

Outdoor Rec / Local

ODFW advises against picking up baby animals in wild

A male bear cub picked up by a hiker along the Santiam River Trail on Sunday, has been sent to, a wildlife rehabilitation facility today to continue its growth, according to Colin Gillin, the ODFW state wildlife veterinarian who has been taking care of the cub with his veterinary staff since it was turned over to ODFW on Monday, March 27.

A second, female, bear cub arrived at ODFW's Corvallis office on Thursday, March 30, after its den near Myrtle Creek was disturbed by a brush-clearing operation. The mother bear was believed to have abandoned the bear cub due to the continuing disturbance, and it was determined that the mother bear was unlikely to return.

Both bear cubs are of similar age, between three and four months old, the male cub weighed 4.5 pounds, and the female weighed 6 pounds. The male bear cub was treated for mild pneumonia by ODFW veterinarian Julia Burco and several other staff, who worked with the Oregon State School of Veterinary Medicine to evaluate the cub to make sure it didn't have any underlying congenital issues that would have made him a poor candidate for rehabilitation.

On Friday, March 31, both bear cubs were transported to PAWS Wildlife Center in Lynwood, Washington, a rehabilitation facility used by the Department because of their specialized standard of care designed to allow young bears to develop without habituating to humans so they can be returned to Oregon for release into the wild.

"We'll receive these cubs as unhabituated and year-old bears sometime between March and June of 2018," Colin Gillin said. "And they'll be between 100 and 150 pounds at the time of release."

ODFW and Oregon State Police remind Oregonians that taking young animals out of the wild isn't just against the law, it's also bad for the animal. These animals miss the chance to learn important survival skills from their mother like where to feed, what to eat, how to behave and avoid danger and predators. The hiker who picked up the male bear cub on Sunday, March 26th, was



Photographer courtesy of ODFW.

This Oregon bear in on his way to a rehab facility in Washington State.

given a warning by Troopers. Although the OSP did not issue a citation for this specific occurrence, individuals have been cited in the past for similar activities. Oregon State Police will look at each case individually and decide whether a citation or warning will be issued.

Before picking up any wild animal, call ODFW, Oregon State Police, or a wildlife rehabilitator for advice. Removing or "capturing" an animal from the wild and keeping it in captivity without a permit is against state law (OAR 635-044-0015), as is transporting many animals. Last year, seven people were cited for such offenses. You can contact our veterinary staff toll-free at 866-968-2600.

Follow these tips if you encounter young animals in the wild:

Deer, elk and other mammals:

Never assume an animal is orphaned. Taking a newborn deer fawn into captivity is illegal without appropriate permits or licensing. Don't handle the animal, move it or remove it from the forest, including your backyard. Female deer and elk and other mammals will often leave their young temporarily for safety reasons or to feed elsewhere. They will return when it is safe to do so (when people, dogs, or predators are not present). Call your local ODFW office, Oregon State Police office, or a local licensed wildlife rehabilitation center when: 1) you see an animal that you know is

orphaned because you observed the dead parent animal, or 2) the parent hasn't returned for several hours or even up to a day, or 3) if the animal is clearly injured or in distress.

Bunnies are rarely orphaned; mother rabbits only visit den sites at dusk and dawn to feed her young.

Keep your dog or cat away from young wildlife, especially in the spring. If you see a seal pup, young sea lion, or other marine mammal that appears stranded or in distress, contact OSP's hotline at 1-800-452-7888.

Birds:

Leave fledgling birds alone. It is natural for fledgling (mostly feathered) birds to appear awkward while learning how to fly. If you see a young on the ground, leave it alone and keep your distance.

Bring your pets under control and indoors (particularly cats) if possible. The mother bird may feed the fledgling for several days on the ground until it "gets its wings."

Return nestling birds to the nest. Nestlings (baby birds not fully feathered) found on the ground can be gently and quickly returned to the nest. If the nest is out of reach, place the bird on an elevated branch or fence, or in a nest made from a small box, out of the reach of children and pets. Leave the area so the parent birds can return to feed them.

Bring your pets indoors. Cats are a major cause of injury and death for all birds, killing millions of

birds in the US annually. Be careful when pruning trees as there may be a bird nest in the branch. Prune trees during winter or in late Spring or Summer when fledgling birds have left the nest.

Avoid disturbing cavity nesters. Barn owls and other birds could be nesting in hollowed-out trees or logs and in haystacks. Again, void disturbing the structure during nesting season.

What if a bird flies into a window and appears hurt? Birds can become disoriented by reflective surfaces and mistakenly fly into windows. If you find a bird that has been injured by a window strike, place the bird in an uncovered box with a towel on the bottom. Keep it in a quiet, safe place away from pets and check back in a couple of hours to see if has recovered and flown away. If not, contact a local ODFW office or your local wildlife rehabilitator.

Turtles:

Let turtles cross the road. Oregon has two species of water turtles (Western Pond and Western Painted) that spend most of their lives in ponds and rivers. In May and June, female turtles begin searching for suitable nesting habitat to lay their eggs and may be observed moving across roads and trails in search of a place to lay their eggs. If you observe a turtle looking for a nest site, the best thing to do is leave it alone and let it continue on its path or at most move it out of harm's way so it won't be struck by a vehicle

ODFW WEEKLY RECREATION REPORT

BAKER COUNTY

Bighorn sheep can be seen in the Burnt River Canyon west of Durkee or along the Snake River Road south of Richland. The best viewing is in the early morning and late in the evening.

Winter bird species are starting to migrate through the area. Bald and golden eagles can be seen along the Snake River. Take the Snake River Road between Richland and Huntington. Early in the morning and late in the afternoon are good times to view wildlife.

Elkhorn Wildlife Area is known for the Rocky Mountain elk and mule deer herds that frequent the area during the winter. When snow covers the ground, ODFW staff feed elk and deer to encourage them to stay in the higher elevations and out of agricultural fields.

There are two good viewing sites. The Anthony Creek site is located about eight miles west of I-84 on North Powder River Lane. From I-84 take the North Powder Exit (Exit 285). About 150 elk can be seen here on any given day. From the overlook on Auburn Road, watch hundreds of elk and mule deer. It is on the south side of Old Auburn Road, which branches off Highway 7 about six miles south of Baker City.

GRANT COUNTY

Bald Eagles can be observed along Hwy 26 between Prairie City and Dayville.

Bighorn sheep may be viewed from the South Fork near the Murderers Creek road. Early mornings are your best chances for catching them out on the rocky outcrops.

UNION COUNTY

Mark your calendar: Ladd Marsh Bird Festival begins May 19 with Mark Obmascik, author of Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature and Fowl Obsession, as featured speaker.

Note: All visitors must have in their possession a free daily permit to access the wildlife area. Permits are available at several self-check-in stations at entry points and parking lots. Wildlife viewers and anglers also need a parking permit to park on the wildlife area. The \$10 daily or \$30 annual permit can be purchased online or at an ODFW office that sells licenses or at a license sales agent. Learn more about ODFW's Wildlife Area Parking Permit Program.

At this time all of Ladd Marsh, including the Glass Hill Unit, is closed to public entry. The Tule Lake Public Access Area will open to visitors March 1. Visitors are advised to carefully read posted signs and consult the wildlife area administrative rules. Rules that apply to all areas are at the top (at the link), and then scroll down to page 8, #635-008-120, for additional rules specific to Ladd Marsh. Dogs are not permitted within the Wildlife Area, including the Glass Hill Unit, on or off leash except during authorized game bird hunting seasons.

There are numerous quality viewing opportunities from county roads that pass through the area. Binoculars or a spotting scope will help as many animals are best viewed from a distance.

Great horned owls have begun nesting. Watch for the incubating bird's head showing above the nest. Some red-tailed hawks are "staking out" nest sites and performing nest repairs. Egg laying won't be far behind. American kestrels remain common throughout the area and are often seen hunting from perch sites and may now be seen in pairs. A single prairie falcon is still using areas along Pierce Rd.

White-crowned sparrows are present in good numbers and song sparrows are widespread and abundant. Northern shrikes, while not common can be found at various locations on the area.

Ponds and wetlands have thawed and are full of bot water and birds. Tundra swans have been using the refuge below Foothill Road as well as Schoolhouse Pond east of Peach Road. Greater white-fronted geese are in and Canada geese are paired up. Canada geese will be on nests soon. Thousands of ducks are utilizing the area including mallard, gadwall, northern pintail, bufflehead, scaup and American green-winged teal.

Elk and deer have remained at lower elevations. They can often be seen from county roads by glassing the slopes of Glass Hill or across the flats to the east. Use caution to avoid spooking wildlife into roads or highways for their safety and the safety of the traveling public.

UMATILLA COUNTY

Willow Creek and Coyote Springs Wildlife Areas are both found next to interstate 84 and the Columbia River and have excellent viewing for wetland and riparian obligate bird species. The upland areas are also available for savanna and shrub steppe species of birds. Willow Creek has an ample deer herd and the evidence of beaver activity can be seen on the Willow Creek delta area of the wildlife area.

The Irrigon Wildlife Area holds riparian and wetland habitat and hosts a number of species of birds associated with each habitat. One can see a number of waterfowl and wading bird species in the pothole pond areas. Painted turtles are also common in the pond areas. White pelicans can be commonly found along the Columbia River as well. Geese and ducks are beginning to build along the Columbia River and will be commonly trading back and forth along the river.

Upland and forested riparian areas will have a number of wintering birds using those areas.

ELK will be more common in the early morning and late afternoon in mid and elevation areas. Roads moving upslope from the valley floor to the mountain areas would be best to see these animals.

WHITE-TAILED DEER are common along the foothills of the Blue Mountains and can be seen either early morning or evening in those areas. Mule deer are found in better numbers in the desert and mountain areas.

WALLOWA COUNTY

Common raptors in the open areas of the county in winter are red-tailed hawks, rough-legged hawks, prairie falcons, and golden eagles. Look for bald eagles perched in the larger trees along Wallowa Lake shore or on power poles near water in the Wallowa Valley and Grande Ronde River in the Troy area. Migrating bald eagles can also be seen in the Prairie Creek and Elk Mt. Road areas east of Enterprise.

A good place to observe mule deer is along the Wallowa Lake highway between Joseph and the south end of Wallowa Lake. Drive slowly and watch along the moraine on the east side of the lake around dawn and dusk. Be careful to use the turnouts when stopping to watch these animals, as there will be other traffic on the road. White-tailed deer can be found throughout the Wallowa Valley on or near agricultural lands.

Many elk are moving back onto the Zumwalt Prairie now, although some are still on the breaks above Little Sheep Creek or the Imnaha River. Try driving the Zumwalt Prairie Road or Lower Imnaha River Road and looking carefully on ridge tops. These areas are county roads that run through private property, so please respect the landowner's privacy and remain on the county road and park out of the traffic lanes while watching the elk. Once you find a herd, use binoculars or a spotting scope to observe the animals.

While many of our migrant waterfowl have already headed north with the advent of warmer weather, some can still be seen flying into Wallowa Lake in the evenings from the county park at the north end of the lake. Canada geese and several species of ducks can also be seen feeding in agricultural fields and along streams around the county. Other migrants have begun to move into the area including: Say's phoebes, horned larks, and robins. Mountain bluebirds have returned from their southern haunts and can be seen in the Wallowa Valley and Imnaha Canyon. Two sandhill cranes were located this week along Highway 3 in the Snow Hollow area north of Enterprise.

Powder River Sportsmen's Club announces events

Powder River Sportsmen's Club Calendar:

Two Hunter Ed classes have been added to the Range calendar in April and August.

A Precision Rifle course has reserved the entire range July 14-15.

The August Steel Varmint match has been changed to the 13th.

Target Holders Installed:

New target holders were installed at the range last week: backer-boards attached to horizontal wood beams on vertical posts.

The beams and posts will

last for years if they don't get shot up.

Please do your part to make sure that all shooters know to hang targets only on the backer material, not on the beams and posts.

Baker YHEC:

The Baker NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC) is in full swing with 17 enrolled.

YHEC is an educational program for kids age 10-18 that expands skills and knowledge in eight disciplines: Orienteering, Hunter Safety, Hunting Knowledge, Wildlife ID, Light Rifle, Muzzleload-

ing, Archery, and Sporting Clays.

Oregon YHEC teams have a legacy of success at the National YHEC Competition.

Baker YHEC has recently added five new muzzleloader rifles and one new compound bow to its inventory of equipment made available to kids.

Most of the funding for Oregon YHEC programs comes from the Oregon Friends of NRA Fund.

Powder River FNRA Banquet:

The annual Powder River FNRA fundraising banquet

is May 13. Good food, fun times, and a lot of dollars raised to continue support of shooting ranges, shooting sports, and college scholarships statewide.

Learn more at prfnra.org.

The pre-event raffle this year is for two New Ruger 10-22 Rifles with two 25-round magazines, all packaged in a convenient Gatling Gun platform.

Buy Raffle tickets at In-San Diepen's Farmer's Insurance Agency, or see Vic Savage at Cashway, or find David Spaugh, Marco Valerio, or Daniel Batchelor.