

# Goldfish: 'They overpopulate and stunt themselves out'

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But goldfish and bullhead catfish — another illegally introduced species — have increased competition for food and space, stunting the fishery. That's why Fish and Wildlife biologists arrived on an October morning to kill the unwanted fish using rotenone, a plant-based poison that enters in through the fish's gills and cuts off oxygen to the cells.

Rotenone kills each and every fish in the water, including any uncaught trout. It's basically like starting the fishery over with a clean slate, Duke said.

"You can't control (goldfish) once they get in here," he said. "They overpopulate and stunt themselves out."

The same treatment will be done at nine other ponds across northeast Oregon, including: Keyhole, Granite Meadows, Goldfish, Yellowjacket and Windy Springs ponds in Umatilla County; Luger and Peach ponds in Union County; Kinney Lake in Wallowa County; and Balm Reservoir in Baker County. The ponds will be restocked with trout and ready to fish again by next spring.

"That's the whole goal of our program, to get better recreation and better opportunities," said Kyle Bratcher, assistant fish biologist for ODFW in Enterprise.

Bratcher and Kevin Drake,



**A goldfish lies on its side in some pond vegetation as a cloud of the pesticide rotenone envelops the fish at a pond in the Umatilla National Forest east of Meacham. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife treated the pond to remove illegally introduced species.**

Photos by E.J. Harris/East Oregonian

of Pendleton, wore bright yellow Tyvek suits and respirators Oct. 7 as they rowed across Boundary Pond spraying rotenone over the entire surface of the water. Within minutes, dozens of fish could be seen gasping and struggling before going belly-up.

Bratcher said all the fish should be dead within a day. They will return Friday to check the pond and gather up as many of the dead fish as they can in nets, which they will bury at an ODFW site.

Two pesticide investigators from the Oregon Department of Agriculture were also on scene

to make sure Drake and Bratcher followed instructions on the rotenone label, sprayed at the correct concentration and put up signs around the pond to alert the public.

Rotenone is a naturally occurring substance found in the seeds and stems of certain plants. It has been used successfully before in Oregon to remove unwanted Tui chub at Diamond Lake on the Umpqua National Forest, and goldfish at Mann Lake in the Alvord Valley.

The chemical is not harmful to humans and other animals at the low concentration applied to the ponds, Bratcher said.

"It's not possible to consume enough water or fish to get a lethal dose (of rotenone) for a small animal," Bratcher said.

However, the ponds will remain closed to all recreation for at least four weeks until the rotenone naturally breaks down enough to meet drinking water standard.

In all, it will cost Fish and Wildlife about \$10,000 to treat all 10 ponds, Bratcher said.

"It's all coming from license dollars," he said.

Releasing live fish is illegal in Oregon without a license. Duke said he realizes people might have the best of intentions



**Kevin Drake and Kyle Pratcher, with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, use a rowboat to spray the pesticide rotenone to kill the fish in a pond in the Umatilla National Forest east of Meacham. The ODFW was killing the fish to rid the pond of goldfish and bullhead catfish.**



**Canisters containing the pesticide rotenone sit in the back of a truck in the Umatilla National Forest on Wednesday east of Meacham.**

when transporting fish into new bodies of water, but it only creates problems moving forward. "Let us be the fish manag-

ers," Duke said. "Don't be the Johnny Appleseed biologist and spread a whole bunch of fish around."



East Oregonian/File Photo

**Substitute teacher Diana Howland checks the progress of seventh-grader Jeremiah Brandon during an art class in May at Sunridge Middle School in Pendleton.**

## Subs: Much of the need is in support positions

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"People are willing to drive 45 minutes," Frost said of the commute in the Portland metro area. "It seems like an hour's the mark" where candidates question commuting to a district. The cost-benefit analysis becomes even tighter for classified substitutes working in food service, janitorial and other lower-paying positions.

Frost said budget shortfalls several years ago led to record layoffs of staff and fewer aspiring teachers. Add to

that teachers retiring because the state made changes in the Public Employees Retirement System, and districts find themselves short on full-time teachers and the sort of young, entry level teaching candidates who jump at substitute positions as a way to get their feet in the door.

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"In my opinion, there are not enough people with active teaching licenses," Frost said, adding there are many retirees who are not wanting to substitute any-

more or are highly selective in their assignments. Retirees with PERS account are also limited to 1,040 hours of work a year, a part-time position.

In response, she said, the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission has loosened restrictions on the restricted substitute teaching license, which allows people with a bachelor's degree but no teaching license to substitute in any school district or educational service district. Candidates must pass a civil rights and ethics exam, background checks

and be sponsored by a district.

Much of the need is in support positions, Frost said, with Warrenton-Hammond School District in particular need of backup educational assistants.

"The smaller the district, the harder it is to find the classified subs," Frost said, adding the requirements to work in janitorial, food services and other positions are minimal.

Cascade Technology Alliance holds registrations weekly. To learn more, call 866-373-4321 or visit <http://subservices.cascadetech.org>

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