

From: [Falzetti, David](#)
To: [Shellmer, Glenn K](#)
Subject: Welcome, Mobile phone
Date: Friday, November 6, 2020 11:59:46 AM
Attachments: [Summer 2020 Brant.pdf](#)
[Spring2020 Brant.pdf](#)
[Winter2020 Brant.pdf](#)
[Summer2019 Brant.pdf](#)
[Brant Autumn 2019.pdf](#)
[Spring2019 Brant \(1\).pdf](#)

Hello Glenn and welcome to the team! We're very happy to have your help. I look forward to meeting you in person. I think you're gonna find the job fun and rewarding. It's a really unique complex with outstanding Refuges that should provide you with some really great adventures. As you mentioned we are well equipped. If you need something that we don't have we can get it for you. I imagine it will take a while to get organized and figure stuff out. Please feel free to reach out to me as I've been there for quite a while and know where "the bodies are buried".

Lorenz may have pointed out the uniform stash in the loft. Help yourself to anything you find useful. Jennifer asked me to get you set up with a mobile phone. Your number is: **360-460-5405**. You have two choices; you can either carry a gov't. issued flip phone, or you can have that number forwarded to your personal phone. Chris preferred that rather than carry 2 phones as he had an unlimited plan on his personal phone. **I'll need your home/personal number for our emergency contact phone list as soon as possible.**

I believe you already met Kirk. He's the "hub of the wheel". I think you will find him extremely helpful. He's quite capable and very knowledgeable about a great many things, especially personnel matters.

We would like to introduce you in our next newsletter as is standard with new employees. A photo would be helpful. Perhaps you have a favorite action shot. I can either use the intro Lorenz sent to the staff, or you can send me a paragraph or two. I've attached a few recent newsletters. The editor is Jason West who also is the President of the Friends of Dungeness NWR Board. They should help you get a feel for the program. When/if you want we can introduce you to one or more of our fantastic Volunteers who are always eager to lend a helping hand.

I mentioned a couple of projects to Lorenz such as the broken trail sign posts, the new map panels that need mounting, and the new fee can insert that needs "adjustments" to the holes for padlocks. I'm sure Lorenz will fill you in and I can elaborate as needed. Hopefully we'll get a seasonal Ranger this Spring which would be a good second set of hands for you at times. We'll know in a few months.

Again. welcome and let me know if there is anything I can help you with. Cheers, Dave

Dave Falzetti
Visitor Services Manager
Washington Maritime NWRC
715 Holgerson Road
Sequim, WA 98382
(360) 457-8451 x 29



THE BRANT

VOLUME 3

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SUMMER 2020

Virus Creates a Busy Summer for the Refuge Without Volunteers

The Refuge volunteer program has been on hold since mid-March. Since the main volunteer activity is greeting visitors at the entry kiosk, USFWS determined the risks were too great and suspended all on-site activities. Refuge staff have been working remotely when possible and the office remains closed to the public.

While the Refuge never officially closed, the closure of Clallam County Parks meant no access for visitors from March until early May. Since then, it's been a very popular destination, with seemingly more visitors than usual.

Without volunteers to greet and educate visitors, some visitors are not following rules. While poor behavior may be frustrating to see, it is important that volunteers not interact with the public.

Three of the more interesting events of the summer include: 1) a sinkhole developed in the main parking lot, which made for some creative parking. It's been determined not to be a significant issue. 2) a small plane landed on the Dungeness Spit. It did not appear the plane was having issues. The pilot took off shortly after landing. 3) In late August a sailboat ran aground on The Spit. It remained there for several days before being towed away.



Stranded on The Spit. Photo: USFWS



No, this is not the new parking lot design. Visitors got creative with the limited parking making three rows of vehicles. Photo: USFWS

Refuge Update

by Dave Falzetti

Hello Refuge Volunteers, I hope this message finds you safe and healthy at home. We had hoped to be back in action by now, but that didn't quite work out. As the "busy" summer season ends, it appears there is no end in sight to the global pandemic. As you must have already guessed, there will be no picnic this year. We encourage you to picnic with those in your "bubble." We'll simply have to eat twice as much next year.

There has been one bright spot in the otherwise silent Volunteer program. We recently received approval from the Regional Office to resume limited mission critical habitat management activities utilizing specific trained Volunteers. That approval came with a long list of precautions and requirements. Although far from normal operations, it's an encouraging first step towards a distant return to normal operations. However, even those activities will be extremely limited at first, consisting primarily of established Weed Warrior projects. There are no new Volunteer opportunities at this time. I know it's not much, but it's a start. Hopefully more will follow.

For now please stay home and stay healthy. Hopefully we can regroup next year. Thank you all for your incredible patience. I look forward to seeing you all back on the Refuge soon.

— Dave

A Note from the President

by Jason West

Well, I'd hoped 2020 was going to be the "Year of Awareness for Friends" but it seems 2020 had other plans. For the second year in a row Dungeness Discovery Day was postponed. Last year it was the government shutdown. This year the pandemic. I'd like to be optimistic and say perhaps we can make it happen next summer, but the reality of the amount of planning required for an event like this means that isn't very likely. That's okay. We'll resume planning again when it is safe to do so and we can safely host a large event.

Hopefully we'll get back to volunteering together again soon. Until then we can all still go enjoy the Refuge as visitors. While there we can lead by example and practice leave-no-trace principles.

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National Wildlife Refuge**

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Jason West

Refuge Protection

Gulls of Our Region

by Judith White

Adaptable, intelligent, opportunistic—during summer we have an excellent opportunity to see and learn about our region's gulls. In the summer, Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge and Protection Island National Wildlife Refuge, both parts of the Washington Maritime National Refuge Complex, are literally packed with both resident and migrating gulls. Dungeness Bay is also designated as an Audubon Washington Important Bird Area, and a viewing platform at Dungeness Landing County Park affords good views of the gulls in the Bay. The Three Crabs Nearshore and Estuarine Restoration Area, a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Viewing Area along Dungeness Bay, is also a great place to view the gulls. Protection Island can be seen well from Marlyn Nelson County Park at Port Williams, Panorama Vista County Park, Miller Peninsula State Park and Diamond Point.

Our resident gulls, fondly nicknamed “Olympic Gulls” by local birders, are usually hybrids of large pink-legged and pale-winged gulls from the north (Glaucous-winged Gulls) and large pink-legged and dark-winged gulls from the south (Western Gulls). Gull hybridization is fairly common where similar species overlap, and, unlike many hybrid animals, gull hybrids are usually not sterile and raise chicks just like normal. Protection Island, a National Wildlife Refuge and Important Bird Area at the entrance to Discovery Bay, is the largest breeding colony of Glaucous-winged Gulls in the state, with several thousand breeding pairs. Researchers estimate that about half of the nesting gulls at Protection Island look like pure Glaucous-winged Gulls and the other half look like hybrids. Gulls take two to four years to attain their distinctive adult plumage, so be on the lookout for first-year brownish-gray or later splotchy “in-between” immature birds.

From summer through winter, the Strait of Juan de Fuca is a magnet for migrant gulls arriving from all over North America. During June to October, our resident gulls are joined by thousands of California Gulls that migrate here from their nesting grounds on islands in inland lakes, mostly from the prairie provinces of Canada and Great Salt Lake



Glaucous-winged Gull face Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Gulls in a feeding flock Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Adult Heermann's Gull Photo: Bob Boekelheide

in Utah. Salt Lake City even has a statue commemorating the California Gull's role in ridding the settler's crops of plagues of grasshoppers, and the California Gull ironically is the state bird of Utah. California Gulls are often joined by Ring-billed Gulls, distinctive for their black-encircled bills. Ring-bills are also migrating to inland nesting sites. On open water, lovely Black-legged Kittiwakes and Sabine's Gulls will be passing offshore on their way to nest in Alaskan sea-cliffs or arctic tundra ponds. Northern-nesting gulls spending the winter here also include dainty Mew Gulls and Bonaparte's Gulls, larger Iceland Gulls, and Herring Gulls.

Heermann's Gulls, with their flashy red bills, gray bodies, and black legs, arrive here in summer after nesting in the Gulf of California. They disperse northwards only for the later summer and fall season, retreating in winter to California and Mexico. These distinctive gulls may often be seen at Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge.



Iceland (Thayer's) Gull with Glaucous-winged Gulls
Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Western Gull between two Glaucous-winged types
Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Second-year California Gull Photo: Bob Boekelheide

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THE BRANT

VOLUME 2

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SPRING 2020

Friends Present the Maxwell Award to Two Sequim High School Seniors

Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge selected two Sequim High School seniors to receive the first John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award. Each student received a \$1,000 award to assist with their continuing education and pursuit of wildlife conservation interests.

REFUGE EVENTS

All volunteer activities and Refuge events are currently on hold due to Covid-19.

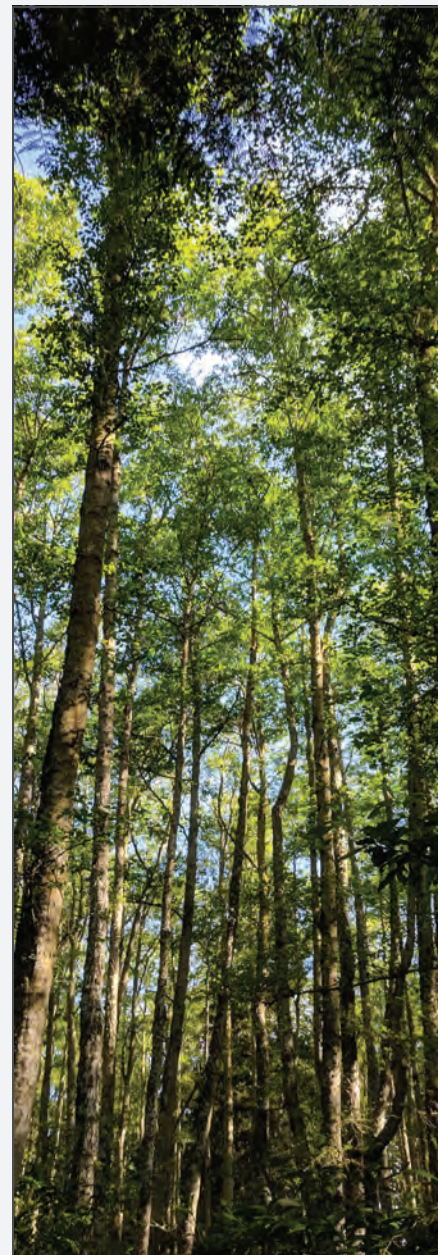


2020 Maxwell Award winners Jessica Dietzman and Vita Olson show their certificates.

Thanks to generous donations, Friends were able to offer two awards this year. The winners are Jessica Dietzman and Vita Olson. This fall Jessica will attend Western Washington University and Vita will attend the University of San Diego.

The Maxwell Award was established to honor John and Margaret Maxwell and celebrate their many years of dedication to Friends and the Refuge, and to support the future of wildlife conservation.

Continued on page 2



Maxwell Award

John and Margaret have been Refuge volunteers since 2010. For three years, from 2014 through 2016, Margaret was President of the Friends' Board. During that time, the Friends group moved forward with planning and growing the organization. "It was good to use the skills I had learned during 12 years as director of the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless," Margaret said. During 2017 and 2018 she was chair of the Board's Refuge Protection Committee. They worked on issues affecting DNWR, including the proposed oyster production and the redevelopment of the Dungeness County Park Recreation Area, as well as issues affecting the National Wildlife Refuge System

John was Volunteer of the Year for 2014 in honor of the extensive research he did on the history of the Refuge and the illustrated presentation he gave of that history at the kickoff event for the Refuge Centennial in January 2015. John said, "It was fascinating work and there is so much more information out there." He became a Board member in 2015 and served as president of the Board in 2017 and 2018.



John and Margaret Maxwell at the announcement of the Maxwell Award at the Refuge volunteer awards banquet in March 2019.

In the fall of 2018, the Refuge sent them to a week-long National Wildlife Refuge System "Friends Academy." This training event for Friends of National Wildlife Refuges was held at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center on the Potomac River in West Virginia. They met Refuge Friends leaders from all over the country. They obtained excellent leadership tools, as well as insights into how the U.S. Government operates.

John retired from the clergy after serving six United Methodist churches in Washington State. Margaret taught music before working for the Coalition and she continues to play the organ on a part-time basis. They have two adult children, Jennifer who works for Amazon and Patrick who works for TVW.

John and Margaret look forward to being able to volunteer at the Refuge in the future.

You can support future Maxwell Awards by making a donation to Friends.

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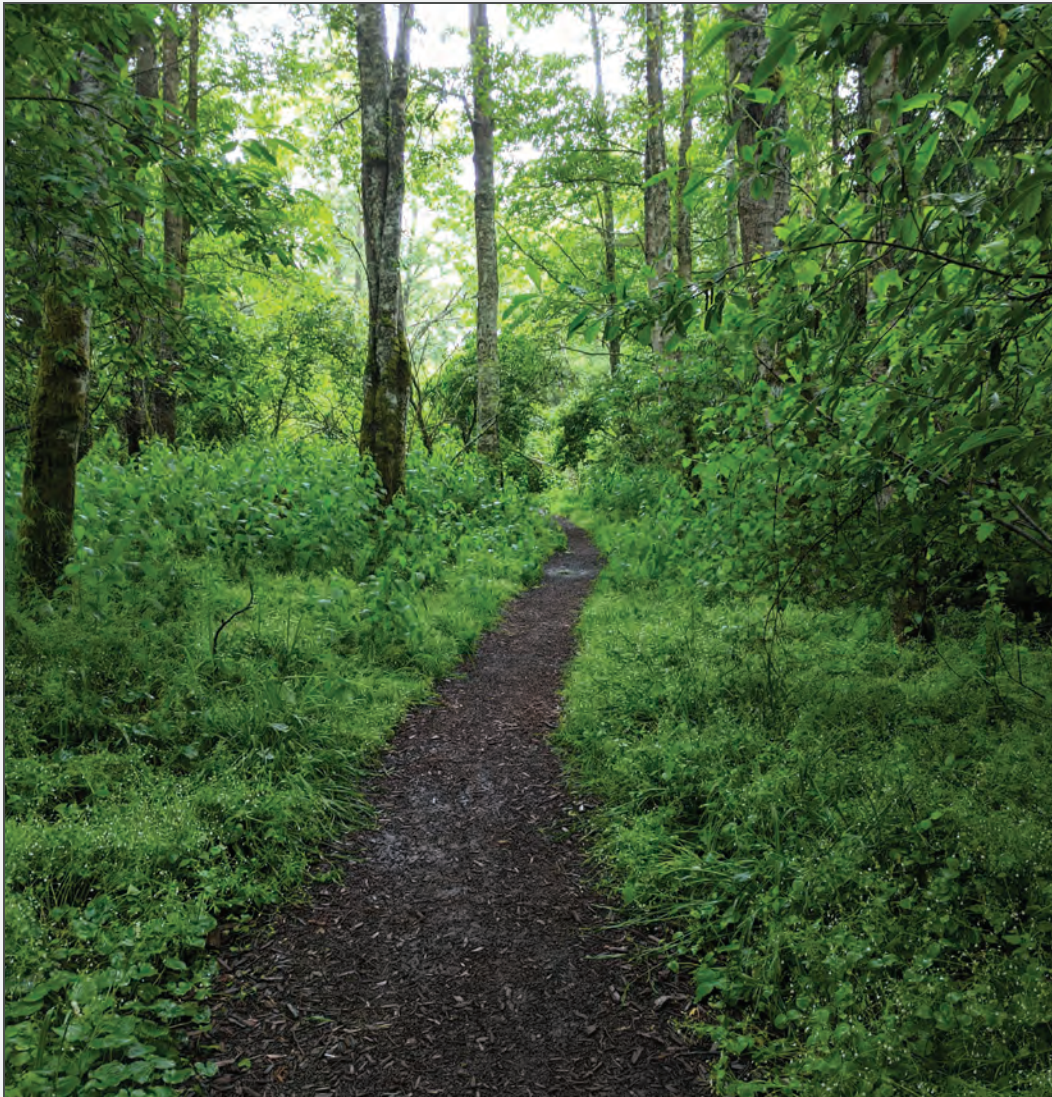
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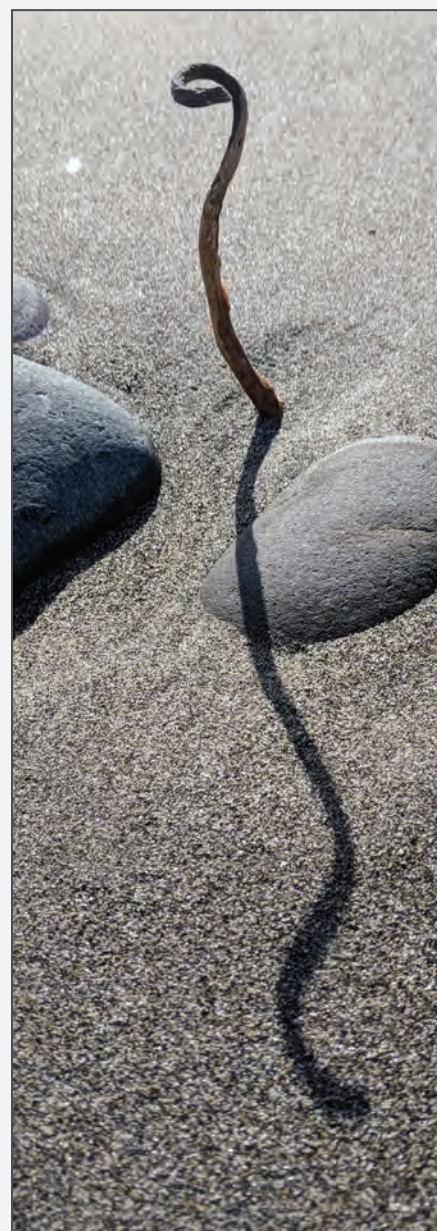
Ellie Ausmus

Outreach

Jason West

Refuge Protection





Virus Impacts Friends and Refuge

The Refuge was not accessible to the public from March 25th until May 2nd due to the closure of all Clallam County Parks. With the Dungeness Recreation Area closed there was no way for the public to access the Refuge. Staff have been working from home and the office has been closed to the public.

The April volunteer training, lunch, and refresher were canceled. All volunteer activities remain on hold at this time.

Unfortunately this means Dungeness Discovery Day has been postponed until next year. We hope to build upon the planning that has already been done and hope that next year we will be able to move forward with this educational event.

If you visit the Refuge you will notice that the primitive trail is now one way (north) down to the lookout. This is in place to increase physical distancing on the narrow trail.

Until further notice volunteers should not engage in volunteer activities, such as trail roving or beach clean up. Please do not interact with other visitors. If you see a violation please report it to Dave. Volunteers should not wear uniforms on site.

We all look forward to getting back in our gear and helping educate visitors about the Refuge, hopefully soon. For now, enjoy some time at the Refuge (admission is free) and set a good example by following Leave No Trace practices.



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THE BRANT

VOLUME 1

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WINTER 2020

Dungeness Discovery Day

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 1, 2020. Refuge staff, volunteers, and Friends are working together to plan and organize an educational event for kids and families at the Refuge this summer. The all-day event will be similar to the Kid's Day event held in celebration of the Refuge's 100th anniversary in 2015. If you are interested in assisting with planning the event, or know a local business interested in participating or becoming an event sponsor, contact Dave Falzetti.



2019 Volunteers Awarded

The Refuge held the 2019 Volunteer Awards Banquet on February 20th. This past year required a minimum of 50 hours of service to receive a dinner invitation. It was a fun filled evening and many volunteers put in well above the minimum of hours required. Pictured below are the volunteers with the most hours in 2019.



Jennifer Brown-Scott presents awards to the top hour-earners. From the left: Jessie Christiansen (302 hrs), Lizzie Baatz (491.5 hrs), Ron Andris (630.5 hrs), Tom McKinney (407 hrs), Grant Rollins (524 hrs), and Lynn Drake (341 hrs).

REFUGE EVENTS

March 12th

Discovery Day Planning at the Refuge Conference Room
10:00 a.m.

April 3rd

Annual Volunteer Training
Sequim Prairie Grange Hall
New Volunteers 8:00 a.m.

Lunch Canceled

Returning Volunteers

Refresher Canceled

May 2nd

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

June 6th

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

July 4th

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

August 1st

Dungeness Discovery Day
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

2019 Volunteer of the Year

Tom McKinney has served as a Refuge volunteer since 2016, with 950 hours in his career, including 407 hours in 2019. Tom earns his hours greeting visitors, roving trails, maintaining trails, picking up trash on the beach and at the lighthouse, and installing signs on the Spit. Congratulations, Tom! We appreciate your hard work.



Tom McKinney is presented with the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award by Jennifer Brown-Scott.

Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade

The Refuge awarded Janet Bruening with the first ever Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade Award. Janet has nearly two decades of service with the National Wildlife Refuge System and is active with both the Weed Warriors and Green Crab Team. Congratulations, Janet, and thank you for your many years of service!



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Winter Storms Batter the Spit

This winter saw a series of storms with heavy rain, wind, and pounding surf which caused breaches in areas of the Dungeness Spit and significant new landslides along the bluffs. The trail along the bluffs in Dungeness County Park has been relocated east along the road. Portions of what was previously the trail and parking area have washed away and will feed new material on to the Spit. Strong winds toppled trees which closed the primitive trail.



In January bluff erosion required moving the trail away from the bluffs to the main road.



Wind and waves washed massive logs, sand, and rocks into Dungeness Bay.



Primitive trail closed.

Survival by Degrees: The Impact of Climate Change on our Birds in the Olympic Peninsula

As the climate warms, birds are forced to adapt by searching for suitable habitat and climate conditions elsewhere. When the places where they live (their ranges) shift, they may not adapt quickly enough to survive. The new *Survival by Degrees* publication from the National Audubon Society includes models with precision down to 1 kilometer, how each bird species' range will likely shift from climate change and other human impacts. The study takes advantage of 140 million observations by birders and scientists, and 70 data sources including the US Geological Survey, eBird, and the North American Breeding Birds Survey.

This model breaks down vulnerability by degrees of climate warming. At 3 degrees Centigrade (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) temperature rise, of the 157 species of our local summer birds included in the study, 56% face high to moderate threat, losing more than half their current seasonal range.

One example of a highly threatened species is the Red-breasted Sapsucker. Living in temperate coastal Pacific habitat, it is the least migratory of the sapsuckers. In the Pacific Northwest, coastal birds may be permanent residents. The model predicts 93% of their current summer range will be lost if global warming reaches 3 degrees C, and on the Olympic peninsula, they will likely move up in elevation where they will gain 10% new range amid the highest peaks of the Olympics.

Thirty-six highly threatened summer species include 5 species of waterfowl, several shorebirds, many flycatchers, 3 thrush species, White-crowned and Savannah Sparrows, and 3 warbler species.

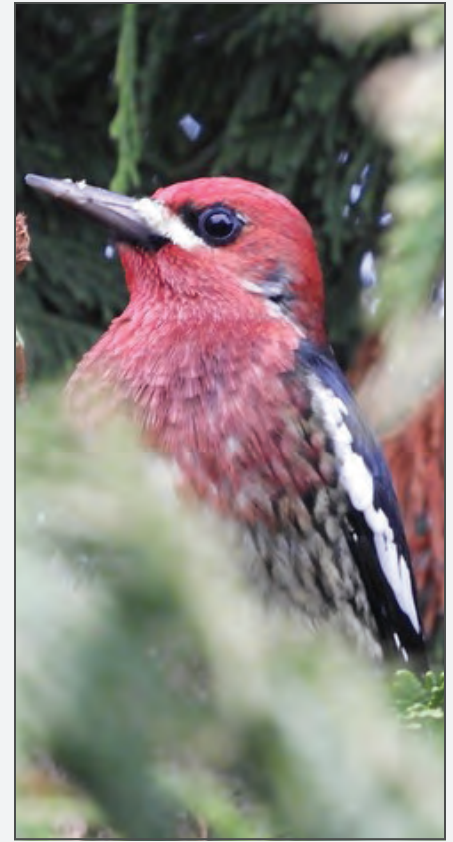
Moderately threatened summer species are even more numerous, including the Harlequin Duck, Common Loon, Pigeon Guillemot, crows, jays, and most gulls, several swallow species and most other waterfowl.

What summer birds are less threatened or stable? Turkey vultures, Brown Pelican, Kildeer, herons, most hawks, falcons, woodpeckers, blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Pacific and Bewick's Wrens are predicted to be stable.

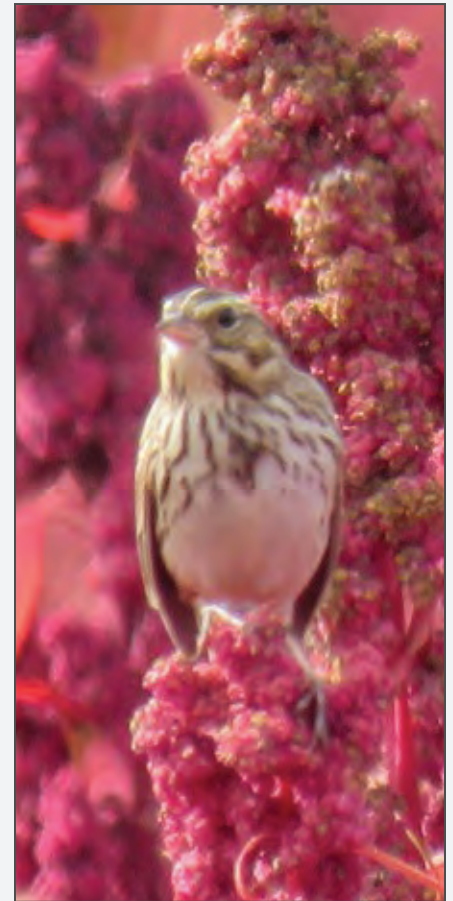
The model for 165 species of winter birds identifies 11 highly vulnerable birds at 3 degrees C global warming, including the American Dipper, California Quail, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Barrow's Goldeneye, Townsend's Solitaire and Canada Jay.

For context, according to NASA's web site, Global Temperature Latest Annual Average Anomaly for 2019 is 0.98 °C or 1.76 °F

<https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/global-temperature/>



Red-breasted Sapsucker
Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Savannah Sparrow Photo: Judith White

Continued on page 5

Survival by Degrees

Continued from page 4

The Brant is projected to lose 84% of its current U.S./Canadian summer range, gaining only 17% of new summer range. No other geese nest as far north in the high Arctic, and Brant are under Special High Risk from sea level rise. The Brant in the Pacific Flyway gather in large numbers at Izembek Lagoon in Alaska after breeding, and depart together for a long overwater migration, flying at altitudes of several thousand feet, until dispersing to their wintering areas on the Pacific Coast. On their wintering grounds, 52% of their U.S./Canadian range is projected to be lost. The remaining 48% of their maintained winter range includes the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, using detailed projections.



Brant Photo: Judith White

Overall, 2/3 of birds in the US face increased risk of extinction from climate change. By habitat, the birds most at risk are Arctic, Boreal and Western Forest Birds, and Waterbirds - encompassing many of our summer and winter birds here in the Olympic Peninsula.

These projections are especially concerning because overall bird populations have declined significantly since 1970. In "Decline of the North American avifauna" published in the October 4, 2019 volume of the prestigious journal *Science*, Rosenberg and colleagues found that 29%, or about 3 billion fewer birds were found in the US and Canada compared to 1970.

The *Survival by Degrees* model offers hope. If we are able to keep climate change in the 1.5 degrees C range, we can improve the chances for hundreds of bird species. Birds are resilient, and only 3 winter species in our area will remain highly vulnerable under a 1.5 Centigrade degree warming scenario – Rock Sandpiper, Clark's Nutcracker and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch. In summer, our Red-Breasted Sapsucker and Barrow's Goldeneye remain highly vulnerable.

Simple ideas to help birds include making windows safer from collisions by using screens or films, reducing lawn and planting native plants, and avoiding pesticide use. For more simple steps, take a look at:

<https://www.3billionbirds.org/7-simple-actions>

To find out more about the *Survival by Degrees* model, and the specific information for each of our bird species, go to:

<https://www.audubon.org/climate/survivalbydegrees/county?zipCode=98382>



Wilson's Warbler Photo: Judith White



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Photo: Bob Phreaner



Oyster Farm Proposal Update

After an extended review, Clallam County Hearing Examiner Andrew Reeves determined that the proposed oyster farm may move forward with a phased approach. The phased approach was required because “There is insufficient current data...to fully assess long-term impacts from this type of operation, especially in relation to the Refuge.”

Phase 1 would establish five acres of on-bottom bag cultivation with a maximum commercial bag density of 4,000 bags per acre (up to 20,000 bags), within a closed area of the Refuge that is heavily used by wildlife.

The approval requires that the applicant coordinate with both Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and US Fish & Wildlife Service. “...the Applicant shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) prior to commencing operations with the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and USFWS concerning the monitoring of shorebirds and waterfowl and the scientific approach that will be taken toward monitoring impacts of the proposal on the Refuge.”

At this time it is unclear how the monitoring of the aquaculture impacts will take place since the mere presence of humans on site may adversely impact wildlife.

You can read the full text of the decision on our web site:

http://www.fodnwr.org/Clallam_Oyster_Farm_Decision.pdf

The hearing examiner’s decision will be sent to Washington State Department of Ecology and to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Each agency has its own regulations that must be met and there may be additional opportunities for public comment.

Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge believe this is not the right location for aquaculture activity as it poses several potential negative impacts on the Refuge, its visitors, and especially its residents, the wildlife.

Learn more about our concerns and updates here:

http://www.fodnwr.org/dungeness_oyster_farm.html

Volunteer Refresher and Lunch Canceled

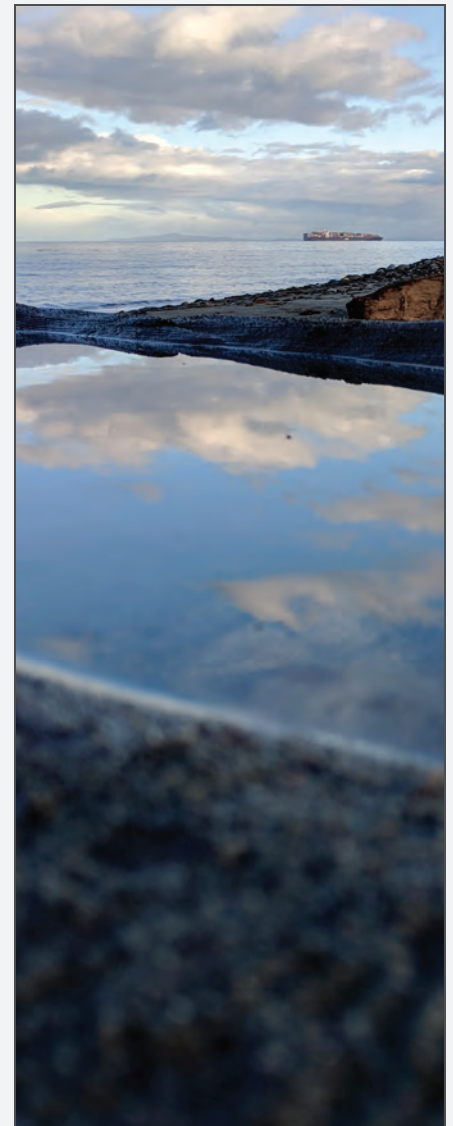
The volunteer refresher and lunch scheduled for April 3rd at the Sequim Prairie Grange Hall has been canceled due to concerns about COVID-19. Attendance for the new volunteer training session has been limited, and is still scheduled to take place. Please check the Friends web site for current updates.

Did you know you can earn money for Friends while shopping on Amazon?

Sign up for AmazonSmile and select Friends as your designated charity and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchase to Friends.

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A Note From the President:

by Jason West

It's still winter, but **Friends** are off to a busy start. At our January meeting we held officer elections for 2020. Ellie Ausmus was elected to the position of Secretary. Bruce Brod will serve another term as Treasurer. Jeanie McNamara will serve as Vice President and I will serve as President.

I'm pleased to announce that Glenn Harris has been elected to the Board. Glenn is active with Sequim Sunrise Rotary and joins our other Board members Jessie Christiansen, Chair of Environmental Restoration; Linda Gutowski, Chair of Environmental Education; and Dan Shappie, Chair of Fundraising.

Friends recently provided applications to Sequim High School for Class of 2020 seniors to apply for the first John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award. We expect to announce a winner by April 30th.

Friends are supporting Refuge staff and volunteers with planning and preparation for Dungeness Discovery Day, including purchasing backpacks for kids. We're also planning other educational events for the year which will help achieve one of our primary goals this year: **community awareness**.

While visiting with friends that happen to have a lovely view of both the New Dungeness Lighthouse and Protection Island, I mentioned what I was working on for **Friends**. Their response was "How have we lived here for over 30 years and never heard of **Friends** before?" I thought this was a good question and something we need to work on, getting our local community more aware of **Friends** and what it is that we do.

Increased awareness of **Friends** will translate into more awareness for wildlife. Perhaps more locals will view the Refuge first as a home for wildlife, not just another public beach or place to go jogging. Additional contributing members and donors will translate into an increased ability to provide educational events like Dungeness Discovery Day that engage and encourage kids to explore and learn about wildlife, or fund more conservation awards to local students.

So how do we make our community aware of who **Friends** are and what we do?

A simple step is if each of **you** share with your friends and relatives what it is that **you** do to support **Friends** and why. Let them know why you volunteer your time or make a donation. Share with them that you are making a difference for wildlife and environmental education right here in our community. You just may inspire someone to join **Friends**, make a donation, sponsor an educational event, or learn more about the wildlife in their own back yard.

Let's make 2020 the Year of Awareness for Friends.



Rough-skinned newts are out on the trail doing some sole-searching. Please watch your step.



21 Years of Volunteer of the Year Recipients

1999: Gwen Pierce

2000: Barbara Williams

2001: Carmelinda Wiley

2002: Lou Peterson

2003: Gail Smith Early

2004: Paul Runyon

2005: Steve & Lois Siebersma

2006: Mary Nilsen

2007: Bill Petrie

2008: Carol Babcock

2009: Rod Norvell

2010: Kermit Reister

2011: Lynn Drake

2012: Bob Larsen

2013: Pat Schoen

2014: John Maxwell

2015: Elizabeth Baatz

2016: Ron Andris

2017: Grant Rollins

2018: C. Jessie Christiansen

2019: Tom McKinney

*Thank You
to all volunteers!*



Volunteer of the Year recipients past and present. From the left: Jessie Christiansen, Elizabeth Baatz, John Maxwell, Ron Andris, Tom McKinney, Grant Rollins, and Lynn Drake.

Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade

2010 – 2019: Janet Bruening



THE BRANT

VOLUME 3

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SUMMER 2019

The Dungeness River Supports Western Hemisphere Shorebirds

By Judi White

Tens of thousands of birds from across the Western Hemisphere use the mudflats at the mouth of the Dungeness River as a critical resting and feeding stop during migration. Dungeness Bay is so noteworthy that it has received the designation "Important Bird Area," identified as being significant habitat for the conservation of bird populations.



Baird's Sandpiper Photo: Judi White

Over 40 species of shorebirds have been recorded in and around Dungeness Bay, yet only four of these regularly nest in Clallam County: Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, and Black Oystercatcher.

Some of the most abundant migrant species—Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, and Sanderling—also remain in Dungeness Bay through the winter. These three species are cosmopolitan, nesting in high Arctic tundra around the entire northern Hemisphere then migrating to spend the winter on coastlines throughout the world. Some of their North American populations winter in coastal areas from British Columbia to South America, including our own Dungeness Bay. Studies with Sanderlings have shown that some fly to the exact same sites year after year, both for nesting and for winter.



Baird's Sandpiper Photo: Judi White



Dungeness Bay Important Bird Area Photo: Judi White

REFUGE EVENTS

2019 Dungeness River Festival Friday, September 27th

Learn more about this event at www.dungenessrivercenter.org
Contact Gary if you are able to volunteer for the event.

2019 Volunteer Picnic Thursday, October 17th

Meet at noon at the group picnic area of Dungeness County Park. Please bring a side dish to share. Hamburgers will be provided by Friends.

Friends 2019 Annual Meeting Thursday, November 14th

The Friends Board of Directors will hold their annual meeting along with the regular board meeting on Thursday. If you are interested in learning more about what the Friends do, please join us in the Refuge office conference room at 2:30pm.

Visit the Friends web site:

Learn more about Friends,
become a contributing member,
or make a donation.

<http://www.fodnwr.org>

Continued on page 2

Dungeness: Important Bird Area *continued from page 1*

Who are the other epic travelers who gather on the Dungeness River mouth mudflats? The most abundant migrants are Least and Western Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, and Short-billed Dowitcher. Of these, Least Sandpipers have the broadest and southernmost breeding distribution, nesting in subarctic tundra and boreal forest across Alaska and Canada. They weigh less than an ounce, yet likely have astounding 2000 mile NON-STOP transoceanic migrations. Western Sandpipers have a restricted breeding range using coastal tundra in Western Alaska and Siberia, then migrate after nesting along the Pacific Coast all the way to Peru. Semipalmated Plovers nest in the subarctic and winter in widespread coastal areas, including Central America. The Short-billed Dowitcher subspecies seen in Dungeness Bay nests in Alaska and winters on the Pacific Coast all the way to South America.

Less abundant migrants are no less epic in their travels. Whimbrels, Marbled Godwits, Ruddy and Black Turnstones, Red Knots, Baird's Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Spotted Sandpipers and Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs all fly from northern or inland breeding areas on their way to widespread sites along the Pacific Coast, some as far as Tierra del Fuego. The longest-distance champions of these species are Baird's Sandpiper and Red Knot. After departing their high-arctic breeding grounds, Baird's Sandpipers travel all the way to the southern tip of South America. Some complete the entire 9000 mile one-way journey in as few as 5 weeks. Red Knots also fly extraordinary long distances, sometimes flying six to eight days without stopping to rest or feed. Like many shorebirds, adult Red Knots depart the breeding grounds before the young birds, leaving the juveniles to grow and mature before they migrate. The young birds then migrate unaccompanied by adults along a route they have never traveled, to a destination they have never seen.

These astounding feats of migration offer important scientific information on lightweight energy storage and conversion, along with astonishing innate navigation skills. Advances in monitoring migrating birds using GPS and satellite transmitters have added greatly to our knowledge. In 2018, the United States joined partner countries like Japan, Mexico and Russia to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which protected migrating shorebirds across international boundaries and made it unlawful to kill, hunt, sell or possess nests, eggs, or feathers without a permit. Still, the greatest threat facing long-distance migrating shorebirds lies in disturbance and habitat loss at mid-migration stopover sites like the Dungeness River mouth mudflats, their crucial refueling stations.

What's so special about the Dungeness River mouth mudflats? As it descends from the Olympic Mountains, the Dungeness River accumulates rich nutrients from the soil and forest. Flowing into Dungeness Bay, it creates an estuary, where fresh water from land meets and mixes with salt water from the ocean. Estuaries transport and trap nutrients and sediment, providing critical habitat for birds, fish, amphibians, insects and other wildlife. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) calls estuaries "important natural places to the economy and the environment."

Dungeness Bay is one of the premier estuaries in the Pacific Northwest. The "Important Bird Area" includes intertidal and subtidal waters of Dungeness Bay, Dungeness Spit, the Dungeness River Estuary and adjacent wetlands. Dungeness Spit and adjacent intertidal areas also lie within the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. Its sandflats and mudflats provide extensive feeding areas for many bird species, including some of the largest eelgrass beds in the Northwest.



Dunlin Photo: Judi White



Black Turnstone Photo: Judi White

Volunteers in Action on the Refuge

2019 has been a busy summer for Refuge volunteers. Here are some examples of volunteers having fun at work this summer.



Weed Warriors in San Juan Island National Wildlife Refuge Photo by L. Davis



Weed Warriors on Matia Island Photo by L. Davis

CONTACTS

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Outreach

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Refuge Protection



Volunteer Jessie Christiansen on Matia Island Photo by L. Davis



EGC clean up work. Pat Schoen and Rick Mazzotta Photo by L. Davis



Maintaining Purple Martin boxes. Photo by L. Davis



Alan Smith maintaining Purple Martin boxes. Photo by L. Davis



Julie Merluccio & Kathy Anderson catching green crabs. Photo by L. Davis



Volunteers erect deer fencing on Protection Island Photo by L. Davis



Volunteer George Llewellyn and Ranger Gary Tarleton install the first of several new replacement benches on the main trail. The bench being replaced was a relatively new one built by George last year but it was severely damaged in a storm in February. Two older benches are rotten and scheduled to be replaced as well.

Photo by USFWS



THE BRANT

VOLUME 4

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

AUTUMN 2019

2019 End of Season Picnic

Refuge staff, volunteers, and Friends gathered on a sunny Thursday in mid-October for the annual end of season picnic.

Visit the Friends web site:
Learn more about Friends,
become a contributing member,
or make a donation.
<http://www.fodnwr.org>



Photo: Brian R. Blais



Photo: Brian R. Blais



Photo: Gary Tarleton/USFWS



Photo: Brian R. Blais

Highlights from the 2019 Annual Meeting

by Jeanie McNamara

The annual meeting of the Friends of the Dungeness NWR was held in the conference room of the Refuge on November 14, 2019.

- Our main checking account increased by \$3,323.80. Most of this income came from our new Iron Ranger which we installed at the Kiosk in August 2017.
- Because of this we established a \$2,000 grant for unfunded Refuge projects and were able to establish an annual John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award for Sequim High School students.
- Additionally we administer a renewable \$10,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Refuge projects including invasive species, biological services, volunteer support, and visitor services.
- The Refuge Protection committee continues to support the National Wildlife Refuge System regarding regional and national concerns.
- The Weed Warriors have been very active with restoration of Protection Island, removal of invasive species on the San Juan Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the genetic testing of invasive green crabs, and restoration of the oak savannah and native plant meadow near Refuge headquarters.
- The present board members were nominated and elected to serve another term.

Your donation to assist Friends in all of this important work can be put into the blue Iron Ranger at the Refuge entrance, mailed to Friends of DNWR at 715 Holgerson Rd, Sequim, WA 98382, or made a donation with your credit card on our web site: <http://www.fodnwr.org>

Volunteer opportunities are available. Email Friends at fodnwr@gmail.com for more information.



Mushrooms along the trail in October. Photo by Jason West

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Dungeness Bay and the Washington Maritime National Refuge Complex Support Seabirds of the North Pacific

By Judi White

Tufted Puffin, the charismatic and iconic seabird of the Pacific Northwest, has the best of both worlds. It can fly above AND below water. The alcid family of diving seabirds in the Dungeness area also includes Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Rhinoceros Auklet, Ancient Murrelet and Marbled Murrelet. These seabirds have strong, short wings that can propel them at speeds up to 50 mph under water, while diving to depths of up to 600 feet, and most seem more comfortable and graceful under water than above it. Similar to penguins of the Southern Hemisphere, alcids in the Northern Hemisphere have compact bodies and short necks. Unlike penguins which cannot fly, today's alcids retained the ability to fly in the air. Their rapidly whirring wings propel them at high speed in the air, but they cannot soar.



Tufted Puffin Photo: Judi White



Common Murre Photo: Judi White

Protection Island supports one of the largest breeding colonies of Rhinoceros Auklets in the world, as well as significant breeding populations of Pigeon Guillemots, and is one of the last two breeding sites for Tufted Puffins in the Salish Sea. These seabirds excavate burrows for nesting, and most return to the open sea after breeding. Protection Island, part of the Washington Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex, can be seen from the Dungeness Spit, New Dungeness Lighthouse and Marlyn Nelson County Park at Port Williams.

Continued on page 4



The Dungeness Spit Photo: Jason West

Seabirds of the North Pacific

Continued from page 3

Even though they do not nest in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, thousands of Common Murres migrate in August and September into the Strait from nesting colonies along the outer Pacific Ocean, perhaps from as far as Oregon and California. In late summer, Common Murre chicks jump from their nesting cliffs when they are only about one-fifth the mass of their parents, and unable to fly. After jumping, the little chicks swim away to sea with their fathers, calling and begging to be fed. The adults also molt their flight feathers at the same time and become flightless as well. All the murres then migrate by swimming hundreds of miles along the coast into the Strait, ending up in large flocks in the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca. They are one of the main participants in local feeding flocks. From August to November, Common Murres far outnumber local-nesting Rhinoceros Auklets and Pigeon Guillemots in the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca.



Pigeon Guillemots on the bluffs at Dungeness NWR Photo: Jason West

Marbled Murrelet's nesting sites were more of a mystery, only discovered in 1974. These diving seabirds nest along the Pacific Coast, high in broad moss-covered branches of large trees greater than 200 years old. Both parents fly inland up to 50 miles each way to these rare nest-trees, carrying one small fish for their young chick, several times a day. Once the young bird is able to fly, it flies directly to nearshore waters and begins diving for small fishes on its own.

Diving seabirds are especially dependent of small fishes, often termed "forage fish," to provide the concentrated energy they need for diving, flying and rearing healthy chicks. The waters of the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca and Admiralty Inlet provide fertile forage fishing grounds. These nutritious schools of forage fish are a crucial link in the food chain, supporting not just birds but a wide range of larger fish and marine mammals. Monitoring and restoration of forage fish populations in the Salish Sea is an area of intense environmental and legislative action.

Continued on page 5



Rhinoceros Auklet Photo: Judi White



Pigeon Guillemot Photo: Judi White



Marbled Murrelet Photo: Judi White

Seabirds of the North Pacific

Continued from page 4

One of the most important Salish Sea forage fish is the Pacific herring, which spawn in eelgrass beds. Native eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) is a flowering shallow water plant that needs soft-sediment habitat like that found in the Dungeness Bay. As the Dungeness River travels down from the mountains bringing soil and nutrients to the Bay, it mixes with salt water to create one of the premier Pacific Northwest estuaries, the Dungeness Bay. Here, one of the largest eelgrass beds in the Greater Puget Sound is found. Eelgrass beds are so important to the ecology of the Greater Puget Sound that the Washington State Department of Natural Resources closely monitors and protects eelgrass beds through the Nearshore Habitat Program and Submerged Vegetation Monitoring Project, but despite this protection, the eelgrass beds and local herring populations have declined in Dungeness Bay. In addition to the spawning Pacific herring, Dungeness Bay eelgrass stabilizes shorelines and supports young salmon and steelhead, crab, shrimp, shellfish, and thousands of Brant geese and other over-wintering waterfowl, which prefer it as a food source.

The nutrient-rich Dungeness River, our premier Dungeness Bay estuary and eelgrass beds, and the Washington Maritime National Refuge Complex together support the iconic Greater Puget Sound ecosystem from Puffins to marine mammals. Protect and enjoy this magnificent resource.



Rhinoceros Auklet Photo: Judi White



Dungeness Bay as viewed from Cline Spit Photo: Jason West



Pigeon Guillemots/DNWR Photo: Jason West

Green Crab Update

The Green Crab Team have been busy this year!

Our activities were highlighted in the most recent Washington Sea Grant's Crab Team newsletter:

- 30 volunteers have spent 230 days out on the spit since 2017
- More than 1,000 hours spent this season
- The number of green crab captured at Dungeness Spit is greater than any other spot along the inland shores of Washington.
- To date 222 European green crabs have been captured here. It has taken more than 8,800 trap sets to capture that many crab in the three trapping sites on the spit.



Invasive Green Crab Photo: Jason West

Oyster Farm – Decision Pending

On November 21, 2019 Clallam County hearing examiner Andrew Reeves received final public input on the proposed oyster farm. Both opponents and supporters of the proposal gave testimony. The hearing examiner extended his decision deadline to January 10, 2020 due to the volume of material to be reviewed. Friends will post an update on the web site when a decision is made.



Clallam County hearing Photo: Jason West

New Maps and Signs for the Refuge

Volunteer and Friends member Jason West, having 25 years of signage and map design experience, worked with Dave Falzetti and the Refuge staff to develop new maps for signage throughout the Refuge. New sign map panels will be installed soon. Three additional new signs will emphasize boating rules and how to access the Refuge. These will be located at Cline Spit, Dungeness Landing, and New Dungeness Lighthouse. The goal with the new signs is to help visitors find their way to the Refuge trailhead and encourage boaters to keep a safe distance from wildlife habitat.

One challenge the new maps should help resolve is directing visitors unfamiliar with the area to the Refuge entrance. GPS directions often direct to Cline Spit County Park. At times visitors have parked here and walked along the shore to the Refuge which is a violation, and can be dangerous with changing tides and weather conditions.

The new signs also make it more clear to boaters that they may only land at the lighthouse with a reservation, and keep a buffer from the spit.



New maps direct to entry Photo: Jason West



THE BRANT

VOLUME 2

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

SPRING 2019

Springtime on the Refuge

It's been warm, sunny, and beautiful out on the Refuge lately. Flowers are blooming and the trees are green. It's a great time to be a volunteer.



Photo: USFWS / Jason West



Photo: USFWS / Linda Gutowski

A rare Calypso Orchid evades the autofocus.



Trillium turning purple along the primitive trail. Photo: USFWS / Linda Gutowski

REFUGE EVENTS

May 15th

Refuge Parking Lot Redesign
Public Information Meeting
Sequim Prairie Grange Hall
6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

Beach Clean Up

Saturday, June 1st

Saturday, July 6th

Saturday, August 3rd

Saturday, September 7th

Meet at the Refuge at 9:00 am
at the old caretaker cabin site.
No RSVP is necessary.
Please wear sturdy shoes, dress
for the weather, bring gloves
and water.

2018 Volunteer of the Year

The 2018 Volunteer of the Year is **Jessie Christiansen**. Jessie started volunteering in 2014 and has put in over 1,350 hours including 344 hours last year. She is very active with Weed Warriors and has been serving on the Friends Board of Directors where she is currently chair of the Environmental Restoration Committee.



Volunteer of the Year past winners pose with Jessie Christiansen, 2018 winner. From left: Rod Norvell, Elizabeth Baatz, Pat Schoen, Bob Larsen, Lynn Drake, Jessie Christiansen, John Maxwell, Grant Rollins, Ron Andris.



Volunteers enjoying the evening at the annual banquet in March sponsored by Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. In 2019 volunteers will need to have a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer time to receive an invitation to the banquet. Space is limited.

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Ellie Ausmus

Outreach
Jason West

Refuge Protection

Maxwell Scholastic Award

John and Margaret Maxwell were honored by Friends at the annual banquet with the announcement of a scholastic award in their name. The John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award will be presented to a student (or students) of Sequim High School that completes the award requirements and exhibits dedication to environmental conservation.

During his time with Friends, John researched and wrote a history of the Refuge. For the centennial year celebration, a series of his articles was published in the Peninsula Daily News, educating both public and volunteers on the rich history of the Refuge and Dungeness Spit.

As chair of the Refuge Protection committee, Margaret kept us informed on issues that could impact the Refuge. She wrote letters to our government representatives to gain support for our Refuge and the refuge system nationally.

John and Margaret have volunteered since 2010 and each served as president on the Friends board of directors. Friends would not be the same without their dedication and leadership over the past several years.

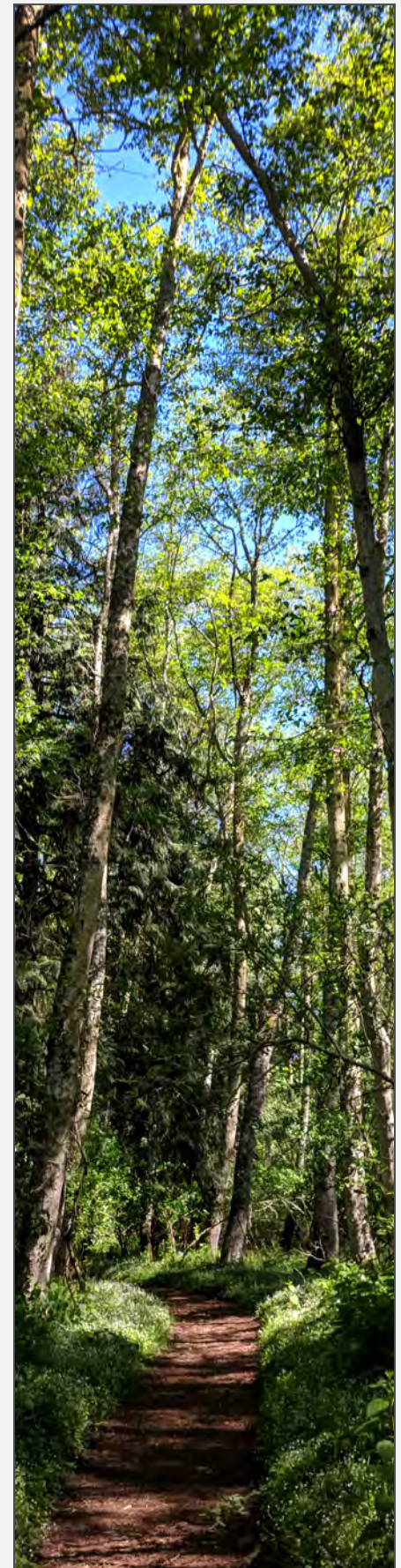


Bruce Brod and the other Friends board of directors present John and Margaret Maxwell with certificates announcing the annual John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award. From left: Jeanie McNamara, Linda Gutowski, Bruce Brod, John Maxwell, Margaret Maxwell, Jessie Christiansen, and Dan Shappie.

Donations to help fund the Maxwell award can be made on the Friends web site:

<http://www.fodnwr.org/maxwell.html>

[CLICK HERE](http://www.fodnwr.org/maxwell.html)



The Primitive Trail in late April 2019.

Jackets Available for Purchase

Lynn Drake is taking orders for volunteer jackets. They are sold at cost. If you are interested please contact Lynn at lkdraque@wavecable.com or 360-477-4078. Orders must be placed by June 15, 2019.



Lynn looking very official in her jacket.

Friends T-shirts Available to Raise Funds

Friends are selling Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge T-shirts to raise funds for projects. The cost is \$25. If you are interested in purchasing a T-shirt please contact Linda Gutowski at gutowski@wavecable.com or call 360-797-1655. Sizes M / L / XL / XXL are still available, but going fast.



Linda sporting the latest fashion trend seen on the Refuge this spring, a Friends T-shirt in lovely dark blue, accented with the Friends logo in white. Not only does it make you look sharp, it makes you feel good about supporting Friends' programs and projects.

Location, Location, Location

That is the concern with the proposed commercial oyster farm. The proposed location is within an area of the Refuge that is closed to humans. It is considered a high-use area for wildlife, especially in winter where Brant and other waterfowl forage for food. It is an area with eelgrass, home to forage fish and shellfish.

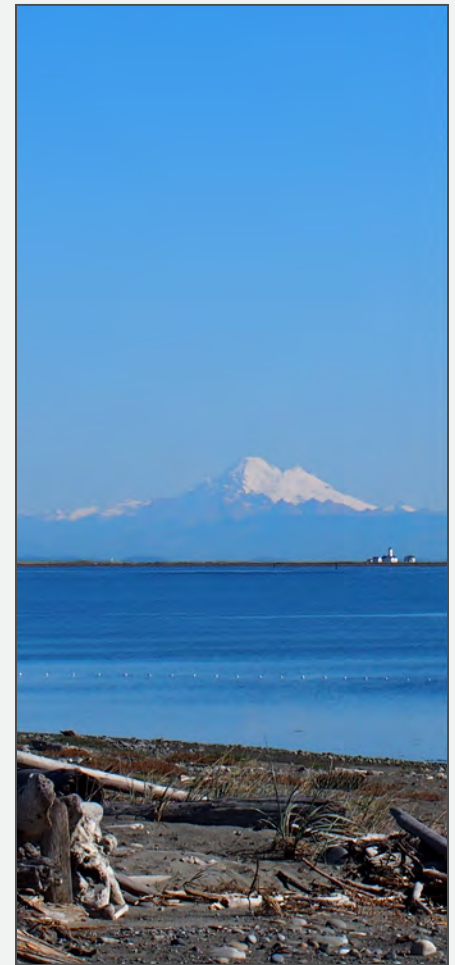
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe has made efforts to minimize the disturbance to wildlife in their proposal. They have done many positive things for our community and Friends support them and their pursuit of commercial aquaculture. Their efforts to improve water quality in Dungeness Bay is what makes oyster farming feasible.

Even with all the good that they do, and have done, the proposed location is not good for wildlife. Human presence and noise in this location could disturb nesting and foraging birds, causing poor health or site abandonment. Oyster farm workers would likely be active in winter when the area is heavily used by wildlife.

Wildlife doesn't have the opportunity to submit a comment to Clallam County or voice their concerns about what happens to their home. The mission of Friends is to promote conservation and be the voice for wildlife.

Clallam County is accepting comments on the proposal. Click here for more info: http://websrv2.clallam.net/tm_bin/tmw_cmd.pl?tmw_cmd=StatusViewCase&shl_caseno=SHR2017-00011

[CLICK HERE](#)



Parking Lot Redesign Meeting

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Clallam County are hosting an open house to provide information and gather public input regarding proposed improvements to the parking area and restrooms at the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, on Voice of America Road. Planning for this project is in its initial stages and all ideas, suggestions and comments are welcome.

The purpose of this project is to provide adequate Refuge parking and restroom facilities, while increasing public safety and reducing long-term environmental impacts. Planning for this project is separate from the Dungeness Recreation Area Master Planning effort.

Public Open House Meeting Location:

Sequim Prairie Grange Hall, 290 MacLeay Rd, west of Sequim.

Date and Time:

Wednesday, May 15, 2019, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

For additional information call the Refuge office at **360-457-8451** or send an e-mail to: david_falzetti@fws.gov



A Rough-skinned newt putting in some volunteer hours for trail roving.

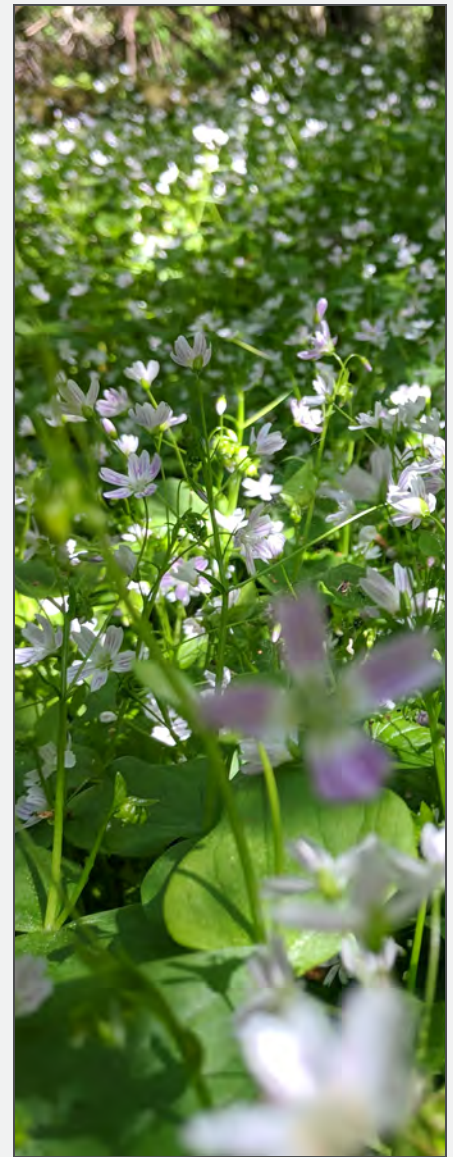
President's Lifetime Achievement Award

Ron Andris began volunteering at Dungeness NWR in 2014 and in five years had amassed over 4,000 volunteer hours. Ron was Volunteer of the Year in 2017 and had 935 volunteer hours in 2018. If you haven't met Ron yet, you've not spent much time at the Refuge the past few years.

At the awards banquet in March 2019 Ron was presented with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award for his service at Dungeness.



Ron Andris and his wife Cheri are presented with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award. From left: Dave Falzetti, Jennifer Brown-Scott, Cheri Andris, Ron Andris, Lorenz Sollman.



April flowers along the Primitive Trail.

Friends Launch New Web Site

The Friends have launched a new web site at <http://www.fodnwr.org> [CLICK HERE](#). We hope to keep it current with useful information about Friends, volunteering at Dungeness, and Refuge events.

Anyone can join and become a Friend by signing up on the Join page.

Current Refuge volunteers are already honorary members of Friends, but can also sign up to become a contributing member of Friends.

We now also accept tax deductible donations on our Donate page.

