

Padilla Bay Newsletter

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

Spring 2008



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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Mount Vernon, WA 98273
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Padilla Bay Poets Anthology

What is an estuary? Technically, it is a partially enclosed coastal water body with salty ocean water diluted by fresh water from the land. The most complete understanding, however, requires looking at the subject holistically to include ecological, cultural, historical, sociological, aesthetic, and economic perspectives.

One day each August, poets gather at Padilla Bay to learn from experts in the field of nature poetry. The participants learn about the ecology and biology of estuaries and get their feet muddy in Padilla Bay. With a heightened awareness and understanding, they are then given an opportunity to write about their experience, to share and to critique their work.

Poems from fourteen years of workshops were recently submitted for publication in a new juried collection, *Padilla Bay Poets Anthology: Impressions of the Salish Sea*. These attractive, hand-bound volumes are for sale from the Padilla Bay Foundation. Stop by the Interpretive Center to purchase one, and enjoy the rich feast.

Written Between Tides

In soft mud, in the shallow bay,
a fine looping calligraphy
traces
the clustered horn-snails' way.

Pooling in slender runnels,
skimming the sheen of tidal silt,
they leave behind the text
of their small wanderings.

At bay's edge, I watch
as they chuff soundlessly,
barely moving, while sandpipers
skitter the distance,
and pick one up.

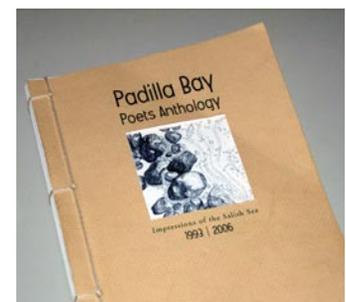
Silty and cool,
it lies still in my palm,
withdrawn to the chamber
of its spiral-ridged shell,
the same brown-gray
as the tide flat:

a batillaria:
common to salt-marsh and bay;
literate as us,
in its own inimitable way.

Briefly, between tides,
the writers and their writings
are apiece.
And I know that joy

grazing the fallow richness
that drifts down
wondrously about them
with each outgoing whisper of
moon's tide.

- Tim McNulty



NERRS Honors Terry Stevens

Terry Stevens, manager of the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve since 1982, received the second annual award for outstanding contributions to the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS).

Outgoing National Estuarine Research Reserve Association (NERRA) President Paul Dest and NOAA's Estuarine Reserves Division Chief Laurie McGilvray presented the crystal award to Stevens during a dinner ceremony Oct. 25 at the NERRS Annual Meeting in Shepherdstown, W.Va.



Stevens was cited for his role in founding the non-profit National Estuarine Research Reserve Association and his success in building partnerships to support the Padilla Bay Reserve, among other things.

The award, established in 2006, is presented to a person who has "demonstrated exemplary leadership and sustained commitment to the mission of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System." Nominations are solicited from staff and friends of the reserves, and the NERRA executive committee makes the final selection.

Padilla Bay Foundation News

An Afternoon with Artist, Allen Moe

"Wondrous pieces which are like no others," only begins to describe the amazing work of ceramicist, painter and maker of castings, Allen Moe. "My work celebrates the specific details of the world around us. I hope that presenting bits of the environment out of their normal context might cause us to

pause and really look at something that might otherwise go unnoticed."

With slides and a lecture, Mr. Moe will be explaining his methods and inspirations at the Padilla Bay Reserve on **Saturday, March 8th from 1:00-3:00PM.** Light refreshments will be served. RSVP online at www.padillabay.gov or call the Interpretive Center at (360) 428-1558.



Scalpin Head, Fins, Deerskin, 9" H



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	\$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

Foundation Board Members

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Spring Events

Presentations for March, April and May

Amazing Amphibians

Refresh your “Spirit of Spring” with the cleansing energy of the wetland hoppers and sliders. Their songs inspire us, and what better way to get into the season than to discover amphibian adaptations, habitats, ecology. Using visuals, and field investigation, David Drummond, Merlin Falcon Foundation Biologist will discuss the bio-ecology of our regional species of frogs, salamander and newts, some of which are endemics. We will also explore the Padilla Bay Center uplands for these incredible creatures! Dress for the outdoors. **Saturday, March 8, 1:00-3:30.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.



The Spring Chorus: Birding by Ear

Join naturalist, Libby Mills, listening and looking for neotropical migrant birds. There is no better time of year to enjoy the music. This excursion involves a **slow** walk around the reserve uplands, so you may want to bring a folding chair. Pack warm clothes, binoculars, field guides, and warm drink or lunch. Meet in the Padilla Bay parking lot. Each class limited to 15 participants. **Friday, April 11 and Saturday, April 12, 8:00-12:00.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.



Wild Edible Plants

Come and experience our annual celebration of spring’s bounty. Join naturalist Marlee Osterbauer in this search for wild edible plants. She 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. **Saturday, May 17, 2:00-4:00.** Please register online or call the Interpretive Center.

Cool School Challenge: Teacher Workshop about Implementing Climate Change Solutions at Your School

Teachers of grades 7-12 are invited to participate in a 3-hour paid workshop to learn about this exciting new educational program. The Cool School Challenge engages students, teachers and districts in a school-wide initiative to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 2000 pounds or more per classroom, per school year. The Challenge empowers students to become leaders, take action, and make a difference. The program can be administered by any teacher interested in becoming a “Challenge Coach,” and is especially suited for science and math teachers.



Join us and learn more about implementing the Cool School Challenge at your school. Free WA State Clock Hours will be provided. Puget Sound Energy is offering a \$100 stipend for attending the workshop. An additional \$200 honorarium will be awarded to teachers who then implement the Challenge at their schools, submit their results and provide feedback.

This workshop is presented by Katie Fleming of RE Sources for Sustainable Communities, with support from the Northwest Clean Air Agency, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency and Puget Sound Energy. **Saturday, March 22, 9:00-12:00.** Please contact Katie at katief@re-sources.org or 360-733-8307 to register. Visit www.coolschoolchallenge.org for more information.

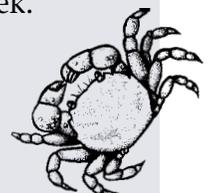
The Breazeale Interpretive Center is open to the public Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00-5:00.

Staff are available 7 days a week.

Register online or by phone.

www.padillabay.gov

(360) 428-1558



Organic Garden Project Benefits Local Community Food Banks

This spring, Washington Conservation Corps members at Padilla Bay are busy creating a garden that will provide over 100 pounds of fresh produce to food banks in Skagit County. The goal is to develop a community garden at the Reserve, offering nutritious food to Skagit families as well as increasing environmental awareness and promoting sustainable, organic agriculture.

Kyle Koch, with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, has joined Padilla Bay's crew, Amy Campbell, Austin Rose and Emily Mendell. Work began on January 19, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Junior. WCC members will host several volunteer



events beginning **March 8 from 10:00-2:00**. Volunteers can help build raised beds and plant seeds for container gardening. At least two more events will be planned during the growing and harvest seasons.

Call the Reserve if you'd like to help with this exciting project.

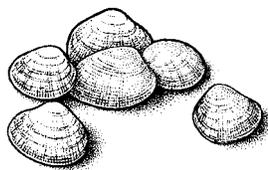


Videos: Sundays at 1:00 & 4:00

March	2	Shadow of the Salmon (42 m)
	9	Strange Days: Invaders (55 min)
	16	Forage Fish/Tiny Tails of Survival (29)
	23	Padilla Bay (20 min)
	30	Strange Days: The One Degree Factor (55 min)
April	6	The Story of Stuff (55 min)
	13	The Northern Elephant Seal (14 min)
	20	Strange Days: Troubled Waters (55m)
	27	The Secret World of Sharks, Rays (60 min)
May	4	Secrets of the Salt Marsh (20 min)
	11	Padilla Bay (20 min)
	18	Planet Earth: Deep Ocean (60 min)
	25	Estuary! (15 min)

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.



March 5 & 6, 10:00 & 1:00
Clams are Cool—*Who's hanging out in Padilla Bay's mud? Come and find out about clams and their bivalve cousins with stories, songs and activities.*

April 2 & 3, 10:30 only

Stars of the Sea—*Meet a sea star face to face and find out all about these colorful creatures and their spiny friends.*

April 30 & May 1, 10:30 only

High Tide-Low Tide—*When the tide goes out, plants and animals have lots of tricks for staying wet.*

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.

March 7 & 8, 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.*

April 11 & 12, 10:30-12:00

Goofy Gastropods—*What else has its mouth in its foot? Learn all about these creatures in the snail and slug clan.*

May 9 & 10, 10:30-12:00

Animal Tracks—*There is nothing like a mud flat to show off signs of animal activity. We'll decipher the clues like detectives and figure out what's happening in the Bay. Bring a jacket and snug boots or old shoes that tie.*



Taking Action to Remove Creosote

The Northwest Straits Commission and Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are engaged in a joint project to identify and remove creosote-laden wood materials from beaches throughout the seven Northwest Straits counties.

Creosote treated wood leaches harmful chemicals on beaches which threaten the health of forage fish eggs and larvae. Researchers with the Skagit Marine Resources Committee found that even 60 year old pilings are leaching creosote daily into the marine environment and a scratch with a finger nail can bring fresh chemicals to the surface.

One cubic foot of creosote treated wood contains at least 20 pounds of creosote. Edible fish and seafood captured from creosote-contaminated areas or held in creosoted cages have been found to contain increased concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), known to be toxic.

In 2006, the Commission worked with DNR to remove creosote at the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, Jetty Island Park, and Lake Hancock. The Northwest Straits Commission used \$35,000 of core funds to support these projects. DNR provided funding and in-kind support for all projects and has sponsored additional removal efforts.

Through the Northwest Straits Foundation an additional \$111,000 was leveraged from NOAA's Marine Debris program for 2007. Several Marine Resource Committees contributed volunteer time to survey beaches and tag creosote debris. In Snohomish County this partnership occurred during the United Way Day of Caring.



Ginny Broadhurst Appointed as Northwest Straits Commission Director

Ginny Broadhurst has been selected to serve as the director of the Northwest Straits Commission, a citizen-based program to restore and protect marine habitat and species in northwest Washington. Broadhurst has served as the interim director since May of 2007, stepping into that role from her previous position as the Commission's Marine Program Coordinator. Broadhurst has worked for the Northwest Straits Commission since 2003.

"Ginny has done an outstanding job as interim director," said Phyllis Kind, Northwest Straits Commission chair. "As director she will lead the Initiative to an increasingly prominent role in the conservation, protection and restoration of our marine environment."

Broadhurst has lived in Bellingham for eight years, and previously worked for the Puget Sound Action Team in Olympia on Puget Sound marine issues. She holds a Master's degree in Marine Affairs from the University of Washington.

"I am honored to be appointed as director," said Broadhurst. "This is an amazing organization that is demonstrating the strength of citizen stewardship. I look forward to great opportunities ahead."

The Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative is authorized and funded by Congress, and brings together diverse representatives to work towards common goals. The Commission provides a scientific ecosystem focus, undertakes regional projects, and funds the volunteer efforts of seven county-based Marine Resources Committees (MRCs) in Clallam, Island, Jefferson, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties.

Current projects of the Initiative include mapping and protection of eelgrass habitat, shoreline restoration, derelict fishing gear removal and restoration of native shellfish. More information is available online at www.nwstraits.org.



2008 Beach Watchers Lecture Series

Salmon Families of the San Juans, March 14

Russel Barsh, Director of KWIAHT, Center for Historical Ecology of the Salish Sea. 7:00PM at Anacortes Public Library

Puget Sound Initiative: Toxics Cleanup in Fidalgo and Padilla Bays, April 11

Sandra Caldwell, Project Lead, WA Department of Ecology Toxics Program. 7:00PM at Anacortes Public Library

The Magic Skagit: A River of Life for Wildlife and People, April 22

Bob Carey, Skagit River Program Director, The Nature Conservancy of Washington. 6:30PM, Skagit Valley Food Coop

Coastal Upwelling and Dead Zones: The Study of Hypoxia Off Washington's Pacific Coast, May 16

Tom Connelly, Graduate Research Assistant, University of WA School of Oceanography. 7:00PM, Anacortes Public Library

Eelgrass Ecosystems: The Web of Life, May 30

Jeff Gaeckle, Seagrass Ecologist, Nearshore Habitat Program, WA Department of Natural Resources. 7:00PM at Padilla Bay
No registration necessary for these programs.



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