River and into Washington — truly a breathtaking sight. While you are taking it all in, keep an eye out for nesting birds raising their young.

Fall: The fall rains bring mushrooms, a very important part of a healthy forest. See how many types you can find growing on the forest floor and out of the trunks of trees. As the leaves fall, look for bird nests left over from the summer and check out the snags for evidence of woodpeckers.

Winter: In the winter, the fog and mist hang in the tall trees and create a cozy forest feel. Listen for the energetic trill of the Pacific wren, which spends most of its time on the forest floor among the sword ferns. If you're lucky, you can catch a glimpse of this little brown bird hopping about. While your eyes are on the forest floor, don't forget to look for banana slugs and deer tracks.

Scouters Mountain Nature Park

11300 SE 147th Ave., Happy Valley

Getting there

Scouters Mountain is perched at the top of Boy Scouts Lodge Road in Happy Valley, just off SE 145th Avenue.

Know when you go

Open sunrise to sunset. No dogs or alcohol, please.

Amenities

Majestic views of Mount Hood. Hiking trails, parking, restrooms and a reservable picnic shelter.

Pets policy

To protect plants, wildlife and people, Metro does not allow pets at most regional parks and natural areas. Pets can damage sensitive habitat and threaten wildlife the region has worked to protect. In natural areas where pets are not allowed, people see more wildlife and get closer to it. Seeing-eye dogs or other service animals are allowed. Please bring cleanup materials.

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