

Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Thursday, July 19

Sunny

High --91 Low -- 59

Friday, July 20

Partly Cloudy

High -- 90 Low -- 59

Saturday, July 21

Sunny

High -- 91 Low -- 60

Sunday, July 22

Sunny

High -- 94 Low - 63

Monday, July 23

Sunny

High -- 93 Low -- 64

Tuesday, July 24

Sunny

High -- 94 Low -- 62

Wednesday, July 25

Sunny

High -- 91 Low -- 61

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded at The End of the Road in O'Brien by Cheryl Johnson:

July	High	Low
6	82.4	49.8
7	89.4	42.0
8	85.7	47.0
9	83.5	43.4
10	86.8	45.8
11	90.6	59.0
12	103.8	56.0

July Rain: 0.00" YTD Rain: 58.76"

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Bagel Junction

119 S Redwood Hwy

Cave Junction OR 97523

Illinois Valley News, Cave Junction, Ore. Wednesday, July 18, 2018

Crawlies with Cri: by Cri Solo

As we hit midsummer, many conversations about outdoor activities begin to include the topic of wasps. Most folks are familiar with social wasps; those that live in hives like paper wasps and yellowjackets. What many folks do not know is that those well-known wasps are just a very small part of our wasp population. They just have better (worse?) public relations.

Fun fact: There are just fewer than 16,000 species of wasps in the U.S. Of those, only about 50 species are those social wasps we're most familiar with. Wasps come in every size, shape and color imaginable from the less than one-tenth of an inch, wingless baeus wasp to the two-inch cicada killer wasp, found only in the eastern U.S.

Our pictured wasp is a chalcid wasp. As small as it is, this wasp is easily twice the size of the smallest wasps around. There are about 2,000 species of chalcid wasps in the U.S., all of which are micro small, many of them with the gorgeous metallic shine of this one. Luckily, with digital cameras and macro lenses you no longer need to have a lab set up with a fancy microscope to see all the pretty, bitty wasps we have here in Oregon.

With so many thousands of types of wasps around, you can imagine they have a variety of roles in any given ecosystem. Most adult wasps feed on nectar, so wasps of all kinds do a lot of incidental pollinating. "Incidental pollinating is done by animals who don't

specifically gather pollen, but who do visit flowers, picking up pollen on hairs or feathers and depositing as they go. Wasps may look sleek and streamlined at a glance, but most are actually quite fuzzy and pollen sticks to those hairs.

The wasps' most important job is population control of pretty much every other kind of arthropod. They do this by capturing aphids, worms, spiders or any other number of critters as food for their young or parasitizing the same types of critters; e.g., by laying eggs in the nests of other insects which hatch and eat the eggs of the host insect.

Imagine how many critters 10,000 species of wasps keep under control, yet we still have plenty of those critters around. Without

wasps, we'd be neck deep in caterpillars and plants with no leaves left.

Wasps are also amazing architects. Paper wasps and some yellowjackets build their elaborate nests with chewed up bits of wood and/or paper. Mud dauber and potter wasps build beautiful, cylindrical nests out of mud they carry to their nesting site one mouthful at a time. Some wasp nests are so pretty that artists use them for jewelry or paintings; making canvass from paper nests or casting rings and necklaces from mud or clay nests.

While some wasps can be annoying at your summer barbecue, most wasps go unnoticed but are making our yards, forests and riparian areas much better places to live or visit.

Chalcid wasp

I love shuffleboard!

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