

COUNTY: Skagit

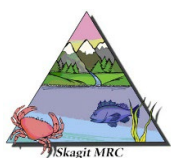
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This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under Assistance Agreement CE01J97401 to Puget Sound Partnership. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

Fidalgo Bay Day 2023

Sponsored by:
Skagit County Marine Resources Committee
With support of the
Samish Indian Nation



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Fidalgo Bay Day Overview

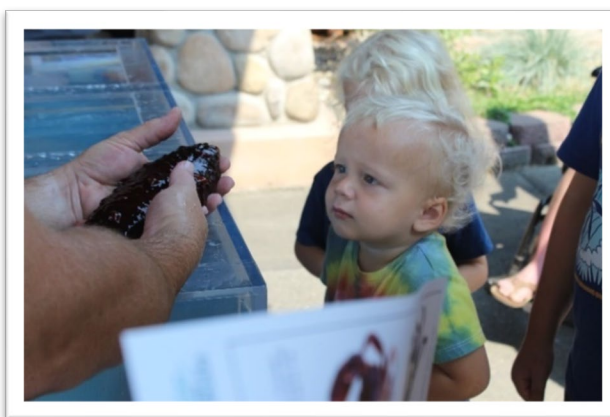
Fidalgo Bay Day (FBD) is the Skagit County Marine Resources Committee's (SMRC) signature public outreach event that has taken place annually for the last 19 years (with a 2-year Covid hiatus in 2021 & 2022, when an online marine themed scavenger hunt was held.) The Samish Indian Nation has graciously hosted our event at their wonderful Fidalgo Bay Resort Clubhouse at no charge each year since its inception. The Clubhouse is located along the beautiful shores of Fidalgo Bay in the heart of Coast Salish traditional territory and is the perfect venue for FBD. The resort staff has always been very accommodating in dealing with our requests. Many 'thanks' go to the Samish Nation for their generosity.



Hundreds of visitors attend this event each year and more than 40 different organizations and businesses participate. Activities vary from year to year, but typically include: interactive displays from many participating organizations including WWU Shannon Point Marine Center's Touch Tank, Deception Pass Park's gray whale skull, beach seining demonstration, children's art and science activities focused on the Salish Sea, face painting, free shellfish and chowder samples, popcorn, and a no-host traditional tribal salmon lunch.

This annual event pulls together contributions from many businesses & organizations in the community. It also involves hundreds of hours from the SMRC Planning Committee, the Salish Sea Stewards, and Friends of Skagit Beaches. The main focus of the event is to spread awareness of the marine environment and to foster environmental stewardship. Presenters with booths and hands-on activities share their love and knowledge of the marine environment with the local community. People visiting the event learn a wide variety of information about the ecosystem functions of the plants and animals that live in Fidalgo Bay and the greater Salish Sea. FBD is an excellent avenue for the SMRC and other partner organizations to share their important work that might not otherwise be visible to the public. It also affords the opportunity for participating organizations to make valuable connections and build relationships with other likeminded people for a greater collective impact in protecting the Salish Sea.

Fidalgo Bay Day is the SMRC's gift to the local Community of marine environment education, a proven way of fostering environmental stewardship and a day of much shoreline beach fun & food for all.



2023 Event Summary

FBD was held **Saturday, August 26, 2023**, at the Fidalgo Bay Resort in Anacortes from 11:00AM to 3:00PM. Despite diminished air quality from wildfire smoke we had a stellar attendance of **over 350 visitors** with a record number of youth. The increased attendance indicates FBD is growing in popularity and there is a lot of interest from our local diverse community to take part in this annual educational event with free admission and a wide variety of educational activities, arts & crafts, & plenty of complimentary food.

The SMRC's goal of increasing public awareness of the marine environment and fostering environmental stewardship was more than realized. The consensus of those attending, the educational booths, the contributing businesses and volunteers was that the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thanks to the **63 volunteers** and **42 organizations and businesses** that offered their gifts of expertise, time, energy & donation of materials to help make this year's event a huge success!



Opening Ceremony

FBD Planning Committee member Beverly Mowrer kicked off the event with a warm welcome, event agenda highlights, 'Thank Yous', and presented the Northwest Straits Initiative's Tribal Acknowledgement. An inspirational welcoming song and words were delivered by Samish Nation Chairman **Tom Wooten** and Samish drummers. Samish tribal member Rosie Cayou James shared a tribute to the recently deceased killer whale *Tokitae*.



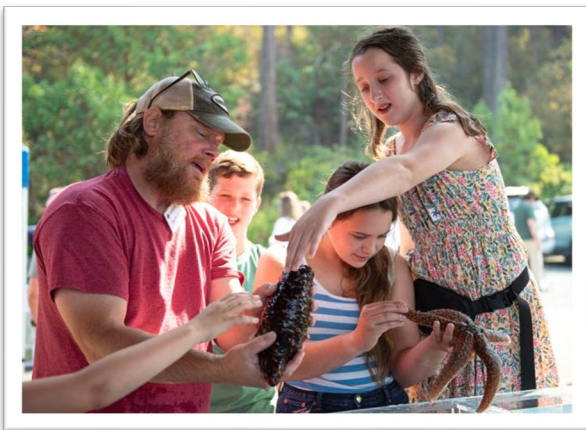
Passport Stations

For the ninth year, the Skagit MRC collaborated with **Friends of Skagit Beaches** who planned and coordinated the “Discovery Passport” activity. A record number of **150 passport booklets** were handed out before running out of passports for the first time ever! Passport participants explored the **23 Passport Discovery Stations** and interacted with the organizations hosting the displays to answer the passport questions and get a stamp for prizes. It is a fun way to engage with the public while they learn about the different organizations & issues impacting the Salish Sea and what they can do to help. **70 passports were completed!** Many indicated they learned something new. Each year, the passport cover is selected from one of the entries in the coloring contest from last year’s event. This year, **24 youth participated in the coloring contest** to win a spot on the cover of the 2024 Discovery Passport.



Western Washington University's Shannon Point Touch Marine Center Touch Tank

Students and their professor from WWU's Shannon Point Marine Center displayed their touch tank full of saltwater invertebrates and seaweeds to the delight and education of young and old.



Deception Park Foundation & Deception State Park Gray Whale Skull

Two Washington State Park Rangers accompanied the WA Parks display this year and educated people about gray whales and what park rangers do.



Beach Seining Demonstration

The highly popular beach seining demonstration was the led by Samish Indian Nation's Matt Castle and his crew. The first sets yielded a good catch with many fish for visitors to help identify. Some visitors looked for birds on the bay, shells on the beach and others just enjoyed the celebration!



Corra the Eco-Friendly Mermaid/Selkie & Her Pirate Partner

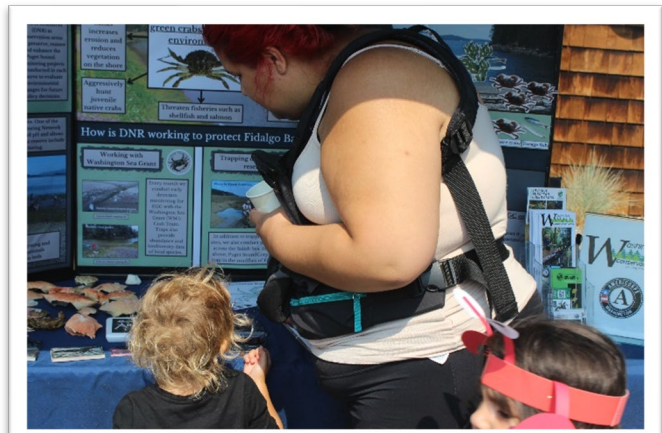
Corra displayed shells and talked of tides in her beach shell tent. The children flocked to hear her tales! She even went for a refreshing swim in the cold waters of Fidalgo Bay.



Interactive Educational Displays

Interactive educational displays from **26 different organizations** were located both outside and inside the clubhouse, and 23 of those were also Discovery Passport Stations. The interactive displays offered educational activities that focused on water quality, marine birds, orcas and other whales, watershed functions, estuaries, salmon, forage fish, marine debris and plastics, eelgrass, derelict gear, recycling, European Green Crabs, groundwater, and more.

This year SMRC co-hosted an interactive display with the Northwest Straits Commission and the Department of Fish and Wildlife that focused on European Green Crabs. The joint display included real crab molts, a real European Green Crab preserved in acrylic resin and a European Green Crab plinko game (*below left*). The Washington Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Reserves program also had an informative European Green Crab display (*below right*). According to the article in the Skagit Valley Herald, one of the parents said her kids ended up learning a lot, specifically about invasive species in the area such as green crabs. Our education and outreach methods must be working! A full list participating groups with displays is included at the end of this report.



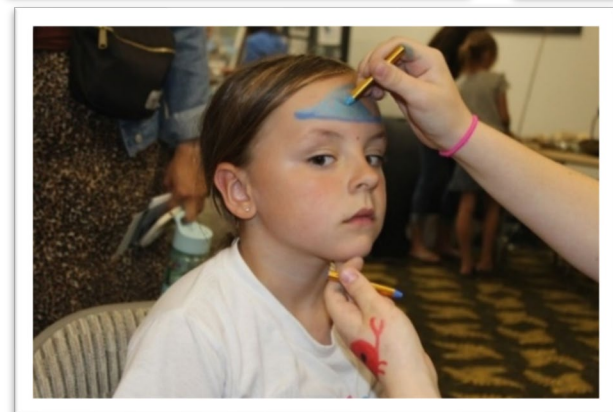
Samish Nation Librarian Storytelling Circle

Jackie Ferry, Samish Librarian held a 60-minute storytelling circle. Thea Roe (Chelángen Event Planner, Samish Indian Nation) helped plan this activity together with posted QR codes for Samish language translations of familiar Salish Sea invertebrates.



Salish Sea Themed Youth Craft Activities

2023 again brought a greatly expanded youth/child marine arts & craft expansion (9 activities) for all to participate in: salmon & crab hats, cork boats & paper binoculars, face painting, cattail mat weaving, fish printing on cloth, painters hats, wooden marine animals, oyster votive candles, and *Batillaria attramentaria* jewelry were just a sample. Bev Mowrer, a 2022 Salish Sea Steward graduate organized and brought 14 volunteers to staff the booths which were jam-packed all day long. We had not planned for this record number of children attending and participating, but all stations were full until closing time!



Food – Chowder, Shellfish, Salmon, & More

We borrowed the popcorn machine from the Anacortes Boys and Girls Club and gave away over 300 bags of popcorn. We also provided ice water in 5-gallon jugs, lemonade & coffee. Lemonade was very popular on this very hot day. The coffee, not so much.

Two Anacortes Restaurants: **Secret Cove** and **Bob's Chowder Bar**, participated in the famous *Fidalgo Bay Day Chowder Tasting*, offering free samples of some of the best clam chowder in the Northwest!



And once again, **Taylor Shellfish** generously donated hundreds of dollars' worth of delicious shellfish. Volunteers prepared special sauces, steamed mussels, and grilled oysters to perfection. Volunteer Paul Parent and his crew grilled Taylor Shellfish oysters (with SMRC member Paul Dinnel's special secret sauce) and steamed Taylor Shellfish blue mussels.



Coast Salish Traditional No-Host Salmon BBQ

Rosie Cayou James, Bill Bailey and their family offered a traditional Coast Salish luncheon of salmon grilled over an open fire, raspberry vinaigrette coleslaw and fresh fry bread.



Each year, SMRC purchases the temporary food permits for FBD. We were pleased to learn that the Skagit Health Department regulations changed in 2023 to allow one Umbrella Food Permit to cover everything served at our event (i.e. Shellfish BBQ, the Chowder Tasting and Rosie Cayou James' Family traditional Salmon BBQ) for a savings of \$350 in food permits.

Restaurant Prize Drawing

All adult attendees were given a ticket to go into a free drawing for gift certificates from local restaurants: Eight \$25 gift certificates donated by Anthony's at Cape Sante, and two \$25 gift certificates for Bob's Chowder Bar & two \$25 gift certificates for Secret Cove Restaurant donated by private donors. This was a very popular addition to the day.

Zero Waste

This was a Zero Waste event with compostable utensils, plates, coffee cups, and chowder cups. New to the Event, Skagit Soils took compostable waste and oyster & mussel shells to add to their batch of soil amendments.

Event Planning & Administration

A huge 'Thanks' and appreciation to our fabulous event planning committee for ensuring everything ran smoothly! Event Lead **Darla Gay Smith** and Co-Leads **Cindy Elston** and **Beverly Mowrer** were key for planning, promoting, and coordinating this entire event and for making sure volunteer positions were filled and that everyone stayed on task and on schedule. This was no easy task, and they did an outstanding job!

- **Administration and Event Planning Team:** Tracy Alker (SMRC Coordinator), Darla Gay Smith (SMRC member), Cindy Elston (Skagit County Intern), Beverly Mowrer (Salish Sea Steward), Pete Haase (SMRC member), Thea Roe (Samish Nation).

Event Volunteers

This year, more than **63 volunteers** contributed **over 900 hours** of their valuable time to make sure the event was educational and fun for all. In addition, **42 organizations and businesses** contributed their time, expertise, and there were **26 excellent displays (23 were Passport Stations)**. SMRC sent 'Thank You' letters to each one of them.

- **Set up / Tear Down:** The day before the event, **eight** volunteers helped set up display tables and signage, and prepared the sauces for the shellfish. On the day of the event, volunteers arrived at 8:30AM to help set up and **five** stayed until 4:00PM to clean up. Darla Gay Smith, Bria J. Hedahl, Paul Vance, Erin Merklein, Joan White, Patricia Winkler, Patricia Bonacic, Mary Campbell, Steve Purcer, Ryan Mielke, and John Griffin.
- **Parking:** LJ Johnson (Lead), Morty Cohen (advisor) & Team: Maureen Brennan, Tom Richards, Tom Flanagan, Joyce Harvey-Morgan, Liz Knowles, Marisa Martin, Don Coleman, and Noelle Kaluna-Oldow.
- **Passport Stations:** Betty Carteret (Lead), Cindy Elston, & Friends of Skagit Beaches Team: Betty Kuehn, Diane Eiesland, Pat Johnson, Patricia Winkler, Erica Pickett, Joan Magee, Karen Richman, Enid Castro, Noelle Kaluna-Oldow, Mary Pugsley, Rene Vance, and Lynne Wenberg-Davidson.
- **Welcoming Table / Exhibitors Sign In:** Phyllis Bravinder and Elizabeth Richards.
- **Exhibitor Booth Organization:** Pete Haase (Lead), Cindy Elston (Lead until 7.31.23), Ryan Mielke (SSS), and Darla Gay Smith.
- **Salish Sea Themed Arts & Crafts:** Bev Mowrer (Lead), Carole Anderson, Donna Davison, Dalton Elder, Aden Elder, Eiren McKay, Jennifer Mortenson, Faye Whitney, Deb Whitney, Kathleen Brueger, Trisha Winkler (SSS), Ryan Mielke (SSS), Jim Mowrer, Janet Bartoli Wiklen, Sienna Wilken, Stephane Downey, Michelle Liburdy, Karen Looney-Patterson, Susan McNamara, Kylee Lowry, Taby Perron, Ana Riefkohl, Pat Steffani, Cindy Thomas, Deb Thurman, Thea Roe, Trina Wheery and MVHS Key Club Students.
- **Beach Seine:** Matt Castle (Lead), Chris Brown, Patty Hutchins, Tom Richards, Don Coleman, Hal Lee, Charlie Donahue, Lee Hall, Erin Merklein, and Scott Peterson.

- **Shellfish BBQ (Taylor's Shellfish Oysters/Blue Mussels):** Dennis Parent (Lead), Paul Dinnel (Lead until 8.20.23) & his team: Dick Kent, John Griffin, Jack Middleton, Scott Peterson, and Saul Vest.
- **Photographer:** Kathy Carroll & her Assistant Susan Economon.
- **Coffee, Lemonade, Popcorn, Ice Water:** Cynthia Nielsen (Lead) and Darla Gay Smith.
- **Zero Waste:** Ruth Taylor, Dean Taylor, Callie Martin, Wayne Huseby, BJ Hedebl, Craig (Skagit Soils) and Jan Weedman.

Planning and Promotion

SMRC maintains extensive 2023 FBD planning documents and notes available upon request including: Youth Craft Activities and supplies, complete Event Timelines, current Participating Organization Contact Lists, current Volunteer Lists, Skagit Health Department Food Service regulations and Permits (and forms) required, Save the Date poster, half-sheet Promotional Postcards with location map, and suggestions for the following year.

Fidalgo Bay Day flyers were widely distributed at special events and places of business. The event was also widely posted online and on partner websites, newsletters, and email lists. Ads were placed in the 'The Clamdigger' and the 'Skagit Kid Insider', and both Salish Sea Stewards Facebook pages. Local reporters were contacted and post-event articles appeared on the front pages of both local papers. The traditional, volunteer installed roadside sign was posted on "R" avenue coming into town.

Event Contributions

In addition to Skagit MRC grant funding, several local business and organizations helped support Fidalgo Bay by contributing in-kind services, resources, or funding including:

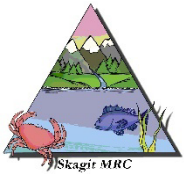
- Samish Indian Nation provided free use of their facility and kitchen
- Friends of Skagit Beaches provided insurance coverage for the facility, sandwich board signs, and passport activity and prizes
- Complimentary chowder was provided by Secret Cove & Bob's Chowder Bar
- Eight \$25 gift cards were donated by Anthony's at Cap Sante and two \$25 gift cards for Bob's Chowder Bar and Secret Cove were donated by private donors for the free raffle
- Complimentary shellfish (oysters & blue mussels) was provided by Taylor Shellfish
- The Anacortes Boys and Girls Club loaned the popcorn machine
- Beverly Mowrer provided some supplies for arts and craft activities
- Over 900 volunteer hours were expended

2023 Participating Businesses and Organizations

Anthony's Restaurant at Cap Sante
Bob's Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon Restaurant
City of Anacortes, Stormwater Management
DNR Aquatic Reserves Program
Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve, CSC
Fidalgo Bay Resort
Forage Fish Interpretation Station
Friends of Skagit Beaches / Salish Sea Stormwater Monitoring
Girl Scouts of Western Washington
Corra the Mermaid/Selkie & Pirate
Northwest Straits Commission
Orca Network
Pacific Mammal Research
Padilla Bay Foundation
Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
RE Sources for Sustainable Communities
Rosie Cayou James Family- No Host Coast Salish Salmon BBQ
Salish Sea School
Salish Sea Stewards
Samish Indian Nation / Library Story Corner/ Beaver Lodge, Citizen-Based Carving Group
Secret Cove Restaurant
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group/ Skagit Watershed Council
Shannon Point Marine Center, WWU
Skagit Conservation District
Skagit County, Natural Resources Division
Skagit County, Noxious Weeds
Skagit County, Public Health
Skagit County, Solid Waste Division / Zero Waste
Skagit Land Trust
Skagit Marine Resources Committee (SMRC)
Skagit Soils
State of Washington, Department of Ecology
Swinomish Department of Environmental Protection
Taylor Shellfish Farms
Transition Fidalgo
Washington Department of Fisheries & Wildlife
Washington Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Reserves
Washington State Parks, Deception Pass Rangers

Acknowledgements

It takes a village, or many tide pools coming together to make Fidalgo Bay Day occur each year, as it has since 2004. FBD is truly a team effort! It wouldn't happen without our amazing volunteers, partner organizations and businesses. The SMRC wholeheartedly thanks all for their involvement and gifts of expertise, time, energy, and unwavering, generous support that contributed to the event's success. Their efforts have made Skagit County more aware of the resources residing in our precious Salish Sea & the challenges faced.



SAMISH INDIAN NATION



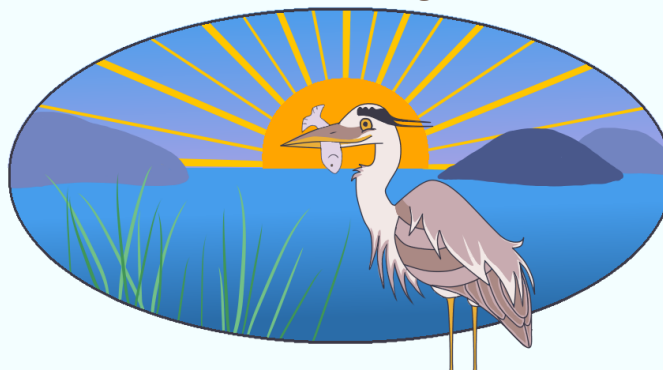


Celebrate and learn about the wonders of our estuaries
with Skagit Marine Resources Committee and friends at

Fidalgo Bay Day 2023

Saturday, August 26th 11AM–3PM

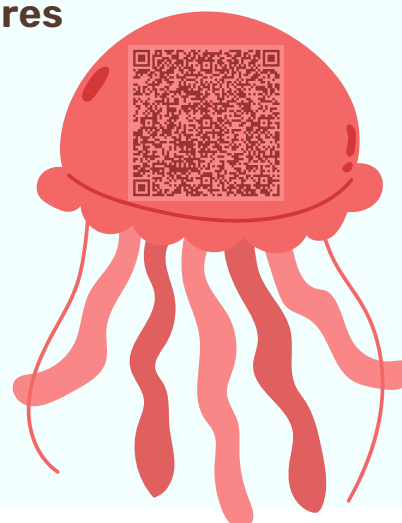
Fidalgo Bay Resort, 4701 Fidalgo Bay Road, Anacortes



**Fidalgo Bay Day is a FREE, Fun & Educational
Experience for the Entire Family with...**

- Lots of indoor and outdoor activities for all ages
- Discovery passport stations and prizes
- A touch tank with living sea creatures
- Beach seining demonstration
- Family friendly craft tables
- Face painting
- Educational displays and games
- Tasty local seafood
- Corra, the live mermaid!

**For more information visit
SkagitMRC.org**

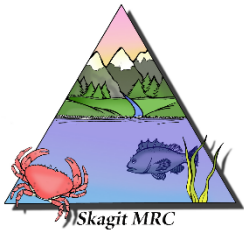


Discovery Passport sponsored by:

Fidalgo Bay Day
2023 Discovery Passport



Thanks to these organizations for
making this event possible.



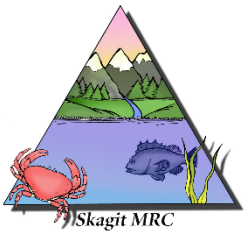
Artwork by Snow Chae

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Fidalgo Bay Day
2023 Discovery Passport



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Artwork by Snow Chae

Today's Activities

Outside

- Visit passport stations
- Beach Seining 11:30 AM at the boat ramp

Inside the Clubhouse & On Patio

- Visit passport stations
- Interactive educational displays
- Arts & Crafts activities
- Sample seafood and chowder
- Samish Story Hour 12:00 noon

Tradition Coast Salish Salmon Lunch

Purchase tickets on east side of building



If you had fun today and would like to get involved with the programs you learned about, sign up to become a **Salish Sea Steward**

To learn more:

www.skagitmrc.org

Or email:

salishseastewards@gmail.com

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My Fidalgo Bay Day



The best part was



2 things I learned





A picture of my favorite animal

My Fidalgo Bay Day



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A picture of my favorite animal

Discovery Passport Instructions:

Visit passport stations inside and outside (identified with numbered flags) and talk with the table hosts. Answer the questions and receive a sticker from each station.

Collect at least 12 stickers, show your passport at Station #1 by 3:00 pm and pick up your prize!

Have Fun!

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Have Fun!



Improving Skagit beaches and marine waters through
Education | Citizens Science | Stewardship

Volunteer with Friends projects such as
our Stormwater Monitoring Project

Contact us at volunteer@skagitbeaches.org



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Station 23

WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

Child Question: Name one type of fish you
commonly find in fish and chips.

Adult Question: What seafood type contributes
the most to Washington's economy?



Washington Department of
FISH & WILDLIFE

Station 23

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Child Question: Name one type of fish you
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Washington Department of
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WA State Noxious Weed Control Board

Child Question: Why do we want to get rid of spartina from Fidalgo Bay and all of Washington?

Adult Question: What makes noxious weeds, specifically spartina, so invasive?



Start here and come back for a prize!

Coloring Contest



Pick up a coloring contest sheet here at Station #1 and draw us a picture inspired by what you learn today!

The winning entry will appear on the cover of the 2024 Discovery Passport.



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Help us reduce our biggest category of water pollution: **pollution carried in stormwater.**

Join our team of like-minded volunteers monitoring city stormwater.

Help lower the risk for salmon extinction.

Survey once a month with scientific instruments.

Discover pollution so we can share data and get the problem corrected.

Work in a team for safety and camaraderie.

Contact us at volunteer@skagitbeaches.org



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Station 21

Transition Fidalgo

Child Question: How much of the earth is covered in water?

- A. 56%
- B. 93%
- C. 71%

Adult Question: What is the Greenhouse effect and how are humans changing it?



Station 21

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- A. 56%
- B. 93%
- C. 71%

Adult Question: What is the Greenhouse effect and how are humans changing it?



Station 20

WA Department of Ecology

Child Question: If you spilled oil in the dirt, how would you clean it up?

Adult Question: Name one pollutant on Fidalgo Island that needs to be cleaned up and one possible way it ended up there?

**Salish Sea Stormwater Monitoring Project**

Child Question: What's one of the tests that says stormwater is safe for fish, shellfish, and eelgrass?

- Count how many marshmallows there are per gallon of stormwater.
- Measure how much dissolved oxygen is in the stormwater.

Adult Question: How much stormwater from Anacortes streets is treated before flowing into Puget Sound?

- 100%
- 50%
- 0%



Station 2

Station 20

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Station 3

**WA Department of Natural Resources
Aquatic Reserves Program**

Child Question: What is one example of an invasive species in the Puget Sound?

Adult Question: How are forage fish (such as Pacific herring) affected by European green crab?



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Station 19

City of Anacortes

Child Question: What is something we can do to prevent pollution from getting into our waterways?

Adult Question: What is something you can do at work or at home to protect water quality?



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Station 18

**Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group &
Skagit Watershed Council**

Child Question: Spin the wheel for your question about watersheds.

Adult Question: Spin the wheel for your question about and watersheds.



Station 4

Deception Pass State Park

Child Question: What species of whale is the skull in our display?

Adult Question: Looking at the skull of the whale, you will notice that it doesn't have teeth. What type of whale is it and what does it use instead to eat?



Station 18

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Station 5

**Wolf Hollow Wildlife
Rehabilitation Center**

Child Question: Name 2 of the main causes of injury or orphaning of wild animals that are brought to Wolf Hollow for care.

Adult Question: How many years has Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehab Center been caring for injured and orphaned animals in San Juan and Skagit Counties?


**Swinomish Department of
Environmental Protection**

Child Question: How many species of salmon live in the Skagit River?

Adult Question: Name all 5 species of salmon you can find in the Skagit River.



Station 5

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Station 17

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Station 16

Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Child Question: Name 2 things you notice about the animals in our tray?

Adult Question: Clams and barnacles eat the same thing. What do they eat, and how are their feeding techniques different?



Station 6

Pacific Mammal Research

Child Question: What is a cetacean?

Adult Question: What is the largest pinniped we have in the Salish Sea?



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Station 6

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Child Question: What is a cetacean?

Adult Question: What is the largest pinniped we have in the Salish Sea?



Station 7

Girl Scouts of Western Washington

Child Question: Why do boaters need to know different types of knots?

Adult Question: Name 4 of the 6 different types of knots.



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Girl Scouts of Western Washington

Child Question: Why do boaters need to know different types of knots?

Adult Question: Name 4 of the 6 different types of knots.



Station 15

Skagit County Natural Resources Division

Child Question: Where does water end up when it goes down the storm drain?

Adult Question: What are three things that people can do (or not do!) to help keep our water clean?



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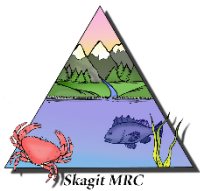


**Skagit Marine Resources Committee
& Northwest Straits Commission**

Child Question: European Green Crabs are always the color green. True or False?

Adult Question: How many spines are on either side of the eye on a European green crab shell? This number is different from any other crab you might see in our area.

- a. 5
- b. 8
- c. 4



Skagit Land Trust

Child Question: What large bird does the Skagit Land Trust help at Fidalgo Bay?

Adult Question: How does Skagit Land Trust help Fidalgo Bay?

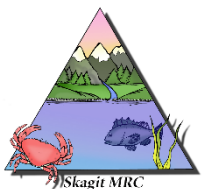


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Station 9

Skagit County Solid Waste Division

Child Question: Name the three living things that break down food scraps in a compost pile. Hint: FBI

Adult Question: Which is organic waste?

- a. Plastic bags
- b. Water bottles
- c. Newspaper



Station 13

Skagit Conservation District

Child Question: What 4 basic things do animals need to survive?

Adult Question: What is the definition of a habitat?



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Station 12

Orca Network

Child Question:

There are two types of orcas in the Salish Sea.

Southern Resident orcas eat _____

Bigg's orcas eat _____

Adult Question: Why are Bigg's orcas thriving while

Southern Resident orcas are endangered?



Station 10

Forage Fish Interpretation Station

Child Question: Forage fish are:

- a. Small
- b. Silver
- c. Schooling fish
- d. All of the above

Adult Question: Forage fish:

- a. Eat plankton
- b. Are near the bottom of our food web
- c. Forage on salmon
- d. Only a and b



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Station 11

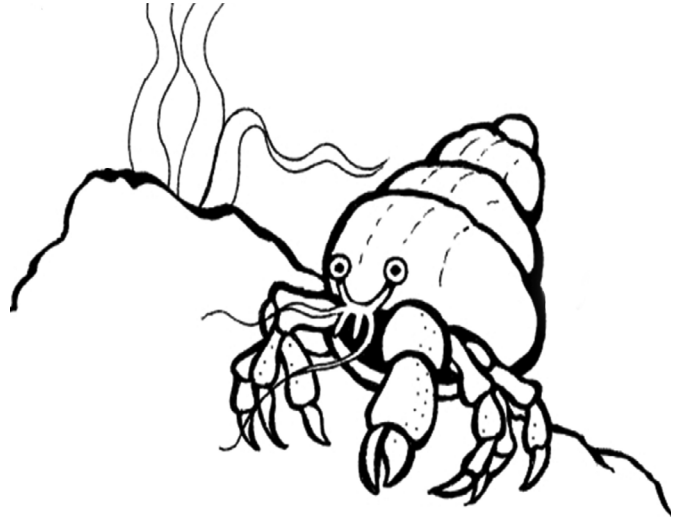
Salish Sea School

Child Question: How many eggs do Tufted Puffins lay in a single nesting season?

Adult Question: The first Tufted Puffin survey estimated Washington State's population at roughly 25,000 birds; in 2017 the minimum outer coast population numbered just how many individuals?



Color me!



Hermit Crab

A hermit crab borrows an empty snail shell for protection and finds new ones as it grows. What do you do when you outgrow something?



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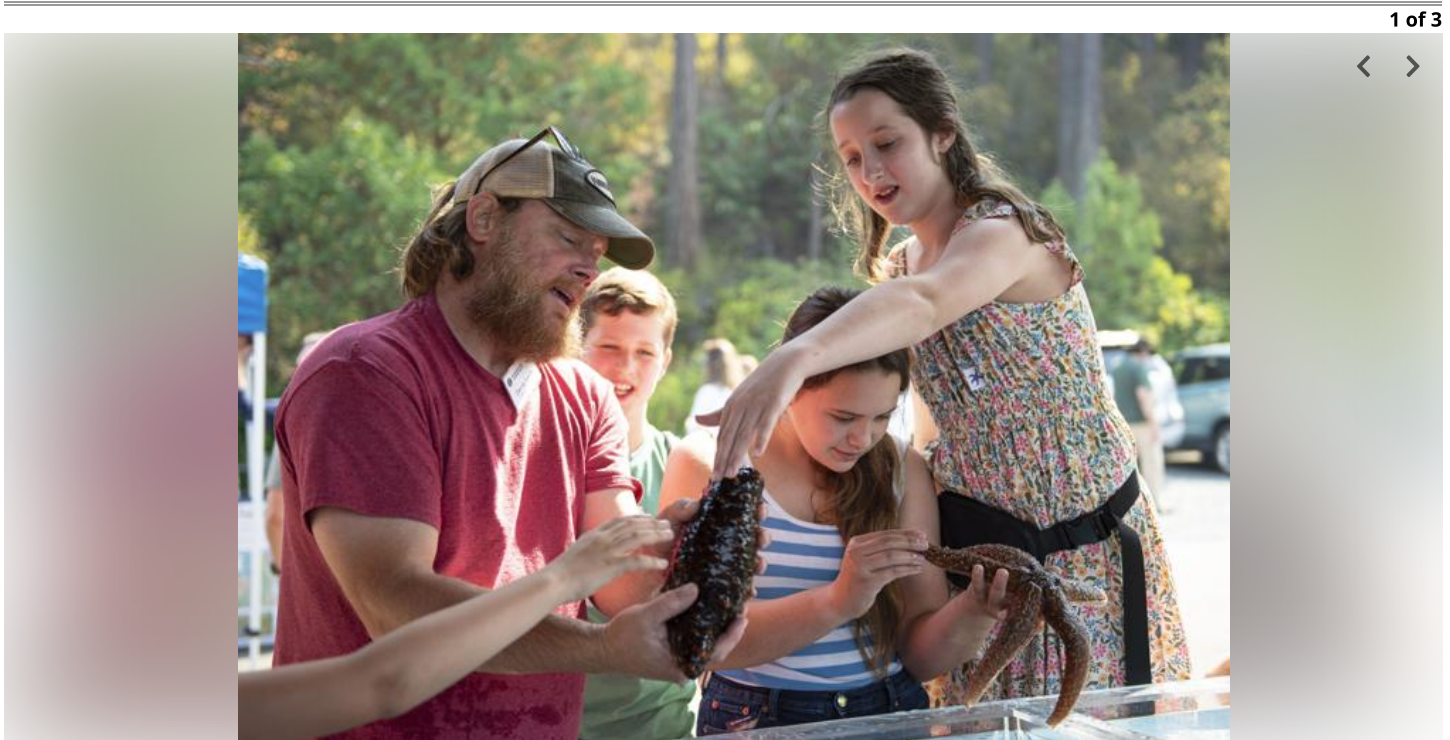
A hermit crab borrows an empty snail shell for protection and finds new ones as it grows. What do you do when you outgrow something?



https://www.goskagit.com/news/education/fidalgo-bay-day-teaches-those-in-attendance-about-areas-marine-life/article_97668962-446e-11ee-bc03-57da0827e3de.html

Fidalgo Bay Day teaches those in attendance about area's marine life

EMMA BURRELL @goskagit
Aug 28, 2023



Derek Smith, a laboratory manager at the Shannon Point Marine Center, shows off a sea cucumber to Cora Wilt (right) as Liesl Cummings examines a sea star Saturday at Fidalgo Bay Day in Anacortes.

Oliver Hamlin / Skagit Valley Herald

ANACORTES — The 19th Fidalgo Bay Day on Saturday gave those in attendance the chance learn about marine life through an aquatic touch tank and educational booths.

Fidalgo Bay Day, hosted at Fidalgo Bay Resort by the Skagit Marine Resources Committee, is an event aimed at getting children excited about marine life.

Upon arrival, kids were encouraged to pick up a "Discovery Passport," a booklet supplied by the nonprofit Friends of Skagit Beaches.

Betty Carteret, vice president of Friends of Skagit Beaches, said the group has been passing out Discovery Passports at Fidalgo Bay Day for 10 years.

"We come because public education about the environment, particularly the marine environment, is one of our core missions," she said. "When people learn about it and establish a personal relationship with the waterfront and whatnot, they are more likely to be taken care of."

The goal of the Discovery Passport is to get kids to interact with each booth, and on the way collect stickers to put in their booklets.

After filling out their passports, the kids could turn them in for a prize.

"It's learning in disguise," Carteret said. "It's loads of fun and it's a great community event."

Along with educational booths, there was a touch tank hosted by the Shannon Point Marine Center.

Derek Smith, a lab manager working at the touch tank, said some of the kids spent more than an hour holding and touching the different animals.

"Most of the stuff we brought today are all things that most people are used to seeing in the intertidal — sea stars and urchins and cucumbers and snails and stuff," he said. "It's stuff most people instantly recognize along with a few other things."

Smith said events such as Fidalgo Bay Day are beneficial for communities because they give kids hands-on experiences with the environment and show them why they should care.

"We all kind of need the ocean to operate properly," he said. "The ocean is life, it's our lifeblood."

Kids were able to learn about threats to marine life and why conservation matters.

Kristen Cummings of Anacortes brought her kids to the event because she thought it would be a fun Saturday activity.

She said her kids ended up learning a lot, specifically about invasive species in the area such as green crabs.

"It's important to educate our kids about the ocean and our ecosystem, what it takes for it to survive and how we can do our part," she said.

Elizabeth Drozda, vice chair of the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve Citizen Stewardship Committee, said she hopes the event sparks conversations between kids and parents about ways they can protect the environment.

"I think that children are the ambassadors of our planet," she said. "When we can engage children in understanding these types of things where they live, they can grow up with that idea and grow up in this environment, understanding this environment and then maybe take care of this environment."

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Emma Burrell

