

OUT THERE 2004

possible, always get updated cache information before going out (mine was three weeks old), and always bring an extra set of batteries for when your GPS goes dead and it's getting dark."

In fact, the darkness *had* sneaked up on me during my trip. I was resting at the last waterfall on the trail, just about to turn around and head back toward my car when I noticed an oddly shaped tree. The trunk was suspended above the ground by a tangle of its own roots. The roots wove together, leaving a hollow place in the center. I checked my GPS. The coordinates roughly matched those in my back pocket. I peeked into the hollow.

A few minutes of searching and muffled cursing netted only one thing: a piece of car bumper I was sure must have fallen from the logging road high above on the hill. In the spirit of beautification, I put it in my backpack along with the GPS and stumbled back to my car. I don't care how high-tech the gear is: Geocaching is difficult, the hunt occasionally fruitless.

As I write this, my knee is healed and my GPS is still sitting in my backpack. I threw away the car bumper.

I've checked the site since that last trip, and the cache I pursued was indeed listed as missing. The geocachers I talked to reported a success rate of about 50 percent on their hunts.

Hunting for a cache can be exciting, and if the disappointment of being skunked is any indication, I imagine that actually finding the cache must be rewarding. But there will always be people who prefer an aimless hike to a reconnaissance mission. Sometimes it's better to leave the gizmos at home. **EW**



Hiking around Sweet Creek.

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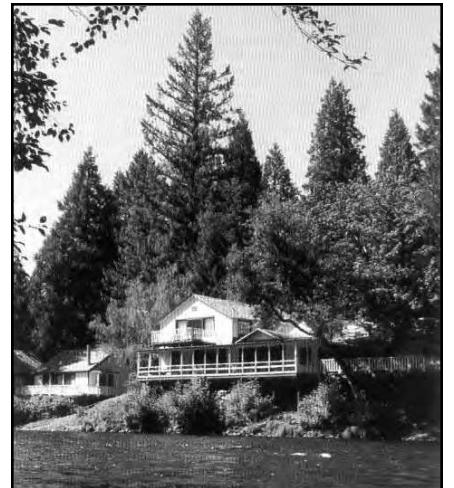
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Kurt listens as Rob records Kurt listening to Rob.




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— DAY 40 —

TEST SUBJECT: Cliff Nickerson

WIDMER BEER OF CHOICE: Hefeweizen

S.W.M.WEAR: Trunks or banana hammock



Shoulder scans indicate that a shoulder was present.

After several hours of coxing, the subject allowed us to enter his natural habitat. Subject was observed drinking a Hefeweizen. Records indicate he enjoyed the crisp refreshing flavor. Records also indicate Kurt not enjoying it when subject sat really, really close to him. But most importantly, we discovered that permanent ink should always be used in the field.



Widmer, Rob

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