

Washington / Mount Olympus NP

Sunrise Ridge Trail to Mount Angeles

DISTANCE: 5.0 miles

ELEVATION GAIN: 1750 feet

ROUTE TYPE: Out & Back

Access: From Port Angeles, follow Race Street to the Heart O' the Hills Parkway (Hurricane Ridge Road). Proceed 17 miles on this road all the way to its terminus at the Hurricane Ridge Visitors Center. Trail begins at the Big Meadow Parking Lot.

Notes: Park fees collected; dogs prohibited.

Most visitors to Hurricane Ridge intent on stretching their legs soon find themselves marching towards Hurricane Hill. The paved path to the rounded knoll sure delivers some impressive views—and it's a hike that can be completed by just about everyone. But, if Hurricane Hill is a little too tame and a tad bit busy for your tastes, consider Sunrise Ridge.

Sunrise Ridge delivers the same jaw-slacking far-sweeping views as Hurricane Hill, but without the asphalt and crowds. And chances are good on Sunrise Ridge, especially in the mornings or evenings, of encountering some resident wildlife. Deer, bear, coyote, and the ubiquitous ground squirrel all make themselves right at home along this delightful trail. And in summer wildflowers grow in profusion here; from magenta paintbrush, to spreading phlox, penstemon, lupine, bistort, and larkspur. But a hike here in Autumn has its delight too from swirling clouds wrapping around a panoramic of peaks to horizon-spanning views on those crisp blue bonus good weather days.

The ridge is reached via the Hurricane Ridge Trail from the Big Meadow Parking Lot. The first ½ mile of trail is paved, but real tread begins soon enough. Undulating between groves of sub-alpine fir and resplendent alpine meadows, the trail works its way over and around a handful of knolls. Gaze north, out across the Strait of Juan de Fuca to massive Vancouver Island. Scan the horizon eastward to snowy Glacier Peak rising above rows of Cascades Peaks. Turn your attention south to the Olympic Peninsula interior, to an emerald sea punctuated with craggy summits adorned in ice and snow. Mount Olympus, the centerpiece of this magnificent wilderness setting, dominates the southwestern horizon.

Of course, it's impossible to ignore the imposing peak in front of you—the one growing taller with each step, 6454-foot Mount Angeles. In 2.6 miles, the trail delivers you right to the base of this locally-prominent peak. A climbers path takes off to the left while the Hurricane Ridge Trail continues right, skirting the southern slopes of the rocky mountain. In 3.1 miles a junction is reached with the Switchback Trail. Head right and drop hard and fast to the Heart O' the Hills Parkway. Head left and climb 800 feet to Victor Pass on Klahhane Ridge for more wide-sweeping views. Or just retrace your steps back to the trailhead with Mount Olympus now acting as your beacon.

