



Ryan Brennecke/Bulletin file

A young angler fights a rainbow trout at Shevlin Pond.

FISHING SHEVLIN POND

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains five youth and family fishing ponds in Central Oregon, hoping to get the next generation hooked on angling. Shevlin Pond, in northwest Bend, is the only one of these ponds not filled by irrigation water, according to the ODFW.

The cool water of Tumalo Creek feeds Shevlin Pond, which is frequently stocked with rainbow trout. Most of the rainbows in Shevlin average 8 to 10 inches in length, but the pond is sometimes stocked with bigger fish. Shevlin Pond is restricted to anglers 17 and younger.

Directions: Travel 4 miles west of Bend via Shevlin Park Road. The pond is next to Aspen Hall.

— Mark Morical, *The Bulletin*

TOP PICK OF THE WEEK

Chimney Rock Trail



Springtime is the right time for finding more striking hues among the usual colors in the desert.

PHOTO AND STORY BY DAVID JASPER
The Bulletin

Until a week ago, I hadn't been to Prineville Reservoir area in over a decade, and even then, it was just a drive-through on Crooked River Highway (also an Oregon Scenic Bikeway for you pedal-heads) en route to Bend from Prineville before I discovered the speed and ease of Millican Road. But last week's recommendation of the area by colleague Makenzie Whittle piqued my curiosity about hiking options there, which led my daughter, Lucy, and I to hike Chimney Rock Trail. About 35 miles east of Bend, Chimney Rock is a 3-mile out-and-back hike widely billed as "moderate." The 600-foot elevation gain could be a little tougher for some, but we encountered multiple generations of friendly hikers, and no matter how grueling, the dramatic views of the rug-

ged Crooked River Canyon make it worth the effort. The upper sections of the trail are fairly smooth and firm, with some rocky sections and a bit of scree along the way. The many junipers lining the path provide a modicum of shade, but I'd recommend getting there soon — you might even glimpse wildflowers — or making this a morning hike come the heat of summer.

Getting there: From Bend, take Highway 20 east to Powell Butte Highway. Proceed about one mile to the roundabout, then head east on Alfalfa Market Road, through Alfalfa, continuing east. Alfalfa Market Road eventually becomes Willard Road and finally Reservoir Road. At the terminus, continue north on OR-27/ Crooked River Highway 6.3 miles to the trailhead, on right.

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The Pink Trail leads down the canyon to the Crooked River.

Mark Morical/Bulletin photo

Otter Bench

Continued from B1

Some hiking paths in the Otter Bench trail system are moderately challenging, and some are difficult. The trails down to the rivers are the most demanding and bikes and horses are prohibited on them.

After climbing back up the steep Pink Trail, I continued on toward the Opal Canyon Trail, which leads to more dramatic canyon views and makes a loop at the south end of the trail network.

The Opal Canyon Trail was uphill and rocky, and brought me to the side of a cliff that offered views of the deep, rugged canyon and the river far below. The terrain there calls for some caution, as the trail parallels the edge of the canyon, the drop-off just a few feet away.

I continued for a mile or so, the trail leading to a higher point on the ridge that showcased even more Crooked River Gorge scenery. Eventually, the trail looped back toward the Otter Bench Trail.

Another trail in the area, the Horny Hollow Trail, is hiker-only and is closed from Feb. 1 to Aug. 31 to protect breeding wildlife that are sensitive to human activity.

I hiked briskly back toward the parking area on the Otter Bench Trail, the last half-mile mostly downhill. I had hiked about eight miles in three hours, with an elevation gain of a little more than 900 feet.

Many of the BLM trailheads near Crooked River Ranch — Otter Bench on the Crooked River and Steelhead Falls, Foley

Waters and Scout Camp on the Deschutes River — are reachable via public roads.

The hiker-only Steelhead Falls and Foley Waters trails, both popular among anglers, have existed for many years but are now defined and designated by the BLM.

As summer draws closer, more Central Oregon hikers

will turn their attention to the forests and mountains. But during spring, the Crooked River Gorge offers some of the

most breathtaking desert scenery in the region.

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Otter Bench Trailhead

Access to Otter Bench and Opal Canyon trails.

Directions: Turn west on Lower Bridge Road, off U.S. Highway 97 just north of Terrebonne. Follow signs to Crooked River Ranch. To find the Otter Bench Trailhead, continue past the golf course to the end of the road, about 11 miles from Highway 97. Look for a trailhead sign and map. Parking is free.

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