

Management Concerns at Camassia Natural Area

Conservation only starts once a preserve is acquired. Camassia's stunning beauty and amazing biodiversity are threatened by invasive species such as English ivy, Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry. Fire suppression threatens to allow Douglas fir to overtop and shade out the oaks. Inappropriate use, such as hiking off trail, camping, dogs, and human caused fires can disrupt or destroy native habitats and organisms.



Volunteers helping to restore habitat by removing invasive English ivy. ©Kyle Strauss/TNC

Self-Guided Interpretive Tour

(Look for numbered markers along the trails)

1. Forested Wetland Restoration Site

This Oregon ash, cottonwood and maple dominated area was first cleared of English ivy by AmeriCorps crews in 2000. Native vegetation flourished after the initial clearing. Volunteers continue to help native vegetation in this area by removing weeds.

2. Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*)

The small, sometimes climbing shrub with tan stems and three shiny leaves is poison oak. Beware, it should not be touched, as oils within the plant can cause a rash on your skin. Poison oak is native to the area and is abundant at Camassia. Please stay on the trails to avoid it.

3. Camas Lily (*Camassia quamash*)

Once common throughout the Willamette Valley, Camas was an important food source for local Native Americans. Its root was eaten raw, roasted, boiled, fried, or dried and stored. During April or early May, the preserve's namesake blooms in abundance in the grassy plateaus.

4. Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)

Although not typical of this area, the grove of slender white trees growing behind the marker are Quaking aspens. The leaves will flutter in the breeze and look as though they are quaking. Aspens growing from a single root system in Colorado are considered the largest living organism on earth.

5. Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)

Anna's Hummingbirds frequent this part of the preserve and, if you scan the trees in this area, you may spot one. Originally found only on the Pacific slope from Baja to San Francisco, Anna's Hummingbirds now overwinter in the Willamette Valley.

6. Oak Savanna

Sparsely wooded meadows, or savannas, with their unique mix of sun and shade, trees and grass are both beautiful and ecologically important. Only a small fraction of this once common habitat remains in the Willamette Valley, of which less than one percent is protected for future generations. Smooth, orange-barked Pacific madrone trees and old, lichen-covered Oregon white oaks thrive in this habitat.

7. Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) Nest

An osprey is a fairly large raptor sometimes referred to as a fish hawk. A pair resides on top of the cell tower outside the preserve, which can be viewed from this spot. This same pair has returned yearly since 1997.

8. Basalt

The bedrock exposed so beautifully here is Yakima basalt from a series of lava flows 15 million years ago. From 19,000 to 12,000 years ago, a series of

major floods, the Missoula or Bretz Floods, poured down the present Columbia River Gorge and up the Willamette river valley as far south as Eugene. These floods swept away soils and vegetation from parts of the valley and deposited ice-rafted granite boulders from as far away as Canada.

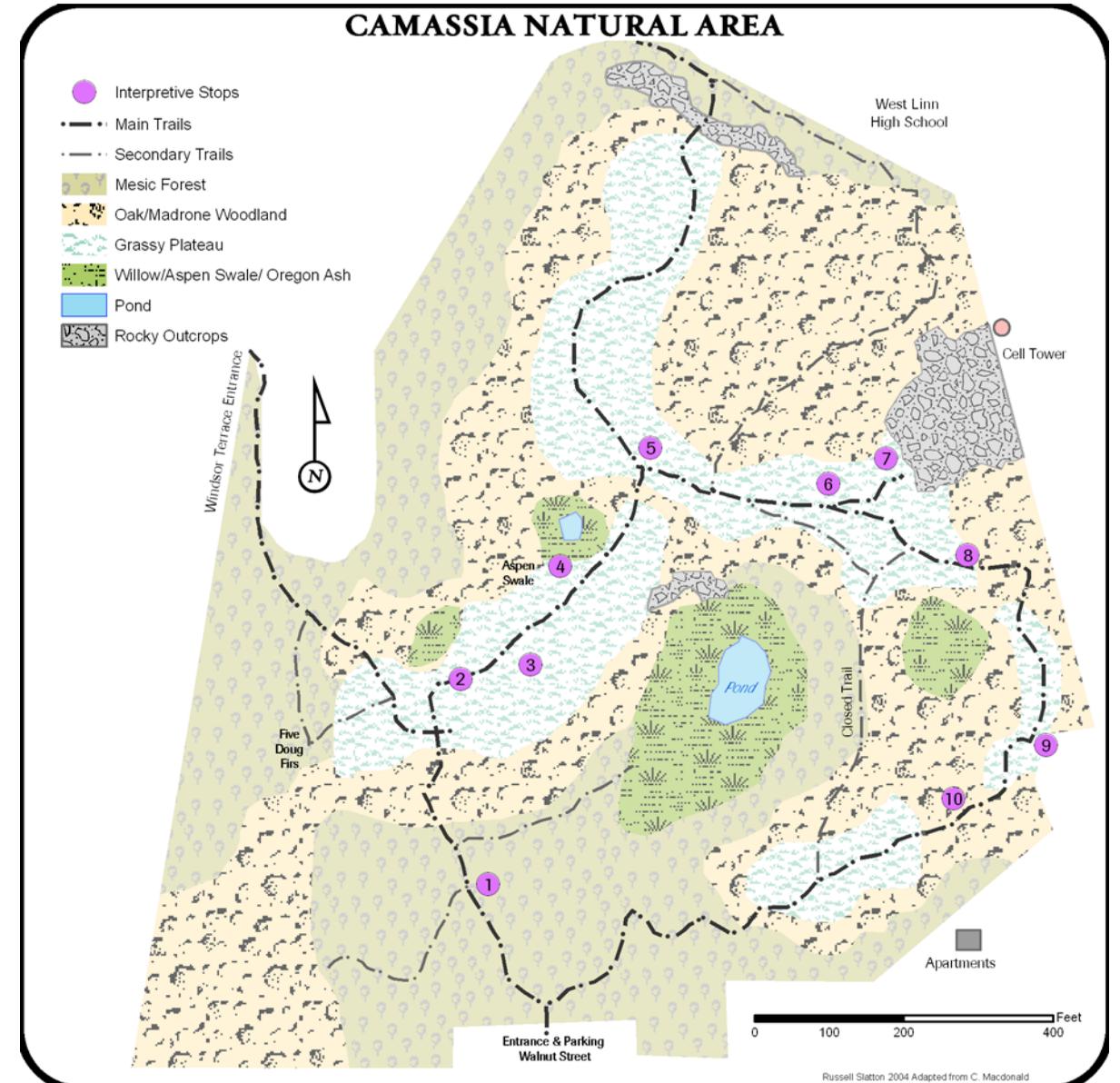
9. Mount Hood View

If you are lucky enough to be here on a clear day,

the view over Oregon City towards Mt. Hood from this point is amazing.

10. English Ivy Study Plots

This area was established to test control methods for English ivy, an invasive species that topples trees and displaces native plants. Once nearly 100 percent ivy, these areas are now being restored to native vegetation.

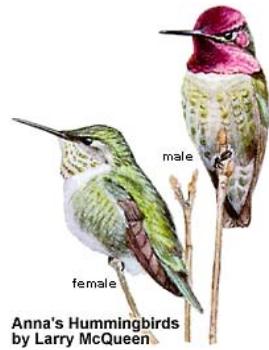


Wildlife and plants found at Camassia Natural Area

Camassia supports more than 400 species of native plants and animals. Keep your eyes and ears open and your field guides handy. Here is a sample of what you may encounter.

Wildlife

Western gray squirrel
 Black-tailed deer
 Red fox
 Pacific tree frog
 Rough-skin newt
 Spotted towhee
 Cedar waxwing
 Bewick's wren
 Golden and Ruby-crowned kinglets



Plants

Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia grandiflora*)
 Rosy plectritis (*Plectritis congesta*)
 Fawn lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*)
 Trilliums (*Trillium chloropetalum*) (*T. ovatum*)
 Harvest brodiaea (*Brodiaea coronaria*)
 Fool's onion (*Brodiaea hyacinthina*)
 Licorice fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*)
 False Solomon's-seal (*Smilacina racemosa*)
 Indian hellebore (*Veratrum viride*)



Poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). This common native plant is a hazard to watch out for while hiking. ©Jason Dumont/TNC

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. Since 1951, we've been working with communities, businesses and people like you to protect nearly 117 million acres around the world -- including more than 483,000 acres of important habitats in Oregon.



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For more information about The Nature Conservancy's preserves, membership, and volunteer opportunities in Oregon, please contact us.



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CAMASSIA NATURAL AREA



©Bob Main

Welcome to Camassia

In 1962, through the encouragement of Murray Miller, a long-time Oregon City resident and well-known naturalist, The Nature Conservancy purchased its first preserve in Oregon, the Camassia Natural Area. Named for the common camas lily (*Camassia quamash*, pictured on cover) which blooms profusely here in the spring, the 27-acre preserve is perched on bluffs overlooking the Willamette River. Camassia's rocky plateaus, woodlands and wetlands host an extraordinary collection of plants, animals and native plant communities, including an outstanding example of Oregon white oak savanna.



©Melissa Roy-Hart/TNC

Camassia is a fragile beauty. Its meadows, ponds, swales, and rare plants are easily damaged. The rocky plateaus are an especially fragile habitat of mosses, lichens, and other small plants that cling precariously to the bedrock.

Please Leave No Trace

Your actions make a difference

- Stay on the trails
- Leave your dog at home
- No camping or fires
- Do not pick flowers
- Use caution in avoiding poison oak



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