

## Find hiking, beaches at Burfoot Park In Olympia

From The Olympian

- **Where:** Six miles from downtown Olympia on Boston Harbor Road
- **To do:** Burfoot Park has something for just about every outdoors person. Hikers can shake off the winter rust on the trail network, which also includes plenty of uphill — in the form of wooden steps. Birders can find a rich variety of gulls, woodpeckers — particularly pileated woodpeckers — ducks and shorebirds. Beach lovers can poke around the driftwood at the high-tide level, sift through shells and pebbles or spot harbor seals and sea lions just offshore. Photographers can get shots of forest and Puget Sound beach. There are picnic spots in the park and play areas for kids.
- **Hiking details:** Burfoot Park is a nice spot for a quick lunchtime or after-work hike. The trails are in good shape and go up and down enough to give a little workout. Trees are budding into leaf along the trails, although winter isn't over for a few weeks. Watch your step on the stairs, as they can be slick. This trail is not for people who use wheelchairs or walkers.
- **Beach details:** It's a good idea to time your visit for low tide, as a very high tide will cover much of the 1,100-foot beach. Low tide is an excellent time to spot seagulls digging clams out of the gravel and then lifting into the air with a few strong wing beats. The gulls then drop the clams on the beach and immediately land to enjoy a meal of very fresh seafood. Several gulls are often working clams at the same time, and the thump of clams hitting rocks is almost constant.
- **Birds:** Birders should watch for the bald eagles that like to perch in the Douglas firs on the bluff overlooking the beach.
- **Safety:** Watch for slick spots on the trail. Don't go off of the trail because poison oak is everywhere.
- **Equipment:** Food, water, rain gear, hiking shoes, cameras, binoculars and wildlife guides.
- **Directions:** From I-5 North, take Exit #105 ( Port of Olympia) , go left on the roundabout to Plum Street. Turn left (north) onto Plum Street at the light, which becomes East Bay Road and then Boston Harbor Road. Pass Priest Point Park. Turn left into Burfoot Park about six miles from downtown. This route is a good bike ride on a nice day.
- **Parking:** Plenty of spaces are waiting for you.
- **Hours:** The park opens at 9 a.m. and closes at dusk.
- **Comforts:** There are restrooms, picnic areas, fresh water and a nice play area for kids. The grassy lawns are good for Frisbee, catch and other games.
- **Rules:** No camping, alcohol, firearms or fireworks.
- **More information:** Call Thurston County Parks and Recreation at 360-786-5595 or go to [www.co.thurston.wa.us/parks](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/parks).



This gull pulled a clam from Budd Inlet at low tide and is headed down the beach at Burfoot Park to drop the clam and break the shell. (Chester Allen/The Olympian)