

# Eugene's *great outdoors* beckon

Eugeneans have the chance to hike mountain trails and scramble up rock walls minutes from home

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FREELANCE REPORTER

The University is notorious for recruiting students by showcasing the school's proximity to recreation-rich coastal and mountain towns. But sometimes recruiters neglect to mention the abundance of great outdoor activities just a stone's throw away from campus.

The surrounding campus areas have many outdoor recreation opportunities, including biking and running paths, hiking trails and parks. Here are some of Eugene's highlights and some hints to help you experience them at their best.

## Mount Pisgah

Mount Pisgah Arboretum is located between the Coast Fork of the Willamette River and the slopes of Mount Pisgah in the Howard Buford Recreation Area. The arboretum easily draws repeat visitors with more than 200 acres of grounds and hiking trails, picnic areas with homemade benches and tables, and more plant and animal species than it's possible to list.

"I like Pisgah (for hiking). It's a quick, good heart rate raiser with a great view to hike to the top. Or you can cruise around the trails at the base for a more mellow hike," said Suzanne Hanlon, the Assistant Director of the University's Outdoor Program.

The park's elaborate maze of hiking trails — eight miles in all — is the main attraction. Each trail winds through various ecological habitats including a meadow and a wildflower garden. The

bird-watching opportunities are plentiful and the long hike to the summit is worth the view of the sprawling south end of the rural Willamette Valley.

Hint: During the weekend, the park's main parking lot fills quickly. Try visiting at off-peak hours like during the evenings or weekdays.

## Spencer Butte

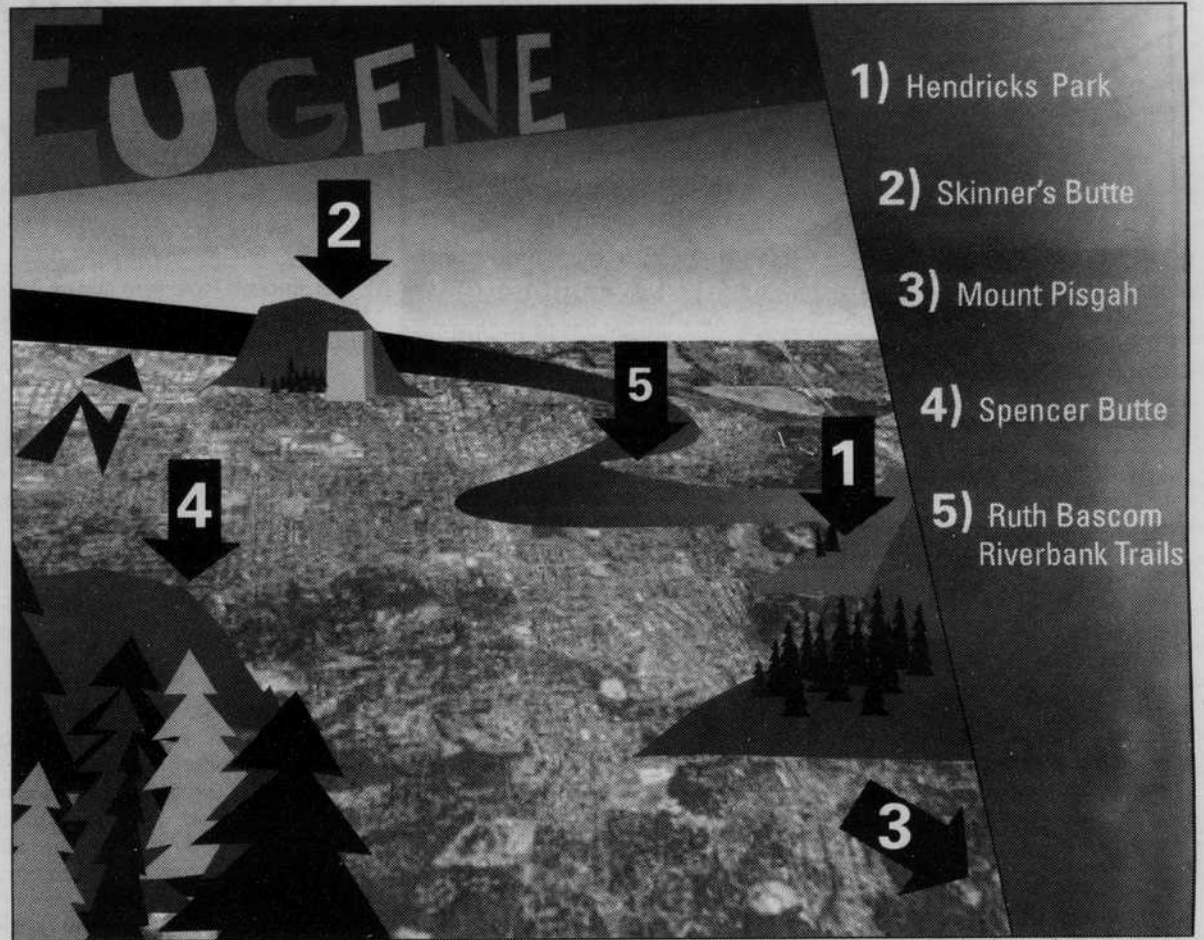
Spencer Butte is another popular hiking trail located just five miles south of downtown Eugene. It provides a steeper grade than Pisgah in a short but challenging 1.5- to 2-mile hike.

"Spencer's is a wonderful forested hike and also a good heart thumper to the top," said Hanlon. "While Pisgah is open grassy hillside, this is forested all the way to the top until you break out onto a rocky, open top with stunning views of the valley."

Spencer Butte loop is part of the South Hills Ridgeline Trail and has two different trail options for hikers. For a steep climb, the left-veering trail is the best option. Both routes lead hikers to the top of this 2,062-foot high butte. From there, they have a sweeping view of the Willamette Valley, Fern Ridge Reservoir and the Three Sisters.

Chemistry and physics major Elliott Hinds has a specific time and season he enjoys hiking the butte.

"I mainly hike the butte in summer and my favorite time is actually at night, but I wouldn't recommend it for others as it's fairly dangerous," he said. "I know a number of people



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who've gotten lost on their way down, myself included."

Hint: Try the hike as part of a training program for a sport, or use it as a fantastic place to watch the sunrise or sunset.

## Skinner's Butte

While Skinner's Butte also provides

some short hiking trails and a panoramic city view, the 100-acre property near downtown Eugene is mainly used as a local gathering place. The park features baseball and softball areas, a community garden, picnic tables, a playground, a climbing area, and numerous walking and hiking paths.

The park has two well-known attractions. The first is the overlook area that provides a sweeping city view and photo opportunity that captures all of Eugene, including the University neighborhood and many well-known city landmarks.

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# Volunteers Wanted!

**Duck Preview** is a visitation day for high school seniors who are interested in the University of Oregon. Its success depends on volunteer support from you... current UO students!

## Duck Preview 2005 Sunday, November 6

Volunteering at Duck Preview is a great way to:

- Get involved on campus
- Meet other students
- Get better acquainted with the university
- Help prospective students
- Share your Duck experiences with visitors

There will be two training sessions to choose from:

- Monday, October 24 at 5:00 p.m. in 461 Oregon Hall

OR

- Wednesday, October 26 at 5:00 p.m. in 461 Oregon Hall

Contact the **Ambassador Program** by phone at 346-1274 or by e-mail at [ambass@uoregon.edu](mailto:ambass@uoregon.edu)



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