



Issaquah Alps TRAILS CLUB

— EST. 1979 —

Dedicated to engaging the public to preserve, protect, and promote the land, wildlife, and trails of the Issaquah Alps, for future and present generations.

Newsletter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club

THE ALPINER

June 2021

Save Coal Creek is still working to stop housing development in Coal Creek.
[Learn more about the movement from a recent article in the Urbanist.](#)

We still have opportunities for you to [Adopt-a-Trail!](#) If you're interested in helping us Leave No Trace by picking up trash on trails, [check out our current opportunities.](#)

If you want to get involved with the IATC please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know what you are interested in.

Upcoming Hikes and Events

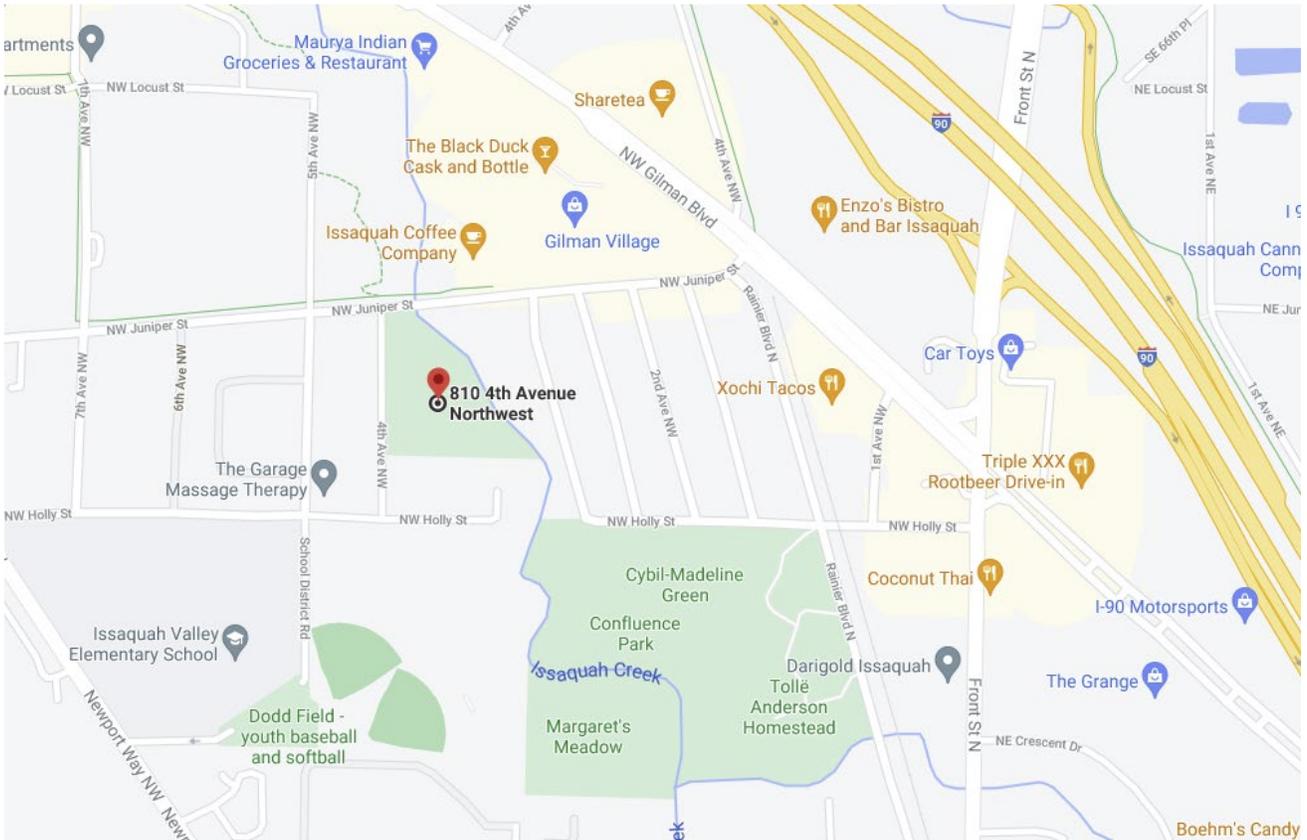
- [Friday, June 25th](#)- Teddy Bear Hike at NE Falls Drive
- [Saturday, July 3rd](#)- Public Art Mosaic Project -- Glass Laying Party
- [Sunday July 11th](#)- Advocacy Hike at West Tiger 3
- [Saturday, July 24](#)- Extended Forest Health Hike

IATC and Green Issaquah Volunteers Continue Work at Berntsen Park

Hannah Wheeler - June 25, 2021



The Green Issaquah Partnership is a collaboration between the City of Issaquah and local environmental nonprofits to improve the health of habitats in Issaquah through restoration projects. The Issaquah Alps Trails Club has been hosting Green Issaquah events at Berntsen Park near downtown Issaquah. This past week, we had some fantastic volunteers removing invasive weeds along Issaquah Creek, which runs through the park.



Berntsen Park is located just off of Gilman Blvd near downtown Issaquah. Issaquah Creek, which supports Sockeye, Coho, and Chinook Salmon, runs through Berntsen Park before flowing through Confluence Park just to the south. While it is a small park, its role as a crucial habitat for local wildlife makes it important to maintain.



During the summer, habitat restoration means removing invasive weeds like Blackberry, English Ivy, and Holly. To remove these species, volunteers will cut back unwieldy portions of the plants or parts that are immediately threatening to surrounding native plants before digging out the roots with a shovel.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome to join Green Issaquah events! There is something for everyone to do when it comes to restoration.



If you're interested in joining a Green Issaquah event, please see our [upcoming opportunities!](#)

June Supporter Spotlight

Lindsay Frickle - June 10, 2021

Our monthly Alpiner e-newsletter now features a supporter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club in each edition. Our goal is to fulfill our [strategic priority](#) for engaging people in our work through storytelling by highlighting the positive impacts of human connections in our community. This month, we talked to Scott Sowle, an Issaquah resident and trail runner.



Scott running on the Adventure Trail.

What drew you to the Issaquah Alps?

"I love the mountains and being outdoors has always been a part of my life. I didn't have a car when I came to Seattle, but I could ride a city bus and get to the trails. I was able to get out to the Issy Alps and clear my head.

I came to Seattle because I was in addiction, and was in a program called Climbing Out of Homelessness through the Seattle Gospel Mission. They brought us out to Tiger Mountain for some of our training. Then they couldn't keep me away from here. In the Issy Alps I was able to stop, learn, and listen to what was going on in myself and in my soul -- just by being in the great outdoors.

Now we (Scott and his wife) live in Issaquah in the Tiger Mountain area. I proposed to my wife on Tiger

Mountain -- we have our loop out there, and we love living right next to the Sunset trail head. We spend a lot of time out there, and on Squak and Cougar also. That's been a big part of our life out here."

How did you hear about the IATC?

"I had seen posts about activism to protect the trails and the areas out here and knew the Issaquah Alps Trails Club was a big part of that. We want to keep being involved in what keeps this area so pristine and beautiful.

Also, I saw David Dunphy (IATC Board President) on Ginger Runner -- that inspired me to make a donation and get involved. I think everyone in the trail running community thinks of the Issaquah Alps first -- a lot of great runners come from here -- Scott Jurek. James Kirby knows the Issy Alps trails like the back of his hand."

What do you hope the IATC will achieve as an organization?

"I'd like to see the Issaquah Alps establish a volunteer system that helps us take care of the trails -- but it's also not just about the trails -- there's a lot of history out here -- for people to know about it is important. As a community, we can join together and make a bigger impact."

How has access to the Issaquah Alps changed your life?

"For me it was an opportunity to be quiet -- in addition it was hard to be quiet. In the wilderness, and in the outdoors I could be really, really quiet. I could hear what was going on with me. It made it possible for me to be able to listen and to see what was really good in my life. Being in the outdoors has helped me get closer to the Spirit. It's given me that great opportunity to put a smile back on my face, and to be able to share that with others has been a huge gift."

How do you see yourself getting involved with the IATC

"I would really love to adopt a trail out here and love it and take care of it, and give back in that way."

** Scott has also pledged to give part of the registration fee for his organization's Run for Shoes Race this spring to the IATC. [Learn more about Run For Shoes.](#)

Join us in supporting the Snoqualmie Ancestral Lands Movement

Hannah Wheeler - June 24, 2021

Heavy recreation at some of our most popular trails, including the Issaquah Alps, has led to the degradation of the Snoqualmie Tribe's ancestral lands.

Join the Issaquah Alps Trails Club in supporting the Snoqualmie Ancestral Lands Movement. Read the introduction below and follow the Snoqualmie Ancestral Lands Movement on their [Facebook Page](#) to learn more .

Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands Movement

It is through education and awareness that individuals can integrate land acknowledgement and respect for the Snoqualmie Tribe into their recreational practices and experiences.



The Ancestral Lands Movement seeks to spread awareness of the Snoqualmie people who have lived in the southern Salish Sea region since time immemorial and share the significance of these lands and provide information on how people can help the Tribe in respecting, restoring, and protecting these lands.



Mt Si | Twin Falls | Rattlesnake | Issaquah Alps | Tiger Mountain | Franklin Falls | Snoqualmie Falls & More

*I acknowledge that I am on the Indigenous Land of Coast Salish peoples who have reserved treaty rights to this land, specifically the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe (sduk*albix*). I thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial.*

Recreational Impacts on Tribal Lands

As the Salish Sea region has grown in population, the Snoqualmie Tribe's ancestral lands have been heavily impacted by recreation. This impact is especially apparent at the popular trails in the Snoqualmie corridor area, where increased visitation has resulted in a degradation of the land.

How You Can Help:

Here are simple steps everyone can take while recreating on Snoqualmie ancestral lands to practice respect and help the Tribe in protecting and restoring these lands for generations to come:

- Treat the lands with the respect they deserve, by picking up your own trash, and that of others that you see, properly disposing of pet waste, and staying on designated trails.
- Commit to experience the lands in a way that is centered in mindfulness, rather than conquest.
- Learn more about the Snoqualmie Tribe and its history and deep connection to these lands, and support the work the Tribe does today to continue stewarding these lands.
- Acknowledge that you are recreating on Snoqualmie ancestral lands through both written acknowledgement and through practice.
- Help the Tribe spread its message by encouraging others to learn more and practice land acknowledgement both on and off the trails.



Follow us to learn more at
facebook.com/SnoqualmieTribeAncestralLandsMovement

In support of the Snoqualmie Ancestral Lands Movement, you can [sign the pledge](#) to protect, respect, and restore the Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Lands, which include the Issaquah Alps, and many places you likely visit often.

Fred's Corner - Then and Now

Tom Anderson - June 9, 2021

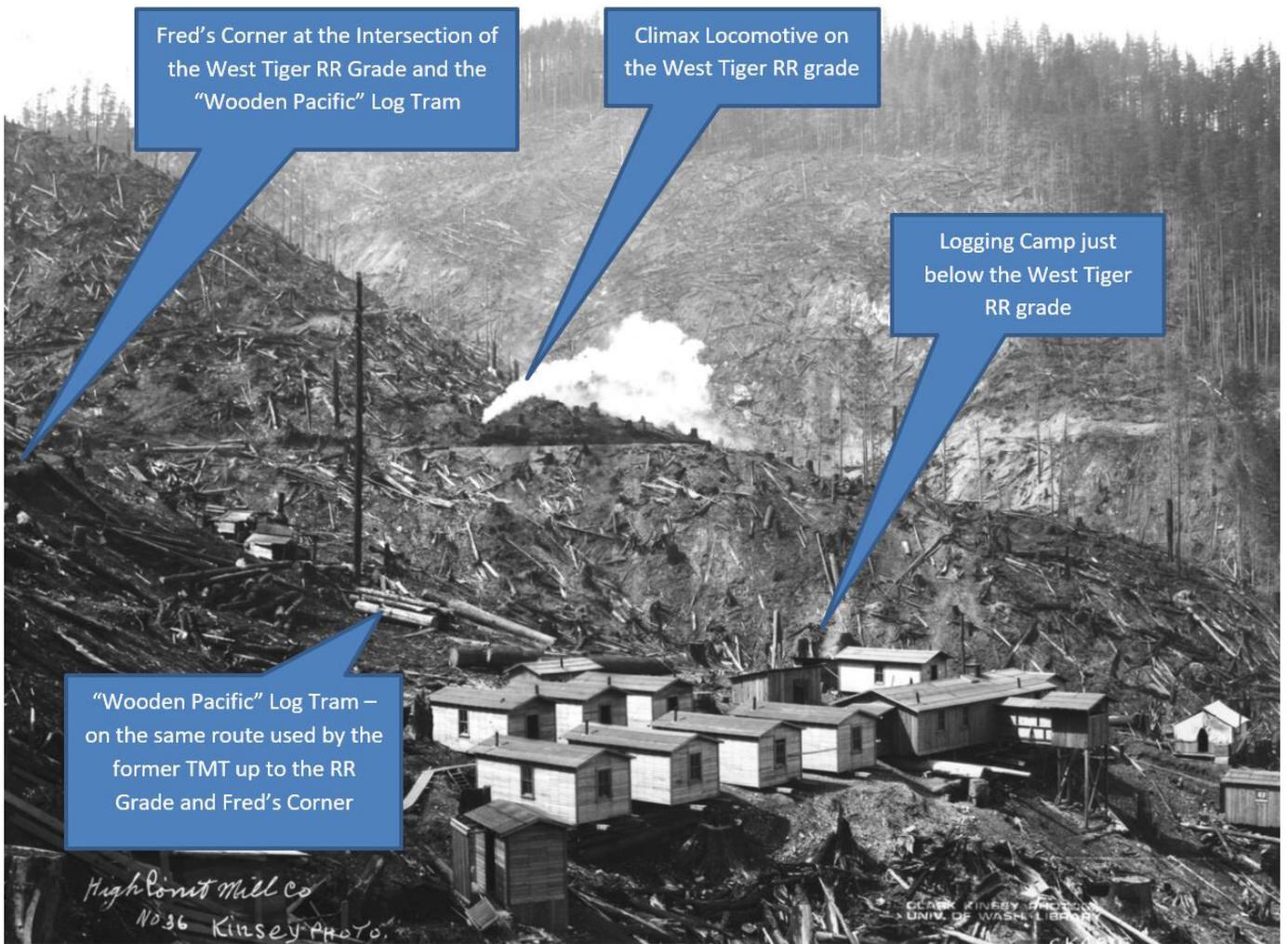
Fred's Corner was a 'T' intersection where the Tiger Mountain Trail (TMT) rose to intersect the West Tiger Railroad Grade Trail. I say "was" because a reroute of the TMT in 2018 eliminated the intersection at that particular point. The TMT intersection was moved a bit eastward. Fred's Corner is still marked with a diminutive sign on a maple tree, a useful waypoint on the TMT.

The location is the namesake of Fred Zeitler, a stalwart of the club during the construction of the TMT and for decades that followed as a trail builder, hike leader and board member.

The signage looks a bit odd today with the trail sign facing downhill toward the now-defunct trail, but still, it provides useful guidance. Here is a view of the signage looking eastward with the West Tiger RR Grade/TMT in the background.



If you could turn back the hands of time to 100 years ago, you would see a bustling logging operation of the High Point Mill Company. This particular spot marks the convergence of three key elements of the operation: a steam-driven railroad to convey logs to this point; a tram to lower the logs to the mill in the valley below; and a logging camp to house the workers. The following photo captures all that, and more:



High Point Mill Logging Camp, circa 1926 (University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, C.Kinsey-1495)

If you would like to learn more, and you are reading this before June 13, you might enjoy the logging history hike we have on the schedule for Sunday, June 13, in which we will visit this site (and others) to discuss the logging operations of the High Point Mill Company. Here is a link to the event:

[High Point Logging History Hike](#)

Hiking 101: Wildlife Interactions

Ash Lehto - June 25, 2021



As things start to open up again and summer nears its peak, more and more people are venturing out onto trails. It's great to have all the visitation from excited hikers eager to trek outside, whether to spend some time in nature or get some exercise and a fun photo. However, with increased human traffic into nature comes increased challenges - not necessarily bad, but ones that we need to face. A big issue, especially with growing urban encroachment into wildlife habitat, is the risk of potentially unpleasant wildlife encounters.

Washington is known for its abundance of greenspace, and our beautiful mountains and forests make for great wildlife habitat - especially in the Issaquah Alps. We are fortunate to have a wide variety of wildlife that live here, from red-tailed hawks to mountain beavers, from black-tailed deer to river otters. And one of the joys of being in nature is getting the chance to see wildlife in their natural habitat. Each interaction is exciting, whether it be spotting a regal elk grazing in the trees or watching an invaluable salmon swimming upriver. Maybe one of the reasons you got into hiking is the chance to see wildlife you wouldn't normally on a walk in a city. With some species, however, face-to-face encounters also bring risks, and as hikers, we need to keep these in mind.

While it's not common, there are situations where an animal may react negatively to a human, attacking out of fear and sometimes, much more rarely, hunger. You shouldn't go into the woods fearful about the wildlife that lives there, but you should be mindful of where you are, and come prepared. You are entering their home, and it's important to be respectful of that.



Given how close many homes in Issaquah are to the forest, you may even encounter wildlife in your own backyard!

The wildlife we often have negative encounters with here in the Alps are most often black bears and cougars. Often these creatures will want nothing to do with you, and you might never even see them even if they're nearby. But it's not uncommon to startle another animal in the woods, especially if you're walking alone or quietly.

Here are some things that you can do to prevent accidental encounters while in the woods:

- **Make noise** - Talk with the people you are hiking with, clap your hands, wear a bear bell or even bring a whistle. This way you are more likely to alert other animals of your presence in advance, and allow them to get away before you come across each other.
- **Don't hike alone** - Hiking with other people means more noise, of course, but may also discourage wildlife from coming near you if you are being watched. Note that hiking with a dog doesn't necessarily mean wildlife will stay away; there are [other precautions](#) you'll want to take with a pet too, such as keeping them leashed and putting a bell on them as well.
- **Be aware and keep your distance** - Look and listen for signs that wildlife are near, such as fresh scat or footprints. Don't wear headphones so that you can hear anything close to you. If you think you are near an animal, try to be loud to make your presence known. And if you do spot an animal, keep your distance. Many encounters go south when people try to get too close to an animal, whether it be for a photo or just a better look.
- **Be mindful of when/where you hike** - Some animals are more active than others at certain times of day. Cougars often [hunt at night](#), and other animals like bears are commonly active at dusk and dawn. You should also familiarize yourself with the area - if you go running on a trail

that has a history of attacks, you may catch the attention of a predator whose instincts say to chase you. That's not to say you can't hike in areas with wildlife presence or at times when you prefer, but you'll want to follow other tips in this list to encourage wildlife to stay away.

- **Be sure to Leave No Trace** - This doesn't just mean leaving behind trash or putting food in enticing easy-to-access places - which you certainly shouldn't do. It also means **don't leave behind an action or memory**, such as by feeding wildlife or again, getting too close. These actions can help wildlife become accustomed to human presence: Maybe you get close enough to take a picture and have no issues, but eventually that animal will no longer be afraid of humans and will spend more time close to them. Then one day down the line some human isn't going to be okay with that animal getting close, and that situation could turn south very quickly - for both creatures.

If you cross paths with wildlife and find yourself in a dangerous situation, you're not doomed. Often the animal might just be startled and run away. But if that isn't the case, and the animal makes it clear that you are not welcome, there are some things that you can do. First and foremost, keep your cool. Stay calm and don't panic - running away and screaming is not going to help the situation and could trigger an animal's predatory instincts. Instead, you'll want to react in different ways specific to the animal you see.

Black bear - While chubby and omnivorous, a black bear encounter can be very dangerous. These bears often only attack when feeling threatened, such as when you surprise one, or when protecting their young, so when you hike you want to be sure to make noise and stay alert. Never come between a mother and her cubs! Bring bear spray and make sure you know how to use it; a [2012 study](#) of more than 200 bear attacks shows that bear spray is effective nearly 98% of the time. If you come across a bear, back away slowly. If you remain within its sight, talk quietly, which will help alert the bear to your presence if you've spotted it first. If the bear charges, you're going to want to act like a predator: Stand your ground, wave your arms and be loud, and prepare to use your bear spray. Oftentimes the charge will be a bluff meant to scare you off, and acting tough will likely scare a black bear away. If it does attack you, fight back.

Grizzly bear - These bears are less common, but if you do come across one, you should be prepared. As with a black bear, you'll want to back away slowly and talk quietly and calmly, especially if it sees you and starts to approach. With grizzlies, you don't want to be seen as a predator or a threat. Have your bear spray ready and do your best to get away slowly. If the bear does attack and the bear spray doesn't work, immediately get into the fetal position and cover your neck with your hands and your face with your elbows. You can learn more about how to prevent a grizzly attack and what to do in [this Outside article](#).

Cougar - First and foremost, despite the hype, cougar attacks are [not common](#) and there have been less than two dozen fatal attacks in North America in the last century. While populations are increasing, that doesn't mean that cougar density and therefore attacks are, it just means that there are more cougars in new areas. In some places, people just accept that cougars are a likely presence, and you just need to be mindful of if you're in cougar country or not. To prevent attacks, don't run on trails where cougars have been recently spotted, and when you hike, travel in groups and make noise to scare a cougar off. A dog can alert you to a cougar presence but might not scare one away, so don't count on your pet to save you. Also note that many [attacks occur on kids](#) under 16, so if you take youth into cougar country, keep them close and monitor them. If you do come across a cougar, stand tall and be loud. Make yourself appear larger by raising your arms or waving a stick, but don't make sudden movements. You'll want to act like a predator and show that you are a threat. Don't run, turn your back, or bend over. If the cougar does attack, fight back with all your strength, but make sure to protect your neck and face. Check out some more tips about how to [prevent a cougar attack](#).

Elk - These beautiful ungulates are not uncommon to come across, and they are certainly an incredible sight. But while these animals would often rather avoid dealing with us, sometimes they can charge, especially if provoked or if you are close to their calves. If you come across an elk, keep your distance and back away slowly. If they do charge, again, don't run away. Rather, find shelter behind a tree or boulders - anything to put space between you and the elk. You want to avoid being underhoof and getting trampled. If you do fall and don't have time to get up and away, cover your head and neck to protect yourself from stomping hooves.

Video of black bears near Park Pointe PUD taken by John Sherwin

For more tips about what to do with different wildlife encounters, check out [Wildlife Safety Tips](#) from REI.

Not all encounters are bad for humans exclusively - we can be just as dangerous to wildlife. We don't want animals depending on humans for food or thinking that we're safe to be around. For some animals, relying on humans for food can be harmful to their health - for example, feeding ducks bread prevents them from getting vital nutrients from other foods. Feeding wildlife can teach that animal that they can get food from us, and one day maybe someone the animal is looking to get food from will assume that they themselves are the preferred meal and will act in self-defense, such as with a firearm. Leaving out your trash so that raccoons and coyotes get used to finding food or prey in urban areas means more encounters, as well - wildlife-vehicle collisions, dogs or cats getting eaten, etc. It's important that while we appreciate and are awestruck by wildlife, that we remember to respect them and understand how our actions can negatively affect them.

As humans encroach more and more into wildlife habitat, through urbanization and habitat loss or more people spending time outdoors, wildlife may become more and more accustomed to our presence. This is one of the big reasons we have many unfortunate human-wildlife interactions, and why sometimes the wildlife gets punished for it. Remember, these are wild animals, not tame pets. So just because you *want* to get that good selfie or feel like a princess feeding a deer doesn't mean you *should* get close to them. Doing things like this causes wildlife to get adjusted to human presence, and the more comfortable the animals are, the more likely a future interaction will go south - for either or both participants. So to prevent other outdoor adventurers from running into wild animals and having to use the tips above, and to keep animals safe, try to prevent wildlife from getting interested in closeness in the first place.

That doesn't mean that sighting a wild animal isn't exciting, and if you do see one near your home or while hiking, consider reporting it on the Woodland Park Zoo's community science program [Carnivore Spotter](#). You can also learn more about this project and the Coexisting with Carnivores program that the IATC supports [here](#).

The Apparatus

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