



Education,
Research,
Stewardship

Beach Log

JULY 2007



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION

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Beach Monitoring Continues Through the Summer Low Tides

Camano Isl and

Twelve eager Beach Watchers arrived at **Elger Bay** on June 13 at the early hour of 8:00 a.m. ready to tackle the first Camano Island intertidal monitoring for 2007. This was a surprising number of volunteers to turn out, considering the cold overcast day. Mary Jo Adams from Whidbey joined us for the adventure. She brought a supply of "Salish Sea Seaweed E-Z ID" charts, which were "hot off the press." With the overcast, it often was difficult to see the horizon point across the water. Fortunately, light rain held off until the last minutes of monitoring.

We accomplished the task, going out 257 feet to the low tide mark. Half of us did the profile line while the others examined the marine life found in the nine quadrats. After we finished and regrouped at Alice's house, comments were heard about the wide variety of critters spotted, among them; bald eagle, barnacle-eating nudibranch, tube worm *Thelepus crispus*, hermit crab, sea star, and mossy chiton. Abundant life ranked high on the list of Beach Watchers highlights for the day, and one declared Elger Bay "the best beach for species." Another Beach Watcher experienced a first monitoring session that day.

Alice Blandin, Camano Island, BW Class of 2002



Elger Bay Team

Photo by Mary Jo Adams

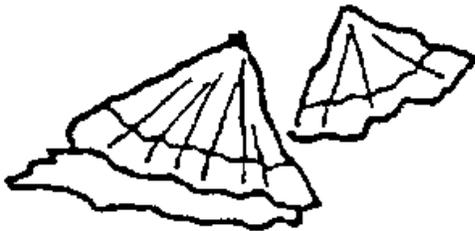


Whidbey Isl and June 3rd was warm and sunny for the **Coupeville Town Park Beach** team. Charlie Seablom noted a ring around the sun that day, a sign that often heralds changing weather, and recommends the website www.atoptics.co.uk as a good source of information about atmospheric phenomena. A team of eight turned out for this beach. Roxallanne Medley did a great job recording findings on the field data sheet. For Paul Whelan, the highlight of the day was seeing a gunnel eel and Lee Chavez found the chitons fascinating. Brian Giles found a white plumed anemone (*Metridium* sp.) adhered to an empty clam shell and Charlie Seablom saw sand dollars (*Dendraster excentricus*). Jan Holmes found an ice cream cone worm (*Pectinaria* sp.) in its precisely-built little sand tube. Other findings at Coupeville Town Park included six species of clams, a kingfisher, an oystercatcher, and a pigeon guillemot.



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Monitoring Team at Coupeville Town Park



As was foretold by the ring around the sun on June 3, the weather on June 4th took a definite downturn. Cooler temperatures, cloudy skies, and sprinkles greeted the **Langley Seawall Team**. Team captain Yvonne Palka was relieved that heavier precipitation stayed away. This beach has such a wide expanse of muddy sand that it is done in 50-foot sections rather than the 10-foot intervals typical of most Whidbey Island beaches. The “quicksand factor” makes this beach somewhat treacherous and team members found that standing in one place too long frequently resulted in literally having a sinking feeling. Arlene Stebbins ended up mired in the muck up to her knees while trying to take profile readings. In spite of the challenges, the team found a fascinating community of organisms. *Fucus spirilis* was seen on the seawall. This brown seaweed is similar to the more familiar *Fucus distichus* but is recognized by minute white hairy tufts on the blades and the tendency of the thalli to twist as they dry. The cockroach-like isopod, *Ligia pallasii* can also be seen on the seawall, if you peer into the cracks and crevices. Lower in the intertidal, Joani Boose had fun finding ghost shrimp. Taking a close look at the semitransparent carapace, she found the tiny copepod *Clausidium vancouverense*. Lee Chavez enjoyed getting out into the eelgrass where she saw the eelgrass isopod (*Idotea resicata*) and tiny caprellid amphipods, and Charlie Seablom found eelgrass limpets (*Lottia parallela*). The highlight for Jill Johnson was spotting a great blue heron in the process of eating a fish. One other finding was that of digging up live purple varnish clams (*Nuttallia obscurata*). This recent invader, native to Asia, is thought to have arrived in Washington in 1998, although it had been found in Canada prior to that.



Photo by Charlie Seablom

Langley Seawall team.



Eugene Thrasher headed up a team of four at **Double Bluff / Cirque Point** on June 13. Eugene reports that the huge tidepool usually surrounding the erratic along the profile line has filled in with sand, to the point of almost disappearing altogether. In addition, he says the bluff has washed away "big time." The team saw many more Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) compared to previous years, and lots of barnacle-eating nudibranchs (*Onchidoris bilamellata*) and their egg ribbons. June Davis was interested in the variability of the substrate as they worked their way down the profile line, and seeing how different communities of organisms occupied each niche. She was also delighted with the many purple sea stars (*Pisaster ochraceus*) that sidled up under the boulders in the low intertidal zone. Charlie Seablom tells of a hermit crab discovered living in a *Nucella* snail shell that had been drilled by a moon snail. (No one knows if the hermit crab got a break on the rent because of the hole in his wall!) The team did not see any live moon snails but did encounter several of their egg collars.



The **Rolling Hills** team was also at work on June 14. Team captain Charlie Seablom reports that the team of three found a bald eagle perched on a nearby pier when they arrived. Charlie and Joyce Peterson set to work taking profile readings and looking for organisms while Jean Wisniewski recorded data. The group documented lots of periwinkles (*Littorina scutulata* and *L. sitkana*), barnacle-eating nudibranchs (*Onchidoris bilamellata*) and their egg ribbons, and Japanese littleneck clams (*Venerupis philippinarum*). A young fellow came along and asked them to identify something for him. It turned out to be a ghost shrimp that had been left in a hole by a clam digger.



Photo by Jan Holmes

South Whidbey State Park Team

Nine Beach Watchers showed up on June 14 to monitor the beach at **South Whidbey State Park**. The trail to the beach had washed out, but luckily team leader Libby Hayward had scouted ahead to find an alternate route. The beach itself showed a lot of change from last year, apparently from the effects of winter storms. To determine how much the bluff has receded, monitors measure from an immense intertidal erratic back up to the base of the bluff. The distance this year was 70 feet, revealing that two full feet of the bluff had washed away over the past 12 months. Biodiversity at this beach was relatively low, but team members saw a live jackknife clam (*Solen sicarius*) and Bob Buck found juvenile red rock crab (*Cancer productus*). Searching through a patch of eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), they saw *Lacuna* snails and their tiny Cheerio-shaped egg cases. One other finding was that of moon snail egg collars.



Ask any of the dozen beach monitors who showed up at **Rosario** on June 15th how the day went, and chances are their description will contain one of the following adjectives: soggy, soaked, drenched, or dripping. It was a rainy day! The group divided into three teams that worked quickly and efficiently to collect data in 18 quadrats. Monem Mahmoud Abdel admired the perseverance of the monitors who stuck with their work in spite of the adverse weather. This was the first time Sue Howard had



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Rosario Team 1

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Dates to Remember

Upcoming Camano Island and Whidbey Island Events and Other Items of Interest



Whidbey Isl and

Tuesday, July 17, 11 a.m. **LEP Meeting**, Room 131
 Tuesday July 17, 1 p.m. **BW Advisory Council Meeting**, Room 131
 Thursday, July 19, 6:30 p.m. **Evening Educational Series**, Trinity Lutheran Church, Freeland
 Saturday, July 21, **Day on the Prairie, Noon (registration and classes) to 10 p.m. (Dance)**
 Tuesday, July 24, 9 a.m. **Creosote Log Survey**, Monroe Landing
 Thursday, July 26, 9 a.m. **Creosote Log Survey**, Joseph Whidbey State Park
 Saturday, July 28, 9 a.m. **Digging for Dinner**, West Penn Cove
 Sunday, July 29, Noon to 2 p.m. **Island Co. BW Picnic**, Rosario Beach
 Friday, August 3, 8:30 a.m. **Breakfast w/ BWs**, Whidbey General Hospital (WGH) Cafeteria
 Wednesday, August 8, 10 a.m. **Sound Waters Committee Meeting**, Room 131
 Friday, August 10, **Coupeville Arts and Crafts Festival**
 Saturday, August 11, 9 a.m. **Digging for Dinner**, Double Bluff Beach Park
 Thursday to Sunday, August 16-19, **Island County Fair, Langley**
 Thursday, August 16, 6:30 p.m. **Evening Educational Series**, WGH Conference Room

Camano Isl and

Tuesday, July 17, 11 a.m. **LEP Meeting**, Room 131, WSU Extension Office, Coupeville
 Tuesday, July 17, 1 p.m. **BW Advisory Council Meeting**, Room 131, WSU Extension Office, Coupeville
 Wednesday, July 18, 7p.m. **Going Green at the Beach**, Camano Multipurpose Center, 141 East Camano Dr.
 Thursday, July 19, 10 a.m. **Camano Field Trip: Pt Susan Bay Preserve**, Nature Conservancy's Pt Susan Bay Preserve
 Saturday, July 21, 7:30 p.m. **Summer Nature Program: How'd They Do That? Fun Facts About Wildlife Adaptation**, Camano State Park Amphitheater
 Saturday, July 28, 7:30 p.m. **Summer Nature Program: Mother Nature Speaks**, Camano Island State Park Amphitheater
 Saturday, August 4, 7:30 p.m. **Summer Nature Program: Gray Whales**, Camano Island State Park Amphitheater
 Monday, August 6, 9 a.m. **Camano Monthly Meeting**, 141 N.E. Camano Drive
 Monday August 13, 10 a.m. **Camano Field Trip: Mount Vernon Research Station**, Mount Vernon Research Station

Monitoring

Monday	July 30	Mabana, Camano Island
Thursday	August 9	Utsalady, Camano Island Pebble Beach, Camano Island Sunny Shores, Camano Island
Saturday	August 11	Old Clinton, Whidbey Island

For updated events everyday please check our website at
www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/island/events/



Continued from page 3



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Rosario team 2

helped monitor at Rosario and she was impressed by the diversity. One of the quadrats contained an aggregating anemone (*Anthopleura elegantissima*) literally pulling itself apart as it divided. Kathy Pigott and Charlie Seablom later checked out a much larger aggregating anemone that stretched out more than 4 inches across as it prepared to divide. June Davis was fascinated by the way black Katy



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Checking ID of a limpet.

June 16th found a group of eight monitors hard at work documenting data at **North Hastie Lake**. This is another richly diverse west Whidbey beach with a rocky upper intertidal transitioning to a stretch of sand and then back to boulders. A huge erratic rears up out of the beach at the -3 foot level and is blanketed by a multitude of organisms. Missy Sommers discovered a northern clingfish (*Gobiesox maeandricus*) under a boulder. These small (to 4 inches) fish have a large suction disk on their underside that allows them to adhere to smooth rocks. As the tide recedes, they take shelter in crevices under boulders to keep them from drying out and to protect them from



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Rosario Team 3



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

North Hastie Lake Team

predators. With the return of the tide, the little clingfish come out to search for small prey among the kelp. In addition to living in the intertidal, they are known to inhabit subtidal waters to a depth of 26 feet. Their species name "*meandricus*" is Latin for "streaks" and is descriptive of the chainlike pattern seen on their skin. Another great find was that of threadlike tentacles seen emerging from the sand in a tidepool surrounding a mid-intertidal erratic. Because the body of the polychaete worm they originated from was concealed back up under the rock, an absolute identification could not be made, but they were believed to be from either the Cirratulidae or Terrellidae family. The small brown seaweed commonly called "sea cauliflower" (*Leathesia difformis*) was found growing epiphytically on the red seaweed *Neorhodomela larix*. Bryozoans,



Two large purple sea stars were found on a North Hastie Lake erratic

colonial ascidians, and three species of sponge also made the species list. Most of the team agreed, though, that what captivated them most were the charismatic sea stars. At least a dozen large thick-bodied purple sea stars (*Pisaster ochraceus*) clung to the base of the massive erratic that was near the water's edge when the tide reached its maximum low. In addition, Charlie Seablom spotted a 10-inch sunflower star making its way through a thick layer of *Alaria marginata*. The day was enriched by the presence of a magnificent adult bald eagle that kept a watchful eye on the team from a nearby fir tree.



Photo by Charlie Seablom

The Freeland Town Park Team

The **Freeland Park Beach** team was out under overcast skies on June 17. This area of shoreline has a rocky substrate higher up, but the team ran into a quagmire of mud at the -1 foot level. Due to the danger of sinking, profiling was halted where the mud began and the team



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Freeland Town Park monitors found a blue mud shrimp.



was unable to reach the water's edge. In spite of the mud, a large part of the beach was accessible and they made some exciting finds. A variety of worms were uncovered and they seemed to be the stars of the day. Jan Holmes' discovery of a writhing 10-inch Nereid polychaete created quite a stir, and a bivalve dig brought up a glycerid polychaete that showed off a talent for everting its large club-shaped proboscis. Team captain Bob Buck turned over a rock to reveal a scaleworm, and flatworms were also seen. Sharon Dunn declared that she had no idea that worms could be so interesting! Other finds were those of several kelp crabs (*Pugettia productus*) that Charlie Seablom spotted tucked up underneath the overhang of a boulder, ghost shrimp (*Neotrypaea californiensis*), a blue mud shrimp (*Upogebia pugettensis*) with a pair of parasitic isopods (*Phyllodurus abdominalis*) attached to its abdomen, and seven species of bivalves.



Libby Hayward's **South Lagoon Point** team hit the beach on June 18, encountering a little mist but good weather otherwise. The start point really stood out this year because someone had carved a peace sign into the glacial till bluff above it. The tide dropped to the -2.1 foot level exposing a huge variety of green, brown, and red seaweeds along the entire 158 feet of the profile line. Libby reports that they found two kinds of chitons, *Mopalia* and lined (*Tonicella lineata*), and two species of sea stars, mottled (*Evasterias troschelii*) and purple (*Pisaster ochraceus*). Jan Holmes added that one of the highlights for her was seeing lots of tiny leather limpets (*Onchidella borealis*). In spite of their common name, leather limpets are not limpets at all but are small, sea slug-like animals belonging to a group called marine pulmonates. Unlike nudibranchs, they have a lung and breathe air. Leather limpets feed on diatoms and tend to be most active on overcast days when the tide is out. Also seen were an immature bald eagle, an osprey, a kingfisher, a plover, crows and a robin.



The **Maxwelton Tidepool** team surveyed their beach on June 29. Jan Holmes pointed out big changes that have taken place in the beach contour since the site was monitored in 2006. A deep layer of sand now cloaks areas usually covered by cobble and small boulders. The base of a large erratic was similarly buried under sand. The 4 feet of erratic that still extended above the sand was coated with living organisms, however. Kathy Fritts took note of the abundance of red sea cucumbers (*Cucumaria miniata*) on the erratic, and the huge boulder was also home to tubeworms, dogwinkle snails (*Nucella ostrina* and *N. lamellosa*), acorn (*Balanus glandula*) and thatched (*Semibalanus cariosus*) barnacles, and jingle shells (*Pododesmus cepio*). Further down the profile line, Neal Clark got a close-up look at a lion's mane jellyfish that had stranded on the sand. While only one live moon snail (*Euspira lewisii*) was seen, team captain Jeanie McElwain noted numerous moon snail egg cases and also found quite a number of invasive purple varnish clam (*Nuttallia obscurata*) shells that showed evidence of being drilled by moon snails. Churning dark clouds and gusty winds rolled in as the monitoring crew wrapped up their work. Team members made it back to their cars just in time before the squall line hit.

Mary Jo Adams, BW Class of 1999

For more photos of this year's monitoring highlights, check out www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/island/monitoring/2007/index.html



Beach Watchers are Guides for Visiting Professors

Beach Watcher Sarah Schmidt (BW Class of 2000) assisted Au Sable Institute as they hosted 20 professors of biology and environmental science from across the U.S. and Canada. On July 14th the group visited two beaches on Whidbey Island as a way to introduce them to the biodiversity and wonders of the coastline of the Pacific Northwest. Sarah gave a briefing on beach etiquette, pointed out birds and local points of interest, and we helped identify intertidal organisms.

Mary Jo Adams, BW Class of 1999



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Sarah Schmidt professors visiting Au Sable are at the water's edge.

Maxwelton 2007 Smolt Count

Several Beach Watchers helped Whidbey Watershed Stewards with this year's count of Coho salmon and Cutthroat trout leaving Maxwelton Creek for the Sound. We also note the number of salmon fry caught in the French Road culvert trap, because that's an indicator of last year's spawning salmon and next year's smolt count. Results have been transmitted to other groups and agencies studying the creeks salmon.

The text of the report from Greg Ridder, project coordinator is quoted here:

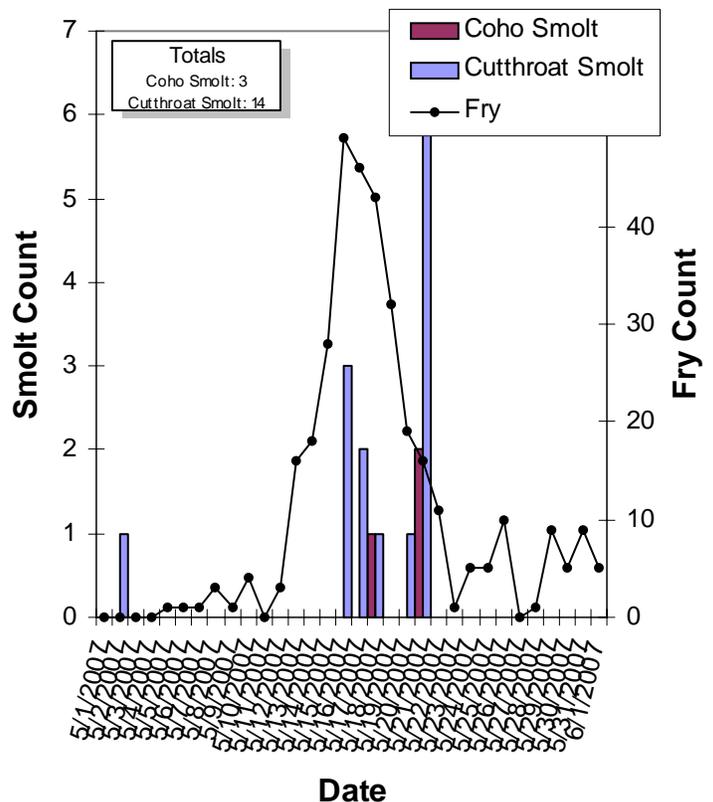
"In summary, we found 3 Coho smolt, 14 Cutthroat and 342 fry. Recall that last year we found 64 Coho smolt, 23 Cutthroat and 0 fry. The release of 17,000 coho fry near Possession Point by the Puget Sound Anglers on May 18th

(The Record, May 23rd) could not have affected our results since the trap was installed on May 1.

Ken Urstad said their fish were actually 4" smolt, not fry as reported in the Record. Therefore, the fry we caught must have been from returning adult salmon to the Maxwelton creek last winter.

Additionally, Bob Buck was kind enough to measure temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO) in the stream at the trap 3 times. His results show an increase in temperature from 11.3C/52F to 13.1C/56F over a two week period when we saw the greatest number of fry come through the trap. These temperatures are in line with what has been measured by Robert Barnes at the outdoor classroom in the month of May and are good for fish development. Bob's DO results show a decrease from 7.6 mg/L to 5.2 mg/L over the same period. These are significantly lower than Robert Barnes historical data in the stream at the outdoor classroom (around 9 mg/L), but similar to measurements at the Tide Gate. These DO levels are approaching a lower limit for healthy fry development, but still well above toxicity (1).

Daily Count May 1-31





In Memory of Mom

My mother loved water. She taught swimming and life-saving and was a self-described "River Rat" who played in the muddy Mississippi and rode power boats on the narrow Illinois. That was the kind of slow-moving Midwestern water that she knew well, with camps on stilts to avoid the spring floods, long grain-filled barges being pushed to New Orleans, and the inability to see one's toes when wading in water only as deep as one's shins.

So she was stunned when she moved to the Pacific Northwest. She adored the dimpled cold water of mountain streams, and was amazed with how far she could see into the depths of Lake Chelan. But with two daughters who owned property on Whidbey Island, she came to most appreciate the salt water surrounding it. Every ferry trip required the trek topside so that she could soak in the view. Each visit meant a search for that one perfect small white stone that she would take home with her.

She was diagnosed with cancer, but still came to the island with us carrying a little plastic beach bucket in the car in case she got ill on the ride. After one particularly difficult round of chemotherapy, we took her to Ebey's Landing and put a chair on top of the rock wall next to the road. We tucked a blanket around her legs, made sure she had her bucket and water and crackers, and then took a walk up the beach. When we turned back we could see her there like a queen on her throne, the sun shining on her white hair, a soft breeze tugging at the blanket. I was glad that there was a place like Ebey's Landing, and I was glad that she was there, even if for just an hour.



Marian Detmer on left, at Ebey's Landing with her sister Joan from Illinois

After she died, we gave a donation to the Cedar River Watershed Education Center in her name. There's a bench there facing Rattlesnake Lake, and the plaque says:

*The view, the lake,
The rock, the tree.
All these things were
Loved by me.
Marian Detmer
1926 – 2002*

It seemed only fitting that five years after she passed we recognize another spot that she loved by giving a gift to the WSU Beach Watchers program in her memory. Perhaps this time the words might be:

*The view, the sound,
The gull, the tide.
I loved it here
Before I died.*

Pat Detmer

DVD Library Available

Beach Watcher Jill Hein has the following nature and environmentally related DVDs sitting on a shelf gathering dust. If you would like to borrow one or some, contact her to set up a time at jillhein@comcast.net or 360-678-3891.

Arctic Dance: the story of Mardy Murie who was mostly responsible for creating the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska.

Antarctic Wildlife Adventure: a National Geographic study of wildlife on South Georgia Island.

Life in the Freezer: with David Attenborough.

March of the Penguins

Happy Feet

Being Caribou: follows the caribou migration across Canada to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Winged Migration: Amazing photography of migrating birds in flight.

Planet Earth (set of 5 DVDs)

Platypus: a documentary on the world's strangest animal.

An Inconvenient Truth



"These Crabs Could Have Been On Your Plate"

(Camano Island, July 4th)

As the early morning sun began to take its bead on the boat launches on Camano, so did ten quickly trained, amped-up, and information-stuffed Beach Watchers wanting to catch the crabbers before the crabbers got to crab. The passion to have a Crab Pot Escape Cord event on Camano started after several of the group attended a formal training and lessons learned session in June at the Tulalip Marina, which was organized by Chrys Bertolotto, the Snohomish/Skagit County BW Coordinator. Without a proper size, 100% cotton cord that degrades in several weeks, a derelict pot's escape panels and gates will remain closed, trapping and killing as many as 40 crabs per lost pot per year.



We didn't just sit around and molt! Scott Chase ('02) garnered the materials, consisting of two-sided color printed cards, a roll of 100% cotton cord, and some stickers to attach everything together. A material assembly gathering was held at the BW office and several hundred cards were made ready for distribution. Tom Perry was working with "Mr. Crabby," getting him ready for the 4th when he was asked to step in and help with the coordination of the overall effort. We had another planning and card assembly meeting that included some training for new recruits who missed the formal training. We strategized about which boat launches would be covered for getting the message out early in the morning. In addition

to boat launches, we decided to place our information at check-out aisles at the local market, country stores, and the only marine supply store on the Island. That appeared to be effective as the cards were flying out the door with interested shoppers.



Carol Gillespie ('06), Sheila Means ('06), and Duane Hoekstra worked the anxious crabbers at Cavalero Beach, who were lined up very early, ready to get their boats in the water for the 7:00 a.m. season opener. Norm Kosky ('03) and Alice Blandin ('02), with Kathleen and Scott Chase took on the daunting task of the masses at Camano Island State Park boat launch.

Vicki and Tom Perry ('03), along with Tom's alter ego at the time, Mr. Crabby, took on the somewhat more laid-back group at the Maple Grove boat launch. Even starting before 6:30 a.m., all of our crew found that many of the crab procurers were already launched, thus they got the under-the-windshield-wiper version of the information we wanted to share with them. After an hour of contact work at the launch, Mr. Crabby and his lovely assisting trophy crabette, Vicki, made their way to the state park to recruit others to give out more cord cards in the very local Utsalady parade.

Arriving early for the 11:00 a.m. parade queue, Mr. Crabby and Vicki were joined by Sue and Duane Hoekstra ('03) and Maxine and Rich Steele ('02) who all agreed to march and carry signs hoping to entice the parade watchers to ask, read, and use our information. Sue Hoekstra won over our group with her slogan proposal of "Catch More Crab, Free Info, What's the Catch? More Crab!"



The parade was a success, and Mr. Crabby managed to spawn a request for information about joining Shore Stewards from the sign he was wearing on his lower backside, attached to his crab cage. Approximately 824 cards were dispersed on the 4th alone, with many great memories and lessons learned, to be shared with the program's participants



as it continues through crab season. Mr. Crabby hopes the program will be a perpetual one with the Camano Island Beach Watchers, who want to insure better use of our marine resources through educational intervention.

Tom Perry, BW Class of 2003

Green Bags are Winners

The wonderful Green Bags are a project of the Camano Island Beach Watchers Class of 2006. To help stem the epidemic of plastic bags in the environment, the project involved finding a bag that was sturdy, reusable, and easy to use at the grocery checkout. After much research, a bag was located, the idea proposed, and the Beach Watchers Council liked the project so much that they authorized an order of not just the 200 bags we requested, but 500 bags so "all Beach Watchers can buy them" (at the Lighthouse gift shop). The Green Bags are shaped like a grocery sack with a structured bottom, with sturdy handles, and grocery clerks say they are easy to load. On Camano Island we have sold 300 Green Bags, and our local grocer has just ordered 1000 of his own bags to sell to customers at cost. So, the project worked just as we had hoped, and now the goal is to "Green Bag" Stanwood!

Pat Foss, BW Class of 2006



Photo by Lee Hart

Lee Hart proves that these bags can take quite a load!



BWs Educate Rosario Visitors

Sammye Kempbell, Barry Dunn, and Jeannene Wisniewski are the crew at Rosario who set up displays and talked to park visitors about beach etiquette and

intertidal life. During the series of low tides leading up to the Fourth of July, they greeted more than 100 people a day, and on the Fourth they, along with Charlie Seablom and Steve Young, talked to more than 400 people! Sammye and her Rosario crew work on low tide days throughout the spring and summer educating visitors and protecting the beach.



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

The Rosario Crew 2007: From left, Jeannene Wisniewski, Sammye Kempbell and Barry Dunn.



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Rosario volunteers interest visitors

Are you ready for some Island County Fair?

Mingle with your friends and neighbors for foot-stomping, hand-clapping entertainment, lip-smacking, nose-tickling, finger-licking "fair" food and eye-popping art, photography, flower arrangements, quilts, and knitting. Ooh and ah over sheep, goats, rabbits, chickens and horses. Stretch your mind and experience by visiting the booths near our own and sharing your insights at the Beach Watchers' booth. By helping staff our Beach Watchers' booth, you get all this while accumulating Beach Watcher hours. But most importantly, you'll be helping educate fair goers, young and old, about Beach Watchers and our activities. We promise you

A FAIR TO REMEMBER!

Please sign up for a time that's good for you and, if possible, sign a friend up to share your time slot with you. The fair schedule is attached. Thanks. Mary Johnson, mhjohns@whidbey.com or (360) 222-3130.



HOW ABOUT BEACH WATCHERS FOR KIDS?

You know what works best for Beach Watchers projects? It's when somebody says "I'm inspired to do this, or to help make this happen." Well, what do you think of this? At the Coupeville Wharf the BWs display tells the story of Puget Sound by looking at the story of the orcas. Wouldn't it be something if that Wharf Project could be the platform for launching a program with children and young people?

Maybe this would mean creating interpretive displays, or presenting periodic programs for children. And maybe the programs would involve a field day on the beach. Churches have VBS. So how about day-camp for kids—a sort of Vacation Environmental School (there would have to be a better name!). Perhaps the kids could be involved in active stewardship. The question is where could we go with this if volunteers began to dream and talk together.

Never mind the challenges—liability, supervision, organization. If you are inspired, these can be managed. But what works best is for Beach Watchers to say, "*I want to see something like this happen.*" And like other BW successes, it *can* happen if it comes from volunteers first.

Does this tickle your imagination? Is this an area about which you may even have a passion? If there is something about connecting children and young people with the Wharf Project and letting that grow into some kind of BWs for kids, you can share that vision with Kristen or Stewart, and you will get their support.

Better environmental stewardship will come through changed attitudes. And one hopeful place to begin is with our children.

Stewart Congdon, BW Project Coordinator, BW Class of 2006



Submitting Volunteer Hours

Life has never been easier for volunteers wanting to submit their hours of dedicated and hard work. Since the implementation of Island County Beach Watchers new online hours database we've had 75 volunteers logon and easily navigate their 2007 hours into existence. This is WONDERFUL. What would be even more stupendous would be if all 200+ active volunteers used this wonderful system for the most up to date and accurate volunteer database ever!

I know that feedback is the most essential key to getting volunteers to take their valuable time to record their efforts and so I will be giving quarterly updates in future Beach Logs. The next Beach Log will announce the latest hour awards earned by Beach Watchers so stay tuned. For now, here are some numbers!

Total Hours Recorded To Date for Island County WSU Beach Watchers...

143,217.00

Total Hours Recorded For 2007...

6,043.00

Total Number of Public Engaged For 2007...

2,628.00

Wow! Double Wow!

Life is Not Perfect

Life is imperfect. As much as our ideals drive us, reality puts the brakes on. So our experience is not so much like a smooth trip as it is like stop-and-go rush hour traffic.

The idea was to help John and Gaye Rodriguey make the three-night passage from coastal Ecuador out to the Galapagos Islands. I had always wanted the experience of a deep sea passage. But I had never given any thought to the Galapagos because, well, "who gets to go there?" As it turns out, a lot of people do. And the islands do not disappoint. Actually, the treats began before we even got to the islands.

On the trip out, I decided to go on a crash diet by eliminating all excess food from my system by the same route it had entered. As I lay not as near death as I would have liked, I looked out the windows and saw angels flying around the boat. At the moment that was a pretty promising sight. But they were actually terns, clicking and chirping at each other as the boat kicked up flying fish and squids for them to eat. Angels or not, they were a joy to watch.

The real aerobatics experts showed up as we neared the islands. Frigate birds are like the Blue Angels of the avian world. Actually they are thieves, but to watch them dive, bank, and even fly in place to fight over a captured fish is worthy of any air show.

Speaking of birds, the only thing Charles Darwin took much interest in during the few weeks he visited the Galapagos, were the finches—thirteen different subspecies of them to be exact, and all equipped with unique beaks to serve their different habitats. He spent the rest of his career pondering how this



happened in nature. As we know, he concluded that it had to do with a natural selection process by which those species and their offspring survived best which have features best adapted to their surroundings.

Darwin actually didn't pay much attention to the eleven subspecies of giant Galapagos tortoises (other than when they were on the dinner plate), each with special adaptations suited to their locale, like neck length or shell shapes. Nor did he note the fact that only in the Galapagos are some particular breeds of boobies found, some with blue feet, and others with red feet, or that there are iguanas there which have become adapted to swimming and eating seaweed. This place is a mother lode of endemic species of marine and land animals, as well as totally unique vegetation.

That is why the Galapagos Islands have been named as a World Heritage Site. Be assured, Ecuador takes the responsibility for these islands very seriously. But the Galapagos have become a feast for ecotourism. The Ecuadorians have responded to this interest by providing permits to visitors who are then guided, either by naturalists on the pricey tour boats, or by taxi drivers for independent cruisers who speak a little Spanish but don't want to spend much money (like us).

Ecuadorians are mostly very poor people. Who can blame them if they improve their lot by moving out to these pristine islands to lead tours, sell souvenirs, work in hotels, restaurants, or somewhere else in the infrastructure that maintains a population of thirty thousand? But over the last two hundred years the presence of human habitants on the islands has introduced a score of invasive species—goats, rats, cats, dogs, horses, pigeons, fire ants, etc., which compete for food, eat eggs, or destroy habitat.

So, do you want to go down there and tell those impoverished people to get off the islands and take their invasive species with them? Actually, the United Nations World Heritage Committee has pronounced the Galapagos endangered. And new President Rafael Correa has vowed to impose greater restrictions. But at the end of the day, the best hope seems to be to find a way for humans and other creatures to live together in a way that serves the interests of both.

Life is just not perfect.

Stewart Congdon, BW Project Coordinator, BW Class of 2006





Friends of Beach Watchers

Thanks to all who give so generously to the Beach Watcher Program throughout the year. Many thanks, also, to those who give to our ongoing educational efforts but prefer to remain anonymous.

THANKS! To all the Beach Watcher Volunteers who contributed articles, typed, edited, and prepared the Beach Log for mailing. Kudos to Cheryl Bradkin, Arlene Stebbins, and Kristen Cooley who help pull it all together each month.



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If you would like to learn more about the Beach Watcher Program, please contact Kristen Cooley, Program Coordinator at 360-679-7391 or kcooley@wsu.edu.



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Save the Date

Saturday Sep-
tember 8th

Deception Pass
Cruise for Beach
Watchers aboard the
Island Whaler
Details in the Au-
gust Beach Log

Sunday, July 29, Beginning at Noon
Rosario Beach Picnic Shelter

Have a great time, with wonderful company
in a spectacular setting!
Bring your Family

The main course, coffee and tea will be provided

What to Bring:
A side dish to share.
Chairs, dishes, utensils, drinking cups, and your favorite beverage.

Special Feature:
Two *Beach Watcher of the Year Awards* Two *Beach Watcher Educa-
tor of the Year Awards*
Two *Citizen of the Year Awards*

(Please email your RSVP and your awards
nominations to kcooley@wsu.edu)

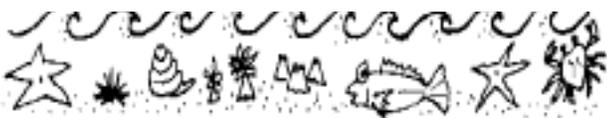
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*“In the end we will con-
serve only what we love; We will love only what
we understand;*

*We will understand only what we have been
taught.”*

~Baba Dioum, Senegalese ecologist



DEADLINE FOR NEXT BEACH LOG
August 4, 2007