

THE OREGON COAST TRAIL  
IN CURRY COUNTY

Hiking in the "Banana Belt".

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Anxious for a woodsy hike with spectacular scenery? Try the Oregon Coast Trail. It's snow free, has fabulous coastal vistas, frequent sunshine, and even flowers year around.

What's more, it is just a few minutes away from those of us living on the beautiful south coast.

The Oregon Coast Trail will eventually traverse the entire 350 miles of the coast border to border. Over 300 miles are now in use, many of those miles are on the beach, while others use existing or newly built segments over the headlands.

Because some Curry sections of the trail come back to 101 frequently, it lends itself to short hikes of from 1/2 to 3 miles with longer hikes for those who want to cover several sections in a day. Highway 101 milepost figures on the left are from the south and on the right side from the north. They are approximate.

Starting from South- Enter Harris State Park from Hwy 101 and park by the entrance to the overnight campground. The trail follows the service Road and becomes a trail that comes back to Hwy 101 across from South Coast Lumber Mill at Dawson Road.

Walk behind the hwy guard rail for a few hundred yards to where the trail goes uphill. The trail goes into the woods parallel to the hwy, crosses Deer Park Road and then back up the slope and down again a few hundred yards south of Rainbow Rock condominiums. Walk the highway to just past the condominiums where a Coast Trail sign will take you back on the trail.

354.3 1. Rainbow Rock condominiums to Lone Ranch. Leaves Hwy 101 just north of 353.7 the entrance to the Condominiums, goes through a gravel stockpile site and then through the woods for a while before coming out on a grassy meadow with noxious gorse plants. Goes back into the woods and comes out on hillside overlooking Lone Ranch Beach and passes by a waterfall. Follow the beach to the trail to Lone Ranch Rest Area.

353.5 2. Lone Ranch rest area to Cape Ferrelo parking area. Restrooms and picnic facilities 352.5 are here. The trail starts just off the paved trail past the restroom. It crosses a bridge across Lone Ranch Creek and goes along the north end of the above the beach before heading up the hill to the top of the westernmost portion of the Cape and then around the north edge and to the parking area on top. Moderate (The bridge went out in high water so it may be necessary to ford the creek on the beach or cross on logs. Take extreme care.)

- 352.1 3. Cape Ferrello to House Rock Viewpoint. 1-1/2 miles. Easy hike. The trail heads north from the Cape parking lot and wends its way through open grassy areas and then into wooded areas. House Rock Viewpoint has a large parking area. A monument to Samuel Boardman, early director of the State Parks system is here. 351.9
- 352.8 4. House Rock Viewpoint to Whaleshead Park. 2 1/2 to 3 miles. Moderate. Trail leaves from the northwest corner of the parking lot. In a short distance it comes back close to 101 before crossing a bridge and then heading through a wooded area and then grassy slopes to the beach. The portion from the grassy area to the beach is steep and may be difficult as wave action sometimes takes the trail out. The last half of the trail is along the beach to Whaleshead Park. An easier alternate Route leads to the right a hundred or so yards past the bridge. It parallels the highway, passes by two beautiful waterfalls and comes out at Whaleshead Viewpoint. From there it is down to the beach and then to the Whaleshead picnic area. (Restrooms and picnic tables) 351.2 349.2
5. From the parking area at Whaleshead the next section leaves from just behind the rest room and parallels the highway to meet the south end of the Whaleshead Loop.
- 350.9 6. Whaleshead loop. Easy to moderate. 1 mile. This loop is another scenic one and you return to 101 just about 500 steps from where you started. The trail begins where the Whaleshead Park access road joins 101. The first part is steep but it levels out once you've gained the heights. 349.1
- 349.1 7. Indian Sands section. Easy to moderate. From 1 to 1-1/2 miles. A wide spot along 101 is a place to park to start at the south end. The trail goes through woods and then a panorama of sand, sculptured sandstone, and breath-taking coves and arches come into view. Indian middens may be found, but they are protected by law, so look but do not dig. Shortly after entering the sandy area a trail heads up a steep hill to the Indian Sands parking area. To go further north, follow the trail along the upper end of the sand. It drops over a small saddle and then up a steep draw and back to 101 just north of Indian Sands parking area. Do not get too close to the ocean side edge. **Dangerous** 348.9
- 349.5 8. Another access to Indian Sands is from the Indian Sands Viewpoint on a steep and sometimes slippery old road. 348.5
- 348.2 8. To Thomas Creek Bridge. 1/2 mile. Easy to moderate. The trail parallels the highway from the end of the Indian Sands section. It swings around a steep, nearly open hillside, plunges through a spruce forest, and traverses around the head of a draw and goes up towards the south Thomas Creek parking area. A side trail leads to a spot below the bridge where great photo opportunities await. 347.8

or can be combined into a longer hike. This section takes you above and to one of the most beautiful and isolated beaches in the area, known to some as "Secret Beach", but no longer much of a secret. Again you have two trails from which to choose. Shortly after the beginning of the trail, the left fork switchbacks down to another secluded cove and along the bluff above a portion of "Secret Beach". The straight ahead trail is not maintained but can be used as a loop to come back from the scenic route. The second segment is the trail that goes on to Miner Creek where you enter "Secret Beach". From Miner Creek an old "cat" road provides one way back to 101, but the trail itself goes through the woods and back to 101 a little north in the third segment of this interesting section.

15. Miner Creek to Spruce Islands Viewpoint. Moderate. About 1/2 mile. Leaves Highway 101 just north of the Miner Creek section and follows the south slope above a beautiful cove. The trail then goes along the bluff overlooking the ocean before going back up hill through a spruce forest and back to the parking area at Spruce Island Viewpoint. (Abundant Poison oak here so be careful)

16. Spruce Islands Viewpoint to Arch Rock Park. This approximately 1/2 mile segment is relatively easy. The south end starts from the middle of the viewpoint parking area and traverses the hillside where it provides several views of the ocean. The north end starts at Arch Rock picnic area at the end of the fence just off highway 101. (Restrooms and picnic tables)

17. Arch Rock Viewpoint north. The trail leaves from the paved path north of the parking area. It crosses a bridge and then through the woods and across another bridge before returning to 101 at a parking area. The trail then is west of the guard rail on the highway shoulder.

18. Just south of Houstonaden creek, the trail leaves a primitive parking area and heads out toward the ocean. It goes through the grassy area where there is a resting bench, and then down to a bench along the highway fill. At the end of the bench it sidehills down to an abandoned road. Cross the road and follow the trail over a bridge just north of the road. The trail heads north and crosses another small creek and then heads up hill to the east on an old road. About halfway up towards the top, the trail side-hills to the north and at the saddle you can see the concrete flume through which Whiskey Creek flows. The trail parallels the flume and goes around the head of it and then up a slight incline and then to the west. It crosses a swale and then contours around the hill to the north end of a meadow before plunging back into a spruce woods, then alder and fern and then a designated viewpoint parking area. (Watch for poison oak on this segment)

19. From the viewpoint parking area at the north end of No. 18, the trail again heads north. It traverses just under the next viewpoint, goes into the woods, comes out at a wide spot along highway 101 and continues on to a large viewpoint a short distance north.

9. Thomas Creek Bridge to North Islands viewpoint. About 1/2 mile. Easy.

The trail leaves 101 at the northwest corner of the Bridge. After a short trek through wooded areas, it opens into small grassy areas before going back to 101 at North Islands Viewpoint. An interesting side trip is across the meadow to the knob west of the trail. You can look back and see Thomas Creek bridge and a considerable distance down the coast.

- 348.4 10. North Islands Viewpoint to Spruce Creek. A delightful beach below China Creek is your reward if you follow this trail. The trail is moderate in difficulty but the hike is well worth it. The trail leaves 101 at the North Islands viewpoint and goes through wooded areas before joining the down hill trail. The trail then switchbacks through dense thickets with a few view "windows" before breaking out into the open. It's then an easy trek to the beach along the grassy hillside. The beach portion is wide and often dry above the waves. 347.6

Several nice primitive picnic areas can be found. Walking north along the beach, the critical part is a rocky point that must be negotiated to make a complete loop. A tide lower than five feet will usually gives the chance to run around the point before climbing up the bank over wave worn rounded rocks.

The trail marker is on the bank above the beach and then it's uphill. Stop often to rest and gaze back at the ocean and it won't seem so steep. Occasionally you might see a flock of goats grazing or sunning themselves on the bluffs near the ocean. A large parking area is located at the top of the hill and you're back on 101 near Spruce Creek.

- 347.8 11. Spruce Creek to Horse Prairie Creek. Easy. About 1/2 mile. The trail leaves 101 about 1/4 mile north of Spruce Creek. The trail winds through a wooded area before traversing the slope on a narrow trail above a secluded cove. 346.2

- 347.5 12. Horse Prairie Creek to Natural Bridge. Easy to moderate. About 1/2 mile. The trail follows the slope just below 101 and then crosses a grassy flat and to the south access to this woodsy trail that ends at Natural Bridge Viewpoint. Just before Natural Bridge viewing platform, a steep primitive trail heads west to a bench above the ocean with more spectacular views. ( Be careful) A memorial to Dr. Sam Dicken, who first proposed the Oregon Coast Trail, is located at the north end of the grassy area by the parking lot. 346.5

- 346.0 13. Natural Bridge to Thunder Rock Cove. Moderate. About 1/2 mile. The trail leaves the north end of the parking area and goes through some beautiful wooded areas. Near the beginning is a fork with the left trail dead-ending at a scenic view point. 346.0

- 346.1 14. Thunder Rock Cove to Miner Creek. Easy to moderate. About 3/4 mile. This portion is actually three segments that can be delightful hikes by themselves 345.9

- 343.3 20. From the large viewpoint the trail parallels the highway to an old road blocked by two large rocks. The trail then goes toward the ocean and back to the highway 342.9
- 343.7 and then to Burnt Hill Road. The trail from Burnt Hill Road to the Pistol River sand Dune Trail can be accessed at several points. 342.3
- 342.1 Arch Rock Road 341.9
- 342.4 Byrdie's Road 341.6
- 341.2 21. Pistol River Sand Dunes to Pistol River. Easy to moderate. This segment provides an interesting hike of about 1-1/2 miles This is a good area for just doing some exploring. The trail leaves 101 at the end of the guard rail. 340.8
- The hiking trail meanders through the stabilized sand areas and then through and into the dunes themselves. The trail heads towards the ocean at the blow-sand where it joins the horse trail marked with posts with a horseshoe painted on them. The left fork goes to the beach and to Pistol River. The right fork goes through the dunes and wooded areas and meets highway 101 south of the river. A loop trail leaves the Sand Dunes Trail at two signed junctions and goes around Lola Lake, a small pond named in honor of Lola Gardner a long-time Pistol River resident and naturalist.
22. Pistol River to Cape Sebastian. Unless the river mouth is blocked by sand, take the 101 bridge over Pistol River. The trail follows the beach to the base of Cape Sebastian at Hunter's Cove. Several access points enable you to leave this segment and get back to 101.
23. Cape Sebastian trail. Easy to moderate. About 1 mile. The best way to hike this section is from the south parking lot on the top of the Cape to the beach.
- 337.6 Have someone drop you off at the top and meet you at the Myers Creek parking area south of the Cape. A rope is tied to a tree to help you access the beach. A new segment is currently being built to make it easier to access the beach. 336.4
24. From the south to north parking area on Cape Sebastian the trail traverses the west side of the road. When it joins the North trail, either take a right to the North parking area or follow it to the road system. (See No. 25)
25. Cape Sebastian north. Easy to moderate. From 1/3 mile to several miles. The trail leaves from the east side of the north parking area, goes through a short section of spruce and pine woods before coming to a junction. The trail to the right is easy to moderate and goes about 1/3 mile back to Hwy 101 a short distance north from the entrance to Cape Sebastian Park. The left fork travels through a spruce forest and then switchbacks down to a primitive road system above the beach. The road system has many hiking and scenic opportunities. At the first junction a road heads east and will take you back to Hwy 101. Further 335.9 334.1
- 334.6 on another road, Bell Tower View, heads east and will take you back to Hwy 101. From this road you can hike a connecting trail that intersects with the 333 trail just 333.4

off Highway 101. Staying the on lower road it continues to the north and west where the road enters the beach. From there you can hike to Hunter Creek on the beach or catch the 333 trail back to Hwy 101. A large rock outcropping and a 6 x 6 post on the hillside mark access on the 333 trail.

- 333.0 26. Milepost 333 to Hunter Creek. Easy to moderate. About 2 1/2 miles. 333.0  
Park just south of MP 333 (just across the highway from 80 Acre Road).  
The trail is fairly easy traveling through alder patches, open meadows and spruce forests until you reach the beach. The trail goes along the beach to Hunter Creek. It's a long trek on the beach so be sure you are up to it,
- 329.0 27. Hunter Creek to Rogue River. Easy. About 2 miles. Follow the beach to 329.0  
the south jetty of Rogue River. Several access points allow you to rejoin 101 along this section. A Rotary Riverside Trail along the south bank of the Rogue River from the sunken vessel Mary D. Hume goes under the Rogue River bridge and comes out on the road just east of the bridge. Cross Rogue River on the bridge.
- 327.3 28. Rogue River to Otter Point. Easy to moderate. About 2 1/2 miles. Travel 326.7  
the beach from the north jetty to a small creek slightly south of Otter Point. The beach section is easy. The trail leaves the beach at the first creek south of Otter Point. It traverses the bluff and then through waist high brush on the bluff. It ends at the parking area on Otter Point. The Otter Point area is a good place to explore further to see interesting plants and rock formations. Several beach access points allow you to leave the beach before reaching Otter Point and getting back to the Old Coast Highway.
29. Otter Point to Geisel Monument. Easy. About 3 miles. From Otter Point the trail follows the Old Coast Road as it crosses highway 101 twice on the way to Geisel Monument.
30. Geisel Monument to Ophir. Easy to moderate. About 4 1/2 miles.  
The trail leaves at the north end of Geisel Monument and follows the paved road toward the community of Nesika Beach. Turn west off Nesika Beach Rd. north of the town and enter the beach. The beach is the trail to Ophir. Several beach access points allow you to leave the beach and
- 319.0 return to 101. About halfway from Nesika Beach to Ophir is a 319.0  
highway rest area with restrooms and picnic tables. North access to this portion is at Ophir.
31. The Highway 101 shoulder is the Coast Trail to Frankport, also known Sisters Rocks. A short trail leaves a parking area near MP 315 and rejoins Hwy 101 a short distance north. From that point the highway shoulder is the trail.
- 308.2 32. Humbug park day use area to overnight area. Follows Brush Creek for 307.8

a while before going up the hill to avoid the steep cliffs. Crosses a road and joins the next segment inside Humbug State Park overnight park. Moderate to steep. Access at main entrance to the Humbug overnight camping Area.

- 307.0 33. Humbug Park. Easy to moderate. Follows old highway 101 from just inside the Humbug overnight camping area. Joins new highway 101 slightly south of the "Entering Humbug Park" sign at the north end. Another exciting trail leads from the south side of the campground and goes to the top of Humbug Mountain, a trip worth taking. Keep bearing left on the trail on the way up and come down the steeper section that starts just below the top. You will see the junction on the way up. Highway to access 34. 307.0
- 302.5 34. Battle Rock Beach. About 1/2 mile north of the Rocky Point viaduct, a dirt road goes to Battle Rock Beach. The beach is the trail to Battle Rock Park at the south end of Port Orford. 301.5
- 301.8 This segment can also be accessed at Hubbard Creek. The north access is a Battle Rock City Park 300.2
- 301.0 35. From Agate Beach on the north side of the Heads at Port Orford, the beach is the trail across Elk River and to the south side of Cape Blanco. Paradise Point Road also provides vehicular access to this segment. The trail ascends the south side of the Cape, goes close to the overnight camp and then drops down by two different trails to the north side of the Cape. The Coast Trail is from two to five miles west of Highway 101 north of Port Orford. All mile posts noted are on Hwy 101 and provide vehicular access to the trail. 301.0
36. Cape Blanco to the mouth of New River. From the north side of Cape Blanco, follow the beach across Sixes River and up towards Blacklock Point. Blacklock was a sandstone quarry and several buildings in San Francisco are made of Blacklock Sandstone. A side trail leads to the rocks where some twisted rails may still be seen. The quarried rocks were transported out on a rocky causeway and then lightered to ships standing offshore. Just south of Blacklock, the trail goes uphill and follows the bluff through brush and Sitka spruce forests and then opens up above a series of beautiful wave and wind sculpted cliffs above the beach. And through a forested area. The trail goes down through a draw and then comes back to the beach at the south end of Floras Lake. A County Park, Boi-Cope Park is across a bridge across Floras Creek. Restroom and picnic facilities. From Floras Lake the beach is the trail along New River to public land at the mouth of New
- 297.4 River, just outside Curry County. You can access the Coast Trail from from Cape Blanco State Park 296.6

294.1	from Airport Road, a west bound road leaving Highway 101 directly across from the entrance to Pacific High School. The trail starts at the Cape Blanco State Airport	293.9
290.1	from Floras Lake Loop south	289.9
289.2	From Floras Lake Loop north	288.8
284.9	and at Croft Road. An interpretive center is at the end of Croft Road.	283.1

Some travel hints:

Be sure to take your camera for some exceptional views.

During the months from December through May it is not unusual to see migrating gray whales as they go to and from lower California. Carry your binoculars for whale and bird watching.

A windbreaker will make the hike a lot more pleasant when the winds that may not be noticeable in the parking area hit you on the beach.

Poison oak is a pesky plant that grows right along the coast in our area. Learn what it looks like and avoid it. If it has "leaves of three, let it be". For many people it means an itchy rash.

#### Trail and beach safety:

1. Primitive rodents, called Mountain Beaver or "Boomers", dig holes in wooded and brushy areas. In trails these holes can cause a twisted or sprained ankle. Watch for them.
2. The beaches, while beautiful, can be dangerous. Do not turn your back on the waves and stay off of logs near the water. The waves toss big logs around like match-sticks.
3. Portions of the trail go along steep bluffs above the ocean. Be very careful and stay back from the edge.
4. Occasionally the trails are very slippery. Watch your footing.
5. If you have young children with you, keep them close to you and do not allow them to run ahead. The trail occasionally comes unexpectedly to a bluff.
6. Please carry out your litter and if you really want to be a good neighbor, pick up other litter and carry it out. Moving rocks and other natural debris such as branches, etc. off the trail, will help us to keep them in shape for future hikers.
7. Be sure to take valuables with you or at least lock them in the trunk out of sight.

The Oregon Coast Trail is being built and maintained by Oregon State Parks personnel and volunteers. If you would like to help, please watch your newspaper for announcements of work party sessions or contact the park rangers at Harris Beach or Humbug Parks to let them know you would like to help.

-End-