

54 MACLEAY TRAIL



KEY AT-A-GLANCE INFORMATION

LENGTH: 2.2 miles to Upper Macleay Park and Audubon Society, 4.5 miles to Pittock Mansion

CONFIGURATION: Out-and-back

DIFFICULTY: Easy to Upper Macleay Park and Audubon Society, moderate to Pittock Mansion

SCENERY: Quiet woods, predatory birds (in cages), three must-see trees

EXPOSURE: Shady all the way, one road crossing

TRAFFIC: Light on the trail weekdays, moderate on weekends; heavy at mansion

TRAIL SURFACE: Packed dirt, with some gravel

HIKING TIME: 1 hour to Audubon Society, 2.5 hours for the whole thing

DRIVING DISTANCE: 3 miles (10 minutes) from Pioneer Square

SEASON: Year-round

BEST TIME: Any clear day, for the view

BACKPACKING OPTIONS: None

ACCESS: No fees or permits

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS: Paved lower 0.25 miles, mansion area entirely accessible

MAPS: Forest Park maps at Audubon Society

FACILITIES: Water and toilets at trailhead, Audubon Society, and mansion

INFO: Portland Parks and Recreation, (503) 823-7529

IN BRIEF

If you just take the easier trip to the Audubon Society, you'll get some quiet time in the woods, where you'll see two monumental trees, and enjoy close-up views of (caged) wildlife. If you put in a little more effort, you'll get that and some history with a great view—and another monumental tree. And it's all right in the middle of town!

DESCRIPTION

First, if the headquarters of the Forest Park Ivy Removal Project (at the trailhead) is open, it's worth a look inside. The project has cleared hundreds of acres and saved thousands of trees in Forest Park from invasive English ivy, which creates "ivy deserts," where no native plants can survive. In this building the crews house some of their "trophies," ivy roots bigger than you can imagine such things being. Gawk, get some water, and head up the trail.

What you're walking up here is Balch Creek, named for the man who once owned this land—also the first man in Portland to be tried and hanged for murder. Small as it

Directions

From downtown Portland, drive 1 mile west on Burnside Street and turn right on NW 23rd Avenue. Proceed 0.8 miles and turn left on Thurman Street. Go six blocks to NW 28th Avenue and turn right. Go one block, turn left on NW Upshur, and follow it three blocks to the trailhead, at the end of the road. This trailhead can also be reached via Tri-Met. From downtown, take the #15 bus (NW 23rd Avenue), but make sure it's headed for Thurman Street and not Montgomery Park. Get off at Thurman and 28th, walk one more block, and descend a flight of steps beside the bridge.

GPS Trailhead Coordinates

UTM Zone (WGS84) 10T

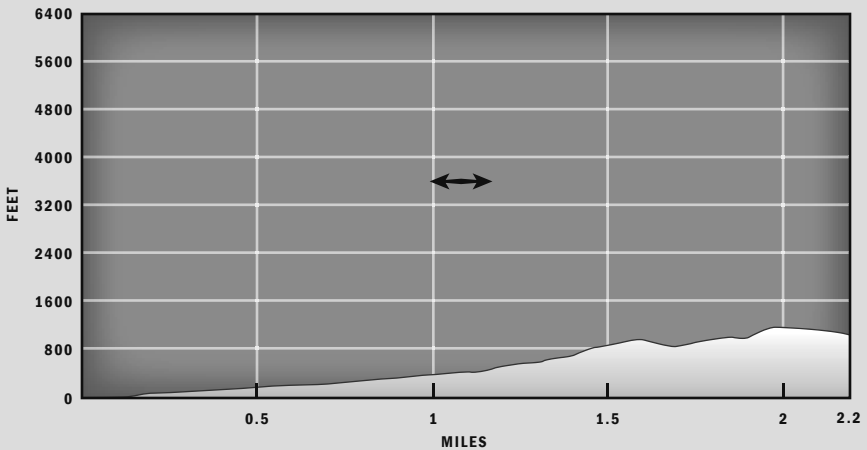
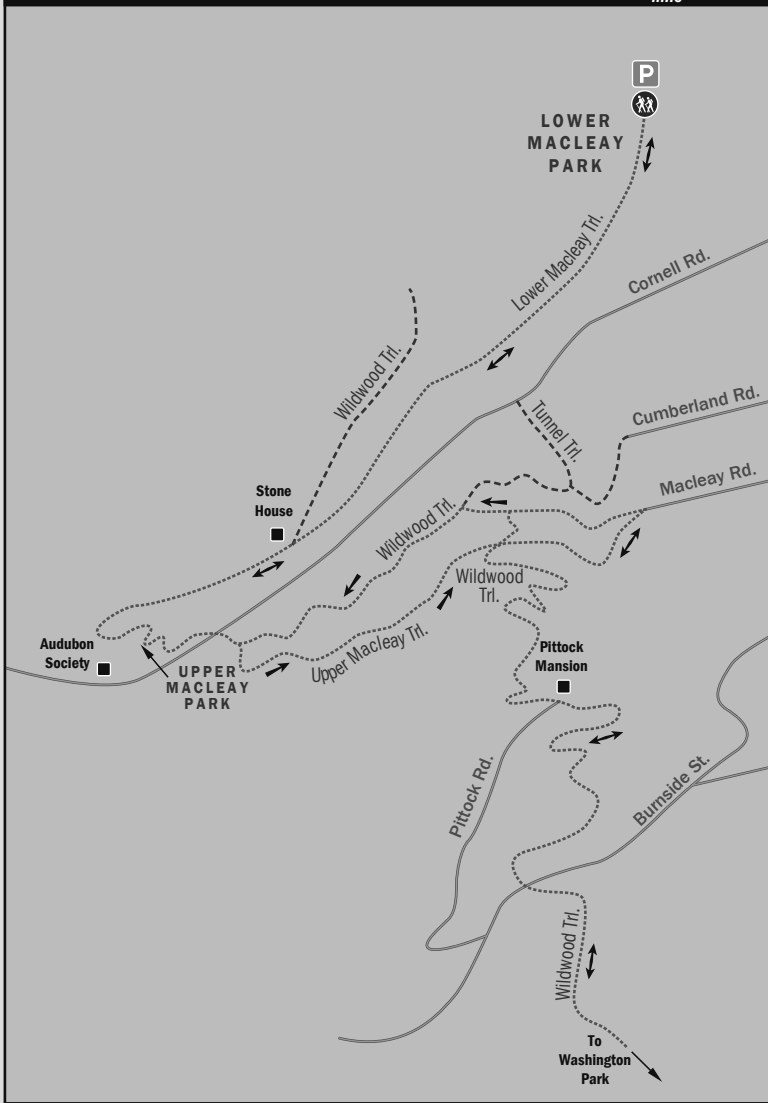
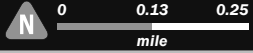
Easting 522366

Northing 5042286

Latitude N 45.53375°

Longitude W 122.71355°

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Mount Hood and Portland from Pittock Mansion

is, the creek was the original water supply for the city of Portland. And if that doesn't amaze you, consider that in 1987 the Oregon Department of Fish and Game discovered a native population of cutthroat trout living in this tiny stream. It is one of only two year-round streams in all of Forest Park. Check some of the deeper pools, and you just may see some of the fish. Please keep your dog on a leash and out of the water.

At 0.4 miles, look for a Douglas fir on your left that is marked with a plaque identifying it as a Portland Heritage Tree, one of some 300 such trees around town to be forever protected from the saw. This one happens to be the tallest tree in the city of Portland, at 241 feet, and is thought to be the tallest in any major U.S. city.

At 0.9 miles, you'll join the 30-mile Wildwood Trail at an old stone building that was a restroom until the early 1960s, when a storm destroyed its pipes by uprooting numerous trees. In fact, legend has it that this house is also the scene of nocturnal battles between the ghosts of Danford Balch and his victim, Mortimer Stump. And if there's a better Old Portland name than Mortimer Stump, I want to know what it is.

Stay straight (upstream), now joining Wildwood Trail, and over the next half mile you'll climb to Upper Macleay Park. Whether you're headed for Pittock Mansion or not, make a right here and walk 100 yards to the Portland Audubon Society. They rehabilitate injured owls and hawks here, and you can view the caged birds for no charge; they also have an extensive collection of mounted animals and an excellent gift shop plus bookstore. Three loop trails explore sanctuaries from here; free maps of those and all of Forest Park are available at

Falls on Balch Creek

the gift shop. Particularly worth visiting is a shelter overlooking a pond, just below the headquarters. You can impress your friends by telling them that the massive sequoia beside the parking lot is actually less than 100 years old. They grow quickly at first.

To do just a 2.2-mile hike, head back to the car. To add another 2.7 miles (and just over 400 feet in elevation), stay on Wildwood Trail by walking along Macleay Park's parking lot, crossing the sometimes-busy Cornell Road at a crosswalk, and reentering the forest. After 100 yards, turn right on Upper Macleay Trail. This trail climbs about 0.2 miles, then flattens out. At 0.5 miles, you'll find a wooden bench with a cool pattern on it. Just past that, rejoin Wildwood Trail, turning right and uphill for the final 0.6 miles to the Pittock Mansion parking lot.

The home (see Nearby Activities, below) is to your left. Wander out to the front yard to enjoy the roses and a view of city and mountains, and admire yet another spectacular tree: a European white birch that offers enough shade for a small town.

If you took the bus, you don't have to walk back down the trail. You can, instead, walk down the road from the mansion to Burnside Street, about 0.3 miles away, cross it (carefully!), and take the #20 (Burnside) bus downtown. You can also continue 1 mile on Wildwood Trail (descending 300 feet) to connect with the Washington Park–Hoyt Arboretum hike (hike 60, page 268).



NEARBY ACTIVITIES

Pittock Mansion, built in 1914 by the owner–publisher of the *Oregonian* and founder of the Portland Rose Festival, is open for tours daily. For more information, call (503) 823-3623.