

A fisherman and The Pocket Fisherman HENRY MILLER / SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Miller

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Not to mention the potential for impalement if there was a hook involved in pocketing the device.

If you think about it, and engaging viewers in critical thinking is definitely not what infomercials are about, a fishing rod is the lightest, easiest-to-carry piece of fishing tackle.

It's the tackle boxes, cooler, maybe a bucket and a folding chair that make up the bulk – and that's the operative word – of your gear.

Popeil's perpetual solution in search of a problem approach to manufacturing and sales reminds me of an oft-told story. It was told to me by my dad, so it's probably true.

After the Soviet Union came apart with the fall of the Berlin Wall, some Russian and American space-project engineers were sharing stories about their experiences.

An American described in great detail the exhaustive, protracted work and expense involved in developing a pen that would write in zero gravity.

"How did you solve the problem?" he asked a Soviet scientist, who allegedly shrugged and smiled.

"We gave them pencils."

Highlights: clamming tides and tuna within reach

Item 1: There is a good minus-tide series in progress during the early morning hours, with the two lowest falling this weekend, Aug. 21 and 22. You can look up the times and tides for the hot spots on the coast online at Tide Location Selection for Oregon (saltwater.tides.com) And, as always, be sure to check before heading out by calling the Oregon Department of Agriculture's toll-free shellfish biotoxin hotline at (800) 448-2474 or go online to the State of Oregon:

Shellfish - Recreational Shellfish Biotoxin Closures

Item 2: According to reports from charter offices, albacore tuna are finally within striking distance off the Oregon coast.

You need reliable sea legs for adventures lasting 12 to 18 hours, and deep pockets for trips that run \$250 and up.

Didn't scare you off? For current information about fishing and ocean conditions, or to make reservations:

- Depoe Bay Dockside Charters: (541) 765-2545. Website: www.docksidedepoebay.com

- Tradewinds Charters: (800) 445-8730. Website: www.tradewindscharters.com

- Newport Newport Marina Store & Charters: (541) 867-4470. Website: www.nmscharters.com

- Newport Tradewinds: (541) 265-2101. Website: www.newporttradewinds.com

- Yaquina Bay Charters: (541) 265-6800. Website: www.yaquina-baycharters.com

Thought for the week: Experience teaches that fish don't care how much you spent for your tackle and gear.

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Cobble Beach at Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area features tide pools, a unique beach and views of seals.

Pairing

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Both places are best explored as part of an overnight trip to Newport — a refuge this summer that's continually had temperatures in the 60s even as the Willamette Valley burns up in triple digits.

Oregon Coast Aquarium offers education made fun

Nothing quite compares to watching a harbor seal or sea otter swim past the underwater glass windows at the Aquarium's outdoor exhibits, or looking into the octopus cave to see whether you can see two eyes looking back at you.

The Coast Aquarium is not cheap at just under \$80 for two kids and two adults, but each time we go, the kids are thrilled and willing to stay for 4 to 5 hours. That's a pretty good return on investment and one I'm willing to make once a year. And look, there's nowhere else in Oregon you can watch Tufted Puffins dive off a rock and then swim underwater.

The "passages of the deep" is probably the biggest showstopper, with fish and sharks swimming above, around and below you. The jellyfish exhibits are always transfixing as well. Masks are currently required for indoor exhibits, which is smart given it can become crowded in a confined space.

Yaquina Head allows watching nature in the wild

While it's one thing to watch a harbor seal swim underwater through a glass window, it's probably more thrilling for kids to see them in the wild. That's just one of the opportunities you get at Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area on the north side of Newport. It costs \$7 per vehicle, but is free if you arrive on a bike. The lighthouse tour and visitor's center have been closed since the beginning of the pandemic and remain shuttered, but there's still plenty to do outdoors.

Far more fun are hikes such as Cobble Beach, Quarry Cove, Salal Hill and the paved trails around the lighthouse.

Cobble Beach Trail

Easily my favorite place at Yaquina Head, and one of my favorite beaches in Oregon, everything about Cobble Beach is cool, including the unique greyish blue cobble rocks, the life-filled tidepools, the seals playing nearby and even the helpful volunteers.

From the lighthouse parking area, you reach the beach down a set of stairs that's easy for most. Visitors must leave all the rocks on the beach. On most days you'll get a talk from a ranger before stepping onto the beach.

The tidepools are the main highlight, and they are fantastic, filled with multi-colored anemones, starfish and the ubiquitous purple sea urchin. Friendly rangers ensure people stay off barnacles while explaining to kids the fun facts about how starfish are not really fish but echinoderms — similar to urchins.

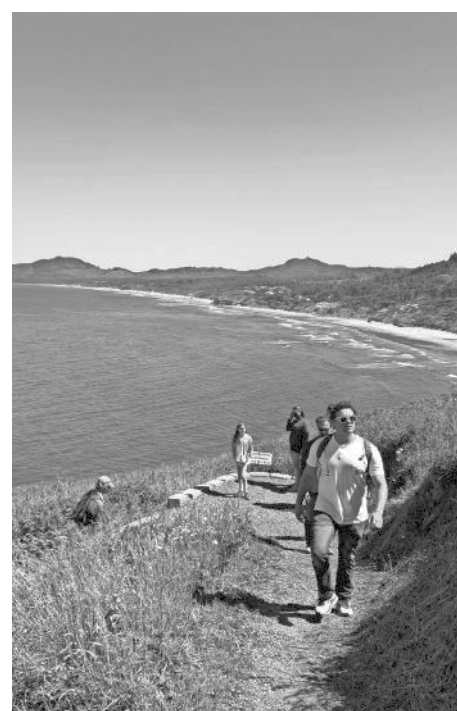
The beach also offers views of seals playing, splashing and swimming in the cove, with the lighthouse rising overhead.

Lighthouse and Salal Hill

At the main lighthouse parking lot, a paved path weaves around the Yaquina Head Lighthouse — at 93 feet the tallest on the Coast. There are also great views of the Oregon Islands just offshore cov-



The Oregon Coast Aquarium features a great way to interact with undersea life in Newport.



Salal Hill is an uphill hike that leads to outstanding views of the Oregon Coast and Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area. PHOTOS BY ZACH URNESS/STATESMAN JOURNAL

ered in hundreds of sea birds — many of the same types you see up close at the Aquarium.

Once you've circled the lighthouse, head over to Salal Hill, a beautiful and not-too-difficult hike to the top of a hill with knockout views of everything the cape has to offer — the lighthouse, Cobble Beach and the beach down into Newport.

Quarry Cove Trail

A former gravel quarry blasted into the side of the headland, this 1 mile trail travels down to more tide pools and a pretty but unnatural beach. Apparently, a developer at one point planned to blast almost all of Yaquina Head before the federal government stepped in to preserve the area.

Communications Hill

Another 1 mile hike up to a great viewpoint of the surrounding coast begins just behind the Visitor's Center.

For more info on planning a trip to Yaquina Head, call 541-574-3100.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors reporter, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 13 years. To support his work, subscribe to the Statesman Journal. Urness can be reached at zurness@StatesmanJournal.com or (503) 399-6801. Find him on Twitter at @ZachsORoutdoors.

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