

Fidalgo Bay Day 2009

A Public Education Program Sponsored by
Skagit County Marine Resources Committee
Anacortes Community Maritime Center



NORTHWEST STRAITS
marine conservation initiative

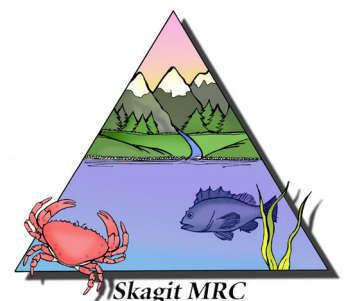


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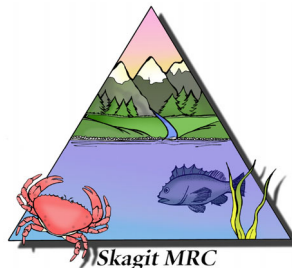
This report was compiled by Erica Pickett with help from Chris Betchley, John Giboney, Rebecca Spurling, Ivar Dolph and Michele Pope.

Fidalgo Bay Day 2009

Fidalgo Bay Day started out as Marine Ecology Day in 2004. Paul Dinnel of Shannon Point Marine Center suggested the event and Lyndon Greene, president of the newly formed Anacortes Community Maritime Center, took up the idea as his own. These two have continued to show up with great good humor and energy to make the day a success. Many other partners have proven to be just as dedicated and equally as essential to putting on our annual show.

Although the celebration is not a long one, much planning goes into providing food, entertainment and information for the public. The event could not happen without the enthusiastic participation of a few key organizations:

- Taylor Shellfish Farms once again made our event memorable by supplying nearly \$700 worth of clams and oysters to us at no charge. Many thanks to Bill Dewey for this generosity and thanks to Paul Dinnel for handling all the logistical details of fetching and preparing the shellfish. Paul even formulated the delectable secret sauces for the day.
- Dan Penttila of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife brought the beach seine, providing the highlight of the day for the children. The discovery of pricklebacks, sculpins, crabs and forage fish coming up in the net brought forth a squeal of delight from the kids heard all up and down the beach.
- The Samish Indian Nation was generous in the rental of the resort, saving us some \$500 over the regular rental rate. The Nation also brought us Bill Bailey and Rosie Cayou to give us a wonderful traditional welcome and delicious barbecued salmon lunches.
- Shannon Point Marine Center student Emily Grason guided small hands in touching the living creatures from our local waters. Shannon Point supplied the creatures in salt water tanks, always a big hit with the kids. We would not be able to collect these creatures for show without the help of Shannon Point, their expertise and their collection permit. There is no way to put a price on the marvels of, for example, the tube feet of sea stars, and we wouldn't have them to show without the energy and dedication of the Shannon Point Marine Center folks.



- WSU/Skagit Beach Watchers members showed up in force to do everything from planning and organizing, minding the clams and oysters to making coffee. Beach Watchers also organized and staffed the button-making, habitat board and fish printing activities for children. In addition, they supplied volunteers to mind the microscope for Dan Penttila when he wasn't at the display.
- Skagit County provided recycling containers for the event and sent us Tracy Alker of the Public Works Department to demonstrate water quality equipment.
- The City of Anacortes helped out with printing of advertising flyers and programs which otherwise would have cost us about \$50. The City also sent a team from the water department to talk about clean water.
- Mary Ann's Kitchen brought luscious chowder for all comers.
- Randy's Pier 61 restaurant featured their delicious chowder.
- Storks' Restaurant and Lounge served yet another special chowder as a treat for attendees.
- Gere-A-Deli came through again this year with an enormous pan of brownies for the crowd, a donation worth \$50.
- The Anacortes McDonald's provided juice for the children.
- Anacortes Yacht Club lent us their super-duper stainless steel grill, another boost from our community which saved driving to Burlington to rent one for \$75.
- Anacortes Community and Youth Arts lent us the rubber fish and invertebrates to make fish prints. Monica Oppel taught the perfect technique for creating the most prints with the least mess.



- The Skagit Marine Resources Committee supported the event with a budget of \$2000 and the help of a number of key members. John Giboney and Rebecca Spurling served as co-chairs of the event with WSU Skagit Beach Watcher coordinator Chris Betchley doing a great job of pulling everything together, following up on every last detail and rounding up all the Beach Watcher volunteers.
- The Anacortes Community Maritime Center supplied insurance worth about \$750, organization, lots of basic labor and clam and oyster cookers. Members also put up signs around town directing visitors to the site. In addition, they hosted several kids' activities like knot-tying and the paddle-boat pool.

There was a welcome table at the entrance of the building to try to get a count of those attending, though not every visitor entered through the front door. Chris Betchley, WSU Skagit Beach Watchers coordinator, figures the number of attendees at 250 to 280.

Rebecca Spurling designed a passport activity that involved the kids in finding answers for questions about the natural world (see page 12.) The back of the passport had a place for kids and parents to tell us what they planned to do to help protect the bay. The participating children were given a raffle ticket and prizes were distributed at the end of the day.

Advertising was mostly focused on the three elementary schools in town, as it was last year. There are two reasons for our concentration on this grade level: one, the kids remember what they learn at that age and two, they all have to have parents or guardians along so we have adult attendance as well. Thanks to Betty Carteret for a spiffy poster which volunteers distributed around the county. (See page 6 for the poster.)

There was also a banner over Commercial Avenue in Anacortes for the week preceding the event, and Fidalgo Bay Day was listed in all the community event columns of local papers.

Dan Penttila, the forage fish expert who has faithfully brought his large display to every one of these seashore celebrations, was pleased with the day. His microscope was in nearly constant use as visitors young and old lined up to look at eggs from the surf smelt and other specimens. His beach seine activity was one of the highlights of the day with the smallest children letting out a great scream of discovery and surprise when they saw all the creatures which came up in the seine.

Many people, especially those with children, expressed their pleasure and satisfaction with the day full of interesting creatures, new experiences and delicious dishes from the sea. Anne Middleton, a retired teacher and veteran of many such events, spent the day helping the kids with the fish prints. She said she heard no complaints during the entire event, just enthusiastic praise.

Fidalgo Bay Day requires nearly 200 hours of the volunteers and many more from participating organizations. As usual, attendance was light before noon, and I asked Dan about how he felt about the crowd. He said that the day is well worth the trouble if we manage to turn on the light in even a few minds, young or old. The great cheer he would experience later that day told all of us that we had truly switched on a bright light in many minds.



FIDALGO BAY DAY



September 19, 2009

11 AM to 3 PM

Fidalgo Bay Resort

Anacortes, WA



Fun for the whole family!

- Join our community celebration of Fidalgo Bay
- Meet sea creatures and marine scientists
- Kids activities, educational displays & more ...
- Sample free local chowders and shellfish
- Enjoy a no-host barbequed salmon lunch
- Special solar photovoltaic exhibit and experts



Learn about marine life at Fidalgo Bay Day

Joan Pringle | Anacortes American
September 16, 2009 - 01:00 PM



Submitted Photo

Emma Foley checks out a starfish at last year's Fidalgo Bay Days. This year's celebration of marine shorelines and organisms is 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the Fidalgo Bay Resort convention center. (Michele Pope)

Help celebrate Skagit County's marine shorelines, marine organisms, history and culture at Fidalgo Bay Day 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at the Fidalgo Bay Resort convention center.

Meet sea creatures and marine scientists from the Western Washington University Shannon Point Marine Center. See what kind of small fish live right here in the shallows of the bay and estuaries. Look at live fish eggs under a microscope.

Featured at this year's event will be children's activities, displays, videos about the Salish Sea, baked goods, plenty of chowder and a salmon dinner.

Other activities include a beach seining demonstration by Dan Penttila from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, demonstrations on water quality testing and lessons about the wonders of the sea and keeping the waters clean.

A special solar photovoltaic will be on display from Phototrip, a Port Townsend photocell vendor, and experts will be on hand to explain how saving energy can help the area's waters.

Children can have fun making fish prints, creating bead bracelets, getting their faces painted, learning to tie knots, designing buttons and building boats to sail on the water. A passport will guide them in exploring and learning about marine waters and enter them in a drawing to win one of two photoelectric toys.

Samples of homemade local chowders from Mary Ann's Kitchen, Stork's Restaurant & Lounge and Randy's Pier 61 restaurant will be available as well as barbecued oysters from Taylor Shellfish Farms and a no-host salmon dinner prepared by Rosie Cayou and Bill Bailey.

Sodas will be on sale to support Native American Canoe Journey Families. Free juice will be provided by McDonald's and brownies by Gere-A-Deli.

This year's event is sponsored by Fidalgo Bay Resort, Washington State University Beach Watchers, Anacortes Community Maritime Center, Shannon Point Marine Center, Samish Indian Nation, Skagit County Marine Resources Committee and others.





Photo: John Giboney

The committee bought the advertising banner across Commercial Avenue for the week prior to Fidalgo Bay Day.



Photo: Ivar Dolph

A couple of years ago one of the Beach Watchers, Michele Pope, donated this great blue banner to mark the entry point of the hall. Here one of the committee members, Erica Pickett, ties the banner to a beam.



Rosie Cayou, a member of the Samish Nation, gave us a traditional welcome in speech and song.



Rosie's husband, Bill Bailey, is assisted by Glenn Tostenrude at the grill. They provided the crowd with a delicious salmon lunch.



Photo: John Giboney

Company representative Jeff Randal shows off the wonders of solar power: a pump that runs on sunlight.



Skagit County Marine Resources Committee's display illustrates the many actions and projects undertaken by the group.



Photo: Ivar Dolph

Beach Watcher Boshie Morris helps the kids assemble their salmon bracelets with beads from Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group. Each bead represents a stage in the life cycle of the salmon.



Photo: Ivar Dolph

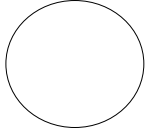
This is the first year we have had the participation of high school students. Mira Lutz brought members of her Anacortes High School Ecology Club to paint faces, raising money for their trip to Costa Rica.

Go to Permit Station #1

Water Cooler Station

Sample the refreshing water that is treated and distributed by the City of Anacortes Water Treatment Plant. After you are finished with your cup, **which is the best container for its disposal?**

- a. Compost
- b. Recycle
- c. Trash
- d. The Ground

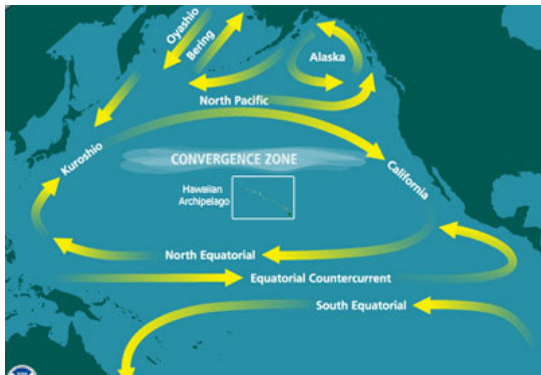
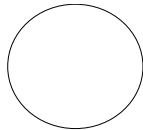


Go to Permit Station #2

Plastic Pollution

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is the world's largest dump located in the far Pacific Ocean. It weighs over 100 million tons and covers an area larger than:

- a. Anacortes
- b. Washington
- c. California
- d. Texas



Go to Permit Station #3

Forage fish :

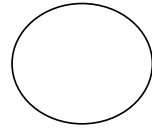
The Vital link in the food Web

Forage fish are small fish which are preyed upon by larger predators for food. Forage fish are sometimes referred to as “fuel for the food web”.



Which of the following are classified as forage fish?

- a. sand lance / surf smelt
- b. salmon
- c. pacific herring
- d. Both (a) and (c)

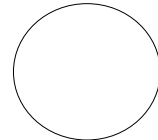


Go to Permit Station #4

Solar Panels

Solar Panels use _____ to generate electricity.

- a. Water
- b. Sun
- c. Natural Gas
- d. Wind



At “Permit Headquarters” for the passport activity kids picked up their permit applications and visited the four permit stations to learn about forage fish, marine debris, solar panels, along with composting and recycling as a method to minimize trash. After the kids answered the questions correctly, the station leaders stamped the passports. A complete passport allowed the kids to enter in a raffle for a solar powered toy. Two toys were awarded in two different age categories.



This year's event featured a solar energy company from Port Townsend. Among the attendees was a rancher from eastern Oregon who was mightily intrigued with the solar-powered pump which was running outdoors.



Beach Watcher Lyn Bishop (left) and MRC member and event co-chair Rebecca Spurling help kids make buttons featuring sea creatures.



Photo Ivar Dolph

Pete Haase of Skagit Conservation Education Alliance answers questions about just how those oysters manage to clean up the water.



Photo Ivar Dolph

Dan Penttila's microscope is always a hit with visitors. The scope featured views of forage fish eggs and crab larvae.



Photo: Michele Pope

Ink pads are used to transfer ink to the fish.



Photo: Michele Pope

Fish print!



Photo: Michele Pope

ACMC member Scott Bullock shows a couple of budding mariners the magic of knots.



Photo: Michele Pope

A perfect figure-of-eight knot on the first try!



Photo: John Giboney

Taylor Shellfish Farms supplied the most delectable oysters. Here Dixon Elder on the left and Paul Dinnel spoon on Paul's secret sauce for an unforgettable taste of the sea.



Photo: Ivar Dolph

Lyndon Greene and Bill Testerman keep the clams and oysters from Taylor Shellfish Farms coming off the grills.



Photo: John Giboney

Visitors enjoy samples of three different chowders contributed by Mary Ann's Kitchen, Randy's Pier 61 and Stork's Restaurant and Lounge.



Photo: John Giboney

Beach Watcher Chet Bradley talks about the WSU program with a couple of visitors.



Tracy Alker, Skagit County MRC administrative lead, demonstrates the County's water quality analyzing equipment.



Shannon Point Marine Center student Emily Grason shows off a number of amazing creatures from beneath the sea.



It isn't only the youngsters who get a kick out of playing in the paddleboat pool! ACMC member Cary Tolman (left) is the designer of the Fidalgo Flyer rubber-band powered catamarans shown racing here.



Beach Watcher and expert seamstress Fran Jepperson shows off her latest version of the habitat flannel board. Children place the various creatures in their homes, whether eelgrass, beach or deeper water.



Photo Ivar Dolph

Dan Penttila and assistant Bryan McCormick set the seine to bring some sea creatures to the beach.



Photo: Michele Pope

All ages get in on pulling the seine in to the beach.



The children let out a great scream of joy and discovery at the sight of all the amazing creatures in the net.



Dan Penttila, at the center of the photo, tells the crowd on the beach a little bit about each of the creatures which came up in the seine.



There is something pretty intimidating about those crabs even when they are sitting in a tub!

In one of the more amusing incidents of the day, Dan Penttila asked the children if they could tell the boy crabs from the girl crabs. A stricken look crossed the face of one eight-year-old boy in the front row as he realized he was about to be made an unwilling party to a birds-and-bees discussion. Telling the sexes apart proved to be mercifully simple, and even the apprehensive kids learned how to do it.





Dan Penttila of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife tells the crowd a little about the sculpin in his hands.



The future of fisheries is in hands like these. Our goal with Fidalgo Bay Day is to make sure that kids and their parents become more aware that our actions can help or hurt the creatures of the bay.

Participating Volunteers

Name	Affiliation
Adria Banks	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Ann Testerman	ACMC
Anne Middleton	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Betty Carteret	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Bill Testerman	ACMC
Boshie Morris	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Britta Escheté	KSVR Radio
Caroline Spehar	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Callie Martin	Skagit County Public Works
Cary Tolman	ACMC
Catherine Davis	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Chet Bradley	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Chris Betchley	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Chris Wood	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Danny Rambo	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Dennis Mazza	ACMC
Dixon Elder	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Donna Davidson	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Emily Grason	Shannon Point Marine Center
Eric Shen	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Erica Pickett	WSU Beach Watchers, ACMC, MRC
Fran Jepperson	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Harold Spehar	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Ivar Dolph, Photographer	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers, MRC
Jack Middleton	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Jeff Randal	Power Trip Energy Corporation
John Bame, M.D.	ACMC
John Giboney, Photographer	MRC
Lin Folsom	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Lyndon Greene	ACMC
Lyn Bishop	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Michele Pope, Photographer	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Nihla Bradley	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Noelle Escheté	KSVR Radio
Pamelia Maxwell	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Pat Steffani	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers, ACMC
Pattie Hutchins	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Patty Young	ACMC
Paul Dinnel	Shannon Point Marine Center MRC, ACMC
Rebecca Spurling	MRC
Scott Bullock	ACMC
Tony Bull	ACMC
Sue Ehler	WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Vernon Lauridsen	ACMC
Vicki McNeil	ACMC

Photo: Erica Pickett

Participating Organizations

Anacortes Community Maritime Center
Anacortes High School Environmental Club
Anacortes Police Department
Anacortes Yacht Club
Anacortes Community and Youth Arts
City of Anacortes
City of Anacortes Water Department
Gere-A-Deli
Mary Ann's Kitchen
McDonald's
Northwest Marine Mammal Stranding Network
People for Puget Sound
Power Trip Energy Corporation
Randy's Pier 61
Samish Indian Nation
Shannon Point Marine Center
Skagit Conservation Education Alliance
Skagit County Marine Resources Committee
Skagit County Public Works
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
Stork's Restaurant and Lounge
Taylor Shellfish Farms
WSU Skagit Beach Watchers
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife



Photo by Erica Pickett