

## BLOOMIN' BLUES



Photo by Bruce Barnes

## Holboell's rockcress

## Widespread rockcress still blooming up high

By BRUCE BARNES  
For the East Oregonian**Name:** Holboell's rockcress**Scientific name:** *Boechera holboellii*

This plant is found from Alaska and Canada, and California to the Great Plains. It is one species of a rather shy group from the mustard family that are seldom seen, and even then appear only as a solitary plant or with one or two others. This is also a plant that has been shuffled by taxonomists from one genus name to another in recent years, and also has been split into several different species. It was once in the genus *Arabis*, and some experts now consider the variety we have here as *Boechera retrofracta*.

Holboell's rockcress has a single, unbranched stem one to two feet tall. The leaves are clustered at the base, and gradually become smaller and farther apart toward the top of the stem. The edges of the leaves are curled downward, and there are two small lobes pointing backward at the base of the leaf. All the plants seen around our area are purple, though they may be other colors elsewhere.

The genus *Boechera* is for

Tyge Bocher, a 20th century Danish plant geneticist who studied arctic plants. The prior name *Arabis* was Latin for Arabia. More than 100 species of the genus are found throughout North America and Asia.

The name rockcress refers to the plants of the genus commonly growing among rocks. The name cress is an archaic term once used to refer to salad greens, and in more recent times the term is often used for members of the mustard family regardless of whether one should eat the leaves. In the case of this species, it was reported by some tribes as causing diarrhea.

It is interesting that even though the plant is not found in abundance anywhere that I know of, there are several uses reported for the species in the genus. Our species here is listed as having been used in the Southwest in tribal ceremonies, and in the Northwest the leaves were reported to have been chewed to relieve a toothache.

**Where to find:** This plant is done blooming at Pendleton's elevation, but it will be blooming well into late June up along Ruckel Ridge, which is where I've most often seen it.

## BRIEFLY

## Hunter education class offered in Heppner

HEPPNER — A hunter education course will include classroom discussions and a field day.

Taught by Jim and Darlene Marquardt, the sessions are June 14, 16, 21 and 23 from 6-9 p.m. at Heppner High School, 710 N.W. Morgan St. The field day is Saturday, June 25 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Lexington Gun Club. The course fee is \$10.

For more information or to register, call Marquardt at 541-969-4845.

## 'Field Guide' producer shares show highlights

DUFUR — Highlights of the "Oregon Field Guide," one of Oregon Public Broadcasting's longest running and most successful programs, is featured during a special program in Dufur.

Steve Amen, the show's host and executive producer, will make the presentation Tuesday, June 21 at 7 p.m. at the Historic Balch Hotel, 40 S. Heimrich St., Dufur. The free event begins with a 6 p.m. reception with Amen and retiring OPB board member Keith Mobley. Light fare and beverages will be available for purchase.

For 27 years, "Oregon Field Guide" has been OPB's weekly TV news magazine exploring

ecological issues, natural wonders and outdoor recreation of the Pacific Northwest. It has won numerous Emmy Awards, including for best Environmental Program three years in a row.

Due to limited space and the popularity of Amen's last visit to the Balch, people are encouraged to make reservations by calling 541-467-2277.

For more information, visit [www.balchhotel.com](http://www.balchhotel.com).

## Lava Beds National Monument makes play for park status

Lava Beds National Monument in southwest Oregon could soon be recognized as one of America's "best of the best."

On June 22, Discover Klamath Executive Director Jim Chadderdon and other stakeholders will meet with California Sen. Barbara Boxer to ask her to support designating Lava Beds as a national park.

According to Chadderdon, a national park can come into existence in one of two ways: by presidential proclamation or by an act of Congress.

He said partners along the Oregon-California Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway will ask Boxer to draft a bill upgrading Lava Beds classification in the park system.



Kathy Plonka / The Spokesman-Review

In this June 7 photo Coeur d'Alene tribe member Kodamen Matheson, front, is among the escorts paddling a Sturgeon nose canoe during the first leg of the tribe's journey on Lake Coeur d'Alene, in Idaho.

## Coeur d'Alene tribe begins Columbia canoe journey

COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho (AP) — Smoke from burning sweetgrass drifted over the 35-foot-long dugout cedar canoe and its seven paddlers.

Words of prayer and blessing were spoken, seeking protection for the trip ahead.

And then the crowd erupted with cheers, whistles and back-slapping excitement as the paddlers took their places. Vincent Peone, a member of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, slipped into the canoe's last open seat and picked up his paddle. The shovel-nose canoe glided through the marshy waters at the southern end of Lake Coeur d'Alene, gaining speed as the paddlers found their rhythm.

Tuesday's launch marked the beginning of a 100-plus-mile journey for the Coeur d'Alenes in the hand-carved canoe. Members of the tribe will paddle north on the lake that bears their name, before heading down the Spokane River and into the Columbia.

They'll meet four other Inland Northwest tribes on June 17 at Kettle Falls, an ancient fishing spot, for a summer solstice celebration and a salmon ceremony.

The trip was planned to call attention to the tribes' interest in restoring salmon to the Columbia River above Grand Coulee Dam, which has blocked fish passage since the 1930s.

But for Peone, the journey really started last summer, when a 700-year-old western red cedar arrived on the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reser-

vation. The 28,000-pound log was a gift from the Upper Columbia United Tribes, which purchased logs for its five member tribes to fashion into canoes for the trip to Kettle Falls.

Peone and his cousin, Jeff Jordan, spent hundreds of hours on the project. They helped schoolkids and elders use elbow adzes and other hand tools to carve the shovel-nose canoe — the first made by the tribe in recent memory.

Each fragrant cedar shaving helped connect tribal members to the time when canoes were "kings of the lake," in the words of Felix Aripa, a 92-year-old tribal elder. Canoes were used for transportation, fishing and even for lulling fretful babies to sleep.

"Today we're bringing back our canoes," said Aripa, who spoke at the canoe blessing before the launch.

He sat in the canoe's second-to-last seat, with Jordan behind him. At the front of the canoe, cedar boughs filled an open seat, honoring the tribe's ancestors. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe's flag flew from the stern.

A drone hovered above the canoe, recording the action.

"Because this is such a grand historical re-awakening, we have a drone," said Peone, chuckling.

The canoe moved easily through the water, an elegant but sturdy craft. The shovel-nosed canoe was one of several designs used by the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. It was the workhorse of the lake, with a function similar to a pickup truck.

Six smaller sturgeon-nosed canoes launched with the larger canoe, accompanying it up the lake. The lighter canoes were made of cedar and maple frames, covered with Kevlar. Some of the sturgeon-nosed canoes were made by families from the tribe, who entered a lottery for a chance to work with a master canoe builder.

Maria Bighead, her husband, Murle, and three generations of the couple's extended family worked on that project. "It's a very historic event to bring the canoe back," Maria Bighead said.

Fifteen-year-old Kodamen Matheson took off school on Tuesday to paddle a sturgeon-nosed canoe up the lake. He planned to do extra homework that night so he could get parental approval to be back on the lake Wednesday.

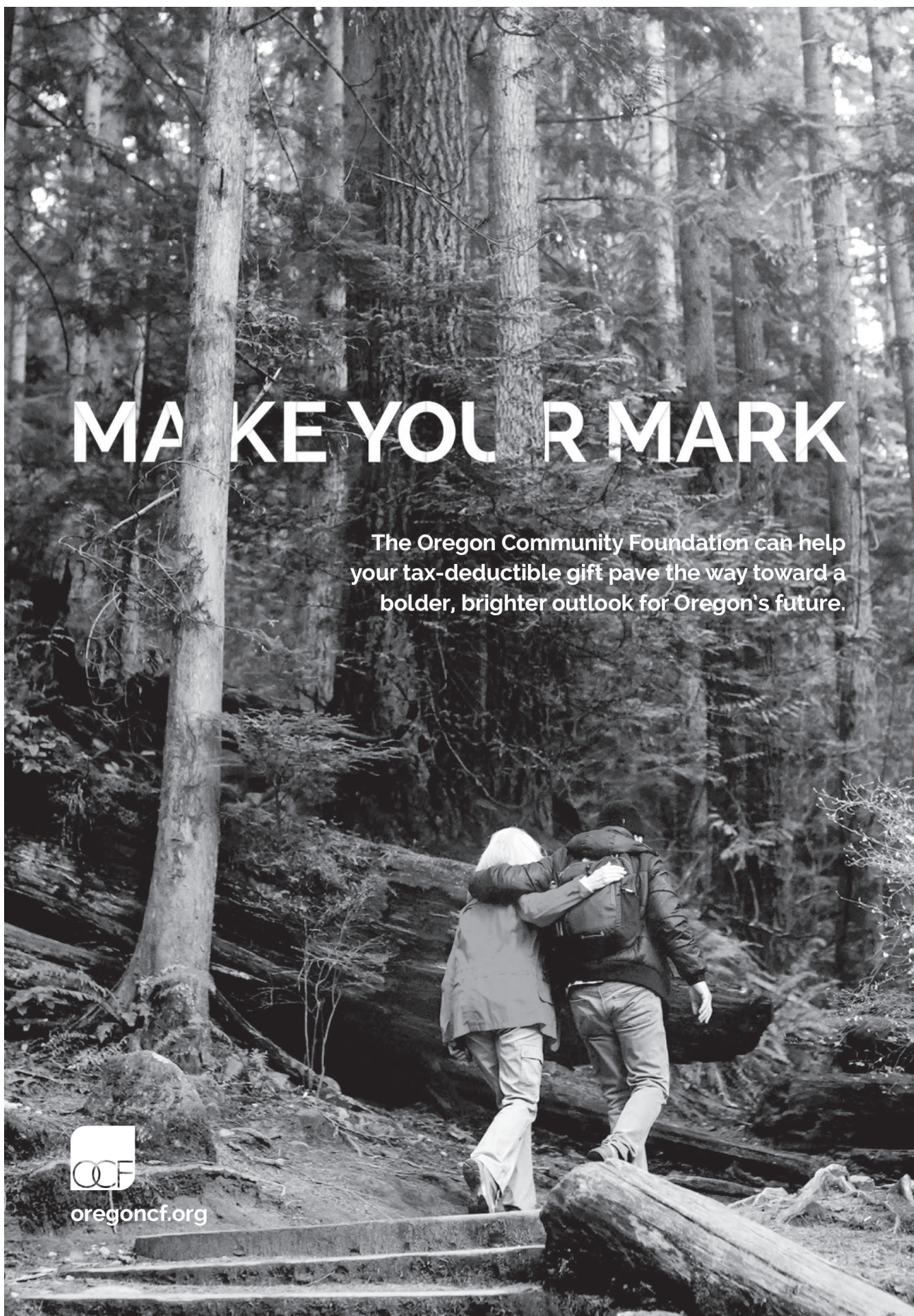
"He said, 'Dad, you're taking me tomorrow,'" said his father, Quannah Matheson.

Camp Larson, which is on the west side of the lake across from Harrison, was the tribal members' destination for the first leg of the trip. They'll resume the journey Wednesday, with plans to arrive at Coeur d'Alene's City Beach in the late afternoon.

Two boats followed the canoes with relief paddlers, switching out the seven-member crew as people grew tired.

Aching arms and shoulders also helped make the experience authentic.

"Paddling is hard work," Peone acknowledged. "We're the motors."



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