

Outdoor Rec / Local

New wolf depredation confirmed

Date Investigated: 3/25/2016

General Area: Upper Swamp Creek area – private land

General situation and animal information: On the morning of 3/25/2016 the range rider found a dead sheep in a grassland pasture near the county road. Wolf depredation was suspected and ODFW investigated that morning. The adult ram was examined and it was estimated to have been killed during the morning of 3/25/2016.

Physical evidence of attack by a predator: Though a significant portion of this sheep had been consumed, premor-

tem bite wounds with associated hemorrhaging and tissue damage were clearly observed on the ram's hind leg and neck indicating the animal was alive when attacked.

Running sheep tracks were observed approximately six feet from the initial kill site where three pools of blood were located at the beginning of a drag path approximately 30 yards long continuing to the carcass. These are both indicators of predator attack.

Evidence that the predator was a wolf: Multiple large bite wounds and severe tissue damage were observed on the neck and left hind leg. The loca-

tion of the bite wounds are commonly observed attack points for wolves. Premortem hemorrhage to underlying tissue with limited damage to the hide and canine puncture holes of 1/4 -3/8 inches in the hide is similar to other wolf depredations.

Evidence of wolf presence near the time of the animal(s) death/injury: GPS radio-collar data of 2 Imnaha

Pack wolves indicated that OR39 was 500 yards from the carcass at 3:00am and both OR4 and OR39 were 200 yards from the carcass at 6:00 am on the morning of 3/25/2016.

Recent wolf depredation in the same or nearby

area: ODFW confirmed a calf depredation by four Imnaha Pack wolves about three miles away on 3/9/2016.

Cause of death/injury: Confirmed wolf

Summary: The location, as well as the number, size and severity of the bite wounds are similar to those observed on other confirmed sheep depredations by wolves.

Combined with an observed kill scene and direct evidence of wolf presence (at least two wolves) in the immediate area of the sheep at the time of this incident were adequate to confirm this incident as a wolf depredation.

Wallowa-Whitman urges caution during spring weather

Spring has sprung and it's time to get back into the woods! Find your favorite place, hike your favorite trail and visit your favorite lake. The roads are thawing out and the mud and erratic weather changes can cause safety concerns if visitors are unprepared.

"It's always a good idea to prepare for a variety of weather conditions this time of year," says Public Affairs Officer Katy Gray. "One minute the sun will be shining brightly and the next minute the clouds will roll in and drench you with a cold rain, so please be prepared with dry clothes and jackets. Being prepared is key to a safe and fun adventure into the woods this spring," continued Gray. The roads can also be a little tricky to navigate in the spring. Getting out and

seeing the spring wildflowers and the snow melt off into rushing creeks and rivers is a ritual for many of us in here eastern Oregon, so we want to share a few tips for planning your spring time adventures. General tips for spring time driving and for more information check out www.treadlightly.org :

- Tread lightly with your motor vehicle and be cautious if conditions are muddy.
- Stay on designated trails and roads.
- Honor road and trail closures.
- Please don't build your own trails, they cause damage and are illegal.
- Where open riding is allowed, learn to read the terrain. Avoid low spots and watercourses that could lead to wetlands and meadows.
- Avoid sensitive areas

like wetlands altogether.

- Be part of the solution. Please report resource damage to the Forest Service office nearest you.

We would like to remind forest visitors to take extra precautions around streams and rivers this spring. "Rain falling on heavy snow pack can cause rapid snowmelt; flooding small streams and larger rivers," said Public Affairs Specialist Matt Burks. "We want to ensure our visitors have the knowledge to act safely in these upcoming spring months when the risks of floods increase," continued Burks.

To help prepare visitors, two Safety Pages titled Floods and Flash Floods are available on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest website and can be viewed at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/WWOutdoorSafety

Before visitors head out to the forest it is beneficial to be weather wise. "Keep an eye on current and predicted weather conditions as weather can change very quickly," said Burks.

Know the signs for approaching storms or changing weather conditions. Stay away from fast rushing waters and don't try to drive through washed out roads.

For the most recent information on roads and trails or to purchase a map please call or visit one of our Forest Service offices www.fs.usda.gov/detail/wallowa-whitman/about-forest/offices We would be happy to chat with you and offer hiking, biking and motor vehicle recreation suggestions.

Information is also available on our website at www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman.

Spring turkey hunting tips

The essence of Oregon's spring wild turkey hunt is to attract a tom to your position by mimicking the sounds of a hen.

Your hunting success relies heavily on locating a tom. For this reason, you may want to scout your hunting area before the season begins. Look for signs of recent wild turkey activity, and locate suitable calling locations.

Wild turkey sign includes tracks and droppings. Hen tracks rarely exceed four and one half inches in length, whereas gobblers can have tracks up to six inches long.

Droppings offer positive evidence that wild turkeys have been in the area. The dropping's shape indicates the sex of the bird. Gobblers leave "J" shaped, elongated droppings, while hens leave rounded, piled droppings.

Once the season opens, arrive at your preselected hunting area well before sunup to be in position before toms begin to stir on the roost. Your calling location should be at least 100 to 150 yards from roosting wild turkeys. Attempts to get closer may spook birds off the roost and spoil your initial hunting efforts (this is where pre-season scouting pays off).

Wild turkeys are hesitant to walk through thick brush, so select a calling position in relatively open

country. Also avoid cover that restricts your sight path; maintain at least 50 yards of visibility in all directions.

Find a tree that is wider than your shoulders and taller than your head to sit against. This will break up your outline and protect your back from a careless hunter who may be stalking you.

Wild turkeys possess a well-developed sense of hearing and acute vision. For this reason, you should remain motionless while calling. You might consider taking a cushion to provide more comfortable sitting on cold or wet ground. Dressing in camouflage from head to toe is also recommended. Some wild turkey hunters even wrap their shotguns in camouflage tape to prevent gun barrel glint from giving away their position.

Once in place, sit quietly for a few minutes and listen for wild turkey activity, including wing flapping and soft calls. Remain motionless and begin calling softly and infrequently. Loud, aggressive calling may attract a gobbler, but may also cause him to avoid the area. Only experience will help you determine when, how loudly and how often to call. Good audio tapes are commercially available to help improve your calling. If a tom responds, call less often and watch for

the gobbler. Calls may also attract a curious hen. If this happens, do not frighten her away; her presence will give any incoming gobbler more confidence.

The gobbler may call from a distance, then approach quietly. Remain still and be patient; the bird may circle before coming in from another direction. Scan the area in front of you, being careful to minimize your movement. During your hunt, you may need to change calling locations. Do not be too eager to do this, particularly if the wild turkey you have called has been silent; it may be coming your way. If you do move, do not attempt to stalk the bird. Pick a new calling location and proceed as before. Be alert for other hunters in your area.

Because wild turkeys are tough to bring down, call your bird to within 25 yards before attempting a shot. Positively identify your target, and be certain you have a safe backstop. Wait for the turkey to extend its head and neck, then aim for the base of the head. Shooting for the body will often only wound the bird; dense feathers and heavy muscle and bone structure protect vital organs. After firing, set your gun's safety and quickly approach the downed turkey. Be cautious of slashing spurs and beating wings.

Miller attends Speedo Sectional Swim Meet



Submitted Photo.

Jared Miller.

Submitted by Noel Scott

Baker High School Swimming State Champion Jared Miller(16), who competes for La Grande Swim Club, attended the 2016 Speedo Sectional Swim Meet in Federal Way, WA on March 17-20.

This meet required qualifying times to enter, and was a highly competitive season culminating meet for the top swimmers in the Western states.

Miller posted personal best times in almost every event, and qualified for Winter Junior Nationals in backstroke. This is an impressive and exciting accomplishment and he has worked very hard to achieve this.

Below are his results for the meet.

Men 200 Meter Free 46 2:01.70 Miller, Jared
Men 400 Meter Free 24 4:19.86 Miller, Jared
Men 1500 Meter Free 20 17:13.07 Miller, Jared
Men 100 Meter Back 19 1:00.52 Miller, Jared
Men 200 Meter Back 13 2:09.42 Miller, Jared
Men 200 Meter IM 36 2:16.32 Miller, Jared

County warns against Myrtle Spurge

Baker County Weed Supervisor Arnie Grammon issued a statement last week after a local business owner reported that her grandson had broken out in a severe rash and blisters after coming into contact with a plant.

Said Grammon, "This plant was identified as Myrtle Spurge, a plant that is very toxic to people, causing severe rashes, temporary blindness." This plant is an early spring arrival, so this is the time of year to patrol for the weed. "Use gloves and take special precautions when removing the weed," Grammon said.

Myrtle Spurge is listed as a State Noxious Weed in Oregon. According to their site, "The sap of myrtle spurge is casutic and creates rashes, swelling, and blistering of the skin and is a human health concern."



Submitted Photo.

Myrtle Spurge with white sap.

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