



Oregon's Crater Lake

Crater Lake is a national park, but let's just focus on the lake and surrounding area. Crater Lake has long attracted the wonder and admiration of people all over the world. Its depth of 1,943 feet (592 meters) makes it the deepest lake in the United States, and the seventh deepest in the world. Its fresh water is some of the clearest found anywhere in the world. The interaction of people with this place is traceable at least as far back as the eruption of Mount Mazama. Founded May 22, 1902, Crater Lake National Park seeks to preserve these natural and cultural resources.

Crater Lake is a caldera lake located in the south-central region of Oregon. It is the main feature of Crater Lake National Park and famous for its deep blue color and water clarity. The lake partly fills a nearly 2,148 foot deep caldera that was formed around 7,700 (± 150) years ago by the collapse of the volcano Mount Mazama. On June 12, 1853, John Wesley Hillman was reportedly the first person of European descent to see what he named "Deep Blue Lake" in Oregon. The lake was renamed at least three times, as Blue Lake, Lake Majesty, and finally Crater Lake.

The Klamath tribe of Native Americans, who may have witnessed the collapse of Mount Mazama and the formation of Crater Lake, have long regarded the lake as a sacred site. Their legends tell of a battle between the sky god Skell and Llao, the god of the underworld. Mount Mazama was destroyed in the battle, creating Crater Lake. The Klamath people used Crater Lake in vision quests, which often involved climbing the caldera walls and other dangerous tasks. Those who were successful in such quests were often regarded as having more spiritual powers. The tribe still holds Crater Lake in high regard as a spiritual site.

Crater Lake is known for the "Old Man of the Lake", a full-sized tree which is now a stump that has been bobbing vertically in the lake for more than a century. Due to the cold water, the tree has been rather well preserved. While having no indigenous fish population, the lake was stocked from 1888 to 1941 with a variety of fish. Several species have formed self-sustaining populations. Since 2002, one of the state's regular-issue license plate designs has featured Crater Lake. The commemorative Oregon State Quarter

features (first issued in 2005) an image of Crater Lake on its reverse. An average of 482,249 people visit Crater Lake National Park each year. Open year-round, less than 100,000 people visit the park during the non-summer months.

[<http://www.nps.gov/crla/index.htm>;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crater_Lake]

