

OSP says "Leave wild ones alone"

The Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Division in St. Helens recently received a telephone call from a well-intentioned citizen reporting that she was at a local police department with an abandoned deer fawn in her vehicle.

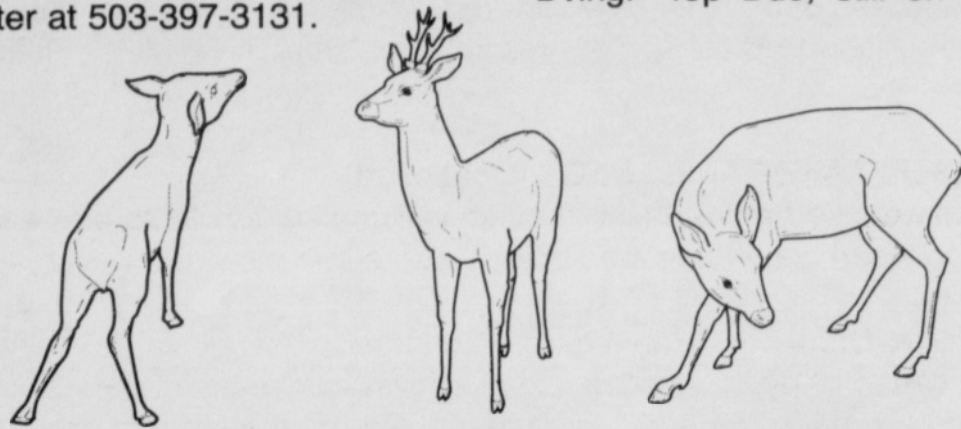
Each year, the Oregon State Police respond to many calls of this nature. During May, deer fawns are being born, as well as most other wildlife that may be encountered in Columbia County. Deer, it seems, are especially vulnerable to being found and "rescued" by kind-hearted people who just want to help.

Unfortunately, picking up a fawn at this time of year will do more harm than good and is a violation of Oregon law. For the first few months of their lives, deer fawns' best defense is to stay very still and "hide" from any threat or danger. The doe is usually close by, and there is little doubt that the doe is watching the person approaching. The fawn has not been abandoned

and, if left alone, the doe will soon return to take care of it. "Rescuing" the fawn by humans, results in little or no possibility of reuniting the two and the fawn may be forced to live its life in a zoo or other facility.

Do not disturb baby animals that you may find, as the mother will most probably return as soon as you leave. Removing these animals from the wild is a Class A Misdemeanor crime with a possible fine of \$5,000 and a year in the County Jail.

If you find an animal that really concerns you, leave it and notify the Oregon State Police - St. Helens worksite at 503-397-0325 or through our 24-hour Northern Command Center at 503-397-3131.



Deer mice are common in Columbia County and hantavirus is a concern

The 1993 Hantavirus outbreak in the Southwestern U.S. focused attention on the role of deer mice in spreading the disease. Hantavirus causes a flu-like illness which progresses to severe lung edema. When the disease was still unknown, upwards of 60 percent of those infected died. With improved diagnostics and better supportive care, the rate has dropped to about 40 percent.

Cases have now been confirmed from about 30 states, including Oregon, Washington and California. Most of the Oregon cases (5) have come from Central Oregon but one was in Washington County. There was at least one case in the Castle Rock/Toledo area of Washington.

The primary reservoir for the virus seems to be the deer mouse. Rodents are natural hosts for all known types of Hantaviruses around the world. Humans are infected from exposure to rodent droppings, urine or saliva that contain the virus. Person to person transmission has not been demonstrated in the United States.

Hantavirus infection rates among deer mice vary widely by both geography and year. The Southwest seems to have a much higher base rate of infection in their deer mice populations. It is also clear that large increases in deer mice populations in any locality can trigger increases in the Hantavirus infection.

Deer mice are extremely common in Columbia County. In rural areas, they are more common than the European house mouse. They are distinguished from other species by their white underbelly fur.

Deer mice are generally nocturnal. Their nests may be found in trees, autos, garages and houses. They eat grains, berries, seeds, fungi and insects. Deer mice are part of the food base for carnivores, snakes and birds.

Hantavirus incidents in the Pacific Northwest reinforce the notion that rodents don't belong in our houses. If you have rodents, you should remove the three things necessary for their survival: food, water and shelter. Clean up spilled foods,

keep dishes clean and place garbage in a can with a tight-fitting lid every evening. Do not leave pet food out. Feed your pet and remove the remaining food after thirty minutes.

Survey your house to locate means of entry. All openings should be tightly screened or blocked.

To remove an existing infestation, trap as needed. Deer mice are not trap shy like rats quickly become. Poison baits may be needed in some situations but be very careful in their use.

Most serious exposure is to people living in areas with large active deer mice infestations. Caution is needed when cleaning; coming in contact with mouse droppings or mouse urine (even dried) can increase the risk of infection. Current recommendations are to wet-mop areas with a dilute bleach solution rather than using a vacuum cleaner. Putting the virus airborne and then inhaling it is not good.

For more information, go to <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/acd/hanta/index.cfm>.

Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



A h, Spring. I finally got into the weed patch of flowers. I think I'll

go to moss and grass this fall.

How many of you watched Animal Planets 40 Most Famous Animals on May 15? Bullwinkle is still in the top 20 - Kermit the frog was #2, Lassie is still the #1 choice. Country Music Awards were interesting, Top Song "Live Like You Were Dying." Top Duo, still on top,

Brooks & Dunn. Entertainer of the year, Kenny Chesney.

A personal observation - the chances of me ever seeing a new Senior Center built any place in Vernonia is getting dimmer and dimmer. The flood was in '96 and we still don't have all concerned on the same page, nor the ducks in a row.

While I'm at it, if my comment in the May 19 issue offended the seniors, I apologize. I was not putting the seniors down nor attacking anyone. The day the paint went on, before it was dry, I received phone calls wanting to know "what are you Seniors thinking?" I didn't know until Sunday what they were talking about, until I saw it myself! Peace? Dissidents have the right to a voice also.

I see the highway crew (one of them) is back in town - I've never seen dits, dots and dashes put down like this, before the

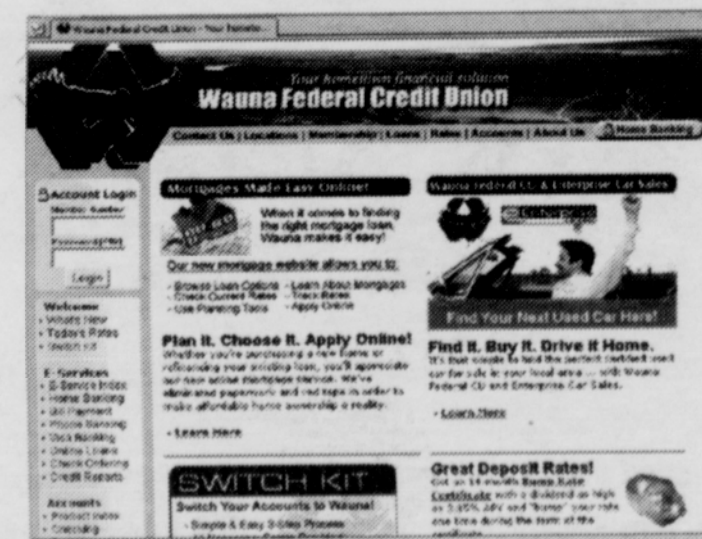
crews just painted, but I am waiting with bated breathe for the Bridge/Rose lines to be finalized.

I finally got over to the Lake to view the lights, 10:00 p.m., 65°, slight breeze rustling the trees. The bull frog was singing to his lady love and a few birds were chirping. I sat and reminisced on the play at WGS, The Music Man. It was well worth the time. The kids were great. Solos very well done and on key. Congratulations to all, this includes the teachers and back stage crew.

One more thing. Does your cat qualify as a blockhead? Mine does - He came in the open back door, walked through the house and sat down in front of the closed door and mewed until I came and opened the door and screen so he could go outside. This is a daily thing with him.

Check out our website www.waunafcu.org

New Product Information
Switch Kit • Current Rates
FREE Home Banking
and Bill Pay!



Everything you wanted to know about
Wauna Federal Credit Union and more!



Wauna Federal Credit Union
Your hometown financial solution

Astoria
503-325-1044

Warrenton
503-861-7526

Clatskanie
503-728-4321

Vernonia
503-429-8031

St. Helens
503-366-1334

Toll-free 1-800-773-3236 • www.waunafcu.org