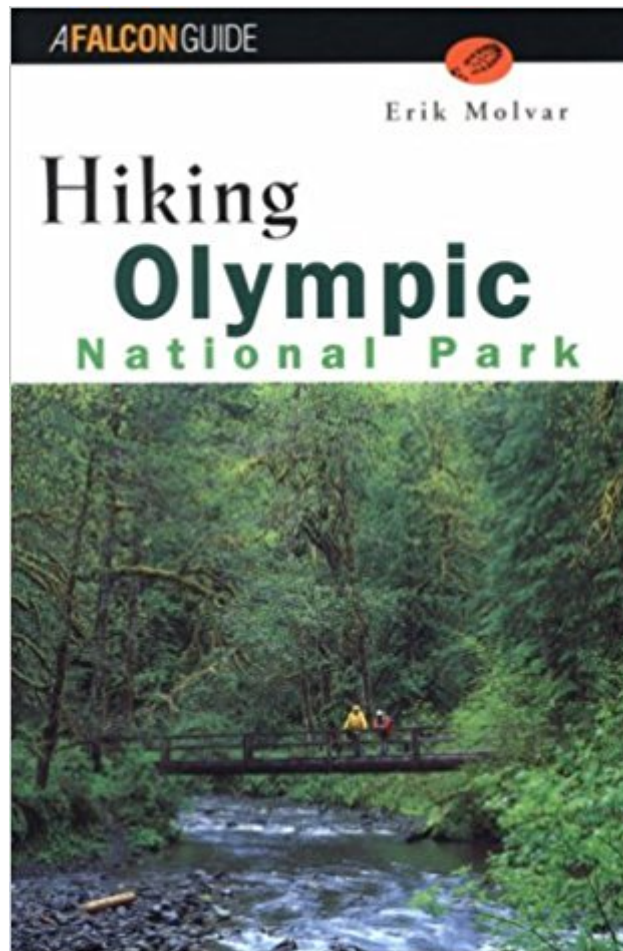




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The Trail Guide To Olympic National Park (A Falcon Guide)



Synopsis

This book describes a 585 mile network of maintained trails in a wilderness ecosystem that stretches from the beaches of the Pacific to the heart of the Olympic Mountains. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Series: A Falcon guide

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Customer Reviews

Written by veteran trail-guide author Erik Molvar, this book describes a 585 mile network of maintained trails in a wilderness ecosystem that stretches from the beaches of the Pacific to the heart of the Olympic Mountains. The trails provide a full spectrum of challenges, from strenuous backpacking trips over glacier-clad mountains to short strolls through a temperate rainforest. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is great! Been to Olympic peninsula few times but this guide will help for the next trip.

Great book, didnt see the point in buying the newest edition.

This book was great. It gave us detailed information to the trail heads. We liked how the book was seperated into sections of the peninsula. This helped us plan our trip. We hiked 10 of the hikes. We couldn't have done it without the book.

Decent overview but hard to comprehend if you've never been there. Poor maps, little on the visitor center and tourist areas. Great if you have a topo and have been there before. Not great if it's your first visit.

I ordered the three Olympic Mountains trail guides that seemed most highly recommended -- Molvar, Blair, and Wood -- and was impressed by each. I needed a guide for a 7 to 10 day visit to Olympic, of which I had no prior knowledge. Wood's book is definitely the most comprehensive and technical of the three. If I lived near Olympic or had more time, it would definitely be my first choice. Blair's book of day hikes is also an excellent book, with useful topo maps and a 1 - 5 star rating system that makes choosing the day's hike that much easier, especially for out-of-towners. It is chattier than Wood, in a sort of happy-day-hike way (pointing out picnic spots and giving more local history, for example), and includes hikes from a few to 10+ hours. The happy medium between these two books is Molvar. It is written in a friendly narrative, but with enough information to put together a several-days hike. Its weak point is its lack of topo maps, but the trail maps are still very useable, and the elevation profiles are helpful. It also includes beach trails not found in Blair.

Although I am a huge fan of Falcon guides, this edition definitely let me down. Unfortunately it doesn't differentiate between Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest trails. This becomes a big deal when you spend a significant amount of time planning your trip only to arrive at the trailhead and find that you need an Olympic National Forest permit, because the trailhead parking falls in the national forest, not the national park, and you need to drive back 15 miles to get one. If you are prepared with a National Parks pass, not a National Forest pass, this is definitely frustrating. In fact, a significant number of trails in the book are in the national forest, not the national park. Because this is an older book (1995) it also doesn't include some of the nicer Falcon guide features found in the newer books like the trails being broken down into categories in the beginning based on the types of features the trail has (i.e. waterfalls versus alpine meadows). It also doesn't include any attempt at topo maps, which is a definite downside. I'm still a fan of the Falcon guides, but I think I'll stick to the ones that are more recently published from now on...

In the 2008 edition the directions to the Royal Basin trailhead were entirely wrong. Not confusing, just wrong. The US Forest Service roads are poorly marked and maze-like. The road maps in this area are not great. Therefore, the book failed us hugely. We wasted 2 hours and gas driving on

gravel roads because the book failed to mention that we make a right turn early on and told us to avoid a road that in fact we needed to be on. Be sure to go to the USNPS/USFS ranger stations for accurate directions as well as (in the USFS case) permits to park your car. As a minor note, this book, unlike others, is very dry. It does not tell you at the outset of each trail description, why you'd want to take the trail. Personally, I'd look for another book. At the very least, have a second opinion on directions.

Olympic is a beautiful park with diverse terrain, serious vertical gain, rain forests, waterfalls, northern pacific coast, glaciated peaks and miles and miles of trails for both day hikes and extensive backcountry excursions. The falcon guide does a good job organizing the park, providing acceptable overview references, including compelling photography (for black and white) and selecting a diversity of hike distances. There short hikes, moderate and long day hikes and multi-day excursions (though the emphasis is on the latter two). You sill need to print out a map from the national park service web site to orient yourself in the park as you flip through the pages (I often felt lost with just the couple of overview maps) but in general it is a really helpful guide.

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