



Photos by Carolyn Hoard

**ABOVE:** Resident Kori Foster, left, and her daughter, Niki Doggett, pause during a walk along the trail. **TOP RIGHT:** Benches by the pond offer a respite and a good viewing spot for birding. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Bufflehead swim in a pond.

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trail passes four large freshwater lagoons with marshes and woodlands on both sides of the trail.

Climb the short steps to the viewing platform where artistic placards portray local flora, fauna and the birds. These beautifully painted and informative displays, written and illustrated by Sally Lackaff, are located at several places along the trail. They provide rich details about the natural and human history of the area, as well as about the wide variety of plants, animals, birds and insects that live in the lagoons and surrounding wetlands.

The woods are a mix of alder and spruce, with undergrowth of ferns, salal, huckleberry and elderberry bushes. The trail crosses a short wooden walking bridge and leads to the upper water treatments ponds which are frequented by mallard ducks and seagulls. A spur trail to the south leads to a spruce reserve, then into some quiet Cannon Beach neighborhoods.

In winter, ducks such as the black and white bufflehead, cinnamon teal, shovelers and ring-necked ducks dabble and dive for aquatic food. Ospreys, vultures and eagles may be seen along with views of the Coast Range mountains to the southeast.

Come spring, little pompey wetlands liven with yellow and green skunk cabbage, soft grey pussy willows and brown cattails. Warblers, flycatchers and songbirds such as the red-winged blackbirds with their bright red shoulder patches, fill the marsh with color and their distinctive songs.

Almost any day, you can find folks walking their dogs, birdwatching or jogging.

“I use the trail for so many things. It’s nice for running and jogging because it’s a loop and protected from the wind. It’s flat and even an easy sunny spot,” said local resident Jen Yih.

Yih frequents the trail almost every day. “It’s really quiet. You don’t have the tourist traffic. It’s a local trail,” she added.

Kori Foster and her daughter Niki Doggett walk their dog along the trail. Foster visits the trail a couple times a week.

“The attraction for me is my camera. I’ve gotten photos of so many ducks landing and taking off,” Foster said. “You see eagles once in a while.”

Although this nature area is close to U.S. Highway 101, it is vibrant with plants, birds and animals. One may find frogs, salamanders, raccoons, deer, butterflies, woodpeckers, even a brown creeper, a bird that looks for insects while walking up the tree bark. Canada geese and great blue herons are common.

Across the parking lot from the lagoons is the paved trail along Ecola Creek. At the start of this short trail, there is a placard about the 1964 tsunami which hit Cannon Beach. A city park with a playground, picnic tables, tennis courts and a skate park borders the beginning of this walk. Chickadees and jays inhabit the woodlands while alders and willow trees overhang the creek where mallards and mergansers swim.

There are two parking spots and a viewing bench at the end with a view of a barn and horses across the creek. The ocean and town are just around the corner.

Whether for birdwatching, a peaceful walk or an energetic jog, the Cannon Beach Nature Trail is a lovely place to be rejuvenated by the beauty of nature.

