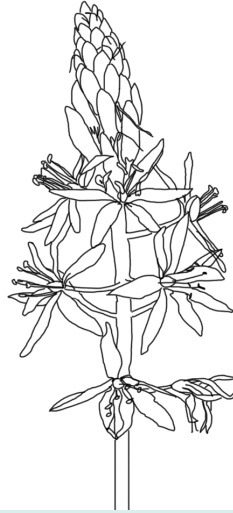


WELCOME

In 1962, through the encouragement of Murray Miller, a long-time Oregon City resident and naturalist, The Nature Conservancy purchased its first preserve in Oregon, the Camassia Natural Area. This 27-acre preserve is perched on the bluffs of the Willamette River and is named for the common camas lily, which is pictured below and blooms profusely here in the spring.

Common camas (Camassia quamash) is a traditional First Food of Pacific Northwest Native Americans. Camassia offers a rare view of the natural history of the Willamette Valley. The Valley's mosaic of open prairies, oak woodlands and savannas—like you see here—supports a diversity of plants and animals. Now, however, these habitats are increasingly imperiled, with under two percent remaining for future generations. The Nature Conservancy and many other conservation organizations are working to protect and restore these rare habitats and native species.



AN URBAN, GEOLOGICAL GEM

Just off I-205 and nestled in the community of West Linn, Camassia Natural Area is a natural gem surrounded by urban development. Its rocky plateau provides a glimpse into ancient history—when the Bretz Floods poured down the Columbia River Gorge and into the Willamette Valley 12,000 to 19,000 years ago. The floods swept soil and vegetation from parts of the Valley and deposited granitic boulders called “glacial erratics” from as far away as Canada.



CAMASSIA VOLUNTEERS

Protecting this unique habitat would not be possible without the help of volunteers. Our volunteer stewards, hike leaders, and work party participants all play a role in keeping Camassia the natural gem it is. If you'd like to get involved, please email orvolunteers@tnc.org or head to our website at nature.org/oregonvolunteer



LEAVE NO TRACE



CAMASSIA IS DAY-USE ONLY. CAMPING AND FIRES ARE NOT PERMITTED.



ENJOY THE TRAILS ON FOOT ONLY. BIKES ARE NOT PERMITTED.



DO NOT PICK FLOWERS; THEY PROVIDE SEEDS FOR NEW PLANTS YOU CAN ENJOY ON YOUR NEXT VISIT.



PLEASE LEAVE YOUR DOG AT HOME; THEY CAN DISTURB WILDLIFE.



POISON OAK

This native plant can cause a blistering rash. Please stay on the trail to avoid it and respect the habitat.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY WORKS IN ALL 50 UNITED STATES AND IN 72 COUNTRIES AROUND THE GLOBE TO PROTECT THE LANDS AND WATERS ON WHICH ALL LIFE DEPENDS. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT:

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY PORTLAND OFFICE

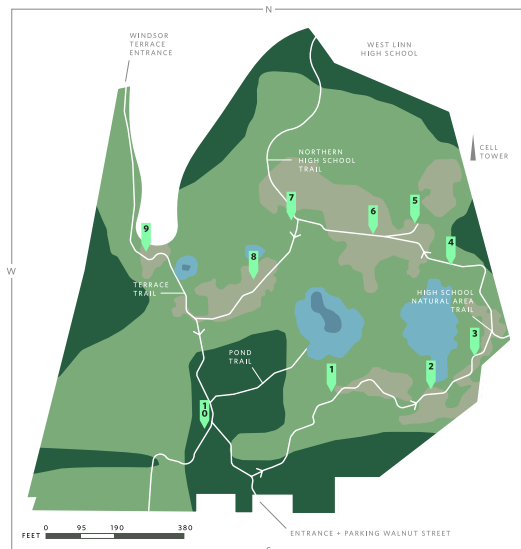
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CAMASSIA NATURAL AREA

The Nature Conservancy 
Oregon

SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETIVE TOUR



1 — CAMAS LILY

Once common throughout the Willamette Valley, Camas is a traditional First Food for Native Americans. Its root is eaten raw, roasted, boiled, fried or dried and stored. During April or May, the preserve's namesake blooms in abundance in the grassy plateaus.



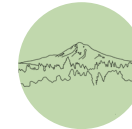
2 — OAK RESTORATION

Natural areas throughout the Willamette Valley, such as Camassia, were historically managed with fires, which allowed prairie plants and Oregon white oak trees to flourish. Without fire in the ecosystem, shrubs and trees can quickly grow into once open habitats. Douglas fir trees, common throughout Western Oregon, grow much faster than oak trees and over time they can shade out and kill the oaks. In order to protect the oaks at Camassia, the Conservancy removed some fir and girdled many others, which leaves the standing dead firs you see at the preserve. This oak tree was older than the Douglas fir that was cut at this spot. Now the oak is thriving and increasing its canopy.



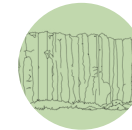
3 — MT. HOOD VIEW

On a clear day, the view of Mt. Hood is amazing. Historically, a person standing at this point would have heard the roar of Willamette Falls. Today, the roar is from motorists on I-205, which was built between 1968 and 1983.



4 — 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, major floods poured down the present Columbia River Gorge and up the Willamette River Valley. These floods swept away soils and vegetation from parts of the valley and deposited icerrafted granite boulders from as far away as Canada.



5 — OSPREY 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. An osprey pair, perhaps even the same pair, has returned to this nest annually since 1997.



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. Smooth, orange-barked Pacific madrone trees and old, lichen-covered Oregon white oaks thrive in this habitat.



7 — ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD

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.



8 — QUAKING ASPEN

Uncommon in western Oregon, quaking aspen have flattened petioles or leaf stocks that cause them to flutter or "quake" in the breeze. Aspens grow in groves of genetically identical trees created by the growth of spreading suckers. Where quaking aspen are more abundant, the size of individual clones make them one of largest living organisms on Earth.



9 — MEADOW RESTORATION

This meadow used to be covered in dense patches of Scot's broom, blackberry and other shrubs & trees. In order to simulate the fires that once burned this area every few years, the Conservancy removed shrubs and invasive species. Native grass and wildflower seeds were broadcast throughout this meadow. The floral display grows in beauty every year as the wildflowers mature and spread. Did you know it can take 3-7 years for a camas grown from seed to start flowering?



10 — FORESTED WETLAND SITE

Most of the forested areas at Camassia were once covered in English ivy. Over time, Conservancy crews cleared ivy from the forested wetlands to allow room for native vegetation. Now, Conservancy volunteers keep these areas clear through regular surveys. Native wildflowers and other plants have flourished where it was once a carpet of ivy.



CAMASSIA NATURAL AREA'S ROCKY PLATEAUS, WOODLANDS AND WETLANDS SUPPORT A MYRIAD OF NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS. HERE IS A SAMPLE OF WHAT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER:

WILDLIFE

- Black-tailed deer
- Pacific tree frog
- Rough-skin newt
- Spotted towhee
- Cedar waxwing
- Bewick's wren
- Golden and Ruby-crowned kinglets
- Screech owl
- Osprey

PLANTS

- Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia grandiflora*)
- Rosy plectritis (*Plectritis congesta*)
- Fawn lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*)
- Trilliums (*Trillium chloropetalum*) (*T. ovatum*)
- Harvest brodiaea (*Brodiaea terrestris*)
- Wild Hyacinth (*Triteleia hyacinthina*)
- Licorice fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*)
- False Solomon's-seal (*Smilacina racemosa*)
- Indian hellebore (*Veratrum viride*)
- Common camas (*Camassia quamash*)
- Tall Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*)
- Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)
- Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*)

