

# Bighorn sheep transplant, well-traveled Malheur badger

Fifteen Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep from Idaho were trucked to Oregon recently and released in the lower Innaha River Canyon of Wallowa County. The transplant was a result of cooperative efforts by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Idaho Fish and Game Department, and the U.S. Forest Service to reestablish this species in the Snake River area.

The sheep—nine ewes and six rams—were trapped by Idaho Fish and Game personnel in the Panther Creek drainage, a tributary of Idaho's Salmon River. A 24-hour truck ride brought them to their new home in Oregon. Three ewes were equipped with radio transmitter collars to help keep track of the herd and all were marked with ear tags and red streamers.

Trapping efforts in the past in Oregon have been done by herding or baiting sheep into wooden traps. But in Idaho, Fish and Game personnel lured the sheep to a trap site with fermented apple pulp and then used a drop net to capture all fifteen animals simultaneously. Although it is hardly considered a natural food, sheep rapidly acquire a taste for apple pulp. Once they become accustomed to eating it, they will return regularly to a bait site. The use of this

exotic bait was apparently pioneered in Wyoming and Colorado.

Most of the animals are young, one or two years of age, said Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department biologist Vic Coggins, and they survived their long trip in fine shape. The young age and healthy condition is a real plus in upping the odds the sheep

will adapt well to their new surroundings.

This sheep transplant is the second one attempted in Hells Canyon. The first release of Rocky Mountain bighorns was made in April 1971 near Hells Canyon Dam. The sheep persisted in the area for several years but then disappeared. The animals from that first attempt came from

Jasper Park in Alberta, Canada.

Jasper Park is an alpine area, unfortunately, rather than a canyon habitat like the Snake River where they were released. The Idaho sheep from Panther Creek come from a canyon habitat very similar to the Snake River and may be better adapted to it than the Jasper Park animals

were.

Oregon has one other Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep herd in the Lostine area of the Wallowa Mountains. This herd has done well since its 1971 reintroduction and numbers are now estimated at 100 animals. Since there is a very limited winter range for the animals at this site, some have been released in Bear

Creek, a neighboring drainage. Unfortunately, most of those animals returned to Lostine Creek, so the effort failed.

Another transplant is planned for Battle Creek in upper Hells Canyon with stock from the Lostine herd. Five sheep were released in the area last year. Snow and high winds have so far hampered efforts

to move more animals this winter but Coggins expects to make another try when the weather moderates.

The Panther Creek shipment of bighorn sheep from Idaho is part repayment for Rocky Mountain elk which were trapped several years ago in Oregon and sent to Idaho. Swaps of this nature between states have been

common over the years and have made reintroductions possible as well as introductions of new species throughout the United States.

**BADGER SETS TRAVEL RECORD**  
An Idaho badger which immigrated to southeastern Oregon may have set a new record for the cross-land interstate badger trek.

**OSU open house for h.s. seniors is Saturday**

Oregon high school and community college students thinking of attending Oregon State University next fall are invited to attend OSU's annual Beaver Open House Saturday, Jan. 27.

Prospective students and their parents are invited to attend the one-day session. Students can have their questions answered about classes, majors and student activities, said Franz Haun, director of new student programs.

Students and parents will have an opportunity to visit with representatives of all academic units at OSU. Information will be available on admission requirements, housing, financial aid and costs.

A \$3 registration fee will be charged for each student attending; no fee is charged for parents. Students and parents may purchase lunch on campus.

Participants may pre-register by mail or on Open House day in OSU's Gill Coliseum from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. when the opening meeting begins.

More information on Beaver Open House is available from Office of New Student Programs at OSU, telephone 754-2626.

**Mime show set for Wednesday at BMCC**

Scot McKay will present mime, the fine art of body language, Wednesday, Jan. 31, in the college union at Blue Mountain Community College. Performances are scheduled for 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. The public is invited to come, eat lunch, and view the free show.

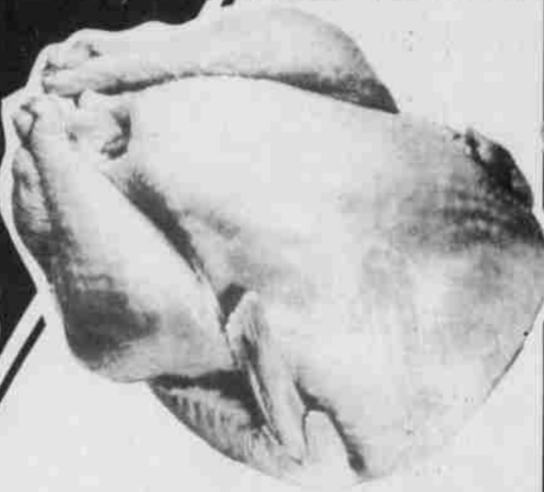
Mime is termed an avenue of direct communication without the burden of verbal concepts or physical objects. The mimist concentrates on communicating with the actions of his body and facial expressions only.

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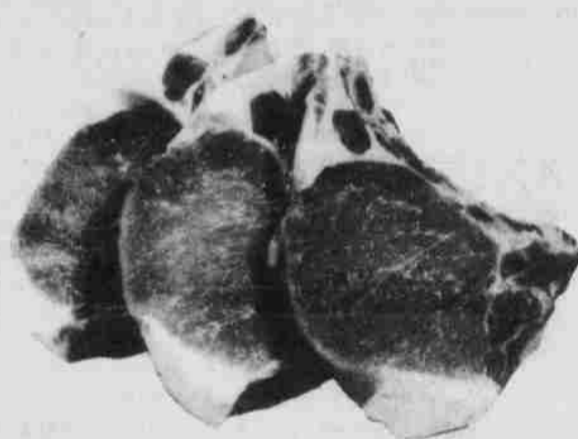
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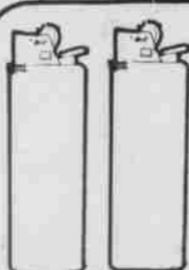
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