



The Trout Lake Bearing Tree, located on Highway 141, just south of Trout Lake Store. The plaque was added years after the bear was carved in the 1980s. Kirby Neumann-Rea photo

# In Trout Lake, orient yourself at the "Bearing Tree"

By Kirby Neumann-Rea  
Columbia Gorge News

Outside Trout Lake Store, a long-standing ursine punster stands along the road. Perhaps you've driven by the smiling bru-in, carved from a fir tree.

What you may not have seen is the plaque on his chest.

It reads "Bearing Tree."

The bear is a good place to get oriented in this Klickitat County community 15 miles north of White Salmon, with several stores, restaurants, churches and parks, a K-12 school, a U.S. Forest Service office, and nearby trails leading up to and around Mount Adams. And "Bearing Tree."

The title has an official forest survey significance, but in the case of the gray, lichen-covered bear on Highway 141, it's the act of a prankster.

Store owner Bev Meyer said the bear was carved probably in the early 1980s — and said the Bearing Tree plaque was added later on by person or persons unknown who removed it from another location.

The late George Bradley, a Hood River carver, created the bear for Bev and her late husband, Greg.

"He carved a lot of animals for people but I'm not sure how many of them are left," Meyer said. A Bradley-carved bird adorned the top of what is now called The Station Cafe up the road and even had a "Vulture Burger" named in its honor.

The six-inch metal plaque is an example of a standard surveying procedure used in

forests, according to Keith Harding of Mt. Hood, a trained forester.

Harding said "a bearing tree or other" object is a reference point to a survey corner marker — a way of finding the boundary of a distinct property.

Under the words, "Corner Is Approximately," the plaque has spaces to etch in Direction, Distance, Section and Track, along with Posted By and Date.

"When you start reading deeds you will find all sorts of bearing markers," Harding said. "A hole full of broken glass or an old horse shoe, a mark on an outcropping, a steel pipe driven into the ground." Harding, who grew up in New Hampshire, said, "It's really interesting east of the Mississippi River." He has two degrees in forestry and worked in Alaska as a surveyor for Bureau of Land Management. Harding explained that bearing markers are employed by Bureau of Land Management, earlier called the General Land Office after its founding in the 1880s as general land survey agency. "The USFS later surveyed its lands, and the U.S. Geological Survey marked topography elevations on mountains and other features."

What markings might have been made on the Trout Lake Bearing Tree plaque have faded, except one:

Date: "4-74."

"It doesn't get much notice anymore," Meyer said. "It's turned brown and blends in now. People just drive by," she said. "I think it's lasted this long because it's from an actual tree," still rooted in the ground, Meyer said.

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**Kid Scoop Puzzler**

Draw the thing that should come next to continue the pattern in each row.

Row 1: Tree, bear, fish, tree, bear, fish, tree, fish, [ ]

Row 2: Cow, ladybug, cow, ladybug, cow, ladybug, [ ]

Row 3: Ladybug, bear, fish, ladybug, bear, fish, ladybug, bear, fish, [ ]

**Kid Scoop Together: What is a food web?**

Food webs show how different food chains are connected. For example, a mouse and a rabbit both eat plants and seeds. Like a spider web, a food web can be very complicated since there are so many different creatures.

**Food Chain THE CIRCLE OF LIFE**

A food chain links plants and animals to each other for survival. For example, a plant gets eaten by a small animal. That animal is also food for another, larger animal. Ultimately, when plants and animals die, decomposers cause them to turn back into soil that will grow more plants and the circle of life continues. The diagram at right illustrates a basic food chain.

**Complete the Food Chains**

Below are three unfinished food chains. Complete each chain by drawing, naming or pasting a picture of one of the choices of plants or animals who lives in that plant community. Think about which animals are herbivores, omnivores and carnivores.

**Evergreen Forest Community**

The forest community has many different kinds of trees. Ferns and mosses can also be found.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
bay nuts • leaves madrone berries	quail • squirrel deer	fox • bobcat	mountain lion coyote	worm • fungi bacteria

**Creekside Community**

The area along the banks of a creek is mostly moist and shady.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
Underwater plants algae	aquatic insects fish	newt frog	raccoon scrub jay	worm • fungi mushroom

**Grassland Community**

This can be a dry and hot area. Mostly low, dense bushes and a few wildflowers can be found there.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
flowers • seeds berries	rat • mouse insect	snake • bobcat lizard	owl hawk	worm • fungi mushroom

**Food Chain Words**

**PRODUCERS:** Plants that produce their own food from sun, water, air and soil.

**CONSUMERS:** Animals that eat other plants and animals.

**DECOMPOSERS:** This group includes fungi, bacteria and worms that eat decaying plants and animals.

**Double Double Word Search**

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

C	R	B	U	E	A	I	T	R
Q	U	E	R	A	L	G	A	E
U	W	E	C	V	C	F	N	D
A	O	T	F	I	S	H	U	R
T	R	A	R	V	M	O	F	A
I	M	C	H	A	I	N	S	Z
C	L	B	O	L	D	W	E	I
E	G	O	R	F	I	N	A	L
B	S	B	A	C	T	E	R	I

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

**Advertising Math**

Find an ad in today's paper that is especially interesting to you. Using the subject of the ad, write a two-step word problem. Then, have a classmate try to solve your problem.

Standards Link: Language Arts: Understanding meanings from context clues.

**Write On! Plan a Picnic**

Where would you go on a family picnic? What would you bring?

**Community Connections**

Look through the newspaper for five or more people or places that are connected to your life. (Example: A grocery store where your family shops. What other connections can you find?)

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

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