



# Padilla Bay Newsletter

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

Spring 2005



*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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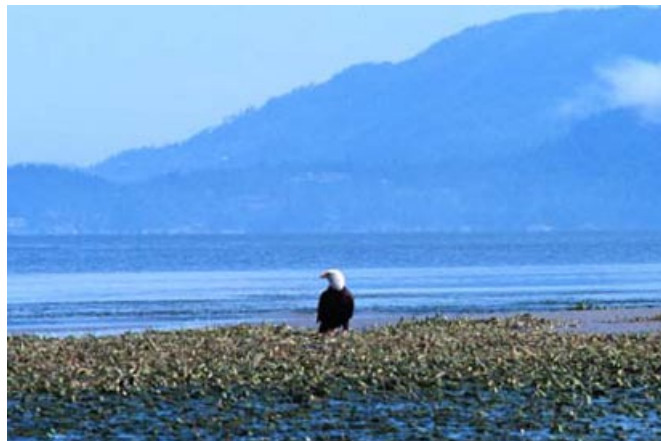
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## The State of the Sound 2004

As an “estuary of national significance,” Puget Sound has been the focus of intensive scientific research for decades. This research has focused on a broad array of topics, from long-term trends in water quality, sediment contamination, and wildlife populations to concentrations of PCBs in seals and Orca whales. Every two years, the Puget Sound Action Team (PSAT), the state’s coordinating body for protecting and restoring the Sound, releases a report describing the results of this divergent research in order to paint a picture of the overall health of Puget Sound. The most recent report, entitled *State of the Sound*, was released in January, 2005.

This report includes a mix of positive and negative news. Thousands of committed people in both the governmental and private sectors are accomplishing a great deal of excellent work, leading to significant improvements in some areas. Yet the Sound continues to show troubling evidence of decline. Most notably, the health of the Sound’s living resources—Orcas, rockfish, marine birds, and others—appear to be in jeopardy, a possible sign of a broader systemic problem.

Hilary Culverwell, the local PSAT Liaison for Skagit, Whatcom and San Juan counties will present the major findings of this report at the Padilla Bay Reserve, **Thursday, April 7 at 7:00PM**. Hilary will discuss why problems exist in the Sound, as well as what federal, state, local, and tribal agencies, non-profit organizations, citizens groups, private entities and others are doing to help. The presentation will include numerous photographs of Puget Sound’s incredible diversity of marine life and provide information about how citizens can get involved in protecting our Sound.



## Padilla Bay Foundation News

### Donations are Adding Up!

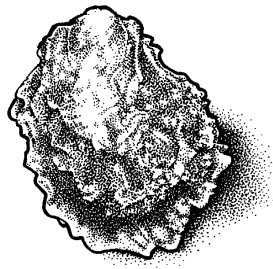
The Foundation is pleased to report a wonderful response to the "Benefactors For The Bay" capital campaign. From small cash box coins & bills deposited by visiting friends to large donations, the contributions are adding up. Our regular membership continues to amaze us with their strong support above and beyond membership dues. Our end-of-the-year solicitation letter for tax deductible donations has been very successful. Larger donations have come in from a number of sources, including individuals, local businesses and other foundations. Over \$103,300 has been raised toward our goal of \$138,000. Matched 2.3 by a federal grant, that means over \$340,000 of support for Padilla Bay. WE THANK ALL OF YOU!

### Festive Event at MoNA Feb. 10 for visiting Educators

Padilla Bay Foundation Board Members hosted a truly cultivated affair at the LaConner Museum of Northwest Art February 10th. In honor of visiting education coordinators and Coastal Training Program coordinators from Estuarine Research Reserves around the country, the Foundation organized a reception in the elegant confines of the museum. MoNA Executive Director Kris Molesworth gave a personal tour of the museum, followed by food and beverages. Board of Directors members were also guests and the festive evening was memorable, not only for our out-of-town visitors, but for those who live locally and have the splendid asset of the Museum of Northwest Art as a close-by treasure. The NERRS educators were in La Conner for their annual meeting, organized this year by Padilla Bay educators.

### New Brass Critter Prototype Debut

Thanks to Taylor Shellfish Farms, long-time supporters of the Padilla Bay Reserve and the Padilla Bay Foundation, we have a 5th brass critter to offer donors. What else could it be but an oyster? The new oyster joins the salmon, Dungeness Crab, seastar, and flounder which acknowledge donations of \$1000 or more.



### Correction

Our winter newsletter inadvertently omitted Ed Gastellum from the list of Foundation Board Members. Though Ed moved off the executive committee where he had served as president, he remains an active board member and enthusiastic supporter. Our sincere apologies for the omission, Ed.



Padilla Bay Foundation

### 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: Kraig Kemper  
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Secretary: Gail Smith  
Treasurer: Deb Canon  
Past-President: Patsy Martin

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Paul Dinnel  
Ivar Dolph  
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Bobbi Krebs-McMullen  
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Ralph Munro  
Charlie O'Hara  
Dan Porter  
Dirk Rozema  
Tom Smith  
Paul Sund  
Terry Stevens - Advisory Member  
Kay Reinhardt - Administrator



# Spring Events

## Presentations for March, April, and May

### Orca Pass International Stewardship Area

Despite the political boundary, the waters between British Columbia and Washington State are really a single ecosystem. In the fall of 1999, more than 20 citizen groups came together to establish a protected area in these shared waters. The area is rich in natural beauty, marine biodiversity, environmentally sensitive habitat, and cultural sites. Britta Eschete of People for Puget Sound will share the origin and future of this proposed marine protected area. **Saturday, March 12, 1:00-2:00.** Please call or register online.

### Owls Outback

To some cultures they are symbols of wisdom, while to others they are harbingers of doom and death. Join wildlife biologist David Drummond for a close look at these exceptional birds. This slide presentation will explore the cultural mythology, biology, ecology, field identification, and calls of local owls. We are repeating this class to accommodate the long waiting list from January's program. **Sunday, March 27, 1:00-2:30.** Please call or register online.

### Wild Edibles of Spring

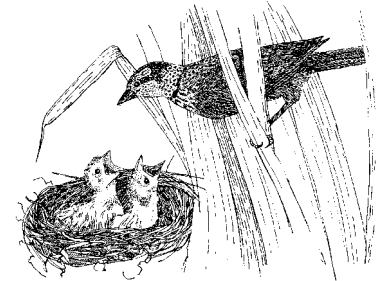
Back by popular demand. Come and witness the exciting new growth of spring. Join naturalist, Marlee Osterbauer in this search for wild edible plants. Marlee will share her extensive knowledge of plant uses and folklore. Weather may be chilly, so dress appropriately. You may want to bring a notebook and pencil along with your appetite. **Saturday, April 23, 2:00-4:00.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.

### Spring Songs – Birding by Ear

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day by boning up on your field identification skills. Join naturalist, Libby Mills, watching and listening for migrating birds around Padilla Bay. Perfect for beginners and experts alike, this class is a favorite. Wear warm, outdoor clothing, and pack binoculars, field guides, and snack or lunch. Binoculars are available for loan from the Padilla Bay Center. Each class limited to 15 participants. Please call June 14 or later to register. **Friday, May 13 and Sunday, May 15, 8:00-12:00.**

### Kayaking in Padilla Bay

Enjoy a spring 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 \$65 per person for a 5 hour trip, with proceeds benefitting the Padilla Bay Foundation. Call Island Outfitters at 299-2300 to register. **March 26, April 2, May 7, and May 28.**



### Summer Opportunity for Teachers

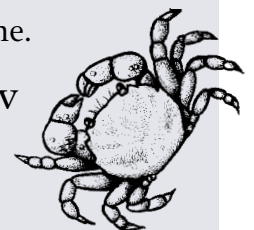
The North Sound Science and Environmental Education Resources Workshop is a chance for teachers to network with local organizations offering environmental education materials. Learn what's out there, how much it costs and funding possibilities, and how new material can supplement science kits and enforce EALRs. Plus, earn free clock hours. **Friday August 12th 9am-4pm at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center** Call for more information, or email [mgroner@padillabay](mailto:mgroner@padillabay).

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

Register online or by phone.

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

(360) 428-1558.



## 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 to register.

March 2 & 3, 10:00 & 1:00  
*Algae–Seaweeds aren't really weeds. Come learn about these great plants in Padilla Bay.*

April 13 & 14, 10:00 & 1:00  
*Salmon–Here is an amazing fish with an incredible life story. Come hear this river-to-sea adventure.*

May 4 & 5, 10:00 & 1:00  
*Life on a Rock–Here's a habitat loaded with plants and animals. Learn all about the critters who call a rock home.*

**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.

March 18 & 19, 10:30-12:00  
*Octopus–Come explore the mysterious world of these amazing eight-legged creatures.*

April 15 & 16, 10:30-12:00  
*Tides–Here's the force that empties Padilla Bay each day. Learn what makes it go, and what it means for plants and animals in the bay.*

May 6 & 7, 10:30-12:00  
*Goofy Gastropods–Learn all about these creatures in the snail and slug clan.*

## Clases en Español por Niños – Totalmente gratis

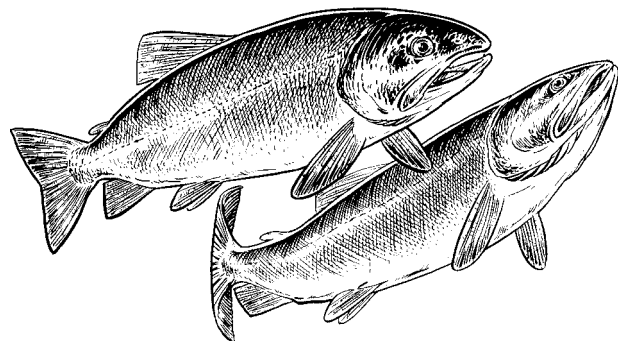
Exploradores Pequeños–por niños de 3-5 años.

el 12 de Marzo, 10:00 - 11:00 por la mañana  
*Alga–¿Que esta cosa babosa que tiene tantos colores y tamaños? En este clase vamos a aprender que es alga y como la prueba. Después vamos hacer un proyecto de arte con alga.*

el 23 de Abril, 10:00 - 11:00 por la mañana  
*Salmones–Salmónes son un parte integral de la ecología del Noroeste Pacífico. Vamos aprender como viven, leer una cuenta sobre un salmón muy especial y hacer un proyecto de arte sobre los salmones.*

el 14 de Mayo, 10:00 - 11:00 por la mañana  
*La Vida en una Piedra–Muchos animales viven cerca de piedras en Padilla Bay. En este clase los niños aprenderán cuales animales viven atrás de, a lado de y ligado a las piedras. Venga listo por una exploración de la playa, una cuenta y un proyecto de arte.*

Por más información sobre las clases o la reserva de Padilla Bay llama (360) 428-1558. Si quisiera hablar en español pide hablar con Maya. Puede registrar por clases en el internet en [www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov) o por teléfono (360) 428-1558. (Pide hablar con Maya por español).



Ecólogos Jovenes–por niños de 6-9 años

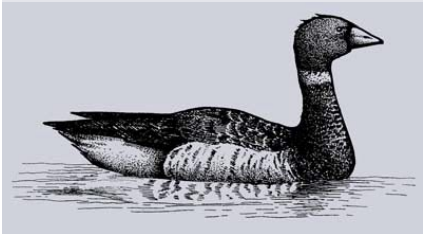
el 12 de Marzo, 1:00-2:30 por la mañana  
*Los Pulpos y Los Calamares- Pulpos son los invertebrados más inteligente en el mundo. Los pulpos más grandes en el mundo viven aquí en Puget Sound. Venga a Padilla Bay para aprender que pulpos y calamares hacen con tantas piernas. Tendremos pulpos y calamares vivos y harémos un proyecto de arte.*

El 16 de Abril, 1:00 - 2:30 por la mañana  
*La Marea- La marea siempre está cambiando. Aprende porque la marea sube y baja y como la marea cambia en Padilla Bay. Dibuja su propia carta de marear.*

el 7 de Mayo, 12:30-2:00 por la tarde  
*Los Caracoles–¿Sabia que los caracoles no tienen huesos y solo tienen un solo pie? Aprende como los Caracoles mudan, comen y duermen, Vamos ir a la playa para observar los Caracoles.*

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

March	6	Eagles (40 min)
	13	The Inland Sea: a Puget Sound Fish Story (12 min)
	20	The Return of the Salmon (30 min)
April	27	Winged Migration (85 min)
	3	Puget Sound: Out Heritage at Risk (27 min)
	10	The Worlds Below (40 min)
May	17	Life at the Edge of the Sea (60)
	24	Heron Cove (60 min)
	1	Life Cycle of the Salmon and Salmon of the Skagit (10 min each)
	8	The Magnificent Whales (60 min)
	15	Where Have all the Orcas Gone? (40)
	22	The Northern Elephant Seal (14 m)
29	Seasons in the Sea (55 min)	



### Brant in Padilla Bay

We often think of birds flying south for the winter, but for many waterfowl and shorebirds, Washington is south! Brant geese (*Branta bernicla*) spend their summers nesting in the tundra of Northern Canada, Russia, and Alaska. As winter approaches, these birds gather into a large flock at the Izembek Lagoon on the Alaskan Peninsula. As many as 150,000 brant gather at the Izembek staging grounds to wait for a low pressure system that will allow them to make their migration south along the pacific flyway. For most of these Brant, this non-stop flight to California and Baja Mexico is long and arduous. It can take as long as 2.5 to 4 days of flying at an average rate of 60 miles per hour.

A relatively small population of Brant (numbering in the thousands) stops to winter in Birch Bay, Samish Bay, Fildalgo Bay, and Padilla Bay. The world's largest population of a rare sub-species of pacific brant, the gray-bellied brant, can be found feeding on eelgrass in Padilla Bay. Brant pick their wintering grounds based on the availability of eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), a tall highly-productive seagrass that used to be found in many estuaries along the pacific coast. Brant are one of the few animals that feed directly on eelgrass. Like many migratory birds, the brant's dependence on a wide range of habitats and a small number of food sources make them a vulnerable population.



### Blackberry Removal in the Upland

If you have walked the Upland Trail during the spring or summer time then you have most likely noticed the abundance of ripe juicy blackberries. Although these berries may seem like a delightful treat, they are actually a non-native invasive plant. The Himalayan Blackberry is scattered around the 64-acre upland area. Removal of this invasive plant started last summer.

The Himalayan Blackberry is considered a problem because it invades natural habitats and chokes out native plant species. An example of this in Padilla Bay Reserve's upland area is an alder stand just south of the historic rock pile. Blackberry bushes grow to heights of 8 feet in and around the alder stand.

The alders and the blackberries compete for vital nutrients and sunlight. Since the blackberries are able to grow up the trees and intertwine in the trees branches, they oftentimes win this competition. However, this is not the case for the alder stand on our Upland Trail. With the help of Padilla Bay staff and Washington Conservation Corp crewmembers, these alders are now free of blackberries.

Unfortunately, there is still a lot of work to be done before the upland will be free of the Himalayan Blackberry. This is where we need your help. We will be having four blackberry removal parties this spring. This is a great chance for you to make a difference in the environment while having fun. The work parties will be 3 hours long; tools, water, hot beverages, snacks and bandaids will be provided. Bring gloves, and wear sturdy shoes and clothes that you don't mind getting dirty (or torn).

**April 9, April 23 (Earth Day!), May 14, May 28, 9:00-12:00.**

Please call or email Mary Anderson at (360) 428-1043, [manderson@padillabay.gov](mailto:manderson@padillabay.gov) if you have any questions or to sign up.

This is a great community service event for groups or clubs!



If all goes as planned, Padilla Bay staff should be moved into several of the new facility spaces by mid-March. Researchers will be filling the new lab shelves, educators will be moved into new offices, and the Hands On Room will be returned to its original function of providing interactive exhibits for kids and adults. We are looking forward to completing the multipurpose meeting room (above) and helping the native landscape re-emerge. Come and visit us this spring!

### Want to Save Paper?

You can get this newsletter by email. Send us your address, and we will send you an e-mail with a link for downloading the newsletter. You save paper and postage, you find out about classes sooner, and the pictures are in color! Email Alex at [alex@padillabay.gov](mailto:alex@padillabay.gov) for more information. To have a look at our on-line version, go to Padilla Bay's website at [www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov) and click on the Newsletter link.

### Check Inside for the Summer Activity Schedule:

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

*Padilla Bay*



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