

Outdoor Activity: Steilacoom's Chambers Creek a good place to go any day- Check out the bird life

By Chester Allen | The Olympian



This great blue heron stalked around the clear waters of Chambers Creek. The big, shy bird got a few fish, but it also missed quite a few. It's never easy being an angler. (Chester Allen/The Olympian)

What: Outing to Chambers Creek Canyon Park in Steilacoom.

To do: In fall, few people visit this 195-acre park just off the 7100 block of Chambers Creek Road - right near the Steilacoom waterfront.

On a lonely day, shorebirds, raptors and songbirds swarm over the quiet waters. An osprey took a bath in the shallows. Geese and ducks nibbled water weeds, preened and dozed on the mud flats. Two great blue herons hunted for little fish in the shallows - and got their share. A belted kingfisher swooped over the water and perched in a dead cedar tree.

The trail network through dense forest was quiet and cool. A pileated woodpecker jackhammered on a snag, and two young blacktail deer browsed in the foliage.

This park is a good idea on any day.

Directions: From South Sound, take Interstate-5 north. Take exit 119 and turn left at the top of the offramp and cross over I-5. Turn right onto Dupont-Steilacoom Road. Follow the road through North Fort Lewis. Turn right at Lafayette Street in Steilacoom, which is near a ferry dock. Lafayette Street becomes Chambers Bay Drive. Follow Chambers Bay Drive to the park sign and a small parking area.

Equipment: Cameras, sunglasses, sunscreen, birding guides. If you want to try the trails, bring bug spray and good hiking shoes.

Safety: Put life preservers on the kids. Watch for poison oak in the woods.

More information: Visit Pierce County Parks and Recreation at www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/services/recreate/fac-list.htm