



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

WILDLIFE: Caution is in order with Sisters Country critters

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food near homes or campgrounds, bears can become a threat to human safety and must often be destroyed.”

Oregon is full of spiders, but with a few exceptions, none pose a threat to humans.

There are three species of Oregon spiders that can be very dangerous, but you’re more likely to find them in your garage than when exploring a forest or seeking out a waterfall.

Hobo, yellow sac and black widow spiders can all be potentially dangerous, but the black widow is the one to be most mindful of. Their bites can lead to abdominal muscle cramps, nausea, profuse perspiration, tremors, fever, labored breathing, and restlessness. In rare cases, people have died from black widow venom, but less than one

percent of those bitten suffer anything near that serious.

Every year there are about 10 to 20 rattlesnake bites reported throughout the state. The Western rattlesnake is the most venomous animal that slithers throughout Central Oregon and can strike at any time.

Matt Keenan, access and habitat program coordinator with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, noted that rattlesnakes don’t want to bite people.

“They want to stay away from people. They’re very reclusive. Really, you have to almost step on them to be in danger of being struck.”

Rattlesnakes do slither everywhere, but some places are a little more favored by the creatures than others — especially at Smith Rock, which is known for its beauty and adventure.

There has only been one recent snakebite reported at Smith Rock, which happened last year to a dog who was off leash. If you see one, you and

your furry friends should keep your distance.

David Vick, an interpretative naturalist at Smith Rock State Park, said, “If they are really feeling cornered and harassed, the Western rattlesnake would want to coil and rattle its rattler as a last sign or warning. They just want to be left alone.”

Typically, at Smith Rock, hikers will see them along paths, sunning themselves, since they’re cold-blooded creatures.

Enjoy wildlife safely:
 • Secure your garbage.
 • Feed your pets indoors.
 • Never feed wildlife.
 • If you feed birds, be aware that feeders may attract other wildlife. Place feeders so only birds can get to them.

As Sisters naturalist and *Nugget* columnist Jim Anderson says, “The best thing to do for ALL wildlife is just leave ’em be.”

SHELTER: Lutheran Church is on board this season

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the now-vacant New Hope Christian Center at 222 Trinity Way as a space for their food bank and to house the shelter for parts of January and February.

On Monday, November 4, 5:30-7 p.m., the shelter steering committee will be holding an open house for the community at New Hope to showcase the new facility and provide an opportunity for volunteers, donors, and the community to learn more about the shelter, volunteering, committees, and providing meals.

Training is provided for volunteers before they begin, and ongoing training opportunities are offered free of charge. To work in the shelter a background check must be completed. No check is needed for providing meals. A free training with Ryan Dowd is being offered at the Unitarian Church in Bend on November 13, 2 to 5 p.m. Offered by the Homeless Leadership Coalition, Dowd will be talking about how to work with people experiencing homelessness.

There are a number of ways to be of support to the shelter besides serving as early evening monitors from 5 to 10 p.m. Dinner can be prepared at home and brought to the shelter. Non-perishable,

single-serve food stuffs can be purchased and provided for breakfasts. A gift of money may be donated to sponsor a breakfast or dinner.

Donations of warm winter clothing and camping supplies are always welcome. There are several committees that handle various responsibilities for the shelter such as the Year-Round Services Committee addressing the needs of the homeless for showers, lockers, and laundry facilities. Some guests have dogs, which are not able to stay in the shelter, and volunteers offer to care for them.

Signing up for meals and early evening monitoring can be done online after being registered as a volunteer. The shelter also has a Facebook page.

The shelter will be hiring monitors for the “Night Owl” shift from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

The cost of running the shelter amounts to approximately \$10,000 a month. Shepherd’s House Ministries will again provide support and administrative assistance to the Sisters shelter, acting as their financial agent. Donations to the shelter should always be noted as being for the Sisters Cold Weather Shelter. To make a donation, make check payable to Shepherd’s House Ministries and write Sisters in the memo line. Mail to Shepherd’s House Ministries, PO Box 5484, Bend, OR 97708. To donate online go to <https://shepherdshouseministries.org/donate-scws>.

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