



**Education,
Research,
Stewardship**

Beach Log

APRIL 2008



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION

WSU Beach Watchers P. O. Box 5000 Coupeville WA 98239 360-679-7391 ; 321-5111 or 629-4522 Ext. 7391 FAX 360-678-4120
Camano Office: 121 N. East Camano Dr., Camano Island, WA 98282, 387-3443 ext. 258, email: schase@wsu.edu
E-mail: Kcooley@wsu.edu meehan@wsu.edu beachwatchers@wsu.edu Web address: www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu

Meet the New Beach Watcher Assistant

I would like to introduce myself, my name is Kylee Allen and I recently started to work at the Beach Watchers office with Kristen. I am very excited to be a part of such a wonderful program and look forward to learning all kinds of new things. I will be assisting Kristen with providing support to volunteers and the everyday office requirements. I am learning and am available to help assist you with your needs. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you might have. wsu.bw.kallen@gmail.com

A little about me, I have been an active volunteer in the Oak Harbor community for the Boys and Girls Club and Skagit/Island Head Start Programs since 2000. I believe in community partnerships and that volunteers are key to making a successful program. I have three young children who keep me very busy. I look forward to working with you all.

Kylee Allen, BW Assistant



Sound Waters' Waste Collection Details

At Sound Waters, an effort was made to reduce waste by planning ahead. The Sound Waters committee requested food vendors to consider recyclable products. Participants were requested to bring their coffee cups and 268 did!. Here is a listing of the different waste streams. Remember all categories are recyclable, except garbage.

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Category	Pounds Collected
Garbage	20.5
Compostables	28
Food	32
Coffee	20
Cardboard	9.5
Plastics	5
Aluminum	2
Paper	1



Liking Lichens

A recent string of high water days kept me off the beach so instead, I went out looking at lichens. They're fascinating organisms but are so variable in form, color, and fine detail that I felt totally overwhelmed in my attempts to identify them. Beach Watcher and lichen enthusiast Melissa Duffy tipped me off that a group of licheneers would be holding a field trip in mid-March headed up by Dr. Fred Rhoades of Western Washington University. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to learn more, so I quickly signed on.

The field trip explored various habitats of Washington Park in Anacortes and the licheneers first headed into a forested area. Lichens are a symbiotic composite of a fungus with either an alga or cyanobacteria (blue-green alga), and Dr. Rhoades pointed out species of both types. Melissa then reviewed the three basic growth forms of lichens: encrusting (crustose); leafy or lobed (foliose); and shrubby (fruticose). The overall body of the lichen is called the thallus and with the aid of a strong magnifier, a number of fine structures can be observed. I was a real neophyte at this and decided to stick with very easily identifiable species.

One of the most flamboyant species we observed was the yellow powder lichen blanketing many of the tree trunks. This, I learned, is *Chrysothrix candelaris*, commonly called "gold dust lichen." Another lichen looked like tiny hieroglyphics or bird tracks on the smooth bark of deciduous trees, and proved to be *Graphis scripta*, or "pencil script."

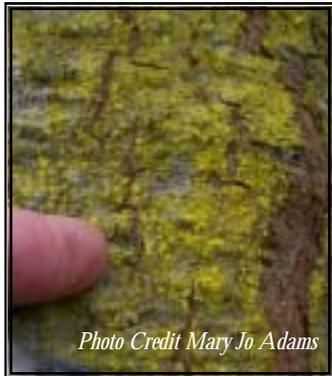


Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

The gold dust lichen *Chrysothrix candelaris* was on tree bark.

When Dr. Rhoades announced it was time to head down to the beach to check out the lichens there, you can bet my ears really perked up. Arriving at the site, he pointed out an area in the spray zone where the bedrock ap-



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

Verrucaria lined the rocks at Rocky Point. Look at next page to see the various lichens as stacked, from bottom to top, on the rocks

peared to have been covered with a band of black paint. Rather than paint, this is the crustose lichen *Verrucaria*. There are several species of *Verrucaria*, with the most common being *V. maura*. A close look with a hand lens at that lichen revealed a profusion of tiny cracks and also the presence of small bumps, which are the fruiting bodies. Above the black band was another band, this one dominated by orange lichens of the genus *Caloplaca*, and topping that we observed patches of gray lichen from the genus *Physcia*.

I was quite surprised to learn that other lichens grow on rocks below the level of the splash zone. One of these was a green colored *Verrucaria*, *V. mucosa*. It had a relatively shiny surface and was observed in patches up to about three inches in diameter.

Dr. Rhoades also pointed out thatched barnacles with surfaces pitted by yet another lichen. Looking closely with our magnifiers, we could make out the lichen's fruiting bodies, appearing as tiny black dots within the pitted areas. That lichen was tentatively identified as *Collempsidium halodytes*, but further study will be necessary before nailing down a definitive answer to its genus and species.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

This barnacle shows black lichen pits.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

Graphis scripta was found on deciduous tree bark.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

The gray lichen high on the rocks was *Physcia* sp.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

This is the orange lichen *Caloplaca* sp.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

Verrucaria maura was the most common of the genus.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

Verrucaria mucosa is green colored and at the bottom

One species that we did not see on the field trip, but I have frequently encountered on driftwood, is *Lecanora xylophila*, commonly known as driftwood rim lichen. It is an encrusting lichen with a light colored thallus and numerous brown or brick red fruiting bodies, encircled by a thallus-colored rim. Sometimes this lichen will cover large areas of driftwood that has beached high in the intertidal.



Photo Credit Mary Jo Adams

Lecanora xylophila is the driftwood rim lichen.

Several good lichen books and field guides are available through Sno-Isle Regional Library System, and Dr. Kozloff's "Plants and Animals of the Pacific Northwest" is also a wonderful resource if you are caught in the allure of learning about lichens. Although we don't have good low tides every day, there is still a lot to see along our beaches. Don't miss the lichens. You'll like 'm!

Mary Jo Adams, BW Class of 1999


 Summer is coming!! 
 Low Tide Dates and Times 
 and 
 Beach Monitoring Schedule 
 Will be Published 
 Next Month 
 


Dates to Remember

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



Camano Isl and Events

April 19 English Boom Shoreline Workshop

9:00 am to 3:00 pm 141 N.E. Camano Drive, Camano Island, 98282 Please sign up if you would like to help in the classroom or with the seining.

April 22 Advisory Council Meeting

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm call for location 360-679-7391 On Camano Island

April 23 The New Cama Beach State Park

141 N.E Camano Dr Camano Island WA Presented by: Jeff Wheeler Cama Beach Area State Park Manager. The third in our lecture series. Starts at 7 pm. More information: www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/island.

May 6 Camano BW Monthly Meeting

9:00 am to 12:00 noon 141 N.E. Camano Drive, Camano Island, 98282 Monthly Meeting with the Training Class and Mary Jo for 'EZ ID'.

May 8 FOCIP Education Days

Camano Island State Park

FOCIP 2nd grade education days. Contact: Alice B. for additional information.

May 9 FOCIP Education Days

Camano Island State Park

FOCIP 2nd grade education days. Contact: Alice B.

Whidbey Isl and Events

April 19 Sustainability Fair

Come learn about all about Living Green. Learn to incorporate environmentally sound options into island living. Skagit Valley College 10am-3pm

April 22 Advisory Council Meeting

1pm Camano Island

April 29 Sustainable Living Workshop

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm Hayes Hall-Room 137 (across from the library) at Skagit Valley College, 1900 SE Pioneer Way, Oak Harbor. Green Building Resources and Recycling

May 12 Breakfast w/ Beach Watchers

8:30 am to 9:30 am Neil's Clover Patch in Bayview, Whidbey Island



Volunteer Opportunities Abound at Whidbey Watershed Stewards

Whidbey Watershed Stewards relies on volunteers to help restore, protect, and educate about South Whidbey watersheds. And this counts as Beach Watcher hours!

Join in on Earth Day, Sat. April 19, to plant and mulch native shrubs and trees on streamside property in the Clinton-Maxwelton area. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Maxwellton Fire Station on French Road, to work until 2 p.m. Contact Nancy if you would like to work with high school students on weekdays.

Sign up for one day a week as an Outdoor Classroom teacher, helping grades 3-5 learn about the Forest Ecosystem, especially insects and native plants, during sessions from late April to early June. Teacher training is Thu. April 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with lunch included.

Young salmon going out into the world will be counted in May during the morning and evening. Sign up for one or two slots a week during the Smolt Count in the Clinton-Maxwelton area.

This summer, the Outdoor Classroom viewing deck will be replaced, and lots of volunteer help will be needed. The project manager is BW Richard Johnson, and volunteer coordinator is BW Debbie Bitts.

To sign up, contact Nancy Waddell at 360-579-1272 or info@whidbeywatersheds.org. Nancy Waddell, Administrator, Whidbey Watershed Stewards

"Top of the Watershed" Retreat Is Planned

The North Cascades Institute Environmental Learning Center will be the site for a Beach Watchers retreat to be held Wed. through Fri., September 3-5, 2008. The theme will be "Top of the Watershed." The retreat will be limited to 69 participants and will cost approximately \$300, including lodging, meals and programs. More information and registration details will be coming soon.

The Institute is located off Hwy. 20 in the area of Diablo Dam and North Cascades National Park. More site information is at www.ncascades.org/learning_center/.



How Do You Cook an Egg?

The Island County 4-H program includes "Food For Thought," a challenge to families and youth to think about where our food comes from, including what is involved to grow or raise it, what transportation occurs, and how it is best prepared. Right now, the program is looking for talented cooks who would like to teach families how to prepare dishes using fresh eggs.

Part of the program is to offer low-cost cooking classes for families with children, with the kids actively involved in the cooking. The project is planned to continue through the year, as more locally grown foods become available.

If possible, the egg class will be offered on Sun. April 13, from 2 to 5 p.m., in the Freeland or Coupeville area. If you would like to be involved now or later, contact Judy at 360-679-7328 or judyfe@co.island.wa.us.

Judy Feldman WSU/Island County 4-H Program Coordinator





Oak Harbor Middle School Environmental Education Project

The second session of this project was Marine Debris Litter: what it is, the harm it can do and how to prevent it. Jill Hein, Sammye Kempbell, Cheryl May and Janet Hall put together three interactive class room sessions. The next week everyone went out to clean the beach at Fort Casey. Over eighty students, teachers, and parents traveled to Keystone Spit in March to cleanup the beach and collect data for the National Marine Debris database.



Photo by Jill Hein

Litter, students, beach and blue skies.

570 pounds of litter was picked up, predominately in the log line since this beach gets scoured with the tides. Most of the litter was small pieces of plastic and Styro-foam. Below is a picture of the students, parents, teachers and litter.

Janet Hall, Waste Wise

Man the Booth and Be Living Green

The Whidbey Island 2008 Sustainability Fair will be held Sat. April 19, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Whidbey campus of Skagit Valley College. It will include free workshops, activities for adults and kids, vendors, and exhibits. Be a part of it all and volunteer for a shift with the Beach Watchers exhibit.

This free-to-the-public Fair is sponsored by Skagit Valley College, the City of Oak Harbor and Sno-Isle Library system, and will offer ideas to incorporate environmentally friendly options into Island living. It opens at 10 a.m. with Keynote guest Arunas Oslapas, Industrial Design professor from Western Washington University, speaking on "Zero Waste" and sustainability concepts in design.

Contact the Beach Watcher office if you can help with this.

The Fair will take place on the Skagit Valley College Whidbey Island Campus at 1900 SE Pioneer Way, Oak Harbor, WA. This event is free to the public.

For more information, contact Carolyn Batchelor cbatchelor@skagit.edu phone 360-679-5221.

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Dollars Starting to Flow Our Way from Lighthouse License Plates

It's a winner.

The Washington Lighthouses special license plate is generating about \$7,000 a month for Coupeville-based Lighthouse Environmental Programs (LEP). Since the distinctive plate went on sale Jan. 1, 2006, more than 3,300 Washington drivers have purchased it for their cars, trucks, motorcycles and recreational vehicles.

At year-end 2007, LEP's proceeds from the first two years of license plate sales stood at \$112,000 and climbing -- slowly. The Department of Licensing (DOL) collects additional fees for each special license plate it sells or renews, allocating \$28 to the sponsoring organization as a charitable contribution.

"The license plate is a lifeline for us," said Don Meehan, director of Washington State University (WSU) Extension for Island County. His office operates three nonprofit programs housed at Admiralty Head Lighthouse, at Fort Casey -- WSU Lighthouse Docents, WSU Beach Watchers and WSU Waste Wise Volunteers.

"Every year we scramble frantically to piece together the funding to keep these programs going. I don't know what we'd do without the license plate, as well as the many friends who support our programs with their charitable gifts."

Gloria Wahlin of Clinton, who first suggested the license plate in 2005 as an out-of-the-box fundraising idea, is program coordinator for the lighthouse. "Our volunteers love lighthouses, love history and are passionate about this place where we live," she said. "The license plate's success is a sweet victory for them."

Wahlin said the license plate idea was a gamble that, thankfully, turned out well.

"We knew we wouldn't see a penny until the DOL had recouped \$32,000 in administrative start-up costs. We figured we could sell enough to do that, which is over 1,100 plates. But beyond that we just didn't know."

The wild card was that the new plate would have to compete against dozens of other distinctive designs motorists could choose by paying an extra fee to the DOL. The three nonprofit LEP groups housed at Admiralty Head Lighthouse were running on a shoestring. They needed reliable income, not more expenses.

But Wahlin knew that Coupeville artist Janet Orso's design for the plate was a cut above many other license



Photo by Celia Bartram

Lee Hart of Coupeville shows off his Washington Lighthouses license plate at Admiralty Head Lighthouse, Ft. Casey. Hart welcomes visitors to the historic landmark in his turn-of-the-century lightkeeper's uniform.

plates. "We kept hearing comments like, 'Wow, this is cool.' I had a good feeling."

With strong backing from State Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen of Camano Island, LEP in 2005 sold the legislature and DOL on a proposal to allocate 75 percent of the license plate's income to Island County programs and set aside 25 percent in a grant fund for other lighthouses in Washington kept open to the public by nonprofit groups.

Since its rollout, Washington Lighthouses has consistently been one of the top-selling designs in the state. "We've had some terrific support from hundreds of proud Island County residents who think of it fondly as the hometown plate," Wahlin said.

Money raised this year is helping fund the salaries of the Lighthouse and Beach Watchers coordinators, along with several special projects. These include new lighthouse brochures and interpretive displays.

It will also help fund restoration of the lighthouse's fourth order Fresnel lens, as part of a three-way partnership with Washington State Parks and Keepers of



Continued from page 7

Admiralty Head Lighthouse, the membership group that raises money for lighthouse restoration projects. The \$14,000 project will receive \$2,000 of license plate funds.

In addition, the board of LEP awarded \$22,000 to four lighthouse nonprofit groups outside Island County that keep other Washington lighthouses open to the public:

\$7,020 to Swiftsure Lightship on Seattle's Lake Union as a matching grant to help support a \$45,000 project to restore the mast and rigging, electrical system, navigation beacon and smokestack.

\$6,980 to Westport Lighthouse in Grays Harbor County to help fund a historical structural report.

\$5,000 to Turn Point Lighthouse on Stuart Island in the San Juans to help establish a museum in the mule barn and create a portable exhibit for use at schools and public forums.

\$3,000 to Browns Point Lighthouse near Tacoma to help match a \$4,000 investment by local contributors to purchase tooling and baseboard lumber to duplicate the original fir baseboard and trim.

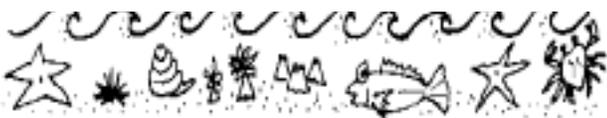
Island County residents who wish to support these restoration and educational programs may do so by taking their vehicle registration renewal to the county auditor's office or any office of the Department of Licensing and specifically requesting the Washington Lighthouses license plate. The cost to purchase a special license plate from the state DOL is \$45 additional the first year; \$30 additional to renew in subsequent years. \$28 of the original purchase cost and annual renewal cost is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.



"In the end we will conserve 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
April 28, 2008**