



The Community Steps Forward with NRNC Monitoring Projects by Daniel Hull



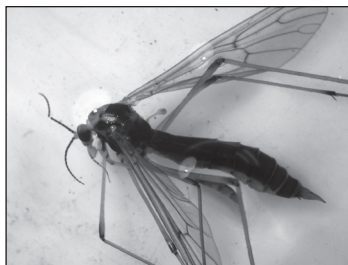
Lydia Withrow works on invertebrates.

has successfully spearheaded citizen monitoring programs in the Nisqually estuary. These programs contribute to our knowledge of migratory bird and invertebrate populations in the restored Braget Marsh, nearshore fish species at Luhr Beach, and most recently the beach environment at Solo Point. Community members, students, and soldiers from Ft. Lewis are all participating in these important projects. Citizen monitoring is a way for people to gain a better understanding of the beach and nearshore habitat and also to use critical thinking skills to examine why the estuarine environment and its processes are important.

INVERTEBRATE MONITORING

We now have successfully completed our invertebrate identification from 2007 and are embarking on identifying the 2008 samples. This year, we are pleased to create a partnership with St. Martin's University students; Mary Jo Hartman enlisted her spring quarter students to help with our

One of the most exciting programs at NRNC over the past four years has been our introduction of citizen science projects, which enlist our community in documenting the status of our estuarine environment over time. For the last four years, NRNC

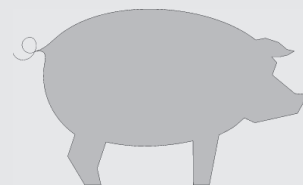


Diptera tipulidae

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Annual Pig Roast Set for September 12



Our third annual benefit pig roast is right around the corner! The date has been set — Saturday, September 12. What started as a small idea of a few caretakers has turned into an annual, much-awaited event around the Nature Center. See details on page 5.

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The Community Steps Forward with NRNC Monitoring Projects (continued from page 1)

invertebrate identification by each completing a sample (14 total) as part of their lab practicum. It is our intention to continue this educational partnership with St. Martin's University in the future.

We also look forward to working with the Nisqually Tribe as they analyze the data and correlate it with findings from their juvenile Chinook salmon diet monitoring.

BIRD MONITORING

Our bird monitoring of the Phase 2 restoration site is mostly anecdotal because we have not yet introduced the new protocol and systematically undertaken the monitoring project on the site as a whole. However, Susan Moss from the University of Washington completed a general census of bird populations in the northeast corner of the Phase 2 site, where she recorded consistent numbers of Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, and Bald Eagle (in some instances numbering more than 20). We are looking for experienced birders who



can work with the Center to obtain consistent data from the restoration site. If you or someone you know is interested in helping us out, please contact the Center at nrnc@nisquallyestuary.org.

SOLO POINT

We have now started monitoring

at Solo Point, on the eastern side of the estuary. Brian Nau and Jared Toppenberg, enlisted men from Ft. Lewis, helped us with a successful beach seining, where we caught a wild juvenile Chinook salmon, a threatened species. I am amazed at how different the morphology of the beach is at Solo Point compared with Luhr Beach. Solo Point has much more rocky material extending well into the subtidal zone. We intend to work with soldiers and their families to gather some baseline data for pre- and post-restoration comparison. This project will help foster a better understanding of the beach environment and a sense of connected community with our military families.



Solo Point



Aquatic Reserve Open Houses

A Step in the Right Direction

On May 12 and 15, NRNC, together with Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), hosted the first Nisqually Aquatic Reserve open house meetings. The meetings are part of a multi-step process that the WDNR goes through in the nomination and creation of an Aquatic Reserve. About 35 people attended both events, for a total of 70 people who came to comment and learn about this exciting proposal. It was nice to see Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark make an announcement in support of the Aquatic Reserve process at the Lacey meeting.

According to Kyle C. Murphy, Aquatic Reserve Program Manager, the meetings were a very positive experience, where participants not only left better informed, but also more inclined towards a trusting, collaborative relationship with the agency in the future. WDNR and the Nisqually Reach Nature Center were able to gather invaluable information and input from the public at these meetings, as well

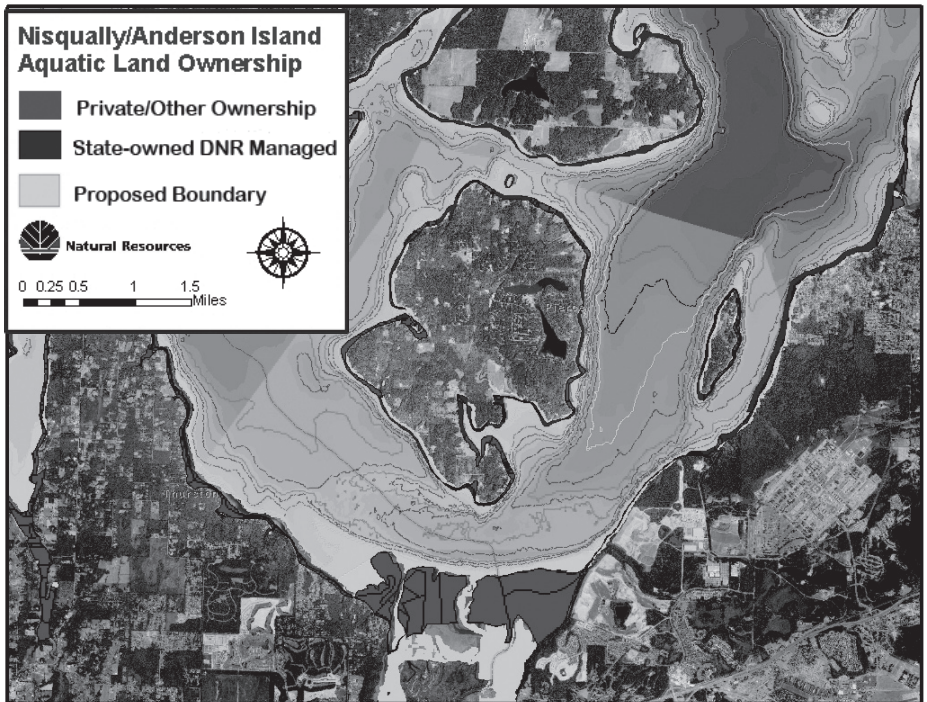
as continue to identify stakeholders and potential partners.

Harold L. Stone, MPA, PhD, flew in from Washington, DC to help the Center during this important stage in the Aquatic Reserve process, and was instrumental in fostering an atmosphere of



Harold Stone

(continued on page 6)



NRNC Welcomes New Board Members

The NRNC Board of Directors has seen some changes in recent months. Former President Doug Canning retired from the board, and three new members have joined.

Nigel Blakley, Ph.D., is an ecologist who recently retired from the WA Dept. of Ecology, where his work included research on the effects of polluted sediments on marine life in Puget Sound. He is interested in developing more exhibits at the Center, and promoting hypothesis-driven

science projects at the Center.

Mary Jo Hartman, Ph.D., an Assistant Biology Professor at Saint Martin's University, taught at the University of Alaska and conducted research at the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve. Her invertebrate zoology students assisted with our invertebrate monitoring project this past year, and she would like to continue to involve students in our programs as well as participate herself in education and research projects.

Rob Olson and his wife Sylvia have lived on the shores of Nisqually Reach for 30 years. He spent his career in public education and would now

like to apply his knowledge to educational outreach programs sponsored by NRNC.

We look forward to the contributions of these motivated, enthusiastic new members!

NRNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- DOUG MYERS, PRESIDENT
- JIM CUBBAGE, TREASURER
- KAIA PETERSEN, SECRETARY
- GORDON BELLEVUE
- NIGEL BLAKLEY
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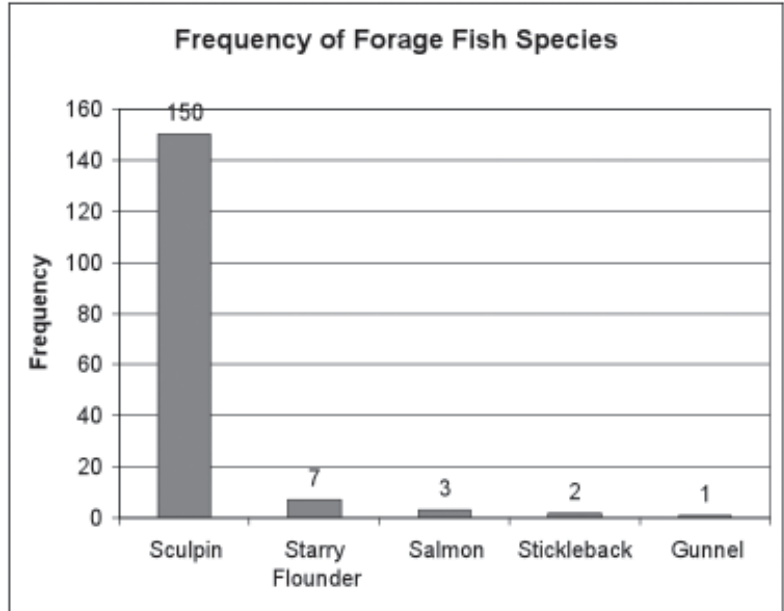
Mentoring Students: Wave of the Future

This year, we mentored three students from Capital High School as they conducted their senior culminating project. Emily Wallen, Brittany Lawrence, and Brooke



Pearson undertook citizen science monitoring of winter/spring fish use of Luhr Beach, during which they conducted 13 fish seinings and identified, quantified, and measured what they captured. NRNC President Doug Myers viewed their presentation at Green Congress (an event where students from around the South Sound get together to share and learn about water and water quality issues) and commented that “these students did an excellent job of presenting the information and demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of this kind of work.”

Coming from Tacoma Community



College’s Head Start program, Chris Miller achieved his equivalent of a senior culminating project working in our invertebrate monitoring program. Chris was instrumental in assisting us with finalizing all samples from 2007 and is looking forward to being a primary Identifier in the future.

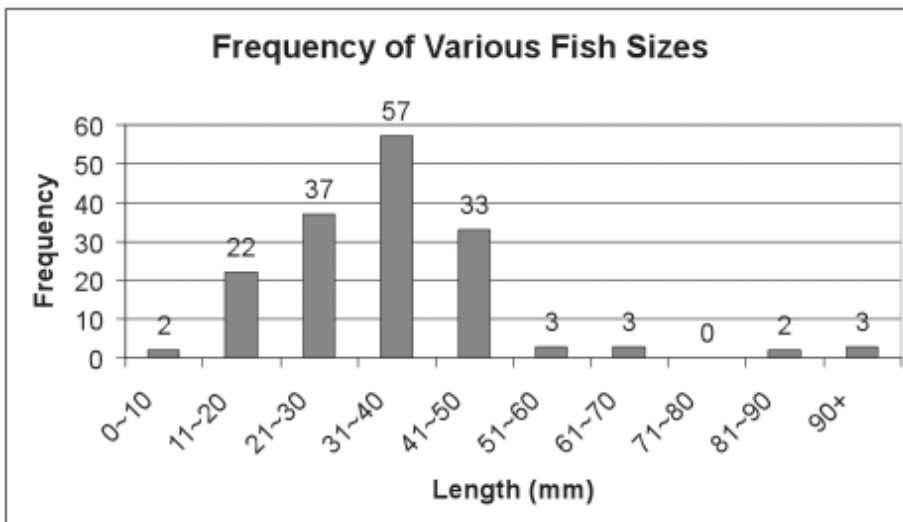
Mary Jo Hartman, NRNC board member and professor at St. Martin’s University, brought her biology class to help with primary ID of invertebrate samples in 2008.

I have to say it was a real treat to work with these young energetic students, some of whom might go into the field of natural resources

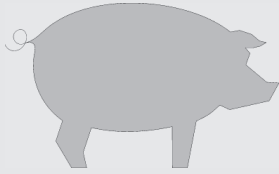


after their experiences with us. Emily Wallen commented that she might want to study marine biology/ecology. Even if they do not go into a natural resource field, everyone commented on the good times they had learning about the significance of nearshore habitat and citizen science, lessons that will go with them for the rest of their lives.

We hope to continue to mentor students like this in the future and we are always looking for concerned members and volunteers who would like to help us in this important new way of accomplishing our mission.



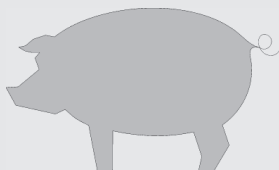
Annual Pig Roast Set for September 12



Our third annual benefit pig roast is right around the corner! The date has been set — Saturday, September 12. What started as a small idea of a few caretakers has turned into an annual, much-awaited event around the Nature Center. We hope the earlier September date leads to better weather than we had last year.

We are looking for raffle items and donations for our goldfish bowl-style raffle. Last year, we raised over \$500 on just the raffle and had an amazing array of wonderful prizes as well. We are also looking for musicians for live entertainment at the pig roast. If anyone is interested in playing or contributing donations, please contact Jeanine Toth at (360) 459-0387.

So mark your calendars and save the date! This is a wonderful event for a great cause in one of the most beautiful places in Thurston County. Show your support for what we do by attending the pig roast. Tickets are available by calling the Nature Center at (360) 459-0387. Reserve your spot today! Hope to see you there, as we sacrifice a pig to save our salmon!



NRNC Summer Camp 2009

It's Summer Camp time at the Nisqually Reach Nature Center once again! We are very excited that Daniel Krenz, our environmental education intern last summer, is with us again, along with our new intern Victoria Allison, a biology major from Western Washington University. This year, we are grouping the kids by grade instead of age, with the hopes that students in each group will have the same baseline knowledge.

We are always trying to keep things new and exciting at summer camp and this year we are doing that through some new activities.

We have added a new program about invertebrates that is modeled after our invertebrate research. We have created a new tug-of-war game revolving around tide cycles, and have improved our program on dichotomous keys. We have continued with our goal to reduce waste at the Nature Center. Last year, it was unbelievable how little garbage we actually had; throughout all our summer camps, we only generated 34 oz. of garbage. The majority of items in students' bagged lunches were reusable, recyclable or compostable!

This year, we are also excited to employ our new equipment purchased through the Community Foundation grant for dissecting microscopes. Students had a great time looking through the microscopes during our

plankton and invertebrate workshops, and we look forward to sharing with our students for years to come.

As always, data collected from summer camps is important baseline data of what is happening on Luhr Beach.

With the impending restoration project at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, these pre-restoration data could be critical as a comparison with post-restoration information. It is an exciting time to be an educator and student in the Nisqually area, to be able to watch, collect data, and record the changes that are unfolding. At the end of summer camps last year, Daniel Krenz helped us create a much-needed database for our field surveys. This year, we hope to begin entering data from our past and present summer camps into this database. It will be a great way to be able to compare and contrast what is happening on Luhr Beach as the restoration project develops.



Nisqually Reach Nature Center by the Numbers by Daniel Hull

2008/2009 was filled with great accomplishments, none of which could have been possible if not for our dedicated volunteer staff. Last year, volunteers put in an estimated 3,000 hours working with the Center. Our volunteer roster has risen to 49 active volunteers. New volunteers to our roster include Lydia Withrow (picture on page 1), Brian Nau, Jared Toppenberg, Rebecca Seago-Coyle, Susan Moss, Nancy Hertzler, Terence Lee and Matthew Louv. We also would like to thank Mary Jo Hartman's entire biology class for all of their help with invertebrate ID. If you or someone you know is interested in helping us with our mission, please contact the Center.

Our education programs in 2008-2009 reached approximately 4,000 students in programs both at the Center and at outreach events. This year too, we started a program with Mini Skool Day Care, where we had the opportunity to take critters out to the youngsters to give them a better understanding of the riches found in and around healthy beaches in the Puget Sound.

Through a Nature of Learning Grant with USFWS, we were able to strengthen partnerships with South Sound Green and the Nisqually River Education Project to involve well over 300 people in the restoration process the Nisqually Tribe is spearheading on the north side of the Nisqually River. Kids had the opportunity to help with the planting of trees in the upper reaches of what is known as the Phase 2 Restoration Area and learn what types of monitoring are going on to gauge the effectiveness of this type of restoration.

During 2009 summer camp, we partnered with Padilla Bay Reserve to give teachers in the South Sound an opportunity to experience our inquiry-based science programs. Jeanine Toth did an outstanding job leading 17 students through a fish seining where they easily caught over 100 fish. The teachers in the training were impressed with how we connected students with math and science skills with our hands-on approach, having students actually measure fish and then critically think about what kinds of statistical analyses can be done with the numbers. We look forward to increasing training opportunities like this in the future to share our curriculum on inquiry-based science and beach surveying techniques.

Aquatic Reserve Open Houses (continued from page 3)

cooperation and understanding at the open house meetings. Harold spent many volunteer hours contacting stakeholders and drafting documents to help important stakeholders understand where things were going. He was also hawk-like in his ability to mitigate communication problems that arose, which could have stymied support from some

of our important stakeholders. NRNC would like to give a big thanks to all the hard work Harold has put into this important process. Without support like this, we would not have many of the treasures that we have today in the Nisqually Valley.

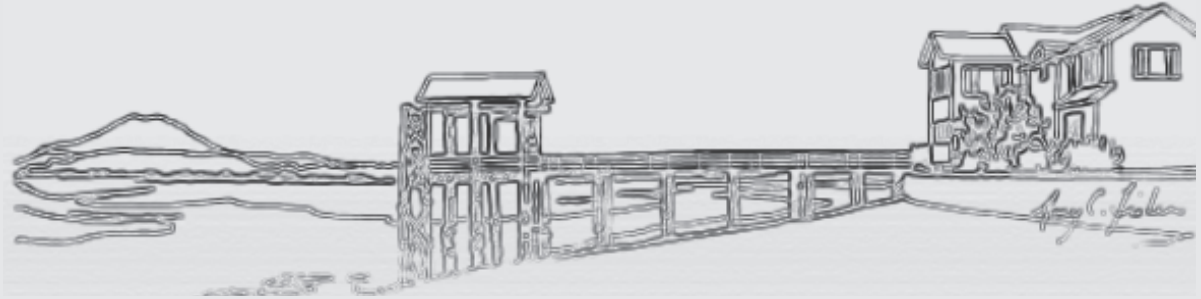
The Aquatic Reserve Program is an ongoing process and we at NRNC are always looking for

new champions to assist us in our mission. Our volunteers and members give us the ability to plant the seeds of conservation and mobilize the community to be proactive in understanding and protecting our little slice of paradise in Nisqually. If you find you have the time or would like to make a donation to help with this process, please contact the Center.

NRNC Volunteer Matthew Louv by Daniel Hull



A bright student at The Evergreen State College, Matthew Louv is a new volunteer to NRNC full of enthusiastic energy. I want to highlight his brief stay with the Center for his ability to be proactive in helping the Center in our mission. He is not one to say something needs to be done without the can-do attitude to make it happen. If you notice, we have new bird forms for the NRNC bird binder and are looking to put up a picture platform for folks who use the Center, thanks to Matthew. I am sad for us, but glad for him that his stay with us will be short this summer, as he will be teaching people to fly-fish up in Alaska. I know he will have a superb time up there and we will all be waiting to hear his wonderful stories when he returns. Thanks, Matthew!



BECOME A SUPPORTER OF THE NISQUALLY REACH NATURE CENTER

Become a member of the Nisqually Reach Nature Center or renew your membership and help support marine science education programs for children and adults. All members will receive:

- A subscription to the Center's newsletter, *Luhr Lore*
- Priority consideration for Center activities and events
- Volunteer and docent opportunities

To join, fill out the application below and mail it with your check to:

Nisqually Reach Nature Center
4949 D'Milluhr Rd. NE
Olympia WA 98516
(360) 459-0387

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

PLEASE CHECK ONE

- Senior 25.00
- Student 25.00
- Individual 35.00
- Household 50.00
- Supporting 75.00
- Patron 100.00
- Benefactor 250.00
- Sponsor 500.00

On occasion, NRNC receives requests from like-minded nonprofit organizations for the use of our mailing list. If you do not want us to provide your address to others, please check the box below:

Please do not release my name to other organizations.

Reaching Out to Our Neighbors to the North



When it comes to accomplishing our mission, we do an excellent job working with our local community members, but have had trouble connecting with our neighbors to the north. We want our educational programs to be for everyone, not just people who are already aware or have the ability to freely visit with us.

Through monies leveraged through the University of Puget Sound's Summer Academic Challenge Program, Jovan McCoy, Access Programs Coordinator, was able to bring out a group of great students from inner-city Tacoma to visit us at the Center and participate in our inquiry-based science programs.

Jovan said, "The students had a blast and are able to recall everything that took place on our trip," making our education staff feel great about the job we are doing and our ability to connect with diverse audiences. We look forward to fostering a good relationship with Jovan and students from Tacoma and to connecting with our neighbors to the north a bit more often.

The Nisqually Reach Nature Center (NRNC) is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to environmental education, outreach, and research. All contributions are tax deductible. The Center is located at Luhr Beach on the west side of the Nisqually delta. Our facilities are provided by the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. No state funds are provided for the operation of the Center.

The Center is open to the public Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday from 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm.

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