

More Geologic Change Discovered around Drift Creek Camp



Left, view from the top of the Hike to the Rock, circa 1975. Right, Roger Oakes and Tony Kauffman atop the rock at its new location on June 19, 2011. See more photos of the slide in Drift Creek Camp's Rock Face-book photo album.



Last fall I spent many of my free afternoons hiking anything that remotely looked like a trail searching for the famous "rock." I had heard the stories of the wonderful rock and had seen the black and white photos of pensive hikers looking out over the grand vista of camp and wilderness. I knew it was close, but try after try I could not seem to find "the rock." I had never been there personally, but I listened carefully to many recollections from the seasoned staff and campers who had been there in years past and I kept at it.

It ends up that I was not the only one interested in finding "the rock." A few others went out to look for and refresh the trail so that a new generation could have the experience. Unfortunately, landmarks and trails return rapidly to their natural state of dense vegetation in the Pacific Northwest and no one could seem to find it.

Enter long-time camper, Roger Oakes. Armed with an adventurous spirit and a modern GPS system, he managed to find "the rock" using the GPS coordinates of DCC and the angle at which the old photos from "the rock" were taken. He relocated it this January. He was very surprised when he came back for Parent and Me camp a few months later and "the rock" was gone. It had relocated several hundred feet down the side of the mountain taking down trees and bulldozing the soil until it came to an angle of repose not far from the road.

DCC is located on the Siletz River Volcanic Series

formation. Our portion of the coast range is made up of a softer and more vesicular type of basalt. This mountain range was formed long ago as a series of submarine volcanoes far out in the oceanic crust that were scraped off onto our continent. They are very ancient and highly weathered mountains making them susceptible to rock slides.

Mark your Calendar

November 12, Fall Mushroom Event at Drift Creek Camp

Program planned by Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center. Featuring a class by Northwest Mushroom Expert, Jake Hurlbert, with ample time for collection and identification.

Watch the DCC website for more information.

This has been a big year geologically-speaking, for getting to see massive weathering and change up-close and first-hand near camp. We had the cliff face at Drift Creek Falls flake off erasing the beautiful, smooth, mossy face of the falls and obliterating the plunge pool at the bottom and now we have "the rock" that rolled. It is still worth it to take the new Hike to the Rock to visit it in its new resting place, just to see the scope of what can happen when something that large dislodges and takes off down the mountain-side. Be prepared to hike through some scree and vegetation but it is a great adventure to see such a fresh geologic change to our area.

- Sara Gibson, Caretaker

New Nature Center Classroom Provides Kids with Work Space

"The first activity was TODAY! We set up the microscopes out there for X-stream exploration. It was great!" Brenda Kauffman reports to the board of directors how the first nature activity turned out in the newly completed classroom. "Things that could improve the space: better lighting and maybe a wipe-off board or chalkboard."

Tony Kauffman headed up the project to modify the north side of the activity building to include a closed-in room that is 10 feet by 24 feet. This new space will give kids and adults another dedicated location for equipment, nature activities and projects.



frigid water, scooping up organisms as quickly as possible before retreating to the nature classroom where we could identify them away from the rain.

I personally wasn't sure if kids were enjoying the activity until one day one of the campers asked if he could stay for his free-time to identify the creatures. To me that was really exciting because it meant that kids were actually finding what I was teaching interesting! In a time they could be spending playing foosball in the lodge or talking with friends, they were identifying macro-invertebrates.

As the kids got younger, the more interested they seemed to be in the activity. Their attention spans, however, also proceeded to shorten, and I began to allow them to catch critters other than macro-invertebrates. I encouraged them to catch anything they found fascinating or bizarre. A lot of the campers used the scuba masks to find young crawdads and others spent their time chasing fish. Whatever the case, we ended up snaring tadpoles, fish, crawdads, mayflies, stoneflies, and all sorts of slippery things.

The last week of camp was also the youngest full week of campers, 3rd-4th grade week. Knowing that this particular age group is a bit more tiring than most, I was expecting my daily nature activities to be a bit more stressful than usual. Surprisingly this wasn't the case. Although I had large groups, the kids who participated actually wanted to be there, making my job a lot easier.

By the end of camp, I had campers telling me that nature was their favorite activity and that they never knew nature could be fun. I think an exact quote was something along the lines of "I never knew nature could be this fun. I always thought it was about boring things like plants." Hearing that made me sure that I had been successful in what I believed was my role as the naturalist this summer. Knowing that kids went away from summer camp believing that biology could be engaging and fun made me feel confident in what I had been teaching.

-Ana Smith, Summer Camp Naturalist



Nature Not Boring at Drift Creek

This summer I had the joy of leading the nature activities at Drift Creek. Heading into the job, I was somewhat concerned on how I could teach the kids nature and have fun at the same time- mainly based on own experiences of being in nature activities as a camper. I focused the activities on capturing and studying macro-invertebrates, a subject that had been one of my strong-points in biology the previous school year.

Every day I would lead the kids out to the creek, find an area with high turbidity, and teach the kids how to catch macro-invertebrates and accurately identify them. The weather at camp wasn't always cooperative; there were lots of cold rainy days when we'd wade through the

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