

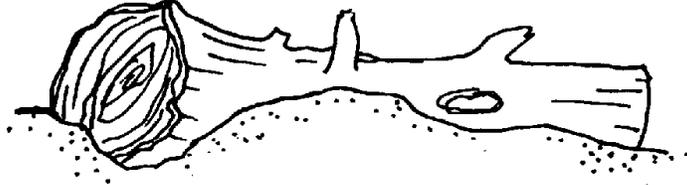


**Education,  
Research,  
Stewardship**

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION

# Beach Log

JULY 2012



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## Words From Barbara Bennett, Program Coordinator WSU Extension Island County Beach Watchers

I have enjoyed monitoring a number of beaches this season on Camano and Whidbey. Since we are all thinking about tidal zones, I will reflect on the work of this season as if our program is a beach with high, mid and low tidal zones - each filled with activity and many stories.

**At the high tide level** is the usual frenzy of festivals, school groups, parades, monitoring, digging for dinner, launching Sound Waters 2013 in Oak Harbor(!), and, of course, lots of visitors (tourists, family and friends)! This edition of the Beach Log is full of highlights and thanks for this busy season.

**At the mid tide level** are new opportunities to carry our skills, creativity and capacity into deeper applications:

- For the first time, a Washington State Incident Response Team addressing an oil spill invited WSU Beach Watchers to assist the U.S. Coast Guard with monitoring for fuel sheen at the shore.
- For the first time, the WSU Beach Watchers programs across the region have been funded by the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife to educate crabbers about stewardship of this delicious resource (see the full article about crabbing on page 7). Island County is coordinating county-wide education and I am reporting on behalf of all the WSU Beach Watchers programs.
- The Puget Sound Partnership, Whidbey Eco-Net and Snohomish-Camano Eco-Net are researching public awareness and targeting public education to strategically address behaviors of importance to marine stewardship. I have recently become trained as a trainer in the “social marketing” skills instrumental to this process.
- On Whidbey Island, new opportunities to connect with the Navy community are opening up with lines of communication to Naval Air Station Staff who work with families, singles and with Navy personnel who make use of the newly opened base RV, camping and yurt park on the west side of Whidbey.
- Emerging opportunities include:
  - Using monitoring data to tell the stories of each of our beaches – a science team is getting started on this.
  - Planning to address Tsunami Debris – a regional meeting will take place late July to plan for our response as some debris (probably) is just beginning to appear on the western beaches of Whidbey.

*continued...*



### Words From Barbara Bennett, Program Coordinator

(... continued)

**At the low-tide level** there are important programmatic and County policy matters being discussed with opportunities for each of us to shape important decisions:

- WSU has charged our own director, Timothy Lawrence, to serve as faculty lead in making recommendations for the WSU Beach Watchers program - from its academic framework to its regional implementation. This is an important opportunity for each Beach Watcher to share philosophical, programmatic and heart-felt goals with Tim.
- Island County's Planning Commission is deliberating the County's draft Shoreline Master Program. The decisions made over the coming 6 months will shape uses along the shores of Whidbey and Camano Islands for years to come. Again this is an important opportunity for Beach Watchers to consider their roles as private citizens and voice personal perspectives on the plan.



This edition of the Beach Log will catch you up on many of these zones of activity. I encourage you to dig in, look carefully, observe, learn and get involved as your interests lead.

As the summer wraps up, I am planning to discuss a summary of accomplishments and opportunities during the winter months. I will present this information at two meetings: at the September Camano Beach Watchers meeting September 10th and at the Whidbey Summer Wrap Up on September 11th (see page 14 for meeting details).

**\*\* Be sure to attend the Whidbey Summer Wrap-Up \*\***

**See you there!**

*BW Program Coordinator  
Barbara.bennett@wsu.edu*



## River Otters

In late May, Camano Island's English Boom biosurvey team caught sight of a group of four river otters (*Lutra canadensis*) loping across a long stretch of beach as they made their way toward the low tide line. More recently while driving past a local marina, I spotted a mother river otter with her two pups. These intelligent, playful, and beautiful animals are for some people a visual treat, but because of their nasty odiferous poop, the river otters are very unpopular with others. Because the river otters are members of the Mustelidae family, it's not just their poop that smells. This group of animals includes weasels, wolverines, and badgers, all of which have anal glands that secrete a foul smelling liquid musk used to mark their territory. Needless to say, when river otters leave their calling cards around boats, docks, and under houses, the humans who share those spaces are often not happy. That being said, I still like them!



River otters can reach lengths of 4-5 feet and weigh up to 30 lb., with males usually being somewhat larger than females. Numerous adaptations have finely tuned them to life in the water. Their bodies are quite streamlined with a tapering tail and webbed toes. Their small ears close when they submerge and their noses seal up to keep water out. They have good vision underwater and whiskers (vibrissae) sense prey movement in the water or substrate. These animals can remain submerged for up to 8 minutes. River otters have very high metabolic rates so they spend a good part of their time foraging. Their preferred diet is fish, and on the day I saw them they were clambering up on the dock with good-sized gunnel eels, which they bolted down and then slid back into the water to search for more. Their diet can be variable when fish aren't abundant. In the estuarine waters of our area, that may include crabs, urchins, and chitons, and there is at least one observation of a river otter feeding on sea stars.

The pups I saw were already catching and eating fish on their own. They were likely born during the peak of pupping season that spans March and April. River otter pups learn to swim at about 7 weeks of age and are weaned at 3 months. Average size for a litter is 2 to 3 pups. They will stay with their mother until about 6 months of age and then will head out on their own. Groups of river otters are usually a mother with pups, as the males are more solitary. In the wild, life span for these animals is 8-9 years, although they have lived 20+ years in captivity.



If you happen upon river otters when they are out of the water, give them plenty of space. With their cute faces and playful ways, it's easy to be lulled into thinking of them as Disney-like characters but they have been known to attack humans. Mothers with pups can get cranky pretty fast when they feel their pups are in danger. A worker at the Oak Harbor Marina advised me that a mother river otter had come after him once several years ago after he inadvertently approached too closely and it was a lesson he would not soon forget.

Whether you love 'em or hate 'em, river otters are definitely amazing animals and fun to watch (just don't get too close)!

*Mary Jo Adams, BW class of 1999*

*Photos also courtesy of Mary Jo Adams*



## Incident Response Team Support

WSU Island County Beach Watchers were trained and deployed to assist the Incident Response Team during the raising of the derelict vessel Deep Sea from the bottom of Penn Cove on June 3, 2012. Though WSU Beach Watchers have taken trainings with an eye to emergency preparedness, this was the first invitation to actually assist an active Incident Response Team.



The lead agency, the WA Department of Ecology had worked with WSU Beach Watchers previously and found them to be knowledgeable, trained and reliable. This past experience made the Department comfortable with inviting Beach Watchers to become involved. In addition to the WA Department of Ecology, the Incident Response Team included the U.S.Coast Guard, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Island County Emergency Preparedness staff and private contractors.

A flexible plan had to be developed for volunteers to work within tight time constraints, follow deployment protocol and meet requirements for safety training. Before deployment, each Beach Watcher had to complete a 3 hour web-based FEMA course on the structure and protocols of Incident Response Teams, and a 3 hour customized safety awareness training provided by the Coast Guard specific to the Deep Sea incident. Anyone holding a current certification in Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard (HAZWOPER) were exempted from this required training. However, certification is time limited and some Beach Watchers held certifications that had expired. Two Beach Watchers had had HAZWOPER training and one was currently certified. 16 Beach Watchers met all training requirements within 48 hours of the first contact and of those, 14 were deployed.

On the day the vessel was raised, the U.S.Coast Guard provided personnel to lead beach monitoring teams to look for oil sheen along the shores of Penn Cove. At least two WSU Island County Beach Watchers were assigned to work with each Coast Guard lead. Teams were assigned segments of shoreline to check as the derelict vessel was raised. The teams on the southern side of the cove observed a very light sheen.

Other Island County volunteers were also involved. Members of the Whidbey Audubon Society were engaged by the Incident Response Team to observe bird activity from bluffs along the cove - as they had been doing even prior to the mobilization of the Incident Response Team. They too confirmed indications of an oil sheen along the southern side of the cove based on unusual behaviors of a small number of birds.

The decision to partner trained Coast Guard personnel with WSU Beach Watchers met safety requirements by pairing every volunteer with personnel fully trained to address all possible spill situations. This decision created efficiencies in use of Coast Guard personnel, added local knowledge to the monitoring process, and created a local cadre of Beach Watcher volunteers with first hand knowledge about the process. The decision to provide Beach Watchers with customized just-in-time awareness training allowed training to be condensed, specific and essential and made it possible to deliver necessary training quickly. The level of training provided was not as intensive or as comprehensive as full HAZWOPER training, but it was tailored to the conditions and types of contaminants specific to the incident and the training was put into immediate use by participating volunteers.

Feedback from the Incident Response Team and the participating Beach Watchers has been positive. This successful experience may open opportunities for WSU Beach Watchers to assist future Incident Response Teams. Many thanks to the WSU Island County Beach Watchers who responded: Janis Collins, Bob Gentz, Jill Hein, Mitch Incarnato, Joanne McMillen, Noel Nic'Fergusson, Charlie Seablom, Jim Somers, Tom Vos, Kelly Zupich, Julie Ward, Steve Young, Libby Hayward, Derek Pritchard, Susan Mador, and Gary Rassner-Donovan.



## Tsunami Debris

Tsunami debris was the topic of a regional meeting convened on 7/19 by representatives of the WA Department of Ecology (DOE), lead entity for communication on a team of multiple state and federal organizations.



DOE encouraged everyone with questions to reference their website for current information: [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/itn01\\_debris.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/itn01_debris.html). The site provides information about safety and contact numbers for various types of debris. It also addresses:

- Whether radiation is a potential danger (not likely due to the short half-life of the materials washed into the ocean)
- The anticipated pace of debris moving to the west coast
- Under what conditions debris might enter the Strait of Juan de Fuca

Opening remarks by a DOE Solid Waste Specialist tempered the sense of urgency and added context to what is being learned about the debris. Here are some highlights from the comments:

- The focus of the WA State response is to collect and properly dispose of debris - scientific studies will sort and classify types of debris but disposal is the focus of the debris response
- DOE is working with communities to address needs as they are identified
- The west coast of WA has experienced sporadic influx of debris but it is not steady
- Heavy debris is being driven by currents below the surface and lighter debris by winds at the surface

Sites within the Strait of Juan de Fuca are less likely to be impacted by debris due to the geography of the Strait, patterns of winds, and push of fresh water flowing out from the rivers that pour into the Salish Sea.

In July the DOE released a very informative pamphlet with guidelines on what to do if you see debris: [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/docs/debris\\_flier.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/docs/debris_flier.pdf). For convenience, the text is also included on the next page.



## What To Do If You See Debris

Be safe: If you don't know what it is, don't touch it. Collect as much information from a safe distance as you can. Call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278).



### Guidelines By Debris Type



**Litter and other typical marine debris items:** Common marine debris types will vary by location. If an object appears to be nonhazardous and linked to the tsunami, please report it to [DisasterDebris@noaa.gov](mailto:DisasterDebris@noaa.gov). Please take photos if possible and provide as much information as you can. Where it's safe and practical to do so, remove the debris and recycle any plastics or metals.

**Hazardous materials (Examples: Drums, fuel tanks and containers, gas cans, gas cylinders, chemical storage totes):** Do not touch or attempt to move the item. Give authorities a detailed report about what you've observed. Call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278) and press 1.

**Aluminum Canisters:** 10-inch aluminum insecticide canisters often are found in high tide zones. Do not open the cap since these fumigant canisters may contain small amounts of toxic phosphine gas. Call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278) and press 1.

**Derelict boat or other large debris item:** Do not attempt to move or remove the boat. Call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278) and press 2.

**Personal effects or possessions from Japan tsunami:** Items that appear to be personal belongings should be treated with respect. They should be reported with as much relevant detail as possible. Generally, these objects should be left in place for later retrieval. However, if the object appears likely to be moved by tide or wave action and it is safe to do so, consider moving the object above the high-tide line. Report these to [DisasterDebris@noaa.gov](mailto:DisasterDebris@noaa.gov).

**Human remains:** It is extremely unlikely any human remains from the tsunami will reach the United States. However, if you encounter any remains, immediately call 9-1-1 and give local authorities a detailed report about what you observed. Do not touch or attempt to move such items.

**Unknown Item:** Don't touch or attempt to move the item. Give local authorities a detailed report about what you observed. Call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278) and follow the prompts.

For more information on Japan tsunami debris, please visit [www.marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/japanfaqs.html](http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/japanfaqs.html) [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/itn01\\_debris.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2012/itn01_debris.html) and <http://disasterdebris.wordpress.com/>



## Responsible Crabbing

Crabbing season runs Thursdays through Mondays, now through Sept. 3. WSU Island County Beach Watchers encourage all crabbers to use cotton cord to secure doors of crab pots. It is a Washington State Law to use escape cord (<http://www.escapecord.org/When-And-Where/9.aspx>). Lost crab gear continues to catch and kill and waste crabs all year.

We believe every crab deserves to die deliciously (males only of course since we do not harvest females). With funding through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Island County Beach Watchers are working with other Beach Watchers around the regions to encourage crabbers to use cotton cord, also known as rotten cotton, to secure the doors of their crab pots.



Here's what you can do to maintain an abundant and delicious supply of crab:

- Use "rotten" cotton twine (no plastic, polyester or chemical content) to secure the doors of your pots
- Abide by all regulations
- Only harvest male crabs that are at least the minimum size
- Do not harvest soft shell crabs
- Mark your pots and check water depth ***before*** dropping the pots
- Report lost pots so they can be retrieved at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/derelict/>  
1-855-542-3935 or 360-428-1084
- Look for WSU Beach Watchers at boat ramps in Island County – they will have copies of the regulations and can provide cotton twine.

No crabs should die wastefully in derelict gear that catches and kills on the bottom for months, and seasons, and years. For information about regulations, visit the DFW website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/crab/area.php?id=10> An article about the financial impact of lost crab pots is posted here: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02755947.2011.590113>

*Susan Mador, BW Class of 2011*

With the opening of crabbing season, WSU Beach Watchers regionally are funded by a grant from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to educate crabbers about: correct measurements for "keepers", distinguishing between male and female (only harvest males), looking out for soft-shell crabs (don't harvest these at all), and securing crab pot doors with cotton twine (sometimes referred to as "rotten cotton") that will deteriorate in a few weeks if the pot is lost. This will avoid catching and killing crabs unnecessarily. **You can help:** we still need Beach Watchers to talk with crabbers at boat ramps on open days on Whidbey. To help either contact me, Mary Williford (north Whidbey) or Ken Urstad (south Whidbey). Also, let me know if you have a group that would like a presentation about crabbing.

*Barbara Bennett, BW class of 2011*



## Digging For Dinner

On Saturday, July 7, our third Digging for Dinner series was conducted by master shellfish expert Eugene Thrasher.

He was accompanied by Trevor Arnold (BW class of 2009) and Gary Rassner-Donovan (BW-in-training class of 2012).



The class consisted of seniors, families with children, and young couples. It was a fabulous affair, with over 40 people taking part on this sunny warm afternoon (low tide around 1:30).

After our one hour class of instruction and guidance, we all headed out to the beach at Double Bluff, and everyone, kids especially, started digging for clams.

It was a challenging day for clamming with ulva (our ubiquitous green seaweed) heavily covering our low/low tide beach, making it more difficult to see clam tracks. But that did not dissuade this very eager group, and all found and harvested mainly butter clams, some cockles, and some horse clams.

We really appreciated the kindness and patience of our large group and upon leaving, the three of us were very satisfied that we had made new and responsible converts to proper shellfish harvesting and beach restoration.



*Gary Rassner-Donovan, BW Class 2012*

*Photos Courtesy of Gary Rassner-Donovan*

**Program Coordinator's Note:** The creation of a team to work with Eugene Thrasher is an example of the way our new generation of Beach Watchers can sustain and refine **great** programs. We have a long and remarkable history and many older projects may be prime for new life. If you would like to champion the revival of a favorite and valuable program or project, let me know.

*BW Program Coordinator  
Barbara.bennett@wsu.edu*



## Sunny Shores Monitoring, July 5, 2012

The Team: Alex Keggan, Dave Brubaker, Pete Domoto, Paul Robertson, Russ Holmes, John Anderson, John Radzewicz, and Carol Gillespie (not shown: Skip Ingraham)

The day was clear and sunny. A welcome change from the day before. Temperature was mild, to the upper sixties .

We saw an eagle watching us. He saw us watching him (her?). A couple of crows flew by at different times.

The beach was less interesting than last year.

We found *Amphipods*, *Balanus* barnacles, many small clams (mostly soft shells and a varnish), a few mussels (*Mytilus Trossulus*), a couple of shrimp (*Neotrypaea Californiensis*), and several *Polychaetes*. Also, *Hemigrapsus nudus* and *H. oregonensis*.

Sea weeds were both green and red, unidentified.

We ran the survey 380 feet over mostly sand and silt. The upper 60 feet are made up of a mix of sand, gravel, and cobble.

We adjourned to Sally's patio for snacks, drinks, and conversation.



*Skip Ingraham, BW Class 2006*



## Beachwatchers Monitor Ala Spit Restoration

Volunteers for Island County Beach Watchers convened on a sunny (!!) April 23 for training and monitoring activities associated with phase 2 of Island County's restoration of Ala Spit. The project is a three step effort to restore juvenile salmon and forage fish habitat at the spit while maintaining its use as a county park (see the Beach Log for April 2009). Phase 1 consisted of a feasibility study conducted by Island County Public Health and Herrera Environmental consultants. Perhaps some of you participated in seining activities at the spit in 2007 aimed at characterizing use of the spit and the associated pocket lagoon by species from the mouth of the Skagit River, just three miles away.

The first actual construction took place in October 2011, when workers with heavy equipment removed approximately 800 ft of large boulders and other rip-rap lining the eastern front of the spit. This installation predated acquisition of the site by the county and mistakenly attempted to prevent breaching of the spit during winter storms (wave reflection at armored beaches actually increases erosion). The construction area was then seeded with 'fish mix' (small gravel and sand) to jump start the return of the spit to its normal dynamic state and begin to reduce the depth in the lagoon to the west, which had been starved for sediment which normally washes over the spit. This will allow the mud flats behind the spit to return to an environment more conducive to salt marsh, and the fostering of juvenile salmon.

Beach Watchers was contacted by the county to provide volunteer expertise to monitor the changing physical characteristics of the effort over the next three years, a task not funded in the grant from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. We reoccupied a number of transects established by Herrera perpendicular to the spit and measured the beach profile using a laser level, while characterizing sediment cover every 10 ft. Aerial photos were contributed by Gregg Ridder and will be used to monitor growth of salt marsh species. Despite doubts by some vocal members of the public, who felt that spit would be transformed into an island and limit use by county residents, the spit is responding as the engineers intended. The narrow neck of the spit has broadened substantially, and the preliminary results of the BW beach profiles indicates that the spit has actually accumulated more sediment than was added during the seeding operation. The pocket lagoon is changing slowly in character from a mud flat to a shallower, coarser bottom with the introduction of sediment that moves over the spit during winter storms. Yes, it breaches at high tide during a storm, but remains accessible at other times.

Phase 3 of the project entails removal of a 7 foot bulkhead within the confines of the park to the south. This will restore forage fish breeding habitat and a wetlands that is currently isolated by the wall. In addition, it includes a feasibility study addressing removal of a man-made groin to the south which is altering sediment deposition by the longshore current. Beach Watchers will be participating in these activities and I hope that when the call for volunteers goes out next spring, we will get a good turnout. Chances are that we will be using the same protocols to monitor the effects of the bulkhead removal at Cornet Bay that is scheduled to take place later this year.



## Education Opportunities at Festivals

Can learning actually be fun? Absolutely! See page 12. That's the approach Kelly Zupich and I took for the ICBW booths in Coupeville and Freeland this summer. Our plan was to grab the attention of both adults and kids with something unusual, eye catching, and fun. Once they stepped closer, we were able to share some "fun facts" about the animals who live on the beaches of our beautiful island.

I made a barnacle puppet out of a plastic food container, paper mache, and a small box. The barnacle body was a glove with feather seri attached that I used to lure people to our booth. It worked! People were curious about this weird looking barnacle and it was a good conversation starter. The small kids just loved to play peek-a-boo with the barnacle who quickly retreated to his shell if they got too close. Once we had them, Kelly was able to interest them in our live barnacle tank. Many adults did not know that barnacles were actually living creatures, and everyone was fascinated by watching them feeding right before their eyes. It was an excellent opportunity to teach them about the other animals also in the tank like a chiton, hermit crab, and limpets. Of course we also had information about beach etiquette, trash clean up, and the harmful effects of plastic, but the stars were the barnacles.

Our successful booths this year prove you can have fun and learn something. This is not an easy task in this age of non-stop text messages and video games. The trick is to have an attention grabbing prop like a barnacle puppet, keep the message simple, and HAVE FUN!

*Janis Collins, BW Class of 2012*

With an impressive team effort, WSU IC Beach Watchers have handled numerous festivals and school groups with good educational content and lots of style this year.



Particular thanks go to Janis Collins and Kelly Zupich of this year's Beach Watchers class for their creative energy at multiple festivals and Parades. Also to Pat Collins for being the Trash Monster at Oak Harbor on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Mary Williford for being the champion of Beach Watchers presence in Oak Harbor, and Melody Kuschnereit for coordinating school classes visiting Coupeville.

*Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011*



### Performing Crustaceans, Barnacle Puppets, and Trash Monsters - Oh My!

These are only a few of the creatures that made appearances at Whidbey Island Festivals and the 4th of July parade this year. The events team's objective was to attract the public to our booths with visual and interactive displays that were engaging for children and adults, and that would grant us the opportunity to educate in an enjoyable and entertaining fashion.



Barnacles were the main attraction by far. (They are so well behaved too!) I remember the first time I saw *Balanus glandula* feeding I could not believe my eyes. It made me realize at the time that what I had been stepping on so carelessly was a creature so fascinating in its fluidly swift motion. Our team was hoping that our enthusiasm about these little crustaceans would be infectious and capture the interest of others. Convincing people to watch the aquarium carefully was a challenge, even after they were introduced to Janis Collins's attention-grabbing Mega Balanus (a.k.a. the Giant Barnacle Puppet). But once their eyes adjusted, and they finally saw the barnacles feasting, a smile would creep upon their lips and their eyes widen with surprise. Then the questions started flowing and that opened the door to a teaching moment.

We also featured a great plastics and beach litter display that included an interactive beach cleanup activity. We learned a great many things from this experience and will continue to improve upon our ideas.



For the Oak Harbor 4th of July Parade, we agreed upon a theme of sea critters protesting a very nasty Trash Monster (Pat Collins knew just how to bring the trashiness into the monster.) It took some work, but Mary Williford and I came up with the catchphrase: "Don't be a trash monster; put trash in the can, not in the sand!" With that, I designed a label which would be attached to every bag of crackers handed out to the kids. Marching beside the

Trash Monster, under good-humored protest, was a pirouetting Jellyfish, a frolicking Orca, two rambunctious little crabs, and a whimsical Sea Star! I was honored to wear the costume made by Jan Holmes which was only a small part of her legacy to Beach Watchers.



Beware, however, that the Trash monster will be skulking about from time to time as he helps to educate kids about where to put their trash. I am going to design bookmarks with the same catchphrase and graphics which will then be distributed in the local libraries and, hopefully, at our next round of festivals.

Thank you to everyone for making this such a fun experience. It can only get better.

*Kelly Zupich, BW Class of 2012*

*Photos courtesy of John Arthur Lyon*



## Mussel Watch sets sights on Island County

Beach Watchers can get involved with a program monitoring mussels this fall and winter. State researchers will be placing mussels at sites on Whidbey and Camano islands to monitor for heavy metals and other contaminants.

While exact specifics of the program are being ironed out, volunteers will be needed to help place mussel containers at monitoring locations, retrieve the mussels and ship them to researchers. Keep watching the Beach Log and your email for more information on volunteering.



*Susan Mador, BW Class of 2011*

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## Eel Grass Monitoring



All three studies of eel grass continue this summer (aerial photography, boat video, and “fun in the mud” density).

Ken Urstad, Neal Clarke and Gregg Ridder are heading the aerial and boat based surveys.

Thanks to Phyllis Kind and Sandy Wyllie-Echeverria, Ph.D. (of Friday Harbor Labs), Jan Holmes’ research on plant density, size, and reproductive status (a.k.a., “fun in the mud”) in Holmes Harbor is also continuing this year.

*Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011*



## Upcoming Beach Watchers Events



### Advisory Council

**August 28, October 23 (Tuesday), 10-noon** - Deception Pass State Park Administration Office. Contact Nicole Luce if attending.

**September 25 (Tuesday), 10-noon** – location TBD

### Camano Island

**Aug 8** – [Cama Film Festival – Fresh](#) – 7:00pm Cama Center Forest Room

**Sep 5, Sep 26, Oct 31, Nov 28 (Wednesdays) 9:30 AM** - BW Steering Committee Meetings, Camano Beach Watchers Office

**Sep 10, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3 (Mondays) 9:00–noon** - Monthly BW meeting, Camano Beach Watchers Office

**Sep 22** – [Harvest Jubilee](#) – Stanwood Country Store 10:00am – 5:00pm

**Sep 26** - 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday night talk – *Alternative Energy* – Craig Collar from SNOPUD

**Oct, Mondays and Wednesdays, beginning 10/1, Whidbey Island** - [Island County Beach Watchers Training](#) (next BW's training held on Camano Island will be in 2013), graduation 10/31

**Oct 24** - 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday night talk – *Killer Whale Tales* - Jeff Hogan

### Whidbey Island

**August 10, Sep 14, Oct 12, Nov 9, Dec 14 (Friday) 9 AM**– Second Friday Breakfasts , Neil's Clover Patch, Bayview

**August 13 (Monday)** - Digging for Dinner on Whidbey – 9:30am, clamming license & parking permit may be required Penn Cove - Zylstra Road & Hwy 20 (Grasser Lagoon)

**August 27 (Monday)** - Digging for Dinner on Whidbey – 8:30am, clamming license & parking permit may be required Double Bluff Beach off Double Bluff Road

**August 14 (Tuesday), 10-noon**— Sound Waters 2013 planning team meeting. Contact Nicole Luce if attending the meeting to get directions to Ingri's Nordic Room (the room is not very large)

**September 7, Oct 15, Nov 2, Dec 7 (Friday) 9 AM** - First Friday Breakfasts, Whidbey General Hospital

**September 11 (Tuesday) 10:10 AM to 1:17 PM**, Fall Wrap Up at Coupeville Recreation Hall (times allow for using Island Transit)

**September 11 (Tuesday), time TBA; October 9, 10-noon ; Nov. 13, 10-noon; Dec. 11, 10-noon** — Sound Waters 2013 planning team meetings. Contact Co-Chair Nicole Luce or Mary Hulbert if attending the meeting to get directions to Ingri's Nordic Room (the room is not very large)

**October, Mondays and Wednesdays, beginning 10/1** - [Island County Beach Watchers Training](#) (graduation on the 31st)



### Creative Giving

Note: Your contributions to the WSU Island County Beach Watchers Excellence fund and the LEP Beach Watchers Fund will both benefit the WSU Beach Watchers program in Island County. Please consider creative giving.

Lighthouse Environmental Programs was pleasantly surprised to receive a corporate matching donation from Microsoft for an employee's purchase of a Lighthouse specialty license plate. This demonstrated great imagination on the part of the employee. Anyone who is an employee or retiree from a company that matches their donations and has purchased a Lighthouse License Plate, should consider applying for a matching donation to LEP (or even to the Washington State Parks if they did not opt out of that \$5 donation when they renewed their plates).

LEP also learned that two new real estate brokers in Oak Harbor have initiated a program allowing their clients to donate 20% of their commission to one of five local non-profits. LEP and its councils are one of those five selected for this program. In addition, there are fishing charters in Anacortes that donate a portion of their proceeds to charities. Unfortunately LEP is not one of the recipients; however one has previously donated a fishing trip to the Beach Watchers holiday auction.



If you consistently support a local business, think about asking them to support Beach Watchers on a regular basis. Ask your employer to do the same, especially if you are retired. Let them know that our program's existence depends upon their support.

Another way to increase your benefit from a donation to Beach Watchers is to contribute stock that has appreciated in value. You get to deduct the current value of the stock without having to recognize the gain on the appreciated value. Check with your tax advisor on this option.

And lastly, consider updating your will to include an endowment to Beach Watchers. We only need about \$18,000 added to our existing endowment funds to be able to invest them with WSU. The WSU endowment program is currently yielding over 4%, much better than the 2% we are earning at our current bank.

*John Howard, BW Treasurer, LEP Treasurer, BW Class of 2008*

#### 2012 BWAC Members

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September 22, 2012