

Phlox blooming in the hills west of Durkee Valley, in southeast Baker County.

WILD

Continued from Page 1B

I was surprised at the diversity of the terrain. This of course is one of the great rewards of venturing off the main routes — to understand more intimately what lies between the folds of the land, hidden from all but the adventurous traveler.

For instance, the gully just to the north of the road was a contorted badland of rock pinnacles and colorful ashy swathes not so dissimilar from the Painted Hills near Mitchell, though not nearly so dramatic or photogenic. Still, when I stood beside the car and looked up at

our intended route I had no conception of what I was going to see. The road veers sharply to

the right at the head of that gully. We watched a herd of about a dozen mule deer gambol across the slope above, winding among the junipers in their uniquely graceful, somehow dainty, gait.

The road crosses the gully and soon after reaches the second junction in a grassy saddle.

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Colorful beds of rock and ash in the hills above the Durkee Valley of southeast Baker County.

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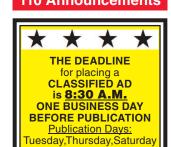
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