



## OREGON NATURAL DESERT ASSOCIATION: YOU KEEP OREGON'S DESERT WILD

Oregon's high desert holds swift rivers, rugged canyons, broad peaks and vast swaths of unbroken sagebrush steppe that provide critical habitat for well over 300 wildlife species.

This remarkable wild landscape has drawn together thousands of hard-working volunteers, dedicated donors and passionate advocates who know and love this region deeply. **Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA)** is a vibrant group dedicated to ensuring that Oregon's high desert treasures are protected for future generations to know and love just as we do today. Welcome!

Through thoughtful conservation campaigns and ambitious stewardship projects, ONDA connects more people throughout Oregon and beyond to this incredible wild desert each year.

#### SPECIAL THANKS

ONDA is grateful to the members, volunteers and supporters who make our efforts to preserve the desert—including the beautiful Wild Desert Calendar you're holding now—so successful. Special thanks for this publication go to the 107 photographers who submitted images for consideration, our featured photographers and our highly dedicated calendar committee: Jim Davis, Greg Burke, Dave Caplan, Helen Harbin and Mark Chidlaw.

Copyright to all photographs herein belongs to the photographers who generously donated these images.

ROW 1 (L–R): ONDA has appreciated horse-packing support from the BLM on our trips in the Steens. Photo: Sage Brown. Regular volunteer Ann Dudley, all smiles on a productive day. Photo: Lace Thornberg. Volunteers take a break from trail maintenance under a lone tree in this part of the Big Indian Gorge. Photo: Sage Brown

ROW 2 (L–R): Sean Leslie and child on a family hike to Chimney Rock. Photo: Wendy Gorton. Elisa Cheng wrestling sagebrush and clearing trail on Steens Mountain. Photo: Sage Brown. Tiyana Casey ably led the inaugural season of ONDA's tribal stewards program. Photo: Sage Brown

ROW 3 (L–R): Rustica Carlos was one of over 100 volunteers who restored riparian habitat in the Pine Creek Conservation Area during ONDA's Annual General Meeting. Photo: Lace Thomberg. Michele Patrick and Marshall Gibson monitoring a sage-grouse lek. Photo: Phillip Ferreira. Ole Peterson taking out juniper in the John Day River Basin. Photo: Lace Thomberg

ROW 4 (L–R): Volunteers with the enviable task of collecting data points while hiking in the Spring Basin Wilderness. Photo: Mark Darnell. A few cheery, if a bit wet, members of the Denny Jones Ranch restoration crew—Elizabeth McLagan, Gary Evans, Jeff Christensen, Tom Lyon, Ben Gordon, Calla Hagle, Shelly Pavlacky, and Terry Lowell. Photo: Mary Powell. Emily Laird, proudly wielding loppers. Photo: Kirsten Blackburn

### OREGON'S HIGH DESERT: YOURS TO CHERISH

Pictographs dating back thousands of years. Sweeping views of landscapes that have looked the same for centuries. Dark night skies filled with endless stars. All these qualities and more give Oregon's high desert a unique timeless quality you won't find in many other places.

Since 1987, ONDA has worked to protect, defend, and restore Oregon's high desert public lands. By partnering with tribes, land management agencies, landowners, elected officials and people like you, ONDA is a strong voice for conservation in Oregon's high desert.

As you page through the jaw-dropping wild country that Oregon Natural Desert Association presents to you in the 2020 Wild Desert Calendar, we hope you'll be inspired to join us in protecting these landscapes.

### WHERE ONDA WORKS

#### OWYHEE CANYONLANDS

At more than 2 million acres, Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands is the largest undeveloped, unprotected expanse in the lower 48 states. Its red-rock canyons, vital rivers, and diverse wildlife—including the imperiled Greater Sage-Grouse—are unlike anything else in Oregon. Protecting the Owyhee is one of ONDA's top priorities. See February, May and November.

#### CENTRAL OREGON BACKCOUNTRY

With rolling sagebrush plains and dramatic river canyons, the "gateway" to Oregon's dry side offers world-class fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and more just a few miles outside city limits. Many of its waterways are critical spawning grounds for salmon and steelhead. ONDA works with community members to conserve the natural beauty of the confluence of Whychus Creek and the Middle Deschutes River and other beloved wild areas of Central Oregon. See September and December.

#### JOHN DAY RIVER BASIN

Without dams to block their path from the sea, the John Day River provides safe passage for summer steelhead and Chinook salmon. The surrounding landscape offers critical habitat for mule deer, elk and more, with exceptional recreational opportunities to boot. ONDA's dedication to conserving the area has resulted in a community-driven proposal to protect Sutton Mountain now being considered in Congress. See April.

#### **GREATER HART-SHELDON REGION**

Spanning over more than 3 million acres of Oregon and Nevada, the Greater Hart-Sheldon Region is a diverse expanse of mountains, wetlands, sagebrush steppe and canyons that provide a safe haven for wildlife. More than 300 species thrive here, including migrating waterfowl, pronghorn antelope and the imperiled Greater Sage-Grouse. ONDA spends many hours monitoring and restoring wildlands in this region each year. See June, August and October.

### STEENS MOUNTAIN REGION

Stunning Steens Mountain, with its glacier-carved gorges, aspen groves and flower-filled alpine meadows, was the first place in Oregon's desert to earn protection as wilderness. ONDA played a critical role in making that happen and continues to serve as a vigilant advocate for this iconic mountain and the nearby Alvord Desert today. From challenging "right idea, wrong place" industrial scale energy development to preventing unnecessary roads, we continue to protect this jewel of the Oregon desert. See January, March and July.

#### **OREGON DESERT TRAIL**

With long stretches of cross-country travel stitched together by pieces of defined trail, the Oregon Desert Trail is a long-distance hiking route like no other. Whether you head out for a day, a week or a month, this route through eastern Oregon's public lands will grant you an intimate connection to the wildest stretches of Oregon's high desert. See March, October and December.





# **JANUARY**



Petroglyphs, Greater Hart-Sheldon Region. Photo: Brian Ouimette

To be whole. To be complete. Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from.

TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS

Watch the skies over Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Rock, Christmas Valley, Silver Lake, Summer Lake Wildlife Area and Malheur National Wildlife Refuge for raptors this month. Rough-legged Hawks will have migrated to Oregon for the winter for the abundance of prey available relative to their Arctic habitat, joining large concentrations of Red-tailed Hawks, Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles who are also searching for food.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRI	DAY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	New Year's Day	2		3	4
			Last day of Kwanzaa		Quadrant shower (	40/hour)	Perihelion (Earth closest to Sun) 11:48 <sub>P.M.</sub> PST
ONDA incorporated, 1989	6	7	8	9		10	11
12	13	14	15	16	•	17	18
19	Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday observed	21	22	23	•	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		31	• 1



### FEBRUARY



Bighorn sheep, Deschutes River Canyon. Photo: Steve Loebner

Let me keep my mind on what matters, which is my work, which is mostly standing still and learning to be astonished.

MARY OLIVER
"Messenger," Thirst

sunday 26	MONDAY 27	TUESDAY 28	wednesday 29	THURSDAY 30	FRIDAY 31	SATURDAY  1
2	3	4	5	6	7	° 8
Groundhog Day	10	11	12	13	14	• 15
		40			St. Valentine's Day	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
• 23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Ash Wednesday

Big sagebrush's evergreen leaves make it valuable winter forage for numerous wildlife species, including Greater Sage-Grouse, mule deer and pronghorn.



# **MARCH**



Sandhill Crane near Upper Elder Creek. Photo: Cregg Large

Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us.

### ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

In early springtime, male Great Basin spadefoots attract females with their loud monotone chorus, breeding in temporary rain-pools and any other available shallow water. • Greater Sage-Grouse males begin congregating at leks to perform their courtship display where it can be easily seen by females.

SUNDAY 1	● MONDAY 2	TUESDAY 3	wednesday 4	THURSDAY 5	FRIDAY 6	SATURDAY 7
Daylight Saving Time begins, 2A.M.	° 9	10	11	12	13	14
15	• 16	17	18	19 Spring Equinox, 8:50 p.m. PDT	20	21
22	23	• 24	25	26	27	28
29	Oregon Badlands & Spring Basin wilderness areas designated, 2009	31	• 1	2	3	4



FRIDAY

SATURDAY

THURSDAY

### APRIL



Showy milkweed, John Day River Basin. Photo: Bryan Andresen

In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.

MARGARET ATWOOD

Bluebeard's Egg

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	° 7	8	9	10	11
Palm Sunday	13	14	First day of Passover	16	Good Friday	18
	20	21	Lyrid meteor shower (20/hour)	Last day of Passover  23	24	25
26	27	28	29	• 30	1	2

WEDNESDAY

By mid-month, hedgehog cactus will come into bloom in the Spring Basin Wilderness. • Snow, Ross's, and Greater White-fronted Geese gather in the tens of thousands in the Harney Basin during their spring migration.



MAY	sunday 26	MONDAY 27	TUESDAY 28	wednesday 29	THURSDAY  30	FRIDAY 1	SATURDAY 2
	3	4	5	Eta Aquarid meteor shower (30/hour)	° 7	8	9
That the (Oregon Desert) trail—in fact and in concept—has been introduced sets something in motion, the gentle flap of the butterfly wing that creates a hurricane of change.	10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
High Centered	17	18	19	20	21	• 22	23
In riparian areas, listen for the distinct chorus—a two-part 'Kreek-eeck'—of Pacific treefrogs at night during their breeding season which extends from February through July. • Golden currant blooms.	24/31	25  Memorial Day	26	27	28	• 29	30



FRIDAY

SATURDAY

THURSDAY

### JUNE



American Avocet, Summer Lake Wildlife Area. Photo: Greg Burke

That's how summer is: no past or future but all present tense, long twilights like vandals, breaking into new days.

GRETEL EHRLICH

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

Islands, the Universe, Home

31	1	2	3	4	° 5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	Summer Solstice, 2:44RM. PDT
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
• 28	29	30	1	2	3	0 4

WEDNESDAY

When beaver give birth between May and July, their three to four kits are born with full fur, open eyes and all of their teeth. They are able to swim within a couple of weeks.

• Antelope bitterbrush are in full bloom.



FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1

THURSDAY

### **JULY**



Burrowing Owl, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Photo: Tara Lemezis

A healthy ecosystem is a system of diversity. That's the same thing in poetry, different poetry streams. It's the same thing with peoples in a country. Somehow I would like to pull all that. We have a lot of work to do—all of us.

**JOY HARJO** 

SUNDAY

20

MONDAY

TUESDAY

Delta Aquarid meteor shower (20/hour)

2	8	29	30	1	2	3	4
							Aphelion (Earth farthest from Sun), 4:35a.m. PDT Independence Day
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	9	• 20	21	22	23	24	25
2	6	• 27	28	29	30	31	1

WEDNESDAY

Look for migrating shorebirds, such as Least Sandpipers, Western Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, returning from their time in Alaska and Canada to arrive at Summer Lake Wildlife Area and Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Resident shorebirds, such as the Black-necked Stilt, Snowy Plover and Spotted Sandpiper will have nested and now have downy chicks.

Throughout the desert, keep an eye out for the lavender blooms of sagebrush mariposa lilies.



THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

### **AUGUST**



A band of pronghorn does. Photo: Greg Burke

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

I always feel sad leaving Hart Mountain. Yet after I travel a few hours and turn to see its great bulk against a southern sky my heart rejoices. This refuge will leave our grandsons and granddaughters an inheritance of the wilderness that no dollars could recreate. Here they will find life teeming throughout all the life zones that lead from desert to alpine meadows.

### JUSTICE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

My Wilderness: The Pacific West

V	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Greg Burke	2 0	3	4	5	6	7	8
s and ness I find at lead	9	10	11	12 Perseid meteor shower (60/hour)	13	14	15
ific West —	16	17	18  Malheur National Wildlife Refuge established, 1908	19	20	21	22
otiles become Gopher first	23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

WEDNESDAY

During the peak daytime heat of summer, many reptiles stay hidden in cool subterranean retreats and only become active as the sun sets and temperatures moderate. Gophe snakes and Great Basin rattlesnakes are usually the first out, with desert night snakes emerging later.



THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

# **SEPTEMBER**



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

					Federal Wilderness Act passed, 1964		
Western fence lizard. Photo: Tyson Fisher	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge established, 1935	Labor Day					
Dislocated from one another, we are now flooded, resting in place.  We suffocate in the backwater of decadence and fractious contempt.  Purity of the ancient is the language without tongues.  The river elegantly marks swirls on its surface, a spiral that tells of a place that remains undisturbed.	13	14	15	16	• 17	18	19
ELIZABETH WOODY "Waterways Endeavor to Translate Silence from Currents,"  Luminaries of the Humble	20	21	22	<b>●</b> 23	24	25	26
			Autumn Equinox, 6:31a.m. PDT				
As wildflowers and weeds die off in late summer and fall, beaver add more aquatic species, rhizomes and deciduous hardwoods to their diet. • Under optimal conditions, large numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes, Eared Grebes and American Avocets will stop and gather at Lake Abert to feast on brine shrimp and brine flies in preparation for	27	28	29	30	0 1	2	3

feast on brine shrimp and brine flies in preparation for their southward migration in the fall.



# **OCTOBER**



Western Meadowlark, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Photo: Tara Lemezis

How beautifully the leaves grow old. How full of light and color are their last days.

JOHN BURROUGHS

The Falling Leaves

27 28 29 30 C 1 2 Step 20 29 Step 20 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29 29	eens Mountain rative Management Protection Act passed, 2000
	4.0
4 5 6 7 8 9	10
11 12 13 14 15 • 16	17
18 19 20 21 22 ° 23	24
Orionid meteor shower (20/hour)	
25 26 27 28 29 30 °	31
John Day Fossil Beds National Monument founded, 1974  Oregon Wild & Scenic Rivers Act passed, 1988	1

Big sagebrush blooms. • Trees offer a contrast from the surrounding low sagebrush steppe, providing warmth and cover for native ungulates such as elk and mule deer.



## **NOVEMBER**



Ash-throated Flycatcher. Photo: Greg Burke

Autumn teaches us that fruition is also death; that ripeness is a form of decay. The willows, having stood for so long near water, begin to rust. Leaves are verbs that conjugate the seasons.

#### **GRETEL EHRLICH**

The Solace of Open Spaces

Look for masses of white birds at Summer Lake Wildlife Area and Klamath National Wildlife Refuge as thousands of Snow Geese land here during their migration south to warmer climes. They join the Tundra Swans, many of whom stay for the entire winter, depending on temperatures and how much of the water freezes over.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Daylight Saving Time ends, 2A.M.		Omnibus Oregon Wild & Scenic Rivers Act passed, 1988				
• 8	9	10	11	12	13	• 14
15	16	Leonid meteor shower	Veterans Day	19	20	• 21
22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
29	° 30	1	2	3	4	5



### DECEMBER



Petroglyph, Owyhee Canyonlands. Photo: Barb Rumer

Where the road tapers to a track and that to a path through sage and that to a far look, you look down, and there glints a flake of dusky clarity, fireborn, hand-shattered by your elder in this place. Still sharp, a glimmer in your fingers against the sun, black lens magnifies old illuminations: look far, look down, look back to begin.

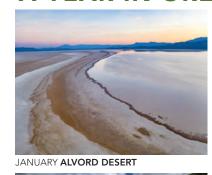
#### KIM STAFFORD

"Obsidian in the Dust"

When the pond around their lodge freezes over, beaver live off the hardwood sticks cached at the bottom of their pond and exit and enter their lodge through an underwater entrance. They stay below the ice and won't see the sun until the spring thaw. \* Short-horned lizards hibernate by burying in sand ten to twelve centimeters below the surface, and freezing solid for months at a time.

sunday 29	MONDAY	TUESDAY  1	wednesday 2	THURSDAY 3	FRIDAY 4	SATURDAY 5
6		7 8	9	10	11	12
Geminid meteor shower (100/hour)	• 1	4 15	16	17	18	19
20	Winter Solstice, 2:02A.M. PST	1 22	23	24	25 Christmas	26 First day of Kwanzaa
27	2	8 ° 29	30	31	1	2

### A YEAR IN OREGON'S HIGH DESERT





FEBRUARY OWYHEE CANYONLANDS



MARCH STEENS MOUNTAIN



APRIL SUTTON MOUNTAIN



MAY OWYHEE CANYONLANDS



JUNE ABERT RIM



JULY STEENS MOUNTAIN



AUGUST GREATER HART-SHELDON REGION



SEPTEMBER MIDDLE DESCHUTES RIVER



OCTOBER HART MOUNTAIN



NOVEMBER OWYHEE CANYONLANDS



**DECEMBER OREGON BADLANDS** 

From a quiet morning on the Alvord Desert to twilight in the Oregon Badlands, this Wild Desert Calendar showcases twelve dramatic landscapes in Oregon's vast high desert. You'll also enjoy captivating portraits of the burrowing owls, pronghorn, Western fence lizards, fritillaries and other wildlife that give this landscape its pulse. Prose, poetry and reflections from Terry Tempest Williams, Joy Harjo, Gretel Ehrlich, Kim Stafford, Margaret Atwood and others will inspire contemplation. And, with moon phases, meteor showers, expected wildflower blooms and migratory bird arrivals all helpfully provided, you can use this calendar as a guide to the many natural phenomena found in Oregon's high desert.

All proceeds benefit Oregon Natural Desert Association. ONDA protects, defends and restores public lands in the Owyhee Canyonlands, Central Oregon Backcountry, Greater Hart-Sheldon Region, John Day River Basin and Steens Mountain. To protect the desert places you love, visit www.ONDA.org/give.



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SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS:















