

Hidden beneath the waves

Oregon’s 362-mile shoreline is more than just sandy beaches and rocky headlands. Retreating tides reveal some of the most diverse coastal ecosystems: tidepools.

The organisms that live here are resilient ocean residents. They battle strong currents, water temperature changes and a lack of food and oxygen. Many tidepool inhabitants work together to survive.

Oregon’s tidepools attract thousands of curious human visitors each year. Exploring tidepools can be a fun way to spend an afternoon, but certain precautions must be taken to ensure the resident creatures (and you) remain safe.

Tips for visiting a rocky intertidal area

- **Know the rules before you go.** Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations protect tidepool animals. Check the Oregon sport fishing regulations (free at most stores selling sporting goods) for rules about collecting animals.
- **Visit the tidepools at least one hour before low tide.** Start with the tidepools closest to the ocean and work your way back with the incoming tide. Bring a tide table too; look for them at a state park or local business.
- **Tides of zero feet and lower are best for visiting tidepools.** Tides up to two feet high can still provide good viewing when the ocean is calm.
- **Travel slowly and carefully.** Rocks and marine algae can be slippery. Also be careful around marine plants like seaweed. Many animals hide under ocean plants to avoid the hot sun and predators.
- **Always stay on marked trails.** Many tidepools are located near unstable headlands and bluffs.
- **Always keep one eye on the ocean.** Exploring a tidepool means you’ll be near ocean waves. Make sure an incoming wave doesn’t sneak up on you. If a big wave heads your way, lie flat on the rocks and hold on tight!
- **Expect to get wet.** Wear appropriate clothing. If you get soaked, dry off soon. Evening temperatures can drop quickly on the coast, putting you at risk of hypothermia.
- **Look at, in, under and around. Tidepool creatures hide in creative places.** After looking at animals under rocks and seaweed, re-cover them to prevent drying by the air and sun.
- **Touching or picking up animals is OK, but be gentle.** Please return any animal you pick up to the exact spot you found it.
- **Never pull or pry an animal from a rock.** Animals in the tidepools stick to rocks because of the waves and strong currents that wash against them.
- **Bring your binoculars.** Harbor seal pups often rest on rocks and beach areas while their mothers feed offshore. Seabirds also use rocks for nesting and rearing their young. Please enjoy these animals from at least a 50-foot distance.



Please leave plants and animals just as you found them. State parks are nature preserves, where all living things are protected for others to enjoy.

oregonstateparks.org



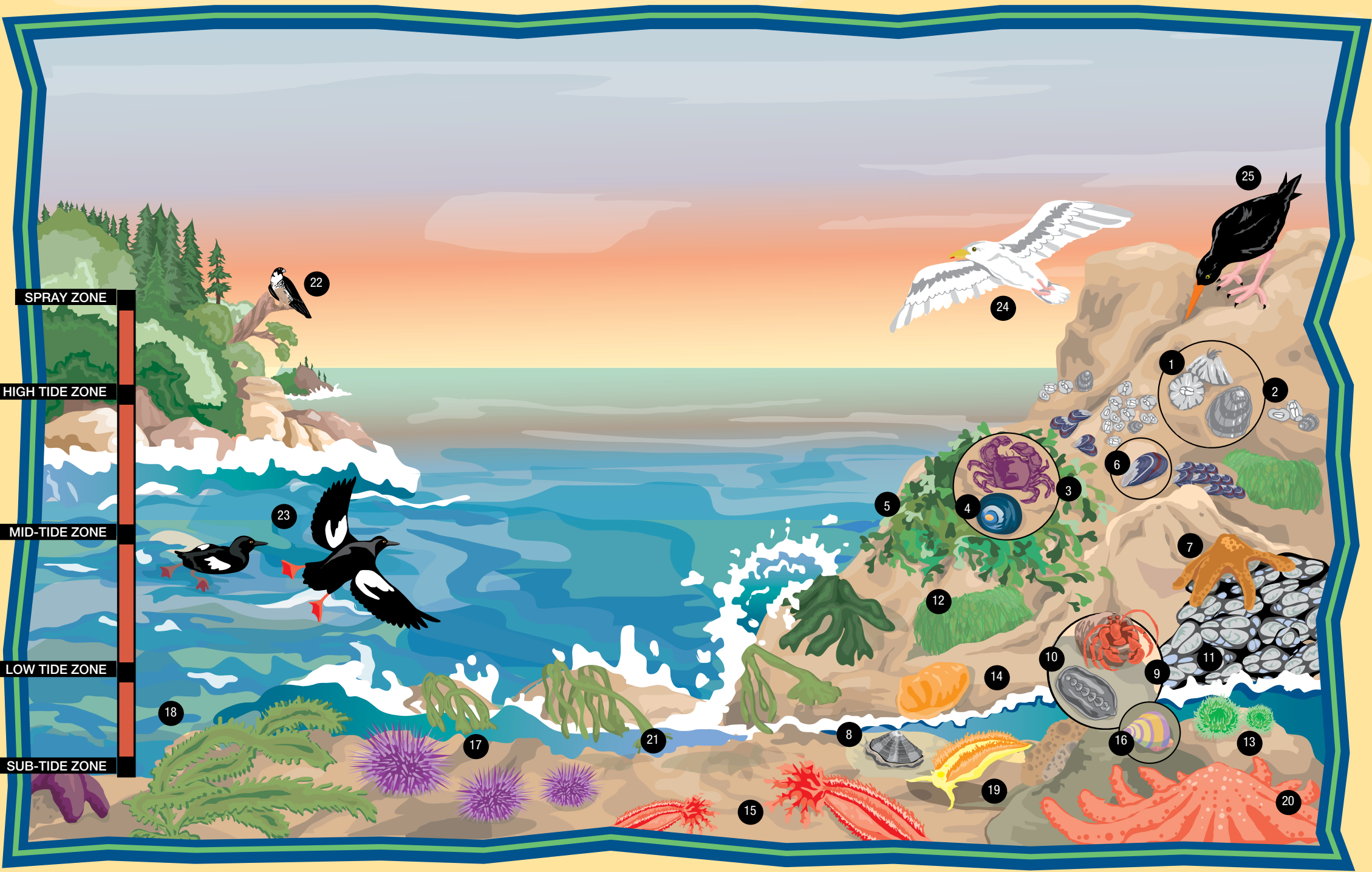
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Oregon’s Rocky Intertidal Areas



SPRAY ZONE	HIGH TIDE ZONE	MID-TIDE ZONE	LOW TIDE ZONE	BIRDS
1. Acorn Barnacle	3. Purple Shore Crab	6. California Mussel	14. Giant Pacific Chiton	22. Peregrine Falcon
2. Ribbed Limpet	4. Black Turban Snail	7. Ochre Sea Star	15. Red Sea Cucumber	23. Pigeon Guillemot
	5. Rockweed	8. Rough Keyhole Limpet	16. Blue Top Snail	24. Western Gull
		9. Hermit Crab	17. Purple Sea Urchin	25. Black Oystercatcher
		10. Black Leather Chiton	18. Feather Boa Kelp	
		11. Gooseneck Barnacles		
		12. Surfgrass		
		13. Giant Green Anemone		
			19. Nudibranch (Sea Slug)	
			20. Sunflower Sea Star	
			21. Sea Palms	

Brown text indicates animal.
Green text indicates plant.

Welcome to Our Home

Tidepools are divided into several zones. The zones are classified based on wave action, shoreline features and exposure during tidal periods.

The organisms that live in each zone are dependent on a number of factors: water temperature, wave action, variation in salinity (saltiness), exposure to light and how much water is present. The conditions have to be just right for an organism to be comfortable in each zone.

Some organisms are hardier than others and are able to live in multiple zones. Part of the fun of exploring tidepools is discovering a plant or animal where you least expected it to be!

Spray zone: This area extends from the highest reach of spray and storm waves to the average height of the high tides. It is usually dry, meaning relatively few types of organisms can live here.

High tide zone: This zone includes the area from the average high tide to just below the average sea level. It is a highly saline (salty) environment and experiences higher temperatures than other zones.

Mid-tide zone: This zone extends from just below average sea level to the upper limit of the average lowest tides. Mid-tide zones experience more intense wave action than spray or high tide zones, but nonetheless are rich in animal and plant diversity.

Low tide zone: This zone is exposed to air only at the lowest tides. This keeps temperatures and salinity levels more stable, allowing for more biodiversity than other zones. Organisms here are also more protected from predators—like big fish—because of the wave action and shallow water.



Map Location	Oregon Coast Rocky Intertidal Sites	Access to Tidepools	Restrooms	Camping	Picnic Areas	Seals & Sea Lions	Seabirds	Interpretive Programs	Directions
1	Ecola State Park	M	•	•	•	•	•	b	Located two miles north of Cannon Beach. Take Hwy 101 to Cannon Beach and follow signs.
2	Haystack Rock	E				•	•	a	Located within Cannon Beach city limits. Access is at Gower St. and Second St.
3	Oswald West State Park	M	•	•	•	•	•	b	Located 10 miles south of Cannon Beach along Hwy 101.
4	Cape Meares	M	•	•	•				Located 10 miles west of Tillamook on the south side of the Cape. Access is from Short Beach, one mile north of Oceanside.
5	Maxwell Point	E	•						Located next to Oceanside, nine miles west of Tillamook.
6	Cape Lookout	M	•	•	•	•			Located 18 miles south of Tillamook, on the south side of the Cape. Take Pacific City Loop off Hwy 101.
7	Cape Kiwanda State Natural Area	E/M	•			•	•	c	One mile north of Pacific City. Take Hwy. 101 18 miles north of Lincoln City, and turn west on Three Capes Scenic Route.
8	Otter Rock	M	•	•	•			•	Located nine miles north of Newport. Take Hwy. 101 to the Devil's Punch Bowl State Natural area turn-off located between mileposts 132 and 133.
9	Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area	E/M	•	•	•	•	•	d	Turn west off Hwy. 101 at Lighthouse Road in Agate Beach, four miles north of Newport.
10	Seal Rock State Recreation Site	M/D	•	•	•	•	•	b	Located 10 miles south of Newport off Hwy. 101. Access is from Seal Rock State Recreation Site on the north and two turn-offs south of main park.
11	Yachats State Recreation Area	E	•	•			•	b	Located north of the Yachats River. Take Hwy. 101 and turn west on 2nd St. or Ocean Dr. Use caution in heavy surf.
12	Cape Perpetua	E/M	•	•	•	•	•	e	Take Hwy. 101 two miles south of Yachats. Visitor's Center is located between mileposts 168 and 169.
13	Neptune State Scenic Viewpoint	E	•	•	•		•	b	Located three miles south of Yachats off Hwy. 101.
14	Strawberry Hill	M/D		•	•		•	b	Located within Neptune State Scenic Viewpoint.
15	Bob Creek to Bray Point	E/M		•			•	b	Adjoins the southern boundary of Neptune State Park. Access to intertidal area is south of Bob Creek.
16	Heceta Head Lighthouse	E	•	•	•	•	•	b	Located 12 miles north of Florence.
17	Sunset Bay State Park	E	•	•	•		•	b	Located nine miles south of Coos Bay and less than ½ mile south of Cape Arago Lighthouse.
18	Cape Arago State Park	M/D	•	•	•		•	b	Located 11 miles south of Coos Bay.
19	Five-Mile Point	M							Take Seven Devils Road 13 miles south of Coos Bay, off Hwy. 101. Use public access from end of Whiskey Run Road, walk north on beach.
20	Coquille Point Unit of Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge	E			•	•	•	f	Located in Bandon. Access to intertidal area is from either south bank of the Coquille River or from the bluff off 11th St.
21	Cape Blanco State Park	M	•	•	•	•			Located approximately 10 miles northwest of Port Orford. Turn off Hwy. 101 north of Port Orford, follow the signs.
22	Port Orford	E	•	•					In Port Orford turn west off Hwy 101 onto Harbor Drive. Follow signs to Port of Port Orford. Main intertidal area is north of the boat dock.
23	Rocky Point	M							Located three miles south of Port Orford off Hwy. 101.
24	Arizona Beach State Recreation Site	E	•	•			•	b	Located 12 miles south of Port Orford off Hwy 101.
25	Lone Ranch Beach	E	•						Located five miles north of Brookings off Hwy. 101.
26	Harris Beach State Recreation Area	E	•	•	•	•	•	b	Located just north of Brookings, west of the campground. Access is from the main parking lot by walking south along the beach.
27	Winchuck Beach	E							Access is from road parallel to the north side of the Winchuck River. Rocky intertidal area is ¾ mile north of parking lot.

¹ Access Ratings
E – Easy; trails generally paved or well maintained from the parking area to the rocky intertidal area. Not very steep.
M – Moderate; trails are either steep, or have one or more sections that are poorly maintained.
D – Difficult; trail requires climbing.

² Interpretive programs vary in availability and timing. They are generally more prevalent during spring and summer weekend low tides. Some only provide services to organized groups.
a = Haystack Rock Awareness Program—contact Cannon Beach City Hall, 503-436-8060
b = State Parks—contact Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 1-800-551-6949
c = Kiwanda Environmental Learning Program—contact Nestucca Neskowin Watershed Council, 503-965-2200
d = Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area—contact U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 541-574-3100
e = Cape Perpetua—contact U.S. Forest Service, Cape Perpetua Visitor Center, 541-547-3289
f = Shoreline Education for Awareness—call 541-313-6751

*Check Before You Collect

Tidepool life is protected by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife sport fishing regulations. **Special restrictions prohibit or limit the collection of intertidal marine life in the sites noted.** For specific information, check the ODFW regulations for each site.

