

WINGING

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Jordan Valley provides an excellent opportunity for September Canada goose hunting. Hunters need to get permission to hunt private lands.

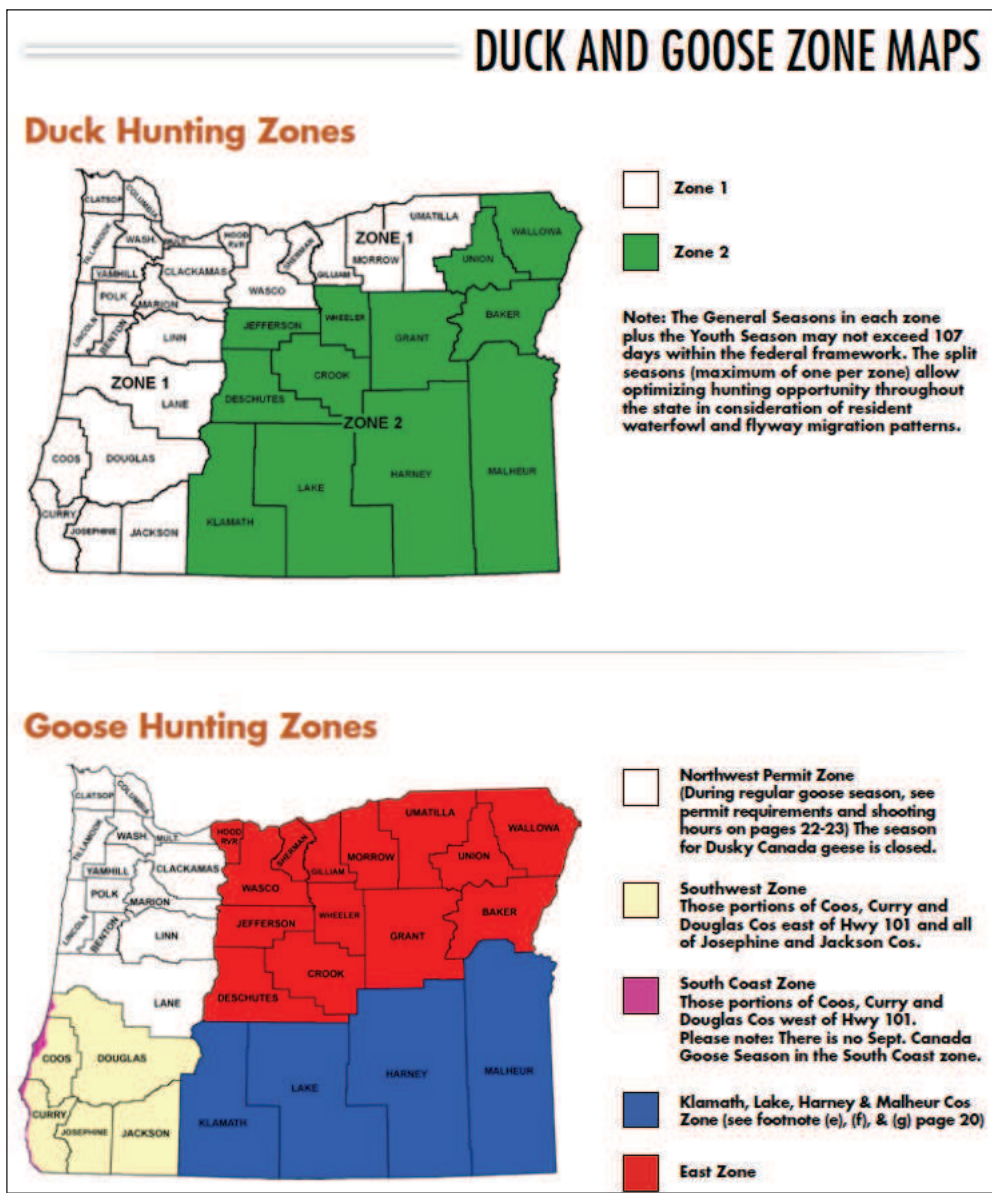
Fair waterfowl hunting is available in the Treasure Valley (agricultural areas near the Snake River in the vicinity of Ontario, Adrian and Nyssa) most of the season, and improves significantly during cold weather events. Cold weather events reduce open water, concentrating birds and increasing the time spent foraging. Field hunting for both geese and ducks can be good for hunters willing to spend the time and effort to secure access to private land.

Union County

Duck and goose hunting is expected to be similar to last year.

Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area

The 2019 year was another good production year for waterfowl, especially Canada geese. Nest success appears to be similar to past years with lots of mallard, gadwall and teal broods. Water levels in the marsh as of the end of August are looking very promis-



ing. Most wetlands still have a small amount of huntable water. Hunters should call the

office at 541-963-4954 to get a current update on water levels or plan to make a trip out

on one of the open days prior to the hunting season to scout out potential locations.

All visitors including hunters must have in their possession a free daily permit to access the wildlife area. Permits are available at several self-check-in stations at entry points and parking lots. The Wildlife Area is closed 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. daily. There is no camping on the wildlife area.

Wallowa County

Waterfowl hunting should be similar to previous few years. Expect good hunting opportunities later in the fall and early winter when migrating birds arrive. The few resident geese Canada geese in the district have fared well, too. Most hunting is decoy hunting in agricultural fields, and jump shooting irrigation ditches so be sure to get landowner permission before hunting.

Umatilla and Morrow counties

Hunting prospects depend on weather conditions. If the region does not experience a real winter, many of the northern migrants will stay in Washington. The best hunting is usually later in the season (late November) after some weather pushes birds down northern areas. The Columbia River is usually the

Planning to e-tag?

The MyODFW app works without cell reception, but you need to be logged in for your profile to come up and to be able to use the app out of cell range.

Note that the original version of the app released in December 2018 automatically logged users out after six months. So, if you haven't used the app in awhile you may need to login again -- even if you never logged out.

best opportunity for hunters on public land, but those who can access irrigated circles in northern Morrow County usually get good goose hunting.

Habitat in the Columbia Basin still supports large numbers of wintering Canada geese and the number of snow geese wintering in this area has greatly increased in recent years. Waterfowl hunters should not forget about the Columbia Basin Wildlife Areas (Power City, Irrigon, Coyote Springs, Willow Creek). Food crops were planted and ponds have been enhanced, all of which will make conditions better for waterfowl hunting.

Prineville teen hikes Oregon section of Pacific Crest Trail

By Mark Morical
The (Bend) Bulletin

Looking back, the first week was the hardest.

Shiloh Binder, just 14, was on his own, hiking the 460-mile Oregon section of the Pacific Crest Trail. He went four nights without seeing another person.

"I was missing everyone, missing my family," Shiloh recalls. "That got pretty lonely and sad, just being alone and not having anyone to talk to."

But Shiloh, of Prineville, trekked through his loneliness and eventually came across many other hikers from across the country, as well as from Sweden, Norway, France, Great Britain, Australia, Puerto Rico and South America.

He started his solo journey on the Oregon-California border in the Siskiyou Mountains on June 23 and finished in the Columbia River town of Cascade Locks on July 25, averaging about 18 miles per day.

Along the way, the freshman-to-be at Crook County High School lost 25 pounds and had encounters with a bobcat, a black bear and a herd of elk. He spent time sliding down snowy slopes, crossed and swam in more than 100 lakes and streams, witnessed the devastation of wildfires and took in some of the most dramatic mountain scenery in the West.

And, according to his parents, he became a man.

"We view this as a growing period for a young man," says Shiloh's mother, Laura Binder. "A coming of age" event.

The Pacific Crest Trail is a 2,650-mile hiking and equestrian trail running from Mexico to Canada, following the mountains of California, Oregon and Washington. To hike the entire trail is a bucket-list item for many hikers. But to complete a section of it such as the Oregon stretch is a significant accomplishment in the hiking world, too.

Those who may think Laura and Isaac Binder are crazy for allowing their 14-year-old son to hike alone across the crest of Oregon should understand how the couple raised their five children.



Submitted photo

Prineville's Shiloh Binder hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail near Mount Hood.

"Toward the end, I was just eating as many calories a day as I could. It was easy to fixate on foods. I dreamed about ice cream."

— Shiloh Binder, 14, who hiked the 460-mile section of the Pacific Crest Trail through Oregon by himself

Isaac Binder, a social worker, says he spent many seasons as a wilderness guide in Alaska and throughout the United States.

"I feel like we have been preparing our children to do these big adventures and complete these challenges their whole life," he says. "I have always encouraged them to stretch themselves. We understand that some people feel scared in the wilderness or without people around them, but we have trained our children to feel at home by themselves in nature."

Shiloh, the second-oldest of the Binder siblings, was adventurous from a young age. By 11, he had become an

avid whitewater rafter and was guiding his family down stretches of the John Day River in Northeast Oregon, according to his mother. Since he was 10, she says, Shiloh has hiked and climbed by himself all over the buttes, ridges and forests around Prineville and the Ochoco Mountains. He also enjoys camping, swimming, biking, kayaking and triathlons, and he has been trained in wilderness survival and outdoor ethics.

Laura Binder, who owns a home day care business, says she struggled with the concerns and fears of others when they found out about her son's plans to hike across Oregon.

"I feel uncomfortable when people are questioning my parenting, so I kept it very quiet in the beginning," she says. "I only told a select few and solicited advice from those that I trusted. It comes down to preparing and teaching our children skills that they need to be able to succeed, and then getting out of the way and letting them

practice those skills."

Shiloh says he met quite a few people who insisted that a 14-year-old could not hike the Oregon PCT alone.

"And mostly, that just made me want to do it more," he says.

Shiloh worked for a family in Prineville doing irrigation and farm work to earn enough money for his hike across the state. He needed to buy ultralight supplies, as well as trail food, a new camp stove and a Garmin inReach global satellite communicator.

The inReach allowed Shiloh's friends and family to track him along his route, updating his position every 10 minutes. He could also exchange texts with his parents, and the inReach included an SOS button, which when pressed would send his GPS coordinates to emergency responders and to his parents. He never needed to press the button.

"That was critical," Laura Binder says of the Garmin device. "That was the deciding factor. Knowing he could call somebody if he needed

to, or we could find him if we needed to. ... We had some expectations that he would contact us every morning and night with a text message."

Shiloh's parents dropped him off several miles away from where the PCT crosses the Oregon-California border, and he hiked in to the trail from there.

The south end of the PCT in Oregon starts near the Siskiyou Mountains summit (4,310 feet) and runs north through the Cascade Range at a fairly constant elevation. Other volcanoes the trail passes close by include Mount Thielsen, Mount McLoughlin, Mount Mazama (Crater Lake), Diamond Peak, the Three Sisters, Mount Washington, Three Fingers Jack, Mount Jefferson and Mount Hood. The trail drops into the Columbia River Gorge, where the Oregon section ends at Cascade Locks.

Shiloh says his favorite section was the Three Sisters Wilderness in Central Oregon. His parents met him at McKenzie Pass for a resupply, and he stayed a night in Sisters with them, about halfway through his trek.

"There was enough snow when I was there to make it challenging and fun at the same time," Shiloh says of the Three Sisters Wilderness. "By then, I was in good shape, and I did some fun side hikes."

One evening at dusk, Shiloh recalls, he lay down to rest and awoke to a black bear smelling and pawing at his pack outside his tent. He says he managed to scare the bear off by waving his trekking poles and smacking

them together.

Shiloh packed water bottles but also used a filter that allowed him to drink from creeks and streams. Through areas scorched by wildfire, this was a challenge.

"They're hot, and they kind of mess with your head," Shiloh says of those sections of the trail. "You're not used to hiking through that. You have to cross fallen trees. It changes the water table so much when a fire comes through. A creek that was maybe there before the fire can be totally diverted somewhere else. But the guidebooks still say there's a creek or a spring there."

As he approached the north end of the Oregon section of the PCT, Shiloh says, he started to burn through his last energy reserves and was intensely hungry.

"Toward the end, I was just eating as many calories a day as I could," he says. "It was easy to fixate on foods. I dreamed about ice cream. I've been nonstop eating since I got back."

While Shiloh says the hike was difficult at first, physically and mentally, the adventure became easier and more enjoyable as he transformed into hiking shape.

"I was sore and cramping after the first couple days," he says. "But towards the end, after a 16-mile day I almost wanted to keep pushing."

For now, Shiloh has set his well-worn trail runners aside. But he has another adventure in mind: Next year, he says, he plans to solo hike the Washington stretch of the PCT — all 500 miles.

La Grande's Certified Arborist

I'm putting together a Dormant Season Pruning List

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