

Drift Creek Falls... Literally

A letter from caretaker, David Nafziger describes the natural but dramatic change that occurred at Drift Creek Falls in late July or early August. The bridge appears to be largely unharmed.

John, Ken and others:

I will always be grateful for the time you abducted me and said that it was time for me to see Drift Creek Falls! Today was my opportunity to see the face-lift, or must I say, face-fall.



Photos before and after the rock sheet fell, from left to right

To describe, the side-stream that flows over the basalt cliff had a hot-tub sized basin on top, just before it went over the precipice. Drift Creek below had undercut the base, with the help of erosion from the falls. The largest flake (of basalt) apparently fell in one piece. It split through the basin vertically, following cleavage lines from the columns. Since it had no base to support it, the rock sheet fell on its face into the creek and into the woods on the far bank. Using the range-finder on my camera I measured this piece to be at least 20 feet thick.

I don't believe I had ever heard how tall the waterfall was. There are very few areas on the

main cliff face that did not show dirt from water seeping in. It was a free-standing flake on both sides of the falls, up until the upper end under the suspension bridge. Who could have guessed? The water now falls free of the cliff for more distance; the cliff is now a few feet less since the end of the tub is gone. I will always regret not responding to the appeal of that tub on the edge of a waterfall! I clambered around in the rubble pile that fills the creek and found nice examples of 4, 5, and 6 sided columns.

-Dave Nafziger

Family Nature Retreat a Success

John Gingerich

Drift Creek Camp hosted a weekend Family Nature Retreat in July, planned together with Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center (FSEL) and Drift Creek Nature Center. This first-year retreat was attended by 12 families (17 adults and 17 children in all) who are already looking forward to next year's event.

The program featured activities in nature, journaling, old growth ecology, entomology, plant identification and stream ecology. Rounding out the evening was plenty of fireside singing, s'mores and a Night Hike to find bats and owls.

Drift Creek Camp was blessed with warm sunny weather which attracted children and their parents to the water for wading, tubing and swimming during the afternoon free time. The weekend was capped off with a three mile round trip hike to Drift Creek Falls.

NEXT: Join FSEL at Drift Creek Camp for a one-day **Fall Mushroom Retreat** with an expert on Saturday, **October 23**, from 10:00-4:00. Participants will learn to identify and collect a variety of local fungi, with the options of enjoying dinner and an overnight stay in the lodge. Visit driftcreek.org/programs.

Did you Know? Forest and DCC facts to help prepare you for Drift Creek Camp's 50th celebration kicking off this year.

How big are Oregon's forests? How big is Camp?

Oregon's forests cover more than 30 million of the state's 63 million-acre land base (about 48 percent of the state's total land area). DCC enjoys 12 acres inside the 25 acres lying within a natural loop formed by the meandering creek itself.

Who owns Oregon's forests?

About 60 percent of all forestlands in Oregon are owned by the federal government. Various private owners hold 35 percent; 3 percent belongs to the State of Oregon; 1 percent is tribe land; 1 percent is in other public ownerships.

Myth: Drift Creek Camp is currently engaged in a 100-year lease with the US Forest Service.

Fact: Drift Creek Camp is authorized under a five-year Special Use Permit by the US Forest Service with land-use fees due every year!

Drift Creek Nature Center

is under the guidance of the Drift Creek Camp Board of Directors.

DCNC committee members are:

Joe Ebersole, Bruce Flaming, John and Louise Gingerich, Tony and Brenda Kauffman, Kayla Mast, Glen Oesch, Ken Snyder and Jon Yoder.

To learn more, visit us online at driftcreeknaturecenter.org

What is Oregon's most common tree?

The state tree...the Douglas-fir. West of the Cascades, you could guess that any evergreen tree you see is a Douglas-fir, and you would be right eight out of ten times. Also, there are 30 species of conifers and 37 species of hardwoods found in Oregon's forests.

Tip: Visit the biodiversity database at driftcreeknaturecenter.org to see what trees are found around Drift Creek. Click on the headings to make it easier to find what you are looking for.

What is the No. 1 cause of wildfires?

People cause the most fires; on the average, about 68 percent of all wildfires are human-caused. Lightning and natural causes are

responsible for the remainder. **Fact:** The original generator shed and shop at DCC were destroyed in a fire in 1969. This fire ignited during the maintenance of a faulty generator.

Forest Facts, Oregon Department of Forestry: oregon.gov/ODF/PUBS/docs/Forest_Facts/FFForestryFactsFigures.pdf



Katie Chupp enjoys a visit from a tiger swallowtail butterfly during the 3rd and 4th grade week of camp.

DCNC Wish List for 2010

1 dozen rubber animal casts \$10 ea.
1 dozen face masks and snorkel sets \$40 ea.
Digital Camera \$250
Tripod \$250
Digital Camcorder \$400
Large Screened-in Canopy (outdoor classroom tent) \$500
Birding Scope \$500
Telescope \$500
Laptop Computer: iBook or MacBook \$1,000
Desktop Computer: iMac G4 or newer \$1,250
Thank you to those who have helped our wishes come true!