Central Oregon Viewing Report 02-29-08

by ODFW

Prineville Area

Recent warmer temperatures have helped loosen winterâ€™s grip on portions of the area. Lower elevation all-weather roads are mostly snow free, and the Post/Paulina Highway viewing route is again providing opportunities to see wintering big game, local waterfowl, and winter transient eagles, hawks, falcons and other birds of prey.

The viewing route is an approximately 180 mile all day round trip southeast of Prineville through the small rural communities of Post and Paulina, and the Ochoco National Forestâ€™s Paulina Ranger Station. To access it, drivers will turn south from Hwy. 26 at the east end of Prineville onto the Paulina Highway, with some of the better viewing between mileposts 20 and 60. Approximately 4 miles east of Paulina, proceed north to the Paulina Ranger Station via Puett Road.

This time of year the weather can change quickly, and participants should be equipped with warm clothing, winter footwear, binoculars, camera, snacks, and a thermos with a warm beverage. Back country and less traveled roads remain unpredictable, and recreationalists with â€œcabin feverâ€• are urged to use caution, consult weather forecasts, and check with state highway and local county agencies regarding road conditions.

The Dalles, Mid-Columbia Region and Northern Wasco County

Elk Viewing

White River Wildlife Area is hosting migrating deer and elk. Visitors wishing to view wintering deer are best served in the Smock Prairie area, where deer will congregate in open meadows to feed. Elk are now present in large numbers at the feed sites at White River wildlife area, especially in the Friend area.

White River Wildlife Area is hosting migrating deer and elk. Visitors wishing to view wintering deer are best served in the Smock Prairie area, where deer will congregate in open meadows to feed, while those wishing to view elk are more likely to be successful in the Friend area.

Spring migrants

Warmer weather will start to bring spring migrants back from southern wintering areas. Many different passerine species will begin to move through the area in the coming month. Focus your attention to the oak woodlands, where spring conditions are first to appear, and where many species will stop during migration.

Look along the Columbia River for bald eagles. Large numbers of eagles congregate near the mouths of salmon-bearing rivers and streams as salmon carcasses wash up on the sandbars. The best areas within the district are the mouth of Mosier Creek and the Klickitat River on the Washington shore. Viewers also can find eagles near Riverfront Park in The Dalles, Wells Island near Hood River, and Government Cove near Cascade Locks.

*Events:

High Desert Museum, Daily Wildlife Programs at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

11 a.m. Live Bird Encounter: Meet an owl, hawk or raven at the Birds of Prey Center. 2 p.m. Otter Talk: Learn about the amazing world of the river otter. Get a chance to touch furs, skulls, and meet the Museum's river otter.

NEW! Behind-the-Scenes Wildlife Tours.

Take a tour led by wildlife staff and learn about wildlife and their care. Get up close with unique program animals and birds. 2pm - 3pm. $20 members. $25 non-members. Weekends only. Call 382-4754 ext. 241 to register or register online.

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