Most of Mount Rainier’s wildlife is fairly elusive. In summer you may see deer, marmots, and squirrels during your visit, and maybe even mountain goats if you venture into the highcountry. What’s missing here? The Pacific fisher, a small carnivore the size of a house cat, has been missing from its native habitat on Mount Rainier’s slopes since the mid-1930s. The fisher is a small, reclusive predator of the weasel family that thrives in mature forests. Along with wolves, wolverines, and lynx, fishers were eliminated from Mount Rainier early in the last century. Fishers throughout Washington State declined primarily through trapping harvest, pest control, and habitat loss associated with an expanding human population. The State listed them as an endangered species in 1998.

Ecosystems evolve through the interactions among all their constituent species, each one representing an integral component of the whole. Generally, more complete ecosystems are more stable—each species plays a role in ecosystem dynamics, acting as a buffer to internal and external forces which may disrupt the ecosystem. Over the next four to six years, Mount Rainier and North Cascades national parks are teaming up with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Conservation Northwest to reintroduce fishers to their historical range in the Cascades. Reintroduction in Mount Rainier National Park and vicinity has just begun. The return of the Pacific Fisher will restore a critical native predator to a spectacular forest ecosystem.

Mount Rainier: A Winter Wonderland

The mountain’s landscape undergoes a dramatic transformation in winter. Its colorful subalpine meadows and lush old growth forests are draped with a thick blanket of snow for much of the year. The sometimes dusty-grey appearing glaciers are freshly covered in white and the snow-covered steep pitched roofs of the rustic historic buildings are rimmed with icicles, creating a picture perfect setting.

This winter wonderland creates spectacular opportunities for crosscountry skiing, snow play, snowboarding, winter photography, and cloud watching. At lower elevations you may find snow-free opportunities for hiking and exploring.

Winter is the perfect time to visit historic Longmire with its rustic buildings draped in snow, lowland trails, and, on clear days, views of the mountain. Activities and information are available at the Longmire Museum. The National Park Inn offers meals, lodging, and a general store.

Stop by the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise on weekends and holidays to learn about the mountain’s winter ecology by taking a snowshoe walk with a ranger and by viewing the exhibits and film. Warm up in the visitor center while enjoying the snowy view from the great hall. Have lunch or browse in the gift shop. Winter activities at Paradise include sliding, crosscountry skiing, winter camping, and snowboarding. See the Facility Hours on page 4 for snowshoe and ski rental locations inside the park.

Wander through a temperate rainforest, hike, and explore at Carbon River. Visit the ranger station for area information.
Snow Camping
Snow camping requires a permit and sufficient snow depth to prevent resource damage. Free permits are available at the Longmire Museum daily and at Paradise on weekends and holidays. Camp in designated areas well away from buildings, marked trails, and parking lots. When you finish camping, collapse igloos and snow caves to keep others from falling in. Fires are not permitted.

The park is open for overnight winter camping with a valid permit seven days a week, but the gate at Longmire to Paradise closes nightly. Plows routinely operate on the wrong side of the road when it is closed. A sign at Paradise will indicate when the road is open and safe for downhill travel.

Groups of 13 or more and organized groups of up to 80, such as church and scout groups, are advised to pre-register at least two weeks in advance by calling (360) 569-6575. Access to 24-hour restrooms and an emergency phone are available in the upper parking lot near the Guide House. Others should use “blue bags” to remove human waste from the park and/or deposit blue bags in the special barrel provided. The blue bag barrel is located in the tunnel to the Paradise upper parking lot restroom. Do NOT throw blue bags in trash cans!

Proper food storage is required. Hang your food, garbage, and scented items or secure in approved hard-sided containers. Hard-sided containers are required for camping at Paradise, Reflection Lakes, Tatoosh, and Mazama. Wildlife-resistant food containers are available for loan—as a ranger when you get your permit. Approved containers for winter camping at Paradise are five-gallon plastic buckets with tight-fitting lids, or manufactured wildlife-resistant food containers.

Overnight parking is allowed in designated areas only. Do not set your parking brake; it may freeze. Stay clear of parking lots and roads until morning plowing activities are complete. Before driving downhill, check with a ranger or listen to Radio 1610-AM Paradise, to be sure the road is open and that your vehicle meets the traction requirement.

Snow Play Area
Sliding and sledding are permitted only in the designated snow play area, located immediately north of the upper parking lot at Paradise. Runs are constructed when there’s sufficient snow depth to prevent resource damage. The snow play area may remain open into mid-March, depending on snow.

Because of the high potential for personal injury and frequency of accidents, no other area of the park is open to sledding (except skiing and snowboarding). Serious frequency of accidents, no other area of the park is open to sliding (except skiing and snowboarding). Serious injuries and fatalities have occurred elsewhere when people have mistakenly slid over waterfalls, into trees, down steep slopes, or broken through thin snow into stream gorges.

• Access the snow play area from the main trailhead behind the visitor center.
• Use only inner tubes, plastic sleds, saucers, or other soft sledding devices. No wooden toboggans, runner sleds with metal edges, or other hard devices are permitted.
• Compressed air is available on weekends and holidays during snow play hours at the upper parking lot restroom.
• Be sure the run is clear before starting your slide. Collisions may cause serious injury.

Dress warmly and in layers with a wicking fabric such as wool or polypropylene next to the skin and a waterproof outer layer, not in jeans or T-shirts. Wear a hat, gloves, and snow-sealed boots. Take a warm-up break at the Jackson Visitor Center (open 10:00 am - 4:15 pm, weekends & holidays).

Avalanche Aware!
Snow avalanches are common in winter and spring. The greatest danger to you is an avalanche that you trigger by skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or climbing in avalanche terrain. Summer trails may lead through avalanche terrain.

Learn more about safe travel in avalanche country. Consider snowpack, weather, and topography in selecting your route. Ask yourself, “Will this slope slide?” and if it does, “Where will I or my partner go?” Carry an avalanche transceiver, probe, and shovel.

Remember, even small avalanches can be deadly.

Avalanche Level Descriptions
Slopes between 30 and 45 degrees pose the greatest avalanche danger.

Low Risk: Generally stable snow. Travel is usually safe.

Moderate Risk: Human-triggered avalanches possible.

Considerable Risk: Human triggered avalanches probable.

High Risk: Natural and human-triggered avalanches likely. Travel in avalanche terrain is not recommended.

Extreme Risk: Widespread natural and human-triggered avalanches certain. Avoid travel in avalanche terrain. Confining travel to low-angle terrain well away from avalanche path runouts.

Never ski, slide, or camp on plowed roadways or parking lots! Whether the road is open or closed, snowplows may be working nearby.

Winter Weather Reports
Avalanche Hazard Forecasts:
http://www.nwac.us/avalanche-forecast/current/cascade-west-south/

Highway Pass Reports:
(800) 695-7623 or dial 511
http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffict/passes/

Climbing & Backpacking
Over 10,000 people attempt to climb Mount Rainier each year. About half actually make it to the summit. Climbing information is available at ranger stations and on the park’s website at www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/climbing.htm. The fee for a climbing pass is $45 dollars/ person 25 years and older, and $32 dollars/person 24 years and younger, per calendar year. Be aware that camping and climbing in winter are much more demanding and hazardous than in summer.

Permits are required for all overnight stays in the wilderness and for travel above 10,000 feet and/or on glaciers. Rangers issue permits from the Longmire Museum daily and at Paradise on weekends. Self-registration is available at the Paradise Old Station, Carbon River Ranger Station, and at the winter closure of SR410 near Crystal Mountain.

Overnight parking at Paradise is in designated areas only. See the overnight parking map on page 4.

Guided climbs and climbing seminars are available through:
- Alpine Ascents International (206) 378-1927
- International Mountain Guides (360) 569-2609
- Rainier Mountainraineering, Inc. (RMI) (888) 892-5462

Skiing, Snowshoeing, & Snowboarding
Before starting out for the day, check the weather forecast and determine the avalanche hazard. Avalanche information, a weather forecast, and winter maps that show marked trails and popular unmarked routes are available from the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise (weekends and holidays) and the Longmire Museum (daily).

In early winter or in years of low snowfall, trees and other plants are damaged by skiers and snowboarders when snow depth is not sufficient to protect vegetation. Ski and snowboard only in those areas where the snow is deep enough to cover and protect vegetation. There should be at least five feet of snow before building jumps.
NOTICE: Marijuana is illegal in Mount Rainier National Park. While limited recreational use of marijuana is now legal in Washington State, possession of any amount of marijuana or other illegal drugs remains illegal in Mount Rainier National Park and all federal lands.

Pets
Leashed pets are permitted only in picnic areas, campgrounds, and parking lots, and on roads currently open to public vehicles.

Prepared & Take Care
Mount Rainier offers excellent opportunities for exploration and adventure, but sometimes people get lost, injured, or worse. Reduce your risk by following these guidelines:

Dress Warmly & Stay Dry
Cold temperatures, wet snow, and wind can easily rob you of body heat. To avoid hypothermia and frostbite, dress warmly and stay dry. Wear layers of wool or synthetic fabric like pile and polypropylene under a waterproof shell. Avoid exposure to wind. Snack frequently, drink lots of water, and take warm-up breaks indoors.

Pay attention to the weather
It's easy to get lost or fall when the weather turns bad. The trail can quickly cover with snow, or thick fog can blanket your route. You need to know where you are and how to get to safety. You also need to know how to assess avalanche hazards to minimize potential risk. Don't head out when storms are predicted.

Prepare
When hiking, climbing, skiing, or snowboarding, bring the “Winter 10 Essentials” and know how to use them. In addition, obtain compass bearings to Camp Muir or other off-trail destinations; carry an altimeter; have extra batteries. Having proper gear is a must.

Take Care
Tell someone your travel plans so they can notify the park if you fail to return. Do not travel alone or in poor visibility. If you are not truly knowledgeable and prepared, or if the weather is questionable, don’t push your luck!

Accessibility
Most comfort stations, visitor centers, picnic areas, and designated campsites are accessible or accessible with help by wheelchair. Accessible lodging is available inside the park and in local communities.

In the Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise, the audiovisual programs are captioned; assistive listening devices are available for the park film; an audio described tour of the exhibits is available; and the building and exhibits are accessible by wheelchair. The Kautz Creek Boardwalk Nature Trail is accessible when snow-free. TDO: (360) 569-2177.

Bikes in the Park
Bicycle only on roads, not on trails.

Mount Rainier: An Active Volcano
Active steam vents, periodic earth tremors, and historic eruptions provide evidence that Mount Rainier is sleeping, not dead. Seismic monitoring stations around the mountain should provide days or weeks of advance warning of impending eruptions. Other geologic hazards, however, can occur with little warning. These include debris flows and rockfalls. If you are near a river and notice a rapid rise in water level, feel a prolonged shaking of the ground, and/or hear a roaring sound coming from upvalley—often described as the sound made by a fast-moving freight train—move quickly to higher ground! A location 200 feet or more above river level should be safe.

Become A Mount Rainier Steward
Turn your passion for Mount Rainier into action that will benefit visitors today and tomorrow!

Volunteer in the park for a day, a summer, or on weekends as a park volunteer. Your contribution will benefit visitors and a Washington State license plate will be waiting for you on your next trip.

Mount Rainier National Park
Superintendent
Randy King

Mailing Address
SS210 238th Avenue East
Ashford, WA 98304

E-mail
MORAinfo@nps.gov

Park Headquarters
(360) 569-2211
(360) 569-2177 TDD

Lost and Found
(360) 569-6608

Park Websites
Mount Rainier National Park
www.nps.gov/mora
North Coast and Cascades Science Learning Network
http://nwpsparkscience.org/

Official Park Social Media Sites
facebook.com/MountRainierNPS
r flickr.com/MountRainierNPS
twitter.com/MountRainierNPS
mountainbikesfri.com
youtube.com/MountRainierNPS

Washington's National Park Fund
www.nps.gov/mora/supportyourpark/

Prepare & Take Care
Consider joining our team as a volunteer. Your contribution of time and energy will protect the magnificent natural and cultural arsmates entrusted to us, and you’ll go home with a sense of pride at having participated in something worthwhile. Volunteer in the park for a day, a summer, or on weekends as your schedule permits. Learn more at www.nps.gov/mora/volunteer.

Be prepared for route-finding conditions.
Trails may be snow-free at lower elevations but anticipate and prepare for snow at higher elevations. If you plan on retreading your route back to the trailhead, note important landmarks and consider using maps on snow-covered trails. Always carry a map and compass, and actively use them on snow-covered trails. If the trail becomes difficult to follow, stop and find where you are on the map before continuing. Also consider supplementing your map and compass with an external antenna GPS for best coverage beneath a forest canopy. Again, it is extremely important that you know how to use these tools.

Most importantly, plan your route ahead of time, have a backup plan, and never travel alone. If at any point you begin to feel uncomfortable or unprepared, turn around, get out safely and call for help. Mount Rainier will be waiting for you on your next trip.
Visitor Facility Hours

Longmire
9:00 am - 4:30 pm daily
Museum
(360) 569-6575
Information, exhibits, book sales, and climbing and backcountry permits

Henry M. Jackson Visitor Center at Paradise
10:00 am - 4:15 pm weekends and holidays
Hours may be extended mid-winter.
Information, exhibits, movies, book sales, gifts, and climbing and backcountry permits. Climbing permit self-registration is available at the Paradise Old Station.

Carbon River Ranger Station
(360) 829-9639
Call for hours
Wilderness camping & northside climbing permits (including Ispus Creek Campground)

All other visitor and information centers are closed for the season.

Food & Lodging

For in-park lodging reservations, call Mount Rainier Guest Services at (360) 569-2275 or go to www.mrainierguestservices.com

National Park Inn
Front Desk:
7:00 am - 10:00 pm daily
Dining Room:
7:00 am - 7:00 pm weekdays
7:00 am - 8:00 pm Fridays, Saturdays, and holidays

Paradise Inn
Closed for the season

Paradise Camp
11:00 am - 4:00 pm weekends and holidays
Deli and Gift Shop, the Jackson Visitor Center
Food service, gift shop, snowshoe rentals

Sunrise Day
Closed for the season
Lodge Snack Bar & Gift Shop
Gasoline, lodging, dining, recreation equipment rentals, and other services are available in local communities.

GAS IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE PARK

Winter Driving Safety Tips

- Beware of poor visibility and reduced traction.
- Reduce your speed.
- Allow extra distance between vehicles.
- Stay well back when following plows.
- Use low gears, especially when driving downhill.
- Never stop or park in a traffic lane. Your life may depend on it!
- If your RWD vehicle skids: reduce gas, steer where you want to go.
- If your FWD vehicle skids: accelerate slightly and steer where you want to go.
- Brake sparingly to avoid skidding by locking your brakes.
- Keep your headlights on for visibility.

Drive in the appropriate lane for your direction of travel. Avoid the center line.
Ensure that your chains fit your tires and practice installing them before you need them.
Stop in a chain-up area, pullout, or parking lot to install, adjust, or remove tire chains.
When parking, avoid setting your emergency brake. It may freeze.
Shady areas and bridge surfaces can be treacherously icy even when other sections of roadway are not.
Stay alert, use caution, anticipate hazards, and slow down.

Follow Traction Requirements

All vehicles are required to carry tire chains** when driving in the park in winter and spring as conditions can change quickly throughout the day. Vehicles over 10,000 pounds must carry a second set of chains and chain up whenever traction tires or chains are required. Traction tires or chains may be required at anytime in winter or spring. Obey the posted traction requirement.

Approved Traction Tires

TRACTION TIRES
- Required on the drive wheels including all-season tires, snow tires, or chains** on the drive wheels. Approved traction tires are designed by “M+S,” “M/S,” “+”, or “All Season” on the sidewall of the tires.

The road ahead has patches of snow and/or ice. Your vehicle should have approved all-season tires, snow tires, or chains** on the drive wheels. Approved traction tires are designed by “M+S,” “M/S,” “+”, or “All Season” on the sidewall of the tires.

The road is snow-packed or icy and drivers can expect some difficulty. Your vehicle must have tire chains (link, cable, or plastic)** on the drive wheels. AWD and 4WD vehicles may proceed without chains if they have snow tires on all four wheels, are in four wheel drive, and carry one set of chains** in the vehicle for later installation if needed.

All vehicles must have chains** on the drive wheels including AWD and 4WD.

** AutoSocks are allowed for passenger vehicles under 10,000 pounds as an alternative traction device.