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## BLM and Nature Conservancy offer interpretive hiking opportunities at Table Rocks

Wildflowers are beginning to show their color, vernal pools are buzzing with life, springtime is returning to the southern Oregon landscape. It is time once again for the annual Table Rocks guided hike season. From April 1 through June 6, the Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and The Nature Conservancy are offering the public two separate interpretive hiking opportunities, one on weekdays and one on weekends.

### GROUP WEEKDAY HIKES

Various school and community groups have been guided by the Table Rocks Environmental Education Program to the tops of Upper and Lower Table Rocks for more than 20 years. Groups of 10 individuals or more of any age are welcome to sign up for these free, interpretive hikes. Participants enjoy spectacular views of the Rogue Valley and surrounding mountain ranges while learning about the unique natural and cultural history of the Table Rocks. Guides are available Tuesday through Friday. Hikes begin around 9:00 am and last about four hours. The schedule already is quite full, so please reserve a day as soon as possible. For more information visit our website: <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/tablerock/index.php>.

### WEEKEND SPRING HIKE SERIES

The Nature Conservancy and the BLM are offering their annual series of guided, educational walks on the Table Rocks in April and May. This popular weekend hike series promises a spectacular view of the valley, a natural wildflower display, and expert interpretation from specialists on the natural and cultural history of the area. Anyone from the community is welcome to sign up. There is no fee to participate, but reservations are required. To reserve a space on a hike, call the BLM Medford District Office at 541-618-2200. Participation is limited to 30 individuals per hike unless otherwise noted. The weekend hike schedule can be viewed on the BLM's Table Rocks website and The Nature Conservancy website: <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/tablerock/index.php> and <http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/oregon/preserves/>.

Participants in both the weekday and weekend hikes should dress for the weather and bring a lunch and something to drink. There is no drinking water at either Upper or Lower Table Rocks. Restrooms are available at both trailheads. To help protect this special place and its inhabitants, dogs are not allowed on the trail. The hikes range from three to five miles roundtrip along a moderate grade trail, and last three to five hours.

### 2008 TABLE ROCKS WEEKEND HIKE SEASON SPRING SCHEDULE

**Saturday, May 3—10:00 am**

**LOWER TABLE ROCK—Legacy of a Landmark**

Jeff Lalonde, archaeologist and historian for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, will discuss the role of the Table Rocks in the culture and legends of the Takelma Indians, as well as some history of the Table Rock area during the "Indian Wars" of the 1850s.

**Sunday, May 4—10:00 am**

**UPPER TABLE ROCK—Layers of Time**

Bill Elliott, assistant professor of geology at Southern Oregon University, will describe the formation of the Table Rocks and unique geological features observed along a hike to the wildflower-covered top of this ancient lava flow.

**Saturday, May 10—10:00 am**

**UPPER TABLE ROCK—Wonderful Wildlife**

Come learn about life in the wild with Jeff Stephens, wildlife biologist for the BLM, on a hike investigating the biology and ecology of animals found on and around the Table Rocks.

**Sunday, May 11—10:00 am (Mother's Day)**

**LOWER TABLE ROCK—Family Hike**

Join Greta Gardiner, a BLM environmental interpreter, on a family hike to the top of the rock! This is a general information hike suitable for all ages. Topics will include plant and flower identification and the cultural history of the area. Bring water, your lunch, and your curiosity!

**Saturday, May 17—10:00 am**

**LOWER TABLE ROCK—Living with "Titanakh"**

Come discover the unique cultural history, ethnobotany, and general ecology of the Table Rocks with BLM naturalist Leah Schrodt.

**Sunday, May 18—10:00 am**

**UPPER TABLE ROCK—Nature Sketching**

Join illustrator and naturalist Irene Brady on a nature-sketching trip. Get advice from this skilled professional as you recreate the beauty of the Table Rocks. Bring a camera if you wish. If it rains, we'll skip the sketching to explore and enjoy Table Rocks natural history. Bring your sketchpad, drawing tools, waterproof sifter, sack lunch and water bottle. For more information about Irene, see [www.natureworkspress.com](http://www.natureworkspress.com). Participation will be limited to 12 individuals.

Contact: Leah Schrodt, Project Coordinator, 541-618-2468.