

Spring Whale Watching Week returns along the Oregon Coast

March 17, 2025



Oregon State Parks will host Spring Whale Watch Week along the Oregon Coast Saturday, March 22 through Sunday, March 30.

Trained Oregon State Park volunteers and rangers will be stationed at 14 sites along the Oregon Coast to help visitors spot whales and their calves and answer questions from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily March 22-30, according to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

The sites are some of the best places to watch for whales on the Oregon Coast, according to the OPRD. Cape Foulweather will not be included this year because it is closed due to construction.

“Spring is a great time for whale watching because the gray whales are usually closer to shore on their return trip, typically around a mile or so out, and they might have calves in tow,” OPRD Park Ranger Peter McBride said.

An estimated 19,260 gray whales are expected to swim past Oregon’s shores from late winter through June as part of their annual migration back to Alaska.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced an end to an Unusual Mortality Event impacting gray whales in 2023. Since then, the estimated population has increased by roughly 30% from 14,530 in 2023 to 19,260 last year, according to NOAA. The numbers are on the rise overall, but the calf count is still low as the population continues to rebound.

Whale Watch Week provides an opportunity to see not only the gray whales but other coastal wildlife including birds and other marine mammals with help from trained volunteers and rangers.

A map of volunteer-staffed sites is available online on the official event webpage:

https://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=thingstodo.dsp_whaleWatching

The Whale Watching Center in Depoe Bay will be open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 22-30. Visitors to the center can enjoy interactive whale exhibits and take in the panoramic ocean views. Binoculars are provided. Rangers from Oregon State Parks will also be on hand to answer questions about the whales.

All Whale Watch Week visitors are encouraged to dress for the weather, to bring binoculars and to follow beach safety guidelines such as remaining out of fenced areas, knowing the tide schedule and keeping an eye on the surf at all times. Go to <https://visittheoregoncoast.com/beach-safety/> for a list of safety tips.

For more information about coast parks and campgrounds, visit stateparks.oregon.gov.

Visitors are encouraged to share their photos and videos from Spring Whale Watch on social media using #OregonStateParks and #ORWhaleWatch.