

OREGON Life

OUTDOORS • COMICS/PUZZLES/TELEVISION



'THIS FEELS GOOD'

Carol Burnett receives the Mark Twain Prize/D4

Buzzworthy

WHALE-LOVERS WANTED

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is seeking whale-lovers to volunteer for its Whale Watching Spoken Here program. The program places trained volunteers at 24 whale-watching sites along the Oregon Coast each year during winter and spring watch weeks, when Gray whales migrate along the Pacific Coast on their way to and from Alaska. This year, the dates will be Dec. 26-31, 2013, and March 22-29, 2014. The first of three one-day training sessions will be Nov. 30 at the OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport. Training will be led by Dr. Bruce Mate, director of the OSU Marine Mammal Institute. For more information, visit www.whalespoken.org. Whale Watching Spoken Here was launched in 1978 and is one of the most organized onshore whale-watching programs in the U.S.

BUILD A BETTER (BIRD) HOME



Bird lovers and weekend hobbyists may want to check out the "Audubon Birdhouse Book: Building, Placing and Maintaining Great Homes for Great Birds" (Voyageur Press, \$24.99 paperback). Due to be released next month, the book explains how to build and place functional bird homes that are safe and appropriate for more than 20 classic North American species, from wrens to raptors.



Author Paul Hoobyar with another large Peacock Bass on the first day of their trip.

A fly-fishing paradise

Brazil's tropical Aqua Boa River offers great sites and rewards to its visitors

By PAUL HOOBYAR
For The Register-Guard

We were on the Aqua Boa River fly-fishing for bass on a 20-acre "Lago," or side-channel lagoon. Every cast produced a hook-up on this clear-water tributary of the Amazon River: Butterfly bass, in the 2- to 4-pound range, chased our flies from under the overhanging mangroves and inhaled them. The feverish pace of fishing on this, our first morning on the river, kicked my endorphins like a drug. If the fishing is like this every day, I thought, our week on the Aqua Boa will be a fly angling Valhalla.

When we first entered the side channel that drained the Lago, the dense, confining canopy loomed out of Conrad's "Heart of Darkness." For half an hour our Brazilian guide cleared the under-story, sometimes with his machete, and navigated our johnboat up the small channel. As the jungle closed in around us, zingers percolated up my brainstem. Could we find our way back to the main river



An 18-foot caiman they saw regularly on the Aqua Boa.

should something happen to the guide? I kept an eye out for Fer-de-Lances or boa constrictors in the overhanging canopy as we pushed farther into the jungle.

With a deft touch on his throttle, our guide zigzagged the boat around and through driftwood piles, over sunken trees and across shallow sand bars until the channel broke open onto the 20-acre lagoon. A flock of egrets took flight as we emerged from the forest canopy — their white plumage a striking tableau against the verdant rainforest.

Within minutes of stripping out our lines, my doubts were cast aside. My fishing buddy, David Bayles, and I stood six feet apart, threading our flies under mangroves with 40- to 60-foot casts. And one or the other of us — and often both of us — had a fish on for most of that 90-minute run.

But then a tropical cloudburst rained on our parade. As the curtain of nickel-sized drops pummeled us, the

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PAUL HOOBYAR

The Aqua Boa River, a clear-water tributary of the Amazon River in Brazil, from a johnboat.

MUSHROOMS

Chanterelle picking a picky business

Knowing where to look and what to look for are key

By HENRY MILLER
The (Salem) Statesman Journal

While sight is important when hunting wild chanterelle mushrooms, hearing is probably about as important.

"Car coming," Phil McCorkle of Salem said in a stage whisper, which is a cue to use another key outdoor skill, nimbleness.

Or in my case, sneaking.

Phil managed to duck behind a tree to avoid being spotted.

Caught out in the open, I had two choices: Turn my back and pretend to be relieving myself, or since the camera already was in my hands, pretend to take a breathtaking shot of the rotting stump in front of me.

Hunting wild mushrooms is that kind of pastime, kind of like pretending you're stuck on the bottom if you have a Chinook on the line when another boat passes, because you don't want to give your secret spot away.

Judging by the number of cut mushroom stems looking like tiny pencil stubs sticking out of the ground, though, this spot was about as unknown as Mount Rushmore. We have visited it on rare occasions during the course of

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BRYAN SHROY

Tasty chanterelle mushrooms are found in the lush Oregon forests.

Mushroom festival at Mount Pisgah

Boasting the largest mushroom display on the West Coast, the 32nd Mount Pisgah Arboretum Mushroom Festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday with live music, food, arts and crafts, children's activities, hay rides, nature walks and a scarecrow contest.

Exhibits will feature more than 350 mushrooms, and visitors may bring their own mushrooms to be identified by experts.

A variety of mushrooms, plants and arts and crafts also will be on sale, with proceeds benefiting the arboretum's work in environmental education and habitat restoration.

Cost is \$8 for those 12 and older (members free). A free shuttle will run from Civic Stadium. For more information, or to volunteer, phone 541-747-3817 or visit MountPisgahArboretum.org.