

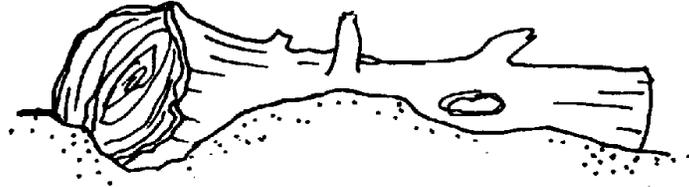


**Education,
Research,
Stewardship**

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION

Beach Log

JULY 2013



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, E-mail: wsu.bw.island@gmail.com
Web address: www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu

Words From Barbara Bennett, Program Coordinator

WSU Extension Island County Beach Watchers

Administration in Action

Welcome to the Beach Log for August 2013. If you like the newsletter, you'll love the monthly member meetings on each island and the new web-based calendar for Beach Watchers' activities: <http://beachwatchers.net/web>



Member meetings are new on Whidbey, although Camano has enjoyed monthly meetings for years. The August 12th meeting featured Dr. Brian Bingham of Western Washington University presenting a new topic: "The Life History of Invertebrates" (which he may also present at the next Sound Waters). Dr. Bingham's photos and research stories again revealed the endlessly amazing adaptations of microscopic creatures.

WSU Beach Watchers in Island, Jefferson, Kitsap and Snohomish are working together across the region to educate recreational crabbers about rot cord and precise measurements for harvest. How much is a piece of rot cord worth? This year, \$100 - see the article on page 6. How much is our work worth on the crabber program? A Department of Fish and Wildlife grant will fund WSU Island County Beach Watchers \$5,000 in salary and expenses. All we do is talk to people and hand out educational materials. It's easy and important and you can help! Email me to learn more (Barbara.bennett@wsu.edu).

The summer continues with festivals on both islands. CamOcean continues this year on August 17th at Cama Beach State Park. It's always a fun day and a great opportunity to talk with recreational crabbers. See page 2 for details. The same weekend is the Island County Fair where WSU will have a booth and Beach Watchers will talk about crabbing.

On an international stage: citizen science, community capacity building, and lessons learned about estuary recovery were themes that captured my attention at the International Congress on Conservation Biology conference July 21-25 in Baltimore, MD. Julia Parrish and others in our Pacific Northwest neighborhood were among the speakers about citizen science. See page 5 for information and links of interest.

Within the WSU Beach Watchers program, I am pleased to report that I am a member of Tim Lawrence's committee working on the WSU Master Naturalist program envisioned in his white paper last year. Beach Watchers training is a test case for the new model. I will provide updates on the program as they occur.

Finally, we have crossed an important milestone for our own WSU Island County Beach Watchers program. With recent elections for BWAC, additional insurance provided by LEP for venues and events, and settling most organizational questions, the year ahead should have more time to focus on marine education, science, stewardship, and seeking grants. All good news! Congratulations on your election to BWAC: Loran Blankenship, Kelly Zupich and Kes Tautvydas.

*Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011
BW Program Coordinator Barbara.bennett@wsu.edu*

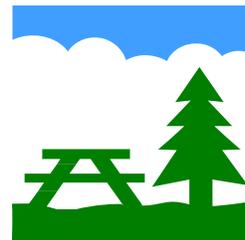


**Words From Tom Vos, President
Beach Watchers Advisory Council (BWAC)**

Administration in Action

It was great to see a number of you out enjoying the sun and socializing at this year's Beach Watchers picnic. We couldn't have asked for a nicer day.

As previously announced, this year we took a few minutes at the beginning of the event to take care of some BWAC business - the election of new members to the Beach Watchers Advisory Council. From the approximately 40 voting members present, we received 23 ballots. The ballot listed new candidates Loran Blankenship, Kes Tautvydas, and Kelly Zupich. In addition, Pam Cooper and Kathy Fritts were up for re-election to a second term. Space on the ballots was also provided for new nominees or write-ins. There were no further nominations or write-ins and all five people on the ballot were elected. Please give these new members of BWAC your congratulations and support as they move into their new roles.



Going forward, the BWAC will focus on transitioning more of the BW project coordination and follow-up from the program coordinator to individual project leaders and steering committees. This structure is already in practice on some of our major projects. This strategy will expand overall program capacity by allowing the Program Coordinator to increase networking and community outreach, seek grant opportunities, and support the university in developing a regional training program. With many of last year's questions about organizational structures and roles and responsibilities behind us, I see BWAC revitalizing its role as the conduit of information and support between the needs of the BW program and the university.



Tom Vos, BWAC President, stvos@whidbey.net

Celebrate the Sea at CamOcean Water Festival

Education in Action

The event runs from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 17, at Cama Beach State Park, 1880 SW Camano Drive, Camano Island. It is supported by the Cama Beach Foundation. A Discover Pass is required for vehicle access to the park.

The waterfront celebration includes information booths, hands-on activities and educational materials provided by a variety of natural resources and ocean conservation organizations that work to restore and maintain Puget Sound and ocean health. Activities include a live, interactive video feed provided by MAST, Adventures Down Under Dive Shop and five Scuba Divers. Visitors can also check out live marine tanks, with help from the Bellingham Marine Life Center and the Washington State University Island County Beach Watchers.

Also featured are guest speakers, live music with Chandlerstone, games, geocaching, arts and crafts, songs and storytelling, toy boat building and a rain gutter regatta. Rental boats and kayaks will be provided by the Center for Wooden Boats.

For more information, visit www.camabeachfoundation.org.



Education in Action



On June 10th and 11th, 2013 Beach Watchers Mic Kisinger, Melody Kuschnerreit, Gayle Nixon and Bill Young teamed up with Susie Richards, Co-Director of Service Education and Adventure (SEA), to provide a series of outdoor education experiences at Camp Casey for third grade students from South Whidbey School District.

On Monday, June 10th, students rotated through three stations presented by the Beach Watchers volunteers. The stations featured quick lessons plus time on the beach identifying marine invertebrate, looking for red, green and brown seaweed, using bird books, binoculars, listening for birds, observing birds and sketching.



On Tuesday, June 11th, Beach Watchers led student groups on walks along the beach at the Keystone ferry landing to look for marine invertebrates as the tide was going out and stopped at the old pier to observe and learn about pigeon guillemots.

In addition to support from SEA, Beach Watchers were also assisted by Bill Bugert, an AmeriCorps member working with SEA, along with students Kyli Rhynalds and Sam Lebrun from the Learn and Serve Environmental Anthropology Field (LEAF) School at Edmonds, and Everett Community College.

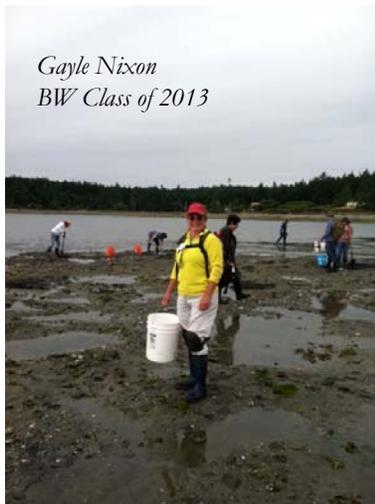
Let me know if you have questions or need additional information on this outdoor educational experience.

Gayle Nixon, BW Class of 2013



Digging for Dinner Makes the Connection between Clams and Water Quality

Education in Action



*Gayle Nixon
BW Class of 2013*

What draws people to retire to an island surrounded by salt water? What would convince them that small things like picking up pet waste in their yard are actually very important to human and marine well being in their own neighborhoods? What message would persuade them that “Puget Sound Starts Here” and convince them to act accordingly?

Whidbey EcoNet partners set out to ask a group of retirees who live on Whidbey Island these questions. Partners include Whidbey Watershed Stewards, Whidbey Island Conservation District, Whidbey Audubon, SEA: Service Education Adventure, WSU Waste Wise, WSU Island County Beach Watchers, Island County Health Department and others. Funded by a grant through Puget Sound Partnership and with the assistance of a consultant, EcoNet hosted three focus discussions with local retirees to learn their answers.

Here is what they learned. In addition to beautiful views of water and mountains, Whidbey retirees really want to have beaches where their grandchildren can go swimming and seafood they can harvest and eat. It all boiled down to water and seafood quality.

How to fit these two priorities into one message? Enter the lowly and delicious clam! Of course! Good swimming and good clamming depend on the quality of both our fresh and salt water systems. What we do on the land (with septic care, lawn care, pesticide and chemical use, pet waste clean up and storm water run off, etc.) directly impacts fresh water quality which ultimately influences the quality of salt water for swimming and clam harvest.

Digging for Dinner (D4D) is a long-standing educational outreach program of Whidbey Beach Watchers volunteer Eugene Thrasher (class of '99) who loves to teach people how to dig for clams. Eugene and his team, Gary Rassner-Donovan (class of '12) and Gayle Nixon (class of '13), adopted this message to carry to D4D this summer. So far, about 170 people have heard the message and have been asked to answer assessment questions. Barbara Bennett is collecting web-based responses to the assessment questions.



Other EcoNet partners are incorporating the same messages into their own activities. Each partner has a different audience and different focus so the same message is being sent in many ways across Whidbey Island. Together we are reinforcing each other.

In coming months, we will report what we learn and what EcoNet will do next.

*Barbara Bennett, BW class of 2011
Photos courtesy of Barbara Bennett*



International Conference on Conservation Biology

Education in Action

As I mingled with thousands of scientists from around the world at the International Conference on Conservation Biology (Baltimore, July 21-25) I wrote my own headlines of favorite themes:



“Conservation benefits from physical sciences combined with local capacity building”

“Restoration of the Chesapeake Bay hinges, in part, on engaging oystermen on opposite sides of the bay with differing priorities for restoration”

“New Technologies enable scientists to remotely engage local residents to collect data”

“Citizen Science requires collaboration between scientists and local citizens”

“Ebird app enables Cornell Lab of Ornithology to track real time migrations of multiple species on multiple continents through sightings posted by thousands of birdwatchers”



I left the conference encouraged that WSU Beach Watchers are current with established and emerging trends in conservation practice which emphasize local capacity building, educational outreach and scientific inquiry in partnership with trained local residents. Technology promises to rapidly expand opportunities in unexpected ways for trained local volunteers to be a resource for future scientific inquiries. The future abounds with remarkable potential!

Barbara Bennett, BW class of 2011

Photos Courtesy of Barbara Bennett



Recreational Crabber Education Grant

Administration in Action



A little piece of cotton cord can make a BIG difference to the crabs in Puget Sound – about 300,000 lbs worth in one year according to WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WA DFW).

It's just common sense – if a crab pot is lost and the door is secured with light 100% cotton cord (*not* synthetic rope, zip-ties or wire) the cord deteriorates and crabs can escape - eliminating wasteful killing of crabs.

Even skilled crabbers lose a crab pot once in a while: currents run strong, propellers cut lines, crabbers misgauge depth... things happen. The numbers of derelict (lost) pots add up and every year there are hundreds of lost pots and thousands of crabs are left in the depths of Puget Sound to die.

In and around Island County, one out of three licensed recreational crabbers has never crabbed in these waters. WSU Beach Watchers are targeting these new crabbers to teach them about “rot cord” and how to make accurate measurements before harvest (male only and at least 6 ¼ inches from tip to tip). Why males only and at least 6 1/4 “ across? Because males this size no longer compete well for females – harvesting them does not reduce productivity (WA DFW).

It's not just common sense and it's now the law. Starting this year, WA DFW is fining crabbers \$100 per pot that is not properly rigged with cotton cord!



WSU Beach Watchers are proud to have received a regional grant from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to educate recreational crabbers on proper crabbing techniques.

Virginia Walton and Elizabeth Rabi making connections with a recreational crabber on opening day for the 2013 Crabbing season at Freeland Perk

Barbara Bennett, BW class of 2011



SUMMER PICNIC 2013

Celebration in Action



July 28 at Deception Pass State Park

With perfect weather; delicious mussels; BBQ brats and hamburgers; great side dishes; and about 50 Beach Watchers and friends, what else could one ask for!?!



Our yearly picnic was a huge success. Throughout this past year Beach Watchers had collected 575 mussel discs which Sammie Kempbell returned to Penn Cove Mussel Farm for 25 pounds of mussels.



They were cooked to perfection by Jill Hein. BBQ “masters” were Sue and John Howard.



There were other activities to watch such as the radio controlled sail boat races, lots of action on both the lake and sound beaches. It was great fun.

Ingri Johnson, BW class of 2006

Photos Courtesy of Jill Hein



Intertidal Monitoring

Citizen Science in Action



The monitoring season is not quite over, with a few beaches to be done in August, but we know that we will have work to do in preparation for the 2014 season. We were challenged this year with a reduced number of ID experts on Whidbey Island, and, as a result, a shortage of monitoring equipment. I am pleased to report that we actually have a number of Beach Watchers who are quite skilled at identifying species, so with the help of Gayle Nixon (class of 2013), the numbers of skilled and confident volunteers will increase over the winter. We were also able to transport the monitoring equipment to monitoring sites with apparent ease. August should be a “piece of cake”.

During the “off” season we will be working on:

- Revising the monitoring procedures (last done in 2003). (Both Camano and Whidbey)
- Improving our abilities to identify species. (Both Camano and Whidbey)
- Revising the beach profiles to make sure they have all information needed. (Both Camano and Whidbey)
- Determining the amount of monitoring equipment needed, and building and/or purchasing the equipment
- On Whidbey, adding a monitoring site at Keystone - details will be worked out by Barbara Bennett and Phillip Osborne (class of 2013).

Wow! Having seen this in black and white, there seems a lot to do! The leads will meet after the season is over to evaluate how things went and celebrate a successful season. Looking at this list, I hope we don't come up with a lot of other things needing updates!

Don't forget that you can see all the monitoring data here:

http://csi.gis.cwu.edu/intertidal_monitor/index.htm

Sue Howard, BW Class of 2006



Whidbey BW Book Club

Education In Action



Yes! There is a Beach Watchers Book club. We meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Freeland Library, from 6:00-8:00 p.m., and all Beach Watchers are welcome to attend.

When we met in July, there was a lively discussion of J. A. Baker's *The Peregrine*. Participants were particularly impressed with Baker's ability to bring his field observations of the natural world to life for his readers, and everyone attending commented on the beauty and power of the book. We also chatted about the importance of the work done by literary naturalists, as it was writers like Baker and Carson who helped make the public aware of the harm caused by agro-chemicals .

The conversation will continue on Tuesday, August 27, when we will meet to chat about Henry David Thoreau's "Walden". If you have not read this often-quoted American classic, please consider adding it to your summer list. Many find the book holds more than they thought it would.

Hope to see you there!

Meeting Dates and Texts

(Please note the location for each meeting is the Freeland Library meeting room)

August 27, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – "Walden" Henry David Thoreau (Lead: Joanna Snow Cruse)

September 24, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Book and Lead TBD

October 22, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Book and Lead TBD

November 26, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – Book and Lead TBD

December (no book group this month!)

If you need additional information about the book group, please contact Kelly Keith keith@whidbey.com or Joanna Snow Cruse joannasnow@whidbey.net.

Kelly Keith, BW Class of 2013



**FREE
Admission!**

SKAGIT RIVER SALMON FESTIVAL



**SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 7, 2013
10 A.M. to 6 P.M.
EDGEWATER PARK • MOUNT VERNON**

Entertainment • Children's Activities • Cultural Enrichment
Salmon BBQ • Beer & Wine Garden

 skagitriverfest.org



SPONSORED BY



PUGET
SOUND
ENERGY





You are invited to a summer celebration on August 14th, 7-9pm at the Seattle Aquarium.

This event is free of charge.

We are featuring three speakers:

Jennifer Lanksbury, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Mussel Watch

Christopher Krembs, Department of Ecology, Eyes Over Puget Sound

Elizabeth Tobin, University of Washington, Processes that control harmful algal blooms

Meet the scientists and fellow marine volunteers at the social hour following the short presentations.

Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HF83N8Z>

Questions? Please contact Janice Mathisen at j.mathisen@seattleaquarium.org

We look forward to seeing you on August 14th.





What We See on Our Beaches



After one of my stints at counting pigeon Guillemots, I checked to see what was hiding under the rocks at low tide. I found some interesting critters you might want to share in the Beach Log.



The first is a long orange blob that I believe is a giant sea cucumber *Parastichopus californicus*.

The second one is a sea star *Pisaster ochraceus*.



The third one I think is the armored sea cucumber *Psolus chitonoides*.

I found these at very low tide on the beach at Lagoon Point South.

Kes Tantrydas, BW Class of 2011

Editor's Note: For all you budding ID experts, how many critters can you find in number 3?



Upcoming Beach Watchers Events



Advisory Council Meetings

Aug 27, Sep 4 - Deception Pass Park administration offices

Remember that the Log is only a small snapshot/outline for events. For the complete picture and details, please visit our events calendar at:

<http://beachwatchers.net/web/>

Camano Island

2013 Steering Committee Schedule, Wednesdays, 9:30 am

Sept 4, Oct 2, Oct 30, Nov 27

2013 Monthly Membership Meeting Schedule, Mondays, 9 - noon

Sept 9 (joint meeting with Whidbey), Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2

Aug 17 – CamOcean – 12:00pm – 4:00pm - Cama Beach State Park

Sep 21—Port Susan Past, Present, Future open house 9-noon (2227 S Camano Dr)

Whidbey Island

2013 Steering Committee Schedule, Mondays 10-noon (Day Rd. Fire Hall)

Aug 26, Nov 5.

2013 Monthly Membership Meeting Schedule, Mondays 10-noon (venues vary, see page 14)

Aug 12, Sept 9 (joint meeting with Camano), Oct 14, Nov 11, Dec 9

2013 2nd Friday BW Breakfast Schedule (Neil's Clover Patch)

Sept 13, Oct 11, Nov 8, Dec 13

2013 Book Club Schedule (Freeland Library)

Aug 27, Sep 24, Oct 22, Nov 26 (see page 9 for details)

Aug 17 - Digging for Dinner, 9:00 (Double Bluff)

Aug 15-18 Island County Fair (BW booth Langley Fair Grounds)

Aug 20, Beach Monitoring, 8:45

Freeland Park (contact Michele Johnson) and Columbia Beach (contact Bill Blair)

Sep 10 - SW planning, 10-noon (Ingri's Nordic Room)

Sep 26 - 3:30-6:30 Oak Harbor Farmers Market (BW booth)



We Invite You to Join Us

for the Monthly

Whidbey Beach Watchers Meetings!

Monday September 9th. Speaker to be announced

will include presentations about the bay restoration

Cornet Bay 10:00am-12:00pm

Remember friends don't let friends miss the Monthly BW Meetings!

Bring a BW Buddy who has never attended before and get a prize!

Contact Kelly Zupich with any comments or questions at redmadrone@hotmail.com

[Link to last month's BW Meeting Minutes](#)

<http://beachwatchers.net/web/whidbey-monthly-meeting-notes-7-8-13/>

2013 BWAC Members

Tom Vos (W)-President; Janet Kramer (C)-Vice President; Nicole Luce (W)-Secretary;
Pam Cooper (C), Skip Ingraham (C), Bobbye Miller (C), Mary Hulbert (W), Virginia Walton
(W), Kathy Fritts (W), Sue Howard (W), Michele Johnson (W).

Beach Log Team

Managing editor: Joanne McMillen, BW Class of 2011

Associate editors: Julie Ward, BW Class of 2011; Jill Hein, BW Class of 2005; Barbara Bennett, BW class
of 2011



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



PugetSoundPartnership
our sound, our community, our chance

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION



DEADLINE FOR NEXT BEACH LOG

September 24, 2013