

Outdoor Rec / Local

My Thanksgiving encounter with the now-dead skunk



THE OUTDOOR COLUMN
By Todd Arriola

This Thanksgiving I enjoyed some great food and company again, with numerous family members, and while none of the meat, as far as I know, was acquired the traditional way (shooting and cooking a wild turkey or deer, for example), I did manage to dispatch an uninvited guest—a skunk.

First off, I need to explain that the skunk was neither seated at the table, nor was he even in the house, when his time on this Earth had ended abruptly.

And secondly, I don't live within City limits.

The skunk wasn't even near the same house as where we had eaten first, my brother's, but rather,

near mine one night, when I halted him in his tracks. This was accomplished with my standard boom stick, a Mossberg 500 Defender 12 gauge.

Over the course of about a week, I noticed that my cats' large water bowl had been mysteriously drained more than usual each night, and the area around it was completely wet, as if something had upset the bowl every time.

The several bowls I use to feed the cats with seemed to be more out of order than usual, and there were odd, oil-like spots on nearby wood.

As I returned home from work one evening, I noticed a very familiar black-and-white colored animal on the porch, acting as if he owned the place, scaring my cats into a near state of heart attack.

He was eating the food, and drinking the water, and he didn't appear to fear any

of them (the largest and oldest cat, Harry, Jr., was coincidentally more likely to cuddle, than to attack).

With the skunk between me and the door, I had zero chance of getting to my firearm, and accomplishing anything.

So, I watched for him each day, and I noticed him outside, fiddling with the food, the water, and the cats once again, while I was inside, with access to my shotgun.

I quickly grabbed it, flung open the exterior door, chambered a shell, and killed him instantly.

My copy of Merriam-Webster's Dictionary And Thesaurus defines a skunk as "any of various black-and-white New World mammals related to the weasels that can forcibly eject an ill-smelling fluid when startled."

Yes, I would have to agree with the ill-smelling fluid part (the mysterious, oil-like spots), because that was the first time I ever remember being able to smell one, and though my sense of smell leaves something to be desired, I picked up his scent without any issues whatsoever.

He had sprayed some fluid at the time of death,

and luckily, I only smelled it elsewhere, rather than on me.

My cats seem to have thanked me the only way they know how—by not running away, and by cuddling and purring, which is plenty of gratitude.

They appear to be more relaxed now, and they only have to worry about the 100 other animals running around, which could be threatening in some way or another to them.

Some of the cats have disappeared mysteriously, and my possible suspect list includes dogs, coyotes, other cats, and even humans (two were run over by vehicles not long ago—cats, not humans).

Whatever the case, dispatching the skunk was nothing personal, and I don't hate skunks, although he might have had a different interpretation of those thoughts, shortly before I pulled the trigger of my shotgun.

He won't be bothering us anymore, but he must have spoken with his family or buddies about the easily accessible food and water, because I see we have yet another uninvited guest—of the ill-smelling, black-and-white variety.

2016 Turkey Trot results announced



Photo Courtesy of Basecamp Baker

The Logger Joggers won for best costumes.

SUBMITTED BY BRIAN VEGTER

The 9th Annual Baker City Turkey Trot presented by the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center had an incredible turnout with 560 people registered from around the county and as far away as London and again Venezuela. There were 17 teams this year and over six hundred pounds of food were donated to the food bank of NEOCC. Organizers, Corrine and Brian Vegter estimate over \$6,500 was brought in this year from entry fees, donations and sponsorships.

A new course record was set in the women's field by 21 year old, Rachel Roelle of Anchorage, Alaska in a time of 21:27 beating her previous record 21:44 by 17 seconds; second Anika Anderson 22:40; third Whitney Anderson 23:19.

On the men's side, Baker City local Nic Maszk, won for his fourth Turkey Trot in 17:52; second Jacob Dewalt 17:58; third Joshua Carpenter 20:1.

The team category saw Run Like the Turkey's Overdone take first, The Giblets second and The Gravy Train team was third.

Best costumes went to the Logger Joggers.

Fastest runners with dogs were Michelle Boudreau in 24:54 and in Tom Price, Jr. 24:55.

The fastest runner with a stroller was Logan Mitchell in 26:15.

Organizers would like to thank the community, volunteers, participants and our sponsors for the continued support and to remind people that NEOCC accepts food donations all year long at 1250 Hughes Lane in Baker City.

Great photos are available on the Base Camp Baker Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/basecamp-baker>.

Help needed to locate Nathan Crouch, suspected elk poacher

On November 16, 2016, Oregon State Police asked for the public's help to locate individuals involved in the incident involving the unlawful killing and waste of two bull elk in Union County.

As a result of the overwhelming support from the community, Nathan Crouch, age 26, Dylan Crouch, age 22, and Brianna Black, age 18, all from Elgin, were identified as suspects in the incident.

Dylan Crouch and Brianna Black were charged with three misdemeanor charges of aiding in a game violation.

At this time, Nathan Crouch has not been located and is believed to have fled the state. He is facing misdemeanor charges which include two counts of unlawful taking of a bull elk, casting a light within 500 feet of a vehicle, hunting with the aid of a motor vehicle, hunting prohibited hours, two counts for waste of a game animal, hunting on the enclosed lands of another and hunting prohibited area-public roadway.

During the course of the investigation, information was obtained that Nathan Crouch had also unlawfully



Photo Courtesy of OSP

One of the two elk left to waste.

ly taken a large bull elk in Union County a few years prior to this incident.

The antlers from the bull elk were located and seized by Troopers.

Due to the statute of limitations, Nathan Crouch can only be charged with

the unlawful possession of the antlers. This will be an additional charge for Nathan Crouch.

Oregon State Police is extending a special thanks to the public for their assistance in this case and is further seeking the public's assistance regarding the whereabouts of Nathan Crouch.

Anyone with information regarding the case is asked to contact OSP Senior Trooper Marcus McDowell through the TIP hotline at 1-800-452-7888 or Email at marcus.mcdowell@state.or.us). Information may be kept anonymous.

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Salmon, trout committee to meet in Salem

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) Advisory Committee will meet in Salem on Thursday, Dec. 8 and Friday, Dec. 9. The meeting is open to the public.

The meeting will occur at the ODFW Headquarters at 4034 Fairview Industrial Dr. SE in Salem. The agenda is available at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/STEP>. From 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Thursday the Board will be included in an informational discussion of volunteer and education programs. On Friday the Board will meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., the agenda includes updates from ODFW management, STEP program planning, review of mini-grant applications, and review of propagation proposals. The Oregon Legislature created Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program in 1981 to provide a way for volunteers to participate in the restoration of native stocks of salmon, steelhead and trout.

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA COUNTY OF BURLEIGH	IN DISTRICT COURT SOUTH CENTRAL JUDICIAL DISTRICT
State of North Dakota by Workforce Safety & Insurance,) SUMMONS
Plaintiff,	
v.) Employer Account No. 1303509
Martin Davis, Individually,	
Defendant.	
THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT:	
You are hereby summoned and required to appear and defend against the attached complaint which is herewith served upon you, by serving upon the plaintiff an answer within twenty-one (21) days after the service of this summons upon you, exclusive of the date of service. If you fail to serve an answer, judgment by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.	
Dated this 21st day of November, 2016.	
BY:	
Anne Jorgenson Green Special Assistant Attorney General State Bar ID No. 05691 Workforce Safety & Insurance PO Box 5585, Bismarck, North Dakota 58506-5585 (701) 328-3800 / agreen@nd.gov Attorney for Plaintiff	