# ORGON MayJune 2022 53.95

RESERVATIONS
FOR PRIVATE

WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT PREFERENCE POINTS

ZZ TOM: Long beards rock

SPRING

BEAR!

GREASE THE SKIDS FOR YOUR GOBBLER

FULL DRAW SCOUTING

BLACKPOWDER VARMINTS













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Spring bear,
varmints,
and creepy
preference
points





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Full freezer? Fry fajitas!

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Enter to win a prize from Tactacam

OHA funding supports muley habitat

Anti-poaching prosecutor hired

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Looking for Licenses and Love

**Cover:** Josephine County bear posing for trail cam (Dennis Kirkland/Hislmages.com)

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#### They don't make many like him

The Oregon Hunters Association lost a 30-year member when my Uncle Willy passed away in February at age 89, and sadly, they just don't make many hunters like him anymore.

Uncle Willy never hunted with scents, just good sense, which meant watching his dollars and cents. Raised as one of eight kids during the Great Depression, he didn't spend a lot of money on hunting, as hunting was supposed to reduce your bills, not add to them. That's why he never had anything mounted by a taxidermist but his four Oregon antelope – you were supposed to stuff yourself on the critters, not stuff the critters with money. But antelope were special, like Uncle Willy.

His gear didn't include a lot of glitz or gadgets. His rifle was a .270. I never knew the make or model, as that didn't seem to matter. Much of his gear was as sentimental as it was practical, including his dad's red felt hat and knife. I gave him an Alaskan blade trader that I never saw again. He didn't need that; he had his dad's knife.

I also gave him a Work Sharp knife and tool sharpener, but I doubt he ever used it, because he had a stone, perhaps given to him by someone he looked up to – maybe his dad, who served in the world war to end all wars, or one of his older brothers, who fought on opposite sides of the globe in the world war after the war to end all wars.

I never saw him miss a shot. He thought he did once – when a forked horn in the Trout Creek Mountains didn't come to rest until the third shot. But he'd hit it all three times. I told him it was just so small, each time he hit it, the buck flew another 20 yards. He said he lowered his rifle three times before shooting that fork, but he was there for meat, because you can't eat the horns anyway. He cussed himself for shooting that fork, because we had my four-point to take care of. (Notice how I slipped in the fact I had a four-point down.) But the real point was that it was my first deer, and Uncle Willy was the one who outfitted me on that trip to the Trout Creeks. Those deer came home in the back of his lavender-and-white '65 Ford, which matched his lavender-and-white dump trucks and lavender-and-white '57 Ford hard-top retractable. Like his rigs, he was one of a kind.

He was also my outfitter when I got my first antelope in the Trout Creeks, and my first elk in Starkey. He did the lion's share of the packing for all of those.

Uncle Willy was not into trendy nutrition. For him, it was candy bars, not protein bars. His breakfast bar was a maple bar. Oatmeal was something that held together the chocolate chips in cookies. His energy drink was RC cola. Water rusts your guts, he always said.

For such a generous guy, he never had much use for people asking for handouts. But he never let his memberships lapse in OHA, NRA or RMEF, because he knew his support was important in defending what was important to him. My sons and I received a lot of re-gifted RMEF items from Uncle Willy. After all, he didn't need those knives. He had his dad's knife.

No, I never saw Uncle Willy miss anything he shot at, but those who knew him will certainly miss him, as well as those cut from the same camo cloth.



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a) grouse

c) pigeon

b) duck

d) partridge

2. The sharptail is a:

a) grouse

c) pigeon

b) duck

d) partridge

3. The pintail is a:

a) grouse

c) pigeon

b) duck

d) partridge

4. The whitetail is:

a) an ungulate

c) both a and b

b) a ruminant

d) neither a nor b

5. Blacktails are hunted in which unit?

a) Pine Creek

c) Catherine Creek

b) Evans Creek d) none of the above

6. Chukars are found along which river?

a) John Day

c) Snake

b) Owyhee

d) all of the above

7. Roosevelt elk live in what wilderness?

a) Badger Creek c) Bridge Creek

b) Boulder Creek d) Mill Creek

8. Bighorns dwell in what canyon?

a) Hells Canyon c) Klamath River

b) Owyhee

d) all of the above

9. Chukars are native to which country?

a) Hungary

c) India

b) Canada

d) Mexico

10. This issue's quiz photo was taken in what county?

a) Klamath

c) Grant

b) Lake

d) Crook

TRUE OR FALSE?

11. Antelope have dewclaws.

12. Antelope have gall bladders.

7-b; 8-d; 9-c; 10-b; 11-F; 12-T. ANSWERS: 1-c; 2-a; 3-b; 4-c; 5-b; 6-d;



#### WHERE IN OREGON WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

Identify this lake in the heart of Oregon's outback (that's a clue, but we're also trying to trick you), 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, where a larger version of the photo appears. One entry per OHA member.

Entry deadline: May 20, 2022.





#### LAST ISSUE'S WINNER:

Steve Vangrunsven, Forest Grove Steve's name was drawn from among

the OHA members who correctly identified Big Indian Gorge on Steens.

## OUTDOOR

APRIL 30 Klamath Chapter banquet 541-882-9593

MAY 7

OHA Tioga Youth Day, 541-267-2577

MAY 14

**OHA State Convention,** Seven Feathers Casino, Canyonville, 541-772-7313 www.oregonhunters.org featuring A&H Statewide Deer/Elk tag

auction & A&H hunt drawings; Columbia County Chapter Banquet, 949-533-7271;

Hart Mountain project, 541-884-5773

MAY 15

Application deadline for controlled hunts

MAY 21

OHA Tualatin Valley Barney Res. Project, 503-290-6143

May 31

Turkey, spring bear seasons close

JUNE 4

OHA Klamath Chapter forest cleanup, 541-884-5773;

> OHA youth & family events: Bend 541-480-7323 Josephine County 541-218-2836 Tualatin Valley 503-502-0611

> > JUNE 5

OHA youth & family event: Tualatin Valley 503-502-0611

**JUNE 10-12** 

White River project, 503-706-7481

JUNE 17-19

All Hands All Brands for Public Lands weekend project, Ochocos, 541-647-0424; OHA Pioneer Chapter weekend guzzler campout, 503-710-1233

JUNE 20

Controlled hunt results available

JUNE 23-26

OHA Josephine County Chapter family weekend campout, 541-761-3200

JUNE 25

OHA youth & family event: Lake County, 541-417-2983





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# OREGON AFIELD

# Get a bearing on spring bears on the move

s Oregon's spring bear season progresses, the chance of tagging a mature boar keeps getting better. In fact, my favorite time to target big black bears in Oregon is the last week of the season — it'd be June if the season went that long.

June marks the peak of the black bear rut, and boars start getting fired up in late May. This is when boars cover a lot of ground in search of sows in heat. And we're not talking just easy-to-travel logging roads, but straight up and down the steepest mountains in the state.

A radio-collaring project by ODFW in the early 2000s showed boars traveling upwards of 25 miles a day in search of sows during the rut, amid the most rugged land in the Cascades.

The more spring progresses, the more plants become part of a bear's diet. From bulbs to fern fronds, balsam root to grass,



This coastal black bear couldn't resist the sounds of a predator call. A bear's healthy appetite and the rut are two focal points Oregon hunters want to take advantage of as the spring bear season progresses into May.

even insects to ground squirrels, late spring marks a time of plenty for bears. This is also when elk are dropping calves, and in many areas of the state bears are ravenous predators of newborn elk. Nearly 20 years ago a biologist told me bears kill more calf elk than cougars do in some units of northeast Oregon. And there are a lot more bears now. Many veteran bear hunters on the coast monitor Roosevelt elk birthing to tag their bear.

Glassing for bears on the move and feeding is very effective toward the season's end. Covering ground with binoculars and a spotting scope is far more

## Zumwalt elk hunt winner drawn



Tony Rose of Klamath Falls is the winner of OHA's TNC Zumwalt Prairie Preserve guided elk hunt raffle drawn on March 17 at the OHA Office. Raffle proceeds support OHA's mission of Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage. OHA congratulates the winner and thanks all who purchased tickets.

efficient than traveling on foot.

Using predator calls is also effective late in the season. A mix of varmint sounds, bird distress, deer and calf elk anxiety sounds, even bear cub distress noises, can bring in curious boars. It's best to first see a bear prior to commencing calling, so you can observe how it responds. If there's fresh scat and tracks in thick cover, set up and call for at least an hour.

Persistence and patience are key in late season bear hunting, with morning and evening hours being best. And who doesn't like being in Oregon's outdoors this time of year?—*Scott Haugen* 

# You don't need private land access to set your sights on Oregon's rock chucks

The author used a .257 Roberts for this rock chuck hunt in Oregon's canyon country.

#### These aren't your daddy's rock chucks

ay up in the Three Sisters Wilderness. Out in the breaks of the White River. West and east of Lakeview. An outpost of *marmotas flaventris* might be found in any rock slide east of the crest of the Cascades. But they aren't as numerous as they used to be.

There was a time when any farmer would let a rifle-toter ramble around to hunt rockchucks in their fields. The critters are still there, but the houses packed around the fields just make it harder to find safe shooting. What's a modern day hunter with a chuck rifle to do?

It's time to think differently. Don't do what your daddy did. Hunt rockchucks on the ground you own in common with every other American.

Buy, beg or borrow your daddy's Oregon Road & Recreation Atlas and look for the color-coded sections of BLM

land. Steeper is better. River canyons. Dry canyons. The slopes above long reservoirs. Where rocks slide, where avalanches scour. Shale slides and rim rock. If it is public land adjacent to fields of alfalfa, so much the better. You don't need permission. All you need is a hunting license, a pocketful of ammo and access to your public land.

Before spending \$4 a gallon for gas, do a fly-by with Google Earth to visualize where to park and where to hike.

Hunt chucks solo or take a friend. You're looking for your own private secret spot. You want a good bolt rifle like a .204 Ruger, a .22 Nosler or a .223, a binocular, maybe a spotting scope and no more than 20 rounds each.

Leave some for seed. A good hand with a rifle can wipe out a whole colony of rockchucks in a weekend. Dude. Don't do that.—*GARY LEWIS* 

## Preference points remain creepy 🛷

ailure to draw tags with seemingly 100-percent odds is frustrating. It's crushing when you've waited 15-plus years. That's "point creep." We've all heard the term. Does it end?

I asked Ron Wold of oregontags.com. He's an Oregon hunter and mathematician who took interest years ago, not from frustration, but mainly because he's "a math guy." He decided to improve predictability himself. He "tuned the algorithm" a few times but hasn't for six years. He's now the authority, helping us, industry folks across the country, and ODFW each year.

To him, point-creep is simple. This stuff is trivial compared to his job. He had to explain it to me twice. A third time wouldn't have hurt. Basically, tag numbers go down, applications go up, so "the price goes up." The kicker is gravitation toward certain hunts. People enter a hunt pool who weren't there previously. This changes the "prediction analysis."

Max-point applicants gravitate from one hunt to another. Some reasons are obvious: success rates or outstanding field reports. Modified hunt dates or habitat changes, like recent burns, also affect popularity. The point-saver option compounds the problem; applicants sit poolside certain years, then jump in the next.

Some hunts have so few tags, it takes years for the pool to "drain-out." So, if a hunt takes 14 points and you have 12, you're not going draw in two years, as many assume. That's certainly the case for pronghorn tags; after years of stability, it's now taking about one more point every couple of years. Two steps forward, one step back.

He mentioned the infamous "Big Three" elk tags (Mt. Emily, Walla Walla, Wenaha). Mt. Emily was creeping 2 points per year, but has stabilized since.

"When is it going to end? I don't know," he said. "I'm gonna say 26 (points)."

There's a positive side. "Some actually decrease. We never talk about it."

You can tell this guy is a hunter. He's just good at math. As for similarities, "thoroughness of preparation!" he said.

—JASON HALEY

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#### Wildlife crossing funds make it safely through '22 legislative session

By Amy Patrick & Al Elkins, OHA Lobbyists Amy@oregonhunters.org

The short 2022 Oregon Legislative Session closed with several good bills receiving funding, while others didn't make it to the finish line. Here's a brief recap of the bills OHA engaged:

- HB 4130 requested \$5 million to fund wildlife crossings projects. The bill itself did not make it through the entire committee process, but the appropriated funding, at an increased amount of \$7 million, was included in the end of session bill.
- SB 1546 established the Elliott State Research Forest and passed with amendments. While the Elliott has been a contentious issue for years, OHA continues to advocate for access, a recreational focus, and a managed forest to benefit local economies and provide wildlife habitat.
- HB 4080 was a continuation of predator control districts in Oregon. It was supported by OHA and other natural resource groups, but it died in committee.
- HB 4127 would have provided additional funding to the state wolf depredation and mitigation fund. OHA offered testimony in support of both the bill and wolf management in Oregon, but it also died in committee.

#### Elkins hands over reins as OHA lobbyist

After a quarter century of service defending OHA's mission of Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage, OHA lobbyist Al Elkins is passing the torch.

OHA hired Elkins to be our lobbyist in 1997, and after his first legislative session, he immediately found himself in the mid-

dle of an anti-trapping ballot initiative in Oregon, which he and our allies helped defeat.

Elkins helped OHA forge an unprecedented report with legislators, agency leaders and commissioners. OHA found itself at many tables where we had never been invited before, and top ODFW and OSP officials became regulars at OHA State Board meetings, helping to openly exchange information and Al Elkins is passing the torch concerns.

In every legislative session, Elkins has led efforts to pass key bills for OHA that serve our mission, while fighting off endless anti-hunting and gun control bills. While we did not always get everything we wanted – no one ever does in the Legislature – very few bills OHA actively opposed ever became laws.

Finding relief from cougars in the Oregon Legislature has been a 25-year journey through the desert for Elkins. who was hired in the wake of OHA's valiant-but-failed effort to repeal Measure 18 with Measure 34 in 1996. But Elkins spearheaded the bill to allow ODFW to use citizen houndsmen as agents to control cougars, and then led the effort to renew the bill when it sunset. Administrative

cougar removal and expanded cougar hunting - longer seasons on public land and additional tags – were important achievements that have helped maintain a high level of cougar harvest.

Another stellar accomplishment was getting former OHA State Board Chair Bob Webber appointed to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission.

While Elkins will remain available on an advisory basis, OHA's legislative affairs

are left in the capable hands of OHA Policy Director Amy Patrick, who chairs important sportsmen's alliances and participates in many others.

"Al has positioned us well to fight threats from anti-hunting and anti-gun groups," Patrick said. "He has built the foundation for our future success working for Oregon's wildlife and sportsmen."



as OHA lobbyist.

#### IP13 reloads for 2024 ballot push

Proponents of IP13, which would criminalize hunting, fishing, trapping and many forms of agriculture in Oregon, are now focusing on the 2024 ballot. They have refiled with the Secretary of State for the 2024 cycle as IP3, and now begin the process of placing their extreme initiative on the ballot all over again.

First, they will need to collect the initial 1,000 signatures needed to qualify for a draft ballot title/summary. At that time there will be a comment period, which OHA engaged in with IP13 to get the language strengthened and more accurate. After that process and a potential appeal process, they will be approved to collect the 112,020 signatures needed to place it on the 2024 ballot.

The new language for IP3 is, interestingly enough, even more far reaching than IP13. IP3 keeps everything from IP13 and also adds changes in additional sections within the animal abuse statutes.

—Amy Patrick



Sign of the times in Oregon?



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## Roundballin' for Rodents

Ankle deep in alfalfa or chest deep in the sagebrush, hunting varmints is the best way to tune up with a muzzleloader

e know how you are. You put your message in a modem and threw it in the cyber sea. You bet your preference points on a blackpowder elk or deer hunt and now you're waiting until June for the payoff – for that bottle from ODFW to wash back up on the virtual sand.

You call yourself a muzzleloader – a blackpowder hunter, but really, how many times do you fire that front-stuffer each year?

In these times of hard-to-get ammo, I guess what I'm asking is do you have the roundballs to be a real muzzleloader hunter? Do you have the powder? Then go roundballin' for rabbits. Or sage rats. Or gray diggers.

How many times do you fire that front-stuffer each year?

You don't need to shoot up those expensive conicals. The mountain men and the pioneers – they did the same thing when ammo and components were hard to come by – they dialed back their powder charges and lightened the loads for meat for the pot.

You can even make your own speed loader. Picture this: a loading block shaped like a miniature bread board. Drill it with six or eight holes to hold your patched roundballs. Drill another hole at the tang to tie a leather cord to hang around your neck or off a powderhorn or possibles bag.



The gun is a .54-caliber Lyman Trade Rifle, which when loaded with a round ball and 75 grains of FFFg, is good fun with a beagle to push out the jackrabbits.

Now you have a speed loader.

I hear people complaining that ammunition is expensive these days, but I just checked; a box of 100 .490-inch lead balls costs \$14.49. Now all you need is powder and caps or a flint. For a .50-caliber gun, set the powder measure at 50 grains. That might be all you need for a good rabbit load. Want to punch sage rats at longer distances? Dial the load up to 60 or 70 grains.

What you want for your critter gitter is varmints to shoot at. You want to use that speed loader.

#### **SAGE RATS**

Anytime you find yourself ankle deep in alfalfa on the outskirts of Ontario, Bly, Burns, La Grande or Mitchell, you could be in a major vermin metropolis. Fields are planted to alfalfa or orchard grass. Sage rats tunnel and terrace. They excavate and edifice. They mound and heap. Anytime between March and mid-June, sage rats can be found above ground and on the prod.

#### **GRAY DIGGERS**

For the blackpowder hunter, the gray digger ground squirrel can provide great sport from early spring till October.

Gray diggers can be found up and down the west side of Oregon, from the slopes of the Cascades into the Coast Range and out in the woods in the White River drainage.

Because of the varmint's enthusiasm for excavation, landowners are often pleased to let a hunter amble their acreage with long gun in hand. From the right stand, a hunter with a single-shot frontstuffer can put a dent in a population of burrowing long-tailed pests.

#### **JACKS AND COTTONTAILS**

The huge rabbit drives of the old days are probably a thing of the past, but certain locales are apt to see booms of rabbits from time to time. East and west of Steens. Out in the Malheur country. South of Wagontire Mountain. Scan a map for springs, waterholes and seeps.

The best times to locate rabbits are in early mornings, at dusk and after dark. Locate a spot? Come back at daybreak and walk with another hunter, or better yet, with a beagle or two to push the bunnies out. Surely you know someone with an unemployed tri-color scent hound. They don't even need to know much about hunting, they got this. Take it from a former beagle man. That dog wants to hunt.

With or without a hound, the best way to hunt rabbits is to walk and stop. A blacktailed jackrabbit will lay low until it gets nervous. It thinks you see it when you stop. Watch the back door and the sides. As soon as it can, it will try to get behind you. Now you're roundballin'.

Trust me, you're going to need that speed loader.

For a signed copy of Gary's latest book Bob Nosler Born Ballistic send \$29.95 to Gary Lewis Outdoors, P.O. Box 1364, Bend, OR 97709. Contact Gary at www. garylewisoutdoors.com





# Full Draw: How controlled hunts change the game of for scouting

ay 15 marks the controlled hunt application deadline for Oregon hunters, a date that has grown in importance for Oregon bowhunters, who now must apply for controlled tags to hunt deer or elk in eastern Oregon.

The draw results are posted June 20. Then it's game on.

If you draw a controlled archery tag in the places you're used to hunting, you're

If you don't draw a tag for your traditional area in the new controlled hunt draw, you'll have some legwork to do. good to go. If you draw in another area, you'll have some legwork to do. If you don't draw any tags for eastern Oregon, your next option might be a leftover tag or a westside overthe-counter tag.

According to ODFW, after all the publicity about eastern

Oregon deer archery going controlled last year, there were a lot of bowhunters caught by surprise trying to buy an overthe-counter tag in August, which didn't exist. All that was available was a western Oregon archery deer tag.

If you fail to draw a controlled tag, the June 20 notification leaves plenty of time for scouting. The benefit bowhunters have with mid-summer scouting is that they're the first ones in the woods come deer and elk season.

Whether you'll be hunting a new area east or west of the Cascades, start by monitoring wildfires. With the recent warming trends and devastating forest



Not sure where you'll hunt deer or elk this fall? Following the June 20 draw results, get out and scout.

fires sweeping the state, know where fires were, watch closely for any that may pop up between now and hunting season, and research when the last burns were in your new hunting area.

Due to the lack of public land logging throughout the state, burns that are only a year old can produce good deer and elk habitat. If there's any moisture, grass and vegetation can quickly grow in burns, attracting ungulates and bears. Deer commonly roll in ash to delouse themselves, so scout the edges of burns.

Calling regional ODFW offices will help in learning about big game trends in your new hunting area. Don't wait to make this call. Deer and elk antlers are rapidly growing all summer long, and the fact that bucks and bulls are largely in open areas early and late in the day means now is the time to locate them.

Get out and physically scout as much as possible. A new hunting area means summer plans might have to change as travel and scouting time are demanding. But think of these as an investment in your hunting future; you might just find a place you like better than where you've been hunting.

Scout areas where water, shade and feed are found. Cover as much ground as possible with binoculars and a spotting scope and be stealthy. Mark on maps where you find bucks and bulls. By the time opening day comes around, the last thing you want to be doing is looking for a place to hunt.

Trail cameras are a great scouting tool and are your eyes in the woods when you're not there. I run many cameras year-round. My favorite trail cameras are Stealth Cam's DS4K, as they're tough and

great quality. I always set them on video mode. A 10-second video reveals more about animals than a fleeting glimpse of a still shot. With video, you can hear what animals are doing and see how they're moving and acting.

Of the countless blacktails and Roosevelt elk I've caught on trail cameras over the years, I've only killed one of the bucks and zero bulls that were caught on film, but I keep using trail cams, because they reveal so much about animals and their relationship to the habitat I hunt. Plus, I'm not going to waste time hunting an area where game is scarce, meaning trail cameras provide a good starting point where you can go with confidence.

If you're used to hunting eastern Oregon and find yourself in the Coast Range or west side of the Cascades, research food sources relied on by big game.

If you're also hunting black bears on the coast, get after them on opening day. Yes, it's hot on Aug. 1, but blackcaps are ripening, and bears can be found. I once saw nine bears opening day on public land in the Coast Range. By mid-August, blackberries begin to ripen, and bears don't wait for them to turn sweet before gorging themselves. Deer and elk love the new growth of these berry bushes, too.

Yes, times are changing, but sometimes change is good. Make the most of it and enjoy what Oregon has to offer those who are willing to work and explore.



Signed copies of Scott Haugen's bestselling book, Trophy Blacktails: The Science of the Hunt can be ordered at www. scotthaugen.com or send \$20 to Haugen Enterprises, P.O. Box 275, Walterville, OR 97489.



The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's
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The 2022 raffle will be held at the Annual Oregon Hunters Association Convention on May 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Seven Feathers Casino in Canyonville, Oregon.



FOR MORE INFO: Scan the QR code or go to https://tinyurl.com/4wevpusk

The event will also be livestreamed starting at 6:30 p.m. on May 14. Go to www.youtube.com/user/IEODFW to attend the event.





## 

It's the water. And a lot more. Northwest spring bear hunters know the best action is on tap in the land of sky blue waters.

#### By Max Zeller

ater is one of three basic. but essential, requirements needed for wildlife survival, along with food and shelter, but when it comes to bear hunting in the spring, water takes on a whole new dimension. Bears coming out of their dens from a winter of slumber and basically no sustenance need water along with vegetative matter (usually grass) to conquer sleep-induced constipation and kick-start their digestive and nutrition-intake process. Water also plays a significant role in a bear's diet beyond hydration and it has to do with a bear's unique digestive physiology.

Many who stumble upon bear scat can attest to their digestive inefficiencies; their poop looks almost the same coming out as the food did going in. Bruins are in constant need of water to help their digestion progress more efficiently.

These little tidbits of information can help the spring bear hunter become more successful, especially during those drier spring seasons in more arid bear country east of the Cascades. I found this to be true last year with little snow in the lower to mid elevations of the Cascades eastern slopes, along with early green-up and warmer-than-normal temps in April leading to even drier conditions throughout May. Hunting close to riparian zones was the ticket to success.

Late April scouting along the eastern slopes of the Cascades revealed what I already surmised – early spring green-up and warm conditions. I knew I had to get bear camp set up earlier than normal.

What I didn't anticipate were the Covid crowds camping and crawling all over the bear woods in areas I had never seen folks before. Every week new campers moved in and off-road vehicles tore up every trail that led into prime bear habitats, even trails marked prohibiting vehicle traffic. Where I used to find quiet solitude and plenty of bear sign, I now found none. All my bear hotspots within a 5-mile radius were compromised. I had no choice but to dig deeper into the backcountry where no human footprints were to be found.

Thank goodness for my mountain bike. As May progressed and the dry conditions intensified, I scouted new country even farther behind locked gates and hugged the creek bottoms where water was flowing, the grass was still lush, and the creek-side brush was bursting with new growth. It was in one of these riparian corridors that I observed my first tracks and fresh scat piles of a decent-sized bear.

I still-hunted this bear for several days and finally got a glimpse of the large blackphased bear basically living in the thickest part of the brush-choked creek bottom. There were a few close calls as we played cat-and-mouse (I was the cat — I think), but he finally gave me the slip. I decided to let the area rest before I returned to hunt this bear another day. I had other small tributaries to explore.

Early the next morning I biked over three miles to a creek crossing where I stashed my ride and still-hunted two miles upstream. The scene played out the same as the creek bottom where the large blackie was spotted – good water, green grass,







The author took this cinnamon bear last spring along a backcountry stream with abundant bear sign.

fresh nutrient-rich buds and no humans. The added bonus, about a mile in, was a series of freshly girdled young pines made by a bear seeking the sweetness of the cambium layers. I continued on.

At the two-mile mark, my trail ended at a small grassy meadow along the water's edge, where numerous bear tracks and scat piles littered the field. I decided to wait here until dusk and then still-hunt my way out, keeping the peeled trees in the back of my mind. I sat for nine hours in one spot, nestled up against the base of a big Ponderosa.

The only action in all that time was a lone cow elk that came to the water's edge

to drink her fill, only 10 feet in front of me.

The sun was setting, and it was time to hunt my way back downstream. Slowly moving along the water's edge, I crept past several elk until I was close to the location of the peeled pines. Brush moved 30 yards in front of me. Then a patch of brown fur. My first thought was another elk. Then the head appeared followed by a shoulder. Hey, a nice cinnamon bear with brown leggings. The bear suddenly disappeared into a depression. I went down on one knee and the .45-70 went up on to my shooting sticks. The lone 220-pound boar climbed out of the ditch past a patch of willows that he was feeding on, giving me a clear broadside shot.

I took it, and the bear rolled back down into the depression, but this time he didn't climb back out. Sometimes it happens that fast. I had him skinned and quartered by 10:30 p.m. A little too tired to make two packing trips that night, two quarters in game bags all wrapped in a tarp were hung high in a tree for a morning pack-out. With owls hooting and coyotes howling, packing out that first heavy load by the light of the moon and a headlamp, miles into the backcountry, was exhilarating. I was back at camp just after midnight.

Before morning's first light, I was



back at the kill site to recover the rest of my bear and my remaining gear, and to clean up the immediate area of any human sign. I used that time to ponder the lessons I learned on this hunt, and continually learn on each and every hunt, successful or not.

On some hunts, everything works in your favor and it seems like you can do no wrong. But on most other outings, you have to dig deep and put the pieces of a puzzle together. On this three-week hunt, the answer was water and seclusion. Not all waterways are created equal, but the ones that show promising sign are not only important to a bear's nutritional well-being, especially during drought conditions, but are also major travel corridors.

As warmer-than-normal spring temperatures and the bear breeding season ramps up during May's progression, a bruin's thick spring hide, fat accumulation and randy disposition will lead it to the cooling effects of water more frequently.

So, for the still or stand hunter who prefers up close and personal encounters in bear country, slowly make your way along these narrow riparian zones that are off the beaten path. The greater the effort, the greater the reward.





# GOBBLERS at

Grease the Skids to Loosen up a Late Tom

s April showers turn to May flowers in Oregon, the spring turkey season has been ongoing for a couple of weeks and things have slowly changed with the movements and breeding cycles of hens. Frequent gobbles have all but disappeared, and the woods now seem quieter as those once-noisy jelly heads have toned it down a bit.

What's up: By now most hens are on a nest or already raising poults. The turkey rut has drastically slowed with only a few receptive hens being bred or beginning to nest. Gobblers are lonely and patrolling the woods for one last spring romance. Often you will find two or three gobblers traveling together snapping heads of budding western mannagrass or chasing freshly hatched insects. There is plenty of food to go around, and I have also found birds during warmer days hanging underneath shade trees and dusting themselves during the mid-afternoon heat.

Enticing a bird to gobble is more difficult. It's a lot like getting a rusty bolt loose. You're going to need some WD-40 and patience. Most of the gobbling will occur first thing in the morning and prior to birds coming back to roost in the late afternoons. Many birds that I have taken have been spotted from a distance and called to a specific setup. Mind you, most of them will likely come in silently.

I like decoys this time of year, and with some of the newer products, hunters have a wide range of options to choose from. Jake decoys near a lone hen will often pull that old tom just in range for a shot. Of course, there are birds that have been bombarded with decoys throughout the season and will not respond well to any decoy presentation. Curiosity and the drive to breed is what will likely put that May bird in your cooler. Then again, hunting without decoys can be very effective as well.

**Waiting Game:** It's going to take a lot of patience and waiting for that WD-40 to work. Especially with older birds later in



# the FINAL BUN



#### By Troy Rodakowski

the season. I like to find a good place where turkeys travel, and sit there for several hours at a time. Every 45 minutes or so I'll throw out a light yelp or purr and listen and watch carefully for any sound or movement.

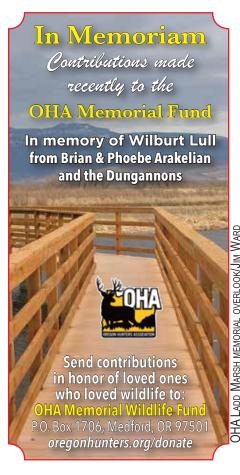
Choose an area that you have scouted or have frequently seen turkeys visit. Patterning these birds is essential to increase your chances. Dusting and strutting areas are good places to start. Finding travel routes from a roost area to a strut zone is a great advantage. However, some birds will find different routes from day to day when moving to and from their strutting and dusting zones.

Patience & Persistence: During the late season, birds will change their habits due to the pressures from hunters and available food sources. I had a fellow turkey hunter once tell me a story about a bird that would fly to his strut area every day from his roost site. Upon arrival, the tom would use a different entry point every single time. Needless to say, that bird survived the spring season without any problems. Yes, turkeys learn quickly and are very wary.

Waiting only 30-45 minutes at a setup is not enough. I have lost track how many times I have been ready to call it quits when that bird finally shows. Learning from experience, I know that I have prematurely left areas and ruined opportunities to bag a few birds. I can't emphasize patience enough.

Remembering that WD-40 and what these birds have been through for a month prior will keep you in the right mindset. Once eager to find love, many of these old gobbler birds have become reclusive loners during their continued searches.

The tall grassy meadows and pastures easily hide turkeys. This is why a hunter should always have a good pair of binos to carefully scan these places, especially the edges. Try to avoid cutting across openings when moving through them to your setup. I have taken more gobblers in the afternoons in May than any other time during the season.



Where in Oregon: The top five units on the west side in Oregon have been the Melrose, Rogue, Willamette, Evans Creek and the Applegate. One unit to keep an eye on for this year will be the Siuslaw

near Lorane, especially in the southeast portions near Drain and Creswell. The McKenzie, Alsea, Chetco and Keno units have seen increasing numbers of birds on private lands near the foothills.

Eastside locations near La Grande, Imbler, Elgin, Union, Cove, Wallowa, Sumpter and Flora all hold decent flocks of

birds. Catherine Creek, Sumpter, Walla Walla, Pine Creek, and Minam units all saw decent harvests during the past few seasons. Units that showed some significant increases during the past few years were the Sled Springs, Chesnimnus, Keating and Starkey.

Seal the Deal with Changeups: Be prepared to spend a lot of time and endure some disappointments along the way. Most seasoned hunters will tell you that late season success is the sweetest. Turkeys

are very wary, and the older birds that have weathered several seasons are among the toughest to hunt. Even younger birds have a few tricks under their wings to avoid hunters this late in the game.

Try things you haven't, Give the birds such as new decoy setups, less calling and the use of optics to space and play spot birds at greater distances. hard to get. One season I got an old tom to If a bird hangs gobble back at me about 4:30. He gobbled only once, but I up, back off like knew where his roost tree was you're leaving so I set up a few hundred yards from it on a heavily traveled the area. trail. Two hours later his bob-

> bing red head appeared, curious as to where that hen he heard had disappeared. I made sure he disappeared into my freezer.

> Using different calls can be a game changer. If you have been blowing the same old diaphragm all season, switch to a box, friction or wing bone call. Birds can tell the difference, and if you sound different in comparison to what they have been hearing, you might just pull that wise bird your way. Give the birds some space and play hard to get. If a bird hangs up, back

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Author Troy Rodakowski teamed up with his father to take this late-season tom in western Oregon. Sometimes late in the season, you have to try some fresh tactics to draw in a wary gobbler.

off like you are leaving the area. Move about 50 yards at a time and call lightly, then wait. Their curiosity sometimes is the key to notching your tag.

Also, be prepared to cover lots of ground. Nesting hens usually stay within a radius of one mile, spending the day feeding, laying and setting on eggs. Gobblers, on the other hand, will cover ground, often wandering up to two miles from their roosting site looking for receptive hens. Hearing a gobble over a ridge doesn't mean you will find that bird in the original location that he sounded off from. One year I contacted a bird and ended up shooting him three miles from where I had first heard him.

May will soon fade like a wildflower in bloom, so now is your chance to make the most of the late season. Don't forget that WD-40.





### RESERVATIONS

#### NOT JUST FOR DINNER ANYMORE

#### **ODFW Hunting Reservation Program Gets Hunters on Prime Private Land**

#### By GLENN ZINKUS

common plight of many hunters anywhere is where to hunt in prime habitat. It seems like the birds are on the other side of the ridge, the side that's a family farm, a privately owned forest, or in some cases, state land held for educational purposes.

ODFW's Hunt by Reservation (HBR) Program connects hunters with private landowners. Hunters can make online hunting reservations and receive a permit and a map for their selection of dates that landowners make available for hunters. Hunters get quality hunting opportunities on private land. Landowners get to easily coordinate hunt logistics, and manage healthy wildlife populations in their area.

This program began when ODFW's upland bird coordinator, Mikal Cline, asked some of the ODFW team to review the draft Ten Year Turkey Management Plan. Brandon Dychess, who was hired to be ODFW's HBR coordinator, was part of that team. Dychess was relatively new to ODFW at that time but dove headfirst into the plan. He suggested that ODFW look more toward Willamette Valley opportunities.

"We could start to point people toward the Willamette Valley and its units," he said. "The data showed a huge increase in not only turkey harvest, but turkey hunter participation."

It's only natural that hunters have opportunities near home in a region where turkey numbers exploded over the years. Any central and southern Willamette Valley resident of wooded neighborhoods knows that a flock of turkeys inevitably is around the corner.

To construct this program from the



Bunker Hill was a newly added property to the Hunt By Reservation program in 2021 with upland bird hunting opportunities.

ground up, Dychess went afield to locate and recruit property owners. He targeted efforts to those landowners who had turkey damage issues and would welcome hunters. Dychess matched these properties up with trusted hunters who previously contacted ODFW looking for properties like these. The program proved popular from the start with both hunters and landowners.

However, to expand this program, ODFW needed to eliminate bottlenecks. First is bandwidth and the time it takes one person to manually match properties and hunters; it is not sustainable for the program coordinator to spend full-time in the field seeking willing landowners with good hunting opportunities, as well as identifying and vetting hunters. Second, ODFW recognized the need to open this up to all hunters. Dychess and other ODFW

team members envisioned a reservation system, not unlike Airbnb, where hunters in this case can view available hunting opportunities and properties and make a hunt day reservation. This system, unlike other large reserve style hunts, needed considerable flexibility to allow landowners to opt in and out of the program based upon their own needs.

#### **Hunt By Reservation Hunt Popularity**

Since this program began in 2020, it's proven popular, competitive even, with hunters electronically positioned to reserve properties when the reservation system opens at its set time. This was typically a week in advance for the spring turkey season. And it is the spring turkey opportunities on properties in central Willamette Valley that are especially popular. Turkey hunting in Oregon, and everywhere, is a far

more popular sport in the spring than in the fall. The situation is different for the fall turkey hunt and mirrors hunter participation in the fall turkey hunts. Turkey hunter participation in the fall hunt is 8 percent of what it is in the spring. Yes, all the properties and available dates do book up during the fall season, but the website traffic is smaller, and hunters don't necessarily need the fast reflexes and computer savvy that they do in the spring.

ODFW is working on solutions to the heavy website traffic experienced in the spring and will load test the website to see how many people can go on at once. In the Spring of 2021, reservations switched to being released on a weekly basis, opening a week in advance of each hunt week.

#### **Diverse Hunting Opportunities**

Last year this program continued with the popular western Oregon spring turkey season on parcels spread through the Willamette Valley, a region with high turkey populations and almost all private land. During the 2021 fall hunting season, the reservation system expanded to include both some eastside upland bird opportunities for chukar, pheasant, quail, and Hungarian partridge, and a western Oregon big game hunt.

Future focus for Willamette Valley HBR properties include more large land parcels, the 200- to 2,000-acre pieces that provide a completely different hunt experience from a 5-acre family farm. The bigger parcels are more durable and likely to stay in the program for successive years because game will return to the property as part of its range, time and time again. A good example of this is the Oregon State University-owned Soap Creek Ranch and Berry Creek Ranch.

If there are, for example, 15 to 20 turkeys on a small family farm that are hunted over a few weekends, these turkeys are likely to move on as their numbers decrease from hunter harvest and to move to an area where they are less likely to be pressured.

"These programs aren't going to impact turkey populations in an area like Corvallis, for example, but the hazing aspects are important and help to mitigate damage on small farms," Dychess explained.

This year there is a big game opportunity within the HBR program for antlerless elk – elk hunting at Oregon State Univer-



Zach Herbel dialed it in just right on OSU's Soap Creek Ranch.

sity's Soap Creek Ranch and Berry Creek Ranch properties. Hunters must draw the tag ahead of the hunt, and it's a hard tag to draw.

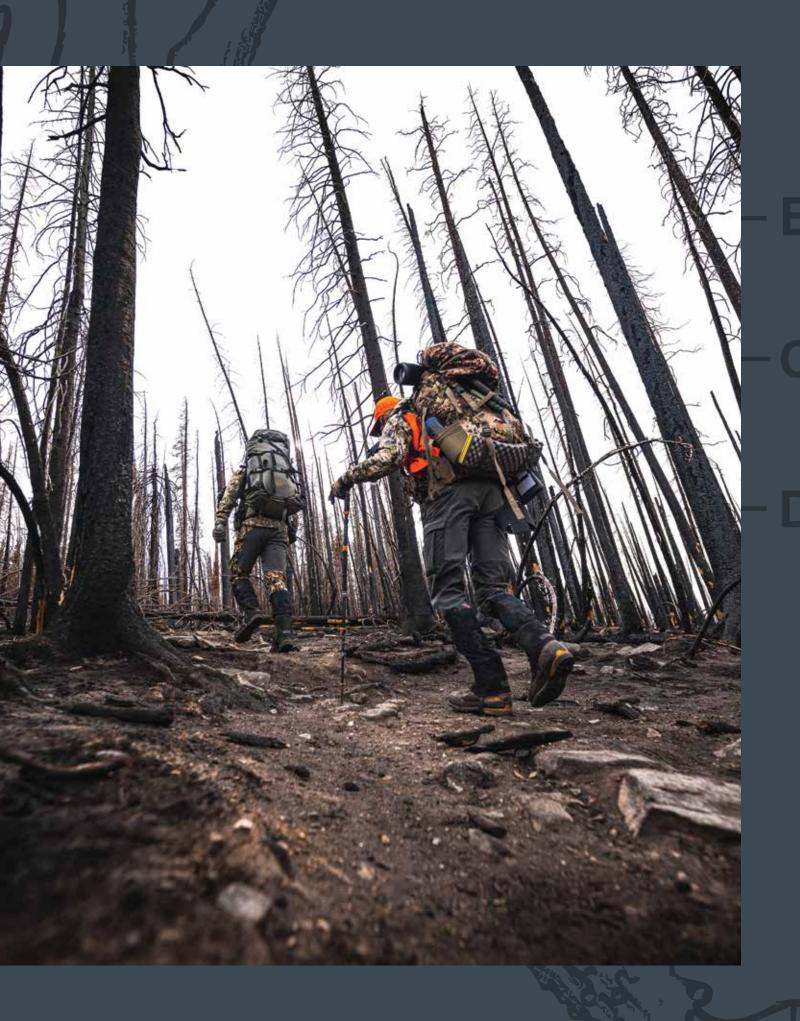
"It can take eight years to draw this antlerless elk tag, so we want to have a lot of flexibility," Dychess noted. While many of the small HBR properties are open just a couple of days per week, the OSU ranch properties are open to antlerless elk hunters seven days per week for the months of January through March. The ranch manager coordinates with hunters, because as Dychess pointed out, "the elk are on the ranch when the elk are on the ranch." The elk move from adjacent forests to the ranch properties occasionally. This hunt is shotgun-only, and Dychess further observed, "it's actually quite a challenging hunt."

#### **Program Primer**

Reservations are available online on a first-come, first-served basis.

There is currently no fee to make a reservation. Each hunter can have a maximum of two active reservations. A hunt reservation is "active" if it is happening that day or in the future. This limit includes hunts where one hunter is part of a group reservation created by another hunter. There is no seasonal or annual limit. Landowner coordination is sometimes required. Hunters must contact landowners by 12 p.m. the day before a hunt begins to confirm hunt plans. After booking, hunters will receive a hunt permit, landowner contact information (when needed), and a property map. While not required, ODFW recommends that hunters provide a thank-you note or gift to the landowner.

Visit the ODFW Hunt By Reservation Hunt website at https://myodfw.com/reserve-your-hunt You can reach the ODFW HBR coordinator at huntbyreservation@ odfw.oregon.gov







#### Perfect 10

### Oregon youth goes 10-for-10 on youth big game hunts

f ever an Oregon hunter seized the opportunity, it was Kellen Tanner, 16, of Redmond. From nine years old until 15, Kellen went a sizzling 10 for 10 on youth hunting opportunities, tagging seven deer and three elk. Although his record has been perfect, Kellen will be the first to tell you not everything will go perfectly.

What's more outstanding about Kellen's streak, he's not been privileged to hunt on private property, but rather gobbled up miles, grinding it out on public lands, hunting mostly central and northeastern Oregon in the most extreme temperatures.

A couple key factors positioned Kellen for success.

First, his father, Rob Tanner, always hard at it himself and seeing solid results in the field, wanted to provide those same opportunities for his son. When an 8-year-old Kellen finally got to hunt with his father, he took to the rough country so well Rob knew the following year his son would be ready.

Oregon's Mentored Youth Hunter Program allows 9- to 15-year-olds to hunt with a licensed supervising adult. The heart of the program is designed for kids "to receive one-on-one field training on the ethics, safety, responsibility and enjoyment of hunting." The program authorizes a supervising mentor to sacrifice their tag for the benefit of the youth – a perfect fit for this father and son.

At nine, Kellen's streak almost never got started. Rob and his son had to sweat it out. On the last day of the season and in the final hour, Kellen took his first forked horn. Rob, always aware of how a hunt can unravel, had ingrained in Kellen the importance of The Three P's: Patience, Persistence, and Positivity.

As Kellen's streak continued into the fourth year, yielding two more forks and a



Kellen Tanner notched 10 tags in 10 youth opportunities, including this trophy Oregon mule deer.

three point, there were several challenges requiring the Three P's. With these valuable lessons, Kellen raised his sights to a buck with more points, which sometimes requires waiting patiently for more points.

As an incentive, each year that youths register for the mentor program, they receive one preference point. They gain an additional point by applying for a controlled hunt but not drawing. Accumulated preference points are stored and can be leveraged later toward drawing a tag.

In 2019, at 13, Kellen tossed his streak upon the altar, cashing in four years of youth points, and pulled a coveted mule deer tag in a prime area of southcentral Oregon.

To allow Kellen to stay in school, his father drove three hours to scout, sleeping in his truck at night. Rob returned with pictures of seven beautifully velveted muleys for Kellen to evaluate. He knew immediately the one he wanted – and nicknamed him, Sexy Seven, for the seven scorable points on his left antler.

"And you know how that works – it never works!" Rob conceded. "You find the buck you want and someone else gets him, or he disappears."

A day before the season, Kellen, Rob, and Kellen's Uncle Troy actually did catch up with Sexy Seven mingling with other massive bucks. They backed carefully out of the area to not disturb the cagey muleys. Maybe it could work out.

On opening day, they showed up three hours early just to be the first boots on the

ground. Regardless, neither Sexy Seven nor any of his buddies were around. It was time to summon the Three P's.

Instead of giving up and moving on to another spot for Sunday, they agreed to be persistent and risk the same hunt. Walking in before light, they spotted a vehicle lumbering through their area. The truck passed on, unknowingly frightening a herd of does that were feeding in a ravine. The group of bucks raced out of the ravine behind them. With mule deer sprinting for the safety of a stand of junipers, Rob and Troy got hunched down to watch through their optics. But Kellen recalled thinking, I gotta set up, removing the tripod from his dad's pack.

"That was when he started taking things into his own hands," the proud father recalled.

That might have made all the difference.

The five suspicious bucks were on the verge of bolting again. At 175 yards, Rob and Troy thought the 30-inch wide buck in the lead was Sexy Seven. "Second to the last one!" Rob declared, a moment before Kellen pulled the trigger. Kellen shifted, and shot.

"I was kind of speechless," a hyped Kellen said. "I'd never killed a mature buck before."

As it turned out, Sexy Seven had been run off on Friday night, but luckily for Kellen, returned on Sunday.

To find out more about the Mentored Youth Hunt rules, visit MyODFW.com and start a streak of your own.

## WARTEDE

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The hunter education program involves passing on the hunting tradition to future generations in a safe, fun, and responsible manner.

- Firearm and hunter safety
- Hunter ethics and responsibilitiesOutdoor safety
- Wildlife management and conservation

Hunter education instructors are individuals 21 and older who have a passion for hunting. You do not need to be an expert hunter to teach this course; a strong interest in introducing young people and adults to the sport is what is required.

#### How do I become a Certified Instructor?

Easy process: contact the number below for an application.



Hunter Education

**ODFW Hunter Education Program 503-947-6028** www.dfw.state.or.us



# GAME ON THE GRILL BY TIFFANY HAUGEN

#### Full freezer? Fry fajitas!

on't let your wild game taken last fall get lost in the freezer. When meal planning, always shop from your freezer or pantry first and make it a goal to have a nearly empty freezer by this fall's hunting seasons.

We are constantly rotating our fish, venison and game birds in the freezer, so things are as fresh as possible. If you end up with more than you can eat, smoke up a few batches of jerky or get creative and make sausage. This is also a good time of the year to have your meat commercially processed into pepperoni or sausages, as the butcher is less busy than at the peak of hunting season.

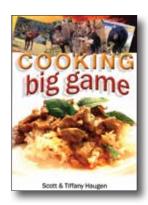
Here's a recipe that works well with all big game, including bear. We've enjoyed it over the years with turkey and waterfowl,



1 pound wild game steaks1 sweet onion, thinly sliced1-2 bell peppers, thinly sliced2 tablespoons olive or coconut oil

#### **Fajita Spice Rub:**

- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon granulated garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper



Slice game steaks into desired sizes. In a medium bowl, mix spice rub ingredients. Completely coat meat with rub and let sit 20 minutes at room temperature or refrigerate up to 6 hours. Heat oil in a large skillet, sauté onions and bell peppers on medium heat until they reach desired doneness. Push vegetables to the side of the pan, add more oil if needed and add seasoned wild game. Continue stir-frying 2-3 minutes or until meat reaches desired doneness.

Do not overcook, venison is best served medium rare. Mix onions and peppers into meat, add salt to taste. Serve over warm tortillas and all the usual fajita fixings.

Meat Care Tip: Prior to cooking, trim away any freezer burned portions of meat that may have formed, as this will taint the overall quality and flavor of the recipe. Also, when cutting steaks into chunks for fajitas, trim away any silver skin. While silver skin cooks down in slow cooking methods, with this hot and fast cooking approach for the fajitas, the silver skin could turn out tough and chewy. Remember that any game recipe is only as good as the meat you start with, so make sure it's been properly cooled, cleaned of all hair, dirt, and blood prior to storage, and especially before cooking.



Not all your steaks in the freezer have to be served as steaks. Enjoy fajitas, stir fry or specialty snacks from your local butcher.



To order signed copies of Tiffany Haugen's popular book, Cooking Big Game, send a check for \$20 to Haugen Enterprises, P.O. Box 275, Walterville, OR 97489 or visit www.scotthaugen. com for this and other titles.

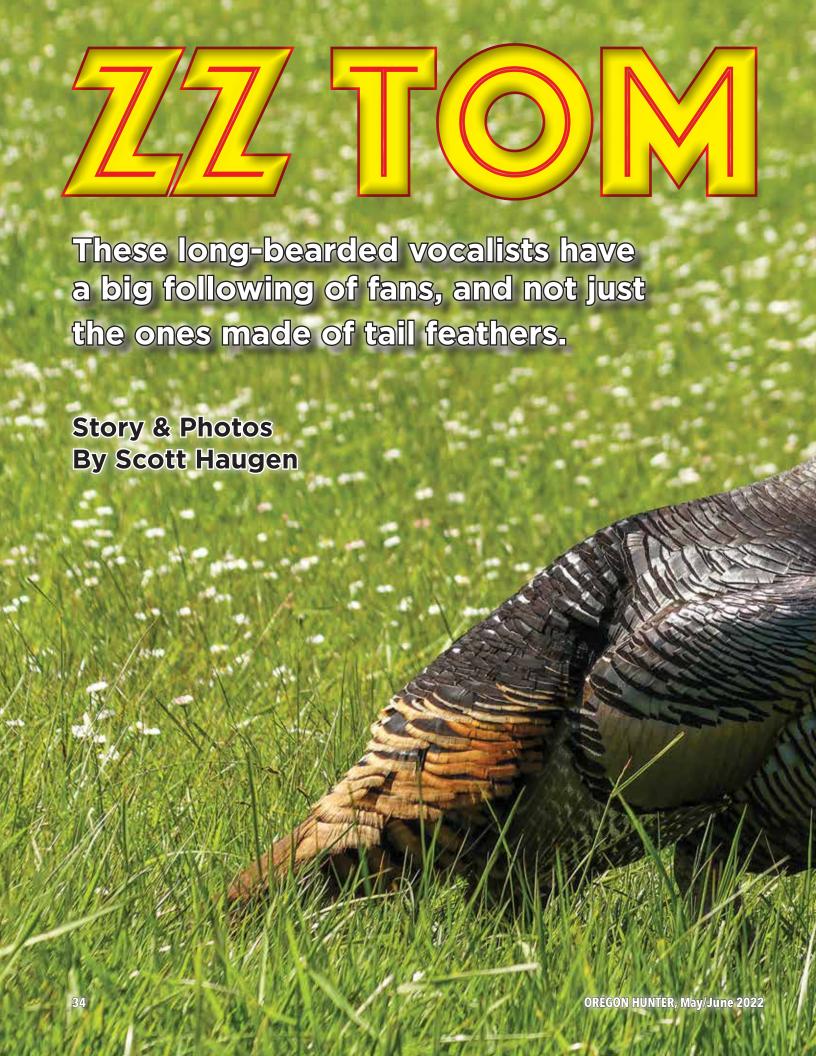


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HUNT









s more than 30 hens approached the decoys, I searched with intent for the prized bearded hen. I'd caught her on trail camera multiple times, had seen her during the fall season for the past seven years, and I even photographed her on a nest one spring on the banks of the Umpqua River.

Finally, as the flock drew tight to the hen stuffer and strutting tom decoys, I found what I was looking for, a gorgeous hen with a beard that would stretch a tape to beyond 9-inches; the longest bearded hen I've ever seen. Her winter plumage was clean and white-fringed, and she was simply stunning in the ray of sunlight that broke through the early morning haze in late January.

Sliding the shotgun safety off, I just needed her to separate from the other hens in the big winter flock. I had Oregon's fall turkey season to thank for what was about to happen. Yes, bearded hens can legally be shot in the spring, but face it, spend any time in the turkey woods and deciphering between a tom and a bearded hen is simple, and I swore to never stoop to such foolery just to tag a bearded hen in nesting season.

However, this time was different. This time it felt right, and I'd called in the flock from a long way. But just as I prepared to shoot, doubt entered my mind. I simply couldn't do it. At 15 yards the shot would have been simple. Yes, I would have had the hen mounted and the family would have eaten it. But I'd watched her for so many years, it just didn't feel like the right thing to do. I watched her and the flock of hens inspect my decoys for the next 20 minutes. It's amazing what we, as hunters, can observe when we're not quick on the trigger. Three hours later I filled my tag with a 10 3/4-inch, 21-pound tom that came strutting and gobbling into the decoys along with 20 of his comrades.

With more than 35 years of turkey hunting in Oregon behind me, I've seen some crazy beards, just one of the many attractions these grand birds carry. There was the split-bearded tom I caught on trail camera all winter long, lost track of it a week before the spring season, then had it come strutting into my hen stuffer

decoy and mount it without hesitation. We had turkey for dinner that night, and the next, and the next.

Big, full beards are impressive, and running one through your fingers leaves a lasting impression. This is especially true when a tom carries more than one beard. Last season, good friend and guide, Jody Smith of Elkton, had three clients who each killed triple bearded toms. There's no scientific proof that multi-bearded toms, or bearded hens, produce more offspring with beards than normal adults do.

Hunt very many falls and you'll likely end up taking a jake, just to have some great, tender eating meat in the pot. And with that will come the shortest beards imaginable. One season Tiffany and I each killed jakes, and both beards, together, measured less than a tad over one-inch.

Another time I took a big tom in the western foothills of the Cascades, near my home in Walterville, which had only a four-inch beard with a reddish hued line where it had broken off. I saw a tom killed near Oakland that had only a two-inch beard, having broken off at this color band mark. One of Smith's clients took a mature tom with an unusually thick "burnt" band running through the beard, one spring. This is likely due to a melanin or vitamin deficiency where the beard undergoes a change in color across the beard, forming a band of light color a 1/4-inch or more wide. This band sometimes gets brittle and breaks.

One spring I caught a beardless tom on trail camera multiple times. It had a full fan and long spurs. Beardless toms are rare.

Beards are the only feather on a turkey that continues to grow throughout its life. A three-year old tom will have grown a beard of about 14-inches long, but the end is worn off by dragging on the ground, which explains why most beards of mature toms are 9- to 10-inches long, give or take.

Turkey beards are simply a group of modified feathers. They're fragile, but intriguing, and are often the standard of measure that not only draws hunters into the woods, but gives 'em something to talk about.



For signed copies of Scott Haugen's best selling book, Western Turkey Hunting, visit www.scotthaugen.com or send a check for \$20 to Haugen Enterprises, P.O. Box 275, Walterville, OR 97489.







# Wolves relisted in W. Oregon

By Mike Totey, Conservation Director mtotey@oregonhunters.org

A U.S. District court ruling on Feb. 10 in response to a lawsuit returned wolves west of Highways 395-78-95 to the federal Endangered Species List. The lawsuit was filed by a coalition of groups, including Cascadia Wildlands, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, the Western Environmental Law Center and others after wolves in the western two thirds of Oregon and much of the U.S. were delisted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in early 2021.

This ruling, which returns wolves to the ESA listing, means federal rules now supersede the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and Oregon

Administrative Rules in this area, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (not

OHA was proactively involved in the development of the Oregon Wolf Plan

ODFW) is the lead management agency. The ruling clearly changes wolf management west of Highways 395-78-95.

Some tools for responding to livestock depredation are no longer available, including the "caught in the act" provision that allowed livestock producers to shoot a wolf caught in the act of biting, wounding, killing (and in some areas chasing) livestock.

Also, the Oregon wolf plan rules that allowed ODFW to consider lethal control of wolves when non-lethal measures are failing to stop chronic livestock depredation are also off the table.

OHA was proactively involved in the development of the current Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan that outlines a thorough process, using solid science, to both recover and manage wolves. Wolf populations are stable and growing in Oregon, indicating they are in no danger under the state wolf plan.

## OHA working to reduce vehiclewildlife collisions

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator TD@oregonhunters.org

As sportsmen conservationists, OHA aspires to bolster our deer, elk and other game populations. One way to do that is to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on our highways via wildlife crossing structures. There's little doubt that crossing structures significantly reduce vehicle/wildlife collisions, but the hurdle to implementing safe passage infrastructure is funding.

HB 4130-01 (Wildlife Crossing Investment Act), if passed, would allocate \$7 million to the Oregon Department of Transportation to invest in wildlife crossings across the state.

OHA has testified in strong support of this bill and has testified on multiple occasions in front of the Oregon Transportation Commission in sup-

OHA has developed a priority list of wildlife crossing projects for Oregon's highways.

port of allocating ODOT funds to wildlife crossings via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In order to ensure Oregon is ready to compete for federal funds for impending wildlife crossing grants, OHA has dug deep and developed a priority list of wildlife crossing projects that are currently being constructed, near completion or undergoing initial consideration. Specifically, in cooperation with PEW Charitable Trusts and the Oregon Action Team on Ungulate Migration, OHA has outlined 10 projects across the state ranging from Interstate 5 south of Ashland to Interstate 84 in Meacham and many locations in between.

A report posted on OHA's website has been sent to state and federal legislators, and will be continually updated as projects advance, and as new projects gain traction. You can find the report here:

https://oregonhunters.org/documents

# OHA STATE-LEVEL SPONSORSHIPS

Please support the sponsors who support OHA's mission of protecting Oregon's wildlife, habitat and hunting heritage.

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

# **OTC urged to fund crossings**

## By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator TD@oregonhunters.org

Via the Infrastructure, Investments, and Jobs Act, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has \$412 million in flexible funds at its disposal that can be used as needed. OHA has testified on multiple occasions, along with many partners, urging the OTC to use \$10 million of these funds toward implementation of wildlife crossings to reduce vehicle collisions with deer and elk on Oregon's highways.

Representative Ken Helm and 45 state legislators recently signed on to a letter echoing OHA's request. This issue is not partisan; many Republicans and Democrats signed on to this letter, because it's important to all Oregonians that we mitigate highway impacts with respect to wildlife.

It's unclear if the OTC will prioritize wildlife crossing projects with IIJA funds, despite a compelling letter from roughly half of the Oregon State Legislature.

Consistent with the Oregon Department of Transportation's mission, wildlife crossings would increase the safety and reliability of our transportation system, reduce property damage and other costs, and assist wildlife conservation efforts.

Among west coast states, Oregon has been identified as having the highest risk of wildlife-vehicle collisions. Wildlife crossings are a proven solution that can reduce these collisions by 80 percent or more. With only five wildlife crossings, Oregon significantly trails other western states that have 50 or more.

OHA led an effort by the Oregon Action Team on Ungulate Migration to prioritize wildlife crossing projects throughout the state, and these project areas have been informed by data on deer and elk collision hot spots. This recent report is housed on OHA's website, and it identifies \$22-\$35 million in immediate project needs. View it at https://oregonhunters.org/documents

## Learn to Hunt program now available for OHA chapters

OHA's Learn to Hunt program (LTH) was rolled out to chapters in early February and focuses on online courses and resources, as well as in-person classes, clinics, and events. A second rollout meeting is scheduled for April 25 via Zoom platform. Members can contact the LTH team at learntohunt@oregonhunters.org for more information. Participating chapters will receive a quarterly contact list of new LTH participants and can provide information for a monthly email sent to all LTH students. —Amy Patrick





## Banquets are back! Projects and youth events are up next!

#### **BAKER**

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

**Chapter Meetings:** New Location: Oregon Trail Restaurant, 2nd Wednesday, 6 p.m.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 2

**Update:** Scholarship Raffle, tickets \$10 each, winner got a Mauser M18 Savanna 6.5 PRC, Proceeds went toward a \$1,500 scholarship.

#### **BEND**

**Rex Parks** 

541-480-0230

oregonhunters.org/bend-chapter

**Chapter Meetings:** New Location: Laurie's Grill, 2nd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held March 12

**Update:** Youth Day is June 4 at Cyrus Ranch, Sisters. Ladies Hunting Camp is July 15. Youth Hunting Camp scheduled for July 22.

The Project Coordinator position is open. Contact Eric Brown (541-647-0424) if interested in filling this position.

#### **BLUE MOUNTAIN**

Dean Groshong (541) 377-1227

ohabluemountainchapter@gmail.com

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of the month, The Saddle, 2200 Court St., Pendleton, 6 p.m. meeting, 5:30 p.m. dinner and drinks available.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 2 **CAPITOL** 

Erik Colville (503) 851-8409

ohacapitol.webs.com

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., 4090 Cherry Ave, in Keizer. The Eagles have a full bar and menu food service available to us during our meetings.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 2

**Update:** Our westside habitat and enhancement project on the Willamette National Forest will be May 13-15; call 503-910-2913. Our Prairie City aspen protection



Caden Thrasher, son of OHA Redmond Chapter President K.C. Thrasher (left), celebrates his 12th birthday at the chapter banquet Feb. 26 with a rifle won by chapter volunteer Steve Fox (right), who gave the rifle to Caden for a birthday present. Caden is a 10-year cancer survivor who loves hunting and regularly volunteers at OHA events and projects. Redmond netted \$101,108 – a record for any OHA chapter – and collected nearly \$7,000 additional in OHA memberships sold with banquet packages.

project is tentatively set for June 10-12; call 503-689-4334.

**CHETCO** 

David Green

(541) 207-4866

Chapter Meetings: 5:30 p.m.; next meet-

ings TBD.

**CLATSOP COUNTY** 

**Troy Laws** 

503-738-6962

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

**2022 Fundraiser:** Will be a virtual auction.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY** 

**Jordan Hicks** 

(949) 533-7271

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m., leastion listed in the payelatter.

location listed in the newsletter. **2022 Fundraiser:** May 14, Columbia

County Fairgrounds.

**Update:** Chapter members volunteered at a cleanup project on Sauvie Island.

#### **EMERALD VALLEY**

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

EmeraldOHA@live.com

**Chapter Meetings:**2nd Wednesday, 7 p.m., Sizzlers on Gateway

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held March 5

**Update:** Lane County has several Hunter Ed Classes scheduled this spring and summer, including field days from May through September. For more information,

contact Ivan at 541-935-5331.

#### **HOODVIEW**

Kelly Parkman (503) 706-7481

oregonhunters.org/hoodview-chapter

Facebook: Hoodview OHA

Chapter Meetings: 2nd Wednesday, 6:30

p.m., Portland Gun Club.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held February 19 at the

Monarch Inn.

**Update:** White River Habitat Project is June 10-12 and volunteers are needed.

#### **JOSEPHINE COUNTY**

**Cliff Peery** 

(541) 761-3200

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 19

**Update:** After heading up the duck box project for 10 years, Bob Loper would like to pass it on to an eager volunteer; call 541-479-4571. Youth day will be held on June 4 at the All Sports Park in Grants Pass. JoCo Chapter Family Campout June 23-26 at Willow Lake Group Camp.

#### **KLAMATH**

**Allan Wiard** 

(541) 884-5773

ohaklamath.webs.com

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

**2022 Fundraiser:** April 30

**Update:** If you are interested in helping OHA repair local guzzlers, let us know as we are forming a committee. Hart Moun-

tain Project and Campout is scheduled for May 14. Green Diamond Cleanup in the Keno area will be on June 4.

#### **LAKE COUNTY**

Larry Lucas (541) 417-2983

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

VFW Hall, Lakeview.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 2

**Update:** Lake County Youth Day is June

25.

LINCOLN COUNTY

Todd Williver (541) 648-6815

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday, 6 p.m. meeting, OSU extension office, Newport. **Update:** We are currently selling tickets for the Coastal Farm & Ranch raffle gun; contact Todd at 541-815-1515.

**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.

**MID-COLUMBIA** 

Stanley Walasavage (541) 296-1022

**Quarterly Chapter Meetings:** 6 p.m., at Spooky's Pizza, The Dalles.

**Update:** All chapter members will be entered into a drawing at each meeting to win a \$100 Coastal Farm & Ranch gift certificate. Must be present to win!

**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.

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 9

**Update:** March chapter meeting had guest speakers from Hunters of Color, a non-profit group working to dismantle stereotypes and barriers to people of color to hunt and conserve our hunting traditions. May 12 meeting will feature a guest speaker from Oregon State Police.

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John Dehler, III (541) 815-5817

**Chapter Meetings:** 1st Tuesday, 7 p.m.,

Crook County Library.

**Update:** OHA Gun Raffle Calendars are for sale at chapter meetings. Get a chance at one of 52 great gun prizes. All Hands All Brands for Public Lands project will be held on June 17-19 at Sugarcreek Campground.



Tia Kroo from Coastal Farm & Ranch presents a Browning Hells Canyon Speed to the CF&R Raffle winner at the OHA Bend Chapter Banquet.

#### **PIONEER**

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

oregonhunters.org/pioneer-chapter

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 5

**Update:** Spring/Summer Gun Raffles have started. Buy tickets now for a chance to win both a Browning rifle and a Browning shotgun. Winner to be drawn at the September meeting. Annual family campout and guzzler project is June 17-19

**REDMOND** 

K. C. Thrasher (541) 419-7215

OHA line (541) 383-1099

oregonhunters.org/redmond-chapter

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held Feb. 26

**Update:** We scheduled our annual Bridge Creek/Priest Hole habitat project weekend for April 29-30.

**ROGUE VALLEY** 

Ricky Clark (530) 905-1186

**Chapter Meetings:** 2nd Thursday, 6 p.m. social & dinner, 7 p.m. presentation, Eagles

Club, 2000 Table Rock Rd.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held on March 19 **Update:** Spring events include Youth Turkey Clinic and Young Oregon Hunter's Day at Denman Wildlife Area.

**TILLAMOOK** 

John Putman (503) 842-7733

Chapter Meetings: 3rd Monday, 7 p.m.,

Tillamook PUD.

**2022 Fundraiser:** July 16 at Tillamook Fairgrounds. Call 503-842-7153 or 503-

801-3779. **TIOGA** 

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

**Chapter Meetings:** 4th Tuesday, 6 p.m., Uncle Randy's Café, Coquille.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 2

**Update:** Youth Day will be held May 7 at

Myrtle Point Sportsman's Club.

F Tony Kind

(503) 290-6143

oregonhunters.org/tualatin-valley-chapter

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

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held March 26

**Update:** Brian Long spoke to us about Aloha Clay Target League, a high school age league of shooters. The Barney Reservoir Project is scheduled for May 21. Youth Day will be held on June 4 at Hagg Lake.

**UMPQUA** 

Tadd Moore (541) 580-5660

Chapter Meetings: 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m. at

Backside Brewery.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held April 9

**Update:** Speaker Evan Brannock shared his hunting experiences as a disabled hunter and the David's Chair Foundation.

**UNION/WALLOWA COUNTY** 

Morgan Olson (541) 786-1283

**Chapter Meetings:** La Grande Library,

next date TBA.

**2022 Fundraiser:** Was a virtual auction held March 19-April 11. Our TNC Zumwalt Prairie elk hunt raffle sold out fast.

YAMHILL COUNTY

Andy Bodeen (503) 490-2489

ohayamhill.com

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

**2022 Fundraiser:** Held March 19

**Update:** Chapter elections will be held during the May 12 chapter meeting. Help us grow and prosper as a chapter by becoming a Chapter Board Member.

## TACTACAM TRAIL CAM CONTEST

See rules and enter your best shots at oregonhunters.org for a chance to win a great Tactacam prize!



#### WINNER:

OHA member
Jon Duerst, of
Peoria, Arizona,
wins a Tactacam
Reveal Trail
Camera for this
September
2021 trail
camera photo
of a bugling
Wallowa County
elk.

#### **HONORABLE MENTION:**



OHA member Andy Schofield earns an OHA hat for this photo of a well-fed Jackson County bobcat.

OHA member Julie Wurtz of Pendleton receives an OHA hat for this 2021 trail cam capture of a free-roaming bison in the Catherine Creek Unit.



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# OHA State Convention





Saturday, May 14, 2022

Seven Feathers Casino, Canyonville

# Join us when OHA's biggest bash returns to sunny Southern Oregon!

Enjoy a Dinner Buffet Fit for a King!

Awesome Auctions! More than 100 top-quality items in live and silent auctions - great trips, gear, fine art and much more!

**Rockin' Raffles!** Over 100 great prizes will be given away - guns, optics and more! Someone has to win it - Why not you?

Great Guns! Win 1 of 6 premium firearms in the Wall of Guns, or a Nosler rifle in the Nosler or Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffles!



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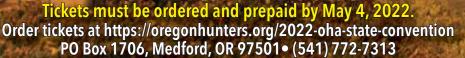
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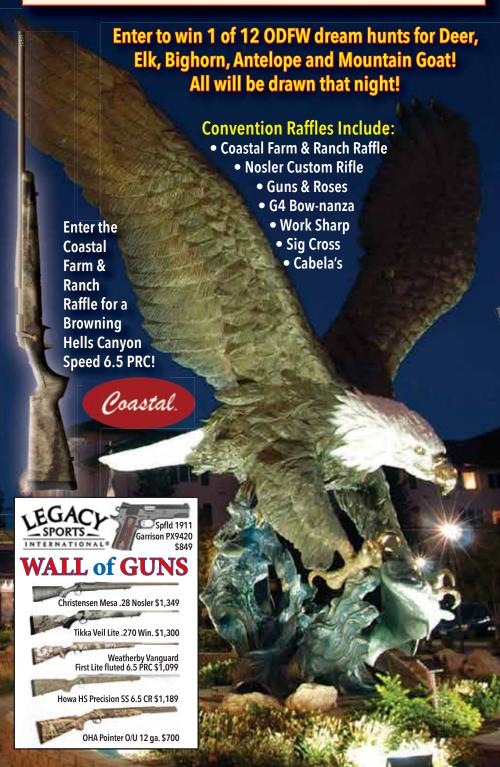
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- For the Bull: 1 Henry Big Boy 44 Mag. & 1 Trophy package
- For the Herd: 6 Stag packages (upgrade to 6 Lone Wolves for \$900 more) • Table sign, special recognition & extra goodies

#### **BENEFACTOR PACKAGE \$1.500\***

• 1 Henry Big Boy 44 Mag. & 1 Trophy package • Special recognition & extra goodies

#### TROPHY PACKAGE \$350\*

- 1 in 10 wins a 9mm 3" Springfield HellCat! (\$587)
- 2 Dinners & 6 Drink Tickets
- 8 Party Starter Raffle Tickets
  - 8 Special Raffle Tickets
  - 72 General Raffle Tickets
  - 2 Commemorative Gifts

## LONE WOLF PACKAGE \$275\* [1-PERSON TROPHY PACKAGE]

- 1 in 10 wins a 9mm 3" Springfield HellCat! (\$587)
- 1 Dinner & 3 Drink Tickets
  - 8 Party Starter Tickets
  - 8 Special Raffle Tickets
- 72 General Raffle Tickets
- 1 Commemorative Gift

#### **DELUXE PACKAGE \$250\***

- 2 Dinners & 2 Drink Tickets
- 2 Party Starter Raffle Tickets
  - 24 General Raffle Tickets
  - 2 Commemorative Gifts

#### **STAG PACKAGE \$125\***

- 1 Dinner & 1 Drink Ticket
- 1 Party Starter Raffle Ticket
  - 12 General Raffle Tickets
  - 1 Commemorative Gift
- \* OHA member prices. Nonmembers add \$35 for 1-year OHA membership.

Party Starter: 2 guns (\$599 & \$349). Max 1,900 tickets. Special: Rifle (\$960); Knife (\$40). Max 1,760 tickets. General: 45 items (>\$7,000 total). Max 24,000 tickets.



# OHA partners with EFM to improve mule deer habitat

he Oregon Hunters Association has invested \$42,000 of state-level grant funding through a partnership with EFM to protect and enhance mule deer habitat in central Oregon.

Mule deer migration corridors have received much attention lately as a result of a recent shift in how wildlife professionals prioritize management of these critical areas. Migration corridors used to be widely recognized as conduits for animals to move to and from seasonal ranges.

However, as wildlife tracking technology, vegetation data, and access to these data have improved, biologists can now clearly see that mule deer are timing their migrations with the intent of foraging and utilizing resources along the way. During migration, mule deer commonly use specific stopover areas to reside and forage for several days. They typically use the same areas year after year, and importantly, mule deer often spend upwards of 90 percent of their migration using these areas and less than 10 percent of their time actually moving through the corridor.

Ideally, migration habitats that comprise these corridors have adequate forage and remain intact, while human disturbance is low along these routes. Unfortunately, that's not the case in many areas in Oregon, due to roadways and other man-made infrastructure.

OHA, Mule Deer Foundation and EFM partnered to improve habitat, and security for mule deer by reducing very high road densities on EFM land west of Highway 31, and northwest of Silver



Before and after: OHA funding helped reduce heavy road densities to improve habitat and hunting.



Lake. The property provides winter and summer habitat for mule deer and elk, and it contains numerous ODFW-identified mule deer migration corridors. Within the 7,073-acre (11-square-mile) project area, open road density was reduced from 7.5 miles of roads per square mile to 2.2 miles of roads per square mile.

Protecting these habitats from motorized and off-highway vehicle use will improve habitat for mule deer and many other species. By reducing motorized traffic and human disturbance, we help ensure that mule deer will be more secure while foraging, and with the seemingly endless benefits of quality nutrition, this will have a positive impact on their survival and reproduction. By discontinuing motorized travel on vegetated roads, we have also reduced the risk of unintentional fire starts, soil compaction, annual grass invasion, and erosion, which are all threats capable of negatively affecting mule deer habitat.

Further, this project lowered road maintenance costs and access liabilities, and that is beneficial for EFM to maintain "Welcome to Hunt" opportunities. The EFM Fort Rock Access Map showing open roads and area regulations can be found at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/maps/access\_habitat/EFM Fort Rock openfields.pdf.

While high road densities were reduced, public access was enhanced by removing brush along 6.2 miles of specific roadways to accommodate motorized traffic to the EFM Fort Rock Access and Habitat Area.

OHA and EFM have collaborated in recent years to build wildlife-friendly buckand-pole fence to restore natural springs and meadows for the benefit of deer and elk. OHA helped build 1,600 feet of buckand-pole fence around Pothole Springs in 2019, and 2,666 feet along Smoke Creek in 2021. EFM was OHA's 2020 Corporate Landowner of the Year.

Controlled hunt reminders –

# What's new for 2022

Don't forget to review the regulations and confirm your hunt number before applying.

Archery elk hunting now controlled in parts of Eastern Oregon – Tag not transportable to general season

Archery elk hunting in 13 units and 3 subunits in the Blue Mountains has changed from general to controlled hunting to better manage elk populations and hunting pressure.

Controlled archery elk tags are not valid in general season areas. Hunters with a general season tag may hunt in both Eastern and Western Oregon general season units.

Warner archery elk hunting is now part of the general season (no longer controlled tag).



#### **Archery deer hunting in Eastern Oregon controlled only**

This change took effect in 2021. Controlled archery deer tags are not transportable to general season.

#### **Changes for youth hunts**

Interstate Youth Hunt (175T) season date change to Sept. 26-Oct. 12 (due to mule deer population concerns, hunt is no longer during the rut).

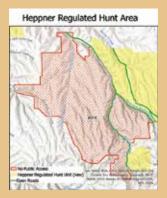
5 other new youth deer hunts, see page 36.

Youth antlerless elk hunts will begin Aug. 15 (not Aug. 1)

**Premium Hunts**: Don't forget to include a deer, elk and/or pronghorn Premium Hunt on your controlled hunt application. Hunt August-November, during the rut, for the same price as a regular tag, in addition to any regular hunt tag and with no impact on your preference points. See pg. 65-66 of regs.

#### **Changes to hunting areas:**

Heppner Regulated Hunt
Area: A large portion of the
RHA was recently sold and
will no longer be available for
public access. The closure
includes the Skinner Creek
drainage, the access point at
the Skinner Creek gravel pit,
and the area located south
of Blakes Ranch Rd and east
of Willow Creek Rd commonly called the Apple Orchard.
See map. No public lands are
affected by closure.



**New Umatilla National Forest TMA** in Fossil, Heppner, Ukiah, Desolation, Mt Emily, Walla Walla, Wenaha with motorized travel allowed only on open roads as designated by the Umatilla NF Motor Vehicle Use Map

**Coos Mountain Access Area date change**: Now open Aug. 1-Dec. 31 (not permanently) and offroad traffic prohibited at all times.

**Weapon restriction changes**: Muzzleloaders do not require an open ignition.

**Error page 43** (archery elk seasons table) in the printed regulations regarding Malheur River Unit: The southern portion of 66 (NOT northern) is open during the General Archery Elk Season. Tag 266R required to hunt northern portion. The online e-regulations have been corrected.



# Oregon DOJ hires anti-poaching prosecutor

OHA efforts helped make it possible

oachers beware, there is a new force in the courts: An anti-poaching special prosecutor. Jay D. Hall, hired last month as a new Assistant Attorney General with the Oregon Department of Justice, is serious about prosecuting fish and wildlife crimes.

The new prosecutor role is the final strategy of a three-prong approach legislators mapped out in 2019 to reduce poaching crimes across the state. Increasing detection of poaching through a public awareness campaign and increasing enforcement of wildlife laws by hiring additional OSP Fish and Wildlife Troopers were the first two strategies.

OHA was the driving force in initiating the anti-poaching push in the legislature, and worked tirelessly to secure the funding and then to get it back after it fell victim to the state budget axe.

The anti-poaching prosecutor will work with OSP and ODFW to locate, investigate and prosecute poachers. For his part, Hall will support investigations and prosecutions by providing law enforcement with training and access to resources that will build stronger court cases. He will advise law enforcement agencies in evidence collection, case process and penalty options, and guide and assist county prosecutors in the nuances of trying fish and wildlife criminal cases.

Hall hails from Eugene, where he prosecuted major crimes for 12 years through the Lane County District Attorney's office. In 2010, he received the OSP Prosecutor of the Year award – presented by the Oregon Sportsmen's Coalition and underwritten by OHA.



New anti-poaching prosecutor Jay D. Hall receives the Prosecutor of the Year award from then-OSP F&W Capt. Jeff Samuels in 2010.



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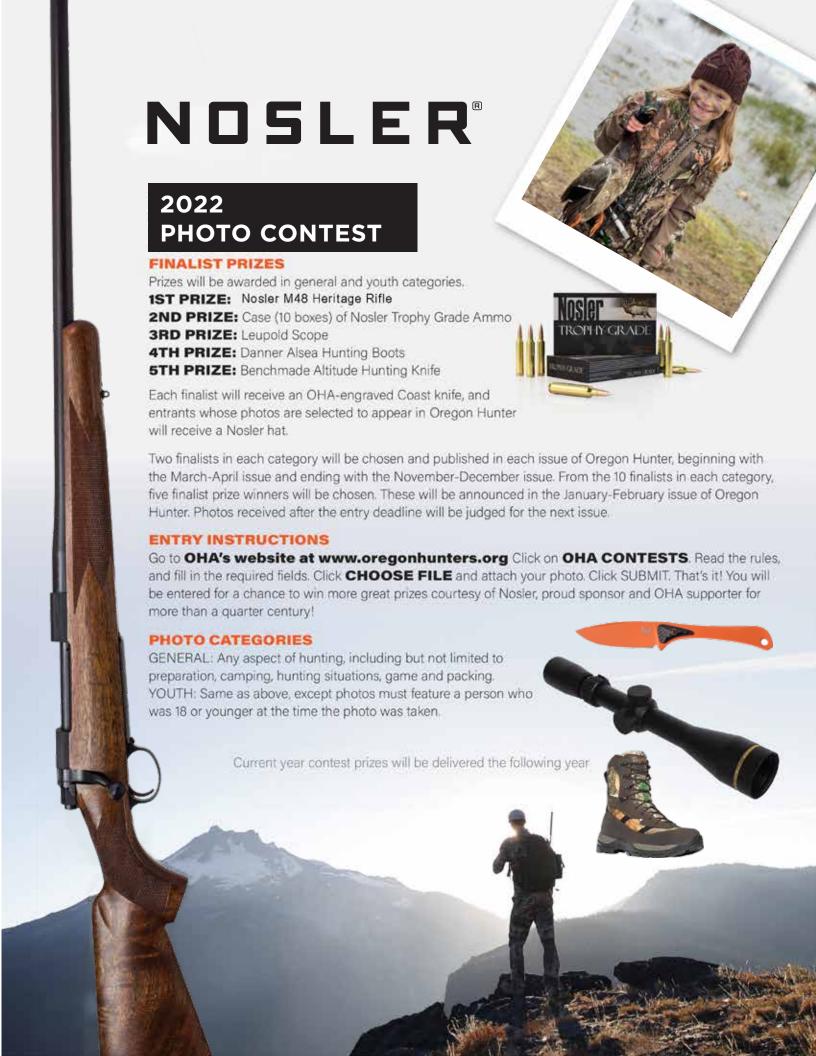




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# NOSLER PHOTO CONTEST

**GENERAL CATEGORY FINALISTS** 



James Rice, OHA member, scores an OHA Coast knife and entry in the finals of the 2022 Nosler **Photo Contest** for this photo of **Gunner making** the retrieve with a mature drake pintail during a December 2021 rainy morning hunt in Benton County.



OHA member
Kathy Campbell of
Lebanon claims an
OHA Coast knife and
a place in the finals
of the 2022 Nosler
photo contest for
this photo of Scott
Campbell with a
Silvies Unit antelope
taken with a Bergara
B14 Hunter in .300
Win Mag.

# NOSLER PHOTO CONTEST

YOUTH CATEGORY FINALISTS



OHA member Nathan
Fisher of Eugene
bags an OHA Coast
knife and a berth
in the finals of the
2022 Nosler Photo
Contest for this photo
of Brooke Fisher with
her first elk, taken in
the Indigo Unit in the
Cascade Rifle elk hunt.



claims an OHA Coast knife and a spot in the finals of the 2022 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of Kyle Payne and his son, Carter Payne. The cougar was taken with a rifle in the Metolius Unit in October 2021.

Kyle Payne, OHA member in Sublimity,

**OREGON HUNTER, May/June 2022** 

# NOSLER PHOTO CONTEST

HONORABLE MENTION



OHA member Mike Menasco of Martinez, Calif., gains honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of his gorgeous mountain goat from coastal British Columbia.



OHA member Ron Martin of Pleasant Hill gets honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this picture of himself with a Sitka Blacktail taken with a Nosler M48 in .300 WSM.



Estacada OHA member Tom Vanasche takes honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself with a Kobuk River grizzly taken with a longbow. He made an 18-yard shot on what is the largest grizzly known to have been taken with a longbow.



OHA member Pat McGanty of McMinnville collects honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself with a pronghorn he took with a .28 Nosler on a hunt last September in Wyoming.





Jim Cota and Mike Davidson garner honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of a cougar taken over a mule deer kill last November in Baker County.



OHA member Curt Gibson of Prineville grabs honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of Gabi with a limit of ducks and a pair of geese on opening day at Summer Lake.



OHA member Larry Adams of Jefferson collects honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of his Silvies Unit mule deer taken in August 2018 with a Martin bow.



Allen Sedey collects honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of Lori Miller, who called this bird and tagged it in Klamath County in 2021.



# Looking for a Hunting License & Love in All the Wrong Places

hen I took Little Sassy to buy her first hunting license some years ago, it was coming on 9 p.m. at Walmart. I reckoned we could get in and out fast with no waiting in line. It appeared we were in luck. First Little Sassy had to pick up a bottle of mousse, and then we strolled back to sporting goods where we were greeted by a guy in a blue apron with March Madness basketball teeth, meaning he was down to the final four.

"Just need a hunting license for the young-un," I said. "And we need to apply for a deer tag, too." He looked Little Sassy over then he looked at me.

"I don't believe in hunting," he said.

I looked around to make sure we were in the sporting goods section. Sure enough. There were guns, knives under the counter, game bags and orange plastic pouches to fold Little Sassy's license into.

"Well, I reckon they put you in the wrong department," I said. "Can we call another person for help?"

But Mr. Basketball had more to say.

"The only thing I like huntin', I don't need a license for, and that's WIMMEN."

We got the point. In fact, at that moment one of his quarry was coming into sight. She had just turned her cart into the aisle and heard the whole thing.

She was of the right vintage. She skidded to a stop with both hands up on the cart handle like a female T. Rex, she swiveled her head and batted her eyes.

"You don't say!" she exclaimed. "I... Am a woman." She stood around and touched her blue hair while Mr. Basketball flirted and sold us a license. Oh. Sweet miracle. I like to think they found love. I found I threw up a little in my mouth.

Some years later I found myself back at the same Walmart counter with Little Sassy three days before the Saturday deer opener. Half a dozen people stood around being waited on by two 20-something blue apron males. We found our place in line with several people behind us when it was our turn.

"I just need to pick up a buck tag for the girl and her 600-series antlerless deer tag, too."

"Cain't do it."

Huh?

"She can't have two deer tags," the guy raised his voice so everyone could hear. "She has to pick one or the other."

I repeated what I was going to pay for and what he was going to print out. "It's pretty easy."

He doubled down. "I'm telling you; she can only have one deer tag or the other," he said. "I do this. Every. Single. Day."

"Well then you do it WRONG every single day," I told him. I turned the screen around and showed him how. Imagine all

the poor fellows and their offspring trying to buy tags from the Walmart warden before me. Every single day.

I mentioned this at the last gathering of the Bear Mountain Gang down at Charlie's Fish & Chips.

T. Roy said in January he had occasion to take his daddy on a duck hunt for veterans. T. Roy's daddy hadn't hunted ducks in 12 years, so his documentation was out of date. They stopped at Bi-Mart to buy the necessary licenses.

The young man behind the counter proceeded to tell T. Roy he was out of Federal stamps. "You can get one at the Post Office," the clerk said.

T. Roy looked at his watch. 4:56 p.m. The Post Office closed in four minutes. "Sir, here is your license," the kid handed the paper tag to T. Roy's daddy, "and your state waterfowl endorsement." He turned to T. Roy. "Now what can I help you with," he asked.

I always tell people, the trick to applying for tags is to keep a positive mental attitude. If this is hard to remember, just remember *Whoomp*, the debut single by Tag Team, the '90s hip hop/rap duo from Atlanta. According to Wikipedia, *Whoomp There it is!* was written to encourage positive partying. And believe me if you ever need positive partying, it's on a spring bear hunt. T. Roy and I were applying for spring bear.

"I need to apply for my spring bear tag, and this will be a party application," T. Roy told the clerk.

"You can't apply as a party." Quick as a Harlem Globetrotter, the kid spun the screen toward T. Roy, pointing out there was no place to input the party leader number.

"Click right here," T. Roy said.

Whoomp! There it is! Uncle Geddy's ODFW ID was linked with T. Roy's through the power of positive partying.

Just then T. Roy's daddy exclaimed, "THIS ISN'T ME! This isn't my name on this license, T. Roy!"

"Whoomp, there it is. I missed it by one number," the kid said. After visits to two more big box stores, the proper Federal stamp was located. And daddy shot his ducks. T. Roy reckons ODFW could add two full-time staff in Salem with the money their license partners lose each season.

According to a recent study of Craigslist's "missed connections," Walmart is THE best place to look for love. Top locations at Walmart include the main entrance, the hair salon, the greeting card section, the home department, electronics, grocery and pets.

If you're a single woman, I recommend you go straight to Walmart and walk around with as many items as you can carry, including lingerie, TV dinners and an engagement ring. Then walk past a cute guy and drop it all. If he's a gentleman, he will fall to his knees to help you pick things up. Whoomp! There it is! When he hands you the ring, tell him you accept, grab him by the hand and don't let go.

If you can't find what you're looking for at Walmart, go home, change out of your pajamas and take a shower so you can go to Bi-Mart.



Every time I lie down on my bed the horrors come flooding back. I guess that's why the salesman called it the repressed memory foam mattress.

For a signed copy of A Bear Hunter's Guide to the Universe, send \$24.95 to Gary Lewis, P.O. Box 1364, Bend, OR 97709.

Contact Troy Rodakowski at troyoutdoors@hotmail.com



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