



Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

2026 Education Programs



Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area – Education Office

750 NW Lighthouse Drive Suite # 8; Newport, OR 97365

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This 100-acre park hosts a 19th century Lighthouse, some of Oregon's best tidepools, an exceptional Interpretive Center, and opportunities for bird watching, wildlife viewing, and hiking.

In the springtime (April through mid-June), K-12 school groups can choose one of the curriculum-based teacher-led tidepool programs or a teacher developed lesson with an educational objective.



Driving Directions

Yaquina Head's physical address is 750 NW Lighthouse Drive, Newport, OR 97365. There are brown signs along Hwy 101 and at the turnoff to help direct you to Yaquina Head.

Please note that Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area is a different park than Yaquina Bay State Park, which also has a lighthouse.

From the East or South

Newport is located 55 miles west of Corvallis on the north central Oregon coast. Take Hwy 20 to U.S. Hwy 101 in Newport. Turn north (right) at the traffic light onto Hwy. 101 and drive three miles to the traffic light at Lighthouse Drive. Turn left and follow approximately ¼ mile to the Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area entrance station.

From the North

Driving from the north on Hwy. 101, turn right at the traffic light onto Lighthouse Drive (approximately ½ mile south of the Newport city limit sign).



Field Trip Preparation



Before the Field Trip:

- Arrange administrative permission.
- Schedule transportation.
- **Make sure all parents understand that students must be dressed for cold, windy and very rainy conditions.** Yaquina Head's weather is usually much worse than inland, so students often underdress resulting in a wet miserable time.
- A ranger will contact you a few days before your trip to confirm details.
- Review rules and guidelines with your students.
- Prepare students with pre-visit activities including this 2-minute video, [Yaquina Minute: Rules of the Pools - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbH6aWi9ac4) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbH6aWi9ac4>)

Chaperones:

- Distribute to adult leaders and review "How to be a Great Chaperone," which is the final page of this document.
- A minimum of one chaperone for every 5 students (1:5) is required.
- Chaperones must stay with students at all times during the visit – this includes high school groups. If your students become unruly and/or separated from their chaperones, they may be asked to return to the bus.
- Chaperones are along to assist and supervise students and should refrain from visiting with other adults during instruction.
- Chaperones that bring younger siblings may detract from your students' experiences.

Day of the Field Trip - Before you arrive:

- Give clear directions to your chaperones on both your expectations and those from Yaquina Head. Review schedules and meeting times.
- Review rules and guidelines with your students again.
- Notify park staff if you will be late, delayed, or need to cancel by calling **(541) 574-3100**.

Day of the Field Trip - at Yaquina Head:

- Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time, allowing students plenty of time to disembark from the bus at the Interpretive Center and receive a short orientation. If you know you will be late, please call (541) 574-3100.
- For groups having lunch onsite, there is an outdoor seating area with picnic tables behind the interpretive center. Ask a ranger for garbage bags and be aware of clean up procedures. Please leave the area cleaner than you found it. No food or drinks are allowed inside the interpretive center.



Rules and Guidelines

- Students must be under adult supervision at all times.
- Please walk and stay on trails.
- Use quiet voices, especially inside the Interpretive Center.
- Be aware of, and courteous to, other visitors.
- Keep area clean of litter.



Tidepool Etiquette

Cobble Beach is part of a designated Marine Garden and therefore is one of the best tidepool spots in Oregon. Remember, there are 134 steps down to the beach! For your safety and the protection of the environment, please observe the following:

- No walking on the mussel beds. Try to walk only on bare, dry rock. Rocky shores make for uneven footing, and seaweeds growing on rocks can be dangerously slippery.
- Public access is restricted to the “recreation area.” Please abide by wildlife protection signs and stay in the designated area.
- Animals and plants can be gently touched, but not picked up. When touching tidepool animals, wet your hands in seawater first. Most tidepool animals have a coating of slime to protect them. Touching them with a dry hand can damage their slime layer and harm their delicate surfaces.
- No throwing rocks or sticks. Thrown objects can hurt the many animals living in the tidepools.
- All rocks, shells, sticks, animals and plants must stay on the beach. No collecting, except litter.
- Sneaker waves and other crashing waves can be hazardous. Be alert and keep an eye on the water.
- If you move a rock to look underneath, replace it gently where you found it.
- Be sure to wear sturdy shoes – no sandals or flip flops!

Rules of the Pools - Shout out		
Rule	Teacher Shouts	Student Shout Reply
Walk on Bare Rocks	<i>Walk on</i>	BARE ROCK
Don't pick up alive critters	<i>Alive or stuck</i>	DON'T PICK IT UP
OK to touch gently	<i>Touch</i>	GENTLY
No Collecting	<i>Collect only</i>	TRASH
Leave sticks and stones	<i>Sticks and Stones</i>	LEAVE EM ALONE

Other Suggested Activities

In addition to tidepool opportunities, Yaquina Head offers a number of activities for your students to enjoy. Please check with the Education Program Coordinator prior to your visit if you plan on participating in any of these activities in addition to your scheduled teacher-led tidepool experience.

The Interpretive Center (15 students at a time)

- **Scavenger Hunt** – A great way for students to explore and learn about Yaquina Head is by going on an Interpretive Center scavenger hunt. Request an advanced copy for duplicating. (20 – 30 minutes)
- **Videos** – A 15-minute video about the history of the lighthouse runs continuously in the theater, and 2-3 minute videos, “More than a Place” run on a loop in the Yaquina Room.
- **Exhibits** – The exhibit area is full of great hands-on displays and information about Yaquina Head and the surrounding area. (5 – 15 minutes)
- **Picnic Tables** – Are available behind the interpretive center (area seats maximum 18 people). No food or drinks are allowed in the building. Ask a ranger to supply a trash bag for your group. Please clean and check the area for garbage and food scraps before leaving.
- **Restrooms** - with multiple stalls and running water.

Towards Quarry Cove and Communications Hill

- **Quarry Cove** (5–10-minute walk from the Quarry Cove parking lot, or 20-to-30-minute walk from the Interpretive Center)

Quarry Cove has a diverse history. It was used as a rock quarry to supply materials for road building from the 1920s through 1980s. In 1995 the area was developed with wheelchair-accessible tidepools. Nature, however, had other ideas as ocean sand filled in the area and the “man-made tidepools” were impossible to maintain.

Fortunately for visitors, seals have claimed Quarry Cove. Although there are no tidepools, the area is now a great place to observe harbor seals at high tide. When the seals are present, students can see them from the viewing area. All visitors must consider themselves guests to the animals’ home and act respectfully (use soft voices, do not approach), allowing them to remain wild.

- **Communication Hill Trail** (45-minute walk from the Interpretive Center)

This trail is a great opportunity for exploring the Sitka spruce and shore pine forest found on the headland. It begins at the Interpretive Center, follows the bluff east, then leads hikers to the top of the highest peak at Yaquina Head for a breathtaking view of the ocean. *Please stay away from buildings, tanks and other apparatus at the top of the hill.*

Towards the Lighthouse

- **Lighthouse Walk** (20-30 minutes)

Yaquina Head Lighthouse was first lit on August 20th, 1873, and is still operating. The viewing decks outside the lighthouse are open year-round. The inside of the lighthouse is open only during ranger-guided tours. At this time, no tours climb the tower stairs.

- **Wildlife Viewing** (5-15 minutes)

The area around the lighthouse parking lot has several great viewpoints (and interpretive displays). Birds flock here seasonally by the thousands including pelicans, cormorants, and murre. Bald eagles are commonly seen. Gray Whales are best observed migrating December and March, while seasonal resident whales are observed closer to shore from late summer through fall.

- **Cobble Beach** (15-60 minutes)

This volcanic basalt beach is very unique and a great place to visit at both low and high tides. Have students check the tide chart before arriving. There are 134 steps down to the beach. Be sure to make a reservation during spring education programs – even for teacher-led visits.

High tide – Although tidepools are covered with water, Cobble Beach is a great place to explore, journal, and/or draw. Check out how the angular basalt becomes cobble while listening to the tide move the rocks to and fro. Go on a “wrack walk,” a scavenger hunt to explore the interesting things brought to shore by the waves. Watch harbor seals in the water or laying on the rocks.

Low tide – Exposes a myriad of life on the ocean floor. Observe anemones, sea stars, urchins, crabs and more.

- **Salal Hill Trail** (25-30 minutes)

This trail provides a great opportunity for students to exercise and get an amazing ocean view (on a clear day). Although it looks steep, it is well graded and fairly easy to climb. Keep your eyes open for native wildflowers, plants, small mammals, birds, and insects.

Quests

Quests are clue-directed hunts that encourage exploration of natural areas. By following a series of word clues, a secret location is revealed - a box where students can sign their name and get the official Yaquina Head Quest stamp. Request an advance copy for duplicating.

How to be a Great Chaperone

You don't need special knowledge to be a chaperone—just common sense and a willingness to jump in and get involved. Here are a few tips to help make your trip a good one:

What will my role be during the program?

- Throughout the day, your job will be to monitor the behavior of the students, provide for their safety, and facilitate the learning process while ensuring a fun visit.
- You may be asked to work with specific students and help guide them through program activities. You may want to ask the teacher for information about the program, including background information and vocabulary words, to familiarize yourself with the topic. The more you are able to interact with the students, the better their experience will be.

What do I need to tell the students about touching in the tidepools?

- Step on bare, dry rocks – not creatures or plants.
- Encourage students to touch gently. When touching tidepool animals, wet your hands in seawater first. Most tidepool animals have a coating of slime to protect them. Touching them with a dry hand can damage their slime layer and harm their delicate surfaces.
- Do not pick up or remove the animals.
- Follow the guidance of the park staff.

How can I help students get the most out of their visit?

- Be sure you understand the plan for the day, as instructed by the student's teacher.
- Ask the teacher for any material that will help you lead the students.
- Interact and have fun with the students.
- If a ranger asks a question, please let the students answer for themselves.
- Ask questions of each student in your group. There will always be a few who have all the answers. Please encourage quieter students to share ideas too.

What else do I need to know?

- Please leave small children at home if possible. They can distract you from your duties as a chaperone.
- Avoid visiting with other adults at the expense of your chaperone duties. Remember that your primary job is to assist the students, not to socialize.
- Students must stay with you, their chaperone, at all times. Their behavior and safety is your responsibility.
- Be sure you know when and where to meet the rest of your group during and at the end of the visit.