

'Walk for the Wild'



Photos by Ethan Makowsky

The Willapa National Wildlife Refuge encompasses diverse ecosystems including salt marsh, muddy tidelands, forest, freshwater wetlands, streams, grasslands, coastal dunes and beaches.

Exploring Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

Friends of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge are challenging the public to “Walk for the Wild” in Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula during National Wildlife Refuge Week. The national challenge runs Saturday to Oct. 16. Participants can make a free pledge to walk a 5K or 3.1 miles, or pay \$30 to receive a t-shirt, finisher medal and waterproof bib.

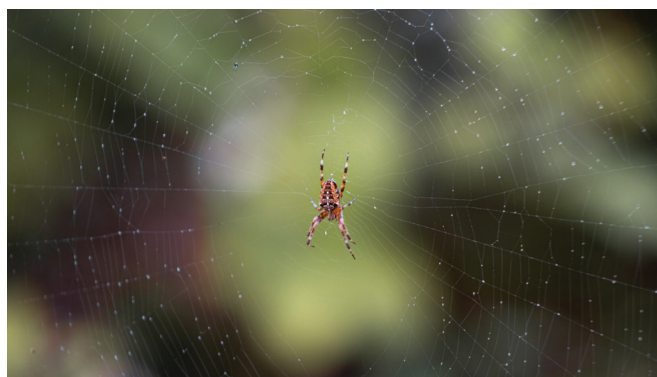
Friends of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge canceled the 2021 Wings Over Willapa Festival last month due to a rise in coronavirus cases in the county and across the country. However, they want people to explore all that Willapa National Wildlife Refuge has to offer and believe October is the perfect time to do it.

The National Wildlife Refuge System, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provides vital habitat for thousands of native species. The area has a collection of nine different trail systems with options for both beginners and hikers looking for a challenge. They ask that hikers pay attention to the tides, and remember foraging is not permitted in the area.

For more information about the refuge and the challenge, visit friendsofwillapa-refuge.org/



President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the refuge in 1937 to protect migrating birds and their habitat at a time when many estuaries and shallow water bays were being destroyed in the name of progress.



Three main families of spiders are found in the refuge, including orb weavers, jumping spiders and crab spiders.



A hiker explores the Cutthroat Climb trail at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. The trail is a moderate 0.75 mile loop with some stairs.



A caterpillar makes its way through the old-growth forest at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.