

Life *in the* Valley

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PHOTOS BY JUSTIN MUCH/STAYTON MAIL

Dory Lapanamea of Vancouver, Wash., right, and her daughter, Amado, admire a blue parakeet named Cloud, a pet of Rich Hawkins of Medford and his boys, Kenji and Kaneda, left. They all enjoyed a 4.5 mile hike at Silver Falls State Park May 23.

Blue parakeet turns heads as hikers explore falls and trails

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Cloudless blue skies and warm spring temperatures lured hundreds of hikers to Silver Falls State Park on Tuesday, May 23, while one blue parakeet named Cloud lured a passel of post-hike attention.

Cloud actually finished up a roughly 4.5-mile sojourn perched atop his keeper's shoulder. Rich Hawkins of the Medford area made the trip north with his boys, Kenji and mohawk-adorned Kaneda. And Cloud came along for the ride and walk.

"We try to do stuff like this all the time," Hawkins said of the day's outdoor adventure, which involved the falls-filled Canyon Trail jaunt, followed by a precipitous Maple Ridge climb on the return.

"We usually go out on our bikes, but this is an entirely different setting from what we're used to."

Cloud actually brought a different sight to Silver Creek Falls as well, which is steeped in rich verdure smatterings of wildlife in the air and on the ground and, of course, the roaring splashes of the creek and its plentiful falls.

But a parakeet?

Another out-of-town visitor, Dory La Panamea of Vancouver, Wash., and her stroller-strapped toddler Amado, were entranced by the docile, powder-blue Cloud, who perched on La Panamea's hand to provide a peek as Kaneda offered instructions.

The visitors joined hordes of others, including a contingent from Salem's Roberts High School, who took advantage of a pleasant weekday to meander through the picturesque footpaths in search of a little jaunt away from the weekly norms.



Cloud, a blue parakeet, joins a family hike at Silver Falls State Park.

Silver Falls State Park trails were a popular draw on a sunny day in the Willamette Valley.