

# Thermal shock caused trout deaths

By IAN CRAWFORD  
Baker City Herald

NORTH POWDER — The approximately 200 hatchery rainbow trout that died in late July after being released in Anthony Lake succumbed to thermal shock when they splashed into the comparatively warmer surface water in the alpine lake, a state fish biologist said.

“It was a temperature difference between the transport and the water body they’re released in,” said Joe Lemanski, district fish biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s La Grande office.

Although the water is generally cool in Anthony Lake, at elevation 7,100 feet, direct midsummer sunlight can warm the top layer to as much as 60 to 70 degrees, Lemanski said.

Water in the hatchery transport truck that delivered the trout to the 22-acre lake on July 26, by contrast, was likely in the 50s or below, he said.

“With a good amount of sunlight and ambient heat, it can heat up really quickly,” Lemanski said. “By July we’d already had a few 100 degree days, and by the time they were released the temperature difference was too great.”

An automated weather station just east of Anthony Lake, and at nearly the same elevation, recorded a high temperature of 75 degrees on July 26, the day 2,000 rainbow trout were released in the lake.

High temperatures over the previous two weeks ranged from 64 degrees to 79 degrees.

Lemanski said ODFW began to get reports from anglers soon after the July 26 release, including one report from a Forest Service employee who took photos of dead fish.

The dead trout were concentrated near the boat ramp at the southeast corner of the lake — which is where the hatchery truck disgorges its load of rainbow trout.

Lemanski said it doesn’t appear that a large number of fish were dead before they were released, however, since there were no reports of dead fish floating near the boat ramp during or immediately after the release.

He suspects most of the fish died within a day or less, based on the timing of the reports.

This summer, prior to the lab test results, Lemanski said thermal shock was a possible cause for the fish deaths. He noted that there were no reports of dead trout after 2,000 rainbows were released in Anthony Lake, at the same site, three weeks earlier, on July 5.

Temperatures were much cooler during the two weeks prior to the July 5 release, with the high below 60 degrees on several days.

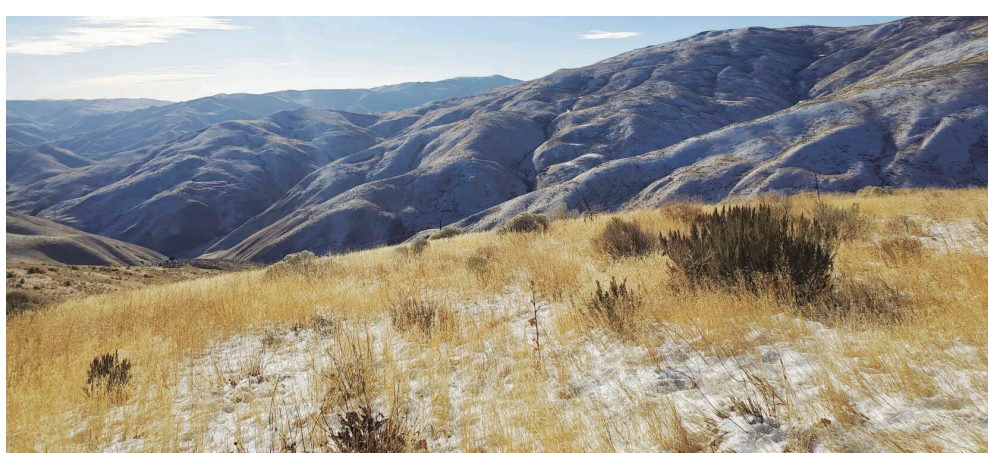
Indeed, lingering snowdrifts, the result of an abnormally cool, wet spring that brought snow to the area as late as mid June, delayed the second trout release until July 26.

“They were hoping to get those fish in a few weeks earlier, but the snow accumulated prevented an earlier release,” Lemanski said.

After reports started coming in about dead trout near the boat ramp, ODFW officials collected some carcasses.

“A handful of specimens were taken to our fish health lab at EOU, they evaluated them for everything — blood, tissue, bacteria, virology,” Lemanski said.

The tests confirmed thermal shock as the cause, and ruled out other, potentially more troubling, problems such as toxins in the water, an infection in the trout, or failures with the hatchery truck or release procedures.



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

Even if you come home without any birds, a chukar hunt on the breaks of the Snake River in Baker County, on a fine November morning, is not without its attractions.

# Chukars get the best of hunter

By JAYSON JACOBY  
Baker City Herald

As I raised my shotgun the covey of chukars flew broadside, as straight as clay pigeons, although not bright orange.

Also I didn’t holler “pull.”

But the scenario was otherwise about as ideal as a chukar hunter could hope for.

I fired three times in the span of as many seconds.

All those pellets and I didn’t ruffle a single feather, so far as I could tell.

This is a typical score for me, to be sure.

But rarely, if ever, have I had so few plausible excuses for wasting 12-gauge shells in hopes of bringing down one of these fleet partridges.

I was hunting with my brothers-in-law, Dave and Chuck Britton, in the big canyon country above Brownlee Reservoir, north of Huntington.

Dave and I were on a ridge near Morgan Creek that reliably yields birds.

Almost none of which have ever ended up in my vest, but at least there was a decent prospect of coming across a covey or two.

The notion of “flat ground” is more theoretical than real on the breaks of the Snake River, but the spine of this ridge is quite gentle by local standards.

I was standing among shoulder-high sagebrush in a sort of shallow bowl, the slope rising at a modest angle to the north.

I actually heard the birds muttering to themselves in their distinct chattering style.

It always sounds to me as if the chukars are taunting. But that might just be frustration-induced anthropomorphism. Shotgun shells aren’t cheap.

Since I knew approximately where the birds were, I wasn’t shocked when they flushed.

Which is to say, I didn’t flinch, as though I had stepped next to a rattlesnake, and then nearly fall down and forget to push the safety button besides.

And since I wasn’t standing on a precipitous

slope (like as not coated with grainy snow with the approximate traction of ball bearings; whoever came up with the slur “bird brain” knew nothing of chukars and their telepathic ability to appear when the nearest hunter is in the most precarious position possible), I had a stable base.

I had time to point the barrel. I even fancied that I was leading a particular bird out of the dozen or so that comprised the covey.

I worked the pump as fast as I could. With each blast I was sure I would see the telltale sign of a hit — a bird dropping its legs, or a flutter in the otherwise smooth flight.

But I knew better even before the echo from the last shot dissipated in the chilly air of early November.

As I trudged back to the pickup — I had reloaded the gun, which proves only that optimism and incompetence are bedfellows — I replayed the sequence, much as a quarterback does after throwing the ball over the head of a wide open receiver.

I reached no useful conclusion.

I was terribly surprised, to be sure.

I’m well acquainted with my failings as a wingshooter.

But I have brought down birds — and done so in circumstances far less amenable to success.

I suspect those episodes were statistical anomalies.

The morning’s hunt, despite its disappointing climax, was not without highlights.

It was a fine fall morning, the ground frosty after the recent passage of a cold front, the sky clear except for patches of wispy cirrus.

We saw a couple coyotes, and while I was hunting alone I jumped four deer in a draw, one of them a fine 4-point.

We had roasted chicken for dinner that evening. Not quite so satisfying, I suppose, as meat I had procured myself.

But a cooked chicken thigh, whatever its questionable origin, at least has the advantage of staying still until you pierce it with a fork.



Jacoby



Rod Carpenter/Contributed Photo

Tuck admires a beautiful Arizona Coues deer.

# SHOOTING THE BREEZE Making some memories in the Arizona desert

Coues deer are a tiny subspecies of whitetail only found in parts of Arizona, New Mexico and northern Mexico. Ever since I read Jack O’Connor’s stories about hunting them as a kid, I dreamed of chasing them someday. That day came this year.

By taking advantage of the youth hunter program in Arizona, I was able to build up some inexpensive points through my son. This year we applied as a party and cashed them in on a hunt. I knew that, since we didn’t know the country or the animals, it was going to be tough to tag out, so we planned to hunt the whole eight-day season if we had to.

After a short 22-hour drive, we made it to our unit in the Arizona desert. We quickly learned to pay attention to where we were stepping. Every plant had thorns, spikes or stickers waiting to draw blood. The plan was to climb to a vantage point and glass, and glass. We glassed until our eyes ached, and then glassed some more.

Over the course of seven days we saw very few deer, but we were still having a good time. We saw snakes, tarantulas, javelina, bobcats and coyotes.

Finally, on the seventh morning, we were surprised to glass up a whopper of a buck. Initially I thought he was further away than he was. By the time we got it together, he had moved and was a long way off. I tried a couple of shots but missed. Unconcerned, he fed over the hill and into the next draw.

When we peeked over the hill into the draw below, we didn’t see anything and our hearts sank. As we were standing there talking, we were shocked to see the buck jump up from under a dead juniper and run down the hill and over the edge into the next draw before we could get a shot.

We thought he was gone for good, but he made a fatal mistake. Instead of sticking to the bottom of the brushy draw, he ran up the hill on the far side. By now we were ready, and Tuck made a great shot to bring him down.

For a little while we just sat there in stunned disbelief at what had just happened. We would have been happy with any buck, but after days of looking, we had taken a spectacular deer.

They are beautiful animals, but not much to them. We managed to fit all the quartered-out meat into Tuck’s pack for the 2-mile hike out. All that was left to do was survive the 22-hour drive home.

Our little adventure had created some great memories. Maybe someday I will find a way to do it again.

What is your most memorable hunt? Let us know at shootingthebreezefarm@gmail.com. Rod Carpenter is a husband, father, and a huntin’ fool.



Rod Carpenter

## SPORTS SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, DEC. 2

Dayville/Monument girls basketball @ Union, Union Lions Club Basketball Tournament, Union High School, 6 p.m.

Dayville/Monument boys basketball @ Union, Union Lions Club Basketball Tournament, Union High School, 7:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, DEC. 3

Long Creek boys basketball vs. Huntington, 1 p.m.

Dayville Monument girls basketball @ Echo, Union Lions Club Basketball Tournament, Union High School, 11 a.m.

Dayville/Monument boys basketball @ Echo, Union

Lions Club Basketball Tournament, Union High School, 12:30 p.m.

### TUESDAY, DEC. 6

Grant Union girls basketball vs. Prairie City/Burnt River, time TBD

Prairie City boys basketball vs. Grant Union, time TBD

Home games in bold

# Anthony Lakes set to open this weekend

By JAYSON JACOBY  
Baker City Herald

ANTHONY LAKES — Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort will open for the season on Saturday, Dec. 3.

Season pass holders will get the first turns on the slopes, however, on Friday, Dec. 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

After a dry stretch for much of November thwarted hopes for skiing on Thanksgiving weekend, the first in a series of storms forecast this week dropped about 14 inches of snow on the slopes Sunday, Nov. 27, and Monday, Nov. 28, said Chelsea Judy, the ski area’s marketing director.

With a 34-inch base on Monday, and the prospect for quite a bit more snow before the weekend, Anthony Lakes officials decided to schedule the opening.

Although early season conditions will exist, it’s

going to be “one of the better openings we’ve had in many years,” Judy said on Monday morning.

The resort, in the Elkhorn Mountains about 34 miles northwest of Baker City, will be open Saturday, Dec. 3, and Sunday, Dec. 4, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The ski area will be open the following weekend as well, on Saturday, Dec. 10, and Sunday, Dec. 11, then operate daily for Christmas break from Dec. 17 through Jan. 2, with the exception of Christmas Day.

Daily snow updates are available at anthonylakes.com.



Chelsea Judy/Contributed Photo  
Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort will open for the season on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022.

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- Veteran's ceremony with Military honors
- Candle lighting ceremony
- Special speakers
- Music
- Refreshments

Memorial candles available for purchase by donation. Memorial Tree with ornaments available for purchase by donation will set up during the month of December at Thadd's Place.

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