



Welcome to the Lewis Creek Park Self-Guided Nature Walk.

This pamphlet will direct you through the park's three distinct habitats: the Wetlands, Upland Meadow and the Woodlands.

56 acres make up Lewis Creek Park, more than 80% of which is preserved in its natural condition.

The Visitor Center was built in 2006 with environment-friendly design in mind. Some of the green features include the green roof with living plants, recycled steel beams and radiant floor heating.

Please remember to be considerate of other visitors, the animals that call the park home and the plants that grow here. Stay on the paths, and remember it is your responsibility to leave the park as you found it.

Species you may see in the park:

- American Goldfinch, Swallow, Red-Winged Blackbird, Pileated Woodpecker
- Red Tailed Hawk
- Great Blue Heron
- Butterflies –the Monarch, the Mourning Cloak, and the Painted lady
- Banana Slug
- Coyote (early morning)
- Deer (early morning)
- Bats (night)
- Frogs (night)



A Woodland Path

Wetland Loop

Begin below the basketball court and walk along the paved path towards the Visitor Center. To your left you will see an open wetland area. This is the headwaters of Lewis Creek, fed by a small spring and runoff from higher elevations.

The dominant plants in the wetlands are Cattail, Tule Reed, and Reed Canary Grass.

Stroll along the boardwalk and listen to the birds. As the seasons pass different birds migrate in and out of the area.



The American Goldfinch lives year round in Washington.

In winter the wetlands boast a large amount of standing water, the perfect environment for ducks. Protected from predators by the thick vegetation, ducks create pathways and inlets through the plants so they can move quickly, similar to deer paths.

In the spring and summer the wetlands are home to frogs, various songbirds, insects and even the occasional Great Blue Heron.



Tule Reed



Great Blue Heron

Upland Meadow

The end of the boardwalk marks the beginning of the meadow habitat. Along this gravel path you will notice rows of poplar trees, growing unnaturally close together, as well as apple, pear, and cherry trees, and other ornamental plants. These are the remnants of the past lives of Lewis Creek Park. Four family homesteads held this land before it became a city park in 2006.

Go straight to continue along the Half Mile Loop Trail, or turn right to head up the barked Upland Meadow Trail.



Cone of Douglas Fir

As you head up the meadow keep an eye out for Black-tailed Deer that can often be spotted here. To your left you will notice five tall trees lined up in a row; these are Lombardy Poplar, planted here by previous residents.

Further up the trail and to your right you will notice a large evergreen tree, this is a Douglas Fir tree. The Douglas Fir is native to this area and can live to be over 1000 years old. The cones are 2-4 inches long with 3-forked bracts extending beyond the scales.



Lombardy Poplar originate in parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe.



Needles of Douglas Fir

A Native American tale explains how one year a great fire approached the deep forest. All the animals began to run away, except the mice who knew they were too small to run fast enough to escape. Instead, they ran up the tallest trees they could find and hid inside the cones of the tree. But once the fire left the mice were stuck! To this day they remain inside the cones of the Douglas Fir tree with only their tails and hind legs hanging out past the scales of the cone.

Have you heard the hammering of [Pileated Woodpeckers](#)? These birds will eat fruits, nuts, and berries, but enjoy insects the most, in particular carpenter ants and wood-boring beetle larvae. Pileated Woodpeckers often chip out large and roughly rectangular holes in trees while searching for insects.



Pileated Woodpecker

Woodland

At the top of the meadow's switch-back trail, turn left and walk along the path at the top of the meadow, be sure to enjoy the view of the park from this high point. Turn left at the next bollard and walk down the gravel path. Turn left again at the next available barked trail into the Lewis Creek woodlands.

Along this trail you will come across a number of nurse logs. Nurse logs are the remnants of fallen trees, often stumps, which now support the growth of new plants. As the logs decompose they provide a nutrient rich environment for moisture loving plants and organisms. These logs are very important for the health of the forest – see how many you can find!

Look at the forest floor to see if you can spot any slugs. The Banana Slug is the second largest species of terrestrial slug in the world. It is an essential part of the native forest in the area. They help decompose the forest by processing leaves, animal droppings, and dead plant material, and recycle it into a nitrogen rich fertilizer. To hear more about banana slug find the [Bungee Jumpin' Cows Banana Slug Song](#) online.



Nurse Log



A Banana Slug hiding near a Nurse Log.



Icicle Moss

You may notice many trees, snags and nurse logs host a variety of fungus, algae and lichen species. Lichens can be composite organisms of a mutually beneficial relationship between a fungus and a photosynthetic partner, usually algae. “Freddie Fungus and Ally Algae took a’ Lichen to each other” is a helpful reminder of this relationship.

At the end of this trail, turn right onto the gravel path and follow it around back up to the Visitor Center. Or, to explore the forest more, turn right at the prior intersection continuing along barked trail.



Trailing Blackberry

At the first major tree on the trail, look down and to your right to see [Trailing Blackberry](#). A native plant to the area, this blackberry lines rivers and roadways as it rambles about the landscape as a vine-like ground cover.

As you reach the crest of a small hill look around you and notice all of the Sword Fern. These long slender ferns are ubiquitous and native to the area. Next time you brush upon stinging nettle, try rubbing the spores of the sword fern leaf onto the affected area for relief from the sting.



Sword Fern and Devil's Club

Up ahead on both sides of the trail, there is a frightening looking plant called Devil's Club. It is described as having a "primordial" appearance

This plant is covered with brittle yellow spines that break off easily if the plants are handled or disturbed. Devil's Club is very sensitive to human impact and does not reproduce quickly. The plants are slow growing and take many years to reach seed bearing maturity. They are very common in dense, moist, old growth conifer forests of the Pacific Northwest.

Thank you for visiting Lewis Creek Park Online. Be sure to look up information on volunteer opportunities, upcoming programs and more trails! For more information, questions, or comments see a Ranger in the Visitor Center.