

The Vernonia Library Hosted a Halloween Party on Saturday, October 28



Kids watched a short film and made play-doh monsters, treat bags that were filled up at the end of the event, and spider ornaments.

GRAVEYARD DASH

Superheroes, ghouls, and others took part in this year's Graveyard Dash, a walk/run from the Vernonia Memorial Cemetery to the Vernonia Pioneer Cemetery.

Results:

3K

1. Peter Hahn 12:21
2. Max Anderson 12:23
3. Sadie Gump 13:09
4. Delaney Draeger 14:00

6K

1. Jonathan Kintz 32:08
2. Ashley Perry 33:11
3. Kellie Murray 33:23
4. Samuel Potter 36:38

Photos courtesy of Aaron Scovel



Cougar Population Growing in Mid-Coast Region

A few decades ago, cougars in the coast range were practically unheard of. But as Oregon's healthy cougar population has expanded into northwest Oregon from population strongholds in the Blue Mountains and south Cascades, ODFW is observing more cougar harvest, sightings and damage complaints along the coast.

Researchers have studied cougar home range sizes, population densities, and diet in the Cascades and eastern Oregon, but not along the coast. A new study aims to change that through a research effort that will collar 10 adult cougars in the Alsea Wildlife Management Unit, which includes parts of Lincoln and Benton counties.

ODFW will work with volunteer agents who have hounds to tree cougars in the study area so ODFW can immobilize them, take samples including blood and DNA, and get them fitted with a GPS collar. Location data collected from the collars will be used to calculate home range size and habitat selection.

Like similar research in other parts of the state, the study will also use scat detection dogs to refine a cougar population estimate for the unit and to analyze their diet. The scat provides DNA data used in capture-recapture models that estimate population size and density. The diet analysis provides important information on what percent of common prey items (deer, elk or small mammal) are making up area cougars' diets.

Collaring of the cougars was started in October and will continue until 10 adults are collared or April

1, 2019. Once a cougar is collared the GPS unit will collect location data for 17 months.

It is legal to harvest a collared cougar but ODFW prefers that hunters not shoot a cougar with a collar if possible. Hunters who do will need to contact ODFW and return the collar so the data can be retrieved and the collar reused, plus complete the normal check-in process that is required whenever a hunter takes a cougar or bear in Oregon.

"Better data means better science based management decisions, and this data will help refine our cougar population estimates for this region," says Jason Kirchner, district wildlife biologist in Newport. "This research will



help ODFW manage for a viable population of cougars and assess effects on their prey populations, so we can improve management and conservation decisions for both cougars and ungulate species on the coast."

Oregon's statewide cougar population is estimated at 6,400. The Alsea Unit is part of Zone A, the Coast/North Cascades Zone, which has an estimated population of 950 cougars of all age classes.

The research is being funded through federal grants from the Wildlife Restoration Act and donations from Oregon Wildlife Foundation and the Oregon Hunters Association.

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