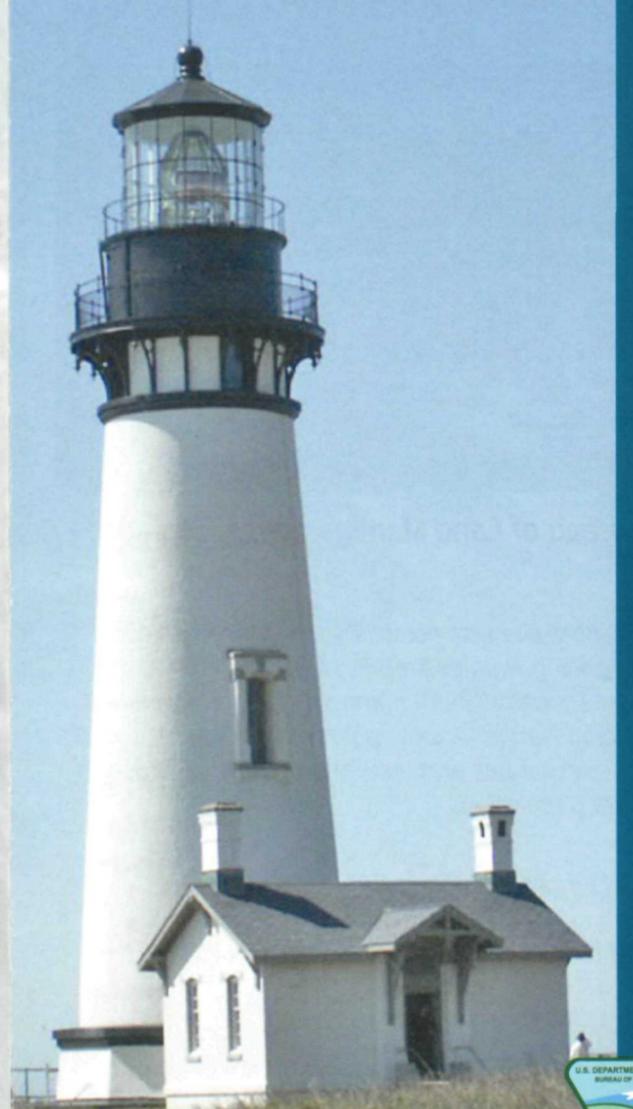


Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area



Directions to the site

Yaquina Head, open seven days a week from dawn to dusk, is three miles (5 km) north of Newport on the Oregon Coast just off Highway 101.

Hours

The lighthouse and interpretive center are open daily. Check for opening times as they vary between summer and winter.

Fees

A \$7.00 per vehicle day use pass is required (good for three days). An annual pass is \$15.00. Federal fee passports including Golden Age, Golden Eagle, and Golden Access are accepted along with the new America the Beautiful Pass. All fees are kept on site and are used to enhance interpretive and educational programs.

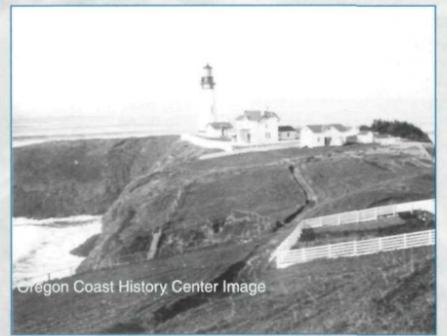
Bureau of Land Management

Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area
750 Lighthouse Drive
Newport, Oregon 97365
(541) 574-3100
<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/yaquina/index.php>

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Historic Lighthouse

In the mid-1800's, maritime commerce along the west coast was booming as a result of the opening of the Oregon and California Trails. The U.S. Lighthouse Service saw the potential of the basalt headlands to provide stable foundations and good locations for lighthouses to guide trading ships along the coast. On June 8, 1866, President Andrew Johnson signed an Executive Order that set aside 19 acres for a lighthouse to be constructed at Yaquina Head.



"Laborers painting the roof of workshop and store and chicken house. Also putting wire on fence around bluff."

Keepers' Log, Yaquina Head Light Station, September 13, 1889

The light at Yaquina Head was first lit on August 20, 1873. At that time, the stately tower stood alongside a two-story keepers' dwelling, a barn, and outbuildings.

Maintaining the light was the primary duty of the lighthouse keepers. Days were filled with polishing, cleaning, and repairing, as well as tending gardens and livestock. Yaquina Head Lighthouse was automated in 1966, ending the era of station attendants.



Lighthouse Keeper early 1900's

Abundant Life

Whales, seals, murre, cormorants, pelicans, and rocky shore intertidal organisms are some of the wildlife you may see in their natural environment.

Whale Watching



Gray whale

Yaquina Head is among the best places along the coast to look for migrating gray whales.

Gray whales can be seen year-round at Yaquina Head. In late December and early January, whales can be viewed as they migrate south to the warm waters of Baja, Mexico to breed and give birth. During March and April, gray whales pass Yaquina Head as they migrate to their summer feeding grounds in the Bering Sea. Some "resident" gray whales stay along the Oregon Coast rather than migrate to the Bering Sea.



Harbor Seals

Harbor seals live here year-round. Look for them in Quarry Cove or around Seal Island offshore from Cobble Beach.

Seabirds and Shorebirds

Each year, thousands of seabirds nest at Yaquina Head. Pelagic and Brandt's cormorants, black oystercatchers, glaucous-winged gulls and western gulls live here year-round.

Birds you might see during the summer include common murre, brown pelican, surf scoter, pigeon guillemot, and rhinoceros auklet.

Welcome to Yaquina Head

Yaquina Head is a narrow, coastal headland extending one mile into the Pacific Ocean. Formed by ancient lava flows, Yaquina Head's hard basalt cliffs and coves have endured the pounding ocean surf for 14 million years.

The lighthouse, tidepools, trails throughout the site, and the Interpretive Center offer many opportunities to explore and discover life at a coastal headland.

Visitors Before

For 4,000 years, Yaquina Head has provided coastal inhabitants with a one-mile long pathway into the open sea. Native Americans used this pathway as a place to hunt marine mammals, collect mussels, and seek spiritual renewal. Explorers, marine traders, and pirates used the headland as a navigational marker for more than 300 years before the U.S. Lighthouse Service built the Yaquina Head Lighthouse on the headland in 1873. Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area protects this headland so that visitors can learn about and appreciate its natural and cultural heritage.



"On the 6th at noon... we saw two seals and several whales, and at day break the next morning, the long looked for coast of New Albion was seen.

At the northern extreme, the land formed a point, which I called Cape Foulweather, from the very bad weather that we, soon after, met with."

Captain James Cook mooring at the mouth of the Yaquina River, March 7, 1778.

Explore the Headland

Follow any of the five trails on the headland for great views, photo opportunities, watchable wildlife, and natural enjoyment.



The Bureau of Land Management at Yaquina Head

This 100-acre site was established by Congress as an Outstanding Natural Area in 1980. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area to preserve its natural, scenic, historic, educational, and recreation values for present and future generations.

Lighthouse Trail

Walking time: Allow 15 minutes each way
Rating: Easy
Steepest Grade: 11%
Trail surface: Asphalt

Beginning at the Interpretive Center, the Lighthouse Trail follows the headland's southern bluffs, and terminates at the lighthouse. Watch for gray whales and harbor seals from the observation points.

Salal Hill Trail

Walking time: Allow 12 minutes each way
Rating: Moderate
Notes: Stairs at base of trail
Steepest Grade: 36%
Trail surface: Unimproved

This relatively short but steep trail makes switchbacks to the top. Along the trail, and from the top of "the big hill," are some of the best views around — south to Newport, out to the Pacific, and the forests to the east. In the springtime, look for wildflowers in bloom.

Cobble Beach

Walking time: Allow 5 minutes each way (from top of stairs)
Notes: Steep stairs

If conditions are right, listen to the water rushing into shore, tossing and jumbling cobble stones — one of the most unusual sounds you'll hear at a beach.

It took 14 million years to build this cobble beach — from boiling hot lava to eroded fragments. What do you think would happen if each of the hundreds of thousands of visitors to Yaquina Head took just one cobble? Soon this special beach would disappear.

Take care - the cobbles can make walking difficult.

Communications Hill Trail

Walking time: Allow 15 minutes each way
Rating: Moderate
Steepest Grade: 15%
Trail surface: Gravel road

A walk up Communications Hill presents a completely different community — a shore pine and Sitka spruce forest. Chipmunks, chickadees, and wrens are fairly common.

Quarry Cove Trail

Walking time: Allow 20 minutes each way
Rating: Moderate
Notes: Some concrete steps
Steepest Grade: 33%
Trail surface: Asphalt/Gravel

Following the crest of Yaquina Head's southern edge, this trail connects the Interpretive Center and Quarry Cove. The views south to Agate and Nye Beaches are beautiful.

Quarry Cove

Artificial tidepools were constructed in this former rock quarry in 1996. By 2000, changes in ocean currents covered the cement tidepools with beach sand. In 2001, a harbor seal colony moved onto the newly developed sandy beach. An observation deck in Quarry Cove allows visitors to view the seals from a safe distance. Quarry Cove's beach, water, and rocks are closed to public entry when seals are present. Handicapped visitors may obtain access to the lower wildlife observation deck at Quarry Cove by requesting a gate opener from staff at the Interpretive Center.

We are all Partners in Protection

- Please stay on trails and do not disturb the wildlife or vegetation.
- Collecting shells, rocks, wildflowers or any natural objects is not allowed.
- Please keep dogs on a 6 foot leash at all times.
- Kite flying scares many species of birds and is prohibited.
- Touching or walking near a harbor seal, healthy or injured, may cause them to panic and is prohibited by law.
- In the tidepools, please walk on bare rock surfaces, avoid stepping on plants and animals.

National Landscape Conservation System

The Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area is a part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System: a diverse program that incorporates National Scenic and Historic Trails, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Wilderness Areas, and National Monuments and Conservation Areas, to name a few. The mission of the Conservation System is to conserve, protect and restore nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological

and scientific values for present and future generations of Americans. This 27 million acre Conservation System is said to be the most innovative U.S. land-management program in the last 50 years, joining together the crown jewels of the BLM's cultural, natural and scientific assets. Quietly revolutionary, instead of protecting "islands" of special land it conserves whole landscapes.

