

# OREGON HUNTER

JULY-AUGUST 2021

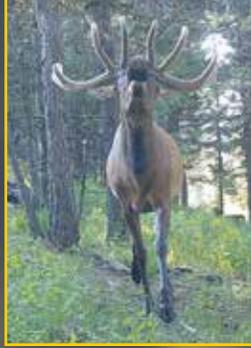
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*Cover: Rocky Mountain elk photo by OHA member Dennis Kirkland (HisImages.com)*



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## OHA tackles conservation issues

**W**ildlife management in Oregon has become increasingly complex. OHA conservation staff members are constantly engaged in species management plans, monitoring and commenting on regulation updates and changes, providing support for active management and research projects, promoting tactics to alleviate damage to private lands that keep our valued wildlife available for hunters, and other work. OHA's premise for seeking sound and scientific management dictates our approach for working on this broad array of items.

Wildlife habitat is a cornerstone for our work. Whether it's working on our first conservation easement, providing comments on public land management projects and proposals, or partnering with private landowners, we cannot lose focus of the importance of habitat and habitat connectivity. Public lands make up half of Oregon. Ensuring that there is a voice and perspective that benefits the wildlife we are interested in motivates us to stay engaged in federal and state land management plans and practices to promote effective management. Recent work would include providing comments on state forest management plans, providing input on wildlife management area plan updates to ODFW, and engaging in fire recovery planning after the historic fire season in 2020.

The current Legislative session in Oregon constantly reminds us how important it is to have an active voice for hunters. Our lobbyists and others are on a constant vigil to protect our current opportunities and defend against additional regulatory controls. While it's unfortunate that OHA has to expend staff time and capacity to prevent losing opportunities, we still prioritize legislation and information to promote funding and practices for wise management of all of Oregon's natural resources. Proactive advocacy is just as important as a good defense.

The slate of current projects getting attention is too long to list here, but covers everything from land management practices, to regulations, to serving on various committees and work groups, to planning specific on-the-ground work to benefit wildlife.

Here are just a few examples of work currently under way:

Beaver management (trapping) input.

Greater Clatsop Plains elk issue and supporting work.

OHA's first conservation easement, development of a management plan for the Metolius property.

Gurdane elk redistribution and the regional look at habitat and elk management.

Regulation review and updates for game birds and eastern Oregon elk bowhunting.

Pew and Oregon Action Team involvements for ungulate migration in Oregon.

Reviewing and planning for ungulate movement/migration and road crossings in southwest Oregon.

Supporting the Legislative Committee throughout the session.

Working on updates/improvements to the tag reporting system.

Advancing mule deer migration topics and awareness.

Pursuing a new approach to cougar target areas through research projects.

Monitoring the federal wolf delisting and ODFW's response.

Hart Mountain Sheep Plan and predator management.

Fire recovery – monitoring USFS and ODF processes; support to local chapters.

Renewable energy site locations and impacts to winter range and migration.

Owyhee Sportsmen Coalition – proposed Sen. Wyden legislation.

South Suburban Sanitary Dist. (Klamath Falls) Hunter Access.

New Youth Pheasant Hunt (Umpqua Chapter).

Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund involvement.

Input on various management plans: federal lands, state forests, WMAs.



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Official publication of the Oregon Hunters Association, dedicated to wise management of Oregon's huntable wildlife. United in protecting hunter interests in the state of Oregon.

Our mission: Protecting Oregon's wildlife, habitat and hunting heritage.

OREGON HUNTER (ISSN 1545-8059) is published bimonthly by the Oregon Hunters Association for its membership and is sold on newsstands statewide. Membership rates are: Individual: \$35 a year, \$65 for two years, \$90 for three years, \$80 for lifetime, \$10 for junior, \$12.50 for full-time student; family: \$45 a year, \$80 for two years, \$90 lifetime; business membership \$75. Memberships include \$5 magazine subscription. Periodicals postage paid at Medford, Ore., and at additional mailing offices.

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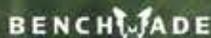
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# WORK SHARP OREGON HUNTING QUIZ

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## KNOW OREGON? WIN A WORK SHARP!

1. Winter Rim is located near:  
a) Klamath Lake c) Hart Mountain  
b) Summer Lake d) Steens Mountain
2. Blacktails and muleys mingle in what wilderness area?  
a) Black Canyon c) Sky Lakes  
b) Bull of the Woods d) Wild Rogue
3. You can hunt elk in the yellow larch trees in which unit?  
a) Starkey c) Saddle Mountain  
b) Interstate d) Siuslaw
4. Shotgun slugs are legal for:  
a) elk c) cougar  
b) bear d) all of the above
5. Buckshot is legal for:  
a) antelope c) elk  
b) bighorn d) none of the above
6. Which animal lacks a gall bladder?  
a) antelope c) mountain goat  
b) bighorn d) none of the above
7. The lower Deschutes Wildlife Area is in what unit?  
a) Hood c) Biggs  
b) White River d) Upper Deschutes
8. Which controlled elk hunt had tags in the leftover drawing last year?  
a) 224X Tioga No. 1  
b) 224Y Tioga No. 2  
c) 231X SE Cascades  
d) 238B1 Grizzly Private No. 1
9. Oregon is home to which turkey?  
a) Ocellated c) Gould's  
b) Osceola d) none of the above
10. Which duck is known as a spoonbill?  
a) merganser c) northern shoveler  
b) wood duck d) none of the above

Answers: 1-b; 2-c; 3-a; 4-d; 5-a; 6-a; 7-c; 8-c; 9-d; 10-c



### WHERE IN OREGON WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

Identify this Oregon lake that the High Plains Drifter would have loved, be drawn from all correct entries, and win a Work Sharp Original Knife and Tool Sharpener! Send your best guess to Oregon Hunting Quiz, OHA, P.O. Box 1706, Medford, OR 97501, or submit your guess at [oregonhunters.org](http://oregonhunters.org), where a larger version of the photo appears. One entry per OHA member.

**Entry deadline: July 20, 2021.**



### LAST ISSUE'S WINNER:

**Jason Adams, Bend**

Jason's name was drawn from among the OHA members who recognized the Wallowa Mountains.

## OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

JUNE 19 – JULY 4

Lake County OHA online fund-raiser, [ohalakecounty.cbo.io](http://ohalakecounty.cbo.io) 541-810-1617

JULY 1

Leftover tags go on sale

JULY 20

Umpqua Chapter picnic 541-430-7324

JULY 24

OHA Josephine County Chapter picnic, 541-761-3200

JULY 31

OHA Capitol Chapter online fund-raiser 503-851-8409

AUGUST 1

Fall bear season opens

AUGUST 7

OHA State Convention, Seven Feathers Casino, Canyonville 541-772-7313

[www.oregonhunters.org](http://www.oregonhunters.org);

OHA Malheur County Chapter youth shotgun shoot, 208-573-5556

AUGUST 14

Standard antelope season opens; OHA Yamhill Chapter youth shotgun shoot 503-737-9483

AUGUST 20

OHA Klamath Chapter's Gerber Reservoir youth antelope hunt BBQ 541-281-6518

AUGUST 21

OHA Tualatin Valley Chapter Banquet 503-502-0611

AUGUST 22

Standard antelope season closes

AUGUST 27

Bow tag sale deadline

AUGUST 28

General bow season opens

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## Hunt the 2nd black bear rut

**N**ot only does Oregon have abundant bears that inhabit a majority of the most beautifully diverse habitats that this state has to offer, but we also have ample opportunities to hunt them. And now it has gotten even better.

As of 2020, two fall bear tags were available statewide (as opposed to prior years when the Additional Fall Bear Tag was limited to units in the southwest). And, thanks to OHA, you can wait to buy your additional fall bear tag until after you have filled your first instead of having to buy both before the deadline (Remember, you still need to purchase your general season bear tag prior to the Oct. 1 deadline to be eligible for the additional tag).

By the time the fall bear season opens on Aug. 1, black bears in Oregon are starting their second “rut.” The first rut in the spring involves propagation. The second



PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

The author took a break from his archery elk hunt to check a blackberry bush and found this bear.

rut in the fall involves hyperphagia – the gluttonous devouring of calories bears require before they den up in the late fall and winter months. Food availability changes as the autumn months progress, along with weather and increased human pressure throughout the season. Bear hunters need to pay attention to these changes.

August and September are months of high berry output, and staking out these locations can be very fruitful. Remnant apple orchards from old, secluded homesteads are a bear favorite during October and even into November. Throw in a mix

of predation, carrion and insects, and you round out their fall diet. But, don’t forget the bears’ old spring friend when hunting the fall season – grass. As food stuffs begin to dwindle in the later months and the Indian summer has dried up other food sources, those late fall rains give rise to a new growth of succulent grasses that bears can’t resist and may be their last chance at some quick calories. Keep your eyes open as bears cruise to find these grassy thoroughfares, and that last minute bruiser might step out at 30 yards to round out your fall bear season. —MAX ZELLER

## Jump the gun for preserve upland bird hunts this fall



TREVOR BARCLAY

Some of the best hunting for chukars, Huns and pheasants can be found on preserves.

**L**ate last winter, if you wanted to get in a bird hunt before the close of the preserve season, it was difficult. With more people buying hunting licenses and looking for excuses to get outside with a shotgun, licensed preserve operators were seeing their calendars fill up like never before.

For my last hunt of the season, I called my friend Court Friday and we met up at Gateway Preserve, where he already had reservations. Gateway offers great pheasant and chukar habitat north of Madras. Friday and Troy Clark turned out their four dogs (two Labs and two GSPs) with my pudelpointer, Liesl, and we started off along the plateau.

The wind whipped from 9 miles per hour up to 25mph. My hat blew off half a dozen times, but we shot very well and the nostril power of five dogs working in harmony paid off. We finished the morning with 13 chukars and a rooster pheasant.

With a lot of new hunters and returning

hunters this year, expect it to be hard to get reservations at hunting preserves from the Coast Range out to the Snake River in 2021 and 2022. Get a jump on the preserve season and tune up for your public land bird hunts, too, by making a reservation with a licensed hunting preserve.

The preserve hunting system allows for opportunity from early September through the end of March.

There are approximately 20 licensed bird preserve operations in the state. Ask a few friends for recommendations. Scan the list at [www.myodfw.com](http://www.myodfw.com), or do an Internet search. Many companies offer lodging and meals as a part of a package. Almost all can provide a guide and a dog. Hunts range from half-day jaunts to four-day affairs. Some outfits take pride in early-release programs, while others offer European-style driven shoots, or horseback and horse-drawn hunts. Call early and jump the gun for preserve pheasants this season. —GARY LEWIS

Pop-up ground blinds don't need to be brushed in for pronghorns.

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

## Blind faith for pronghorn hunts

If you've hunted from a popup ground blind for pronghorn, you know how effective they can be in helping you get a shot with a bow or muzzleloader. If you haven't, there are things to know.

Take plenty of water. One hunt I sat seven straight days in a ground blind where outside temperatures eclipsed 100° each day. I drank nearly a case of bottled water every day and still lost 11 pounds.

Popup blinds can be set the morning of your hunt for pronghorn and don't need to be brushed-in. I've taken many pronghorns throughout the West with my bow, and most blinds were set the morning of the hunt. It can help, but blinds don't have to be in place days prior for animals to get used to.

Make certain all inside walls and the roof of the blind are dark black so no silhouettes are created. All window flaps should be tightly closed except for the shooting window. No flaps should move in the wind, which will spook animals. Side windows should have mesh so the main flaps can be lowered to create a cross breeze in the intense heat. And never open the back window.

Get a chair that's comfortable and quiet that you can shoot from. I like lining the ground with a thin carpet so I can take off my boots, which keeps it quiet and cooler. Dark, breathable, moisture-wicking clothes are a must.

Observe herds from afar to see where they're watering and what trails they're using. Then set up a blind, accordingly. Get in the blind early and stay all day. Mature pronghorn bucks sometimes drink at night, but can come to water any time.

Practice shooting at home from the blind so you're comfortable and confident. Pronghorns will often approach within feet of a blind, so be ready, both physically and mentally, because sitting all day is far from easy. —SCOTT HAUGEN



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*Initiative Petition 13 would ban all hunting, fishing and trapping in Oregon.*

# Initiative petition would ban all Oregon hunting

Oregon is facing an attack on animal agriculture, hunting, fishing, and trapping. Initiative Petition 13 would not only criminalize animal agriculture, making it virtually impossible to raise livestock, but

it would also make hunting, fishing, and trapping activities illegal and classified as animal abuse. This may sound far-fetched, but these groups are motivated, well funded and adept at making these extreme

prohibitions sound appealing to urbanites.

OHA is engaging on IP13 on a variety of fronts and working with other sports groups and agricultural associations to combat this extreme measure.

## Coyote bill dies; gun bills take on new lives

By Al Elkins & Amy Patrick, OHA Lobbyists  
[Alvinelkins@yahoo.com](mailto:Alvinelkins@yahoo.com)

April and May brought a new deadline for bills in Oregon's House and Senate chambers. If a bill did not have a hearing or work session scheduled, the bill died in committee. OHA's two bills moved forward. Here is the latest rundown on bill action.

### **HB 3152 Wildlife Inspection Points**

This is an OHA bill. The bill gives ODFW authority to operate wildlife inspection points for purposes of preventing the spread of infections or infestations harmful to wildlife and to further wildlife management efforts.

**Update:** The bill passed the House and the Senate and has been signed by the Governor. It goes into effect Jan. 1, 2022.

### **HB 3163 Residency Requirements**

This is an OHA bill. It makes a change in residency requirements for purposes of licenses, tags, and permits related to wildlife. Through discussions with law enforcement, it was discovered that prosecuting offenders with dual state residencies had become a concern of Oregon District Attorneys and they had become reluctant to prosecute wildlife offenders that fit into the dual state category. The new language in the bill changes the residency definition to a resident is a person who has physically resided in Oregon for not less than six consecutive months immediately prior to the date of making application for a license, tag or permit issued by the State Fish and Wildlife Commission. It also defines a resident as not someone who merely owns real property or pays property taxes in this state, or who has resident privileges in another state or county for any purpose.

**Update:** The bill passed the House and the Senate and has been signed by the Govern-

nor. It goes into effect Jan. 1, 2022.

### **HB 2548 Wildlife Corridor Funding**

Directs the Legislative Policy and Research Office to study issues related to funding construction of wildlife corridor road crossings and report to legislature its findings on or before Sept. 15, 2022.

**Update:** The bill had a work session in March in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. A committee was formed and has met numerous times to discuss funding options for Wildlife Corridors. The committee continues to meet.

### **HB 2728 Coyote Contests**

The 2021 version has an amendment that protects certain aspects of nonprofit contests (Section 5 of the bill lines 17-19). The bill prohibits a person from conducting or participating in a contest, competition, tournament, or derby that has the objective of taking coyotes for cash or prizes. Provides that prohibition does not apply to raffles conducted by nonprofit organizations if the organization does not award raffle prizes based on number, weight or size of coyotes taken. Punishes violation of prohibition by maximum fine of \$2,000.

**Update:** The original bill is dead. We may see the bill again in another form before the end of the Legislative Session.

### **HB 2543 Firearm Transfer Prohibition**

Prohibits transfer of firearms by gun dealers or private parties if OSP is unable to determine whether recipient is qualified to receive a firearm.

**Update:** OHA opposes this bill, which was passed out of committee and went to the House Committee on Rules. The bill was then referred back to committee.

• • •

To learn more about these bills, visit [www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills\\_laws](http://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws)

### **Gun bills combined, watered down**

The House Rules Committee has combined SB-544 and HB-2510 into one bill. The provisions in SB-544, which would have banned guns in state buildings and allowed local governments to pass their own bans, were curbed significantly. The amended bill would limit a new ban to the state Capitol, and only allow K-12 schools, community colleges and universities to enact bans. Local governments would not have that ability. Guns are already prohibited in most public buildings in Oregon, but an exemption exists for concealed handgun licenses (CHL). It is those permit holders that the new provisions would impact.

The penalty for a violation was reduced from a class C felony to a class A misdemeanor. The fee for renewal of a concealed handgun license was reduced from \$100 to \$75.

The provisions of HB-2510, the so called "safe storage bill" which were amended into the combined bill, were also modified. The new amendments remove the "strict liability" standard for lawsuits that result from a stolen gun being used to cause injuries or deaths if the theft was not reported.

Minors' use of firearms is still regulated, with limited exemptions for hunting and target shooting. Hunters will want to pay close attention to the provisions for safe transportation, transfers and use by minors, as the law will be in force before some fall hunting seasons.

The combined bill, SB-544 with the A-36 amendments, passed the House and the Senate. The bill has been signed by the Governor. This 2021 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the 2021 regular session of the Eighty-first Legislative Assembly adjourns.



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# BLACK POWDER

By GARY LEWIS

## A squirrel on every meat pole?

**M**y friend Matthew comes over and he has something in a long case. He says it's for me and I'm going to pay him for it. We agree on a price before I even see what he brought. Two dollars. He unzips the case and out pours a single barrel muzzleloading shotgun.

It's a Dixie Gun Works 28-gauge made in Spain with a simple percussion lock, a 32-inch octagonal/round barrel, case-hardened furniture and a steel ramrod that nests deep in the butt stock.

It comes up barrel-light, heavy in the shoulder and points wherever the eye throws it. A rabbit-ear rear sight catches the eye and the brass bead on the end of the long barrel nestles inside it, and I think, this is a gun for grouse, or squirrels, or fall turkeys with a stout load.

A wise gun buyer asks for the extras and Matthew produces them, along with a recipe.

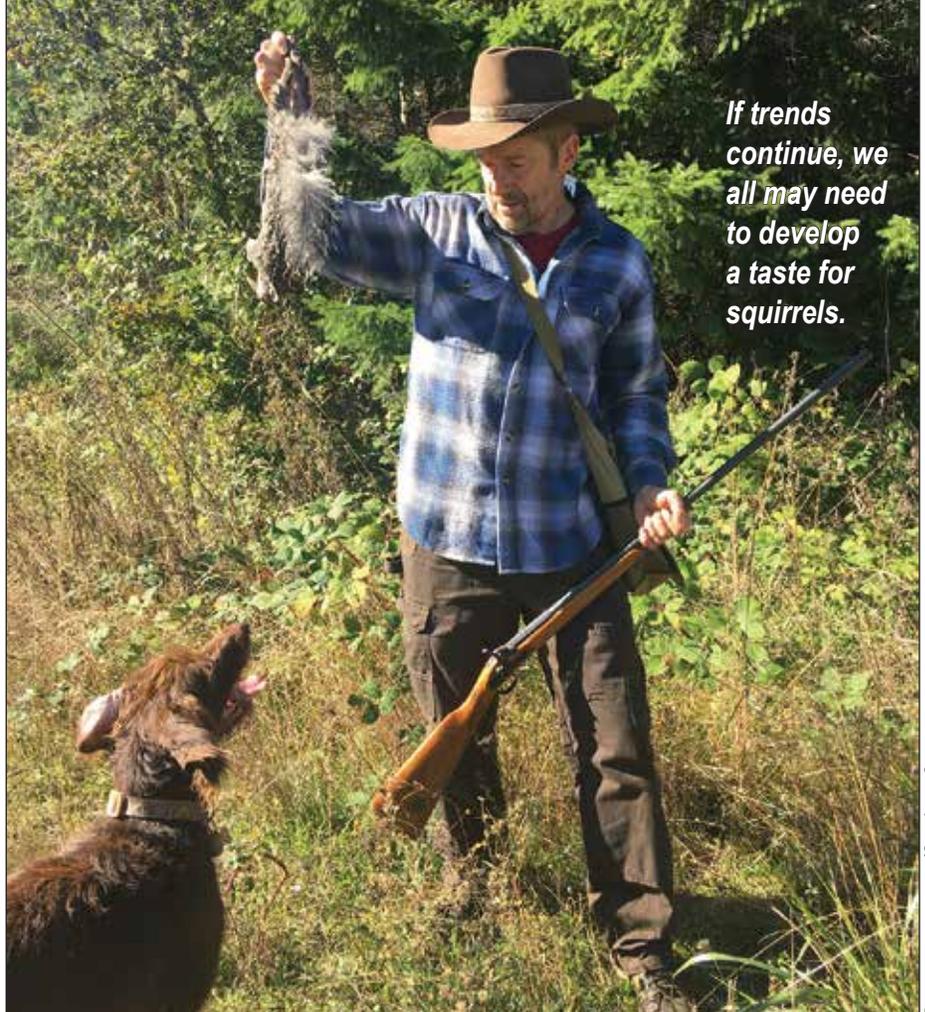
"Forty to fifty grains of FFG, use the wad cushion, pour in 3/4 ounce of shot and then seal it with a nitro card." A recipe for squirrels.

Matthew handed over the necessary wads and cards; I had powder and shot enough, I told him.

For a few days I left the gun propped in a corner of my office, but this was October and it was only a matter of time before I figured out a game plan to put the two dollar gun to work.

Dixie Gun Works offered this gun in their catalog in the 1960s and '70s for \$29. Today, on the used gun market, a similar gun might be purchased for about \$100.

This type of shotgun with its extra-long barrel is often referred to as a Long Tom, which is the name given to a river that flows into Fern Ridge Lake west of Eugene, where shotguns were used to procure squirrels, ducks, geese and grouse – protein for the pioneers of Lane County.



*If trends continue, we all may need to develop a taste for squirrels.*

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR/GARYLEWISOUTDOORS.COM

*The author used an old Dixie Gun Works 28 gauge muzzleloader on this silver gray squirrel.*

In deer camp I was the only one without a deer tag. My dad and friends were hunting, and glimpses of deer were few and far between. Down around the houses and in town, deer were numerous. Up in the forest where we were hunting, we could only find piles of bear, cougar and coyote scat. One of the guys saw a bear, but the bear was too fast for him.

I found myself with a few extra hours to spare each day. With glimpses of quail, numerous turkeys sighted and silver gray squirrels that bounced from branch to branch, I guessed I could put the long tom, the river's namesake, to use.

Forty grains of Triple Seven FFG down the barrel, a wad cushion tamped down, then an ounce of No. 6 shot and a couple of cards to hold the charge in place. Thus prepared, I kept the shotgun close to hand.

The pudelpointer, Liesl, watched the turkeys and kept an eye on the quail, but she had a long-running antipathy for silver gray squirrels. The time had come.

On day 5 of our deer hunt, late in the morning, a sleek silver gray leapt branch to branch to bouncing branch to skitter down

the bark of a Douglas fir, where it fed out of the shadows. With the hammer eared back, I slipped a No. 11 percussion cap on the nipple, shouldered the gun, cheek on wood, held the bead for a head shot, and squeezed. The hammer fell on the No. 11 cap, sparked into the powder. A sharp crack, a puff of white smoke.

The squirrel rolled and I sent the pudelpointer after it. Liesl charged into the trees, caught sight of the silver-gray and gave it a shake as if to claim a major victory for all pudelpointers.

A lot of people want to know what a gray squirrel tastes like? To me, it tastes most like alligator. Alligator is OK. You have to kind of develop a taste for it. Maybe it's the same way with squirrels. You get used to them.

In a time when forest lands are not managed and predators are not managed, and deer are most numerous on private lands where predators less boldly go, maybe we can all develop a taste for squirrels.

*For a great squirrel recipe, see Page 36. To contact author Gary Lewis, visit [www.GaryLewisOutdoors.com](http://www.GaryLewisOutdoors.com)*

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# BOWHUNTING

By NOLAN COOK

## The stickbow edge

**W**e've all been there. You're skimming through the newest Oregon Big Game Hunting Regulations, and you see a few controlled hunts labeled "traditional archery only." You think to yourself, "I wonder what those hunts are like."

Those hunts shouldn't be overlooked. They are areas that hold healthy populations of game and gorgeous landscapes, and they offer the potential of sticking an arrow into a trophy animal. Hunts that are "Traditional Bow Only" allow only a long bow or recurve bow, not a compound.

Because you may need to acquire new equipment and learn to use it effectively, it's not too soon to start planning your traditional bow hunt for next year.

**Because you may need to acquire new equipment and learn to use it effectively, it's not too soon to start planning your trad bow hunt for 2022.**

Santiam Unit Traditional Bow (216R1) and N. Fork Traditional Bow (250R) are two elk hunts that Oregon offers as controlled draw tags. Both 2021 hunts open on Sept. 28 and end Oct. 1. These hunts may only be four days long, but their timing can be stellar.

They take place just after general archery season ends (Sept. 26 this year), which means the woods will be much less crowded. The "trad" guys almost have the mountains to their selves for those few days.

The rut can be just getting hot at the tail end of September. There is a good chance that big bull will finally be vocal enough for you to coax him into stickbow range.

The Santiam Unit hunt is new for 2021 and there will be 55 tags offered. The N. Fork hunt was new for 2020 and has 55 tags available, also. You should have almost a 100 percent chance to draw either of these tags first choice. Last year there were 5 leftover tags for the N. Fork hunt that went



PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR

*The author watches over a water spring in the Trout Creek mountains awaiting a mule deer buck to come in. This method takes patience and persistence to be successful.*

to second-choice applicants.

The other fantastic traditional archery tag that Oregon offers is the Trout Creek Mountains (168R2) mule deer buck tag. This hunt coincides with general archery season (Aug. 28 – Sept. 26 in 2021). The only people allowed to hunt this area are the people who drew this controlled tag. There is no compound bow hunting that takes place in the Trout Creek Mountains. The terrain in this area makes it ideal for spot and stalk style hunting. Big, deep draws with rimrock on the upper edges makes it perfect habitat for mature mule deer bucks. If spot and stalk is not your preferred method, water springs are found throughout the hunt area and make great ambush points. A well-placed ground blind can be effective for these elusive bucks.

The Trout Creek Traditional archery tag used to have an unlimited number of tags offered. ODFW has since put a cap of 100 tags for this hunt. This year you should be able to still draw this hunt as a first choice with no points. If you are looking at saving a preference point and want to put this hunt as a second choice, you have about a 14 percent chance of drawing it. This tag has consistently stayed around 10 percent hunter success rate for a few years.

A few seasons ago, I spent a week

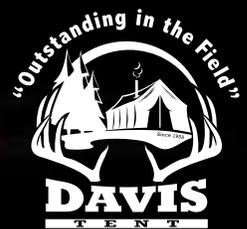
running around the Trout Creek mountains with a recurve in my hand. Getting within stickbow range of these bucks can be challenging, but it is not impossible. Spot and stalk method and sitting over water were both effective, but I never could seem to catch a break. Numerous bucks gave me shot opportunities, but I was never able to capitalize. There was no shortage of deer in the area, which meant once you blew a stalk, it was easy to get onto another buck. That week was the best mule deer hunting I have ever experienced.

These tags have low success rates because of the difficulty of shooting traditional archery, but what these tags do have is high opportunity rates. Shooting a recurve or long bow takes a great deal of practice and patience. Putting in the time and effort into perfecting your trad bow shot before tackling one of these hunts should be a priority.

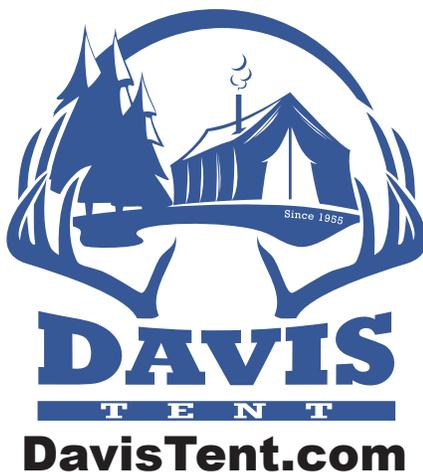
There is no better feeling than walking up to an animal that has fallen to the hand of a stickbow. Whether you are wanting to get away from the crowds of people during general archery season, hunt a new area, or just simply try a new challenge, consider these controlled hunts. Pick up that trad bow, practice shooting, and most of all, have fun.

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# ELK SEASON CALLS

## Are you ready to answer?

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT HAUGEN

In a move of desperation, I stuck to the dark, mid-morning shadows cast across a narrow strip of open ground. The herd of Roosevelt elk I'd been stalking in the Coast Range, just north of Florence, for the past hour grew tired of the heat, quit feeding, and began heading toward heavy timber to bed for the day.

Waiting to attempt a bedded stalk would have been futile with all the eyes in the herd, as there was only one bull I wanted, the herd bull.

As I quickly walked right at the herd, several of the cows and a couple young bulls saw me, but I kept moving. They weren't sure what I was in the black shadows. Arrow nocked, I aggressively cow called as I kept moving right at the herd, which slowly grew nervous.

At 70 yards, the cows started to quicken the pace toward a dense ravine. The bull was in back and far to my left, out of sight, so I kept moving

and calling. The herd broke into a trot. I stopped and let out a bugle. This stopped the herd, and again I moved forward in the shadows.

Ranging the herd, 50 yards was as close as I was going to get. They strung out, passing from left to right, and started trotting. When the herd bull came into view I confirmed the range, reached full-draw and let out a loud cow call on a diaphragm. The arrow hit the mark. The bull went less than 100 yards and piled up.

I'd like to say I scouted the herd all summer and had been watching that bull, but it simply wasn't the case. Truth is, I happened upon the herd by luck, and made aggressive moves that allowed me to fill a tag during the first week of the season.

With elk season fast approaching, there are efforts you can take to help increase the odds of filling a tag. First, accept the fact that being in shape greatly elevates the chances of success. But know, too, that you don't have to run marathons and bench press 400 pounds to be a good hunter. Be in good cardio shape and mentally ready, and you're set. If you can't get to where elk are, you can't kill one.

Nothing has helped me learn more about elk than scouting, and I do it year-round for Oregon's

Roosevelt elk. If I'm not physically in the woods looking for elk, I have trail cameras scouting for me. I run at least 12 trail cameras all year, in both the Cascades and Coast Range. As hunting season approaches, I set cameras on video mode so I can see and hear what's happening with herd dynamics, along with predator movement.

My favorite trail camera is StealthCam's DS4K, which captures great video quality, be it in the coastal rainforest, or dry and dusty Cascades. I'll even take trail cameras into hunting areas, letting them scout while I hunt. This is especially helpful in scouting across the state, where not all of us can make the drive to routinely scout and check cameras.

Having trail cameras allows you to track nocturnal elk movement, and you'd be surprised how far elk travel at night to reach prime food, even wallows.

One September,



while bowhunting the Ochoco Mountains, fresh sign was thick, but I was seeing few elk. I didn't have trail cameras on that hunt, so decided to scout at night. The number of bulls I heard bugling, along with incessant cow and calf chatter, greatly enlightened me as to how many elk were out there, and how far they were moving under the cover of darkness. I ended up moving my spike camp the next day, which put me closer to the elk and gave me a better chance.

During summer scouting missions, search for cows and plot their location on a map. Find as many cow herds as you can, for these will be the focal point of your efforts come hunting season.

Once bulls strip their velvet in late August, they're thinking rut. Testosterone levels rise and they start covering ground in search of cows. One bull I caught on trail camera last year in the Cascades was with one herd of cows, then two days later with

a different herd, 9.2 miles away. The bull made this back-and-forth move multiple times in September, and I have no idea if there were other cow herds between the two I tracked.

No matter where you're hunting elk in Oregon this September, it's going to be hot and dry. Many years ago, I used to love hunting the coastal habitat near Tillamook, Seaside, and Florence, as the forest floor was often damp, making going quiet. But with recent trends in hot fall temperatures, the result is a dry, noisy forest, and this makes it hard for bowhunters.

Treestands and ground blinds are always an option, and I think, a very underutilized tool when it comes to beating the dry conditions. Scouting will allow you to learn where elk are moving and when, providing direction as to where to set up.

Mixing up your calling can also pay off. Elk herds are very vocal year-round, and cows and calves are especially talkative in





*To improve your chances of filling a tag in September, now is the time to scout for bulls, as they are often in the open all day in order to protect their sensitive, velvet-covered antlers.*

*What trail cameras can reveal about big game movement and activity is invaluable. The author runs over a dozen cameras year-round.*



August and September. This is when calves venture from cows, and they regularly call to keep in contact with one another. Several times I've called in bulls by using cow and calf chatter, mixing in high-pitched bugles once a bull gets talking. I'll often move and call, using shadows to mask my movement as I close the gap.

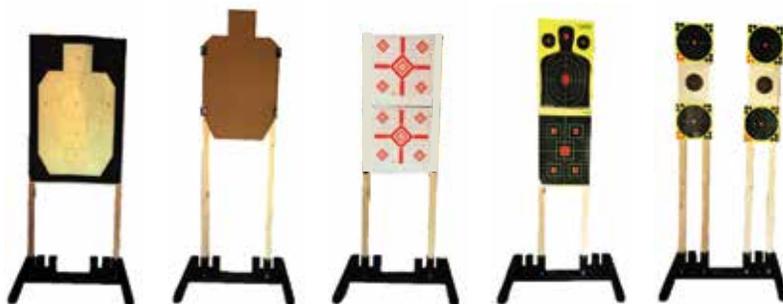
Always keep the wind in your face or moving across your body, as you'll never, ever, fool the nose of an elk; it's their best, most trusted sense. If moving in on a herd and the wind changes, back out and come in from another direction or return on a different day.

Packing a Montana Decoy cow elk decoy can pay off. One time, east of the Cascades, I called and called to a bugling bull that refused to leave the forest. I repositioned on the back side of a knoll, set up a Miss September decoy 30 yards behind me, then called. The bull bugled and busted brush as it ran to see where I'd gone. The moment the bull saw the decoy it marched right into the open, bugling 15 yards from me, with no idea what was about to happen.

Now is prime time to start scouting and setting up trail cameras for elk. While Oregon's archery elk season happens in

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## OHA's New Trail Cam Contest

Nothing has taught me more about elk movement and behavior than spending time in the field, watching, hunting, and photographing them. But a very close second is what I've learned through dedicated use of trail cameras.

I have trail cameras in the field every single day of the year, not only for elk, but for deer, turkey, predators, gray squirrels, and more.

OHA has a new trail cam contest I'm excited about, as it encourages Oregon hunters to step up their game. Check it out on Page 46. —SCOTT HAUGEN

September, the real search is a year-round commitment, and what you'll learn from these dedicated efforts will take your elk hunting knowledge and skills to the next level.



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JOHN HINDERMAN



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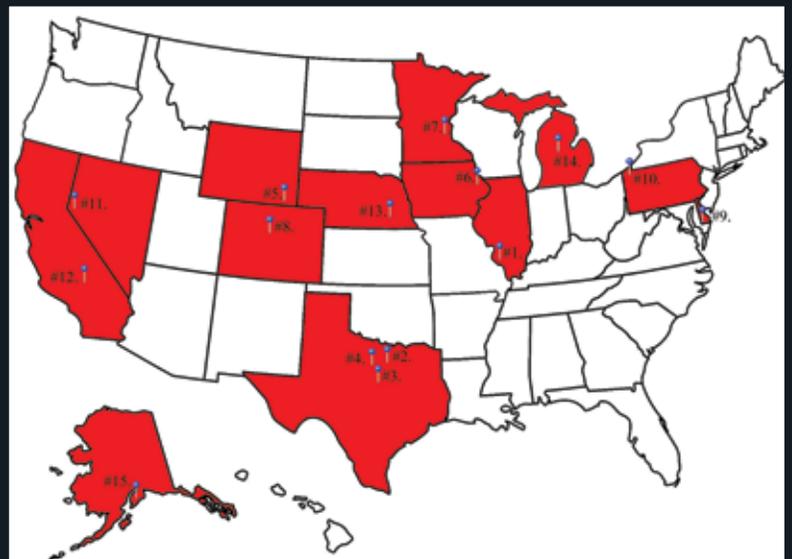
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# WILL DROUGHT MEAN A DRY YEAR FOR OREGON BIG GAME?

BY JIM  
YUSKAVITCH

**A** mild winter throughout the state produced excellent overwinter survival for big game species in all age classes. However, the mild winter and lower spring snowpack means a drier summer, with potentially less green-up, and some parts of the state are showing signs of impending drought conditions. In addition, the massive fall fires in the Santiam and McKenzie river canyons in the western Cascades severely burned a significant amount of deer and elk habitat that will take a few years to sprout regrowth.

Nevertheless, the news isn't all bad. Here's what a number of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists are saying about current big game populations in their districts.

## Deer

There is good news for black-tailed deer on the North Coast, with Tillamook-based ODFW district wildlife biologist Dave Nuzum reporting "We seem to be having a stable to increasing population." He noted that last fall was an outstanding deer season. "It was one of the highest deer harvests we've ever seen," he said.

"We had a very mild winter last year and I suspect we had good overwinter survival," said Chris Yee, district wildlife biologist in Springfield. "That bodes well for the upcoming hunting season." Although black-tailed deer are at benchmark in his district, Yee is concerned about the effects of the Holiday Farm Fire that burned up all the vegetation in some areas, reducing both habitat and hunting access. Deer are especially susceptible. Elk will go somewhere else when habitat conditions don't suit them. Deer tend to stay in their home territory even when it's not in their best

interest, and they may be inclined to return to areas damaged by wildfire.

The situation is grimmer in the southwest part of the state. District wildlife biologist Tod Lum in Roseburg said, "I'm seeing low water conditions and other signs of summer drought." In addition, the Archie Fire on the North Umpqua River did extensive habitat damage. Even though there will eventually be regrowth, it will have a short term negative effect. Also, last year the area's white-tailed deer population was hit with epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD) that killed several hundred herds, dealing a significant blow to those animals.

Greg Jackle, district wildlife biologist based in Prineville, reports that they are still struggling with their mule deer population in the Ochoco Mountains region. He, like Lum, is seeing signs of possible severe drought, with the range bone-dry and the Crooked River water level much lower than typical. Hunting opportunities this fall may depend on whether there is enough spring and summer moisture to produce adequate forage.

The situation is better to the northeast in the Blue Mountains. "Deer seem to be doing pretty well," said assistant district wildlife biologist Ryan Platt in John Day. "We had overwinter survival of 80 percent, which is good, and our fawn ratios are high in the Murderers Creek and Northside units." This year the fawn ratio is in the mid-30s per 100 does — up from the mid-20s in previous years. Platt is upbeat about hunting opportunities this year, with a good crop of yearling bucks.

"Deer came out of the winter with good fawn ratios, and buck ratios are up as well," reported assistant district wildlife biologist Lee Foster in Hines. "So it looks like mule deer numbers are moving up in





WILLY ONARHEIM

*Elk are faring well in most areas of the state except the Cascades, where forage is scarce.*

the Harney District, with the exception of the Juniper and Beatys Butte units.”

“Hunting won’t be like it was 20 years

ago,” he continued. “But it looks like we are having an overall increase in our mule deer population.”

## Elk

As typical, elk numbers in northwest Oregon are good, with populations generally at management objective. “There was also a good calf crop last year, so it will be a good opportunity to hunt spike bulls where it is legal,” said Nuzum.

The decline of logging on public lands on the west slope of the Cascade Mountains continues to stymie elk populations in that region. In addition, Chris Yee, of the ODFW Springfield office, has observed that elk in recently burned areas have moved to places with intact habitat, which will have a positive effect on the population. He noted that some elk herds crossed to the west side of the Calapooia River to spend the winter.

“The Forest Service has been doing habitat projects on the forest, but they tend to be small scale,” said Yee. “Those help, but to be really effective, those habitat projects need to be on a landscape scale.”

In the southwest, Lum has the same concerns for the effects of drought on elk as he does for deer. Last fall’s big fires haven’t helped any, either. While in the long run, habitat will improve in the burned areas, the temporary damage will hurt herds in the shorter term. Hunting access has also

  
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suffered in the fires' aftermath. "I have had to cancel some controlled youth hunts because it wasn't safe to hunt, or there were ongoing salvage operations and road repairs," said Lum.

Prineville-based Greg Jackle said that overall elk numbers look good in his district and hunters should expect typical opportunities. They have noticed a steep decline in hunter harvest success in the Maury Unit over the past few years. However, rather than a population decline, the biologists are thinking that the elk may be moving out of that unit. One theory is that juniper removal projects in the eastern part of the unit have eliminated trees that the elk used for cover. Because desert elk are very migratory, they may have just moved on. Another possibility is that they are relocating to the Ochoco Unit, where there are more private landowners that tolerate elk on their properties. ODFW has an elk collaring study ongoing in the area that may eventually answer some of these questions.

Out in the Blues, Platt said: "Elk are doing fine. We didn't see a whole lot of bulls in our most recent surveys, but we think that was because they were timbered up and we didn't see them. We think the



KEN KLOCK

*Dry waterholes may concentrate pronghorns in their high desert habitat this year.*

population is pretty much stable."

In the High Desert District, Foster reports that the elk population is at or

above management objective in all of their units. The Malheur River and Silvies are the desert units typically with the most elk.



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JOHN WHELAN

California bighorns are faring well in Oregon, but Rocky Mountain herds are struggling.

### Bighorn Sheep

Bighorn sheep are doing well in the Blue Mountains around the John Day region. Ryan Platt reports that they captured 15 bighorns from the McClellan herd to test for disease this year and the same for the Aldrich Mountain herd last year, with no signs of disease issues.

“Bighorns are pretty good in most places,” says Lee Foster in Hines. The population is stable, and there have been no disease issues with these desert herds as well.

However, bighorn herds further northeast have been suffering from widespread bacterial pneumonia since 2020 that caused a major die-off in the Lookout Mountain herd and later spread to the Burnt River herd.



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JOHN WHELAND

Despite being the earliest-opening fall general season, August bear hunting is often overlooked.

### Rocky Mountain Goat

Rocky Mountain goats are doing well throughout their Oregon Range, including the newest population in the central Cascade Mountains near Mount Jefferson.

Said Platt of the Strawberry Mountains herd, "We have a pretty good kid-to-nanny ratio and we have had no reports of dead or sick goats over the winter and spring."

Hunters who draw a goat tag have high odds of success.

### Pronghorn

While there are occasional ups and downs, Oregon's pronghorn population is typically solid. "Pronghorn are doing really well throughout the Harney District, except for the Steens Unit where fawn ratios are a little lower than desirable," said Foster. Overall, he said that populations are stable and should provide good hunting opportunities this year.

### Bear and Cougar

Oregon continues to have a robust population of bears and cougars, with the largest cougar populations in the northeast and southwest. The rule of thumb for bears is that their numbers increase the farther toward the coast and south you go.

Nuzum continues to report increasing cougar harvest on the North Coast, where cougars were rarely checked in the past, indicating an increasing population in that region. Interestingly, Ryan Platt in John Day reported that they are checking in fewer cougars than they used to, suggesting a potential drop in the population that may be connected to the decline in their mule deer prey base.

Most bear and cougar are harvested opportunistically by hunters pursuing other game species.

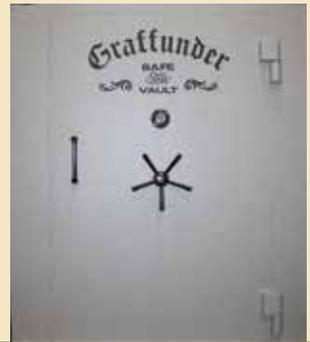


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# TRAVELIN' BANDS

FOR AN AVID WATERFOWLER WHO GREW UP HUNTING DUCKS AT SUMMER LAKE,  
BANDING WATERFOWL THERE IS SOMETHING OF A REVIVAL.

PHOTO ESSAY BY SCOTT HAUGEN

'Well, I'm flyin' 'cross the land,  
tryin' to get a hand,  
playin' in a travelin' band.'  
—Creedence, *"Travelin' Band"*



I love looking at old hunting photos. They hold so many memories. They send a cyclone of words whirling through my head, words I grapple with in an effort to vividly relive the moment. I have a pile of old scrap books in my office. On the first page of the first one, there's a picture of me on my first duck hunt at Summer Lake. The year was 1976. I was 12 years old.

Like many Oregonians, I grew up hunting Summer Lake. So did my dad, and his dad.

Following opening weekend on my first duck hunt at Summer Lake, I went back to school on Monday. Everyone acted so normal, as if we'd just come off a regular weekend. But it wasn't a normal weekend for me. Far from it. That weekend changed my life, forever.

For several nights in a row I cried myself to sleep, missing Summer Lake. I stared out my bedroom window, gazing at the stars, wondering if more ducks and geese were making their way to the wetlands. I dared not share this with anyone, for sheer embarrassment.

In July of 2018 I realized another dream, joining ODFW personnel on a waterfowl banding project. A new moon is required and ducks must be freshly molted. These conditions allow birds to be efficiently caught and banded at night.

The pre-banding meeting held in Summer Lake Wildlife Area headquarters was a powerful start. For the first time I stood behind the check-in counter. I recalled, as a kid, meeting Marty St. Louis here. Marty

served nearly 40 years with ODFW, 33 of which were dedicated to managing Summer Lake. To be on Marty's side of the window next to him was surreal.

Bands and paperwork were organized inside, while tables, lanterns, nets, bird crates, and more, were gathered by staff and volunteers outside. More than a dozen men and women were on hand. Everyone had a job.

Brandon Reishus, ODFW's Migratory Game Bird Coordinator, offered detailed instructions. There was a ground crew, where ducks were delivered in crates for identification and banding, and there was an airboat crew, which caught the birds. Together, they worked all night, two nights in a row at Summer Lake before heading to Malheur Refuge to do the same.

Hundreds of ducks of multiple species were caught, banded, and released. A trumpeter swan was caught, banded, and collared, as were a handful of tundra swans.

My personal highlight was realized



**Brandon Reishus, ODFW's Migratory Game Bird Coordinator, not only headed the nighttime banding project, but continued working during daylight hours, capturing and banding more ducks.**

when I joined Reishus in front of the airboat with Marty in the driver's seat. Marty operated the airboat with inconceivable precision, guided by strategically placed lights, as he'd done for decades. Reishus and I communicated by sight and hand signals, as it was too noisy to do otherwise.

Using fish nets, we scooped up ducks, filled crates, then headed to land.

The crates were quickly off-loaded. Empty crates were rapidly piled into the airboat, and moments later we were catching more ducks. There was another airboat crew doing the same.

It's a race against time, for as many ducks as possible must be caught before dawn breaks on the horizon. Ground crews working by lantern swiftly identify and

band birds for release. The swiftness with which everyone works is impressive.

But even more spectacular was observing how passionately, how diligently, each team member worked. The nights were sleepless, as were most of the days. Reishus and a team set and managed day traps, where they caught and banded many ducks. Everyone else cleaned and organized gear



Duck bands and data collecting materials are prepared for a full night of work.



A pintail is banded and ready for release.



A drake teal triple crown: cinnamon, green-wing and blue-wing.

in preparation for the night's work ahead. During this five-day stretch, three hours of sleep each day was the norm.

Every person faced each task with vigor and zeal. Sleep deprived, hungry, and hot, never was there a complaint. Everyone embraced the task. "Hey, I just banded a teal slam," one person said, holding a cinnamon, green-winged, and blue-winged teal. "I just got a hoody!" exclaimed another.

Everyone involved was a hunter – each greatly committed to waterfowl conservation. They had fun. They worked hard. They were sad when it was over, as was I.

In my 21-year career as a full-time outdoor writer, this experience goes down as one of my most cherished. The wildlife encounters shared with people who are so deeply passionate about what they do made me proud to be a part of this great state and all it has to offer. I wish every hunter in

Oregon could experience how truly powerful and inspiring banding waterfowl in our historic wetlands, with such dedicated people, can truly be.



*Scott Haugen is a full-time author and photographer living in Waltherville. Learn more about his long list of hunting, fishing, and cooking books at [www.scotthaugen.com](http://www.scotthaugen.com) and follow his adventures on Instagram and Facebook.*

**Marty St. Louis, longtime manager of Summer Lake Wildlife Area, gives an airboat a test run before a week of intense, nighttime waterfowl banding.**



**Data recorded, this mallard is banded and set free at Summer Lake.**



**Tim Akimoff prepares a banded and collared trumpeter swan for release, one of the many surprises encountered.**



**New, incoming feathers render ducks flightless in July, making it prime time to capture and band them.**

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\* OHA member prices. Nonmembers add \$35 for 1-year OHA membership.

\*\* Early Bird tickets must be ordered by July 7, 2021.

Party Starter: 2 guns (\$599 & \$349). Max 1,900 tickets.  
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# GAME ON THE GRILL

By TIFFANY HAUGEN

## Try tasty Squirrel Spaghetti

**S**uper versatile, squirrel can be cooked up just about any way you like. And yes, it does taste a bit like chicken, or maybe more like a young wild turkey.

Low and slow or pressure cooked is an ideal way to cook up all cuts of a squirrel. Because squirrel is incredibly lean meat, it's best cooked using a moist heat method. We don't cook them whole because they are much easier to cook once segmented. Simply butcher off the saddle, hind and front quarters and put in a slow cooker or pressure cooker (Instant Pot). This is an easy, foolproof recipe that will bring out the best flavor for your recent quarry of "chicken of the trees." Not only do we love squirrel meat, but our dogs go crazy when it comes to hunting gray squirrels during Oregon's fall season, and last year squirrels were plentiful.

2-3 pounds bone-in or boneless squirrel meat

1 10-ounce jar Rotel Diced Tomatoes & Green Chilies\*

1 6-ounce can tomato paste

1 medium onion, chopped

4-6 cloves garlic, peeled

1/2 cup water

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

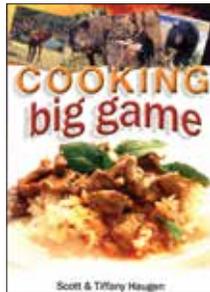
1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 stick butter

1/4 cup fresh chopped parsley and/or basil

Parmesan cheese if desired



Place squirrel, Rotel, tomato paste, onion, garlic, water, vinegar, salt and pepper in a slow cooker or pressure cooker. Mix well, coating squirrel with tomato mixture. In a slow cooker, cook 4-6 hours on high or until squirrel meat falls from bones. In a pressure cooker, set pressure to high and cook 11 minutes for boneless squirrel and 15 minutes for bone-in squirrel pieces. Let pressure release on its own before checking for doneness.

When squirrel is done, remove bones from the meat and add butter and fresh chopped herbs. Let sauce continue to simmer and reduce while making spaghetti noodles. Cook spaghetti according to package directions and add to sauce before serving. Garnish with Parmesan cheese and more fresh herbs if desired.

\*For more sauce, or a Rotel substitution, use a 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes and an 8-ounce can diced roasted green chilies in place of the Rotel.

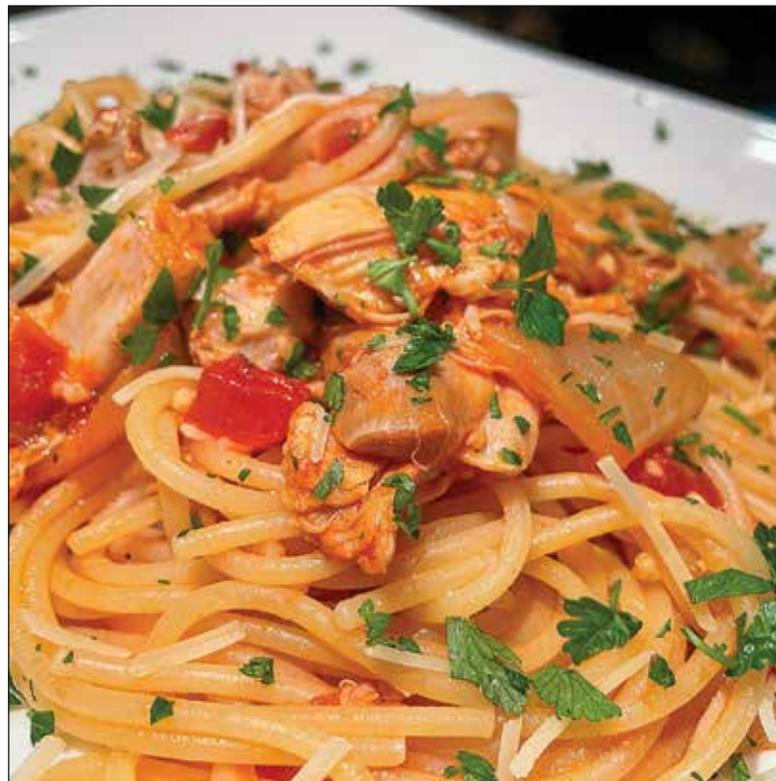


For signed copies of Tiffany Haugen's popular book, *Cooking Big Game*, send a check for \$20 to Haugen Enterprises, P.O. Box 275, Waltherville, OR 97489 or visit [www.scotthaugen.com](http://www.scotthaugen.com) for this and other titles.

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*Because squirrel is incredibly lean meat, it's best cooked using a moist heat method, such as a slow cooker or pressure cooker.*

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[www.dfw.state.or.us](http://www.dfw.state.or.us)**



# YOUNG GUNS

By GARY LEWIS

## So your young gun didn't draw a tag...

Mark your calendar for July 1

Let's not cry about it. Let's talk about what we can do. OHA recognizes that those years a youngster is between 12 and 17 years old are fleeting and precious. And that's why OHA initiated the Youth "First Time" Program, an idea of past OHA Northeast Director Jerry Frampton in the 1990s. Living in Baker City, where it's a long drive to general season blacktail country if a youth didn't draw a tag until driving age, Jerry cornered everyone who would stand still until he got his wish. Proof your involvement in OHA can make a big difference for you and generations to come.

Here's how the program works: A young hunter must be an Oregon resident 12 to 17 years old at the time of the hunt. The young hunter must have applied, and been unsuccessful, in the Controlled Hunt Drawing for a hunt in the 100-, 200- or 600-series (buck deer, elk, antlerless deer). And they must have never drawn a controlled hunt for that respective series before.



Most leftover tags are for elk. Check the hunt descriptions carefully for percentage of public land and private land open to public access, as well as the success rates for recent seasons in the harvest statistics at [MyODFW.com](http://MyODFW.com)



The author's daughter took this buck in western Oregon, where general-season tags are available.

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR/GARYLEWISOUTDOORS.COM

Sound like you? Sound like someone you know? Thought so.

To receive a First Time Hunt, apply beginning July 1. The hunt must be applied for and the tag purchased before the first day of the season.

Keep in mind not all hunts are included in the program. Each hunt must meet a minimum tag allocation of 201 tags in the buck deer (100 series) hunts, 51 tags in the elk (200 series) and a minimum of 51 tags in the antlerless deer (600 series).

Note that a young hunter who applied for a point saver is not eligible for a first time youth tag for that hunt series this year.

### Want leftovers?

Another option for a young hunter is to apply for a leftover tag. Now let's not sugarcoat this. These tags are left over or un-allocated for a reason. It could be that private lands limit access. Perhaps deer or elk numbers are down in a certain region. Whatever the reason, there is a hunt opportunity and a chance to get outside and try to make something happen this fall. Now and then there are a few youth tags left over that could take you on an adventure you never would have had otherwise. A person who ends up with one of these tags should be willing to be flexible. Sometimes the hunts have early starts and there might even be an elk hunt opportunity that launches the first of August. Leftovers go on sale July 1 at 10 a.m. Visit [MyODFW.com](http://MyODFW.com)

### General seasons and other game

If all the draws are unkind to you, general season tags for western Oregon deer (bow or rifle) are available over the counter.

One thing Oregon has plenty of is predators. Bear season lasts five months from Aug. 1 until the end of the year and overlaps most big game hunting seasons for which others in the party may have tags. Cougar season is open all year, and coyotes offer unlimited year-round hunting.

Probably the most-overlooked hunting opportunity in the state is the squirrel season. Deer and elk habitat overlaps with gray squirrel habitat in all the open units. If a young gun didn't draw an elk or deer tag, perhaps the next best thing is going along, carrying a squirrel gun. Best hunting is with a .22 rimfire rifle or a small shotgun. Seasons are open for western gray squirrel west of the eastern boundary of the Santiam, McKenzie, Indigo, Sprague and Interstate units from Sept. 1 through Nov. 15. and from Sept. 15 to Oct. 31 in the White River, Paulina, Metolius and Upper Deschutes units. Check current regulations for bag limits in your hunt area.

For more information on possible youth hunts, visit <https://myodfw.com/articles/hunting-opportunities-youth>



Author Gary Lewis is an award-winning outdoor writer and television host. Contact him at [garylewisoutdoors.com](http://garylewisoutdoors.com)

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DUANE DUNGANNON

# OHA testifies in favor of continued sage-grouse hunting, other changes

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator  
[TD@oregonhunters.org](mailto:TD@oregonhunters.org)

OHA testified on April 23 in favor of ODFW staff proposals that would increase game bird hunting in Oregon. The Fish and Wildlife Commission approved proposals to allow additional fall turkey hunting opportunity in units that overlap Grant County starting this winter. These units include: Murderers Creek (44), Northside (47), Desolation (50), and the Ritter portion of the Heppner Unit (48). OHA realizes that these increases are a result of Grant County damage complaints, and OHA applauds ODFW for using hunters as the tool to reduce landowner conflict. Additionally, OHA supports archery hunters having the chance to bag a turkey starting Sept. 1. Staff are also proposing to allow Sports Pac holders to select either a General Spring, General Eastern or Western Oregon Fall Turkey Tag as part of their Sports Pac.

The migratory gamebird proposed modification of the Zone 2 season for geese will simplify the complex goose hunting regulations. We support proposed changes to the mourning dove season in western Oregon, as it may offer hunters an opportunity to hunt the migratory portion of the population.

OHA applauds ODFW's support for a learn-to-hunt program for waterfowl.

OHA is in favor of continued sage-grouse hunting, which OHA supports for several reasons:

- Sage-grouse hunting does not limit sage-grouse populations in Oregon. Harvest caps are extremely conservative and are set low enough that sage-grouse populations will not change as a result of legal harvest.
- Hunters provide a considerable amount of funding for sage-grouse conservation when considering that ODFW currently uses more than 50 percent of upland game bird stamp funds to benefit sage-grouse. Hunters also pay for sage-grouse permits and applications, while hunting organizations (including OHA) frequently contribute

large sums to sage-grouse research and conservation.

- Hunting yields complementary vital rate data (via harvested wings) for biologists who are charged with managing the species.

There are many factors driving sage-grouse population decline, including predation and habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, but hunting does not contribute to the decline in Oregon. In the best interest of the bird, sage-grouse must retain their game bird status, because hunters are at the frontlines of the effort to conserve this species for future generations.

See related article on Page 48.

## In Memoriam

*Contributions made recently to the*  
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from Gary & Laura Drager

In memory of  
**FRANK "PATCHES"  
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OHA LADD MARSH MEMORIAL OVERLOOK/JIM WARD

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For information about OHA state-level sponsorship opportunities, call the OHA State Office at (541) 772-7313.

# OHA reaches out to new commissioner

By Amy Patrick, OHA Outreach Coordinator  
[Amy@oregonhunters.org](mailto:Amy@oregonhunters.org)

With the re-appointment of Bob Spelbrink in February and the new appointment of Dr. Kathayoon Khalil last month, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission is back to full capacity at seven members.

Prior to the most recent appointment, the Commission had been operating with a vacant seat and two expired members. The remaining expired member, Greg Wolley, whose term was up in May 2020, will remain on the Commission until the Governor brings forth a nomination for his position.

Dr. Khalil will serve in the Westside At-Large seat and resides in Congressional District 5 in the Portland-metro area.

OHA staff is actively working to assist her in getting up to speed with the myriad of topics she will face as a commissioner, and we look forward to working with her in the future.



OHA recently partnered with Pew Charitable Trusts to advocate for safer deer and elk migration in southern and central Oregon. A mailing to more than 6,000 Sports Pac licence holders in those areas included a pitch for the license plate to support safer migration. Reserve your plate at [myowf.org](http://myowf.org)

# OHA mailer raises awareness of need for safer wildlife passage solutions

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator  
[TD@oregonhunters.org](mailto:TD@oregonhunters.org)

OHA recognizes that Oregon has a major problem regarding vehicle collisions with deer and elk on our highways statewide. The number of animals killed on ODOT highways alone is estimated in the range of 21,000 to 35,000 per year.

Pew Charitable Trusts partnered with OHA in May to fund a 6,000-unit mailer to Sports Pac holders in specific counties where wildlife collisions are all too common (Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Coos, Klamath and Deschutes).

Enclosed was a summary of the road-kill deer and elk that ODOT collected within specific stretches of highway that locals know well, along with a collision map illustrating the extent of the issue, a Protect Animal Migration brochure, and specific asks for sportsmen to support a state migration policy and wildlife passage projects via purchase of Watch for Wildlife license plate vouchers available at [MyOWF.org](http://MyOWF.org).

This is a statewide issue, and OHA will plan similar efforts across the state in the near future.

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## CHAPTER NEWS

# Chapters slate summer events

**B**elow are the regularly scheduled times and places for chapter meetings, many of which were suspended at press time, and previously scheduled projects. Please confirm all information here.

### BAKER

**Charlie Brinton**  
**(541) 403-0402**

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Best Western Sun Ridge Inn; optional dinner 6 p.m.

**2021 banquet:** TBD

**Update:** Tickets for the Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffle are on sale now. The banquet has been postponed; see our Facebook page for updates. We plan to hold a scholarship raffle and issue a scholarship.

### BEND

**Rex Parks**  
**541-480-0230**

[oregonhunters.org/bend-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/bend-chapter)

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Bend Golf & Country Club

**2021 banquet:** held online March 17-April 8. We auctioned an A&H statewide deer tag March 13.

**Update:** Our annual end of year drawing, normally held in December, was held at our April 14 chapter meeting, where the winners of our online raffles were also drawn. We approved several funding requests: \$2,000 to Ecotrust Forest Management for road decommissioning, \$4,700 for materials for the All Hands All Brands project, and \$1,800 to the 4-H Shooting Sports program. Chapter members joined with other volunteers April 24 to build Smoke Creek buck and pole fencing on EcoTrust Forest Management property. June 5 was Youth Day at Cyrus Ranch in Sisters. All Hands All Brands for Your Public Lands is slated for June 18-20; call 541-647-0424.

### BLUE MOUNTAIN

**Dean Groshong**  
**(541) 377-1227**

[ohabluemountainchapter@gmail.com](mailto:ohabluemountainchapter@gmail.com)

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of the month, The Saddle, 2200 Court St.,



*OHA's Mid-Willamette Chapter installed wood duck boxes at a local park this spring.*

Pendleton, 6 p.m. meeting, 5:30 p.m. dinner and drinks available.

**2021 banquet:** canceled

**Update:** We unfortunately had to cancel the banquet due to covid, but we are holding raffles to raise funds; see Page 28 and call 541-231-4384.

### CAPITOL

**Erik Colville**  
**(503) 851-8409**

[ohacapitol.webs.com](http://ohacapitol.webs.com)

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., Marion County Fire Station #1, 300 Cordon Rd. NE, Salem.

**2021 banquet:** July 31 online; call 503-851-8409.

**Update:** We will work again with the USFS Prairie City Ranger District June 25-26 repairing fences we constructed in the past, with camping available at the Huddleston Sno-park; email [ydrupj@Q.com](mailto:ydrupj@Q.com) or call 503-689-4334.

Hunters without Partners – we want to use our chapter newsletter as a networking place where hunters without partners can get connected with those looking for partners. Simply send an email to [capitol-chapteroha@gmail.com](mailto:capitol-chapteroha@gmail.com), with your contact information and any specifics you would like prospective hunting partners to know.

### CHETCO

**David Green**  
**(541) 207-4866**

**Chapter Meetings:** 5:30 p.m.: next meetings TBD.

### CLATSOP COUNTY

**Jim Bergeron**  
**(503) 458-6829**

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7 p.m. speaker, 4H Clubhouse, Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

**2021 banquet:** canceled

**Update:** We will hold the Les Schwab and Coastal raffles in 2021. Youth Day is June 26 at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds.

### COLUMBIA COUNTY

**Jordan Hicks**  
**(949) 533-7271**

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., Moose Lodge, 57317 Old Portland Rd., Warren.

**2021 banquet:** Held June 5.

### EMERALD VALLEY

**Tony Hilsendager**  
**(541) 729-0877**

[EmeraldOHA@live.com](mailto:EmeraldOHA@live.com)

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Wednesday, Board meeting at 5:30 p.m.

**Update:** We hope to return to our regular schedules and activities soon.

### HOODVIEW

**Kelly Parkman**  
**(503) 706-7481**

[oregonhunters.org/hoodview-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/hoodview-chapter)

Facebook: Hoodview OHA

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., board meeting at 5:50, Elmer's, 1933 NE 181st Ave., Portland.

**2021 banquet:** canceled.

**Update:** Family Fun Night is June 23, outside at the Portland Gun Club, with raffles, free shooting for youth and beginning adults, and burgers and hot dogs; email [kparkman.oha@gmail.com](mailto:kparkman.oha@gmail.com). Members have been presenting many adult Learn to Hunt classes, via Zoom and in person at Sportsman's Warehouse in Portland. We hope to have a habitat project at White River Wildlife Area this summer.

### JOSEPHINE COUNTY

**Cliff Peery**  
**(541) 761-3200**

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., Elmer's Restaurant, Grants Pass.

**2021 banquet:** held online March 20-28

**Update:** Youth Day at Josephine County Sportsman's Association was canceled. Our chapter family campout at Willow Lake is canceled, but we are having a chapter picnic July 24 at Fields Park in Murphy. If you are new to hunting or your partners have retired, join our Hunters Without Partners group; [mmmull@aol.com](mailto:mmmull@aol.com) or 541-499-2237.

### KLAMATH

**Allan Wiard**  
**(541) 884-5773**

[ohaklamath.webs.com](http://ohaklamath.webs.com)

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., Shasta View Community Center.

**2021 banquet:** Held online June 9-13.  
**Update:** Chapter members gathered for a campout at Hart Mountain May 15-16, and did trash cleanup June 5 on Green Diamond property near Keno. The chapter will put on a BBQ for youth hunters Aug. 20 at Gerber Reservoir; call 541-281-6518. The youth chukar hunt is scheduled for Oct. 23-24; call 541-643-7077.

### **LAKE COUNTY**

**Larry Lucas**  
**(541) 417-2983**

**Chapter Meetings:** 1st Tuesday at 6 p.m., VFW Hall, Lakeview.

**2021 banquet:** online June 19-July 4 <https://ohalakecounty.cbo.io>; call 541-810-1617.

**Update:** Our first 2021 guzzler project took place May 15. Youth Day is June 26 at Juniper RV Resort in Lakeview; call 541-621-8123. Oct. 16 and 23 are duck/goose box project days, and our second guzzler project is on for Oct. 30; call 541-417-1750.

### **LINCOLN COUNTY**

**Todd Williver**  
**(541) 648-6815**

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday, 6 p.m. meeting, OSU extension office, Newport.

### **MALHEUR COUNTY**

**Bruce Hunter**  
**(208) 573-5556**

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Thursday, 6:30 p.m., no host dinner 5:30, location TBA in the chapter newsletter.

**Update:** We hosted a sporting clay event at the Snake River Sportsman on May 8. Our annual free youth shotgun shoot will be held Aug. 7. The winner of the Coastal Farm & Ranch rifle raffle will be drawn at the youth event.

### **MID-COLUMBIA**

**Stanley Walasavage**  
**(541) 296-1022**

**Quarterly Chapter Meetings:** 6 p.m., ODFW Screen Shop, The Dalles.

**Update:** We bought four trail cameras with Python cable locks and donated them to OSP in The Dalles. Thanks to Coastal Farm & Ranch for the donation of our raffle gun, a Christensen Arms Mesa Titanium .28 Nosler; for tickets, call 541-296-1022 or email [swalasavage@gmail.com](mailto:swalasavage@gmail.com).

### **MID-WILLAMETTE**

**Jeff Mack**  
**(503) 949-3787**

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., board meeting at 6 p.m., Old Armory, 4th and Lyons, Albany.

**2021 banquet:** June 19, Boys & Girls Club, Albany; call 541-971-3351.

**Update:** Mid-Willamette Chapter members placed duck boxes March 27 at Simpson Park in Albany.

### **OCHOCO**

**John Dehler, III**  
**(541) 815-5817**

**Chapter Meetings:** 1st Tuesday, 7 p.m., Room 1868, 152 NW 4th St., Prineville.

**2021 banquet:** held online March 15-25.

### **PIONEER**

**Brian Andrews**  
**(503) 266-2900**

[oregonhunters.org/pioneer-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/pioneer-chapter)

**Chapter Meetings:** 1st Wednesday, 7 p.m., come early for dinner, Canby Rod & Gun Club.

**2021 banquet:** Held May 1-14 online.

**Update:** April 24 was Youth Day at Canby Rod & Gun Club, where 33 kids turned out. Guzzler work party trips began again in May. The Pioneer Chapter Family Campout takes place June 18-21; call 503-710-1233. We'll have a booth at the Molalla Buckaroo July 1-4, and at the Clackamas County Fair Aug. 17-21; call 503-710-1233 for both.

### **REDMOND**

**K. C. Thrasher**  
**(541) 419-7215**

OHA line (541) 383-1099

[oregonhunters.org/redmond-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/redmond-chapter)

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday, VFW Hall. Dinner at 5, member meeting at 6, board meeting follows.

**2021 banquet:** held June 5.

**Update:** Volunteers planted 400 forage shrubs, fenced 100 cottonwood trees to stop beaver damage, set sprinkler pipes, rewired the pump, and removed slash at our annual Priest Hole project April 23-25.

### **ROGUE VALLEY**

**Ricky Clark**  
**(530) 905-1186**

[oregonhunters.org/rogue-valley-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/rogue-valley-chapter)

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 6 p.m. social & dinner, 7 p.m. presentation, Eagles Club, 2000 Table Rock Rd.

**Update:** We will hold the Les Schwab and Coastal Farm & Ranch raffles in 2021.

### **TILLAMOOK**

**John Putman**  
**(503) 842-7733**

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Monday, 7 p.m., Tillamook PUD.

**2021 banquet:** held June 12

**Update:** We will hold the Les Schwab and Coastal Farm & Ranch raffles in 2021.

### **TIOGA**

**Marcey Fullerton**  
**(541) 267-2577**

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., 6 p.m. no host dinner, Uncle Randy's Cafe, Coquille.

**2021 banquet:** held March 20.

**Update:** Tioga Chapter Youth Day was May 1. We collaborated with RMEF April 17-18 on a work project on the Seven Devils property in Coos County.

### **TUALATIN VALLEY**

**Tony Kind**  
**(503) 290-6143**

[oregonhunters.org/tualatin-valley-chapter](http://oregonhunters.org/tualatin-valley-chapter)

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday, dinner at 6 p.m., meeting at 7, Prime Time Restaurant & Sports Bar, Forest Grove.

**2021 banquet:** Aug. 21, NW Events Center, Hillsboro; call 503-502-0611. We auctioned an A&H statewide deer tag April 10.

**Update:** Chapter meetings are on hold until we can safely meet again. We had a booth at the Pacific NW Sportsmen's show in March. Our Tillamook Forest target shooting area cleanup has been canceled. Hagg Lake youth event scheduled for June has been postponed, possibly to September.

### **UMPQUA**

**Tadd Moore**  
**(541) 580-5660**

**Chapter Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m., via Zoom.

**2021 banquet:** canceled

**Update:** This year's banquet is canceled. The board is working on putting together some projects in burned areas. The chapter picnic at Roseburg Rod & Gun Club is scheduled for July 20; call 541-430-7324.

### **UNION/WALLOWA COUNTY**

**Morgan Olson**  
**(541) 786-1283**

**Chapter Meetings:** La Grande Library, next date TBA.

**2021 banquet:** held online April 1-15.

### **YAMHILL COUNTY**

**Andy Bodeen**  
**(503) 490-2489**

[ohayamhill.com](http://ohayamhill.com)

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., 6 p.m. dinner, American Legion Hall, 126 NE Atlantic, McMinnville.

**2021 banquet:** held online March 26-31.

**Update:** 18 folks removed 463 tires from public land. We donated \$2,500 to be divided between three local high school trap teams. Our Youth Shotgun Shoot will take place Aug. 14; call 503-737-9483. 



## OHA helps bump elk poaching reward to \$10,000

By Yvonne Shaw  
ODFW Stop Poaching Campaign Coordinator  
[Yvonne.L.Shaw@odfw.oregon.gov](mailto:Yvonne.L.Shaw@odfw.oregon.gov)

The Oregon Hunters Association is offering \$10,000 for information that leads to an arrest or citation in the case of three elk that were poached east of Sisters on or about Oct. 28.

In early April, OHA Bend, Redmond, Capitol, Josephine and Mid-Columbia chapters, along with several private

donors, pooled resources to increase the reward amount to \$6,500. Additional private donations and an infusion of \$1,000 from the OHA State Board raised the total to \$10,000.

OSP Fish and Wildlife Troopers located the cow elk carcass on Oct. 30 after a hunter scouting the Dry Canyon area east of Sisters reported it to the Turn In Poachers (TIP) line. Troopers then discovered a large bull elk carcass nearby. The bull elk's

head had been removed as a trophy. Although bull elk were in season at the time, it is a crime to leave carcasses to waste.

Two days later, on Nov. 1, a hunter reported the carcass of a spike elk about 40 yards from where the cow had been found. Based on decomposition, all three animals were shot at or near the same time, and certainly the same day according to OSP Senior Trooper Creed Cummings, who processed the scene.



OSP Troopers display items seized from a case spanning from one state border to another.

## Shady practices threaten Oregon's wildlife

Three elk, three pronghorns, a mule deer, two turkeys and a bobcat round out a collection of animals illegally killed, tagged, processed or taxidermied in a case that spans multiple jurisdictions. However, the health threats to Oregon deer and elk populations may be of greater concern, according to wildlife authorities.

Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Trooper Tom Juzeler took the initial call to the Turn In Poachers (TIP) line in November. The caller suspected an individual camped with others in Umatilla County had placed someone else's tag on a trophy bull elk he had harvested. When Trooper Juzeler began investigating the incident, it became clear that more than one individual was involved, that more than one hunting camp was involved, and that the activity expanded into Klamath County. Trooper Juzeler called Troopers in Klamath County and continued the investigation.

In Klamath County, Trooper Juzeler and his counterpart, Trooper Kameron Gordon, discovered that two people in the

second camp had recently returned from a game farm in another state, with heads from legally harvested elk. However, the heads still had intact brain matter, which can transmit Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The investigation in Klamath County led Trooper Juzeler to a taxidermy shop where he found three pronghorn hides, a mule deer head and a bobcat, all lacking documentation that they were legally harvested. The taxidermist had neither a license nor an updated record book, both of which are required to conduct business in Oregon.

CWD, which is highly contagious and always fatal to deer and elk, is not known to exist in Oregon. Oregon law prohibits hunters from bringing in heads or spinal columns of deer, elk, moose, or caribou from hunts in other states. Hunters can bring back meat if the spinal column has been removed but heads cannot be brought into Oregon unless they are a finished taxidermy mount or a skull cap with all meat and brain matter removed.

## OHA pays out 7 TIP rewards totaling \$3,000

In the last two months, OHA issued 7 reward checks to informants in 7 cases totaling \$3,000 from our Turn In Poachers (TIP) reward fund.

Charges included: Taking Bull Elk prohibited area; driving under the influence of intoxicants; Take/Possession of Antlerless Elk; Lend, Borrow, or Sell Big Game Tag; Aiding/Counseling in a Wildlife Crime; Unlawful Take - Hunting from/across Roadway; Hunting with Aid of Light; Hunting on Enclosed Lands of Another; Hunting Prohibited Hours; Hunting with Prohibited Weapon; Hunting from Motor Vehicle; Attempted Waste of Game Mammal; Unlawful Take/Possession of Bear, Bobcat Closed Season, Antlerless Elk; Borrowing/Loaning Bear Tag; Waste of Bear; False Application of ODFW Damage Permit; Criminal Mischief in the First Degree; Unlawful Possession of a Firearm; Hunting Closed Season.

# WIN A GUIDED ELK HUNT

ON THE NATURE CONSERVANCY'S FAMOUS



# ZUMWALT PRAIRIE PRESERVE!



**1 Hunter and up to 2 non-hunting guests & 1 guide for 3 days in 2022**

Lodging included in updated historic ranch house with solar powered electricity, full indoor plumbing (supplied by local spring) and full kitchens.

**Tickets: \$50; 7 for \$300.**

**500 offered. Value: \$4,900**

**Drawing: March 17, 2022**

**Tickets & info: call 541-772-7313**

**or visit [oregonhunters.org/store](http://oregonhunters.org/store)**

3-day guided bull elk rifle hunt for 1 hunter on the 33,000-acre Zumwalt Prairie Preserve in Oregon during the fall 2022 season (dates TBD; likely November), including lodging at a fully functioning facility at the Preserve. Hunter may bring up to 2 guests who do not hunt. Hunting is all on foot and hunters should be in good physical condition. Recent hunter success rate has been close to 100%. Mature bulls are common with trophy potential. The Preserve is part of the largest remaining intact Pacific Northwest bunchgrass prairie in North America. Restrictions: food, beverages, gear, and gratuity not included. Transportation to the Preserve not included (once there, the guide will provide transportation). The elk tag is guaranteed, but the hunter is responsible for license and tag fees. Hunt takes place during the fall 2022 season only. Proceeds benefit OHA projects. Donated by The Nature Conservancy. Drawing: March 17, 2022, 3 p.m., OHA State Office, 804 Bennett Ave, Medford, OR. Need not be present to win.



# TACTACAM TRAIL CAM CONTEST



**WINNER:** OHA member Calvin Davis of Pendleton bags a Tactacam Reveal trail camera for this photo of a bugling bull near Union.



**HONORABLE MENTION:** OHA member Darrell Wilson of Happy Valley receives honorable mention and an OHA hat for this photo of three bulls captured near Wallowa.



**HONORABLE MENTION:** Ryan Johnson, OHA member in Redmond, earns honorable mention and an OHA hat for this photo of wild horses sparring in the Murderers Creek Unit.

OHA is pleased to kick off the first issue of the Tactacam Trail Cam contest, featuring trail cam photos captured by OHA members. (And we were appalled that nearly half the entries were predators – mostly cougars.) See the contest rules and enter your best shots at [oregonhunters.org](http://oregonhunters.org) for a chance to win a great prize from Tactacam!

# REVEAL X

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## Why does Oregon allow sage grouse hunting?

By Skyler Vold, ODFW Sage-Grouse Coordinator and Dr. Christian Hagen, Oregon State University

Greater sage-grouse have seen noticeable population declines across their range in western North America over the past 50 years. During the last decade, sage-grouse were a candidate species for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act but were considered not warranted for listing in 2015.

With its vast expanses of undeveloped sagebrush habitat, Oregon is one of the sage-grouse strongholds in the West. But concerns about declining sage-grouse populations may raise questions as to why Oregon and many other states allow sage-grouse harvest each fall. The guiding principles of wildlife management in North America help us understand how a tightly regulated hunting season can have no significant impact on the overall population trajectory of the species.

Simply put, birds cannot be “stockpiled” from one year to the next. The number of birds in a population is defined by the carrying capacity of the species’ habitat, annually. The carrying capacity of a habitat is mostly influenced by habitat quality, but annual weather patterns can also have a large influence. Due to density dependence, mortality from hunter harvested birds can be absorbed within the natural mortality rate of the population. This is known as compensatory mortality; a certain portion of birds in the population die naturally each year and the birds harvested by hunters fall within this natural mortality.

The best available science indicates sage-grouse harvest rates of 10 percent or less are considered compensatory and do not have a significant influence on the following year’s breeding population. Once hunter harvest exceeds the natural rate, mortality from harvest becomes additive and will have an impact on the population.

Sage-grouse are Oregon’s most closely monitored upland bird species; we use aerial surveys and over 1,500 ground surveys to estimate the population annually. Because Oregon monitors sage-grouse populations so closely, ODFW can adapt harvest to stay within the compensatory mortality range each year and not exceed the natural mortality rate. ODFW takes direction on sage-grouse management from the Oregon Sage-Grouse Action Plan, developed in 2015.

Harvest is specifically addressed in the Action Plan, which acknowledges that a hunting season can be implemented without impact to the population. The Action Plan directs ODFW to maintain sage-grouse harvest at less than 5 percent of the harvestable fall population, well below the 10 percent compensatory threshold. It is also important to note that hunting is only permitted in 9 of 21 Wildlife Management Units where sage-grouse are found. With a harvest rate this low, Oregon’s sage-grouse hunting season is likely the most conservative of any of the states that hunt the species. In 2020, estimated harvest of sage-grouse was 273 birds,

2.3 percent of the estimated 11,650 sage-grouse in hunt areas, again well below the 10 percent threshold.

Sage-grouse are relatively long-lived game birds; females live 4-8 years and males live 2-4 years. Despite this longevity, they do succumb to predation. Between 2009 and 2021, an Oregon State University research project radiomarked and banded 1,101 sage-grouse and recovered 568 known mortalities. They found the primary cause of sage-grouse mortality was predation (94 percent), with hunter harvest (3 percent) and other causes (3 percent) making up a small proportion of the known mortalities.

### How does Oregon count its sage grouse?

ODFW has a long history of monitoring and researching sage-grouse. Each year, ODFW estimates the population of sage-grouse based on counts at over half of the 700+ known leks in Oregon. Leks, also called dancing grounds, are where males traditionally gather each spring to display their signature mating behavior – strutting, spreading their feathers, and puffing out their apteria (the space between their feathers and breast) to impress females. Every spring from mid-March through the end of April, wildlife biologists visit these leks to count the number of males in attendance, with some leks surveyed up to three times per season.

### Benefits to the sage-grouse hunting season

Sage-grouse hunters in Oregon are asked to turn in wings after each hunting season. ODFW receives tremendous cooperation (>65 percent return rate) from hunters on this project. Wing collections from hunter harvested sage-grouse provide important information for the Department when it comes to monitoring sage-grouse populations. These data help estimate nest success, hatch date, age and sex ratios, and annual turnover (adult mortality rate) and inform managers about the factors driving population fluctuations. This information would be impossible or prohibitively expensive to collect annually at a wide scale. Also, ODFW’s sage-grouse conservation efforts are in large part funded by hunter dollars. As a game species, the Department’s Upland Gamebird Program is able to spend stamp dollars on sage-grouse management. This includes fully funding the Department’s Sage-grouse Conservation Coordinator position and providing non-federal matching funds for several sage-grouse research projects across sage-grouse range in southeastern Oregon.

### What are the biggest threats to sage-grouse?

The quantity and quality of sagebrush habitat are the driving factors for sustaining robust sage-grouse populations across their range. The most immediate threats to sage-grouse in Oregon are those which reduce habitat quantity and/or quality, such as wildfire, invasive weeds and annual grasses, and encroachment of juniper trees. Sagebrush habitat can take decades to recover from wildfire, and in many areas, it will not be able to recover without significant habitat restoration efforts. Invasive annual grasses often flourish following wildfire, which further reduces the habitat quality of these burned areas.

# NOSLER<sup>®</sup>

## 2021 PHOTO CONTEST

### FINALIST PRIZES

Prizes will be awarded in general and youth categories.

**1ST PRIZE:** Nosler M48 Heritage Rifle

**2ND PRIZE:** Case (10 boxes) of Nosler Trophy Grade Ammo

**3RD PRIZE:** Leupold Scope

**4TH PRIZE:** Danner Alesia Hunting Boots

**5TH PRIZE:** Benchmade Altitude Hunting Knife

Each finalist will receive an OHA-engraved Coast knife, and entrants whose photos are selected to appear in Oregon Hunter will receive a Nosler hat.

Two finalists in each category will be chosen and published in each issue of Oregon Hunter, beginning with the March-April issue and ending with the November-December issue. From the 10 finalists in each category, five finalist prize winners will be chosen. These will be announced in the January-February issue of Oregon Hunter. Photos received after the entry deadline will be judged for the next issue.

### ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

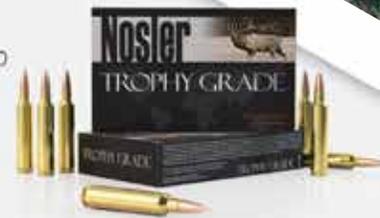
Go to **OHA's website at [www.oregonhunters.org](http://www.oregonhunters.org)** Click on **OHA CONTESTS**. Read the rules, and fill in the required fields. Click **CHOOSE FILE** and attach your photo. Click **SUBMIT**. That's it! You will be entered for a chance to win more great prizes courtesy of Nosler, proud sponsor and OHA supporter for more than a quarter century!

### PHOTO CATEGORIES

**GENERAL:** Any aspect of hunting, including but not limited to preparation, camping, hunting situations, game and packing.

**YOUTH:** Same as above, except photos must feature a person who was 18 or younger at the time the photo was taken.

Current year contest prizes will be delivered the following year.



# NOSLER® PHOTO CONTEST

## GENERAL CATEGORY FINALISTS



OHA member Justin Wise of Medford bags an OHA Coast knife and entry to the finals of the 2021 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of a Dall sheep he took on the eighth day of his hunt in Alaska.



Brad Mombert, OHA member in Bend, wins an OHA Coast Knife and a spot in the finals of the 2021 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of a bobcat treed last winter in the Upper Deschutes Unit.

HART MOUNTAIN SUNRISE/DUANE DUNGANNON

# NOSLER® PHOTO CONTEST

## YOUTH CATEGORY FINALISTS

OHA member Gaedon Broxson of Sunriver scores an OHA Coast Knife and a spot in the finals of the 2021 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of himself with his first buck, a blacktail taken last year with a .243.



Beaverton OHA member Ashley Rudishauser claims an OHA Coast Knife and a place in the finals of the 2021 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of Makena with a mallard taken last November at Sauvie Island.

# NOSLER® PHOTO CONTEST

## HONORABLE MENTION



Hillsboro OHA member Kyle King gains honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself with the bull he took on the last morning of his trip to the Desolation Unit.



OHA member Will Waddell of Springfield gets honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of Kori Groff with a turkey she tagged in the McKenzie Unit in April.



Dennis Hungerford, OHA member in Bend, receives honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of Mateo Hungerford with his first turkey, taken on youth turkey weekend.



OHA member Michelle Crafton of Spray garners honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of an eastern Oregon chukar in flight.



OHA member Jacob Scott gains honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself and grandfather Donald Jacobson enjoying the moment with a Melrose Unit turkey.



John Pomazi, OHA member in Sandy, earns honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself with an elk taken on a DIY horse pack hunt in Wyoming.



Sunriver OHA member Greg Broxson receives honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself packing out an Idaho muley taken last November with an MOA rifle in .28 Nosler.



OHA member Danny Miller of Eugene collects honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of Owen with his first turkey, which he bagged in April in the McKenzie Unit.

LAKE COUNTY/DUANE DUNGANNON

# Triggernometry for Squares

The last time I sighted in a hunting rifle, I noted that the trajectory table said if I'm an inch high at the 50 yards I was shooting, I'd be 3 inches high at 100. So then I began to wonder if I'm twice as high – 2 inches high at 50, would I be an inch higher at 100, or twice as high at 100?

My head began to hurt like it did in high school trigonometry.

"Think, dummy," I said to myself, echoing the indelible words of my trig teacher, Mr. Root.

I should have paid more attention in high school trig and college calculus, but my rock & roll records assured me I'd never need that stuff. I guess when Bruce Springsteen said he learned more from a three-minute record than he ever learned in school, that said more about the singer than it did about his school.

The chords "the Boss" knew weren't the ones that showed up in my math homework.

I think I could have appreciated trigonometry if the teacher had managed to make it apply to hunting and shooting, but apparently Mr. Root and I didn't share that interest as a common denominator.

If only trig had been short for trigger. A trigger is a curve I can appreciate.

When the teacher talked about finding the sine, I thought I finally understood something, but the usual way I find sign is to step in it.

In high school in the 80s, some of us on a slower learning curve didn't readily recognize that "what's your sign?" was no longer a savvy opening line when talking to coed classmates, or that in trig class, such a question could be misconstrued as an awkward attempt to cheat on a test.

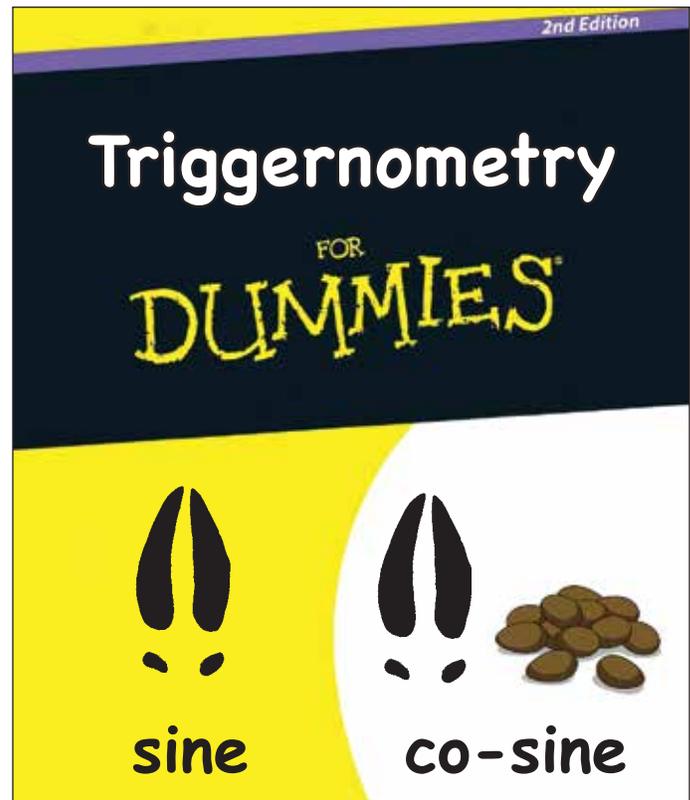
Trig and girls both presented steep learning curves for me, along with lots of problems for which I had no answers. There were just too many negative factors.

More recently I logged onto Ron Wold's Oregon Tags website, where I learned about point creep. Creep is a term I could relate to; those coed classmates often called me that. I never could find the mode or median, but I sure knew the mean when I heard it.

I gave the tags website the deer-in-the-headlights when it started talking about logarithms. It in turn gave me an acute headache. Those hyperbolas sounded like a lot of hyperbole.

I felt betrayed by the Boss. Maybe Springsteen didn't need trig because he hunted general seasons and didn't have to worry about drawing big game tags. Or maybe he just hunted ducks on The River.

I never understood logs very well back in high school math class, and I really didn't understand the anti-logs, which I thought



were the hairy, smelly people who were chaining themselves to old growth fir trees in the 80s. And I was pretty sure those anti-logs were what math students refer to as radicals. Those radicals probably would have considered guys like me to be squares.

I never understood tangents until I got married, and now I hear them every day. On those special occasions when the wicked mother-in-law descends on us, I am then subjected to cotangents, as well. The tangents by these eccentrics are constants, and they are never rational. And most of them are really random.

In one math class I was instructed to find the area. I was supplied with a compass, but I flunked that exercise because I couldn't figure out how you could find any area with a compass that didn't even show North. While that compass was worthless, there were also many references to multipliers, but I was never supplied one of those, which was a shame because that's something I could actually use in camp.

Now finding a range certainly held value, whether it was summer range, winter range or a shooting range. The latter range is a good place to study trajectory and coefficients. When ODFW estimates the deer on summer range, for example, they use prime numbers, but I think those numbers are not real numbers or rational numbers, and are much more likely to be imaginary numbers that just don't add up.

But my struggles in math are actually rooted much farther back, when I was in Mr. Wall's math class at Central Point Elementary. Mr. Wall took a dim view of counting on my fingers, but I would ask him now, if you're not supposed to count on your fingers, why do they call them digits? I'd guess the whole Base 10 thing is probably based on the caveman's 10-digit calculator.

In sum, I think that – all things being equal – when applying for tags, you should just apply where you actually want to hunt, and triggernometry shouldn't enter into the equation.

But maybe I'm just rationalizing.



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optics system



## SIERRA/KILO BDX SYSTEM

QUICKLY AND EASILY BOND BDX  
RANGEFINDERS AND SIGHTS USING  
QUICKBOND™ FEATURE

COMBO KITS PRE-BONDED FROM  
THE FACTORY

PRESET BALLISTIC GROUPS LOADED  
ON ALL SIERRA BDX RIFLESCOPE AND  
KILO BDX RANGEFINDERS

SMART BDC™ RETICLES TO CUSTOMIZE  
RIFLESCOPES OUT OF THE BOX

TO UNLOCK THE ADVANCED FEATURES  
OR CREATE A CUSTOM BALLISTIC  
PROFILE, JUST DOWNLOAD THE BDX  
SMARTPHONE APP



Ballistic Data Xchange

[sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com)



**SIGSAUER**  
NEVER SETTLE



**NOSLER®**

**ELK DROP  
BUCK DROP  
HOG DROP  
GOAT DROP**

**MIC  
DROP.**



**THE ALL NEW 27 NOSLER**

Get ready for Nosler® to drop some knowledge. Not only does the 27 Nosler hit harder than a 300 Win Mag, it shoots flatter than the 6.5 PRC, making it the perfect cartridge for just about everything.

**See the numbers behind 27 Nosler's knockdown performance at [27Nosler.com](http://27Nosler.com).**