

## Meeting My Teacher



Where we met

## Meeting a Teacher

It was late September in 2010 and I had determined that cabin fever was epidemic at least, if not pandemic around my apartment, so I decided that a trip to the far Blue Mountains was well in order. I had no great special plans in mind, but I did want to be there during a time when few others would be around, so I chose my date with great care. Archery hunting seasons were in full sway in early to mid-September with archery elk season ending on the 23rd of the month. There was then a gap until after the first of October when muzzleloading season opened. This was timed around the depth of the rut so the elk herd was not greatly disturbed during this extra vulnerable time. I reasoned, almost perfectly, that with the hunting seasons closed during this two-week window, I would be nearly alone there for whatever perambulations I could conjure... September 25th would be the date... and I could stay over or not, as I saw fit and as conditions dictated.



*The Pile of 'Wood*

As the date approached, I decided I could easily leave home an hour early and stop along the way at my favorite gleaning spot, Snake River Vineyards and Orchards to get some of the left over fruit still hanging after harvest. It had been my experience that I could pick three or four boxes of apples and a box of grapes in an hour and the locals might well appreciate the results. I had not done this in September before as I usually waited for frost before getting the apples and grapes.. it set the sugar levels at their highest and made the fruit absolutely delicious, but

I was not about to wait until November for this outing so determined they'd have to just make do with what was... which revealed a major flaw in my plans... as harvest was not yet done and I had to be a bit more surreptitious in my harvest, working around the crews there for that purpose.. it did make the

grape harvest go a LOT faster, however, being first instead of just taking whatever was left... usually a few bunches at the ends of the rows where the harvester could not access easily.

A day or two before my intended departure, I was in conversation with my mentor in Oklahoma, the person I invariably go to when I have questions I cannot answer, when she asked me, "Is there a stack of wood on that road where you are going?"



*Salmon in River*

I was a bit taken aback by such a question, but having known Arla for as long as I had, I knew it was not asked idly, but with purpose and forethought so I answered, "I don't know. I've never been on this particular road before. It has always been gated and closed to the public when Boise Cascade Timber



*Mullein*

Company owned the land. A few years prior, they had closed their operations here and this land was deeded to the local Indian tribes at the Umatilla Indian Reservation. The Tribe had then reopened it as a private game management unit open to the public under state rules except for some few variations which they spelled out on a large sign board as one enters the land... foremost among them... "NO females of any species are to be harvested on this land regardless of state laws, seasons and conventions." I can live with that! It should be noted that I had been on the ridgetop on both sides of the river but never on the this road that followed the South Fork up to its source.

When I explained this to Arla, she continued, "I see a large male with a red stripe on his chest watching you over a big pile of wood. He seems to be looking for you..."

WOW!! This was a major revelation to me... I had never imagined such a thing and really had no idea how to take this at this time. I had no idea if there was one pile of wood or fifty such, but I determined that I was going to find out! It would be a small matter to just drive the road until I found such as was described and wait there. My prayer was that there would be but one such pile there and not make me choose from several along the route.

The morning of 25 September 2010 arrived with a whisper. The sun was just chinning itself on the eastern horizon as I made my way from my Kennewick, Washington home eastward to the town of Dayton, with a brief stop at the Tagaris Farms vineyards and orchards. I arrived at the South Fork Road in good time, mid-morning, and proceeded along the paved road that wended its way back and forth across the waterway while moving upriver towards its source. Suddenly, some few miles from the main junction with the North Fork Road, the pavement abruptly ended. There was a small cabin used on weekends and special occasions by the owners just as the last bridge crossed the river putting the road now on the east side of the stream where it would stay for the duration of my drive.



*Rose Hips*

Immediately beyond this bridge is the large sign described earlier and an iron gate across the road which was, this day, open and allowing ingress to the management unit. I proceeded cautiously up the road, not graveled, but rocked with large cobbles of crushed basalt measuring at least four inches across. It made driving precarious, but doable, even in my Buick Le Sabre as long as I was extremely careful of where I placed my tires... inch by inch, yard by yard, rod by rod, we climbed the rugged trail, once crossing a running stream in the middle of the road and later descending to the river's level... I marveled at the view from my seat while looking to the tops of the ridges to the west of me... mostly bare with a scattering of trees but poignant in their stoic beauty there. On I traveled, a mile, two... then more when I saw it... a deck of small logs cleared in the improvement of the road to bring it to a standard that would allow traffic on it...

Just across the road from this deck was a very admirable area that would serve me well as my day camp. There were large trees surrounding it, mullein growing nearby and there, just across the road, a beautiful Hawthorne tree with its black berries and a plethora of roses with their bounty of bright red hips shining deliciously in the new sun of morning...

It was the work of but moments to park my car, get out my chair, my ice chest full of diet Pepsi, fried chicken hips, boiled eggs and potato salad and the items for my tiny Mountain Altar... I hung two feathers in the soft breeze and lit a scent stick... blackberry... to serve notice that I was here... I then walked

quietly to the edge of the river to just enjoy the flow of her waters and the sounds made as it found its way around the rocks, over the tiny falls and under the cut out banks.

The first thing I noticed here was the number of salmon in the stream... they were plentiful, to say the least and I felt my offerings may be out of place or, at least, out of time for the locals living here. Obviously, with this many fish in the river, there was no hunger in their lodges just now. Oh well, I thought to myself... the apples will keep and the grapes will dry nicely for later use... I then returned to my small camp and, retrieving my Kindle Reader, sat down to enjoy the book I was then reading.



### *Feathers*

It did not take long for my theory of aloneness to be shattered against the reality of fall turkey season. I had not even considered such... and, truth told, NO ONE leaves home in the morning of a fall day to go turkey hunting... but it IS a wonderful excuse for a pleasant drive in the woods on a Saturday



morning! And I spied several such vehicles engaged in just this activity. Yes, they had a shotgun in the vehicle, and if a turkey (we have the Rio Grande species in this area) happened to try and run them down or hijack their truck, they might have to defend themselves against it, but that was about the only way they'd allow their pleasant days of travel be interrupted! But... it did interrupt my plans. At least five times, such vehicles passed my little private corner of the world and I knew my plans were doomed for this day at least. I was more than a bit upset with myself over this.

### *Blackberry Scent Smoker*

I had planned this for a Saturday... the one day most likely to draw such out... and I was retired, I could have been here on Tuesday just as easily... my time was my own and the ONLY concession I made to the world on retirement was to have removed the single digit numbers from my alarm clock... they simply did not exist in my make up anymore. But... I was having a wonderful time here in God's Creation anyway... one or two of the trucks stopped to chat a moment as did a group of five horsemen out on a most pleasant ride... the chicken was good... I loved my diet Pepsi and boiled eggs, so I was not totally devastated by the events but I had determined that I

would not be staying over tonight... I would simply return another day in midweek and resume my vigil. I would be here on a day when those now passing would be gainfully employed and I would be equally gainfully disemployed!

As the afternoon waned and the sun began to settle below the western ridge, my concentration was interrupted by a voice. It was not something I heard aloud, but it came into my mind. Understand, this is not a new thing. In my recent essay, "Telepathy Wishful Thinking and Self Talk?" I discussed this phenomenon and how it happens with me and with many, many others, I am sure... but this time, it was DIRECT to my mind... it did not pass GO, nor did it collect its \$200... and with it came a mental image... a streaming video, perhaps...

"I am sorry I cannot meet you today as I had wanted. There is too much traffic and the chances of being seen are just too high..."

...Silence... pure, dead silence... as I listened for it to continue. In a short time I gathered my wits enough to answer, "I understand... should I pack up here and return another day?"

"I do think that that would serve..."

"Alright, I will do that. Do you need me to leave this fruit for you?"

Have you ever had a very large, very dark sasquatch laugh at you? No, I suppose not... well, let me assure you, it is disconcerting! At this point I had not seen him, so had no idea of his relative size other than BIG... the mental image I was getting told me that...

"Perhaps you could return with it during the cold times when there is less food available..." and an image of all the rose hips and the fish in the river returned to me. I'm not sure if that came from my mind or was placed into my mind but the net effect was the same... I knew why they didn't need food brought to them at this time...



*Nathaniel - The Hawthorne Tree*

"I will do that," I responded and began preparations for leaving, hoping to get home before total dark overtook the land. I packed my car and loaded my

gear. I put away my food and my chair... I stored my Kindle and I made ready to leave.

I had the door open, one leg up and into the car and was just ready to transfer my weight to allow myself to sink down into the car when I heard a whistle... it was not just any whistle, but one I'd been hearing for forty years... a simple two-note.. up-down whistle... I'd first heard it while I was doing forestry work on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington... the state, not the city... and had just attributed it to some bird I had not yet identified... it was not until June of 2010 at the Oregon Sasquatch Symposium in Eugene, Oregon when Ron Morehead identified it for me... anyone can hear if they have Ron's "Bigfoot Recordings Volume 2" of his Sierra Sounds... track 7 begins with it...



it's a locator whistle... all those years I thought I was hearing a bird, it was the hairy folk telling one another where they (and I) were at that moment!

As one might imagine, my eyes SNAPPED to where that whistle originated hard enough to have knocked a lesser person down... and... there he was... standing at full height beneath Nathaniel... (what I named the Hawthorne Tree by the road there... I mean what ELSE would

*Where He Stood – Just to right of Nathaniel...*