

Kalaloch Area

Safe Harbor

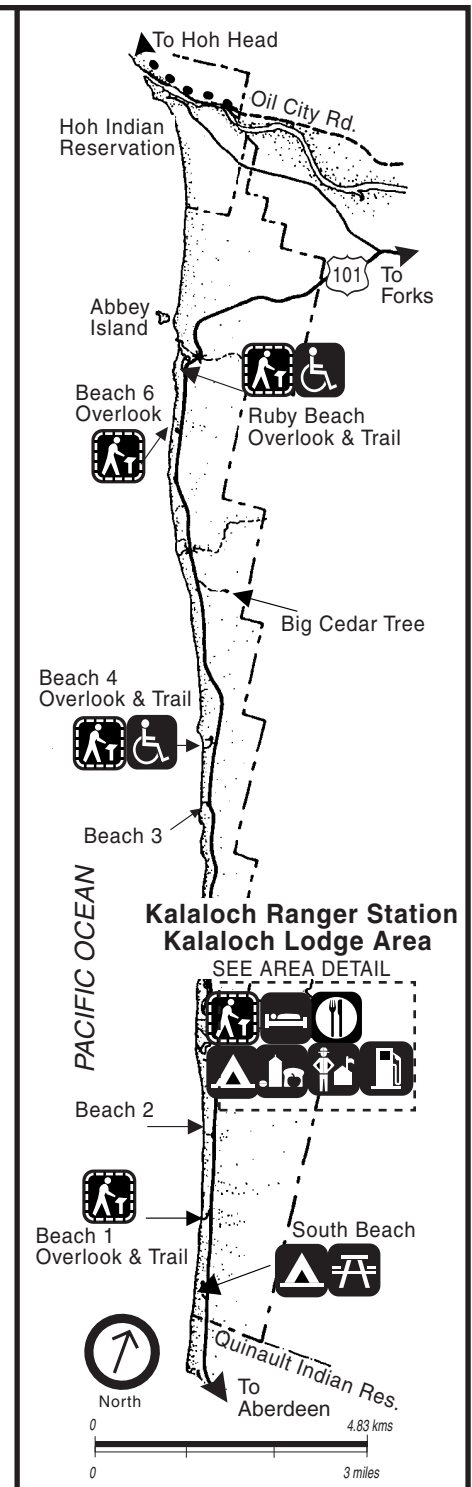
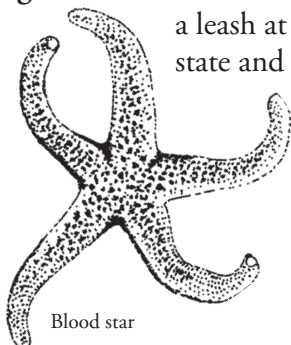
Kalaloch. A "good place to land" in the Quinault language. This beach was a safe landing place between the Quinault and Hoh Rivers. For thousands of sea creatures, these waters are still a safe haven.

Olympic National Park includes 73 miles of wild coastline. But the park ends at low tide line. Who takes over from there? Thankfully, the marine environment and offshore islands are protected by three national wildlife refuges and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. The refuges manage the islands visible above high tide waters. Large nesting colonies of birds like common murre and tufted puffins need these rocky outposts.

The marine sanctuary extends 20-40 miles offshore and 135 miles north to south. Sanctuary waters encompass nearshore kelp beds, subtidal reefs, rocky and sandy intertidal zones, submarine canyons and plankton-rich upwelling zones. Olympic National Park works with the sanctuary and refuges to preserve the rich diversity of life in these coastal waters. Life is not limited to tidepools, but spreads outward in all directions—a great, swarming sea of forms and processes whose nature we are only just beginning to understand.

Kalaloch Area Information

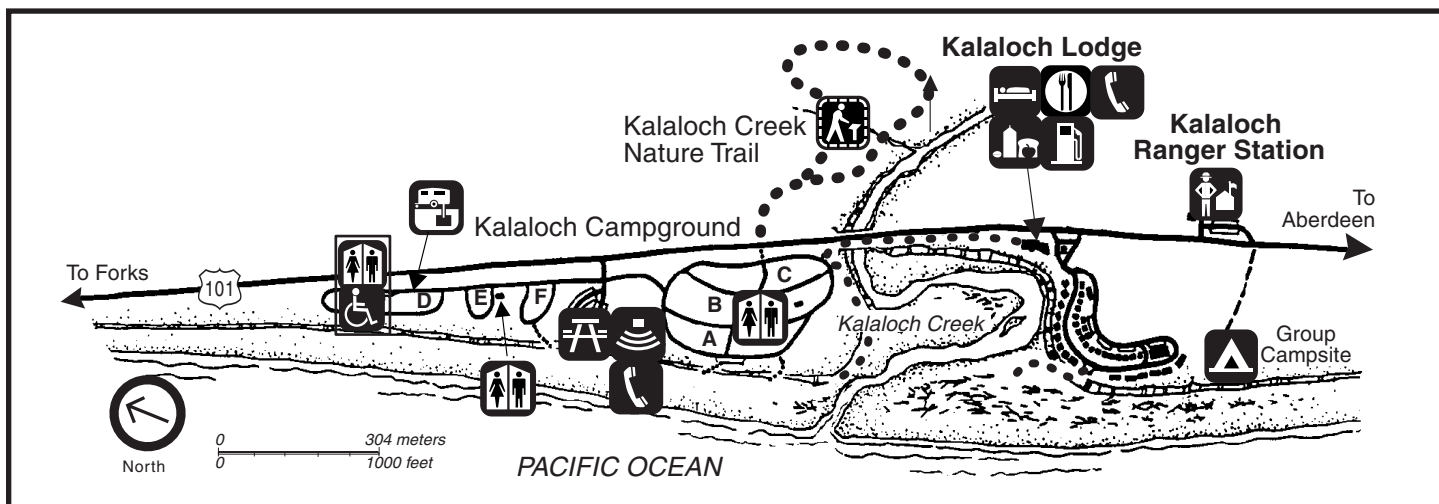
- Facilities:** Kalaloch Ranger Station open daily in summer only. Information, exhibits, sales items.
- Concessions:** Kalaloch Lodge (360) 962-2271. Open year round. Cabins, rooms, restaurant, coffee shop, dining room, camp store, gasoline, group campsite.
- Camping:** **Kalaloch:** 175 sites (four accessible), fire pits with grates, picnic tables, potable water, accessible restrooms, animal-proof food storage, RV dump station (fee). Open year round. **South Beach** (open late May thru October): 80 sites, tables and fire pits, dirt road, animal-proof food storage, flush toilets, BUT NO WATER.
- Regulations:** Pets are allowed on Kalaloch area beaches. They must be on a leash at all times. For fishing and shellfish harvest, refer to state and park regulations.



Beach Logs Kill!

Powerful ocean waves can roll and tumble logs. Do not play on beach logs and other debris, especially when the tide is high. Swim at your own risk.

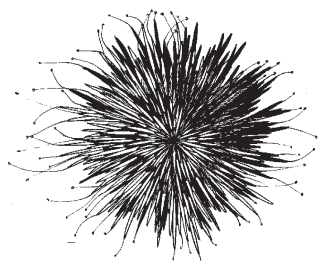




Day Hikes Around Kalaloch

Kalaloch Nature Trail: 1.0 mile easy loop through coastal forest, with elevation change less than 40 feet.

Beach Trails: Seven trails lead to the ocean from Highway 101. Ruby Beach and Beach Trail #4 have accessible viewpoints and accessible vault toilets. Beach One features fascinating spruce burls.



Sea urchin

Otters on the Rebound

Marine mammals are a special sight along Olympic National Park's coastal strip. Whales and dolphins are occasionally seen, but harbor seals and sea otters, the smallest marine mammal, are fairly common.

Sea otters have some of the softest fur in the world. Their hairs are packed very densely, making great insulation. This thick, warm coat replaces the layer of blubber that other marine mammals depend on to ward off the chill of our 40-50 degree water. But this lush coat also made its wearer vulnerable to the voracious appetite of fur trappers from all over the globe. By 1911, close to one million had been killed from Alaska to California. A law was passed making hunting sea otters illegal, but by that time the hunt had stopped because otters were so hard to find. They were gone from the waters off Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, and only a tiny group survived in California.

In 1969 and 1970, sea otters from Alaska were re-introduced to sites along the northwest Pacific coast. Approximately 800 now live off Washington. You might spot them from overlooks in Olympic National Park. Scan the offshore kelp forests for otters entwined in the fronds, their furry rounded heads camouflaged among the bobbing kelp floats. Sea otters depend on large marine algae like bull and giant kelp. Kelp forests not only help protect the coast by absorbing the power of waves, they are also breeding grounds and nurseries for many creatures, including sea urchins, the otters' main food. Studies show that otters help maintain a balance between kelp and urchin populations. Without their top predator, urchins multiply and devour the kelp.

Sea otters are cute and playful—they capture our hearts since they seem so human in their habits. By preserving the ocean otters live in, we also protect animals that are not so cute, but every bit as important to their ecosystem. Fish, birds, seastars, barnacles, and countless other creatures benefit from the sea otter's rebound.

