

sure you have plenty of water. However, the advantage of this steep trail is that you will want to stop often to admire the view.

The top of the Sky Trail is over 1,800 feet, directly above the valley floor. From the small bench at the top, you can see miles of the valley, and parts of the Salinas Valley over the top of the next range of hills. The top is a hillside meadow, complete with dozens of tiny flowers. It is a good place to simply lie down and feel the warmth of the sun and hear the buzzing of thousands of busy insects.

From this vantage point, (the top of Sniveley's Ridge), you can look south over another valley and to Ventana Range.

On the way down, (if you have already taken a side trip to the Mesa), pick up the Fern Trail. It climbs a bit before heading down a shaded canyon to a charming little pond with a bench. This is a perfect place to cool off and look for frogs, before heading down to rejoin the Mesa Trail.

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### GETTING THERE WILDFLOWERS

Exit Highway One in Carmel. Follow Carmel Valley Road east 8.6 miles to the parking area of Garland Ranch Regional Park.



*View of many peaks to explore as seen from Mt. Rainier.  
Photo by Chuck Peradotto*

### MOUNT RAINIER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12 >

is the Tatoosh Range, a series of awesome saw-tooth and towering precipices that cut the cobalt sky. So clear and pure, the spires appear to be etched. Beyond the ridge are the Tatoosh Wilderness and the Pinchot National Forest. To the east are the Douglas National Wilderness and the Snoqualmie Forest.

The park has many acres of old growth. The trees are mostly firs, hemlock and cedar. At these elevations pines and fir prevail. The stunted and gnarled (by nature) trees you see are called 'krummholz'. The woods abound with wildlife, fox, coyote, elk, deer and mountain lions as well as black bear. The benches and precipices are the homes of mountain goats. Above the trees are bald eagles, hawks, owls and ground, grouse and ptarmigan. The rivers are full of Coho salmon and steelhead trout.

In the valley to the south are the Paradise, Sunbeam Creek and Stevens Creeks. Also the Skyline Trail winds through on its way around the base of Mount Rainier. This magnificent 93 mile long trail winds through all the varied terrains as it circumnavigates Mount Rainier. Proper planning, preparation and outfitting are necessary before attempting the multi-day hike. Consult with the rangers for current trail information and leave.

Directly above Skyline Trail, on Rainier, are Snowfield and Camp Muir. You pass a cutoff near Camp Creek .8 mile and Camp Muir 2.7 miles that have not been tempted to take this route to the camp. If you are experienced in steep snow and are adequately prepared.

The peak was first climbed by Hazard Stevens and Philemon Sturges. Climbing permits are required for glaciers or on the mountain. If you are thinking of attempting the summit, it would be wise to consult with the guide services.

Camp Muir at 10,180 feet was originally known as Cloud Camp and renamed after John Muir climbing in 1888. Muir wrote about his experience in 'Mount Rainier' in his book 'The Mountains of California' a worthwhile read. Camp Muir is a jumping off point for serious hikers attempting to summit the mountain.

As you proceed, look for a steep valley to the right and a stream and waterfalls that are visible. On the trail as you cross more snow your hand in to experience

runoff. Remember that all water should be collected around pristine Mount Rainier) before drinking.

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