

# THE SCENE



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A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

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Eager fairgoers participate in the Wheel of Fire trivia activity

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

### RECREATION UPDATES

Field Rangers and firefighters from Oregon Department of Forestry joined the fun at the **Hood River County Fair** last weekend. Fairgoers tried their luck at spinning the **Wheel of Fire**—testing their knowledge of fire-related topics including Firewise property tips, Smokey Bear, fire ecology in the Gorge, and wildland firefighting. Participants left with Smokey Bear prizes and more fire prevention tips to boot!

Join the Forest Service for not one, but TWO events at **Wyeth** this Saturday, August 3rd. From **10 am to 6 pm**, we'll help our partners celebrate the new section of the **Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail**. At **7 pm**, our rangers will host a **"Birds of Prey in the Gorge"** program at nearby **Wyeth Campground**. This free event is open to everyone. Remember to bring a chair!

## TEMPERATURES ARE RISING

As temperatures climb into the 90's, keep an eye out for these symptoms of **heat related illness**:

- throbbing headache
- dizziness
- fainting
- excessive sweating
- nausea
- vomiting
- rapid pulse
- muscle cramps

If someone is experiencing these symptoms take *immediate* action by calling 911 and cooling the person down by moving them to a cooler location (shade or air conditioning).

If they are conscious, provide drinking water, a cool shower or a cold compresses.

## HOT MESS?

DON'T STRESS!!

Find out how much water **YOU** need to stay hydrated this summer

Divide your body weight in half

$$\text{Scales} \div 2 = \text{Person icon}$$

THEN... Divide by 8 to find the # of cups of water you should drink each day

$$\text{Person icon} \div 8 = \text{Cup icon}$$

## trail tales UPDATES & ANECDOTES

The lower section of **Cape Horn Trail** is now open for the season. Every year, a seasonal closure goes into effect on the south end of the trail from **February 1 until July 15** to protect cliffside habitat which peregrine falcons use for foraging, breeding, and nesting. This year, volunteer peregrine surveyors confirmed that one juvenile falcon successfully fledged!

Our partners at **Cape Horn Conservancy** and **Washington Trails Association** have been hard at work getting the trail in shape! Recently, thirteen dedicated volunteers contributed a combined **96 hours** of their time to deconstruct and **realign a problematic switchback**. They lowered the grade from 30% to 20% on the bottom approach, making for a gentler hiking experience. They also brushed (cleared overhanging vegetation) along a **500 foot stretch of trail** above and below the work site and cut in seven drains extending from the switchback down trail. Cape Horn Conservancy has 1-2 trail maintenance events (aka "work parties") a month; for information on how to help, visit: [www.capehornconservancy.org](http://www.capehornconservancy.org)



Volunteer restoring the Cape Horn Trail



## NUTS FOR SCIENCE THE SEARCH FOR WESTERN GRAY SQUIRRELS

The **western gray squirrel** has been a protected species in Washington state since the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission declared it as **threatened** in 1993. At the time, surveys revealed a decline in the species' distribution, finding the squirrels were limited to **three isolated areas** -- one of which is the portion of **Klickitat County** in the National Scenic Area. Here, the species needs protection from **habitat loss** due to urbanization and forestry practices, to offset threats from **roadkill mortality** and **disease**.

Forest Service biologists are **currently surveying** the extent of western gray squirrel populations in the National Scenic Area to identify and protect crucial habitat. Squirrels lend a **helping paw to forest regrowth** and the distribution of plant species. Their forgotten caches of acorns and nuts, as well as scat containing seeds and spores, lay the groundwork for life to thrive. Please help support recovery of this species by staying on trail and regulations when you are in the area!

## SCAT FACTS!

Seen scat lately? Scat provides a glimpse into the animals that call the Gorge home. To identify the owner of scat, keep in mind these 4 key observations:

- **Location:** Is it in the open, by the water, at a trail crossing?
- **Size:** Some scat will look identical to other species, and size may be the only distinguishing feature.
- **Shape:** Is it tapered at the ends, tubular, twisted?
- **What's Inside?** Berries, seeds, and hair are examples of identifiable features of a species' diet.

