

RECREATION  
REPORT

LATE SPRING SNOWSTORM KEEPS THE ELKHORNS LOOKING WINTRY

The Observer & Baker City Herald

**Hunter education classes resume**

SALEM — Hunter education classes have resumed in Oregon, with safety measures in place to protect both students and volunteer instructors.

To see the latest classes and field days available, visit <https://myodfv.com/articles/hunter-education-classes-field-days> and register. Students can choose to take a conventional class, or finish most of the class independently by workbook or online and just take a field day. More classes and field days will be added so check back if you don't see one in your area.

Among the field days scheduled in Northeastern Oregon:

- June 20: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area, 59116 Pierce Road. Students must complete an online course or workbook and bring proof of completion to this ODFW Field Day. There will be a 60-question written exam. Students must wear a mask during COVID restrictions, and are asked to bring their own. Instructor is Darren Hendrickson.

- July 18: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Powder River Sportsmen's Club's Virtue Flat range 6 miles east of Baker City. Students must complete an online course or workbook and bring proof of completion. There will be a 60-question written exam. Students must wear a mask during COVID restrictions, and are asked to bring their own. Instructor is Richard Haines.

- Aug. 15: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area, 59116 Pierce Road. Students must complete an online course or workbook and bring proof of completion. There will be a 60-question written exam. Students must wear a mask during COVID restrictions, and are asked to bring their own. Instructor is Darren Hendrickson.

- Aug. 29: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Powder River Sportsmen's Club's Virtue Flat range 6 miles east of Baker City. Students must complete an online course or workbook and bring proof of completion. There will be a 60-question written exam. Students must wear a mask during COVID restrictions, and are asked to bring their own. Instructor is Richard Haines.

All ODFW outdoor education classes have been canceled since March due to the pandemic, including hunter education, which is required to hunt in Oregon for ages 17 and under.



Lisa Britton / For the EO Media Group

Black Lake, in the Elkhorn Mountains near Anthony Lake, is still covered by snow and ice.

## Snowshoe near the solstice

**W**e celebrated the second week of June in the customary way, by going on a snowshoe hike to an alpine lake that's still frozen.

Except for the very edge, which was the consistency of the stuff that swirls around in machines in convenience stores and comes in flavors such as "tastebud-destroying blueberry."

This is not the customary way to acknowledge the imminence of summer in, say, Kansas.

But we who are fortunate to live so near to great mountain ranges such as the Elkhorns, where the passage of the seasons often bears little resemblance to any calendar, can avail ourselves of different, and more damp, traditions.

Body-sledding headfirst, for instance.

My daughter, Olivia, and my son Max, considered that the highlight of the trip.

It made my head hurt just to watch them bounce down a slope below Black Lake.

My wife, Lisa, said they looked rather like otters, carving their smooth chutes through the slippery slush.

It was an apt comparison, except that our children don't have glossy pelts.

We went up to Anthony Lakes on Monday evening, June 8. This plan, when announced, prompted an immediate, and energetic, protest from Olivia, who insisted that Monday is "not a hiking day."

Her complaint was not without foundation.

Almost all of our hiking excursions this spring have been confined to



**ON THE TRAIL**

JAYSON JACOBY

weekends, owing to work and school schedules.

But I was intrigued to see how much snow had fallen the previous day during the latest of our unseasonably cool spring storms.

A considerable amount, or so it appeared from the vantage point of the valley.

By Monday morning the clouds had dissipated, affording a fine view of the Elkhorns, newly whitened a fair distance down from the crest.

The automated snow-measuring station in a meadow just east of Anthony Lake wasn't reporting, unfortunately.

But another station, at Aneroid Lake in the Wallowas, makes for a decent surrogate — the elevations are similar — and it recorded a foot of new snow.

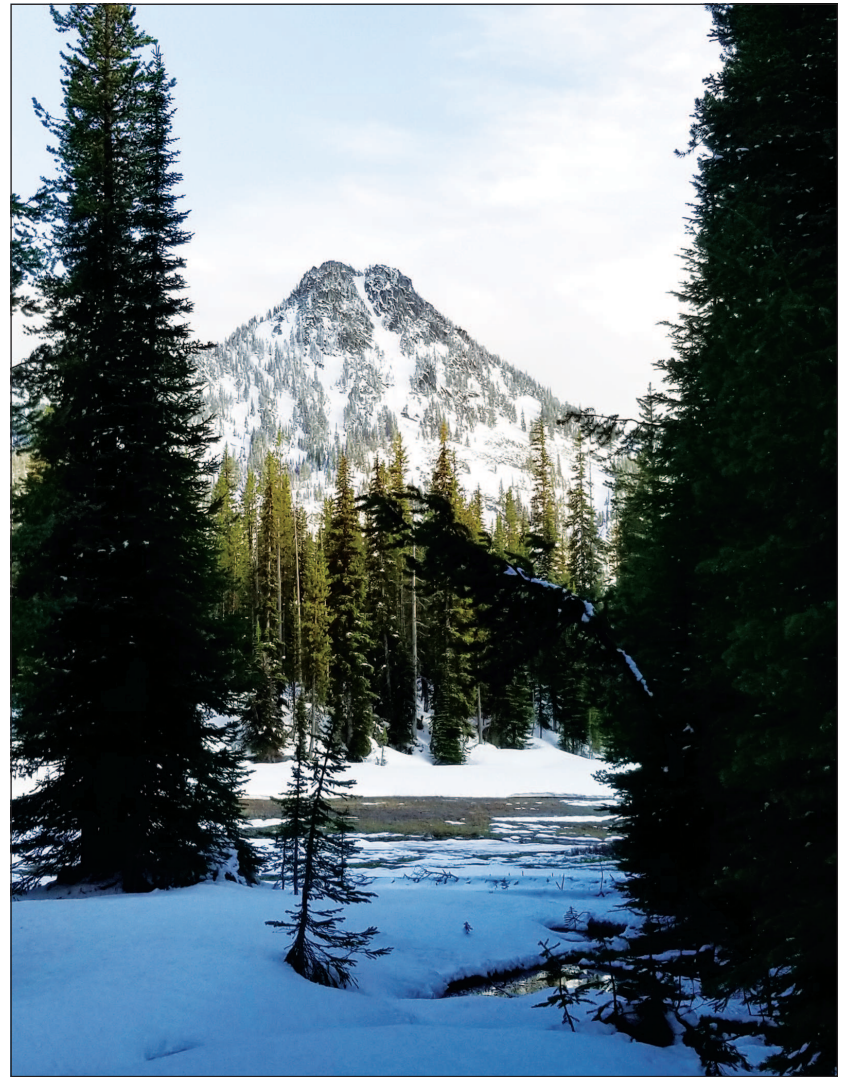
I don't think the storm was quite so generous in the Elkhorns.

But when I started walking across the parking lot for the Elkhorn Crest National Recreation Trail my boots plunged through about 6 inches of slush before striking the solid layer of the "old" snow with a jolt.

These remnants of winter blizzards were widespread and, in places, 3 or 4 feet deep.

This is not unusual for early June above 7,000 feet, to be sure.

But even at the lofty altitudes of the Elkhorns, significant snowfall within a couple weeks of the summer solstice



Lisa Britton/For the EO Media Group

Gunsight Butte looms over the Anthony Lakes basin in the Elkhorn Mountains west of North Powder.

is rare.

It was a pleasant hike, but also a peculiar one.

I hadn't donned snowshoes for several weeks, for one thing, and so it felt

strange to once again be fumbling with the rubber straps, on a day so distant from Christmas.

See **Snowshoe** / Page 3B

## Father's Day gifts for the outdoorsman

As an outdoor writer I test hundreds of outdoor items every year. I'm going to list some items that have caught my eye for some good Father's Day gifts. Remember, you don't have to spend a fortune to light up his eyes. We use everything from a \$1.49 package of crappie jigs on up to a \$75,000 boat. So whether you're a kid on an allowance of 50 cents a week, or the Queen of Sheba, you can make his day if you choose wisely.

First off, investigate. With a little work you can figure out what he wants/needs. Just because he is a fisherman doesn't mean he wants a bag full of red-and-white bobbers. If he only fly fishes then you might as well give him a bag of rocks as a bag of bobbers. Get my drift? Let's get started.

**CLOTHING**

- 5.11 makes some cool tactical pants that are great for hunting, fishing and hiking. They also offer great shorts.
- Heybo makes some sporty fishing shirts.



**BASE CAMP**

TOM CLAYCOMB

- Irish Setter offers great hiking boots. Right now I'm testing their Canyons hiking boots.
- Hiking socks. These are like a gift from heaven for your feet.
- Base layers. I use XGO

**FIRST AID/SURVIVAL**

- Aquimira offers a lot of filtered water bottles and straws.
- Adventure Medical Kits offers a plethora of first aid kits and accessories.
- Firestarting gear. Waterproof matches and a pack of cheap Bic lighters work great.

**BACKPACKS**

- Outdoorsmen use daypacks, backpacking packs and packs to pack out game.



Tom Claycomb photo

A backpack can make the perfect Father's Day gift for a dad who likes to hike and hunt.

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