

AROUND & ABOUT MT HOOD

EXPLORING THE TIMBERLINE TRAIL, ACCESS TRAILS, AND DAY HIKEs

Sonia Buist
with
Anne Ashford, Sandy Mooney
& Emily Keller

LOLITS PRESS
Portland, Oregon

Copyright © 2018 Sonia Buist. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without the written permission from the publisher.

Previously published as *Around Mt Hood in Easy Stages* by Sonia Buist and Emily Keller, LOLITS Press, 1st Edition © 1997 and *Around & About Mount Hood: Exploring the Timberline Trail, Access Trails & Day Hikes* by Sonia Buist with Emily Keller, 2nd Edition © 2013, LOLITS Press

ISBN: 978-0-9643836-2-3

Writer: Sonia Buist

Illustrations: Emily Keller

Editing for the 3rd Edition: Anne Ashford & Sandy Mooney

Formatting & layout: Paul Erdman, Creative Progression

LOLITS is an acronym for **L**ittle **O**ld **L**adies in **T**ennis **S**hoes



Copies of *Around & About Mt Hood: Exploring the Timberline Trail, Access Trails & Day Hikes* can be ordered from

- LOLITS Press website: www.mthoodhiking.com
- By phone: 503 292 0237
- And in many Northwest bookstores, REI, Timberline Lodge and Amazon.com

By the same author:

Hikes & Walks on Mt Hood:

Government Camp & Timberline Lodge Areas

The BEST Hikes & Walks On & Around Mt Hood, 1st Edition, 2017

also available from LOLITS Press

Cover photo: Mt Hood from Bald Mountain, Debbie Asakawa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	v
Introduction & How to Use this Book	1
Map of the Timberline Trail	14
Area Map of Roads	15
Hike Summary Table	16
Trail Segments	17
Segment 1: Timberline Lodge/	
Ramona Falls Trailhead.	19
Segment 2: Ramona Falls Trailhead/	
Top Spur Trailhead	31
Segment 3: Top Spur Trailhead/	
Mazama Trailhead	43
Segment 4: Mazama Trailhead/	
Vista Ridge Trailhead.	51
Segment 5: Vista Ridge Trailhead/	
Cloud Cap	63
Segment 6: Cloud Cap/	
Elk Meadows Trailhead.	75
Segment 7: Elk Meadows Trailhead/	
Umbrella Falls Trailhead	85
Segment 8: Umbrella Falls Trailhead/	
Timberline Lodge	93
How the Forest Recovers from a Fire	102
Shorter Hikes	105
From Timberline Lodge	
Mountaineer Trail Loop	107
Silcox Hut Trail.	108
White River Canyon Overlook.	110
From Ramona Falls Trailhead	
Ramona Falls Loop.	111
From Top Spur Trailhead	
Bald Mountain	113
From Elk Meadows Trailhead	
Umbrella Falls Loop	115
Useful Information.	118
Index	120

IV AROUND & ABOUT MT HOOD



Barrett Spur & Mt Hood from the Timberline Trail



Elk Cove

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the help and support we got for this project from many friends who re-hiked all the trails listed in this 3rd edition to check the accuracy of the information, any changes in signage and access to the trailheads, and to highlight any specific problems encountered on the hikes. Their contribution to this edition has been invaluable as our overriding concern has always been for accuracy and safety. We also thank Linda Bedard who has been our invaluable link with the U.S. Forest Service in Zigzag.

Permission was kindly given by the Oregon Historical Society for the reproduction of the photograph on page 57 of the Summit of Mt Hood, 1896 (Zenius Moody Family, #OrHi 37884). The section on River Crossing Safety Guidelines is excerpted from signs donated by friends and family of Sarah Bishop, a skilled hiker and lover of wilderness, who died tragically when crossing the Sandy River in 2004, with permission from the Bishop family. Our thanks also to Debbie Asakawa and Bill Vollmer for many of the photos in this edition.

Our sincerest thanks to all who re-hiked all of the trails
for the 3rd Edition:

Anne Ashford

Neal Allbee

Susan & Bill Sack

Carolyn Wood

Jean & Bill Vollmer

Joan & Des Wellsmore

Sarah Kramer

Wendy Usher

Steve McCurdy

Kathy Reis

Dale Rush

Kate McPherson

Jannell Werner

Hanka Manova

Anne Sturdevant

Casey Fagan



Tarn on the Timberline Trail

INTRODUCTION & HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The Timberline Trail is one of the most spectacular hiking trails in the world. Until a massive washout in 2006 destroyed a section of the trail on the north side, the Timberline Trail circled Mt Hood for 41 miles, mostly at about the timberline level, dropping in and climbing out of canyons carved by the rivers that flow from the many glaciers on the mountain. The total elevation gain is approximately 9000 feet with the low point of 3200 feet and the high point of 7360 feet. Most of the trail is in the Mt Hood Wilderness Area. The only developed areas are the two ski areas that the trail crosses, Timberline and Mt Hood Meadows.

The 1st edition of the Timberline Trail book was written to show the accessibility and the stunning beauty of the trails that lead hikers up to, down from, and along the Timberline Trail. The 2nd edition was written because a massive washout in 2006 destroyed a section of the trail on the north side. The 2nd Edition changed Segment 5 to Vista Ridge Trailhead to Elk Cove Trailhead, omitting the section of the Trail that

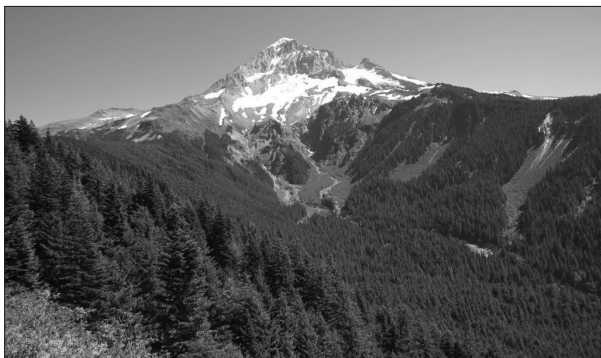


History of the Timberline Trail

1854: August 14, William Barlow party made the first recorded ascent of Mt Hood.

1892: first recorded circuit of Mt Hood on foot by Will Langille, a climbing guide.

1934–1938: construction of the Timberline Trail by the Civilian Conservation Corps.



Mt Hood and Muddy Fork River

had slid. Restoring the Timberline Trail has been challenging because the mountainside in the area of the washout is very unstable and necessitated a major re-routing of the Timberline Trail completed in 2017.

In this 3rd Edition we have gone back to the original eight Segments as the Timberline Trail is again complete. As in the previous editions, we describe how to reach the trailheads that will provide access to the Timberline Trail. These access trails vary in length from less than a mile to three miles and vary considerably in elevation gain and loss.

None of the eight Segments can be considered *easy* hikes: they all entail appreciable elevation gain and loss and all but one also require one or more river crossings. For the hiker who would like to experience the Timberline Trail but is looking for stunning views and alpine flowers without the distance and elevation gain, this edition includes several additional hikes, mostly shorter, that use the same trailheads.

Each segment can be hiked either clockwise or counterclockwise. We use the terms *clockwise* and *counterclockwise* to describe the direction of the segment that is on the Timberline Trail, thinking of the entire Trail as a circle. For example, to hike Segment One *clockwise*, start at Timberline Lodge and hike to the Ramona Falls Trailhead. To hike this segment *counterclockwise*, start at the Ramona Falls Trailhead and hike to Timberline Lodge.

The Timberline Trail is only accessible during the summer months, once the snow melts in late June or early July. In years with late snowfall, the trails may not open until mid-July. Hikers should check with the local U.S. Forest Service (see list on page 119) for information on accessibility of the trails. All of the Segments of the Timberline Trail offer spectacular views, alpine meadows carpeted with wildflowers, beautiful streams lined with flowers, and quiet forests. All but one of the Segments have the challenge of a river crossing; some have two or more. Depending on the snow levels, the elevation, and whether a trail is on the south or north side of the mountain, the wildflower season generally begins in late June or early July and extends into late August or even September.

We wanted to make this a book that tucks comfortably into a pocket. This convenience for hikers imposed constraints on the amount of text we could include and on the size of maps. Inevitably we have had to make compromises about what to include and exclude. Our overriding aim was to be precise and accurate. We hope we have struck a balance that works for most people.