

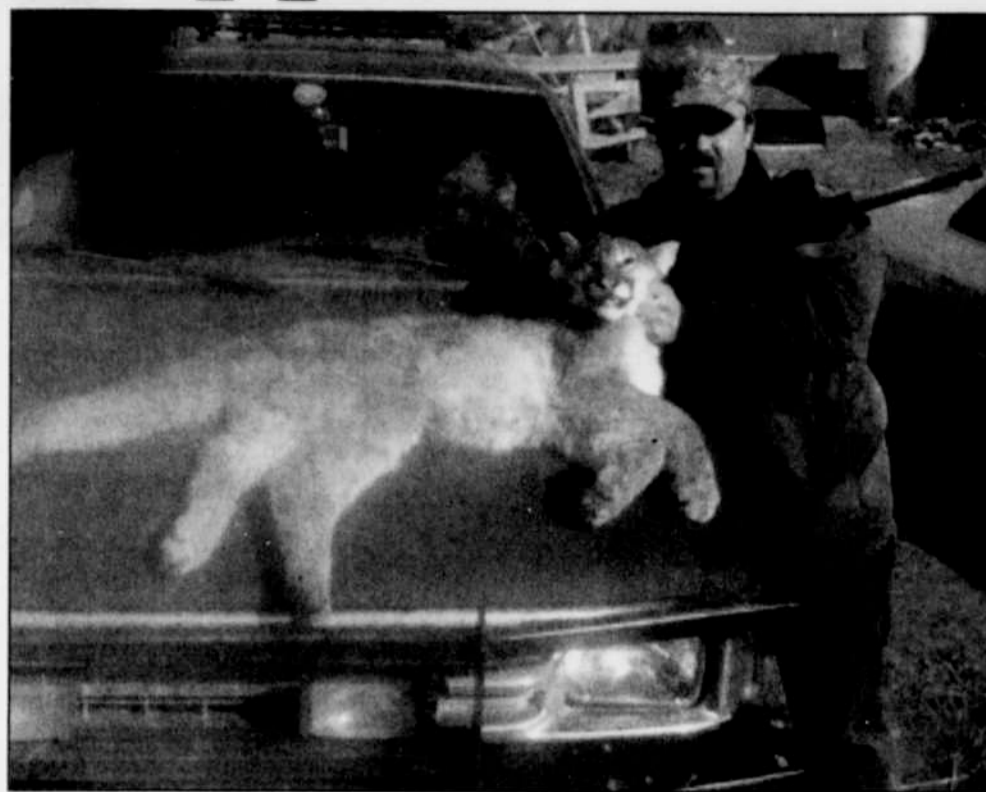
HEPPNER

50¢



Gazette
Times

Local man kills cougar south of Heppner Hill



Gary Waddell with a young cougar shot south of Heppner.

VOL. 132 N.O. 14 8 Pages Wednesday, April 3, 2013 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Garden Club reorganizes, meeting set for Saturday



The long established Heppner Garden Club recently disbanded due to lack of membership as did the Blue Mountain Master Gardeners. A group of local citizens are creating a new opportunity for volunteers to continue some of their projects.

Willow Creek Gardeners are all local

There is a new opportunity for volunteers and citizens of all ages to get involved in 'hands on' community activities.

Following the nationwide trend of dwindling membership, some local civic and service clubs have disbanded including the Heppner Garden Club and Blue Mountain Master Gardeners. John Murray, Jo Ann Burleson, Ed Struthers and Kay Proctor

recognized the continued need for projects that these two Clubs were responsible for. They have formed an informal group, Willow Creek Gardeners, with a more casual approach; no state or national board to report to and meetings only as needed.

Some of the projects on the to-be-continued list are the flower show at the Morrow County Fair; the community garden, decorating and maintaining

public areas like flowers in the mini-park and at Heritage Plaza.

Yard of the Month recognition is being continued under other sponsorship as is the popular Christmas wreath and greens project.

For more information or to express interest, please contact one of above mentioned people. There will be a meeting on Saturday at Heppner City Hall at 9 a.m.

Heppner hosts fifteenth East Oregon MS Walk

For a fifteenth year, Heppner will host the Eastern Oregon Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Walk on April 20. Pre-registration is appreciated but walk-ons are

walkers on another day, to raise funds that way.

There is no registration fee for the MS Walk. However, participants are encouraged to raise \$100

460 N Gale Street. The walk will start at 10 a.m. and a brunch and raffle will follow after the walk. The well-marked 5K route is wheelchair accessible. A



Participants getting ready during the 2012 Eastern Oregon Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Walk.

welcomed. Pre-register on the web at www.walkMS-oregon.com, call 503-445-8342 or register the day of the event.

If you are unable to attend the day of the scheduled walk, you can still help the cause by registering as a Virtual Walker by walking on your lunch break, walking to and from work or walking with a group of

per person to help support our continuing fight against MS. Walkers can earn prizes for outstanding fundraising, starting with a T-shirt prize at the \$100 level. If you bring \$100 the day of the walk, you will be eligible for a T-shirt that day, while supplies last.

Registration and check-in begins at 9 a.m. at All Saint's Episcopal Church,

marked 10K walk is also available. There will be 5K and 10K route maps available the day of the walk. MS Walk posters, with registration information, will be located in local businesses. If you have any questions, you can also contact Heppner MS Walk Co-Chairs, Merilee McDowell, 541-571-5853 or Barb Orwick, 541-256-0455

Big cat sightings on the increase

By Patty Nance

Cougar sightings south of Heppner are getting to be more common according to area hunter Gary Waddell who says the big cats have been spotted at Ruggs junction and on Heppner Hill. Waddell killed a young cougar in a steep canyon on the Haguewood Ranch on March 16. "My son saw them," he said. "They were in the brush so I went in after them." Waddell took one cat.

The cougar is one of three to come out of the Rhea Creek and Sanford Canyon areas.

According to Steve Cherry, Wildlife Biologist for the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, two of the three were a "decent

size". "Young cougars live with their mother until they are one year to 18 months old," Cherry said. "Then the mom kicks them out and they have to find new territory."

Cherry said the presence of cougars in these areas is not unusual. "Since 1994, there has been an expansion of the cougar population into more open country," he said. In 1994, use of dogs to hunt cougars was banned by the Oregon Legislature.

According to Cherry, every year since the ban, there have been multiple concepts brought forward to repeal the laws and none have passed. Consequently the big cat population con-

tinued to flourish.

Cherry said that 53 cats were taken over a three year period between from 2006-2009 during an administrative removal program. "It worked," he said. "Before the removal, an average of 15 (elk) calves to each 100 cows survived and since, there are 30 calves for each 100 cows."

Cherry said the elk population has rebounded dramatically.

The big cats taken by the department were donated to schools, universities and museums for educational purposes.

Most of the estimated 4,000 cougars in Oregon live and roam in forested areas, Cherry explained.

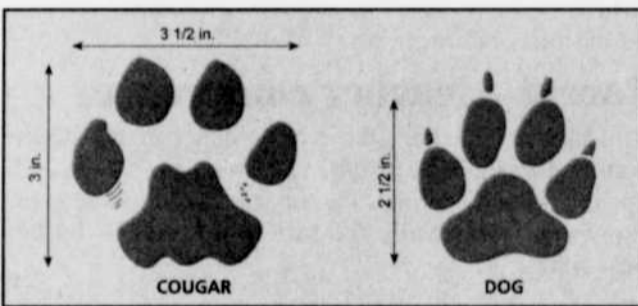
Mountain Lion Facts

How to Identify

Adults of both sexes have long black tipped tails and black coloration on the backs of their ears. Adult males may exceed eight feet in length, from nose to the end of their very long tail, and weigh between 130 and 170 pounds. Adult females can be seven feet long and weigh between 75 and 105 pounds. Kittens or cubs are covered with blackish brown spots and have dark rings around their tails. The markings fade as they mature.

Habitat

The best eastern Oregon habitat is the open mixed conifer type of the Blue and Wallowa mountains, including the pine' bunch grass and canyon country of northeastern Oregon. All of these habitats are productive deer and elk areas. Most locations used by mountain lions during the day are characterized by rock outcroppings or downed logs in forests. Cover is important to mountain lions for bedding -sites and when hunting prey. Cougars have also been found living in ditches and



Cougar and dog paw prints are very different.

culverts in subdivisions.

Reproduction

Females begin to bear young when they are about two and one-half years old. Breeding may take place throughout the year, but most females give birth between April and July. The three-month pregnancy results in a litter of two to three young.

Territory

A mountain lion can occupy a large territory, depending on habitat and how much prey is available. An adult male's territory can exceed 150-200 square miles and usually includes the territory of several females. An adult female's territory can cover up to 65 square miles. Their ability to cover such an expanse may bring them into contact

with humans and urban areas. Because their mobility makes it possible for the animal to travel many miles away within only a few hours, it can be difficult to track their movements.

Foraging for Food

Mountain lions are very powerful and normally kill large animals such as deer, elk and bighorn sheep for food.

However, they can survive on smaller animals such as raccoons, and occasionally kill domestic livestock and pets. They usually hunt at night and prefer to ambush prey from behind and kill with a powerful bite.

They kill may be covered with leaves or snow. Mountain lions may come back to these carcasses over several days.

BEAT THE WEEDS!

WE HAVE

- Sprayers
- Herbicides
- Pesticides



Morrow County Grain Growers

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgz.net