



# Padilla Bay Newsletter

A Joint Publication of the Padilla Bay Foundation and Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Summer 2004



*Padilla Bay*

National Estuarine Research Reserve

Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is managed by the Washington State Department of Ecology under the National Estuarine Research Reserve System established by NOAA.

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The Padilla Bay Foundation is a membership-based non-profit organization formed in 1987. Its mission is to help preserve the Padilla Bay estuary in Skagit County, Washington, through support of Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

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## New Laboratory Will Offer a Spacious, More Efficient Home for Padilla Bay Research

Preparing the slab for a research lab is more complicated than one would imagine. Quantum Construction's crew laid out a meticulous labyrinth of pipes, drains and conduit in all shapes and sizes, and then laced it with rebar in preparation for pouring the concrete floor. The research staff at Padilla Bay thought long and hard about what they need in a new lab building, visiting other labs, consulting colleagues, and working closely with the architects. Months of inquiry, discussion, and brainstorming has produced plans for a building to meet the changing needs of a growing research program.

The present lab consists of one walled-off room in the old dairy barn. A few counters, desks, work tables, and rolling carts are crammed with equipment and supplies for a variety of ongoing projects. But this is about to change! In addition to the main, 26' x 43' laboratory, the new building will also house a staff office area, volunteer lab for Stream Team monitors, a partially enclosed wash down area, a wet lab, a System Wide Monitoring Program lab, and supply room. All will meet stringent safety and ADA standards. Architects have designed an attractive building with a simple, low profile in keeping with the Breazeale farmstead. See back page for the research lab floor plan, and keep watching over the summer months as this project takes shape. We will post construction updates on the Padilla Bay website at [www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov).



## Padilla Bay Foundation News

### Kraig Kemper Joins the Foundation Board

Landscape designer, avid birder, neighbor, and long-time Padilla Bay supporter Kraig Kemper has agreed to serve as vice-president of the Padilla Bay Foundation board. Welcome back, Kraig!



### Brass Critter Plaques Will Acknowledge Donors

As a part of the Benefactors for the Bay fund raising campaign, major donors can now choose to be acknowledged with a unique brass plaque. Hand cast by Anacortes Brass Works in the shape of Padilla Bay animals, the plaques will be placed in an outdoor display area near the Interpretive Center.

The first two prototypes, a Dungeness crab and an ochre star, can be viewed on the Padilla Bay website at [www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov). Click on "Hot Topics," or go to the "Non-profit Friends Group" tab to see the beautiful brass critters. This web page will be updated as we design more animals.

Donors of \$1000 or more will be offered their choice of critters., with the name of their family, foundation, business, or organization artfully cast in lasting brass. Considering that the money will be matched 2.3 to 1 by a federal grant, every \$1000 donation will become \$3300 for the current facility improvement project. That's money well spent.

### Foundation Sponsors Northwest Straits Initiative Conference

The Padilla Bay Foundation has joined with other non-profit, government, and private groups to sponsor a Northwest Straits Initiative conference June 4 and 5 at the new Everett Events Center. The conference theme is "A Sound Investment: The Northwest Straits Initiative Looks Ahead." It will celebrate five years of successes and help shape the future of marine conservation in the Northwest. For more information, see the conference website at <http://www.nwstraits.org/asoundinvestment> or email [conference@nwstraits.org](mailto:conference@nwstraits.org).



### How You Can Help

Grassroots involvement is the core of Padilla Bay Foundation's commitment to protect Padilla Bay and support the Padilla Bay Reserve.

Membership in the Foundation means you are contributing directly to environmental education and research right here in Western Washington.

Categories of membership are:

Senior/Student	\$20
Individual	\$30
Family	\$40
School/Organization	\$50+
Supporting	\$60
Sustaining	\$100+
Small Business	\$100+
Sponsor	\$250
Patron	\$500
Steward	\$1000

Send your contribution to:  
Padilla Bay Foundation  
PO Box 1305  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 757-3234  
a 501 (c) 3 organization

### Foundation Board Members

President: Patsy Martin  
Vice-president: Kraig Kemper  
Secretary: Richard Treston  
Treasurer: Deb Canon  
Past-President: Ed Gastellum

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Paul Dinnel  
Ivar Dolph  
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Mark Joseph  
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Joan Magee  
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Ralph Munro  
Charlie O'Hara  
Dan Porter  
Dirk Rozema  
Gail Smith  
Tom Smith  
Terry Stevens - Advisory Member  
Kay Reinhardt - Administrator



# Summer

## Presentations for June, July, and August

### Painting a Little Bit of Nature

Use watercolor techniques to capture the small details of the natural world. Local artist and teacher, Roxanne Grinstad will welcome both beginners and experienced painters. You can bring a favorite small natural object, or find one here at Padilla Bay. Please bring a 9"x12" watercolor pad such as #140 watercolor paper, a watercolor set, pencil, eraser, and watercolor brushes. Number 6-8 round brushes will work well. **Saturday, June 19, 1:00-3:00.** Please call or register online.

### Summer Songbirds

Join naturalist, Libby Mills, watching and listening for riparian woodland birds of the Lower Skagit at Wiley Slough. Songbirds should be actively feeding young families. We'll hope to see yellow warblers, marsh wrens, and perhaps we'll even hear the sound of an American bittern. Pack binoculars, field guides, and snack or lunch. Meet at the Skagit Wildlife Area on Wiley Road, Fir Island. Each class limited to 15 participants. Please call to register, or register online. **Friday, July 2 and Saturday, July 3, 8:00-12:00.**

### Sail Aboard the Sophia Christina

Take in the beauty of the waters around Padilla Bay while enjoying the adventure of sailing an elegant, 62' wooden schooner. Captain Jim Taylor and a Padilla Bay naturalist will lead this excursion into one of the most productive ecosystems on earth. **Saturday, July 17.** Two departures at 9:00 and 1:00 from Cap Sante Marina in Anacortes. Cost is \$40. Register online or call the interpretive center soon, as this trip is sure to fill up. Bring a snack and warm, layered clothing.



### Sharks

Enjoy a safe journey into the aquatic realm of sharks. The "King of the Ocean" has ruled for over 250 million years, with total efficiency. Learn about the shark's lifestyle, commercial value, and important role in the natural balance of the ocean. This program by marine educator, Alice Fulton will fascinate both adults and children. **Saturday, August 7, 1:00-2:30.** Please call or register online.

### A Shorebird Primer

Probe the world of shorebirds with wildlife research biologist and naturalist, David Drummond. This presentation and field trip will explore the biology, ecology, and field identification of these amazing Padilla Bay migrants. The field trip portion of the class is limited to 20, so please register early. **Saturday, August 28, 1:00-3:30.**



### Mud Flat Safaris

When the tide goes out at Padilla Bay, it goes all the way out! Come explore this huge expanse of mud, teeming with life. Fearless guides will lead you on a trek into the seldom seen world of the estuary's mud flat. Come with old shoes that tie or snug boots. All ages welcome. The programs begin at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, and end at Bay View State Park. Call the Interpretive Center or register online. **July 1 from 10:00-12:00, July 20 from 1:00-3:00, July 30 from 10:00-12:00, August 14 from 10:00-12:00, August 19 from 2:00-4:00 and August 31 from 12:30-2:30.**

### Beach Seines

No need to get your feet wet to see what's living out there in the bay. Just meet on the beach at **Bay View State Park** and watch while we pull a fish net through the water. Come and learn more about our fine finned friends! No registration necessary. **July 7 at 1:00, July 10 at 10:30, July 28 at 1:00, August 5 at 1:00, August 10 at 11:30 and August 20 at 1:00.**

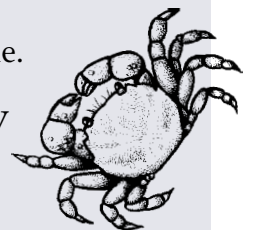
The Breazeale Interpretive Center is open  
Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00-5:00.

Closed July 4

Register online or by phone.

[www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov)

(360) 428-1558.





### Fidalgo Learning about the Intertidal Project

This is a wonderful way to learn more about your local shore. FLIP is a project to bring together scientists, educators, students, and community volunteers to conduct a survey of the intertidal zone of NW Fidalgo Island. Learn about local intertidal plants and animals during training sessions June 28 and 29, and then join the survey June 30-July 5. Optional activities after the survey will include data entry and analysis, algae pressing, and wetland plants identification. Volunteers will host a public tour of the area Saturday, July 3. For more information or a volunteer application, contact Shannon Point Marine Center at (360) 293-2188. Application deadline is June 18.



### Films and Videos:

#### Sundays at 1:00 & 4:00

June	6	Life at the Edge of the Sea (60)
	13	Heron Cove (60 min)
	20	Life Cycle of the Salmon and Salmon of the Skagit (10 min each)
	27	The Magnificent Whales (60 min)
July	4	Closed
	11	Where Have all the Orcas Gone? (40)
	18	The Northern Elephant Seal (14 min)
	25	Seasons in the Sea (55 min)
August	1	Incredible Suckers (60 min)
	8	Pacific Estuaries (28 min)
	15	Owls Up Close (55 min)
	22	Secrets of the Salt Marsh (20 min)
	29	Estuary! (15 min)

### Kayaking in Padilla Bay

Enjoy a summer day of paddling on Padilla and Fidalgo Bay. An Island Outfitters guide and a Padilla Bay naturalist will lead these trips. No experience necessary, just come with a lunch, water bottle, and warm clothing (rain gear, non-cotton layers, hat). Minimum age is 12, with people under 18 accompanied by a parent. Participants meet at 10:30 at the Island Outfitters store on 24th & Commercial, Anacortes. Fee is \$55 per person for a 5 hour trip. Call Island Outfitters at 299-2300 to register. **June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7, and August 21.**



## Monthly Youth Programs Offer Fun Learning

**Mini Explorers** are the 3-5 year old learners. We look at a new topic each month, with stories, games, hands-on observations, art projects, and plenty of action. Call no more than 2 weeks ahead to register.

June 23 & 24, 10:00 & 1:00  
**Food Chain—Who's eating whom in the estuary?**  
*Come and find out with stories, songs and activities.*

July 14 & 15, 10:00 & 1:00  
**Elegant Eelgrass— Find out all about our favorite plant in Padilla Bay.** *We will take a trek to the beach to see where eelgrass lives and who uses eelgrass for a home.*

August 11 & 12, 10:00 & 1:00  
**Mud Flat Safari—Head for the mud to see what lives beneath the tide in Padilla Bay.** *Come with a jacket and snug boots or old shoes that tie for this trek to the beach.*

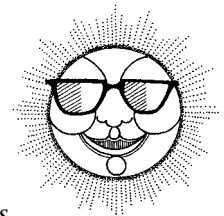


**Junior Ecologists** are 6-9 year olds who have fun exploring the estuary. Excursions to the beach, science experiments, games, art projects, and studying life in the bay -- this program is guaranteed fun! Call the Interpretive Center to register.

June 25 & 26, 1:00-2:30  
**Here Comes the Sun—Celebrate the longest days of the year as we learn about how our sun gives energy to everything around.**

July 23, 1:00-2:30  
**Plants are Pals—We depend on plants for all sorts of things, including our food and the air we breathe.** *Come investigate plants in the estuary from tiny plankton to giant kelp.*

August 27, 10:00-11:30  
**Mud Flat Safari—This is our exciting annual trip to Padilla Bay's mud flat.** *There's no better way to experience the bay! Bring a jacket and snug boots or old shoes that tie.*



## National Evaluation Panel Praises the Work of the Northwest Straits Initiative

by Sasha Horst

The five-year-old, citizen-based Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative, driven by county Marine Resources Committees (MRCs) recently underwent its first evaluation.

The Initiative is overseen by a Commission with staff located at Padilla Bay NERR.

A national review panel of experts recently recommended extension and expansion of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative. Chaired by former US Environmental Protection Agency director William Ruckelshaus, the panel praised the Initiative for implementing effective projects that restore the marine ecosystem, and for initiating projects that improve the marine habitat and protect salmon, bottom fish, shellfish and other marine resources.

“They have used local ideas and sound science to come up with useful, effective accomplishments,” said Ruckelshaus, “The degree of cooperation this process has engendered among tribes, state, county and municipal government bodes extremely well for future progress.”



Northwest Straits Commission director, Tom Cowan, with evaluation panel chair William Ruckelshaus



### Analyzing Large Woody Debris in a Padilla Bay Marsh

If you drive Bayview–Edison Road in the fall or winter you can look down the bluff a mile north of the Breazeale Interpretive Center and see a mass of logs in a lagoon. That is Sullivan-Minor, a remnant salt marsh habitat that one Padilla Bay researcher dated to be 3750 years old.

The wood on that salt marsh is part of a new study by Huxley College graduate student Andrea MacLennan. Scientists have determined that salt marshes are some of the most productive ecosystems on the planet. Puget Sound beaches are frequently characterized by drift wood or drift logs, also known as large woody debris. Large amounts can accumulate in salt marshes. Some biologists think that moderate quantities of woody debris might increase nearshore habitat quality, but no research has verified this. On the other hand, shifting logs may crush and destroy salt marsh plants.

Andrea was awarded a Research Assistantship to study large woody debris in Sullivan-Minor and in a large salt marsh in Elger Bay, Camano Island. She will look at historical conditions in the marshes using historic maps and land surveys, will track more recent changes in the amount and movement of logs using aerial photos, and will also collect a variety of field data on size, origin and location of wood, and surrounding marsh characteristics. Her questions include:

Does the wood come from human activity such as logging and pilings, or from natural events such as land slides and floods?

What is the connection between large woody debris and marsh ecology?

How much do the logs move during storms and high tides, and what effect does this have on marsh plants?

Research Assistantships like the one awarded to Andrea are provided with funds from the Padilla Bay Foundation, Tesoro Northwest Company, and the Coastal Zone Management Program of the Washington State Department of Ecology.

## Interpretive Center Remains Open in the Midst of Construction

When visiting Padilla Bay this summer, be prepared for change. The rest rooms have been replaced with porta-potties to make way for a multipurpose meeting room. (The larger, new rest rooms will be lovely!) A temporary walkway around the southeast end of the building leads visitors to the “back door entrance.” The staff will do everything possible to make sure visitors can continue to safely enjoy our programs and exhibits throughout the summer and fall. The excitement of walls going up and roofs going on is worth the noise and confusion that construction brings.



Visitors now enter the Interpretive Center using this sidewalk from the parking lot to the Aquarium Room entrance.



The new laboratory floor plan

### Check Inside for the Summer Activity Schedule:

- Presentations
- Mini Explorers
- Junior Ecologists
- Films
- Kayaking

*Padilla Bay*



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