

RECREATION  
REPORT

## State looking for expired boat registrations

The Oregon State Marine Board, in partnership with 32 county sheriff's offices (including Baker, Union and Wallowa) and the Oregon State Police, will be out in force Aug. 3-4, looking for expired boat registrations as part of "Operation Ship Shape."

"We want boaters to look at their boat's decals, the registration numbers, and their registration card and make sure they're up-to-date," Randy Henry, boating safety program manager for the Marine Board, said in a press release. "Make sure you've renewed your registration, and make sure you've put the decal on your boat, or you could face a \$265 citation."

The Marine Board is funded by registration, title fees and marine fuel taxes paid by motorized boaters. No lottery, general fund tax dollars or local facility parking fees are used to fund agency programs. These fees go back to boaters in the form of boat ramps, docks, trailered parking spaces, restrooms, construction and maintenance, and for boating safety - marine law enforcement services.

"Any boat that is powered by a motor - electric, gas, diesel or steam, and all sailboats 12 feet and longer - must be currently registered when on the water, even when docked or moored," Henry said. This includes inflatable rafts with an electric motor, even a standup paddleboard or float tube with an electric motor.

Motorboat registrations are \$4.50 per foot, rounded up, plus \$5 which helps pay for invasive species inspection stations. Registration fees will increase to \$5.95 per foot in 2020, so Henry suggests that if your boat registration lapsed, register now at the current fee, which is valid for two calendar years.

Boaters can renew their boat registration online at [www.boatoregon.com/store](http://www.boatoregon.com/store), or can visit their local registration agent. Boaters can print off a temporary permit after successfully completing their transaction online or will be issued a temporary permit through an agent for an additional fee. If you need assistance renewing online, please contact the Marine Board at [marine.board@oregon.gov](mailto:marine.board@oregon.gov) or 503-378-8587.

## The Different Perspectives of Cross-Country Travel



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

The upper reaches of Pine Creek Canyon on the east side of the Elkhorn Mountains. The peak at left is Rock Creek Butte, at 9,106 feet the highest in the range. The object in the upper center is not a UFO - it's a Clark's nutcracker, the most common avian sight in the alpine region.

# On top, off trail

It was the hottest day of the year and my throat felt the way I imagine it would feel if I had recently swallowed a sheet of sandpaper.

I had not done so, fortunately. Nor have I ever consumed so much as a scrap of sandpaper, so far as I can remember.

(Although one time I gave myself a nasty scrape across two knuckles when I was trying to smooth a piece of wood with some 120-grit and my hand slipped.)

Sandpaper, being both gritty and dry, is of course the commonest metaphorical object to describe a person who is particularly parched.

At the moment I was pondering the effects of sandpaper lodged in my esophagus there were two stainless steel bottles, with a combined liquid capacity of 45 ounces, nestled in pouches, one on either side of my backpack.

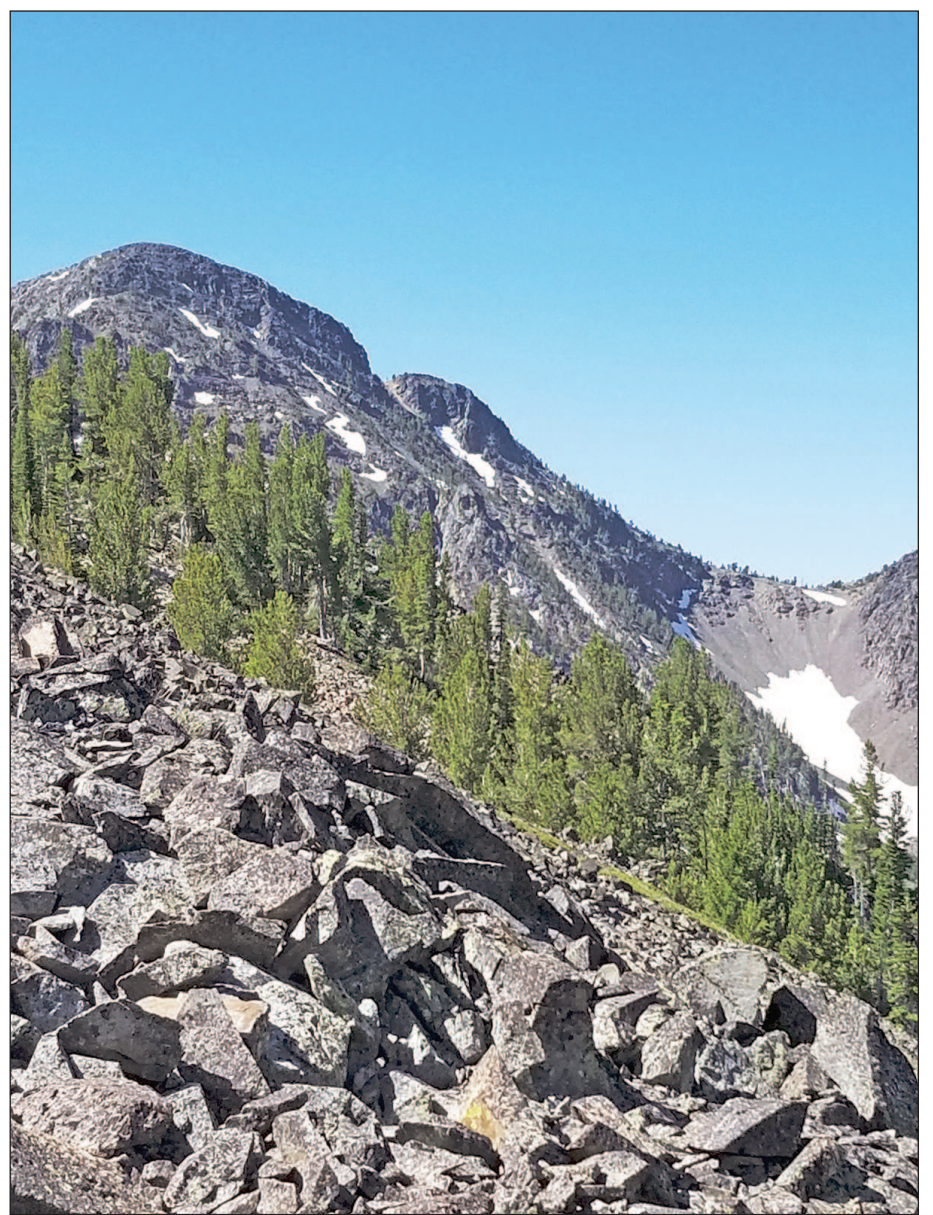
Their combined current volume was approximately 3 molecules of tepid water that would dissipate into their constituent elements long before they ever reached my mouth.

Every time I took an awkward step the pack jostled and the bottles echoed in a dull and depressing way, as though to remind me that they were about as useful in slaking my thirst as, well, sandpaper.



### ON THE TRAIL

JAYSON JACOBY



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

A rock-strewn ridge leads through clusters of subalpine firs and whitebark pines to the summit of Elkhorn Peak, far left. It's the second-highest point in the Elkhorn Mountains, at 8,932 feet.

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# Plinking at pigeons: A low-key type of hunting

A lot of our hunts can be pretty intense and exhausting. Some elk hunts, by the third day I'm so sore I can hardly crawl out of my sleeping bag. You'll be up two hours before daylight, hiking hard all day scrambling up and down mountains and hitting camp well after dark. I love elk hunting, but it's tough.

So if you need a low-key, lotta shooting hunt, check out pigeon hunting. They favor an agricultural setting. They love roosting in barns and hanging around and eating in feedlots. They make a mess when roosting on the farmers equipment and spread diseases by messing in the feed bunks at feedlots. So very seldom will a



### BASE CAMP

TOM CLAYCOMB

farmer or rancher turn you away from hunting pigeons on his property. Especially if you tell him you're hunting with airguns. I received two airguns from Pyramid Air (Check out Pyramid Air, I believe they're the largest airgun dealer in the country). A Ruger 10/22 Airgun which is the spitting image of its cousin the famous Ruger 10/22. I could not wait to test it out. Who doesn't love the 10/22? It is the most popular .22 ever made.

The Ruger 10/22 Airgun is a CO<sub>2</sub> airgun. It is a pellet gun powered by two 12 gr.

CO<sub>2</sub> cannisters and comes in the popular .177 cal. It is a plinker's delight.

I also received the GAMO Swarm Whisper. It is a break action .177 pellet gun but is unique in that it utilizes a 10-round rotary magazine. If you've ever hunted with a break action then you know how frustrating it can be digging a pellet out of your pocket and fumbling it around while the pigeons are in attack mode! The designers at GAMO were ingenious to come up with the clip. I believe they were the first ones to do so on a break action. Look on [gunpowdermagazine.com](http://gunpowdermagazine.com) for an upcoming product review on the Swarm Whisper.

Katy went with me on

this hunt. We sighted in the two airguns and then hit the feedlot. There were more pigeons than I'd ever seen before so the shooting was good. We hit the barns first but they spooked out before we could drill any. But after spooking out they landed on the nearby silos. We picked off one, waited a few minutes and a few more would land. This repeated itself for 20-30 minutes and then we went out to hit the feedlot.

There were a few Eurasian doves but we didn't get any of them. But the pigeon shooting was hot. I bet we had well over 100 shots. We'd catch them feeding on dropped feed in the alleyways or out feeding among the cattle. With an airgun

the cattle never blinked an eye. So airguns are a great way to hunt around livestock. There is no loud report to spook the cattle or horses. I've shot thousands of times around livestock and never spooked them. Of course as a kid our cattle and horse got shot around so much they never even flinched, much less spooked. They got used to it.

Of course, after firing a few shots the pigeons started getting semi spooky. But right now, there are a lot of young ones out there so they're a little slower thinking.

If you decide to grab an airgun and go hunting, I'd recommend a break action.

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