

BIRDMAN

Coastal birding

BY TED GLOVER



A trip along the Oregon and Washington coasts is great any time of the year, but springtime is especially beautiful. A mass of scotch broom in yellow splendor greets the traveler everywhere and the rhododendron, azaleas, bleeding heart, camas, dogwood—even Oregon grape—add color all along the roadways.

With the spring migration underway, a full assortment of songbirds is visible at every stop. Warblers abound, as do swallows, grosbeaks, tanagers and flycatchers. Along the shores and inlets we spotted hundreds of western and glaucous-winged gulls, along with many Wilson's phalaropes whirling around in circles as they fed on mosquito larvae and small insects.

Farther out in the ocean waters and along the small rocks that dot the coast, we spotted pelagic cormorants, with their distinctive white flank patches, and the pigeon guillemot, with its conspicuous white wing patches. A highlight was spotting a male Pacific loon with its pale gray head and black and white checkered back.

Farther north in the Olympic range we saw many gray jays and red crossbills, along with pine siskins and American goldfinch. The best thing of all, however, was watching the spectacular display of the male blue sooty grouse attempting to attract the female by inflating colorful neck sacs of yellow and red. We saw several of these birds on the trip to Hurricane Ridge. All in all, we saw 121 species of birds on our ten-day jaunt.

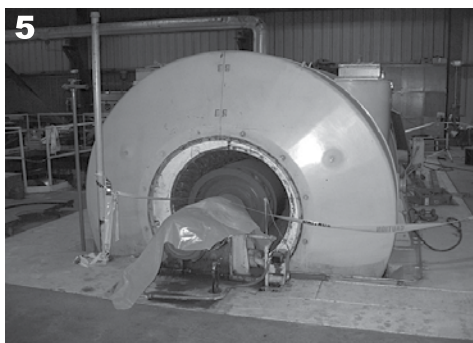
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Photos clockwise from top: Heermann's gull (*Larus heermanni*); Ring-billed gull (*Larus delawarensis*); Western gull (*Larus occidentalis*); and Pelagic cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*). Photos by Mike Baird, www.bairdphotos.com

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tons of yard debris and wood waste are collected annually from all of Jackson and Josephine Counties. That's a lot of potential electricity! With the rising costs of fossil fuels, someday it might be economically feasible for someone to set up a local electrical cogeneration plant right here. But in the meantime . . .

What should we do? We might want to consider taking up Biomass One's offer to pick up our wood waste. Before we start identifying a drop-off site or hiring a sorter, though, it makes sense to see if our residents and businesses would even support this kind of operation. Some of you will be selected at random this summer to answer this very question. A short multiple-choice survey form will be mailed; you'll be able to fill it out in just a couple of minutes and send it back via postage-paid return envelope. I'll be working at Southern Oregon University to tabulate the results. So give me a call if you have any ideas or questions. I'd

love to hear from you. I'll publish the results in late fall.

For now, the Rough and Ready Lumber Mill four miles south of Cave Junction says they'll be happy to take your logs or wood chips if you'd like to sell them for energy conversion. You can call the mill at 541-592-3116 if you have any questions. Biomass One accepts a much wider variety of woody waste debris and will take it off your hands if you want to haul it to White City and pay a small tipping fee. Biomass One can be reached at 541-826-9422.

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Photos:

1. The author in front of a week's supply of "hog fuel."
2. Loading waste into Biomass One's portable grinder.
3. Off loading biomass
4. Biomass One Generator
5. Biomass One's electrostatic precipitators
6. The author with Rough and Ready's steam turbine.

APPLEGATE OUTBACK: MY OPINION

You want to smell like a man



BY BOB FISCHER

In the beginning, it is probably safe to say that man smelled as strong as the animals he pursued and those that pursued him. At some point, man's opposing thumb and forefinger just naturally allowed him to develop a spoken language.

The first sentences must have been, "Would you mind moving downwind, Torg? Your body odor is enough to gag a maggot."

The next few thousand years were spent searching for scents and perfumes that changed or masked the human aroma.

"We are civilized, we don't like being predators and we sure as heck don't want to smell like them."

For a long time we smelled like flowers, then citrus fruits and vegetables became popular scents. Recently the trend is toward more natural aromatic statements. Man is not quite ready to smell like a man. But at least hunters are willing to smell like other animals. Specifically, like other animals' urine.

Seriously! There are a lot of hunting products out there that allow us to smell like deer or elk urine. As much as I would like to get a big buck or bull elk each year, I'm not sure it would be worth smelling like urine to do so.

I used to hunt with a friend named John Kilroy, who works at the Jackson County Court House. John worked hard at changing his own odor into something else. He used doe-in-estrus urine on calm days and skunk scent on windy days. His skunk scent came from a dispenser attached to his hat.

Maybe the reason for my friend's hunting success was that he changed his scent one other way: When we crossed a deer trail he went through the droppings like your mother tests grapes in the supermarket. Squeezing and jabbing, crushing and sniffing.

That was in the woods. At home he couldn't change a dirty diaper or clean up the puppy's mess without gagging.

Even after his second child, his wife handled the messy jobs, saying, "John has such a weak stomach."

He was a master! The guy who walked around smelling like a skunk and finding fresh deer dung had his wife convinced he had a weak stomach—a truly gifted man.

My present hunting partners, Rick Montoya and Rick Colbert, also take the hunter scent very seriously. Montoya tries to overpower the human scent, not change it.

One day Montoya, Colbert and I were at our hunting camp preparing for a morning deer hunt. Montoya was splashing himself with a strong smelling liquid, dousing his hat, boots, armpits and the area best described

as the confluence of his anatomy.

"Wherever you develop smell, that's where you need it," Montoya explained without stopping. "Montoya, isn't that turpentine?" I asked.

"Sure! Turpentine is a natural compound and smells like the woods. Plus, it's powerful enough to erase the human scent," he said.

"Yes, but it also is powerful enough to peel paint. Are you sure you want it near your skin?"

"No problem," Montoya said condescendingly. "Modern fabrics, like the ones you see adorning my body, are designed to wick moisture away from the skin, not toward it. Remember, it wicketh away, it does not wicketh in." This last Shakespearian statement was given with turpentine can held high.

Ten minutes from camp, Montoya began to twitch about on the truck seat in convulsive movements, not normally a cause for concern, but he was driving. At the same time, he began speaking in tongues, a little surprising even for Montoya.

"Montoya, are you all right?" Colbert asked.

"EERPP WHEEEFFF!" he said with feeling. At this point the truck began doing things on the gravel road that were not consistent with the undulations of the road itself.

"Montoya, are you all right?" Colbert repeated. The truck went sideways and stopped. We bailed out of the truck just in time to hear an elk herd crash through the dark woods.

Montoya was doing a dance in front of the headlights that would have made a headless chicken proud. At the same time, he was ripping off his clothing as fast as he could get a handhold. Colbert and I tried to help alleviate the poor man's suffering, but we couldn't catch our breath between guffaws.

Throughout this sequence, Montoya was making noises that sounded like a coyote in heat. "OOOWEEEEEO-W O W O W O W O W O - WOWOWOOO!" he said caninely. Then, "WATER, WATER, WATER, WATER, HURRY, HURRY, HURRY, HURRY, PLEEEZE!"

I threw him my canteen, because it is not safe to get near a guy who rips his clothes off in the middle of a road in the headlights of a truck! Montoya began to wash himself at a rapid rate.

"It just goes to show you," Colbert said, as we watched Montoya doing things to himself that would have meant a jail term in most cities, "turpentine wicketh where it wanteth to!"

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