

# AIR GUNS

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A lot of grandads and dads that want to get their kids into hunting and shooting bring the kids to my seminars. I had the Sig MCX on my demo table. It looks, feels and has the same features as the real SIG AR. As you can imagine, all of the kids were telling grandad to buy them an MCX.

CO's are great for getting kids into shooting. Sig makes a lot of cool targets. Spinners, flippers, shooting galleries, etc. So if your kid doesn't want to hunt but wants to shoot or plink tin cans, CO's are the ticket.



Ron Spomer Outdoors/Contributed Photo

The young crowd will love some of the modern airguns that Sig Sauer offers. They all mimic the company's real firearms.

## BREAK BARRELS (BB)

BB's are the most popular model and for good reason. Some boast speeds of 1,450 fps; remember, a .22 only flies along at 1,250 fps. So they're a good choice for hunting. They're also the cheapest to operate. Break the barrel, insert a pellet and you're good to go. Preppers like these.

BB's get their power by compressing a spring or a cylinder usually filled with nitrogen. They have a unique recoil. They kick backward and then forward. To get any degree of accuracy you need to use the artillery hold. Hold it tight as normal with

your strong hand but only cup your off hand and set the forestock in it. Let it slide backward and forward when you shoot. Hold your off hand in the exact same spot every time or it will affect your point of impact.

With a BB you can shoot

pellets with polymer tips. PCP's and CO's used magazines and the polymer tips jam up in them.

The major pain with hunting with a BB is that every shot you have to dig in your pocket, open a can, pull out a pellet and load it. I have

a small canvas pouch that I can dump pellets into which does speed up the process immensely. But a few companies have come out with air rifles that utilize a rotary magazine. This is great. Buy two or three extra mags and you can hunt and shoot high-speed.

## PRE-CHARGED PNEUMATICS (PCP's)

These are my most favorite air rifles because they're the most accurate. I get 3/16-inch groups with some of mine. So they are the ultimate hunting air gun. They don't travel as fast as a BB, most of them probably 900 to 1,100 fps, but accuracy trumps speed.

They are powered by compressed air which is stored in a tank on the gun. Most of them will hold 3,000 psi. Yes, I said 3,000 psi, not 30 psi like your truck tires. That's some serious air pressure. The PCP regulates the air for each shot so whether your tank has 3,000 or 1,800 psi it shouldn't affect the trajectory of your pellet.

PCP's are also the most

complicated of the air gun family. To charge one you must have an external air tank. These cost about \$350. Not that it is expensive, but to fill the tank you have to run to a skin-diving shop and pay them \$6 to \$8. This can be inconvenient as you have to work around their schedule. Plus, on a busy day of shooting I'll go through two tanks in two-thirds of the day. So if you're hunting with one you'll want two tanks.

You can buy hand pumps that resemble a bicycle pump but they're a major pain to operate. Let's just say if you go this route, you can cancel your gym membership!

But have no fear. Umarex saved the day. They have a compressor called the Umarex Ready Air which you can plug into a 110 outlet or to your truck battery out in the field.

Well, once again we are out of space before I am out of words. In the next installment we'll take a look at different types of pellets for air guns.

# State offering \$1.6 million for public trail projects

SALEM — The Recreational Trails Program is accepting grant applications through June 15 for the 2021 grant cycle. The federally funded reimbursement grant program provides matching grants to construct, expand or improve public trails for motorized and non-motorized use.

Interested applicants must submit a letter of intent via oprdgrants.org by April 30, and applications are due June 15.

An optional webinar is set for April 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to provide information on the program and how to navigate the application process. Register at the Recreational Trails Program web page — <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/GRA/pages/GRA-rtp.aspx>

Approximately \$1.6 million is avail-

able for land or easement acquisitions, safety and education, trail assessment for accessibility or maintenance construction, heavy restoration, trailhead facilities and water trails.

The grant program is open to local governments, park districts, state and federal agencies, Tribal governments, other public land managers and non-profits.

The Recreational Trails Program is funded through the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). Since 1993, the program has funded over 500 projects across Oregon.

Questions can be directed to Jodi Bellefeuille, Recreational Trails Program Coordinator, at [jodi.bellefeuille@oregon.gov](mailto:jodi.bellefeuille@oregon.gov) or 503-856-6316.

## FISHING REPORT

### MALHEUR RESERVOIR

Reservoir is ice-free, and fishing has been good for rainbow trout in the 10- to 12-inch range, but there are larger fish available.

### OWYHEE RESERVOIR

Fishing has been great for black crappie in the upper reservoir near Leslie Gulch. No reports on bass fishing but with warmer weather bass are likely biting well now. The reservoir is 60 percent full.

### THIEF VALLEY RESERVOIR

Reservoir is at full-pool with very little ice across the reservoir, and currently provides good bank and boat fishing opportunities. Anglers are reporting good fishing for rainbow trout, many of which are healthy, sizeable fish that survived through the summer/

fall and into the winter. The spring trout fishery for Thief Valley Reservoir is looking promising.

### PHILLIPS RESERVOIR

Reservoir is beginning to fill up and ice is melting rapidly, leaving considerable open water gaps between the shore and ice. Bank fishing opportunities should become more accessible in the coming weeks.

### WALLOWA LAKE

Anglers are starting to catch a few early kokanee. As spring continues, fishing for trout that held over from the previous year's stocking can pick up. Catching these fish may take some time, but they are often much larger. Fish natural baits as stocked fish have typically learned to eat natural food by this time.

The boat dock on the north end

(county park) of the lake has been installed, but not on the south end (state park). Use caution as boat ramps can still be icy.

### IMNAHA RIVER

Observations of tagged steelhead moving into the Imnaha River have increased over the past few weeks, corresponding with a recent increase in flows. Steelhead are beginning to show up at hatchery facilities, indicating fish are spread throughout the fishery. River conditions are great for steelhead fishing, but according to creel surveys, catch rates have been quite variable.

Anglers should be aware that some construction/utility work is occurring on the lower Imnaha, and trucks will be on the road hauling equipment and materials. Anglers should use caution when traveling in the area.

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## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Egyptian sun god
- Hombre's abode
- Hair adornment
- Not common
- Guinness or Baldwin
- Baseball stat.
- Chilliest days
- Shinto or Zen (abbr.)
- QB objectives
- Gold brick
- Cold-weather drink
- Karachi language
- Stratford's river
- Columbus sch.
- Kind of miss
- Dues payer, for short
- Dartboard locale

DOWN

- Upper limb
- chi ch'uan
- Airport code for O'Hare
- Olivia — -John
- Philosopher — -tzu
- Break suddenly
- Give it a go
- Maui neighbor
- Pink
- Wash off
- Root for
- Confidant
- Softball event
- Anatolia (2 wds.)
- Lb. or tsp.
- Impairment
- Nymph who pined away
- Pastoral spot
- Sapporo sport
- City on the Tiber

Answer to Previous Puzzle

R	U	G	Y	A	P	S	G	O	B	I
I	N	N	A	K	I	N	E	R	I	C
M	O	U	T	H	T	I	N	E	C	K
		I	O	A	P	S	O			
T	R	I	P	O	D	P	A	S	T	A
H	E	M	P	A	R	T	Y	U	R	N
E	B	A	Y	L	I	B	S	M	U	T
M	E	G	G	I	G	S	H	A	T	S
E	L	E	G	Y	P	E	A	C	H	Y
			S	M	O	G	M			
E	C	R	U	A	R	P	U	G	E	T
S	H	U	I	F	E	E	T	A	G	A
P	I	N	T	S	W	A	Y	S	O	B

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Fort Union Grange Hall, corner of McAlister & Gekeler Lanes.  
For more info, call 541-786-1222

AL-ANON Attitude of Gratitude.  
Wednesday, 12:15-1:30pm.  
Faith Lutheran Church.  
12th & Gekeler, La Grande.  
541-786-2051

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS  
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[www.neo-na.org](http://www.neo-na.org)

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Baker City, OR  
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