

Herd of harbor seals debuts at Newport Aquarium

NEWPORT — Three Californians moved to Newport this winter. Miller, Tater and Elvis hailed from Vallejo, where they swam and galumphed across land at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom.

The aquarium adopted the harbor seals to provide some youthful energy to its existing, geriatric population. At 19, 20 and 21 years old, the new additions are hardly spring chickens for their species; but compared to the aquarium's other seals, the oldest of which is turning 40 this year, they are quite spry.

The trio is settling in quite well into their new home. They arrived well-versed in working with trainers, but need to learn to communicate with aquarium staff who use different training signals compared to their former home.

"We started by working

through behaviors they already knew, while slowly transitioning them over to our hand signals," said Ken Lytwyn, curator of Marine Mammals. "They are fast learners, and we are already starting to work on entirely new behaviors, like swimming with trainers and voluntary blood draws."

Their blonde, spotted fur gives them a distinctive appearance from the five black and silver female harbor seals that were already on exhibit. Visitors should be able to spot them during their next visit, especially if they check the underwater windows, where harbor seals often stare at visitors face to face, and sometimes even follow a waving hand with their nose.

The Oregon Coast Aquarium is open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tips to survive being lost, stranded in woods

If you are not prepared and don't know about the area you want to explore, don't go. Wait and go with someone who's familiar with the area. Study maps and search the Internet for more information of the area you're looking to explore.

One very important action is letting your family or friends know where you are going, when you are expected back, and most importantly do not hesitate to call for help. Oregon is a beautiful state but it can be very unforgiving when the elements and the environment change.

If you are traveling on the back roads and your vehicle breaks down, stay with your vehicle. Try your cell phone. If there is no cell service, stay

with your vehicle. The vehicle is your shelter from the elements and your vehicle is easier to spot from a plane or helicopter. If it is too hazardous to remain with the vehicle, don't walk further than eyesight from the vehicle. Often, a person attempts to walk out and ends up in more danger than if they had waited.

If you are lost or injured in the woods, stay near a trail and try to make yourself a shelter.

If you can, prepare an area for a warming or signal fire. Keep in mind the time of the year and the conditions in the woods — you don't want to start a forest fire.

Staying dry and warm is very important. Stay hydrated if it is warm. Remain calm and

listen for searchers and hopefully you have a signal whistle in your pack. Listen for aircraft in the area and hopefully you have packed a signal mirror or flashlight.

Each year, mushroom pickers get turned around and can't find their way back to their vehicle. Many have been rescued because they had cell service; some have never been found.

Pay attention to the direction you are going and stay as close to the trails as you can. Some hikers will mark their way in with surveyors' tape and then collect it on their way out.

It's easy to get turned around when you walk with your head down all day looking for mushrooms. This is why it is so

important to have a map and become familiar with the area.

You can purchase a good Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) device for under \$100 that can lead you back to where you started. Most importantly, stay calm and conserve your energy. Some people panic and wander off from the area resulting in injury.

Plan your trip according to our recommendations. You can never be too prepared, but being unprepared can cost you your life. When you choose to explore the areas of this great state, be safe.

For more information and tips, visit www.lincolncountysheriff.net.

— Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

Help preserve Oregon wildlife with your tax donation

SALEM, Ore. — If you love all things wild, you can help support Oregon's wildlife by filling out your 2014 state tax return and donate to the Nongame Wildlife Fund, Charitable Code 19, in the charitable check-off donation on the 2014 Oregon State tax return.

Funds support 88 percent of the state's wildlife that are not

hunted or fished such as native frogs, turtles, songbirds and bats.

"The donations we receive from the Nongame Wildlife Fund help us protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations," said Andrea Hanson, Conservation Strategy Coordinator.

Donations have helped:

- Bring back the Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon and Western Snowy Plover from the brink of extinction

- Fund wildlife habitat improvement projects on private and public lands

- Purchase educational materials for science classes as part of the Bird by Bird pilot program in the Portland School

District.

- Fund conservation programs for sensitive species including the western pond turtle and Willamette Valley grassland birds

For more information on the Nongame Wildlife Fund, visit the ODFW website at www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/diversity/tax_checkoff/.

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Fishing from 1B

low and clear. Fishing the mid to lower river and focusing on the deeper holding water will produce the best results. The next good rain event should produce a good push of fish.

ALSEA RIVER: Steelhead

The winter steelhead fishery is slow to fair. River conditions are low and clear. Look to fish the deeper holding water and use smaller more subtle presentations. Casting lures, bobber and jig/bait or

drifting beads along the bottom can be effective techniques.

SALMON RIVER: Steelhead

Winter steelhead fishing is slow to fair. River conditions are low and clear. Anglers should focus on the deeper holding water. The river is open to harvest of wild winter steelhead through March 31.

Anglers are advised to read the new regulations as there are harvest restrictions and new deadlines in effect.

The deadline for steelhead fishing is at the confluence with Prairie Creek which enters the Salmon River west of the Van Duzer rest area at the same point as where Sulphur Creek enters the Salmon River.

SILETZ RIVER: Steelhead

Steelhead fishing is slow. River conditions are low and clear. Bank fishing in the upper gorge area or floating the lower reaches will produce the best results until the next good rain event. Typical steelhead tactics apply such as side drifting, bobber and jig/bait, or casting spoons or spinners.

WILSON RIVER: Steelhead

Winter steelhead fishing should be slow as the river is low and very clear. Adjust your gear to these conditions by using lighter lines and smaller presentations. Fish will hold where there is cover; look for depth, choppy water, or large wood or boulders.

YAQUINA RIVER: Steelhead

The winter steelhead fishery is slow in the Big Elk. River conditions are low and clear. The fishery is typically very slow for the rest of the season. Anglers are advised to watch for private property.

Typical steelhead fishing tactics apply but the Big Elk is bed rock dominated and does have a lot of snags.

COOS COUNTY LAKES/PONDS: Trout

Trout will be stocked this week in **Bradley Lake, Saunders Lake, Powers Pond, and Johnson Mill Pond**. This is the first trout stocking of the year. There are several lakes like **Tennile, Eel, and Butterfield** with holdover rainbow trout from last year's stocking.

COOS RIVER BASIN: Dungeness crab, bay clams, steelhead, rockfish

Steelhead rivers in the Coos Basin are very low and clear. Anglers should concentrate fishing deeper water using light lines and smaller lures/baits. There is bank access on the West Fork Millicoma at the Millicoma Interpretive Center and on the East Fork Millicoma at Nesika Park. Access to the South Fork Coos River is through Weyerhaeuser property and anglers must have a permit from Weyerhaeuser.

In the Coos Basin, one additional fin-clipped steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of three adult fish harvested daily.

Fishing for lingcod and rockfish inside lower Coos Bay around the jetties has been good. Lingcod have been biting on larger jigs or on her-ring drifted under a bobber. The marine fish daily bag limit (which includes fishing in estuaries) is seven fish and a separate daily limit for lingcod (two).

Anglers can keep only three blue rockfish as part of their daily limit and there will be no harvest of China, quillback or copper rockfish.

UMPQUA RIVER, SOUTH: Steelhead

The peak numbers of fish normally show up until late March. Fish have been caught in the Canyonville area and hatchery fish have been reported. The hatchery program for winter steelhead is centered in the South Umpqua, which offers the best chance for catching an adipose-fin clipped steelhead for harvest.

Most hatchery fish are caught from Canyonville downstream. All wild fish must be released unharmed. Plunking should be good at places such as Lawson Bar, Myrtle Creek and behind Seven Feathers.

TENMILE BASIN: Steelhead, largemouth bass, yellow perch

Steelhead fishing in Tennile and Eel creeks over the past week has been slow. Anglers are picking up a few fish plunking or back-bouncing crankbaits from a boat.

In the Tennile Basin, one additional fin-clipped steelhead may be retained per day for a total aggregate of three adult fish harvested daily.

Bass anglers have been catching a few largemouth bass in Tennile Lakes. Water temperatures in the shallow water is warmer than usual for this time of the year.



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