



HIKES AREN'T FAR

Places to go in the great outdoors
BY THE EW STAFF

Not everyone comes to the UO because they want to be a Duck. Some come for, you know, the education, and some because Eugene is damn fine place to live if you like the outdoors and don't mind a little rain. *EW's* got some recommendations for you who maybe don't know the area well and want to get out and explore.

AROUND TOWN

All you have is a bicycle or your own two feet? No problem. Urban hikers can easily walk on over to **Hendricks Park** (Summit Avenue and Skyline Boulevard) east of campus for 80 acres of trails, trees and a world famous rhododendron garden. Hendricks is the northern end of Eugene's Ridgeline Trail, another close-in hike that brings nature to the city dweller.

Ridgeline Trail has multiple trailheads including Dillard Road, Fox Hollow Road and Spring Boulevard that meander through oak savannah, over hilltops and past the Amazon Headwaters in this loop of semi-connected parklands. At 2,065 feet, Spencer Butte is the city's highest point and a popular Ridgeline hike. For info and directions, go to the city of Eugene's website at wkly.ws/1kg.

For another local favorite, check out the trails of **Mount Pisgah**, which range from flat to fairly steep.

Eugene is famous for its **bike and pedestrian** paths on both sides of the Willamette River and along Amazon Creek out to the West Eugene Wetlands. Look around for a city bike map or just find a path and follow it.

FARTHER AFIELD

Excellent hiking and mountain biking trails can be found within an hour's drive or so from Eugene. Hiking books and maps are available at local outdoor shops and bookstores, or Google trail names for directions. *EW's* website has years of outdoor columns that will come in handy.

The world-class **McKenzie River Trail** with its spectacular waterfalls and trout fishing can be accessed by taking a \$3 LTD bus (round-trip) out

Highway 126 to the McKenzie River Ranger Station, and you can bring your bike. Those with cars heading out that way (we suggest carpools) can also venture to see the beautiful old growth along the **Lookout Creek** trail. When it's open during the summer months and early fall, **Proxy Falls** makes a great short hike for the less athletically inclined.

Diamond Express is a \$5 (round-trip) public bus service up the Willamette to the Oakridge area via Hwy. 58, with its many mountain bike trails. Oakridge with its brewpub, Brewers Union Local 180, makes a great launching point for hikes like the **Middle Fork Trail** or a quick dip in **McCredie Hotsprings**.

Fall Creek and **Tall Timbers trails** can also be reached via Hwy. 50 but are a little closer in, though not on a bus line. In the summer Fall Creek has some great swimming holes.

FAR OUT

The **Oregon Coast** has great hiking year round, and one favorite north of Florence is from the lighthouse at Devil's Elbow north along the coast to Washburne State Park. Access in the middle is down the very popular **Hobbit Trail**, a few miles north of the tunnel. Farther north toward Yachats are wonderful trails around Cape Perpetua, both at sea level and high on the mountain. Some parking areas require a \$3 day pass.

Honeyman State Park south of Florence has miles of amazing sand dunes to explore, but it's easy to get lost if you stray too far from Cleawox Lake. Take a GPS if you hike to the ocean. Farther south is Siltcoos Lake with unique hiking and canoe trail to the ocean.

HIKING CLUBS

Group hikes are going on year round in the area, sponsored by outdoor groups such as the Many Rivers Group of the Oregon Sierra Club, Obsidians' outdoor club, Altair Ski & Sports, city of Eugene Recreation Services, environmental nonprofits and meet-up groups. The UO Outdoor Program not only sponsors trips — like the Willamette River Clean-up Saturday, Oct. 5 — it also rents camping and river trip equipment. Visit outdoorprogram.uoregon.edu for info.

THE VIEW
ON TOP
OF MOUNT
PISGAH
WHILE THE
VALLEY
WAS UNDER
A BLANKET
OF FOG
PHOTO BY
TODD COOPER