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Membership publication of the Oregon Hunters Association



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September-
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Set your sights on whitetails, Huns and refuge hunts



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Cover: Steens Mountain mule deer photographed by John Wheland

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BY MIKE TOTEY, CONSERVATION DIRECTOR

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Balancing conservation needs

Meeting Oregon's mandated goals for clean, renewable energy is admirable and legally required, and OHA supports clean renewable energy use. However, as Oregon looks to the future to develop clean renewable energy sources, a startling trend is developing. In school we learned that to every action, there is a reaction. The tradeoff that is finding its way onto the ground are massive solar farms, sometimes thousands of acres, being developed and established in winter range that is critical for mule deer, pronghorn and elk. When sited in critical winter range areas, they will permanently eliminate that habitat. OHA has been invited to the table to discuss smart siting guidance in Oregon for the development of future renewable energy sites. While this will come to energy developers as recommendations, not rules, we will at least have the opportunity to clearly point out the impacts to wildlife in these areas.

OHA staff and volunteers also see tradeoffs in a host of other areas of our work to accomplish our mission. Tradeoffs are part of everyday life. Understanding the impacts of the tradeoffs, seeking a win-win resolution, or expending energy and resources to mitigate negative impacts can frequently be overlooked. Here's a few examples.

Fending off bad things vs. investing in good things: Protecting our hunting heritage, in the legislature or at the ballot box, requires resources. These threats require that we commit valuable staff time, volunteer time, and real money that could all be committed toward habitat and wildlife in Oregon, but instead must be prioritized to holding the line. Just consider the amount of proactive conservation and wildlife work that could be accomplished with those resources, that would benefit all Oregonians, if we weren't forced to constantly defend our rights, and our way of life.

Active management vs preservation: While OHA has long been an advocate for active management for both habitat and the wildlife that use it, many others see it differently. Many people and organizations subscribe to the "walk away theory;" that is, don't do anything, and it'll fix itself. Time after time, we've seen natural resources subjected to this overly simplistic approach, only to end up with disastrous results. The North American Model for Wildlife Management has a proven track record of success. Let's celebrate this, not diminish it.

Collaboration vs litigation: Collaboration takes work, time, and commitment to be successful. Working collaboratively often involves some concessions, but in the end, collaborative processes frequently yield the best long term results and can forge long-term partnerships that benefit OHA into the future. Unfortunately, many environmental groups prefer litigation. They are staffed up with attorneys, and see lawsuits as a way to achieve their objectives without making any concessions, and frequently are successful on technicalities, not biology. The most recent court ruling to re-list the gray wolf across much of its range is a classic example.

Co-existing with the wildlife and habitat we care about requires thoughtful planning. Nothing is free, and everything has a cost. These costs aren't always a direct financial cost, but often come as a lost opportunity, or an unforeseen consequence. Developing scientifically supported, thoughtful plans that take into account and recognize the tradeoffs will be needed to support our mission as an organization. Whether it's an updated mule deer management plan, or a renewable energy site development plan, OHA will be watching out for the wildlife and habitat we care about.

TRACY RODAKOWSKI



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KNOW OREGON? WIN A WORK SHARP!

1. Oregon waterfowl regulations permit only one of which in the daily bag?

- a) hen mallard c) pintail
- b) redhead d) canvasback

2. Which can be brought back from another state or province?

- a) spinal column c) boned-out meat
- b) whole head d) none of the above

3. Sage grouse wings tell biologists:

- a) age c) if hen nested successfully
- b) sex d) all of the above

4. Which constitutes proof of sex for big game animals NOT leaving the state?

- a) scalp c) sex organs attached
- b) head attached d) any of the above

5. What is the only why to physically tell a bobcat from a Canada lynx?

- a) ear tufts c) tail
- b) feet d) coat coloration

6. Which appears darker on a pronghorn buck than on a doe?

- a) horns c) sideburns
- b) nose d) all of the above

7. The 200 controlled hunt series is for:

- a) buck deer c) antelope
- b) elk d) antlerless deer

8. The Tillamook State Forest is located within which unit?

- a) Wilson c) Saddle Mountain
- b) Trask d) all of the above

9. The Lower Deschutes Wildlife Area is located in which unit?

- a) Biggs c) Upper Deschutes
- b) White River d) none of the above

10. A rock chuck is a type of which?

- a) squirrel c) badger
- b) marmot d) weasel

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



WHERE IN OREGON WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

Identify this Oregon river canyon, 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: Sept. 15, 2022.



LAST ISSUE'S WINNER:

Rocky Morgan, Coquille

Rocky's name was drawn from among the OHA members who identified Odell Lake in the Cascades.

OUTDOOR OUTLOOK

AUGUST 26

Bow tag sale deadline

AUGUST 27

General bow season opens

SEPTEMBER 1

Openers for forest grouse, mourning dove, W. Oregon quail

SEPTEMBER 17-18

OHA Pioneer Chapter Sight-In Days, Canby Rod & Gun Club, 503-710-1233

SEPTEMBER 24

OHA Pioneer Chapter Sight-In Days, Canby Rod & Gun Club, 503-710-1233

SEPTEMBER 25

General bow season ends; OHA Pioneer Chapter Sight-In Days, Canby Rod & Gun Club, 503-710-1233

SEPTEMBER 30

Deadline to buy tags for rifle deer, bear & cougar

OCTOBER 1

Deer season opens for any legal weapon

OCTOBER 8

Openers for chukar, pheasant, E. Oregon quail, Hungarian partridge & fall turkey

OCTOBER 12

Eastside buck season ends

OCTOBER 15

Fox season opens; OHA Lake County Duck and Goose boxes, 541-417-1750

OCTOBER 22-23

OHA Klamath Chapter Youth Chukar Hunt, 541-643-7077

OCTOBER 26

Rocky Mountain Elk 1st season opens

OCTOBER 29

Lake County guzzler project, 541-417-1750

OCTOBER 30

Rocky Mountain Elk 1st season closes

LAKE COUNTY SUNSET

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OREGON AFIELD

Early whitetails offer challenge

The phone calls and text messages between the two of us painted a picture on near impossibility. Chad would tell me how close or how far he would be from shooting a whitetail buck spot-and-stalk with his bow. We would bounce ideas around trying to meet this challenge. Chad is a good friend and an even better hunting partner, but I'll admit, I didn't think he would pull it off. I should've never doubted him.

The whitetails that call eastern Oregon home are thriving in this region, but they are jumpy and extremely wary of predators, and taking an early season whitetail buck with your bow is no easy accomplishment. They're drawn to crops that are still green in late summer, feeding there and often returning to the surrounding public



Northeast Oregon whitetails are thriving, but they're not easily taken.

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

Chad Dotson ambushed this Wallowa County whitetail returning from a field during bow season.

land where they bed, especially in canyon country. Landowners here are sometimes more willing to allow access for hunting whitetails than mule deer.

Then one morning while hovering over my morning cup of coffee, I got a call.

"Did you get one?!" I asked, thinking maybe he would tell me another tale of heartbreak.

"Yeah! Think you could come snap a few pictures and help me get this thing back to the truck?" he replied.

I threw down the last swig of my coffee, told my crew I'd be back shortly and couldn't believe my eyes when I arrived.

Archery hunting whitetail bucks in eastern Oregon via spot-and-stalk demands steadfast persistence, knowledge of your quarry and skill. Chad possesses all three. He located the bucks coming off an adjacent field moving their way through a small ravine, and that is where he launched one arrow that flew true and found its mark.

—ZACH MANSFIELD

Get next to some smokin' hot Huns

When I'm hunting huns, usually 200 yards behind, my dog creeping ahead, whether in crop lands or sage, this is my favorite bird. But these hunts are rare. Memory takes me back to places like Ruggs Ranch, near Heppner, and to the rimrock above the Deschutes, and to bunchgrass on the edge of the Alvord.

We hunted them last where a huge fire had ripped through miles and miles of encroaching junipers. When we returned, what we found was waist-high bunch grass and water. And Hungarian partridge. In three or four days on an end-of-season deer hunt, I counted seven coveys of Huns and managed to walk amongst three of the coveys with my side-by-side 20 gauge.

Chukar get all the attention, and rightly so. We might see a hundred chukar for every Hun. But those of us that love to chase Huns would not have it any other way.

Chukar tend to hold the high ground,

the inhospitable rim rocks, the little patches of cheat, while their partridge cousins prefer wide-open spaces in cropland, sage, and bunchgrass country at lower elevations or an acre of rye next to a small seep or a creek.

Planning a hunt? Think about all our sage brush skyline country that has burned in the last five years or so.

Run a finger over the map or explore on Google Earth. Keep in mind the best habitat for Huns is foothill ground close to irrigated farmland.

Let the dogs range and run. Huns are sneaky, usually in coveys of 10 or 12, and they burst out of the grass, especially at the tops of low hills. But a good dog can hold them.

When the junipers burn up, the bunch-grass comes back and more water flows in the seeps and the creeks. And a bird hunt for Hungarian partridge can turn smokin' hot. —GARY LEWIS



PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

East of the Cascades, the state boasts 13 wildlife areas, many of which are populated by Huns.

Biden Trumps refuge hunting expansions

The Trump Administration announced massive expansions of hunting and fishing opportunities on public lands in 2020. The executive action established 850 new opportunities on 2.3 million acres at 147 national wildlife refuges and hatcheries, making it the largest expansion by the Fish and Wildlife Service in agency history.

That affected Hart Mountain, Nestucca Bay, and Wapato Lake. Hunters and conservation organizations celebrated, while at least one environmental group, the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), filed suit to reverse it. Said opportunities remain. Hunting at Wapato Lake, near Portland, began in the 2020-21 season, with OHA actively involved in developing hunting opportunities.

Some worried the change of POTUS would roll back hunting access and personal freedoms, as per the pandemic response and gun control efforts. However, not to be outdone, Biden's Department of Interior announced additional expansions in 2021 with the "America the Beautiful" initiative and related 30 by 30 program (conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands by 2030). The press release touted the "largest expansion of opportunities to date" on 2.1 million acres at 90 NWRs.

Here, Malheur expanded opportunities by extending hunting seasons for migratory birds on the Buena Vista and South Malheur Lake units to be consistent with state seasons. Mule deer hunting will also begin in the Buena Vista Unit this season.

Baskett Slough will expand hunting opportunities to new acres and establish a September goose hunt under a rule proposed for 2022-23. Finley will allow waterfowl hunting, for the first time, on acres that already allow other types of hunting. Blacktail areas will also be expanded.

Thirty by 30 was opposed by the U.S. Farm Bureau and many in rural America. Apparently, only 12 percent of the country is currently "protected." So where does the rest of the land come from to reach 30 percent? The program is part of a larger climate agenda agreed upon by numerous other nations. It attempts to fundamentally redefine "conservation." —JASON HALEY

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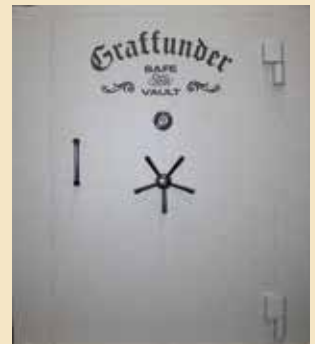
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Purchasing a new firearm could prove all but impossible if Measure 114 passes in November.

IP17 qualifies for November ballot

Gun control measure would ban magazines over 10 rounds, force new layers of red tape on buyers

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

Initiative Petition 17, the “Reduction of Gun Violence Act,” has qualified for the November 2022 ballot with over 130,000 valid signatures submitted at the July 8 deadline. It will be Measure 114.

The initiative contains several changes to firearms ownership and purchasing ability, including a new permit-to-purchase procedure administered by a police chief or county sheriff that would include a background check, including fingerprinting and photographing of purchaser. Additionally, the purchaser must show proof of an approved firearms training course that includes a live fire component. OHA envisions hopeless red tape. The permit, if approved, would be valid for 5 years.

As part of the permit-to-purchase procedure, a searchable database will be created and maintained of all permits issued, including expired permits. All firearms purchased by a permit-holder will be recorded in the database and the information is allowed to be stored for an indefinite period of time. The initiative also states that a valid permit-to-purchase must be verified before any firearm transfer at a gun show. “Large capacity” magazines, defined as holding more than 10 rounds, would also be banned from sale, possession or use.

IP18 gun control bid fails

Initiative Petition 18, “Reduction of Harm from Weapons Act,” failed to qualify for the November ballot. Petitioners did not submit the required signatures by the July 8 deadline.

While OHA is pleased this measure will not be on the ballot, we are certain to see a bill version in the legislature.

IP18 would have prohibited manufacture, import, purchase, transfer, possession, and use of many semi-automatic firearms, including rifles, pistols, and shotguns. Any of these weapons currently owned would be allowed to be retained only if registered with the state and if use is limited to owner’s property, shooting ranges, and hunting.

While OHA understands the need for action against gun violence, we believe these purchase restrictions will only affect legal firearms owners who already conform to the current laws in place and will have no substantial affect to the criminal aspect of gun violence. Additionally, the searchable database containing purchaser information and an itemized list of purchased firearms takes this measure far beyond “common sense” gun laws. OHA will continue to stand with our partners against this measure.

RETURN Act aims to gut Pittman-Robertson Act

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

Filed by Rep. Andrew Clyde (R-GA), the RETURN (Repeal Excise Tax on Unalienable Rights Now) Act would repeal the 11-percent excise tax on hunting firearms, ammunition, bows and arrows that funds the Pittman-Robertson Act.

The Pittman-Robertson Act was established in 1937 and is a major funding source for fish and wildlife agencies across the nation. These funds, often referred to as “PR funds,” are designated to wildlife conservation work, as well as outreach and hunter education. PR funds have provided more than \$14 billion in funding to states since the act’s inception 85 years ago, with several recent years surpassing \$1 billion annually.

The bill seeks to replace the PR funds with appropriations totaling \$800 million or less from the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act and the Mineral Leasing Act, which are funded by offshore oil and gas drilling leases, as well as coal, natural gas, and minerals extracted from federal land.

Pittman-Robertson funds, paid by hunters and recreational shooters, have been foundational in establishing hunters as true conservationists who provide a majority of the funding for on-the-ground conservation work. Hunting, conservation, and sport shooting associations across the nation are speaking up to protect the Pittman-Robertson Act.

Join them by using Howl For Wildlife’s platform to contact your legislators:
<https://www.howlforwildlife.org/returnact>

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BLACK POWDER By GARY LEWIS

Peak fuel deer and elk combo hunts to target

Gas ain't getting cheaper. If you can hunt deer and elk at the same time, you're money ahead!

Remember when you saw a huge buck during elk season? Recall letting a wall hanger bull walk during a deer hunt? How could you forget?

You have always wanted to hunt deer and elk at the same time.

Combination hunts are not easy to put together, but several deer and elk hunts overlap in muzzleloader seasons, and that could save you big money in gas or diesel this fall. At least that's what you tell your special someone.

Using the 2022 Big Game Regulations as a guide, let's take a look at three great combination hunts and the odds of drawing them next year.

EIGHT HAPPY DAYS IN THE HEPPNER UNIT!

Of all the hunts in this year's muzzleloader offerings, the Pole Creek 248M hunt might provide the highest chance of success. Last year, the estimated harvest was seven bulls for 24 hunters. That's 29 percent success with an average of five days in the field. Expect to spend 11 preference points to draw this one. The season runs eight days in mid-October concurrent with the Ditch Creek 148M deer hunt, which usually takes one or two points to draw.

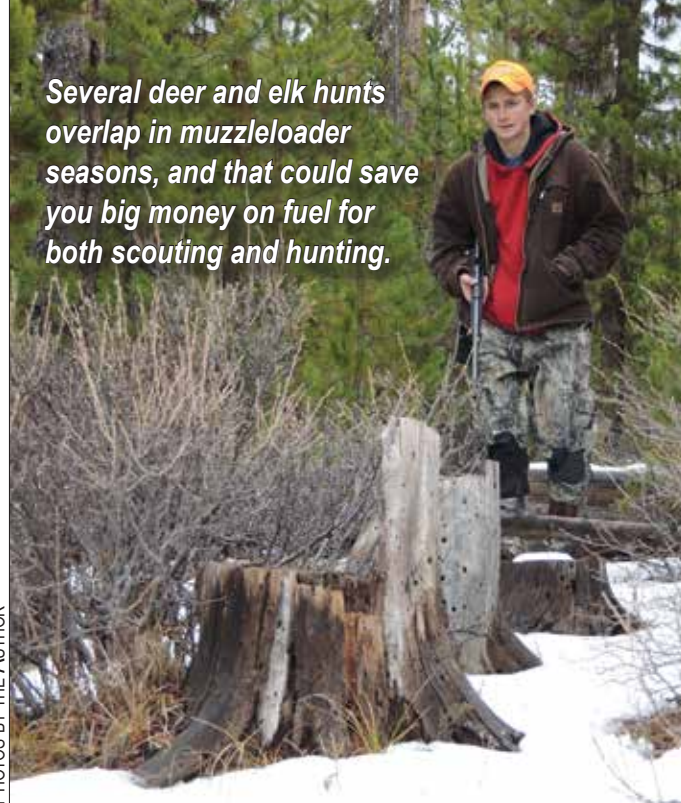
Last year, the estimated harvest in the Ditch Creek deer hunt was 30 deer for 125 hunters with a success rate of 24 percent. Hunters needed an average of five-plus days to fill their tags.

For a hunter with private land access in the Heppner Unit, contemplate a black powder triple play with a Heppner Private antlerless deer tag No. 648A. The season runs in the same time frame and the state offered 20 tags last year.

THANKSGIVING IN SUMPTER!

Tell the family, "We're having Thanksgiving dinner in Sumpter!" They will be surprised. Two hunts overlap to provide this unique opportunity in November. The Elkhorn No. 2 (251M2) is a long season that runs from mid-October through the end of the year. This antlerless hunt is easy to draw with zero points, but the hunt is limited to private lands in the Sumpter Unit. Think about that before applying, but then imagine the Baker muzzleloader 151M. It's a November rut hunt whitetail deer season opportunity that takes place in units 51, 62, 63, 64 in mid- to late November and can be drawn with one or two points.

Several deer and elk hunts overlap in muzzleloader seasons, and that could save you big money on fuel for both scouting and hunting.



PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

Paxton Eicher of Bend hunting elk with a muzzleloader. Oregon's muzzleloading seasons provide hunters with higher quality hunts by limiting entry. Several seasons overlap, providing unique combo hunt opportunities.

Want to make it a real combo pilgrim? Get a fall turkey tag and bring the blunderbuss. Might as well have cougar and bear tags in the possibles bag, too.

BURNS IS BASE CAMP FOR MALHEUR DEER AND ELK

Eight days to get it done. The play here is to draw a deer tag in the North Malheur 166M hunt, which takes place in mid-October concurrent with the High Desert 278M elk season. Hunt deer north of the Highway 20 boundary and hunt elk south of the line. In fact, you can spot and stalk elk in units 67, 68, 69, 70, 71 and parts of units 66 and 73. The 278M hunt takes in the Beatys Butte, Juniper, Malheur River, Owyhee, Steens, Wagontire and Whitehorse units. Success rates run highest in the Malheur and Owyhee.

Spike camp out and prepare to be highly mobile, as elk herds here may cover 70 miles or more in a seven-day circuit. Need a break? Get a hotel room in Burns then head back to the desert. Bring extra tires, extra gas cans and dry reloads. A tracking snow is unlikely, but it could happen. Take a stand on rim rock and watch for the herd.

Drawing the elk tag is easy with zero points or one point. Drawing the deer tag usually takes two or three points.

Looking at the calendar, I would plan to hunt elk for the first four days, then switch to deer for the last half of the deer season.

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Be aggressive for elk

I heard the bull's footsteps in the dry forest way before I saw it. Calm cow calls brought in the public land bull, but with caution. When the bull slipped behind a fir tree, I raised to my knees and drew. The bull emerged and I gave a quick cow mew with a diaphragm call. It stopped, and the 12-yard shot was simple. The pack out of the Siuslaw River drainage wasn't simple.

Every move I make when elk hunting is based on what the animals are doing and saying at the time of the hunt. In the case of this bull, it wasn't talking, nor were any other bulls. It was early in the season and the only sounds I heard were cows and calves calling in shaded draws, so that's what I did.

If there's cow and calf talk going on, I'll mimic those sounds to send a message to a bull that a cow is straying from the herd.

Once gathering is over and protecting starts, get aggressive with calling and moving.

I'll mix up calf and cow talk to simulate a calf venturing away from mom, and communicating to reunite. This may pull in a big bull, or any bull on the fringe of a herd.

In mid-September, as bulls focus on defending their herd, things change. Once the gathering is over and the protecting starts, that's a good time to get aggressive in both your calling and moving. This is when bugling hard and getting close to a herd to fire up a hormone-enraged bull can pay off.

If you hear a cow make an estrus sound, blast your cow call. Mimicking those loud, piercing shrills and tossing in insubordinate bugles will often get multiple bulls moving your way. It can create a great deal of energy and excitement of every elk within earshot fast, so be ready.

"My favorite time to cow call is when I'm moving in on a herd and hear cows calling," shares noted Oregon guide, Jody Smith (jodysmithguideservice.com). "As for bugling, once I bugle and get a bull to respond, I'm on the move, trying to close within 100 yards before calling again. I move fast. I'm a lot more aggressive with Roosevelt elk than I used to be. Stick to the shadows, and if you break a twig, cow call once in a while to cover your noise, but keep moving. Slow down as you get close, then start cow calling."

It's been my experience, both for Rocky Mountain and Roosevelt bulls, that they stick to their harems later in the season, rarely coming out of cover to inspect my calling. As soon as I get a bugle response from a bull, I mark the spot, monitor the wind, then move in. If the wind changes, I back out and come in from another direction, or return another day. Elk have some of the best noses in the animal kingdom, and you will not fool them. I don't care if an elk hears me or sees me in the shadows, but I've never killed a bull that's smelled me.



PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

Bulls go through a progression of behavior shifts throughout September, and hunting them aggressively may be the key to punching a tag.

The closer I get to a herd, or a bull, the slower I move and the more carefully I watch. Look for a shiny, wet nose, the flicker of an ear or tail, or the horizontal back of a bedded elk. It's amazing how well an entire herd of elk can hide. If the wind is blowing toward you, pay attention, as you'll often smell elk way before you see them.

If my scouting has revealed a big bull in an area, midway to the end of the season, I'll hit that spot and bugle often. I'll make aggressive bugles, and if I hear nothing, I'll move on and come back another time; maybe later that day, maybe the next day. Catching a bull when it's in the frame of mind of being protective is key, and this can change day to day, even hour to hour, with testosterone levels.

Because I'll move if I don't hear a bull respond to my bugle, I want to have as many bulls as possible located prior to the season. This is where summer scouting is vital. I keep trail cameras up all season, too, checking to see what new bulls may show up.

This archery season, listen to the elk and let them determine your next move. By focusing on elk behavior, and not what you think should be happening, maybe you'll get the shot opportunity you're looking for.



Want to learn how best to skin and break down an elk? The author's popular DVD, Field Dressing, Skinning & Caping Big Game shows this and more, and is available at www.scotthaugen.com. Follow Scott's adventures on Instagram and Facebook.

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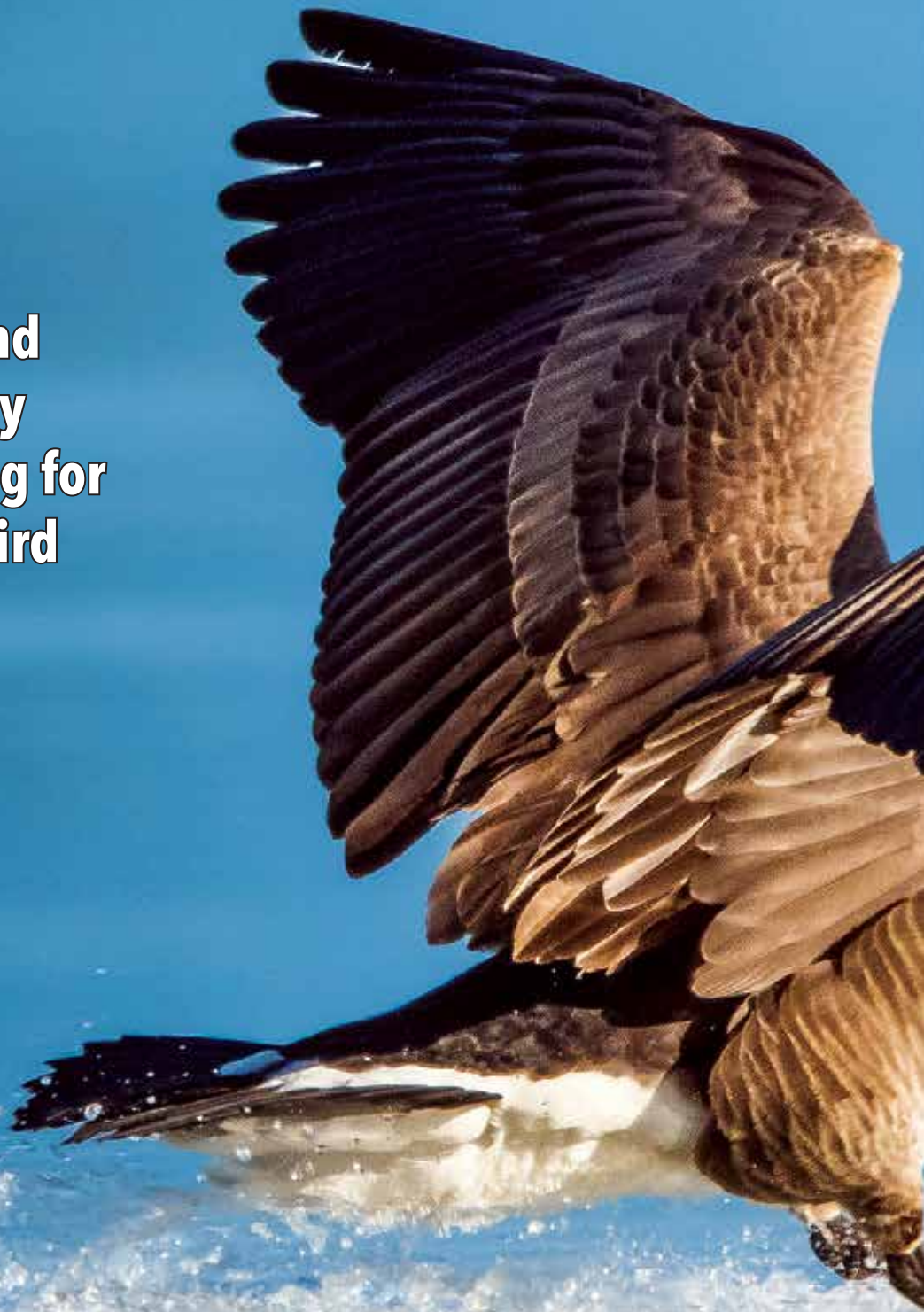
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Ruffling Feathers

The mix of sun and rain into July may mean a mixed bag for Oregon's game bird outlook this fall.

BY JIM YUSKAVITCH





This year, for both upland game birds and ducks, it looks like a good news-bad news scenario. The good news is that it was a generally mild winter in Oregon, and that leads to greater overwinter survival for adult birds. The bad news is that game bird numbers, and therefore hunting prospects, are largely dependent on each year's nesting success and chick survival. Unfortunately, it was a late spring, and in many areas, an extended period of wet and cold. That's bad for upland bird chicks whose downy covering when they first hatch doesn't give them much protection from those conditions and can readily succumb to hypothermia. For ducks, the situation is a little better, but ducks are still suffering from drought and low water conditions in many places on the east side of the Cascade Mountains.

The key to upland bird and waterfowl hunting success this year may be doing some advance research so you don't end up hunting in areas where the birds have taken a big hit. Here's an assessment of what the upcoming bird hunting seasons might look like from a number of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists around the state.

Pheasant

Most pheasant hunting in Oregon these days are the put-and-take fee hunts sponsored by ODFW, and since the birds are pen-raised, they are not dependent on weather or the agricultural habitat they benefitted from in years past. High quality pheasant habitat is much scarcer now due to more efficient farming practices that leave less edge habitat and crop "waste" that provided the birds with a critical food source.

Put-and take-pheasant hunts offered by ODFW each year take place at Sauvie Island, EE Wilson, Fern Ridge, Denman and Klamath wildlife areas. More details are available in the Oregon Game Bird Regulations.

However, there are still opportunities to hunt wild long tails in north-central Oregon, on the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and agricultural lands around Vale and Nyssa. But the wild birds have been hit by cold, wet spring conditions, and populations are probably going to be down this year.



WILLY ONARHEIM

Quail are prolific nesters that will hatch multiple broods, which may have helped them weather the wet spring better than most upland birds.

Quail

Quail numbers in Oregon tend to be pretty healthy in general across their range. They also have the added advantage over some other game birds in that

they tend to nest a little later, often after spring rain and cold has come and gone. In addition, they will readily re-nest – sometimes more than once.

But poor spring weather conditions have taken their toll on quail this year. “It doesn’t look good,” says Tod Lum, District Wildlife Biologist in Roseburg. “It was a cold, wet spring and not the kind of conditions amenable to high survival rates for chicks.” Chris Yee, Springfield-based District Wildlife Biologist concurs. “All the upland birds took a hit,” he says. “While quail may re-nest, by the time they did this year it was late.” That scenario repeats itself throughout the state.

Mountain quail have fared a little better, at least on the North Coast. “We see plenty of mountain quail out and about, even though we had a wet spring,” explains District Wildlife Biologist Dave Nuzum in Tillamook. “We’re not sure how the wet spring has affected broods, but they will re-nest multiple times.” Because these birds do re-nest, Lum thinks that quail – both valley and mountain – may still end up with decent numbers in southwest Oregon.

Forest Grouse

“Forest grouse are doing pretty well,” says Dave Nuzum, of North Coast populations. The past two years saw record

numbers of birds based on spring hooting surveys. This year, the count was down a little but still represented healthy numbers. But the situation changes as you move south down the Coast Range and Cascades.

“I expect forest grouse hunting to be dismal this year due to the cold, wet spring we had,” says Chris Yee of the ODFW Springfield office. It’s the same assessment that Tod Lum makes further south in both mountain ranges.

Sage Grouse

According to Lee Foster, Assistant District Wildlife Biologist in Hines, sage grouse numbers are flat to slightly down in the High Desert District based on the most recent surveys. While poor spring weather conditions affect sage grouse as well, most of the negative impact on the population is from ongoing drought conditions. That is continuing to affect sage grouse across their Oregon range. However, because they are managed conservatively, this has not affected hunting opportunities much.

Chukar

Of the local chukar population, says Steve Cherry in Heppner, “I have been seeing adult birds around but haven’t seen any broods. There could be small chicks in the grass and we aren’t seeing them.”

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“We had a super dry period until the middle of April, then it was wet and cold for the next month and a half,” says Lee Foster, based in Hines. “That wet weather hit at the same time the chukars were nesting.” On a more upbeat note, Foster explains that the wet spring weather did result in a strong green-up that has produced lots of insects. So any chukar chicks (or other species of game bird chicks) that survived the inclement spring weather will benefit from excellent habitat conditions and an abundant food source.

Wild Turkey

While turkeys are affected by spring cold and rain, Tod Lum is confident that turkeys will continue to do well in southwest Oregon, and the birds are generally doing well and expanding in other parts of the state, including the central and northern Oregon Cascades and northeast Oregon.

Doves and Band-tailed Pigeons

Dave Nuzum, on the north coast, reports, “There are lots of band-tailed pigeons. We were seeing them when we were out in the woods during grouse surveys.” Mourning doves, like the pigeons, seem to have fairly steady populations throughout Oregon, although the former species tend to leave at the first sign of cold fall weather.

Ducks and Geese

For the most part, the outlook for waterfowl, while mixed, is brighter. According to Brandon Reishus, ODFW Migratory Game Bird Coordinator, this year’s survey of Oregon’s breeding duck population was up, although some of the birds counted may have been migrants that did not actually stay to breed, which may have inflated the count somewhat. In eastern Oregon, where drought conditions still persist, numbers of gadwall, mallards and cinnamon teal were down. Western Oregon water conditions were better, with mallard populations on the rise.

Habitat up north that produces birds for the fall flight down the Pacific Flyway was mixed as well. In southern Alberta, where a good number of our birds are produced, low water conditions prevailed, although the situation was better and wetter in the northern portions of the province. British Columbia breeding habitat was looking reasonably good. Alaska was experiencing a somewhat drier summer, but tends to be a fairly steady producer of birds.

For the most part, Reishus predicts a duck hunting season similar to last year or slightly better. Southeastern Oregon will likely be an exception. Malheur Lake



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There's no shortage of doves in Oregon, and seasons and bag limits are generous.

is down to 1,100 acres and the North and South Waterfowl Hunting Zones will be closed this year. Encountering very dry conditions, ducks may simply fly on by without stopping. However, this can also shift hunting opportunities to another area. For example, as water levels have been consistently low on Lower Klamath and Tule Lake national wildlife refuges, more ducks are moving onto the Klamath Wild-



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WILLY ONARHEIM

Mallard numbers are on the rise in western Oregon, but are dropping east of the Cascades.

life Area, where water levels have been more reliable in recent years. According to Josh Schmucker, wildlife area manager, that has resulted in increased hunter success there.

While Canada goose numbers remain healthy throughout the state, the Canada goose bag limit has been reduced from four birds to three this season. This is a response to some taxonomic changes relat-

ing to the various sub-species of Canada geese that were proposed by scientists years ago and just adopted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, along with declines in cackling goose numbers. This affects goose management in northwest Oregon, where a number of Canada goose sub-species winter.

Previously, there were seven recognized sub-species of Canada goose in Oregon –

western, dusky, lesser, Vancouver, Aleutian, Taverner's and cackling – the latter three being the smallest and most abundant. Now, cackling geese are considered a separate species of goose and Aleutian and Taverner's sub-species of cackling geese. In addition, since 2017, cackling geese (now scientifically lumped with Aleutian and Taverner's) have been declining and are currently below management objectives, hence the reduction in the bag limit. However, this only applies in the Northwest Goose Permit Zone. Canada goose populations, while there have been some declines, remain good in Oregon and goose hunters should have no trouble finding opportunity.





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BAGGING BIG BUCKS DURING BANKERS' HOURS

How to invest precious time from Gold Beach to Silver Lake.

By Gary Lewis

There was a time when a banker's workday was said to start at 10 a.m. and finish at 3 p.m. In some places the banks closed for the noon hour, too. These "shortened" workdays were called bankers' hours. But bankers and tellers are quick to say the term "bankers' hours" doesn't reflect the amount of time loan officers took to go over the previous day's figures or for clerks to count and recount their tills.

At the end of the day, the tills have to balance, the registers have to reconcile, and all those greenbacks don't stack themselves.

A lot of us who are going afield this September and October are hoping to bag a buck, to make a deposit in the meat locker, and, according to my records, the best bet is during bankers' hours.

WHERE TO GO WHEN BUCKS WITHDRAW

Going back through my journals and looking at the time stamps on pictures, for over 35 seasons hunting deer from Banks to Bonanza, from Green to Greenhorn and from Monmouth to Monument, it seems we spotted most of our deer from about 9:55 a.m. to about 3 p.m. Yes, we took bucks in early-morning hunts, but the biggest bucks all came in the middle of the day. We are talking public lands hunts now, although the same principles largely apply to private land hunting.

The thing to think about is where do deer go when they withdraw from the feeding areas?

BANK ON THIS

"If you're on public land, hunting in the middle of the day is going to be

much more productive than hunting in the middle of the day on private land," said Jeff Miller, owner and operator of Field N Marsh Outfitters, who has been guiding in Oregon and Washington since 1974. Many of the properties that his clients hunt on are adjacent to public lands, and Miller is an observer of nature and human nature.

"On private lands, a lot of hunters come out of the field after the morning hunt, and they go back into the field in the late afternoon and they will hunt till dark," Miller said.

"A lot of guys don't come in at lunch time," Miller said, noting public-land hunters are more likely to hunt through the morning hours and into the afternoon. The patient hunters – the observant students of deer – have a distinct advantage if they can park themselves where they can see into feeding and bedding areas.

"If I'm on public land, I'm at an advantage because there are other people out there moving the deer around," Miller said.

It makes sense to get on a high point or a vantage point.

"People hunting on public land tend to feel that they need to move to see animals and that works to the advantage of the hunter that can stay in one good spot. You have other people out there, and you think that they are your competition, but they are actually helping you."

Bucks tend to feed in the early morning and then find a bed where they can watch their backtrail and keep their nose in the wind. They tend to seek shade, and as the sun moves across the sky, the shade moves

and they have to get up to move back into shade. And when they do that, they might take a few bites of nearby feed. The other thing that can happen is that other hunters will walk right through good deer bedding areas on their way back to the truck. Unwittingly, they move deer ahead of them and out to the sides.

"Really it is about glassing and sitting and waiting," Miller said. "If you're in good cover, you will see deer get up and move around a little bit, maybe two or three times, and that's what you're looking for." That natural movement of a deer that needs to stand up and shift around to get out of the sun and into the shade again.

"I think you have to get on a vantage point and glass and glass and glass. Look for that movement and then decide whether you can make a play for that buck."

FOCUS ON PRIME FOOD

Finding mule deer or blacktails is about finding food. In October they are hitting the browse hard. If the place where you hunt blacktails has mixed hardwoods, the deer might be in a place where the madrone berries are hitting the ground or where acorns are dropping.

When hunting mule deer anywhere in central or eastern Oregon, look for the twiggy browse that make up 55 percent of a deer's diet. Yes, it helps to know the difference between mountain mahogany and bitterbrush and learn about other mule deer food sources, but when glassing at long range, it can be hard to identify the shrubbery. A quick shortcut is to look for browse

For over 35 seasons hunting deer from Banks to Bonanza, we spotted most of our bucks in the middle of the day.



PHOTO BY SAMUEL PYKE

Any little patch of shade could hold a buck in the middle of the day.

that is red or purple in color, contrasted to the dried or the silver green sagebrush.

If muleys or blacktails are hitting a crop like alfalfa or dry land wheat, the best bet is to hunt sparingly. Evenings are best. The food dictates where the bucks are likely to bed. Most blacktails will bed within a quarter mile from where they feed. Mule deer are more likely to be a half-mile or so away from feed and from water sources. Keep in mind that dry country deer might travel up to two miles from nighttime feeding areas (like alfalfa fields) to a bedding spot under a rim rock.

TAKE INTEREST IN WEATHER BREAKS

If the weather has been warm and a cold front is on the way, it can mean the best hunting of the season is around the corner. Conversely, if the weather has been cold or rainy, a warm day with the sun on the slopes can bring deer out of the woodwork.

Watch the weather constantly. One thing that makes all the difference is wind. We all hate it, but especially in open country, it can be astounding how many deer

show themselves. When the wind pushes them out of their normal patterns, groups of deer, often with a buck in attendance, will show up where there were no deer at all the day before. A good steady rain is the blacktail hunter's best ally.

GOOD ACCESS IS BETTER THAN GOOD SIGN

We have to admit that bagging a buck is more like robbing the bank than it is like asking for a loan. And with that in mind, it is better to access the hunt area without bumping into deer than it is to hunt in places where there is a lot of deer sign.

That means if I know where deer are moving, feeding and crossing, I don't pollute that area with my scent. It is better to take a position where these heavy-use

areas can be watched from 200 yards away.

Do not climb a hill in the dark. Wait till shooting light and stay on the downwind side. It is better to get to a stand or a vantage point late than to spook deer in the dark on the way in. The important thing is to be the one that slips into a tree stand or a ground blind or takes a vantage point without deer knowing.

SETTLING ACCOUNTS

A bank account is simply a financial property or an obligation held and owned under your name. Holding a deer tag is like having a certificate of deposit or a money market account but you're not sure what bank is holding that deer that belongs to you. The APY (annual percentage yield) depends on factors like did the bucks come through winter in good shape, and was it a wet spring this year? And are predator numbers being kept in control in your unit? That account has a maturity date, and east of the mountains it is only 12 days long.

I shot over a buck last year and called it my first overdraft in a long time. I like to settle accounts with a 160-grain Nosler Partition or a 165-grain AccuBond at 3,000 feet-per-second, preferably with the gun rested on a backpack at less than 300 yards. I call that direct deposit.



Listen to Gary's podcast - Ballistic Chronicles - on Spotify, iTunes, Apple Podcasts and other podcast platforms. Or visit www.GaryLewisOutdoors.com.



PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

The buck fed out of the mountain mahogany and was out in the open when Lewis slipped over the ridge. This buck was taken on the seventh day of a 12-day season with a cross-canyon shot and a 150-grain Nosler Partition from a Winchester Model 70 once owned by John Nosler.



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Early-Bird Blacktails

Fall rains and the rut are great, but there's nothing like finding bucks when they're still using open areas and getting the drop on them. Be first in line.

By TROY RODAKOWSKI

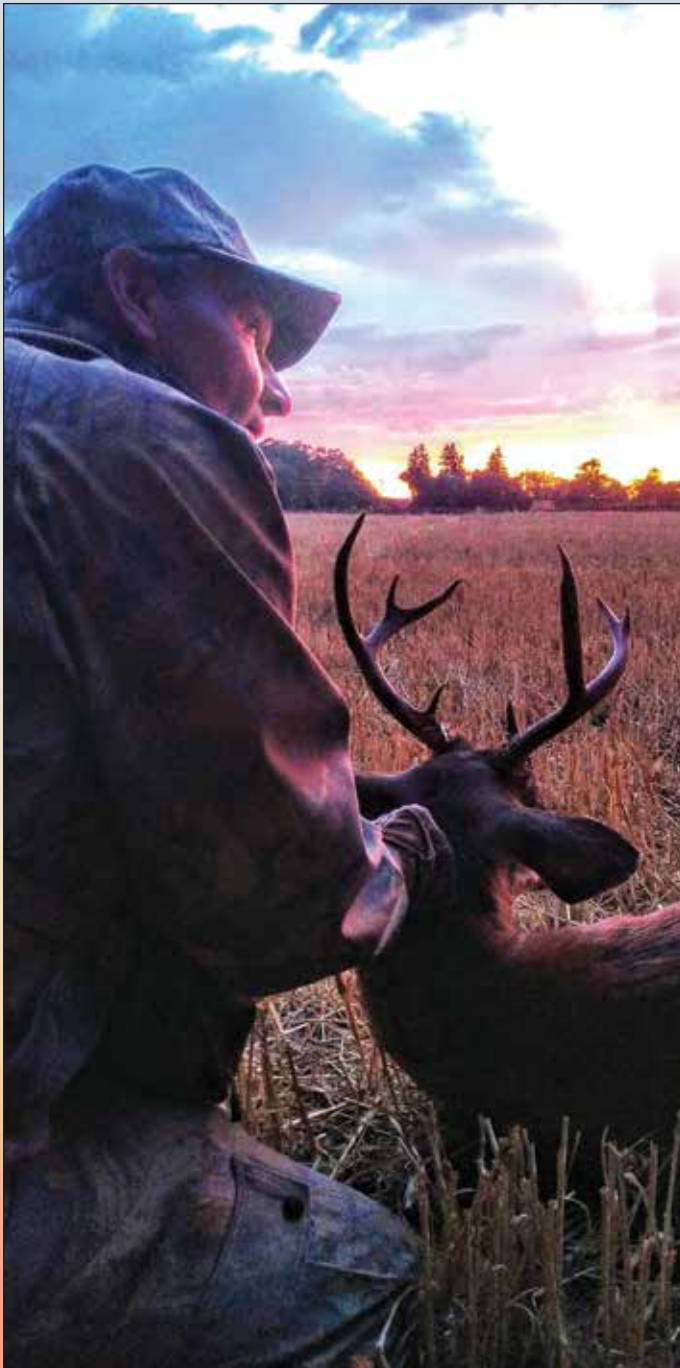


PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

The early bird gets the worm, right? How about the early season hunter gets the buck? Despite great success during the rut, many hunters find some of the best opportunities to harvest their deer before the autumn rains. Deer are transitioning from summer patterns, moving to thicker cover and being seen less often during daylight hours.

Labor Day weekend is always busy with folks taking one last summer vacation before school begins, and the woods just seem to be crawling with people. However, if you find some secluded hidey holes that deer feel safe, then you are halfway to a successful early season. Benches near clearcut edges or small meadows near creeks where deer have been spending the summer offer good bets to find deer resting and moving about to and from feeding areas. Early mornings and 2 hours prior to dusk will be when most deer are on the move.

Most bucks will rub their velvet off during nighttime hours looking for small saplings about 2-4 inches in diameter. Finding trails that are well traveled is another key ingredient for success when looking for that early season score. I have had so many deer run, walk and trot by my stand or ground blind during the first week of September that I have come to realize that this is a great week to be in the woods. Sometimes they have shown up so quickly that I found myself caught off guard. By late summer deer will have well established routines and many of them will continue to maintain them into mid-September.

Creek bottoms, springs and swampy seeps are my early favorites. Animals will visit these places often and be nearby throughout the month of September or at least until the first considerable rains of the season show up. Most small creeks and waterholes have dried over the summer months, so locations with water are magnets for animals during the late summer. Find them, and you will find deer.

Another magical time in the early deer woods is the first big rain of the season. The lowering barometer, smell of moisture and settling of the dust will trigger massive urgency in ungulates to move about. It's almost as if they are throwing a backwoods party to celebrate the return of H₂O. So, keep a close eye on the barometer and weather forecasts for the first good storm and make sure you are in the woods when it hits. You will be surprised at the number of deer you see.

Watch the moon phases closely, as they trigger major movements during clear nights, and I have found that evening hunts can be optimum during these cycles.






Rubs are a buck's calling card. After the velvet is gone, they become more nocturnal and elusive.

Environmental Complications

Cover scent, buck bomb, scent wicks and urine lures mixed with mosquito repellent don't work too well together, but the biting flies, ticks and skeeters are usually pretty bad this time of year. Remember that natural urine lures and scents are now illegal here in Oregon. Wearing long sleeves or bug nets during 75-80+ degree weather is sometimes a necessity despite

its uncomfortable nature. I prefer long sleeve light mesh that allows some air flow and cooling near the body. I see a good number of deer moving during late mornings and early afternoons, changing bedding areas or taking a potty break and getting a nibble or two.

Fire restrictions limiting access to forest lands can be a major obstacle for hunters this time of year. Not only can it be frustrating, but it can ruin an entire summer of scouting and hard work. So, make sure to have a back-up plan or two, because options never hurt. I have unfortunately found myself implementing secondary plans several times over the years. Keep a close eye on private access by calling hunter hotlines for private timber lands such as Weyerhaeuser in Oregon 1-888-741-5403 or the BLM Public Desk: 503-808-6001 (<https://www.blm.gov/orwafire>) or local field offices, as they will give you up-to-date access info. Other companies may require written permission or purchase of trespass permits to access their lands. Also, you can check with the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (<https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc>) 503-808-2764. 

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GAME ON THE GRILL

By TIFFANY HAUGEN

Gochujang Game Bird Tacos

Most upland game birds have a mild flavor profile. Unlike waterfowl, their level of gaminess is not usually affected by what they are eating. Instead of worrying about neutralizing the wildness of upland game birds, many cooks look to amp up the flavor a notch.

One ingredient that is a must-have pantry item if you are a flavor junkie is gochujang. This fermented, Korean red chili paste isn't overly spicy, but it's full of umami savoriness. Gochujang can be found in the Asian section of many grocery stores and can be used in marinades, sauces, stews and stir-fry.

- 3/4 to 1 pound boneless game bird meat (breasts, thighs, legs)
- 2 tablespoons gochujang
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon minced jalapeño pepper
- 1 tablespoon Sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1/2" grated fresh ginger
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion or chives
- 1 tablespoon olive or coconut oil
- Corn or flour tortillas
- Lemon or lime wedge for garnish
- Top with desired salad greens or herbs



Clean game birds and remove meat from bones. Cut meat into small strips. In a small bowl, mix gochujang, soy sauce, orange juice, sesame seeds, jalapeños, sesame oil, vinegar, ginger and green onions or chives until thoroughly combined. Add meat to gochujang mixture and stir until meat is coated. Refrigerate and marinate 2-8 hours. Let meat sit at room temperature 20 minutes before pan frying.

Heat olive or coconut oil in a large skillet on medium-high heat. Add all meat and marinade to the pan. Pan fry 8-10 minutes, stirring constantly. Serve on a tortilla with desired toppings.

Upland Bird Field Care Tip: Even though upland birds are mild flavored compared to waterfowl, be sure to take proper care of them in the field, especially on those hot, early season hunts. Doing so will optimize their quality and overall flavor. Avoid carrying them in the back of a game vest for very long on hot days, where the body heat from your back can keep them from cooling. Be sure to draw the birds and get them cooling as quickly as possible. When butchering, make sure to remove all feathers and bloodshot, and clean all wound channels.

For signed copies of Tiffany Haugen's popular book, *Cooking Game Birds*, 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.



Upland game birds are rarely gamey tasting if prepared with care. As with poultry, you may want to spice up flavor, as we have with this tasty recipe.

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WOUNDED WARRIOR'S BIG BULL

Cross The Divide helps a soldier who sacrificed so much enjoy a dream hunt on Oregon's Zumwalt Prairie.

By Zach Mansfield

Veteran Matt Houston, who lost most of a leg while serving his country, poses with his elk rack next to a sign made by Wallowa County residents.



‘**T**he ultimate test of man’s conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.”

—Gaylord Nelson.

Matt Houston was seriously injured while serving as a quick reaction force for an Army unit. His injuries were so severe that his leg would be amputated to save his life.

With his leg amputated just above the knee, moving about the landscape on this elk hunt in Wallowa County would not be easy for him. Not a single word of discomfort or disdain for his injury were mentioned. It was almost as if he thrived on the challenge of pursuing elk in such a way.

The plan was simple: get to high ground, locate elk and make a play in order to get Matt the best opportunity possible. The guide, Andy Marcum, has access to some unique elk habitat. It’s premium agriculture fields that give way to grass lands in the heart of the Zumwalt Prairie that falls off into the

early stages of Hells Canyon. It’s several incredible pieces of property linked together. This diverse landscape lends itself well to helping wounded warriors hunt the less intimidating landscape while still offering them a top-notch hunt. With the help of veteran organization “Cross the Divide,” Andy can specialize in taking veterans who sustained injuries while fighting for the freedoms of this nation.

The morning wore on with laughs, stories and a certain unmistakable sense that something incredible was going to happen today. We approached our glassing point on the fringe of Hells Canyon overlooking one of the most breathtaking scenes I’ve ever seen. With a heavy morning frost on the grasses of Wallowa County, the Eagle Caps to the southwest and Idaho’s Seven Devils to the east, we put our optics and elk know-how to the test. We set out in search of a bull as unique as Matt and his story.

The story is almost unbelievable, but true. With a herd of well over 100 elk, and several herd bulls working the harem,





Matt surveys the terrain on the edge of Hells Canyon, searching for the bull of his dreams.

one unique bull was pulled off by himself. Had he spent the night working his harem and was worn out, did he just get kicked out of the giant herd by a younger, stronger bull? To this day, we all have no idea. It was elk hunting divine intervention if I've ever seen it.

We slowly picked our way through the rocks and stubble grass, ensuring that we kept ourselves concealed from all the sets of keen eyes and noses that worked the prairie that morning. Maneuvering through the last barbwire fence, Matt's determination to find success in this hunt was evident. We were what I like to call "danger close" and no wrong move could be made. While the country could be called "tamer" than some elk country, it was still a challenge. Matt's prosthetic leg was giving him grief as we crawled, slithered and moved toward our bull. On our last approach, Matt handed Andy his rifle and had to physically reach down and readjust his prosthetic with both hands in order to make the last low crawl to the final position. Determination is a powerful attribute of any human being; it was evident in that moment.

With a solid rest of scabbed rocks, packs, and jackets. Matt settled his breathing and his crosshairs on the bull of a lifetime. At the break of the trigger, the 180-grain projectile rocketed from the barrel of his reliable .300 Win Mag. As with any old bull, he wouldn't go down without a fight, and Matt found himself putting one more insurance shot into the old beast before it was done.

The group that accompanied Matt couldn't believe what we just witnessed, one of the most amazing bulls any of us had ever laid eyes on was taken by an American warrior, who arguably gave up the best years of his life in the name of freedom. Matt's taking this bull is the cap on a hunt that embodies determination, luck and grit – all of which can be traced back to how he overcame a tragic injury in a foreign land.



Cross the Divide is a Pacific Northwest veteran-based organization that offers veterans opportunity to find peace and solace through outdoor activities. For more information, visit crossthedivide.us





The dented primer on the casing of Matt's .300 Win Mag says it all.



Matt and guide Andy Marcum take it all in and savor the moment, admiring Matt's bull with a unique set of swords on one antler.



OHA forms wolf subcommittee



By Mike Totey, Conservation Director
mtotey@oregonhunters.org

The OHA Board of Directors has sanctioned the formation of a wolf subcommittee that will consist of wolf experts from around the region and be chaired by OHA Northeast Director Jim Akenson. The subcommittee will report to the OHA Wildlife-Lands Committee.

Wolves have been in the headlines for years and continue to be a concern for both hunters and landowners. The subcommittee will focus on pressing for implementation of the existing Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan that was updated in June 2019, particularly in the northeast portion of the state where wolves have been in Phase 3 (well established) for some time.

The subcommittee will advise the Wildlife-Lands Committee on wolf management issues and work on OHA's long-term goal of moving management of the species forward. This work will be critical for improving agency and landowner relations where they are currently strained, and set the stage for an eventual update to the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

The subcommittee members include a subset of the OHA Advisory Council: Jim Akenson, Vic Coggins, Holly Akenson, Mike Schlegel from Idaho, Tim Hiller from Montana, and Mike Totey.

Commission trims trap check intervals

By Amy Patrick, OHA Policy Director
Amy@oregonhunters.org

The Fish & Wildlife Commission approved the 2022-24 furbearer regulations at the June 17 commission meeting. ODFW staff recommended only one

change: reducing the 30-day interval for lethal sets when damage is occurring to 14 days.

The commission was not satisfied with the staff recommendation and instead approved reductions to two additional damage-related intervals. The new regulations put in place a 48-hour check time for all trap check intervals except the lethal sets for damage, which is the 14 days recommended by staff.

The commission's decision was disappointing as it was not based on staff recommendations or the best available science and does not take into account the financial hardship that livestock producers and land managers will now incur. OHA provided testimony in support of the staff recommendations, as did representatives of Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregon Trappers Association, and Oregon Forest & Industries Council.

OHA work continues on conservation easement

OHA Conservation Director Mike Totey and OHA Bend Chapter President Rex Parks recently met with the landowner of OHA's existing conservation easement in the Wychus Creek area to assess the effectiveness of the work that was completed by a number of OHA volunteers from central Oregon last fall.

The results were mixed. Seed that was spread seems to have little germination.

However, transplanted bunchgrass and planted Wyoming Big Sagebrush appear to be doing well and getting established.

Nearly all of the work done last fall targeted restoring the many dozer lines that were put in during the fire suppression efforts in July of 2021 when the Grandview Fire burned across the area. Unfortunately, those dozer trails are now being heavily used by cattle in the area.

This portion of Jefferson County is considered open range, which allows legally permitted cattle that are grazing under a permit from the Crooked River National Grasslands to wander to other properties.

OHA and the landowner are now exploring the feasibility of either fencing the property with wildlife friendly fencing or other options that might mitigate the heavy cattle use of the area, which is important big game winter range.



Seedlings are being grown at Warner Creek Correctional Facility for a November planting project in the Interstate Unit.

Restoring Hope & Habitat planting in Interstate Unit set for Nov. 19-20

By Tyler Dungannon, Conservation Coordinator
TD@oregonhunters.org

OHA is on the hunt for 50-100 OHA volunteers to plant and cage 14,000 sage and bitterbrush seedlings to restore mule deer habitat recently affected by wildfires in the Interstate Unit. Over a half-million acres burned in this unit in 2021, including the colossal 400,000-acre Bootleg Fire.

The seedlings are growing and will remain at the Warner Creek Correctional Facility in Lakeview until Nov. 15. As with any outplanting project, weather is a critical component and by planting in November, plants should remain dormant until spring when moisture will be readily available. OHA staff have strategically set the outplanting dates (Nov. 19 and 20) to accommodate volunteers who are holding late season Rocky Mountain elk tags.

State OHA and the Klamath Chapter each contributed \$3,000 to the project, while OHA's Lake County Chapter donated \$2,500. OHA conservation staff successfully attained grant funding to make this project possible.

Some project details are still to be determined. Please contact Tyler Dungannon (td@oregonhunters.org) for more information.

OHA recognizes achievements with state awards

OHA recently recognized outstanding volunteer efforts with the announcement of statewide annual awards. Chapters, state board members and staff nominate deserving individuals for awards, and then vote from the nominees on the ballot.

CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Hoodview Chapter – Hoodview Chapter has taken the lead on creating and piloting the Learn to Hunt program. Without their efforts, we would still be in the trial phases of that program instead of rolling it out to all OHA chapters. Their willingness to serve as the test subjects has helped us improve the program and serves as a great example for all other chapters who may want to implement the program.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Kelly Parkman – Kelly has been the reason the Learn to Hunt program was created and has enjoyed the success it has so far. His tireless energy and enthusiasm has propelled the program forward; it is genuinely his passion project. Without Kelly's vision and enthusiasm, we could not have created such an impactful program that has the potential to increase both the number of new hunters as well as the membership of OHA, in general.



OHA Vice President Cindy Rooney, left, who chairs OHA's Organizational Committee, accepts a Special Recognition Award from OHA Policy Director Amy Patrick at OHA's Chapter Leadership Summit on Aug. 6.



Recognized for efforts toward OHA's Learn to Hunt program, Hoodview Chapter President Kelly Parkman, left, receives OHA's Organizational Member of the Year Award and Chapter of the Year Award from OHA Conservation Coordinator Tyler Dungannon.

WILDLIFE MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Stephen McClelland – Rangeland Resource Manager and Real Estate Support Manager for Manulife (previously known as Hancock Forest Management), Stephen has provided over a decade of support to the Union/Wallowa Chapter by donating LOP tags for private timber lands. That support has raised tens of thousands of dollars that have been put back into wildlife and the community through youth trap shooting teams, scholarships, and youth/women hunting opportunities.

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Michael O'Casey, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership – As TRCP's Oregon Field Representative, Michael has shown strong and effective action to support wildlife and habitat conservation across Oregon's varied landscapes, from the Owyhee Basin Stewardship Coalition and safe wildlife passage, to landscape-level federal planning processes, wildlife management plans, fire resiliency projects and coalition building. Michael has also kept OHA conservation staff apprised of national level events and legislation affecting Oregon's hunters and conservation efforts.

YOUTH MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Jaret Lorimor – 15-year-old Jaret Lorimor is currently the President of the Bend Chapter Youth Board. Jaret is a Junior Hunter Ed instructor who enjoys teaching the skills classes for ODFW. He

is the captain of his archery team, and a three-time Oregon State Archery 3D Champion and two-time Oregon Triple Crown Champion for Indoor, Outdoor and 3D Archery. Jaret enjoys coaching new youths into archery and bowhunting.

CORPORATE LANDOWNER OF THE YEAR

Powell Butte Vistas, LLC – They have allowed OHA to use their property for the last seven years for the Bend Chapter's annual Youth Upland Bird Hunt. The landowners are always eager to support youth events, and this event is always a big hit.

CITIZEN LANDOWNER OF THE YEAR

Bob & Kimberly Bolander – For many years now, the Bolanders have graciously opened up their property to youth hunting and camping. They welcome many youths each year to participate in turkey and deer hunting on their ranch. This past year the Bolanders also donated the use of their lands for the Bend Chapter's live auction Youth Turkey Hunt.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

Doug Stout – A Hunter Ed instructor, Doug was instrumental in establishing a great partnership with the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program (ONGYCP). For the past 9 years, this partnership has paid huge dividends for the Bend Chapter, as well as for the youth involved in this program.

Greg and Mary Petsch – Greg and Mary have been a force behind making the Bend Chapter's Mule Deer Classic the top-netting and record-breaking OHA chapter fund-raiser in the state.

Cindy Rooney – Recently elected OHA State Vice President, Cindy serves as chair of the Organizational Committee, taking on unglamorous and thankless tasks affecting important organizational issues and policies, ranging from OHA's insurance to scholarship guidelines and so many others. After helping with her own chapter's banquet, she always helps at the State Convention. From creating a new membership category to modeling with a gun up for bid, no task is too large or too small for Cindy.

Mark Schoenborn, OSP Sr. Trooper Fish & Wildlife Division – Mark regularly volunteers his time to attend the Pioneer Chapter monthly meeting as a guest speaker. He provides updates on new game laws and shares stories. Mark also volunteers his time speaking at local Hunter Education classes.





CHAPTER NEWS

Chapters wrap up busy to-do list of summer projects

BAKER

Charlie Brinton
(541) 403-0402

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 2 at the Community Event Center.

Update: Congratulations to William Seggerman who is the Harold and RoJean Atkins Scholarship recipient.

BEND

Rex Parks
541-480-0230

oregonhunters.org/bend-chapter

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 12 at The River House.

Update: Guest Speaker for the August meeting was Tim Rozewski, Director of Records with Pope & Young. He described the process and measured antlers.

BLUE MOUNTAIN

Dean Groshong
(541) 377-1227

ohablumountainchapter@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 on April 2 at the Pendleton Convention Center.

Update: ODFW Youth Pheasant Hunt at Irrigon Wildlife Area on Sept. 24-25. Call 541-276-2344.

CAPITOL

Erik Colville
(503) 851-8409

ohacapitol.webs.com

Chapter Meetings: 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., The Eagles, 4090 Cherry Ave, in Keizer.

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 2 at Columbia Hall.

Update: We were awarded a state Access



ANNE THIEL

Volunteers from OHA's Pioneer Chapter work on a guzzler that provides water for wildlife. The chapter maintains 15 guzzlers in areas of central Oregon where water is a limiting factor for wildlife. This year 31 volunteers participated the annual project the chapter has conducted for 20 years.

& Habitat statewide deer tag to auction at our 2023 banquet. Chapter meeting speakers were Fish & Wildlife Trooper James Halsey for July, and Norm Hewitt, who demonstrated game calls at the August meeting.

CHETCO

Matt Thomson
530-351-5847

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

Update: We are currently selling raffle tickets on the Coastal Farm & Ranch raffle gun; call 541-207-4866.

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 scheduled for spring of 2023.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Jordan Hicks
(949) 533-7271
<https://columbiacountyoha.com>

Chapter Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m., location listed in the newsletter.

2022 Fundraiser: Held May 14 at the Columbia County Fairgrounds.

EMERALD VALLEY

Tony Hilsendager
(541) 729-0877
<https://ohaemeraldvalley.webs.com>

EmeraldOHA@live.com

OHA will invest more than \$300,000 and 30,000 volunteer hours in Oregon's wildlife, habitat and hunting heritage in 2022.

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 5.

Update: Lane County Hunter Ed Field days are at Fern Ridge Wildlife Area on Sept. 24-25.

HOODVIEW

Kelly Parkman
(503) 706-7481

oregonhunters.org/hoodview-chapter

Facebook: Hoodview OHA

Chapter Meetings: See chapter newsletter for updated meeting information.

2022 Fundraiser: Held Feb. 19.

Update: Sept. 8 Blacktail Management Plan, presented by ODFW.

JOSEPHINE COUNTY

Randy Hecker
541-659-3259

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 19.

Update: Welcome to the new JoCo Chapter President Randy Hecker.

KLAMATH

Allan Wiard
(541) 884-5773
ohaklamath.webs.com

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 30 at Klamath County Fairgrounds.

Update: Klamath Youth Chukar Hunt will be held Oct 23-24.

LAKE COUNTY

Larry Lucas

(541) 417-2983

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 2 at Lake County Fairgrounds.

Update: Our youth day was held July 9. Lake County Duck and Goose Boxes will go up on Oct. 15 and Oct. 22.

LINCOLN COUNTY

Todd Thompson

541-270-2393

Chapter Meetings: Sept. 6, 5:30 dinner, 6 p.m. meeting, Jack Sprats, Newport.

Update: We're selling tickets for the Coastal Farm & Ranch Browning Hells Canyon.

MALHEUR COUNTY

Bruce Hunter

(208) 573-5556

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

Update: We are raffling a Browning Hells Canyon Speed 6.5 PRC in the Coastal Farm & Ranch Raffle to help sponsor our free youth shoot that was held on Aug. 20.

MID-COLUMBIA

Stanley Walasavage

(541) 296-1022

Quarterly Chapter Meetings: 6 p.m., ODFW screen print shop on Klindt Drive, 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

<https://ohamidwillamette.webs.com>

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held on April 9.

Update: ODFW Youth Pheasant Hunt at EE Wilson Wildlife Area on Sept. 24-25; volunteers needed. Call 541-231-8165.

OCHOCO

John Dehler, III

(541) 815-5817

Chapter Meetings: 1st Tuesday, 7 p.m., Crook County Library.

2022 Fundraiser: Virtual auction June 4-14.

Updates: The annual All Hands All Brands for Public Lands project was held June 17-19 at Sugarcreek Campground in the Ochoco Mountains. See Page 46.



Tualatin Valley OHA volunteers helped metro area youngsters practice outdoor skills at the annual "I'm Hooked" event held at Hagg Lake in June.

PIONEER

Brian Andrews

(503) 266-2900

oregonhunters.org/pioneer-chapter

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held March 5.

Update: We did a June guzzler project campout in central Oregon. Chapter Sight-in Days will be held Sept. 17-18 and Sept. 24-25 at Canby Rod & Gun Club; call 503-710-1233.

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: July meeting had guest speaker John Crafton – Fishing on the John Day River.

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 at the Medford Armory.

Update: Denman 3D Archery Shoots were held on July 30 and Aug. 20.

TILLAMOOK

John Putman

(503) 842-7733

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held July 16 at Tillamook Fairgrounds.

TIOGA

Marcey Fullerton

(541) 267-2577

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 2.

Update: Our sports show was held July 9.

TUALATIN VALLEY

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 at the Wingspan Events Center.

Update: Our booth at the Hagg Lake youth day in June was a big hit. Our June guest speaker was OSP Trooper Tayler Jerome, who had tons of great information for us.

UMPQUA

Tadd Moore

(541) 580-5660

<https://www.umpquaoha.org>

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

2022 Fundraiser: Held April 9.

Update: Chapter Picnic was held July 19.

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. We were awarded the state mountain goat tag to auction at our 2023 banquet.

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: The chapter's annual youth shotgun shoot will be held Aug. 13 at Newberg Rod & Gun Club. Congratulations to Wyatt Hurley for being the recipient of the OHAYC scholarship for 2022. He will attend Linfield University this fall. 

TACTACAM TRAIL CAM CONTEST

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



WINNER:
Oh yeah, well your momma eats alfalfa! OHA member Lane Rutz, of St. Helens, wins a Tactacam Reveal Trail Camera for this trail camera photo of a couple of Grant County spikes with their hooves in the air on the first day of May.

HONORABLE MENTION:



OHA member Nick Butler of Klamath Falls gets an OHA hat for this photo of a bear and cubs in Jackson County.



What's that camera doing in my living room? OHA member Jerry Holbrook of Molalla bags an OHA hat for this image of a black bear screened by branches.



OHA member Larry Bangle of Cottage Grove earns an OHA hat for this image of two bulls in the Indigo Unit.



OHA member Tyler Gange of Terrebonne receives an OHA hat for this photo of a cow and calf in Grant County.

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YOUNG GUNS

BY SHANNON FITZGERALD

Following His Heart

Oregon youth gets a new heart and has it – and his sights – set on a trophy bull

Until almost 11 years old, Tanner could not walk far without running short of breath. His father, Doug, would carry him in a backpack while hunting. At six years old, Tanner remembers riding on his dad's back, peering up over the opening watching his dad finish off a bear.

"Is Smokey Bear dead?" Doug remembered Tanner asking.

Tanner Daniken, now 17, was born with Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS), a condition where, during pregnancy, the heart does not develop correctly. The left side of a normal heart pumps blood into the aorta, which distributes blood to the rest of the body. Tanner was born with only three heart chambers rather than four, causing him to tire quickly. He has both lungs, but only one is effective. His doctor told him, "This is your Super Lung." It alone provides Tanner's body with the necessary oxygen.

Four months short of 11 years old, Tanner's heart was moving toward failure. His family traveled from southern Oregon to Portland's Doernbecher Children's Hospital, and he was immediately flown to Washington State where he would be admitted to Seattle's Children's Hospital.

An IV vitamin drip was administered around the clock to slow the rate of heart failure while Tanner began the long, uncertain wait.

A heart can go for no more than five hours between the donor's body and the recipient's body. A potential heart donation also requires a dominant number of genetic criteria shared with the recipient. This is critical in preventing rejection of the new heart.

When Tanner's chance came, his chemistry met a positive criteria with the donor's heart hitting four of six markers.

On April 20, 2016, nine days before his 11th birthday, Tanner received a new heart.



For his 11th birthday, Tanner Daniken received a new heart. Since then he's been living life to the fullest with the help of friends and family, including this amazing elk hunt.

His long recovery was made easier by the Ronald McDonald House, whose charity enables families to focus exclusively on the health of their children by being freed from financial burden.

While in recovery, Tanner received an hour-long visit from Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson, who would come see kids every Tuesday during the football season, even before he was a starter.

By September, only five months removed from his April heart surgery, Tanner was hunting. This time, pursuing his own Smokey.

The bear was just 80 yards away. Tanner was unsure at first.

"Do you want to shoot it?" Doug asked his son.

"It might charge us!" Tanner worried.

"It's not going to and I'm right here to back you up," Doug assured his son.

His first bear didn't make it more than 20 feet.

Later that December, Tanner also took a 4x3 buck during a Rogue Youth Hunt. Since his surgery, Tanner has accumulated an impressive collection of antlers; even last year, taking a buck on his own.

With the ever-looming possibility of Tanner's body rejecting his new heart, Doug wanted to give his son a hunt of a lifetime.

In 2021, he booked Tanner an elk hunt on a 6,500-acre ranch in Idaho. Doug also invited their good friend, Ron Webster, 68, who was fighting cancer at the time.

The first night, Tanner, Doug, Ron and their guide spotted 18 bulls. Their plan was

to find one that was typical. The next day, Tanner packed his dad's .300 Winchester Model 700 Remington, which Doug earned years ago from his own dad after a summer of weed-eating.

At first Tanner was eager to take any one of these large bulls, but Doug wanted him to choose the right one. When Tanner grew increasingly selective, passing up several large bulls that nobody else would, Ron jokingly nicknamed him "TT" for "Trophy Tanner."

Tanner had his eyes set on a large 7x7, but they lost sight of the bull in a canyon, never seeing him again. Tanner didn't have to dwell long on the wrong elk.

Six hours later they spotted a bull that would have difficulty concealing himself in any kind of canyon.

After hunting to within 180 yards on a spine, Tanner got his shot. Standing on a bench below, among the sage and aspen, were three bulls, one of which even the guide didn't realize was so massive. Tanner took a couple of deep breaths provided by his Super Lung, and pulled the trigger. The bull dropped, but five seconds later stood up, then Tanner put the bull down for good.

He was in shock as he approached the bull. Tanner's monster 8x9 was 57 ¾ inches wide, scoring 432.

Doug suggested to anyone hunting a truly magnificent trophy, aim directly for the charities of St. Jude, Make-A-Wish Foundation, The Ronald McDonald House, and the Seattle Children's Hospital, whose foundations contain some of the most talented people in the world.

WANTED:

HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS



Remember the thrill of your first hunt?
Do you have a passion for hunting that you would like to pass on to others?

ODFW's Hunter Education Program NEEDS you!

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

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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) 947-6002
Email: hunter.ed@odfw.oregon.gov





OHA IN ACTION

ERIC BROWN

OHA rolls up sleeves to help Ochoco habitat

Conservation-minded sportsmen from different conservation groups came from all over the state to central Oregon the week of June 13-19 for the common cause of enhancing wildlife habitat.

In all, 60 volunteers – including members from OHA's Bend, Redmond, Emerald Valley, Capitol and Yamhill County chapters – descended on Little Summit Prairie in the Ochoco Mountains for the annual All Hands All Brands for Public Lands project.

This year's project called for the construction of a pair of four-wire fences totaling about one mile and a buck-and-pole fence stretching over 350 feet.

Volunteers also serviced water guzzlers and repaired fences constructed in earlier projects. Derr Meadow, the site of last year's ambitious buck-and-pole fence was looking lush and green this year.



ERIC BROWN

Volunteers work on a section of a mile of fencing constructed to protect habitat in the Ochoco Mountains during the annual All Hands All Brands for Public Lands project in June.

Members of OHA, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership joined forces to contribute more than 450 hours.

Employees of USFS, ODFW and OSP also jumped in, including USFS Paulina District Ranger Johanna Kovarik and Ochoco USFS Wildlife Biologist and Blue

Mountain Elk Initiative Coordinator Monty Gregg, ODFW Upland Bird Game Coordinator Mikal Cline, and Oregon Zoo Non-Lead Education Coordinator Leland Brown.

Saturday evening included a potluck dinner and barbecue, along with a prize drawing for volunteers. Donors to the event included Legacy Sports International, Sig, Worksharp, Gerber, Havalon, Nosler, BHA, RMEF, NWTf and OHA.



BILL LITTLEFIELD

Volunteers from several sportsmen's conservation groups and resource agencies joined forces.



ERIC BROWN

Elliot Newman stacks rocks on a rock jack, and later won a pair of Sig binoculars in a prize drawing.



ERIC BROWN

Sporting an OHA bandana, Kona keeps a sharp lookout for sabotage.

WHEN IN DROUGHT

FISH & WILDLIFE ARE STRESSED OUT

TIPS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION DURING DROUGHT

While parts of Oregon benefited from a wet spring and early summer, the state still remains in significant drought especially in southeast and parts of central and northeast Oregon.

Hunters and everyone recreating outdoors are asked to take steps to reduce the unintended impacts of recreation on fish, wildlife, and their habitats during drought.

GIVE WILDLIFE, LIVESTOCK ACCESS TO WATER

Please hunt ethically and give wildlife access to water. Do not camp within 300 feet of a water source to allow livestock and wildlife access to water at night. Also, consider the impact your scent or blind may have on animal use even when you are not there.

SCOUT WITH CARE

Binoculars are a great way to enjoy wildlife viewing from afar, and to scout for upcoming hunting seasons as it limits the amount of disturbance to the habitat during drought. Try to limit your disturbance of animals during summer when you are scouting. Scout with optics whenever you can to avoid tromping thru habitat.

TREAD CAREFULLY

Habitat can be negatively impacted by careless use off trail. Bikers and hikers are reminded to stay on trails and limit leaving trails to only when necessary. ATV/UTV users should be mindful to avoid driving on or through streambeds (wet or dry) as it permanently damages the habitat. Remember to keep your dogs on leash and on trail to limit disturbance to wildlife sheltering nearby.

CAMPFIRES OUT

Reduce the likelihood of wildfire by completely extinguishing your campfire (embers and ashes too). Be prepared with a fire extinguisher should a fire accidentally occur from your campfire (required during fire season for ATVs; vehicles must carry extinguisher or gallon of water and shovel when not travelling on county or state roads).

**Learn what you can do to help protect Oregon's
fish, wildlife and habitat during drought**

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DIAL *OSP
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Couple who left five elk dead sentenced in Harney County

Sentencing is complete for two Hines residents involved in killing at least seven elk while shooting into the fleeing herd. The crime left two calves, two cows and a spike bull rotting in high-country sagebrush. Chris Lardy and his wife, Stephanie, were convicted of multiple wildlife offenses on May 20.

The pair must take hunter education courses to regain hunting privileges following three-year suspensions, and they will pay a combined \$2,500 in fines and restitution, according to Harney County officials. Chris Lardy's sentence included six days in jail, 18 months of bench probation and he is prohibited from participating in any hunting activities, including as an observer or mentor, for three years.

According to officials, witnesses hunt-

ing in the Juniper Unit in Harney County mid-day on Dec. 11 called the Turn In Poachers (TIP) line when they saw the vehicle leave a spur road east of Hwy 395 to pursue a herd of about 100 elk through open ground and sagebrush. Witnesses said the driver stopped twice as occupants fired at least 30 to 40 shots into the fleeing herd. OSP Fish & Wildlife Troopers solved the case during a traffic stop the next day.

The Lardy couple and two passengers in their Suburban had four tags for a late-season antlerless elk hunt. Stephanie and another person in their hunt group legally tagged two cow elk. They left five elk to waste and allegedly wounded another elk that OSP Troopers did not find.

OSP Troopers near Hwy 395, not far from where the incident occurred, con-

ducted a traffic violation stop on a vehicle matching witness descriptions.

The case is frustrating to wildlife managers, hunters, and troopers, including OSP Fish and Wildlife Sergeant Erich Timko.

"Each hunter is responsible for every round they fire," Timko said, "and hunters have a responsibility to make a reasonable effort to track and retrieve potentially wounded game. This is a prime example of when that is not done. These are egregious results. On antlerless hunts, it can be difficult to pick one specific animal and stay on target, and at times, you must make that decision not to fire unless you are 100 percent positive you are shooting at that same animal. If you cannot be 100 percent positive of your target, then you have responsibility not to take that shot."



SPONSORED BY OHA, OSP & ODFW

OHA pays out \$500 in rewards in 5 cases

In the last two months, OHA issued 5 reward checks to informants in 5 cases totaling \$500 from our Turn In Poachers (TIP) reward fund. Charges included: Two separate charges of Take/Possession of Sockeye Salmon, exceeding the daily bag limit of razor clams and failing to allow catch for inspection, and failed to have bobcats sealed by ODFW prior to taking them out of state, failed to check in and seal cats by deadline, and falsified annual ODFW furtaker harvest report claiming 0 cats harvested; and a suspect charged for being in possession of a very large sturgeon near the Columbia River.

OHA STATE-LEVEL SPONSORSHIPS

Please support the sponsors who support OHA's mission of protecting Oregon's wildlife, habitat and hunting heritage. For information about OHA state-level sponsorship opportunities, call the OHA State Office at (541) 772-7313.

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NOSLER®

2022 PHOTO CONTEST

FINALIST PRIZES

Prizes will be awarded in general and youth categories.

1ST PRIZE: Nosler Model 21 rifle

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

3RD PRIZE: Leupold Scope

4TH PRIZE: Danner Alsea Hunting Boots

5TH PRIZE: Benchmade Altitude Hunting Knife

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

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

ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

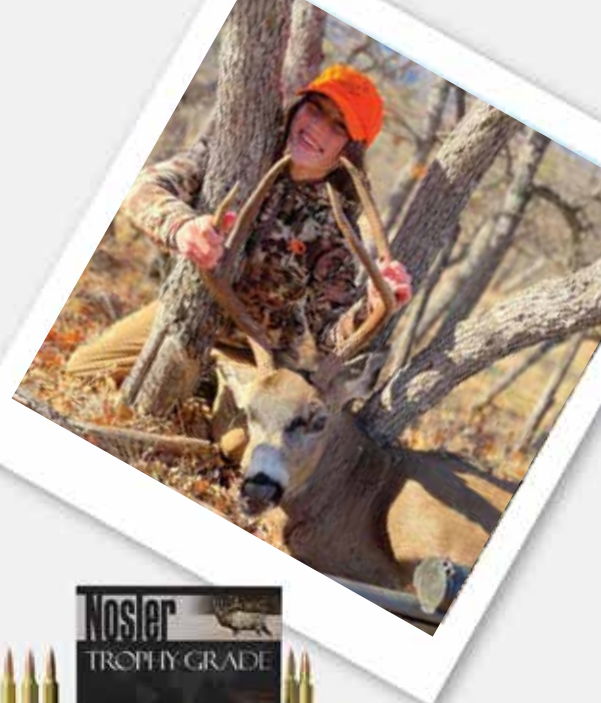
Go to **OHA's website at www.oregonhunters.org** Click on **OHA CONTESTS**. Read the rules, and fill in the required fields. Click **CHOOSE FILE** and attach your photo. Click **SUBMIT**. That's it! You will be entered for a chance to win more great prizes courtesy of Nosler, proud sponsor and OHA supporter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

PHOTO CATEGORIES

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

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

Current year contest prizes will be delivered the following year



NOSLER[®] PHOTO CONTEST

GENERAL CATEGORY FINALISTS



Lane Rutz of St. Helens claims an OHA Coast knife and entry to the finals of the 2022 Nosler Photo Contest for this image of Jessie Loper with her October 2021 Fossil Unit elk.

Bend resident and OHA member Percy Reynolds scores an OHA Coast knife and a spot in the finals of the 2022 Nosler Photo Contest for this picture of himself with an impala taken in the Limpopo Region of South Africa in October 2021.



NOSLER[®] PHOTO CONTEST

HONORABLE MENTION



OHA member Bob Mumford of Anchorage bags honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of his trophy brown bear he took with a .375 H&H on a May hunt on the Alaska Peninsula.



OHA member Gary Schoenborn of Tygh Valley earns honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of himself and Scott Gayer with a trophy musk ox taken April 1 in Greenland.



OHA members Jeff and April Mack of Scio collect honorable mention and a Nosler hat for this photo of themselves with their first gobbler double, taken in May in the Willamette Unit.

NOSLER[®] PHOTO CONTEST

YOUTH CATEGORY FINALISTS

OHA member Mike Nelson of Winston scores an OHA Coast knife and a berth in the finals of the 2022 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of Cole Parnell, 15, who used a Remington 870 to take the Douglas County turkey 10 days into the season. His trophy tom had a 10 1/2-inch beard and spurs that measured 1 1/2 inches.



It was December in Deschutes County with a blanket of snow on the ground and honkers beneath the clouds. OHA member John Stevens of Klamath Falls claims an OHA Coast knife and a place in the finals of the 2022 Nosler Photo Contest for this photo of his nephew Grayson Smith with his first ever honker on his first ever hunt! Grayson was shooting a 20 gauge.

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Parting Shots

By Uncle Geddy

Rodent Scum

Drones, droids & womp rats

A long time ago in an alfalfa field far, far away...

The farmer fears that another year of Belding's ground squirrels could bring a thousand more irrigation pivots into the rebellion and Agriculturist control over the galaxy would be lost forever. I got to thinking about what Luke Skywalker said about womp rats while I was in Las Vegas for the Shooting Hunting Outdoor Trade Show in January.

Instead of one taxi driver on the way to the hotel, I got two. It was Oleg at the wheel and his protégé in the passenger seat. Oleg said it was his last day of work and the taxi company would just have to do without him. They won't have Oleg to stand on anymore! The new guy who said his name was Andropov wanted to talk about the new Star Wars Book of Boba Fett. I told him I also liked to hunt solo.

Luke Skywalker once said of an important target he had to shoot, "It's not impossible. I used to bulls-eye womp rats in my T-16 back home, they're not much bigger than two meters." And it got me to thinking, I know what rats are and I know what sage rats are, but I don't know what a womp rat is. So I looked it up.

It turns out that womp is one of those words that can mean all things or everything or nothing. The Urban Dictionary suggests using the word womp is like shrugging your shoulders. It can also mean a prohibited substance or refer to a group of like-minded individuals, such as you might find at Mos Eisley Space Port or Charlie's Fish & Chips. Another way it can be used is when you shoot a badger, and your daughter's boyfriend – the one with the man bun – asks you what you are going to do with the badger. You say, "I womped it." He won't ask you any more stupid questions.

Womp can also refer to dubstep, which is music, according to Little Sassy's boyfriend. Dubstep is called womp because the bass hits you like a womp. Apparently, the womp is in the space between the bass and your face. But the womp rat is something different. Skywalker used photon torpedoes, but I think from the sounds of it, a 6.5 Creedmoor would do just fine.

That was all the conversation we had time for. The young taxi

Shoot.
Or shoot not.
There is
no try.



driver said his name was Pickup Andropov. If you find yourself in Las Vegas for a dubstep show, you might ask for him when you call for the taxi. Just say you need Pickup Andropov.

When I got home from the SHOT Show, I started planning my annual sage rat shoot. Sage rats, of course, are Belding's ground squirrels. They call them squeaks in southern Oregon and they call them whistle pigs in Idaho. Up in Washington, ground squirrels are the focus of a new study.

According to a recent news release from the State of Washington, scientists will now be using a drone "to test efficiency in monitoring ground squirrels."

Wouldn't you like to be the guy that wrote the grant request for this one? I heard he was having a hard time getting his drone business off the ground. He asked the bank for a loan to open a pizza delivery-by-drone business and the banker said his idea was just pie in the sky. The next thing he tried was meat delivery, but the banker said it was a high-steaks situation.

Apparently the drone operator/entrepreneur hit on a project he could get funded. He will be flying his drone for the State of Washington "occasionally on weekdays between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. in compliance with all federal and state regulations." Where I come from, we call that cush.

It doesn't get much easier than flying a drone in eastern Washington. If you have ever been in Grant and Adams counties, you already know there are not a lot of trees to run into. The jackalopes wear out the fence posts polishing their antlers because they don't have jack pines.

I was with a drone operator in Wyoming once and he flew his drone into the top of an oak tree. We drove a flatbed F-250 under the tree for him to get a leg up in the lower branches. I told him getting a drone stuck in a tree isn't the worst thing that can happen, but it's definitely up there.

One of these days, someone is going to suggest they shoot ground squirrels from an unmanned drone.

If someone ever asks me where the ground squirrels go during an aerial strike, I will tell them I don't know, but if I use the 6.5 Creedmoor and a Ballistic Tip, they go everywhere.



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

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