

Winter hike on Bolt Mountain Trail

BY EVELYN ROETHER

Just because winter is upon us does not mean hiking season is over! Several wonderful low-elevation trails in the Lower Applegate area are open year-round, including the Bolt Mountain Trail at Fish Hatchery Park between Murphy and Wilderville. It's a good little hill climb that can help keep you in shape this winter.

Fish Hatchery Park includes 172 acres on both sides of the Applegate River and is managed by Josephine County. Named for a fish hatchery that operated nearby from 1912-1936, the park offers swimming, fishing, and two hiking opportunities: the Fish Hatchery Park Nature Trail and the Bolt Mountain Trail. Here's the lowdown on the second one.

Bolt Mountain Trail

- Difficulty: Moderately difficult
- Distance: 6.4 miles round trip
- Elevation gain: 1,230 feet
- Access: Year-round
- Map: Murphy Mountain USGS quad

Directions

From Murphy, drive 4.0 miles west on Southside Road. Turn right at the stop sign, crossing over the Applegate River onto Fish Hatchery Road. Shortly after the bridge, turn left onto Wetherbee Drive. Continue 0.5 mile to the large gravel parking lot at the entrance to Fish Hatchery Park. Park there and pay the \$5 fee at the kiosk below in Fish Hatchery Park.

Description

This popular trail was built in 2005 in a joint effort between the Bureau of Land Management and Josephine County. Its namesake mountain was named for an early Swiss settler, John Bolt, who was a prominent businessman in the area during the late 1800s. Rising to 2,241 feet at its summit, the Bolt Mountain Trail is open to hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders. There are great views and interesting terrain the whole way up. Watch for ticks, rattlesnakes, and poison oak.

The out-and-back hike begins to the west of the parking lot, initially following

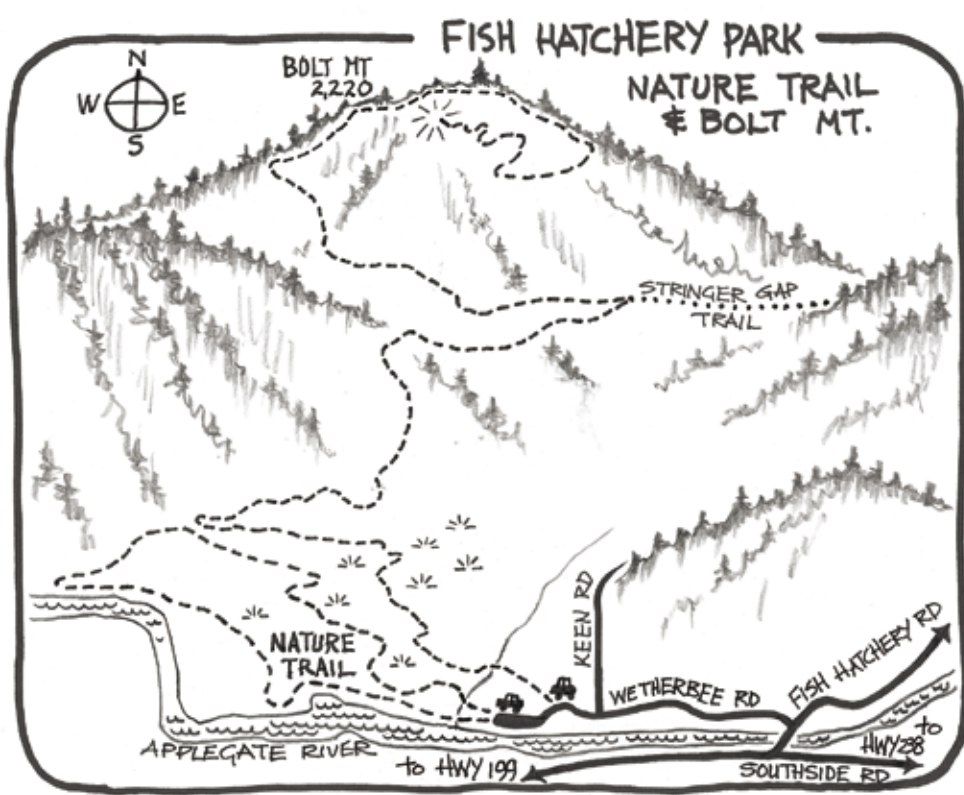
an old road along a terrace above the river. After about half a mile the road narrows to a single-track trail as it crosses a small stream and passes through remnant old-growth ponderosa pine and incense cedar stands. Next is a series of moist meadows that feature, in early spring, a stunning collection of wildflowers: camas, trillium, fawn lily, shooting star, monkey flower, sea blush, spring gold, and larkspur, among others, as well as rare native grass species.

Soon the trail steepens, and the two-mile climb to the top commences. The iron- and heavy mineral-laden serpentine soils on this slope give root to a sparse forest of immense madrone and Jeffrey pine trees. Black oak, buck brush, manzanita, and a fair amount of poison oak also line the trail. On the way up there are many fine views of the Applegate River valley. Looking south across the river, Eagle Mountain and Marble Mountain are also visible.

About 1.5 miles up, the trail takes a dramatic switchback to the west. Here, a spur trail heads off to the right, eventually ending up at Stringer Gap Road. Stay left at this intersection. From this point the trail starts its spiral around Bolt Mountain and levels out a bit. As you come around the north side of the mountain, views and sounds of the Grants Pass area will suddenly accost your senses. After another short climb, the summit awaits you with 360-degree views of the lower Applegate River valley below and the high Siskiyou Crest in the distance. You have arrived!

For a description of 19 other trails in the area, pick up *Hiking Trails of the Lower Applegate* at the Williams General Store and Takubeh Natural Market in Williams, Provolt Store and Whistling Duck Farm Store in Provolt, Rebel Heart Books in Jacksonville, Oregon Books and Games in Grants Pass, and Northwest Nature Shop and Bloomsbury Books in Ashland.

Evelyn Roether
evelynkr@gmail.com



••• BIZBITS •••

The Carriage House Jacksonville

restaurant opened in September on the historical Nunan estate at 635 North Oregon Street. Owners Brent and Shannon Monning are driven by a strong sense of place and purpose to create a restaurant built around fresh, locally sourced, sustainable ingredients. "We are offering not only great food, but also an amazing experience, serving contemporary American cuisine with a French twist," they said. A full bar serves creative cocktails made with freshly squeezed juices and local ingredients, an array of craft beers from both local and West Coast breweries, and a selection of local wines designed to pair well with their menu. Shannon "Sam" Monning is a sixth-generation descendant of the Lindsay-Applegate families and proudly shares stories of her ancestors. "Everything in this place has a story to tell," Sam said. "And the story of this restaurant is tied to the story of this neighborhood—refreshed, revitalized, and bursting with energy." Open Wednesday through Sunday from 4:30 - 9:30 pm, with Saturday and Sunday brunch from 10 am - 2 pm. Reservations encouraged. 541-899-3190 • carriagehousejacksonville.com.



Wild Grapes Bistro + Juice Bar opened in May at 1555 Williams Highway, Suite E, Grants Pass. Owners Layna and Emil offer a varied plant-based menu of smoothies, layered smoothie bowls, soups, sandwiches, salads, and wraps—and breakfast items all day! The bistro hopes to be the go-to place for those seeking vibrant health and delicious food with pure, simple ingredients. Layna and Emil's commitment goes beyond providing customers with the purest ingredients possible and making it convenient to pack more healthy options into your day. "We have the set intention of supporting you on your journey to eating better and of encouraging you to put ingredients into your body that will assist it in healing and flourishing. Getting your daily dose of fruits and vegetables is just one of many benefits our nutrient-rich juices, smoothies, and meals provide. We look forward to growing with you, feeding you well, and seeing you thrive." They are open Monday through Thursday from 8 am - 8 pm, Friday from 8 am - 4 pm, and Sunday from 10 am - 4 pm (closed Saturday). 541-600-9471 • wildgrapesbistro.com.

Wooldridge Creek Vinfarm, located in Grants Pass at 111 SE G Street, recently expanded its hours and menu. Its "Prix Fixe," a three-course dinner for \$27, is offered from 5 - 9 pm, Monday through Saturday, and wine club discounts apply! Regular hours for lunch and dinner are 12 - 9 pm, Monday through Saturday. A Sunday brunch is available from 9 am - 2 pm. The tasting room is open Monday through Saturday from 12 - 9 pm and Sunday from 2 - 5 pm, with boards of cheese and charcuterie from their organic farm available. Happy Hour, from 3 - 6 pm, Monday through Saturday, offers Wooldridge estate wines on tap, with the best price anywhere for a glass of wine at only \$5. And growlers can be filled, which helps with recycling and affordability. Owners Greg Panietz and Kara Olmo focus on sustainability and were the first to sell wine in stainless-steel reusable kegs, eliminating the need to recycle glass bottles, corks, labels, foils, and cardboard boxes. Vinfarm supports, and sources from, local organic farms like Barking Moon and Noble Dairy. The menu is influenced by what is locally available. Sample items are mushroom mezza and Moroccan skewer appetizers, potato and onion chowder and lamb soup, a smoked daikon sandwich, a sausage platter, quinoa cakes, and chocolate pudding brûlée. wcv.farm • 541-226-2664 • info@wcv.farm • wcvinery.com.

BizBits highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone. Email gater@applegater.org.

THE OLD LIBRARY

COLLECTIBLES

THRIFT SHOP

170 S. Oregon · Jacksonville, OR 97530 · Phone 541-899-9555
Hours 10:15 am · 4 pm · Tuesday thru Saturday

- Nonprofit
- All Volunteer
- Benefitting the Jacksonville Community
- Now Accepting Donations

Jacksonville INN

*Gourmet dining in historic Jacksonville
Wine & gift shop • Fine hotel accommodations*

175 E. California • P.O. Box 359 • Jacksonville, OR 97530-0359
541-899-1900 • 1-800-321-9344
jvinn@mind.net • www.jacksonvilleinn.com

CCB# 177466
NV 42066
CA 809835

ACTION ELECTRIC

Quality is doing the job right the first time.

Commercial • Residential • Design Build

paul.actionelectric@yahoo.com
P.O. Box 537, Jacksonville, OR 97530

Paul Crean
541-415-1081

**CECE SHOOP
HOUSE KEEPING**

CT Shoop Incorporated

P.O. BOX 5557
Central Point, OR 97502
(541) 930-2437
ctshoop15@gmail.com