

Padilla Bay Newsletter

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

Winter 2017-2018



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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For more news, research updates, program details, see our website at www.padillabay.gov.

To request materials in a format for the visually impaired, call the Reserve at 360-428-1558, Relay Service 711, or TTY 877-833-6341.

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Youth Earth Summit

One of the most exciting days at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Reserve is the annual Youth Earth Summit. The Interpretive Center and meeting rooms fill with passionate and energetic high school students, ready to work to protect and restore their small piece of this world. This year's event is scheduled for December 7, 2017. Inter-school networking is an important part of the day, and students have a chance to meet students from other schools and to share their successes and problems. Students meet scientists and environmentalists, hear about regional issues and appreciate being treated like mature and responsible citizens.

The summit began as a volunteer-initiated program in 2008, and continues to draw high school youth from Northwest Washington for a day of networking, planning, learning, and inspiration. Each year we welcome approximately 90-100 students and teachers from 8-10 schools in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, and San Juan Counties. Many are members of organized environmental clubs. Others are students in AP Environmental Science classes or alternative high schools with an environmental focus. Sessions are action-oriented, and clubs have gone back to their schools with concrete plans for action. Students have initiated solar energy projects at their schools, carried out waste audits, created environmental videos, installed water bottle filling stations, built rain gardens, and volunteered on habitat restoration projects as a direct result of participation in the Youth Earth Summit.

While response from the students is positive and enthusiastic, (Students are involved in planning the event.) the many volunteers and teachers who help make the Summit happen also come away inspired and full of hope, and perhaps a little exhausted. Three cheers for the next generation!



Youth Earth Summit participants from Spring Street International School, Friday Harbor



Presentations for December, January, and February 2017-2018

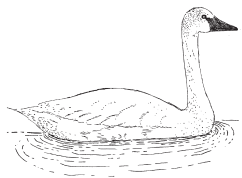


Seals and Sea Lions

When you encounter a marine mammal in or out of the water, do you know who you're seeing? Join us to learn the differences between the three Pinniped families and their species. We will explore their ranges, preferred habitats, food, bio-ecology and fascinating behaviors in the northern oceans. Instructor, David Drummond is a Wildlife biologist-Naturalist who has spent many years onboard coastal and deep water vessels from the Arctic to Antarctic and in between. **Saturday January 20, 1:00-2:30pm.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.

Swans in the Skagit Valley

The swan as a mythical creature goes back to the earliest human cultures. Each year, the Skagit is the winter home of thousands of swans that nest in the arctic. Martha Jordan, biologist with Northwest Swan Conservation



Association will present life history, current issues and tips for finding and observing swans without disturbing them. **Saturday, January 27, 1:00-2:30PM.** Please register online.

Raptor Class

The Skagit Flats are nationally recognized for their hundreds of wintering birds of prey. This class will teach you 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 **February 6**, with a Saturday field trip. The class fee is \$175 per person. To register, send check or money order to the Falcon Research Group, PO Box 248, Bow, WA 98232.

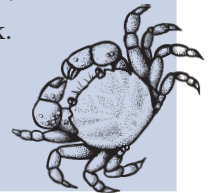
The Breazeale Interpretive Center is open to the public Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00-5:00.

Staff are available 7 days a week.

Register online or by phone.

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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 9:00-11:00AM will introduce you to raptor biology, field characteristics, and common behaviors. An afternoon field trip runs until around 2:00PM and is limited to 15 participants. **Saturday, February 3, 10:00AM-12:00 noon.** Register online or by phone. There is a separate registration for the field trip.



Aquarium Tour and Fish Feeding

Come and find out what's new and exciting in our aquariums. Join aquarist, Mark Olson for a behind-the-tanks view of the system, and a close-up look at the amazing critters in the tanks. **Saturday, February 24, 11:00AM.** No need to register. Just join us in the aquarium room at 11:00.



Upland to Bay to Skagit

Flats: Winter Birds with Libby Mills

Our hardy resident birds are busy with winter foraging, while migrants from the north are filling the fields and bays. Come explore the uplands, farmland, and waters around Padilla Bay with Libby Mills. Bring warm layers and a snack. Binoculars are available for those who need them. We'll meet at the Interpretive Center parking lot. **Sunday, December 3, 8:30AM-12:00 noon and Friday, February 16, 8:00AM-12:00 noon.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.

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 13 & 14, 10:00AM & 1:00PM

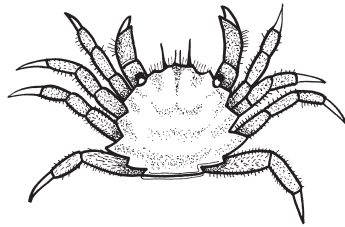
Song and Story Fest—Join us for our favorite estuary songs, stories and activities.

January 17 & 18, 10:00AM & 1:00PM

Wet and Wonderful Water!—Become a water drop on an amazing journey and find out why good clean water is more precious than gold.

February 7 & 8, 10:00AM & 1:00PM

How Animals Eat—You won't find forks and spoons on Padilla Bay's beach, but estuary animals have all sorts of ways to make sure they get enough to eat.



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 or register online.

December 15 & 16, 10:30AM-12:00 noon

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.

January 12 & 13, 10:30AM-12:00 noon

Migration Adventure—From baby crabs heading out to deeper water to swallows who fly halfway around the globe, estuary animals are often on the move. Come find out more!

February 16 & 17, 10:30AM-12:00 noon

Native Americans—For thousands of years, people have been living near our local estuaries. Hear their stories, try their art, and find out how important the coast was to their lives.



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