

DAUBLE

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when the main river ran high and roily from snow-melt. There are few finer things in life than wading up the middle of a small stream with a 3-weight fly rod in hand to dab a wet hackle over log jams, make bow-and-arrow casts between alder branches, and slip-w/wwslide between giant boulders. Small water where 6-inch trout are a prize and 9-inchers live as lunkers never ceases to thrill.

“Where is Shimmie-horn?” I replied. “I’ve never heard of it.”

“It runs into the South Fork of the Umatilla about a mile above the road that crosses the river and follows Thomas Creek,” he said. “My brother Don walked from a nearby ridge down into the creek and fished his way down to the South Fork.”

“I’ve hiked up the South Fork maybe a half mile,” I responded. “Crossed the stream three times, but quit where the channel became choked by deadfall and trout got tiny.”

“Don said the walls of the canyon get very tight at the bottom, and then flare out into big holes chuck full of trout,” Leonard said. “He told me if it wasn’t for the logs in the top of the holes, you couldn’t move down the creek without getting very wet. Every hole had hungry fish in it, so you could almost catch a limit of ten in each hole if you wanted to.”

Three different times I dropped down 1,000 feet in elevation from Luger Springs to Lookingglass Creek for dark-speckled rainbows and voracious bull trout. The difference being my legs were 20 years younger.

On yet another Blue Mountain outing, I took a naive friend down the shot-rock strewn Rough Fork trail to the headwaters of



Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photo

A downhill trek into a stream canyon is always shorter than the trek back up.

the Walla Walla River and back up on a hot August day. The trail marker read 2 miles, but it felt like 6 miles up. As I recall, my friend said, “Don’t ever ask me to try that again.”

“I’m sure the trout are still there,” Leonard continued. “One approach would be to hike down into the canyon, fish half mile or so, and hike back out the top. It would be a lot of hiking for a little fishing on a hot day, though.”

I unrolled a U.S. Geological Survey, Bingham Springs quadrangle, 7.5-minute topographic map of the area. The flow path of

Shimmiehorn Creek spans a distance of approximately 4 miles between a feature called The Shimmiehorn (elevation about 4,600 feet) and nearby Goodman Ridge (elevation about 4,800 feet). The creek is 3 miles as the crow flies due west of Ruckel Junction. A series of meandering four-wheel drive, unimproved spur roads off Summit Road gets you close.

Looking at the map’s steep contour lines, a preferred strategy would be to hike down the creek canyon and to the South Fork confluence with Thomas Creek. Unfortunately, the

South Fork Road washed out with the great flood of February 2019, negating the option of a waiting vehicle.

The secret of those big trout in Shimmiehorn Creek appears safe for now. It’s unlikely for me to sucker someone on such a wild goose chase unless further embellishment of the tale occurs during yet another pass of the whiskey flask.

■ *Dennis Dauble is a retired fishery scientist, outdoor writer, presenter and educator who lives in Richland, Washington. For more stories about fish and fishing in area waters, see DennisDaubleBooks.com.*

CLAYCOMB

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forget, it is backpacking season. I haven’t got to go yet. I just got me and Kolby some new Alps Mountaineering day packs and HybridLight flashlights I want us to test out. Oh, then Kolby and I also have some Danner and La Crosse boots that we’re dying to go backpacking in. Backpacking is a big daddy/daughter event every summer.

What’s more fun than to hit a wilderness with a backpack on your shoulders? You can momentarily forget about the skyrocketing inflation, installing new flooring in your house, \$5/gallon gas and whatever else is bothering you. Set up a camp and take off on day hikes and view awesome country. Build a fire at dusk and cook dinner over it and then watch the stars.



Tom Claycomb/Contributed Photo

Be sure to take rolls and rolls of film. You’ll be making memories on every back-country trip.

And finally crawl off to your tent dead tired.

Gee, I’ve got to get in gear. This is quite a list of activities that I have to get accomplished before summer is over. Luckily we have global warming so summer should last until December this year so I’ll be able to fit it all in.



Tom Claycomb/Contributed Photo

Huckleberries aren’t the only berry out there. Thimbleberries are also good.

ROADS

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More information is available by calling 541-523-6391.

Jordan Creek, Road 4305

Workers will replace a culvert at Jordan Creek starting Aug. 15, but the road will remain open during construction to high-clearance vehicles.

More information is available by calling 541-962-8500.

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2022
CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Hem’s partner
- 4 Ballet leap
- 8 Dagwood’s neighbor
- 12 Provoke
- 13 Dun-colored
- 14 FitzGerald’s poet
- 15 Etc. category
- 17 Hill in San Francisco
- 18 Transparent mineral
- 19 Alphabet enders
- 21 Canape toppers
- 22 Marine deposits
- 25 Sharp turn
- 26 Jungle warning
- 27 Grape-grower’s business
- 30 Cast a vote
- 31 Trades
- 33 Lout
- 35 Like some orders

DOWN

- 37 Fish choice
- 38 Polish
- 39 Twisted and turned
- 41 Crayola choice
- 44 Browser’s delight
- 45 Occasion for leis
- 46 Disqualify
- 47 Ballet skirt
- 51 Takes steps
- 52 Ovid’s “was”
- 54 Sports award
- 55 Roller coaster cry
- 56 Workout result
- 57 Boot liner
- 1 “She Done — Wrong”
- 2 Uris hero
- 3 Mo. parts
- 4 Writer — Salinger
- 5 Fish-eating birds

Answer to Previous Puzzle

B	U	M	P	S	A	W	S	A	Y	E				
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