



“Drought”

with Tami Quinn Hollenbeck

drought | drou (noun)

a prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall; especially one that adversely affects growing or living conditions

Sound familiar?

There are a lot of concerns in our area about how the lack of rainfall is going to affect our groundwater.

As you broil through the summer, keep in mind methods that will allow you to sustain your lifestyle, gardening and landscaping needs. If you have a low producing or shallow well you might want to consider installing a Holding Tank System.

A Holding Tank is a 2,000 gal. concrete reservoir that is buried in the ground. Your low producing well feeds into it, and your house draws from it. Essentially, you always have a large mass of water waiting to be used. When the level in the holding tank drops down, the well fills it on demand.

If you have questions or would like an estimate for a Holding Tank System give us a call!

Water is a geological cocktail, so DRINK MORE WATER!



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Siskiyou Mountain meadows dotted with Large Marble butterflies

BY LINDA KAPPEN

The Large Marble *Euchloe ausionides* lives in the Siskiyou Mountains, which surround the Applegate Valley. This butterfly is white with a creamy tint and black patterns on the open dorsal forewing tips of both male and female. The female can have a yellowish cast on the dorsal hindwings. The ventral wings are patterned throughout with greenish markings across yellow veins. Large Marbles are up to 1 ¾ inches on open wings.

The female lays eggs on mustards and rock cresses. The larvae feed on the host plants, then hibernate as pupae. The adult appears in flight from late March to late July and feeds on the nectar of garden and wildflowers from spring to early summer.

The Large Marble likes habitats of mountain hillsides, open meadows and fields, forests and canyons. It has a large range inland in the Pacific Northwest.

Pictured here are photos from late spring during a butterfly outing on the Siskiyou Crest. A female Large Marble in the grasses of a small meadow allowed me to photograph her crawling and opening her wings in preparation for flight. Miles away, as I drove down the road, I saw from a distance an object on top of a grass seed head at the edge of the road. I parked the vehicle and walked slowly toward the grass and enjoyed having another long photo session with a mating couple of the Large Marble. The Large Marble is one of many white butterflies, and it is fun to find and observe a marbled wonder such as this one.

Although the Large Marble is plentiful throughout its range, a subspecies, the Island Marble, is critically imperiled and does not occur here. The Island Marble has recently been rediscovered on the San Juan Islands of Washington. Scientists are taking steps to help the survival of this subspecies.

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A mating couple of Large Marble butterflies perches atop a roadside grass seed head. Photos: Linda Kappen.



A female Large Marble butterfly. Females can have a yellowish cast on the dorsal hindwings, as seen here.

■ FIRE SEASON

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due to the effects of smoke on residents suffering from COVID-19.

This all translates to more fine and dead fuels remaining on the ground throughout the summer in southern Oregon and our Applegate Valley. It means more fuel around our rural homes, on adjacent BLM lands, and along the rural roads we travel on our way to and from town or work.

Another issue: how the hiring and training of summer firefighters will play out in this coronavirus-wildfire puzzle is still a huge question mark for local fire agencies and districts. ODF noted that they have had to cancel “...dozens of training and refresher programs” this spring. Not good! Ballou also noted, “Whether it’s detection, prevention, suppression, all arteries of it have been dramatically affected.”

Unfortunately, earlier this spring I didn’t see this possible situation coming at us so that I could suggest fuel reduction work sooner. So, *what can we* private landowners do to prepare *now*—in late spring?

From my long-time educational efforts on defensible space, I say that first and foremost we need to do our best to reduce fuels on and around our homes. I’m talking pine needles on the roof and eaves, in the gutters and blown up against the home’s siding. Rake leaves away from the house (and preferably compost, dispose of or legally burn them). Move wood piles away from *all* structures.



As we head into what could be a severe fire season, homeowners are urged to lessen fire danger by taking such steps as clearing pine needles off their roofs. Photo: Sandy Shaffer.

And don’t forget your driveway, the first area that firefighters would observe on the way to your home. A good first impression can make the difference between a responding fire engine crew (not always from the Applegate!) either coming up your driveway or going to the next driveway that’s more open and clear of vegetation.

I know that many of you reading this will say yeah, yeah, she says this every year! Yes, I do. But this year is different— still an unknown in that the coronavirus could hang around all spring and into the summer. And it could infiltrate our communities, *and our Applegate Fire District.*

Consider what happens if more than half of our staff and volunteer firefighters were laid up with the coronavirus and our valley got hit with thunderstorms? Are we landowners ready and able to *protect and defend our own homes*? Do we have the ability and the equipment—hose, water, shovel, gloves, protective clothing and masks, etc. to do so?

Our fire district headquarters in Ruch has been closed to public traffic since March, in order to help keep on-duty firefighters away from germs. Some District staff are working from their homes. (Note: In the event of an emergency, 9-1-1 is still the number to call.)

Our fire chief is working with other local fire chiefs to assure that our region has more-than-adequate stocks of emergency medical supplies. Also, weekly conference calls with the Fire Defense Board, the state fire marshal, the Jackson County emergency manager, the Oregon Health Authority, and the CDC provide the chief *real-time* updates and actions.

Our chief says that things can change by the hour and that our District’s web site and Facebook page are being updated as needed. Search “Applegate Valley Fire District” on your browser or Facebook.

And please—stay safe!

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