



# Yearlings

OHA Junior Newsletter Summer 2024

For OHA junior members & children of family members



FREE POSTER  
AND TARGET  
INSIDE!

## GEAR UP TO HUNT!

**H**unting season is just around the corner, and Oregon has lots of ways kids can get started in big game hunting, even if they haven't taken Hunter Education yet. If you are under 12, you are too young to get your own tags, but kids ages 9 to 15 may hunt with a licensed adult and hunt big game in Oregon's Mentored Youth Hunter Program, which the Oregon Hunters Association helped create. See the Oregon Big Game Regulations for more information. The upper age used to be 13, but OHA got the age raised to 15 for busy high school students until they're old enough to drive.

If you are 12 or older, you can buy general season deer and elk tags, or, if you applied for elk or deer tags in Oregon's controlled hunt drawing this spring but didn't draw them all, you could still be a winner if you have never drawn a tag for that hunt series before.

Oregon's "First Time Hunter" program, which OHA also helped create, allows young hunters who have never drawn controlled tags for buck deer, antlerless deer or elk to be guaranteed a tag if they apply before the hunt opens.

There are some restrictions, though. For example, the only elk tags you can get this way are cow tags, and you can apply for only those hunts that offer a certain number of tags.

For more information about Oregon's First Time Hunter program, see the 2024 Oregon Big Game Regulations.



Avery Varner of Salem took this trophy blacktail buck in the Willamette Unit.

# So you didn't draw a tag...

Mark your calendar for July 1

BY GARY LEWIS

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

## First-Time Hunter Tags

Here's how the program works: A young hunter must be an Oregon resident 12 to 17 years old at the time of the hunt.



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



PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR/GARYLEWISOUTDOORS.COM

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

The young hunter must have applied, and been unsuccessful, in the Controlled Hunt Drawing for a hunt in the 100-, 200- or 600-series (buck deer, elk, antlerless deer). And they must have never drawn a controlled hunt for that respective series before.

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

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

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

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

## Want Leftovers?

Another option for a young hunter is to apply for a leftover tag. Now let's not sugarcoat this. These tags are left over or un-allocated for a reason. It could be that private lands limit access. Perhaps deer or elk numbers are down in a certain region. Whatever the reason, there is a hunt opportunity and a chance to get outside and try to make something happen this fall. Now and then there are a few youth tags left over that could take you on an adventure you never would have had otherwise. A person who ends up with one of these tags should be

willing to be flexible. Sometimes the hunts have early starts and there might even be an elk hunt opportunity that launches the first of August. Leftovers go on sale July 1 at 10 a.m. Visit [MyODFW.com](https://myodfw.com)

## General Seasons and Other Game

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

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

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

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



# PUZZLE PAGE



When you finish the crossword puzzle, find your answers in the word hunt below.



## Across

- Ducks make this sound.
- You must get this to hunt on privately owned land.
- Hiding places and shelter for animals.
- A small black bird that is not protected.
- A baby elk is a \_\_\_.

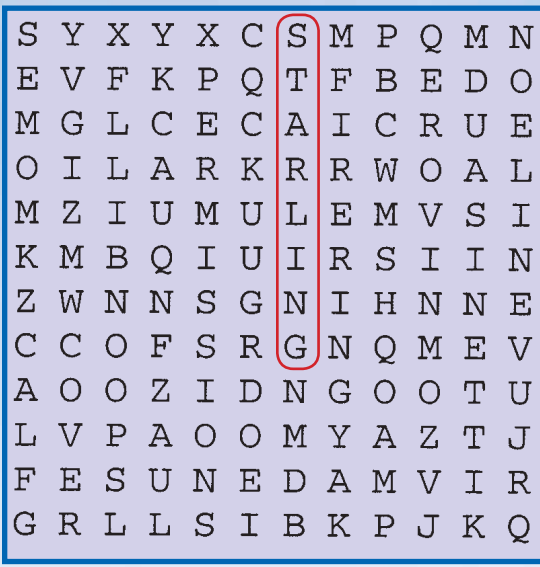
## Down

- A baby cougar is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
- A kid age 14-17 needs a \_\_\_\_\_ hunting license to hunt birds.
- Circle of rocks where you build a campfire.
- A nickname given to the shoveler duck because of its odd-shaped bill.
- Any animal that eats both plants and meat.

## Do You Know?

- What a female bear is called?
- What horns are made of?
- What duck has a spoon-shaped bill?
- What female wild game birds are not fair game to shoot?
- Oregon's biggest lake?
- Oregon's biggest mammal?
- Oregon's only poisonous snake?

Answers: 1-sow; 2-hair; 3-shoveler; 4-pheasants and spring turkey; 5-Klamath; 6-moose; 7-western rattlesnake.



# **WILDLIFE CLOSE-UP**

## **BLACK BEAR**

The shaggy hair of black bears ranges in color from blonde through many browns to black, but most black bears really are black or dark brown. Cubs are usually born as twins, each weighing less than a pound. They grow to be adults that are about five feet long and weigh from 125 to 400 pounds, with small eyes, rounded ears, a long snout, a large body, and a short tail.

While black bears can stand and walk on their hind legs, usually they use all fours. Each paw has five strong claws used for tearing, digging, and climbing. One blow from a powerful front paw is enough to kill an adult deer. In addition to their size and strength, black bears can move very fast.

Black bears are omnivores, which means they eat all kinds of food. While they prefer berries, insects, nuts, grass, and other plants, they also eat carrion (dead animals they find rather than kill themselves), small animals, and fish.

Bears are known for hibernating, or sleeping through the cold winter months, so they must eat large amounts of food in the fall. If the winter weather turns warm, they may wake up and spend some time outside. In warmer places, like the coastal areas of Oregon, they do not always truly hibernate.





**LEUPOLD.**

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# BE CAREFUL, FOR GOODNESS SNAKE!

The western rattlesnake is the only kind of poisonous snake that lives in Oregon. It is found throughout the state except at high altitudes (6,000 to 7,000 feet or higher). Adults are usually two to three feet in length, but have been found over four feet long. They bear eight to fifteen live young. The rattlesnake found in woods is usually darker with large blotches, while those in deserts and plains are lighter with smaller blotches.

Unlike some other species of rattlesnake, the western rattlesnake is a shy animal, and would rather be left alone than bite you. Even a large snake will only be able to strike outward about a couple of feet, so it's sometimes possible to get a good look at this interesting creature from a safe distance. (We mean look with your eyes, not poke it with a stick.)

In the unlikely event that you or someone you are with is bitten by a rattlesnake, it's important to get medical help right away.



PHOTO BY TYLER DUNGANNON

Oregon's rattlesnakes can be nasty and downright dangerous if they feel threatened, but they prefer to steer clear of humans if given a choice.

## LAST CALL FOR HUNTER EDUCATION!



The time to sign up for Hunter Education courses is not when you want to hunt. Classes fill up fast, and it's very hard to find a class by the fall, so get in now.

Oregon's Hunter Education course is required for all first-time hunters under the age of 18.

For information about enrolling in a Hunter Education program, visit: [myODFW.com](http://myODFW.com)



## 10 COMMANDMENTS OF SHOOTING SAFETY

1. Control the direction of your firearm's muzzle. Carry your firearm safely, keeping the safety on until ready to shoot. Keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
2. Identify your target and what is beyond it. Know the identifying features of the game you hunt.
3. Treat every firearm as if it is loaded.
4. Be sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions and that you have only ammunition of the proper size for the firearm you are carrying.
5. Unload firearms when not in use. Leave actions open. Firearms should be cased and unloaded while in a vehicle traveling to and from shooting areas.
6. Never point a firearm at anything you do not want to shoot. Avoid all horseplay with a firearm.
7. Never climb or jump with a loaded firearm. Never pull a firearm toward you by the muzzle.
8. Never fire a bullet at a flat, hard surface or water. With targets, be sure your backstop is adequate.
9. Store guns and ammunition separately in locked spaces out of reach of children and careless adults.
10. Avoid alcoholic beverages and drugs before or during shooting.

## O.H.A. MEMBER PLEDGE

As an OHA member, I pledge to:

- Respect the environment and wildlife;
- Respect property and landowners;
- Improve my outdoor skills and understanding of wildlife;
- Support wildlife and habitat conservation;
- Know and obey the law;
- Hunt safely;
- Show consideration of nonhunters;
- Abide by the rules of fair chase;
- Hunt only with ethical hunters; and
- Pass on an ethical hunting tradition.

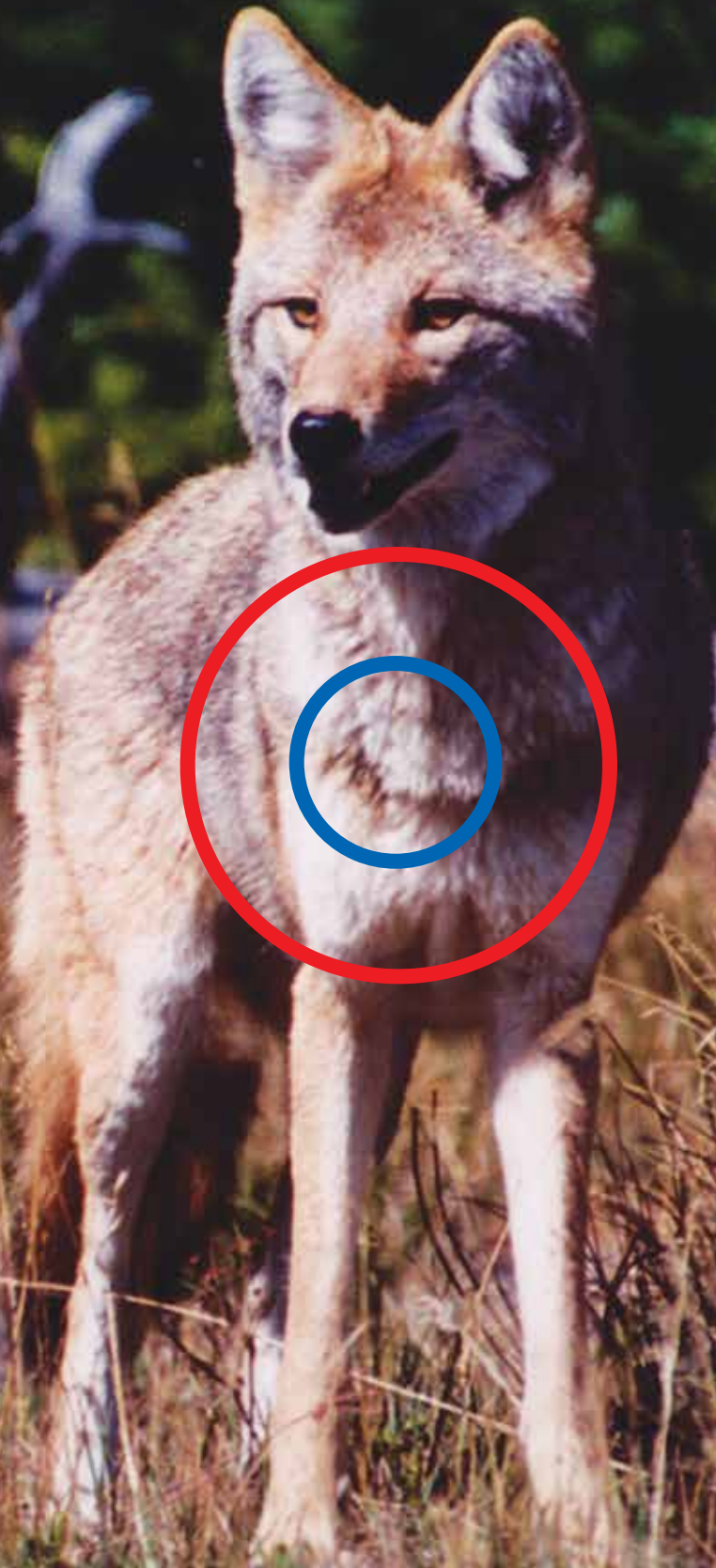
\* Adapted from the Hunter's Pledge of the Izaak Walton League of America



# NOSLER<sup>®</sup>

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## YOUNG GUNS VARMINT TARGET



### **OREGON PREDATORS**

To hunt some predators like bear and cougar, you need tags for that animal. Others, like bobcat and fox, are furbearers, and you need a special furbearer hunting license. But some, like coyotes and badgers, are unprotected mammals, and you only need a hunting license to hunt them.

Coyote/Jim Ward

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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Medford, OR  
Permit No. 425

# DON'T MISS A THING! JOIN OHA TODAY!

When you join OHA as a Junior Member for just \$10, you'll get everything adult OHA members get – and MUCH MORE!



\* You get 6 issues of OREGON HUNTER magazine.

**Just \$10 for kids!**

\* You get an Oregon Hunters Calendar, with 12 colorful game animal pictures, and all the hunting season dates and deadlines!



\* You get 4 issues of OHA's junior newsletter *Yearlings*.

\* You'll be invited to OHA events where there may even be prizes for kids!

\* You'll get your own OHA decal!



## OHA Jr. Membership Application

I want to be an Oregon Hunters Association Junior Member! Please sign me up, send my Oregon Hunters Calendar and OHA decal, and start my subscriptions to OREGON HUNTER magazine and the OHA junior newsletter *Yearlings*!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please enclose one-year dues of \$10**

Payment enclosed (check or money order)

Parent's: Visa / MC / Discover / Amex

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV2# on back: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:

OHA, P.O. Box 1706, Medford, OR 97501

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## GOOD SHOTS FROM OREGON'S YOUNG GUNS



Harbor Graves of Toledo joined his dad on this successful black-tailed deer hunt in Oregon's Alsea Unit on the coast.



Abby Weyer of Canby took this mule deer – her first buck – in the Maury Unit of central Oregon with a .243 caliber rifle.



Jacob Scott of Eugene called this forked horn blacktail up close for a successful shot in the Indigo Unit of southwest Oregon.