

Land Trust to host Nature Nights

The Deschutes Land Trust (DLT) has announced its winter Nature Nights series. From salmon and steelhead to lichen to cougars, the Land Trust is offering free, monthly presentations on nature-related topics given by experts in their field.

Presentations include:

- January 27: Salmon in the Deschutes — 7 to 8:30 p.m., The Tower Theatre in Bend.

Large, ocean-going salmon historically returned annually to the Deschutes River and many of its tributaries. Today salmon and steelhead are coming back to their home waters after an absence of nearly 50 years. Join retired fisheries biologist Don Ratliff for an illustrated overview of salmon and steelhead in the Deschutes River basin. Learn about their historic and present distributions, their life histories, and how they fit into the extremely diverse river system that is the Deschutes River.

- February 24: Lichens — The extreme fungi — 7 to 8:30 p.m., The Tower Theatre.

Have you ever wondered what the neon tufts growing on our local junipers are? Then join DLT for an illuminating evening about lichens! That neon green is actually a lichen: a fungus growing together with an alga to make a specialized growth form.

Lichenologist Daphne Stone will lead a tour of lichens: what they are, how they survive in diverse and often extreme habitats, and how they are different from other fungi. Look at



BLM PHOTO BY ALEC BRYAN

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interesting lichens around the Pacific Northwest, including lush lichens in coastal Oregon, lichens that fix nitrogen from the air in the Cascades, brilliant crustose lichens on rocks in dry areas, and delicate soil crust lichens that protect the deserts of eastern Oregon.

- March 30: Cougar conservation in the 21st century — 7 to 8:30 p.m., The Tower Theatre.

Our relationship with predators, particularly large predators, is driven by a fascination and curiosity that is primal. Cougars are one such species where human/predator interactions seem dramatic, but are nonetheless extremely rare. Join biologist Rick Hopkins to learn more about cougars and the conservation efforts needed to provide both habitat and connectivity for the species. Rick will explore the biology and ecology of

cougars, the history of predator management and conservation including myths that are often perpetuated, and suggest a framework for modernizing predator management that promotes conservation.

Nature Nights are free, but a ticket is required. Register online at www.deschuteslandtrust.org.

The Deschutes Land Trust conserves land for wildlife, scenic views, and local communities. As Central Oregon's only nationally accredited and locally based land trust, the Deschutes Land Trust has protected more than 8,750 acres since 1995. For more information on the Deschutes Land Trust, call 541-330-0017 or visit www.deschuteslandtrust.org.

Disposing of your Christmas tree

It's a sad ritual of the season — that fresh, green Christmas Tree you brought into the house with so much joy just a few weeks ago has to go now.

Dried up Christmas trees are a fire hazard, so it's important that you get the chore taken care of. So how best to get rid of it?

Local Boy Scouts aren't doing tree pick-up this year, but the Sisters Community Church youth group will pick up your tree for a donation. Contact Nate Roy at

541-598-4321.

You can simply put your tree out with your trash and High Country Disposal will pick it up — and add a \$5 surcharge to your garbage collection bill.

You can drop off your tree at Harmony Farms sanctuary for their animals to enjoy — email harmonyfarmsanctuary@gmail.com for information.

Or you can just drop your tree off at the Sisters Recycling Center through January.

New York woman's body is a brewery

By Mary Esch
Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Drunken-driving charges against an upstate New York woman have been dismissed based on an unusual defense: Her body is a brewery.

A lawyer representing the woman says her blood-alcohol level has been recorded at four times the legal limit when she hasn't had a drink. She didn't discover her rare condition until after her arrest.

Attorney Joseph Marusak

says he submitted medical evidence of his client's condition, known as "auto-brewery syndrome," to a suburban Buffalo judge who dismissed the DWI charges this month.

The condition is believed to be caused by high levels of yeast in the gut. The woman is now on a low-carbohydrate diet that has brought it under control.

Marusak declined to name the woman, citing medical confidentiality laws, and he says the case has been sealed.

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