

Coast Weekend Road Trip: Olney and Jewell

Find wildlife, waterfalls and more

BY ALYSSA EVANS

The drive down Oregon Highway 202 from Astoria to Jewell is quiet, yet breathtaking. Practically every inch of the drive features stunning scenery, with hundreds of trees, flowers and other fauna.

The drive is like going through a rain-forest, whether it’s raining, snowing or sunny outside. The greenery along the drive is almost worth it enough to take a few hours for a day-trip to and from Jewell. Yet, luckily, there’s a few worthwhile spots along the way that make the road trip even better. Waterfalls, wildlife viewing, hiking, shopping and dining are all different features of the trip.

Throughout the summer, Coast Weekend will feature suggestions for a different road trip each week. To start, we’ll take you through Olney and Jewell.

Where to stay

Just north of Jewell is the Clatsop State Forest, which has trails, hunting, fishing and campgrounds. The campgrounds are on a first come, first serve basis. Entry costs between \$5 and \$20 per night depending on the amount of space requested.

East in the forest is the Northrup Creek Horse Camp, where campers can bring their horses. Reservations are required ahead of time at reserveamerica.com/explore/northrup-creek-horse-camp/OR/411502/overview.

West of the forest is Saddle Mountain State Natural Area, which has more trails, wildlife viewing and camping options. Campgrounds are limited and are a first come, first served basis so it’s best to reserve a spot ahead of time at stateparks.oregon.gov.

Where to eat

From first glance, it’s clear that the Olney Saloon and General Store is a unique spot. Old signs, worn-in boots and a mini gas station all are visible from a first glance of the business. But step inside, and the character remains.

Dozens of suspenders line the ceiling, in honor of the area’s working class. Olney memorabilia and artifacts can be found in just about every corner of the store. In one part of the store is an old beehive. In another is a mounted deer head.

The spot is just a few minutes away



Along the drive to Jewell is countless trees, bushes and other plants.



If you’re not paying attention, you might miss little free libraries and flower stands along the drive to Jewell.



Youngs River Falls.



Signs outside the Olney Saloon.



Horses hide from rain under this barn, which is one of many near Jewell.



The Olney Grange.



Olney Community Church.

from Youngs River Falls, Sigfridson County Park and a few other noteworthy spots. The store and saloon are across the street from the Wildlife Center for the North Coast, which rehabilitates injured animals, and 46 North Farm, which supplies local restaurants and the Astoria Co-op. The Olney Grange No. 793 and the Olney Community Church are also about a block away.

The saloon has been closed during the coronavirus pandemic but the store has stayed open during its regular hours, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. When open, the saloon stays open until 9 to 11 p.m. depending on the day of the week. Sometimes, the saloon hosts country musicians for live music.

While the saloon has been closed, items from its regular menu have been available for take-out orders, as well as the treats, goods and beverages normally available in the store. Regular menu items for the saloon include burgers, sandwiches, chicken wraps, macaroni and cheese, onion rings and many other tasty options.

The store and saloon are the only place to get food along the drive to Jewell from Olney. The closest restaurants to Jewell are the Elderberry Inn and Camp 18 Restaurant, both near Elsie. Both are classic choices on the North Coast and feature traditional American dishes.

If you’re feeling adventurous, Camp 18 has giant cinnamon rolls that’ll likely satisfy your sweet tooth throughout the remainder of your trip. The restaurant is also located next to a small logging museum that’s open to the public.

The Elderberry Inn is home to a seven-room motel, bar and restaurant. The spot is popular for its breakfast food choices.



A bird perches on the fence that separates wildlife and humans at the Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area.

Where to explore

Past the Olney Saloon and General Store are a handful of small county parks on the way to Jewell. The first is Sigfridson County Park, which is quiet and features places to walk and view nature.

Another county park worth a visit is the Lee Wooden Fishhawk Falls County Park, located just ahead of Jewell. The park has places to picnic and birdwatch. Most noteworthy is the park’s hiking trail, which leads to Fishhawk Falls, a medium-sized



The Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area has walking paths, picnic tables and other sitting areas to watch wildlife.

waterfall. The park is worth stopping to visit before going to the Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area, which is just down the road.

A morning at the Jewell Meadows Wildlife Area can easily turn into an

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