

Padilla Bay Newsletter

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

Winter 2012-2013



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.

Padilla Bay Foundation
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A Celebration of the Life of Edna Breazeale

The Padilla Bay meeting room was crowded on the evening of October 25, with neighbors, staff, Foundation members, and special guests remembering the inspiring life and work of Miss Edna

Breazeale. With her brothers, Fred and Marcellus Breazeale, she worked to protect Padilla Bay from development and donated the family farm to Washington State for long-term protection, research and education.

The delightful program was presented by community members (fondly calling themselves Edna’s Neighbors) with support from the Padilla Bay Foundation. Participants shared old photos, remembrances, and stories of visits to “the old folks” on the Breazeale farm. Guests heard of life lessons, lively late night conversations, and serious strategy sessions around tea and cookies.

Throughout all the stories, strong character traits emerged: courageous, curious, respectful, unyielding, intelligent, honest. She was a passionate reader, an avid gardener, and conservationist ahead of her time. Though she outlived her brothers, and was ultimately responsible for transferring the farm to public use, she constantly reminded people that she acted on behalf of Fred and Marcellus. Their intimate connection to and love of the land inspired them to action. “Somehow or other, we knew some of this land should be kept so other children could enjoy it.”

Among Edna’s many qualities, humility was foremost. She would have complained at seeing her photo on the front cover of this newsletter. And she would have corrected the grammar with a red pen and a “Well dear, it’s a good start. . . “





Boat Ramp and Upland Trail Renovation Completed

The next time you're strolling through "downtown" Bay View, check out the newly renovated boat ramp just north of Rozema Boatworks. As local boaters well know, the 1984 ramp had been in need of attention for several years. The tidy new high-tide ramp is wider than before, with improved surface traction, pilings for boat tie-up, and a new pervious parking area with planned native landscaping. A sloped surface on the south side of the ramp assists with kayak launching. Thanks to Rozema Boatworks for providing and installing steel plate to extend support for boat trailers beyond the base of the concrete ramp.

At the same time, the upland trail received a much-needed replacement of its asphalt surface in the lower section, making it "user-friendly" to wheelchairs and strollers. New crushed rock covers the steepest slope of the hill, and the open meadow portion remains in mowed grass. We plan to improve surface water drainage at the top of the hill sometime in spring 2013. (Until then, rubber boots are handy.)

Work was done by Matia Construction of Ferndale, WA with engineering and design by Robert Boudinot of Mt. Vernon. These projects were funded by a grant from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, (our federal partner in the Estuarine Reserve System), with matching donations from the Padilla Bay Foundation and the Washington State Department of Ecology. The Reserve would like to extend its appreciation to the Bay View Citizens Committee that provided planning and design assistance throughout the process! We have greatly appreciated all the positive calls and messages from people who enjoy these facilities.



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	\$25
Individual	\$35
Family	\$50
School/Organization	\$50+
Supporting	\$75
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

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PADILLA BAY FOUNDATION NEWS

The National Environmental Education Foundation has awarded Padilla Bay Foundation \$2,000 to be used in year 2013 to host events that bring the community out to the Reserve to learn and enjoy the facilities. This follows on the heels of the \$5,000 grant awarded us by the same organization in year 2011. That award was for capacity building of our organization and we used the funds to identify some visions for future community outreach in our mission to assist the Reserve. We also were able to contract with a local Bellingham company to build a blog that will be helpful in sharing news throughout the year about the work we do. The blog will be found at padillabayfoundation.org. Stay tuned and remember to visit the Reserve's web site for its link to the Facebook page and also to see when the blog goes live.

Padilla Bay Foundation is a membership-based non-profit organization. Its mission is to help preserve the Padilla Bay estuary through support of the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Foundation programs include:

Support for Education

- Funding for aquaria and displays
- Purchase of educational equipment
- Funding for public programs and presentations
- Scholarships for WCC staff

Support for Research

- Funding support for students
- Purchase of research equipment

To contact the Padilla Bay Foundation:

Kay Reinhardt, Admin. Officer
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 PO Box 1305
 Mount Vernon, WA 98273
 360-757-3234
foundation@padillabay.gov



photo by Amylynn Richards

Name _____	Membership Category _____
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Check enclosed
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Research Staff Receive Ecology Director's Award for Biomonitoring Project

The Padilla Bay research team was recognized in October for their excellence in science by Washington State Department of Ecology Director Ted Sturdevant. Heath Bohlman, Dr. Douglas Bulthuis, Nicole Burnett, and Suzanne Shull received the Director's Choice Award, given for outstanding work or completion of a critical project. These dedicated staff recently completed the first year of an extensive eelgrass monitoring project.

Over the past year, the team established 2 1/2 mile long transects across the bay and collected data from 150 plots along the transects each month for a year. They trudged through sticky mud in the wind, rain, summer heat, and winter dark. Because the lower zone of the transect is subtidal, the team establish a certified SCUBA diving program in partnership with Western Washington University's Shannon Pont Marine Center. Back at the lab, they carefully sorted, dried and weighed samples, and then mapped the results.

The project measures changes in native and non-native eelgrass in Padilla Bay. Researchers are especially interested in whether rising sea level will affect the health and extent of eelgrass in the bay. Padilla Bay contains approximately 25% of the eelgrass in all of Puget Sound and is critical habitat for important marine species like young Dungeness crab and juvenile salmon.



Well done, Padilla Bay research staff!



Padilla Bay Foundation Membership

Grassroots involvement is the core of Padilla Bay Foundation's commitment to protecting our estuaries and supporting the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Members of the Padilla Bay Foundation contribute directly to environmental education and research at Washington State's only Estuarine Research Reserve.

Memberships can be for multiple years. Please consider payment of 2 or 3 years at a time, as this will save the Foundation considerable labor and mailing costs and insure that your dues work harder supporting the programs you care about.

Please fill out the reverse side of this form and join today.

Membership Categories

Senior/Student	\$25
Individual	\$35
Family	\$50
School/Organization	\$50
Supporting	\$75
Sustaining	\$100
Small Business	\$100
Sponsor	\$250
Patron	\$500
Steward	\$1000
Benefactor	\$2000

Hand cast brass critters, mounted at the Interpretive Center, are available to donors of \$1000 and above who would like to be acknowledged in this way.



Winter Events

Presentations for December 2012, January and February 2013

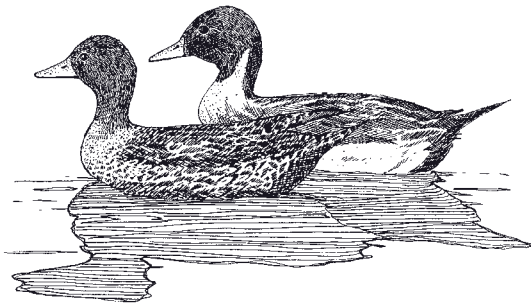
Raptor Class

The Skagit Flats are nationally recognized for their hundreds of wintering birds of prey. This class will teach about different kinds of raptors, emphasizing field identification and the particularly fascinating element of winter behavior. Instructor Bud Anderson has studied raptors for over 35 years, and has an incredible knowledge of local populations and peregrine falcons. This 5 week class meets Tuesdays from 7:00-9:00PM beginning January 8, with a Saturday field trip. The class fee is \$150 per person. To register, send check or money order to the Falcon Research Group, PO Box 248, Bow, WA 98232.



Salish Sea Ducks Part 2: Dabblers, Geese and Swans

The Anatidae family is a fascinating group of waterbirds! Their anatomical adaptations reflect their various roles in our diverse Northwest ecosystems. Join David Drummond, wildlife biologist and director of the Merlin Falcon Foundation, to learn about field ID, habitat associations and behaviors of these delightful winter denizens. If you'd like to better understand and appreciate their life history stories, join us for this "fresh from the field" program! **Saturday, January 19, 1:00-2:30.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.



Winter Birding

Don't let the short, cool days of winter keep you inside! Libby Mills will lead beginners and experts alike, listening and watching for winter's birds.



We'll find tough little songbirds who stay through the worst of weather and the "big guys"— the raptors and waterfowl who know that winter is the best time to be here. Bring warm and dry layers, a snack, and maybe a hot thermos. Scopes are handy. Binoculars are available for those who need them. We'll meet at the Interpretive Center and carpool. **Saturday, December 1 and Sunday, February 3, 8:30-12:30.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.

Introduction to Hawks of the Skagit

Learn to recognize the most common species in our area with raptor biologist and falcon aficionado, Bud Anderson. A slide presentation from 9:00-11:00 will introduce you to raptor biology, field characteristics, and common behaviors. The afternoon field trip runs until around 2:00 and is limited to 15 participants. **Saturday, January 5, 9:00-11:00.** Register online or by phone.

Aquarium Tour and Fish Feeding

Padilla Bay's aquarium inhabitants are always changing. Join Padilla Bay's aquarist, Mark Olson for a behind-the-tanks view of our new system, and a close-up look at the amazing critters in the tanks. From the best camouflaged pipefish and flounder to the flashiest seastars and anemones, aquarium inhabitants have unique habits and stories. **Saturday, January 26, 11:00.** No need to register. Just join us in the aquarium room at 11:00.

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

Staff are available 7 days a week.

Register online or by phone.

www.padillabay.gov

(360) 428-1558



Aquarium Notes

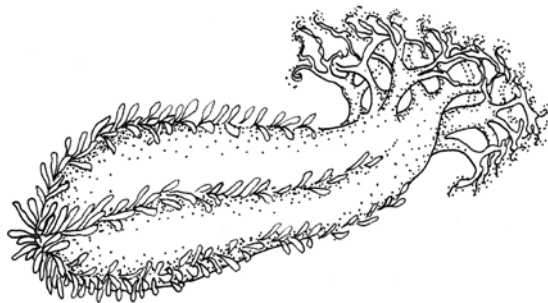
Orange Cucumber, *Cucumaria miniata*

If there were a prize for the loveliest ornament in Padilla Bay's aquarium, it would certainly go to this feathery beauty. Many of us have seen these bright orange blobs squeezed under rocks and boulders at low tide. But we seldom have the pleasure of watching ten fully open tentacles catching food and one-by-one tucking into the waiting mouth. One can't help thinking of a child with sticky fingers, meticulously licking each in turn.

If you're fortunate to find one in a tidepool or out from under its rock, you'll understand how it got the nickname, red ghurkin. Like all sea cucumbers, this one belongs in the echinoderm phylum, along with sea stars, sand dollars, and urchins. It eats detritus and tiny animals, acting a bit like a feather duster mopping up the bottom of the Sound (or aquarium). It, in turn, is eaten by its cousin the sun star and other sea stars.



On your next trip to Padilla Bay, spend some time looking past the fish and concentrating on the amazing life packed into the bottom of the tanks. Burrowing, squeezed, attached, hidden, crowded—the “benthic” dwellers are making the most of life on the bottom.



Monthly Youth Programs Offer Fun Learning

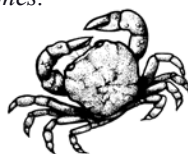
Mini Explorers are the 3-5 year old learners. We look at a new topic each month, with stories, games, hands-on observations, art projects, and plenty of action. Call the Interpretive Center to register or register online.

December 12 & 13, 10:00 & 1:00
Songs and Stories—*Join us for the best of our wonderful estuary songs and stories. This will be an action-filled program.*



January 9 & 10, 10:00 & 1:00
Our Fine Feathered Friends—*Find out what makes a bird a bird, and why they love Padilla Bay.*

February 13 & 14, 10:00 & 1:00
Have to Have a Habitat—*Padilla Bay is a perfect home for so many plants and animals. Come and learn about all sorts of different estuary homes.*



Junior Ecologists are 6-9 year olds who have fun learning about 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 or register online.

December 14 & 15, 10:30-12:00
Wild about Water—*Wet, wonderful, wild water. We'll experiment and play and see how to take care of the water we can't live without.*



January 18 & 19, 10:30-12:00
Swans—*These large, graceful birds come from Alaska and the Canadian tundra to winter in the Skagit Valley. Learn all about them and take home your own swan game.*



February 8 & 9, 10:30-12:00
Marine Mammals—*Living in the water but breathing air, these amazing creatures have all the tricks for survival.*

For Teachers



Storming the Sound North

Environmental Educators from the North Puget Sound region will be gathering for a day of workshops, networking, and information sharing. Thursday, January 31, 9:00-4:00 at Maple Hall in LaConner. Padilla Bay staff are helping to organize and sponsor this event for classroom teachers, agency staff, and educators from non-profit groups. Teachers—there is money available for substitutes. Call the Reserve at 428-1558 or check our website at www.padillabay.gov for more information.



Workshop-Project Learning Tree, Project Wet & Wild

Saturday, February 23, 9:00-3:00.

Teachers—here's an exciting workshop that will give you tools and skills to incorporate forests, wildlife, and water into your teaching. You'll receive four award-winning and classroom tested books chock full of great activities for K-12 students. Free clock hours provided. The \$70 fee for this workshop covers the cost of four books. For more information or to register, call the Reserve at 428-1558, or register online at www.padillabay.gov.



2013 Beach Watcher Lecture Series

January 11, 7PM

From Satellite to Salish Sea. The National Wildlife Refuge System: A Network for Wildlife. Lorenz Sollman, Deputy Refuge Manager, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington Maritime Refuge Complex, Sequim, WA

February 8, 7PM

Ocean Debris: The Pacific Gyre and the Fuk Tsunami. Dr. Jan Newton, Principal Oceanographer, Applied Physics Laboratory, U of W and Executive Director, Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS).

March 8, 7PM

Designing a Healthy Salish Sea. Dr. Joe Gaydos, Wildlife Veterinarian and Chief Scientist, Sea Doc Society, University of California – Davis.

April 12, 7PM

Removal of the Elwha Dam and Ecological Restoration of the Elwha River. Dean Butterworth, Outreach and Education Specialist, National Park Service, Olympic National Park.

Lectures will be held at Northwest Educational Service District 189 Building, 1601 R Ave, Anacortes.

(From Q St., turn on to Seafarer's Way, turn rt. onto R St. at stop sign and continue on to the Northwest Educational Service District's parking lot (there will be signs pointing the way and Beach Watchers, too!)

Sponsored by WSU Skagit Beach Watchers & Friends of Skagit Beaches. Lectures are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Matt Kerschbaum (360) 293-0773.

Welcome New AmeriCorps Staff

Jon Eilers (right) is the new facilities and operations corps member. A Skagit County native, he attended Pacific Union College, a tiny school in Napa Valley, where he earned a degree in Biology. As a child, he remembers losing a boot to the suction of Padilla Bay mud and being in awe of the critters in the aquariums. He is thrilled to be a part of the team that inspired him as a kid and is looking forward to an adventurous year.

Paul Argites (left) joins the research team. Originally from Redmond, WA, Paul attended Western Washington University. He has a BS in Environmental Science with a focus in Freshwater Ecology. This is Paul's second year with the Washington Conservation Corps. Last year he worked on the Skagit crew performing trail maintenance in the North Cascades National Park, and invasive species control in Skagit and San Juan Counties.

Stephanie Fischer (center) is the new education corps member. Stephanie recently relocated from Maryland, where she worked on the education team at the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. After assisting with the Cider Press programs, she is ready to hit the ground running with the Mini Explorers and Junior Ecologists!



AmeriCorps Training

During the week of October 15-18 our new employees went to a training at Fort Worden State Park with all 300 members of the Washington Conservation Corps. At this training Jon, Paul, and Stephanie became certified in CPR, learned how to prepare for backcountry camping, and how to create a successful watershed restoration project.

They also participated in workshops that included learning about each other's work styles and personalities. The Washington Conservation Corps even offered a class where Jon, Paul, and Stephanie learned how to create and balance a budget, which will definitely help them in the long run!

Overall, the training was a blast, and our new members made a lot of new connections with other AmeriCorps staff. You may be seeing other AmeriCorps faces who will be helping out the reserve by job shadowing throughout the year.



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