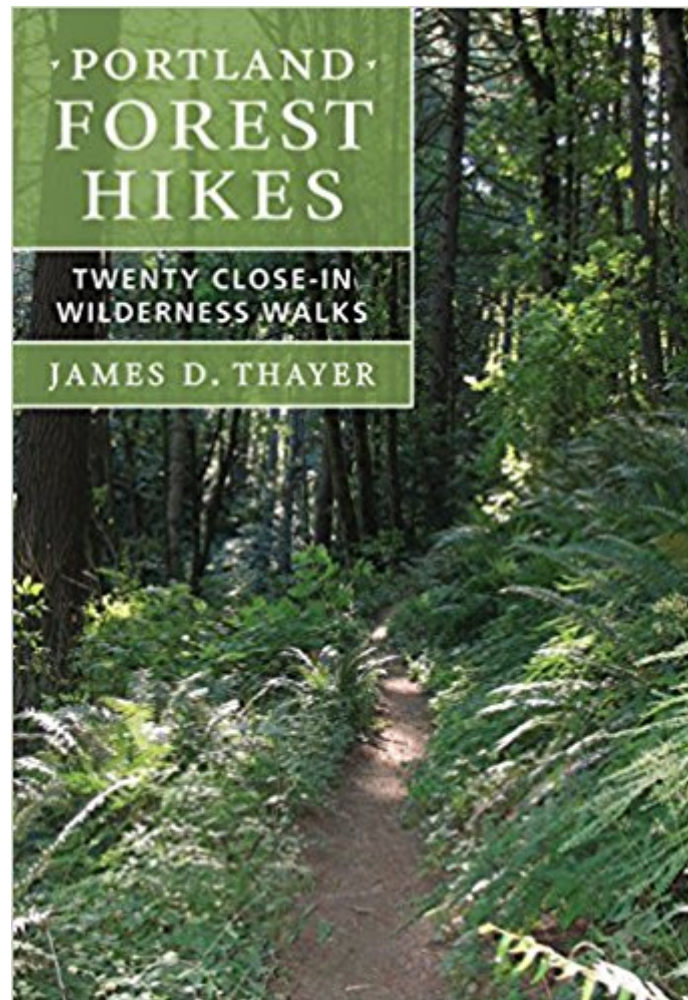




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Portland Forest Hikes: Twenty Close-In Wilderness Walks



Synopsis

Here are twenty wilderness hikes within twenty miles of downtown Portland, Oregon, less than a half hour's ride from the city. Adventurers at all skill levels will be surprised by the remoteness and remarkable beauty of these easy woodland escapes. Just take this pocket-sized companion and slip down a hidden trail to emerge on vistas with eagles soaring overhead. There are shorter walks suitable for kids, like the McCarthy Creek Loop, and rugged routes for the ambitious, like the Fire Lane 12 loop. Each hike description includes a map, bus access, basic conditions, length, and grade, as well as flora, fauna, geology, and local history. Half the trails explore lesser-known wooded hillsides in Forest Park. Others venture farther north in the Tualatin Mountains into rarely described prime Oregon hiking country. A devoted advocate for Portland's wilderness areas, James D. Thayer has surveyed most of the publicly accessible walking routes along the Tualatin Mountains from Forest Park to Scappoose and nearly to the Oregon coast on foot.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"We're impressed. It's a glove compartment companion dedicated to the proposition that you can have your hike and read it, too." -- John Minervini "Willamette Week"

"We're impressed. It's a glove compartment companion dedicated to the proposition that you can have your hike and read it, too."

"Portland is woven into a natural setting, and Jim Thayer knows how to find the remote places that are truly nearby." —David Bragdon, Metro Council President

Here are twenty wilderness hikes within twenty miles of downtown Portland, Oregon, less than a half hour's ride from the

city. Adventurers at all skill levels will be surprised by the remoteness and remarkable beauty of these easy woodland escapes. This pocket-sized companion includes maps, bus access, basic conditions, flora, fauna, and local history. Choose the shorter walks for kids or rugged routes for the ambitious. Half the trails explore lesser-known wooded hillsides in Forest Park. Others venture farther north into rarely described prime Oregon hiking country in the Tualatin Mountains for the thrill of the wild at the city's back door.

Really nothing I haven't already done pretty basic in exciting walking routes all centered I scappoose

The first hike I did in this book was the Forest Park hike that appeared to be the easiest w/ the least elevation gain. This was chosen because I was taking my retired parents, visiting from out-of-state. Initially, I had considered making the hike even easier, by taking one of the fire lane shortcuts recommended in the book, but the author says nothing about how steep the fire lanes are, so I asked one of the few people I saw on the trail, and he said recommended against the fire lanes if we wished to avoid steep ascents. He suggested that we stick to the regular trails. And so we did. Or at least we tried. For the first couple hours, it all seemed to be going well. Each trail intersection we saw was described in the book with perfect accuracy. And I opened the book to verify our course at every intersection. Eventually, we were looking forward to the final trail intersection -- where we were instructed to turn off the Wildwood Trail, to take the "lower end of the Hardesty Trail" back to the starting point. The book's text did not say which direction we should go at this intersection, but as it turned out, there was only one direction. It seemed a little odd that we were going down to the right (north), but I figured the trail would soon swing toward the southwest, and travel upward, ascending back to the parking area. It's worth noting here that James Thayer's book does not specify the elevation change of each leg of the hike, and Thayer seldom specifies the distance of each leg of the hike (and never with any accuracy). Also, as stated earlier, Thayer frequently fails to specify which way a hiker should turn when Thayer tells the reader/hiker to turn onto a new trail. But Thayer's book does APPEAR to describe every trail intersection on each hike he maps and describes. This is why, I never had any real doubt that the Hardesty Trail intersection we took might not be the correct one to take. After all, Thayer had accurately flagged and described every other marked trail intersection we encountered -- even all the intersections that we were supposed to continue through, without turning. This intersection, however, was one that we should have continued past -- despite what the book said, and what the book led us to expect. From

studying better maps after returning from this hike, I know now that we should have continued forward on the Wildwood Trail to the next intersection, where our trail would intersect with the UPPER portion of the Hardesty Trail, going to the left in a SW direction. Had we known to that, we all would have enjoyed a lovely hike through the woods, and returned back to the car just as my parents were ready to call it day. Unfortunately, we followed the book's instructions as most anyone would, taking the lower end of the Hardesty Trail off the Wildwood Trail. And, a 1/3 mile later, we found ourselves on an unfamiliar dirt road, deep in Forest Park, somewhere that was not even on the map Thayer provided. We had no idea where to go, and the book was no help at this point. Needless to say, my parents began to feel very anxious, which in turn caused me to become anxious, worried, and more than a little guilt-ridden for putting them in this situation ...and for trusting in this book. Thankfully, a mountain biker did come along, and he was very nice and very helpful, telling us how to get back to the parking area, by walking along gravel roads open to mountain bikes. (As a biker he was unfamiliar with the hiking trails within the park, or he probably would have suggested we turn back and then continue up the Wildwood Trail until it intersects with the upper end of the Hardesty Trail.) In any case, he told us what we needed to know to get back to our car, and we were very grateful. But it did require a very steep 500 foot hike up a gravel road with poor traction. This was terribly strenuous, and downright scary, as my parents are closer to 80 than 70. It's only been a couple of days since the hike, so I hesitate to say that we made it back with only sore muscles. Either one of my parents could still come down with a serious illness triggered by the stress and strain of the last hour of that hike -- and that stress and strain was, of course, ultimately caused by the poorly-written instructions in James D. Thayer's book of hikes. So...If you already have reliable maps, and elevation information on each trail & road intersection, then you might find Thayer's book to be a useful supplement -- one that might point out some hikes where you'll find very few, if any, other people. But if you want a single book of accurate hike descriptions and accurate maps to pack with you, and to depend upon to guide you as you hike through unfamiliar trails in Portland's large Forest Park, then this is NOT the book for you (unless you & your companions can afford to be lost in the woods where you'll find very few, if any, other people).

Good route descriptions of the trails in Forest Park and surrounding hills.

As someone who leads forest hikes in the metropolitan Portland area and collects guide books of same I eagerly awaited Portland Forest Hikes, Twenty Close In Wilderness Walks. Alas! This book is poorly written for a guidebook. 1 The directions are not clear, 2 Some maps are too small and not

well labeled 3 Some hikes start where parking is not allowed.No clear directions is the most serious problem with this book. Perhaps it should be edited and the directions of where to turn put either in bold or as a first sentence of a paragraph. In this edition they are lost in all the descriptions of brush and etc. Even when one figures out where he is sending us, the mileage he gives is not accurate.Having used most of the trail books printed about Portland, I would judge this one the best written if you want to get lost on your hike or want to do a lot of backtracking to find out what the author really meant. The directions are just too muddled.

After hearing the author on radio, I knew I had to pick up this book. I've always wanted to explore the Forest Park area of Portland, but it's a huge, largely wild area and I didn't feel comfortable just setting off on my own.My daughter and I went on our first hike yesterday and it was great. We found the trailhead right away, no problem. The directions are extremely specific, down to the blue tarp mentioned in hike #19. We even passed a couple carrying the same book as us!! I gave it four out of five stars for two reasons: One is that the picture of the beaver pond is a little misleading. It's an old picture and the pond has since been drained quite a bit which is not mentioned in the caption of the picture. I'd expected a nice body of water for our lab to swim in, but it was mostly gone. Two, the trail did require a little more bushwhacking than expected--blackberry vines are sharp!But overall, I'd highly recommend this book. Great directions and a great way to explore close in hikes in the Portland area.

Great book!

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