

## May 15 deadline to apply for controlled hunt tags

ODFW officials urge hunters to not wait until last minute

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SALEM — Hunters don't have much more time to apply for a controlled or premium hunt this fall.

The deadline to apply is May 15. If you apply at a license agent, the deadline depends on the store hours. The online licensing system for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) will accept applications up to 11:59 p.m. on May 15.

Applications cost \$8 per hunt series (buck deer, antler-less deer, elk, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain goat), and applicants must have an annual hunting license.

Among significant changes this year, archery elk hunting in 13 units and three subunits in the Blue Mountains shift from general to controlled seasons. And for the second straight year, all archery hunting for deer is controlled in Eastern Oregon.

Details are available in the big game hunting regulations, which are available at <https://myodfw.com/>

Here are some tips for applying for a controlled hunt:

- Use group purchase. One person can apply for an entire hunting party and for their family and friends.

- Double-check regulations before applying. Even if you've applied for the same hunt for years, check your hunt number and be sure the hunt hasn't changed.

- Don't wait until the last minute. ODFW offices are closed so staff will not be available to help customers by phone or email during the weekend. If you wait until the last weekend and have problems with your online account, ODFW recommends you visit a license agent to make your purchase.

- Be sure to apply for a premium hunt — deer, elk and pronghorn antelope tags with a four-month season (Aug. 1-Nov. 30) and any-sex bag limit. Everyone has an equal chance to draw these tags (including non-residents). Premium tags are additional meaning you can also hunt a controlled or general season.

Hunters have until June 1 to change their hunt choice if they've already applied.

As of May 1, 164,706 controlled hunt applications have been sold. In 2021, a total of 526,361 controlled hunt applications were received with most applications coming in the last week before the deadline.

"We again urge hunters to not wait until the last minute this year," said Jeanine Smith, ODFW licensing services manager. "The majority of applications come in during the last few days before the deadline and our hold and email response times peak."

Big game herds fared well over the winter, as the mild weather resulted in little over-winter mortality. But severe drought conditions are exacerbating poor habitat conditions for mule deer resulting in some emergency tag reductions.

If you have problems with your online account, call Licensing at (503) 947-6101 or email [odfw.websales@odfw.oregon.gov](mailto:odfw.websales@odfw.oregon.gov).

# STORMS, SURF AND TASTY PERCH

A trip to the sea spurs fond memories



**DENNIS DAUBLE**  
THE NATURAL WORLD

Back in the day, my parents transported me and my siblings from home in Eastern Oregon to the Pacific Coast twice a year; at spring break and in late summer after pea harvest. Every 10-hour trip down the winding "historic" Columbia River highway proved an endurance test for a family of seven crammed into a '55 Mercury station wagon. Constant banter, jostling for position, peculiar body odors, and infrequent bathroom breaks took their toll.

A few other things about those welcome trips to the beach come to mind. First, was invariably reaching our destination in the dark. We sat patiently while Dad drove around town looking for a cheap motel with enough beds for all. What followed was his best attempt to convince Mom he found a good deal. My fondest memories, though, involve casting for redbtail surfperch. We gutted and scaled our catch in the rolling surf, Mom fried their flat shapes crisp and

brown, and we feasted on soft white meat until our bellies were full.

Several decades later I look out the window of an ocean-front rental at Yachats. My plan to spend the next three days fishing is in jeopardy. A dozen sea mussels, harvested at low tide the evening before, are

"clammed up" in a sack on the back porch. Mussels are high in Vitamin A and elevate the flavor of a bowl of Cioppino, but mine are destined for bait. With gusts up to 60 mph and overnight freezing temperatures predicted, the bottle of Pelican Brewing Company's "Tsunami" in my right hand and Johnny Winter's gravelly voice on Pandora seem appropriate.

The loud crash and pound of giant waves on the rock shelf below is relentless, yet reassures. Some things remain constant in an ever-changing world. Fist-size balls of foam blow sideways from wave crests that would challenge surfers on the north shore of Oahu. Rain lashes at the window pane. Beach grass bends sideways. Gulls huddle on the rocky shelf below. A big screen view of the Pacific Ocean rarely gets old except on days when fishing is on your mind.



Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photo

The soft white meat of redbtail surfperch complements a side of crispy hashbrowns.

See, Perch/Page B6



Dennis Dauble/Contributed Photo

The author casts from a coastal rock on a day when tidal conditions were favorable.

## Wallowa-Whitman workers conduct survey for Columbia spotted frogs

The frogs, which require specific habitat, are a sensitive species

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LA GRANDE — Employees from the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest recently surveyed areas in the Upper Grande Ronde River area for the Columbia spotted frog, a sensitive species on the 2.3-million-acre national forest.

Marie Gaylord, a biological science technician for the La Grande Ranger District, said employees conduct the surveys each April, when spotted frog breeding sites are active with the warming weather.

"The breeding of this species of frog have been recorded in this area for over 30 years," Gaylord said in a press release from the Wallowa-Whitman.

This year's surveys were done on April 27.

Dax Smith, a biological science technician for the La Grande Ranger District, said many of the areas surveyed are part of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, which is designed to restore ponds and other habitat that the spotted frog and other species depend on.

"By returning to these areas, we support the process because it acts as a report card for our previous work," Smith said. "These frogs could not lay eggs in some of the areas before, and now with the floodplain reconnected they are able to breed safely."

Female spotted frogs need specific habitat to safely lay their egg masses, which can include from a few hundred to as many as 2,000 eggs.

"Conditions like still, shallow water edges, emergent vegetation, and ample sunlight all contribute to a healthy breeding location," Gaylord said. "As such, the

presence of egg masses is an indicator of certain habitat conditions that can then be used to determine the habitat suitability for other aquatic or semi-aquatic life."

Although forest officials said improving habitat can contribute to a growth in the spotted frog population, other factors can threaten the unhatched tadpoles. One of the bigger risks is people inadvertently stepping on egg masses.

"The egg masses that these frogs produce are very delicate," Smith said. "If you are out recreating in these pond areas, be mindful of your step and do not touch or pick up the masses."

Forest users can assist by documenting and reporting sighted egg mass locations to their local district ranger office.

For more information about the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman>.



Joseph Black/Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Marie Gaylord, front, and Dax Smith, biological science technicians for the La Grande Ranger District, survey a pond in the Upper Grande Ronde area for Columbia spotted frogs on April 27, 2022.