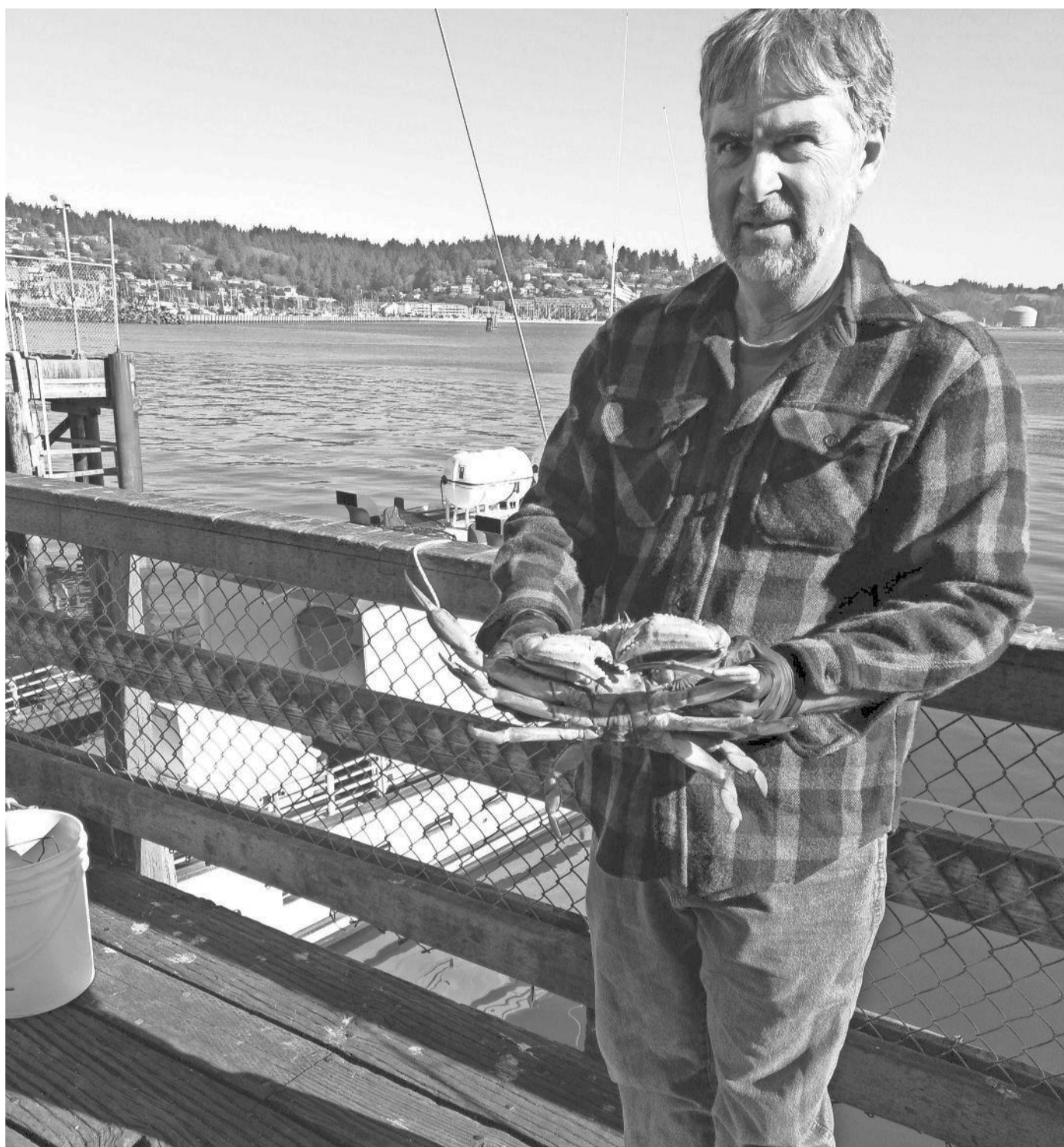


Gathering ingredients for a nice dinner is a lot of work



Fishing
Henry Miller
Guest columnist



Phil McCorkle of Salem shows off a whopper Dungeness crab that he caught on the Newport bay front. HENRY MILLER/STATESMAN JOURNAL

To mangle an aphorism, it takes a village to catch a meal ... apparently.

You might say that outdoor buddy Phil McCorkle and I were “stumped” during a recent mushroom foray in the Coast Range.

Which is to say that we were greeted by a proliferation of meaty cut-off chanterelle stems poking out of the forest floor, a telltale sign of a recent wave of recreational and/or commercial pickers who had scoured one of Phil’s go-to sites. As always, my far-ranging companion did fairly well, while I stumbled into four puny chants that I added to his cache because, cooked, my bounty would barely have covered a slice of toast.

The extended walking, scrambling and clambering meant that we were late getting to Newport for the second half of our combo adventure, crabbing off the docks.

And with Phil needing to get back to Salem for an appointment by mid-afternoon, that meant just a couple of hours of soak-and-retrieve time for our fishing rod crab traps and Phil’s lone crab ring. If you’ve never tried crabbing from shore or the docks, it’s a real kick and adds an activity to your next trip to the coast, with usually a very tasty result.

Check out the action the next time you visit the coast. Popular spots are Newport on the bayfront and the beach at Taft just south of Lincoln City.

Most of the participants, me included, are more than happy to share what we know and offer tips and tactics.

A Crab Max, complete with throw rope, will set you back about \$30 (<http://www.crabmax.com/Crabmax-paymentpage.html#Anchor--CR-15812>).

A fishing-pole crab trap is cheaper at about \$20 (Bi-Mart or other sporting goods stores), but you need a rod, reel and line.

Helpful hint: Henry, who is tight as a tick on a dog, cruises the thrift shops and garage sales for tackle.

Then all you need is a package of chicken drumsticks, the preferred bait and an annual shellfish permit (\$10) and you’re in business.

The crabbers on our stretch of the Newport boardwalk were an international mix, a family unit of Asian-Americans to the right of us, another of Russian-Americans to the left.

Crabbing without borders, one might say.

I digress.

Anyway, things got off to a ripping start when on the first pull Phil reeled up a meaty keeper Dungeness crab, a whopper for Yaquina Bay.

My results were somewhat more

mixed.

I got crabs on every pull (which is suggestive, I know, but not in this case a double entendre), but all of the Dungeness were either too small to keep, or female. I did, however, catch a respectable red rock crab, which are not sex or size-specific to keep.

Given our score at that point - Phil 1, Henry 1 - it went into his bucket with the promise to claw it back if we were more successful in the short time that we had left.

Phil moseyed west down the boardwalk to check out the action at his preferred crabbing spot, which had been too crowded when he had walked down earlier. A crabber there had told him to come back because with one keeper in

his bucket, he’d let Phil have it if he didn’t add to his catch.

He didn’t, so my friend scored his third keeper from a third party.

Which made for enough crabs and mushrooms for a successful trip for a party of one.

As I said, sometimes it takes a village to catch a meal.

WHOPPER ALERT! - The most-anticipated (by many) trout-stocking runs of the year started this week with a load of 38 surplus hatchery brood rainbow trout delivered to Walter Wirth Lake in Cascades Gateway Park in Salem.

The massive trout that have aged out of the peak of their productive lives will be delivered to various Willamette Valley ponds, usually on Mondays through

the end of the year.

The usual disclaimers apply. Hatchery runs are dependent on the availability of trout and trucks as well as road and weather conditions.

The fish come from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Roaring River Fish Hatchery near Scio.

Bonus!

A total of 1,000 keeper-plus-size rainbow trout also were scheduled to be delivered to Wirth this week.

The entrance to Cascades Gateway Park is on the north side of Turner Road just south of the Walmart parking lot.

Henry Miller is a retired Statesman Journal outdoor columnist and outdoor writer. You can reach him via email at HenryMillerSJ@gmail.com

Salmon

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mere afterthought, a whopping 18,000 fish began returning to the Upper Willamette from 2009 to 2014.

“They’re kind of ghost fish,” McIntosh said. “They disappeared for a while, and then showed up. And it has

continued that way. I wouldn’t say they have a real self-sustaining population in the Santiam. The runs ebb and flow. It’s never consistent.”

Legends of the coho

McIntosh said today’s coho are essentially remnants of old stocking programs, but others suggest more colorful origin stories.

Lusk said that years ago — or perhaps decades — wildlife officials dumped coho into Detroit and Big Cliff reservoirs to see if the fish could survive going through the turbines of the dam. Apparently they did survive, he said, and helped kick-start a population in the North Santiam.

Lusk also heard that somebody emptied a truckload of coho smolts into Stout Creek, a small tributary of the North Santiam between Mehama and Stayton.

“You can see them spawning in these little sidestreams and ditches,” Lusk said.

The final legend — about a Robin Hood-esque bandit stealing coho smolts from a fish hatchery and planting them in the river — is also heard in the canyon.

McIntosh was dubious of those stories but said he couldn’t necessarily discount it.

“Back in the day we stocked pretty much every fish everywhere,” McIntosh said. “It was a different time, and if you dug through the records, you never know what you’ll find.”

He also said the agency knows some anglers are out planting fish — or ‘Johnny Apples seeding’ the rivers — even if it’s against the rules.

Santiam?

The problem with having coho in the Santiam River, McIntosh said, is they’re technically an invasive species that competes with native winter steelhead and spring salmon for nutrients and spawning ground.

When coho numbers went through the roof a few years ago, it alarmed biologists. Since then, numbers have bounced up and down, from just a few fish to this year’s robust runs.

“We were definitely concerned when they were moving into the Santiam in particular,” McIntosh said. “If they got a real toehold, we could have our hands full.”

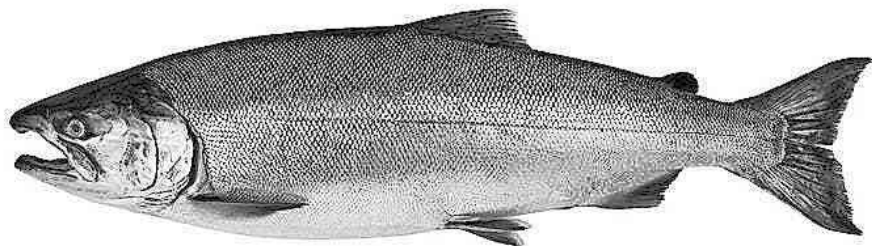
That’s why the agency would love to see anglers on the river, targeting coho. They’re not only good eating, but harvesting them is also good for the ecosystem.

Think of it as public service fishing.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors reporter, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 11 years. To support his work, subscribe to the Statesman Journal.

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Why are coho bad for the



Coho salmon WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



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