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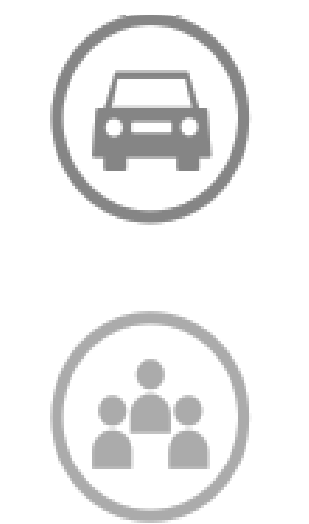
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OHA issues coastwide advisory for soft-shell clams

Removing skin from clam's siphon dramatically reduces arsenic levels

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has issued a health advisory for the length of the Oregon Coast for soft-shell clams because they contain high levels of naturally occurring arsenic.

The advisory is most important for people who dig their own clams and target the specific species *Mya arenaria*, since these clams are not commercially available in markets or restaurants.

The advisory recommends removing the skin from the siphon, or "neck," of soft-shell clams before eating them. Soft-shell clams are found primarily in estuary and intertidal regions of the Oregon coast.

This advisory stems from tests the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) performed on a variety of shellfish species collected along the Oregon coast as part of its

Water Quality Toxics Monitoring Program.

DEQ's tests found that when analyzed whole without the shell, soft-shell clams contained unusually high levels of inorganic arsenic.

Most of the arsenic was concentrated in the skin covering the clam's siphon. Researchers found that by removing the skin covering the siphon before eating, the arsenic can be greatly reduced, to levels that are not harmful.

Arsenic levels varied along the Oregon coast: Clams on the north coast had the most arsenic; clams on the south coast had the least arsenic; clams on the central coast were in between.

Those planning to eat soft-shell clams with siphon skins intact should review the OHA's recommended meal limits, which are available at

www.healthoregon.org/fishadv.

The advisory does not include other species of shellfish. In addition to soft-shell clams, DEQ tested Olympia oysters (a native species of oyster), California mussels, and purple varnish clams, and determined these species are not of concern.

The tests looked for a wide range of potential contaminants, including other metals such as cadmium, mercury and selenium; chlorinated pesticides like DDT and chlordane; polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs); dioxins and furans; tributyl tin; and brominated flame retardants (polybrominated diphenyl ethers, or PBDEs).

None of these other contaminants were present at high enough concentrations to pose a public health risk.

Public health officials say

that since the arsenic contaminating the clams is naturally occurring, the advisory is likely to be permanent.

By issuing the advisory, health officials hope to increase the public's awareness of shellfish species to be avoided, those to keep eating and ways to reduce exposure to known contaminants when possible.

While it is important for people to know about contaminants in shellfish, it is equally important to keep shellfish on the table. Health officials continue to encourage everyone to eat a variety of shellfish as part of a healthy diet.

OHA officials emphasize the advisory is about encouraging

people to be cautious about certain kinds of shellfish, not all types of shellfish, and to prepare them correctly.

"Because eating shellfish and other aquatic species can be an important part of a healthy diet, we want people to continue eating shellfish," said toxicologist David Farrer, Ph.D., of OHA's Public Health Division. "If they plan to consume soft-shell clams, we just recommend they remove the siphon skin before eating them."

To learn more online about why fish is good for you and get information about fish consumption advisories in Oregon, visit www.healthoregon.org/fishadv.

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Coastal Gems set next jaunt for Aug. 4

The Yachats Coastal Gems invites anyone to come walking Tuesday, Aug. 4, for the Beverly Beach to Otter Rock route.

Both 5K and 10K options are offered. The 5K route is flat, and the 10K route includes one steep hill. This walk is not appropriate for wheelchairs or strollers.

The rating for the 10K route is 2B for some uneven footing and the stair climb at Otter Rock. There will be both paved and woodland paths through the state park, and then a walk along the sandy beach with a

stair climb to Otter Rock Overlook.

There are great ocean views at Otter Rock, and a chance to spot whales.

Walkers will meet at the Commons in Yachats at 8:55 a.m. to carpool to Newport, or meet at the Hallmark Inn in Newport at 9:40 a.m. to register for the walk.

The group walks in any weather, so come prepared. As always, leashed pets are welcome on walks, but bring water and clean up materials for your pet.

A sturdy 6-foot leash, not

the retractable type, is required.

On Wednesday, Aug. 5, the group will hold its monthly club meeting in conjunction with a potluck picnic at Ona Beach State Park near Seal Rock. Carpool from Yachats Commons at 3 p.m., or meet at Ona Beach at 4 p.m. for a leg-stretcher walk on the beach. Dinner will be at 5 p.m., with the meeting to follow at 6 p.m.

For more information or directions, call Jean White in Florence at 541-997-8577.

The club website is at www.yachatscoastalgems.org.

Central coast all-depth halibut fishing closed

NEWPORT — After fishing last weekend nearly exhausted the available spring quota, the spring all-depth Pacific halibut fishery on Oregon's central coast is closed until Aug. 7.

"Last weekend there was just enough good weather and good fishing to push us to within 1,500 pounds of the spring all-depth quota," said Lynn Mattes, ODFW's project leader for halibut. "That's not enough quota to open any additional days this spring, but that remaining quota will be added to the summer season that opens in August."

The spring all-depth Pacific

halibut fishery for the central coast subarea (from Cape Falcon south to Humbug Mountain) was open 12 days over four different periods, resulting in the harvest of approximately 109,163 pounds of Pacific halibut.

The summer all-depth fishery will open Aug. 7 with a quota of approximately 45,000 pounds.

The summer season for the central coast all-depth fishery is scheduled to be open every other Friday and Saturday until the all-depth quota is taken or Oct. 31, whichever is earlier.

Fishing for halibut in the

Central Coast Subarea is still allowed seven days per week inside the 40-fathom line until the quota is reached or Oct. 31.

On the north coast (the Columbia River Subarea; from Leadbetter Point, Wash., to Cape Falcon), nearshore halibut fishing is open seven days a week until the quota is taken or Sept. 30.

On the south coast (the Southern Oregon Subarea; from Humbug Mountain to the OR/CA Border) the halibut fishery is open seven days per week until the quota is reached or Oct. 31.

View from 1B

terms — hot or not — by fans and announcers alike.

Danica Patrick, we were told, spent July 4 in a bikini and a few days later was seen cursing out Dale Earnhardt Jr. for an on-track collision.

His lament was not so much that his brakes failed and he hit a driver, as much as it was his brakes failed and he hit HER, of all drivers, so now he would never hear the end of it — just like an episode of "The Honeymooners" or any other show that features a woman nagging a guy over something.

When Serena won Wimbledon, J.K. Rowling took to defending her body image. The top three stories on Google News the day after were about "appreciating" Serena, her body and her dress. Not one story (and this column is guilty as charged, too) about 6-4, 6-4, game, set, match, Williams.

At the same time, a look at Serena's own Facebook biography describes her as, "an Athlete, an Icon ... [who] embodies style, power, beauty and courage."

When you go to Roger Federer's Facebook page, his bio states that he is a "A Swiss professional tennis player."

It goes on to say that many pundits consider him to be the greatest tennis player who ever lived, which for the Swiss, who may on occasion cop to making pretty decent chocolate and nice enough timepieces, is about as large a statement the

country has ever made outside of one of their banks.

Nowhere will you read that he is "handsome."

And not that there is anything wrong with that, either. With the exception of maybe Joe Namath and Andre Agassi, you'd be hard-pressed to find many male athletes talking about looks or fashion in their player bios anyway.

Danica Patrick, Maria Sharapova and, yes, Serena, make no apologies for having traded a bit on their looks. But it was on their terms.

The sexes will never have an even playing field, and for another generation at least, men's athletics will outdraw female athletics and earn more at the gate.

There may never be a truly "level" playing field in that regard. But in the meantime, here's hoping that the next time a woman leaves the starting line, steps up to the plate or walks out of a tunnel, the adult sport fans among us will notice more than what she is wearing — and instead, what kind of game she is bringing.

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