



Tales from a  
**Sisters Naturalist**  
by Jim Anderson

**Don't eat this guy!**

One of the most interesting parts of being a big mouth in the local naturalist business are the emails I wake up to each morning. The photo at right — from a guy in Sisters who says, “I guess the name was appropriate when I was flying a rescue chopper out of Saigon” — was included in an email the other day.

When I opened it, I thought: “Holy Cats, ODFW’s ear-tagging mule deer just like wildlife biologist Paul Bond was doing back in the ‘50s when he was conducting a migratory deer study — only he put bells around their necks attached to a big numbered collar. With that image in mind, I contacted ODFW wildlife biologist Corey Heath at the Bend Office to see what’s going on.

This was Corey’s response: “(Wildlife biologist) Randy Lewis treated that particular buck, however, we dart and handle numerous deer — dealing with similar difficulties, such as tangled in Christmas lights, clothes lines, etc. — every year. In addition, we typically dart from two to five deer per year and operate to remove arrows from them.

“I darted and operated on a deer this winter that had two different broad-head arrows in it! The surgery took about 2 hours and the deer is doing great — we’ve seen it several times



PHOTO BY WILD BILL

A mule deer tagged by ODFW. Tagged deer provide lots of information to wildlife officials.

subsequent to the surgery, (it’s) also ear-tagged.

“Our success/survival rates of deer we dart is very high; 95+ percent. The only ones that don’t survive are ones that have such serious injuries (i.e. broken jaws or similar) that it would be inhumane to release them.

“We do have a data sheet for deer #40; it shows, other than what I’ve told you previously, health monitoring info (temp, respirations, pulse) and drugs used.”

This is very much like what I do with rehabbed birds: band them with a USGS band, hoping that if something happens to the bird and it’s found again — dead or alive — the rehabber will know more about the fate of the species he or she is working with.

The ear tag also denotes the animal had been treated with drugs. When it is first darted, drugs are used to bring it back to consciousness and other drugs may be used to treat wounds, etc.

However, Heath notes that “the ‘drug notification’ applies only to the drug withdrawal period, which is (usually) 15-45 days — depending on drugs used — after that time the deer are perfectly fine to eat. Most of

these deer live several more years, so I guess I wouldn’t make (a) statement about not shooting them. Note: We have had a few of these deer/bear taken by hunters in subsequent years, however I’ve never had one taken during the drug withdrawal period.”

I will end this little epistle with a suggestion that if you’re a hunter, please pass up any tagged or marked mule deer, bear, bobcat, elk or other wildlife you can shoot legally. Instead, let ODFW know you observed it or them when, where and how. That kind of information will go into a database that will eventually provide wildlife biologists with a little more information that may fit into some other facet of activity that will eventually provide that “Ah-ha!” moment.

**BASKETBALL: Outlaws fell in a tough loss to Sutherlin**

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The Outlaws were down by 13 as they headed into the fourth quarter and continued to play catch-up. The Bulldogs started to play keep-away early, took time off the clock, and held on to beat the Outlaws by eight.

“It was a disappointing game that we would like back,” said Runco. “This was a game where we had to play at a high level at both ends of the court, and we did not.” Sisters struggled on

offense throughout the contest and finished at only 33 percent from the field.

Hayes Moore scored six points, Steen Johnson and Connor Schaab tallied five points each, and Ben Larson added four.

The league standings are very close: Sutherlin 5-0, Sisters 4-1, Junction City 3-2, Sweet Home 2-3, Elmira 1-4, and Cottage Grove 0-5. Every game in league has been close for every team, with multiple overtime games and one-point wins.

The Outlaws were to play at Crook County on Tuesday, February 3. On Friday, Sisters will play at home against Cottage Grove.



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Tysen Gill grabs rebound vs. Sutherlin.

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