

Willapa Tidings

Newsletter of the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge • Vol. 4, No. 3 • Spring 2004



Photo by Paula Burg

Friends members Bev Arnoldy, Carole Wiegardt, and Kelly Rupp meet with Congressman Baird (third from left) in his office in Washington, D.C.

Friends Members Visit D.C. to Advocate for Spartina Control

by Kelly Rupp

Friends' members Carole Weigardt, Bev Arnoldy, and Kelly Rupp carried the fight for continued support of Spartina eradication to Capitol Hill earlier this month, where they participated with Friends' representatives across the country at an advocacy workshop in Washington D.C. sponsored by the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

Our special concerns with invasive species at Willapa were shared in individual meetings with staffers and lawmakers in the House, Senate, and Office of Management of Budget (OMB). Presentations about Willapa's long-running battle with Spartina and our comprehensive management plan for eradication were discussed

with staff of Senators' Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Representatives' Brian Baird, Norm Dicks, and George Nethercutt. Additional briefings were held with budget writers responsible for the Fish and Wildlife Service from the House and Senate appropriations committee and the Office of Management and Budget. Meetings included the sharing of letters of support for continued funding of Spartina eradication programs, collected earlier from State Representatives Brian Blake and Brian Hatfield, State Senator Mark Doumit, all Pacific County Commissioners, the Willapa-Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association, Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association, Coastal Resource Alliance, Washington

continued on page 2: See Friends Visit D.C.

Volunteers Assist Refuge Staff with Plover Habitat Restoration

by Marie Fernandez, Refuge Biologist

On March 9, refuge volunteers and Friends members, Suzie Lundsten of Salem, Oregon and Lee Townsend of Surfside assisted Wildlife Biologist Marie Fernandez and Willapa Refuge Manager David Gonzales with spreading oyster-shell at the Snowy Plover habitat restoration area located at the Leadbetter Point Unit of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

The oystershell was generously donated by a local oyster company. Mark Weigardt of Taylor Resources located in Nahcotta donated the 10 yards of oystershell used in the project. This is the third year that oystershell has been donated for the project by Taylor Resources and the refuge greatly appreciates it.

continued on page 4: See Volunteers

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Friends Visit D.C.

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State University, Willapa Bay Fisheries Enhancement Group, the Ports of Peninsula and Ilwaco, Pacific County Economic Development Council, Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordinating Council, and the Willapa Hills Audubon Society. Our visit was preceded earlier in the month by visits from The Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, and the Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association, all who included a message of support for Willapa's fight against Spartina.

Refuge Manager Joins Staff at Willapa NWR



Photo by Kelly Rupp

Willapa gains an experienced manager as David Gonzales joins the staff as Willapa Refuge Manager. Gonzales moves westward from his previous posting as Refuge Manager for the Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge in east-central Washington, filling the Refuge Manager position vacated by Terri Butler upon her promotion to Deputy Project Leader for the Willapa Refuge Complex. Both Gonzales and Butler report to Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader for the three-refuge Willapa Complex.

At Willapa, Gonzales' responsibilities will include program management and supervision of ongoing programs for Spartina eradication, habitat restoration, wildlife management, endangered and threatened species recovery, and public use. His Willapa responsibilities will benefit from his prior postings in the Fish and Wildlife Service at National Wildlife Refuges of San Francisco Bay, Hanford Reach, and Ridgefield in addition to his work at Toppenish. Gonzales brings

Our thanks to all who demonstrated their support!

Staffs in all visited offices were enthused by the progress achieved in Spartina eradication during the past two years, and were impressed by the continued cooperation from federal, state, and private interests in combating this invasive cordgrass. All the staffs pledged their support to the pending appropriations budget for Spartina control, cautioning that FY'05 budget approval is unlikely before the fall election.

nearly ten years of experience in Refuge public relations, firefighting, volunteer coordination, wildlife monitoring, endangered species recovery, invasives species management, and staff supervision.

Dave holds bachelor of science degrees from New Mexico State University in Wildlife and Fisheries Science. While in college, he participated in student internship programs at Klamath Basin and San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuges. "My internship experiences introduced me to the urgent challenges faced by threatened species, including the Western Snowy Plover that we're working to save here at Willapa," noted Gonzales. "And San Francisco also introduced me to Spartina and its direct threat to shorebird habitat. I'm looking forward to contributing to the eradication efforts already underway here."

Gonzales' enthusiasm will be put to the test immediately. His first responsibilities include preparing for the upcoming summertime assault on Spartina, where dozens of staff and a small armada of boats and amphibious equipment will be choreographed in a tide-driven schedule of precision treatments for cordgrass eradication.

An avid outdoorsman, Dave and his dog ("Jackson") will make their home on Refuge-owned property in a forested area frequented by one of the Refuges' elk herds. "It's certainly a little startling to walk out the door in the morning and find yourself interrupting some elks' breakfast!" laughs Dave. "This experience certainly underscores for me the richness of habitat here at Willapa and the importance of our Refuge to hundreds of species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and fish."

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Sandy Profeta, *Editor*

To request an address change, to contribute items of interest (including photos), or to submit articles for publication, please contact Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

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Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge was established in July 2000 to provide support and assistance to Refuge programs and to enhance awareness and appreciation of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

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RV-ing in our National Wildlife Refuges

Second of a two-part series by Cay Roberts

President's Note: Dick and Cay Roberts spent the summer of 2002 at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. They have been gracious to share their story with us.

At many wildlife refuges, a favorite volunteer combination is a husband or partner who'll work as a handyman or has a background in the skilled trades, and a wife or co-partner who may have office or sales skills and can work at the refuge's Visitor Center. Using volunteers to run a Visitor Center on weekends means better family time for FWS staff. Many other jobs are available, however. We've cleared canoe trails, counted shorebirds, painted the trim on the office, planted trees and shrubs, tended the garden, raised quail, led canoe trips and bike hikes, entered plant and bird survey data into a computer, and done many other "odd jobs". At Willapa NWR, Dick worked steadily with Jonathon Bates to redo the treads and chopping mechanism of the Spartina mega-mower. We

had the chance to sling frozen salmon into the HQ salmon stream as part of the restoration process, and we worked with refuge staff and local volunteers to plant native shrubs up the hill where the stream's old dam had been removed.

We've made friends at every refuge where we've volunteered. Willapa's new biologist Marie Fernandez, took us out at midnight one night when we were at Laguna Atascosa. Bouncing along in the back of her truck and helped by her good advice, knowledge, and patient supervision, we counted deer and other nocturnal wildlife. Terry Butler and Jonathon Bates supervised many of our assignments. We worked with Larry Scott and Rudy and Winona Schuver when we were at Willapa in the fall of 2002 and they helped us learn more about southwestern Washington state.

Our service at various refuges now lets us sport USFWS 1500-hour volunteer

pins. We're proud of the work we've done and happy to have been to so many beautiful places and worked in ways helpful to wildlife and the native environment. Without volunteers, the staff at any national wildlife refuge would be able to accomplish far less than they do. And volunteers often bring special skills and abilities, along with a willingness to work hard and pride in the refuge they support. Refuge staff are skilled at combining the talents of local and temporary resident volunteers so that everyone benefits. A viable Friends group can accomplish many things as well - including recruiting more volunteers.

Contact Information:

Cay and Dick Roberts
402 Robin Road
Waverly, OH 45690-1523

Fact or Fiction? "Critter Talk" Answered Them All

Bringing their curiosity about our furry, feathered, and fish friends, over thirty Friends' members and guests gathered on Feb 25th for "Critter Talk" questions and answers about some of the more interesting wildlife species found on the Refuge. Led by Suzy Whitley, the evening's exploration included "true or false" questions about unusual species as the Pacific Giant Salamander, Pacific Jumping Mouse, and Marbled Murrelet as well as more common species, such as the Porcupine, Little Brown Bat, Red-legged Frog, and the humble Banana Slug. Great fun (and a little learning) was had by all!

Test your own knowledge about the behaviors of these species. Answers are on page 5.

1. The Banana Slug secretes a "slime" that allows it to slither easily across the ground, up trees, and even to suspend itself from a tree branch much like a spider.	True	False
2. Marbled Murrelets nest in the tops of old-growth trees where they painstakingly build living quarters from beach sticks and other driftwood found on flights to and from their sealand feeding grounds.	True	False
3. The Marsh Shrew, as its name implies, will forage under logs and in moist litter for earthworms and other soft-bodied arthropods, but spends most of its food-hunting time under water in a search for aquatic arthropods.	True	False
4. The Pacific Giant Salamander is the largest terrestrial salamander found in North America, reaching lengths of up to fourteen inches from snout to tail. Most salamanders are voiceless, but the Pacific Giant will emit a low-pitched grumble when captured.	True	False
5. The Pacific Jumping Mouse crawls or takes short hops during normal locomotion, but can leap upwards to nearly six feet and jump wildly from side-to-side when agitated or in danger.	True	False
6. The Porcupine is the largest rodent on the Willapa Refuge, and famous for its ability to "throw its quills" to adversaries by presenting its posterior to an attacker and rapidly shaking its tail in such a way as to project its quills nearly three feet.	True	False

Volunteers

continued from page 1

Spreading the oystershell was hard work. Shoveling the shell into buckets, placing the buckets of shell on small plastic sleds, dragging the sleds over the sand to the placement area, and then spreading the shell in the buckets evenly over the area occupied the crew for over five hours.



Photo by Marie Fernandez

Volunteer Suzy Lundsten shovels oystershell.

This oystershell placement will greatly assist in aiding concealment of Snowy Plover eggs and chicks and help avoid problems with drifting sand.

Our many thanks to these hard-working refuge volunteers!



Photo by Marie Fernandez

Volunteer Lee Townsend spreads oystershell.

Do you know?

These rodents are found on the Refuge:

- Mountain Beaver
- Forest Deer Mouse
- Southern Red-backed Vole
- Long-tailed Vole
- Porcupine

Calendar of Events

April through June 2004

Events and Activities

- April 15th: Board of directors meeting starting at 5:00 p.m. Call 360-665-0115 or send e-mail to beva@pacifier.com for location and agenda.
- May 20th: Board of directors meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- June 17th: Board of directors meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- June: Members' Gathering.

Volunteer Activities

Many volunteer opportunities await your help. To participate in any of the following activities, contact Bev Arnoldy at 360-665-0115 or send email to beva@pacifier.com.

- Environmental Education — Fourth-grade field trips to the Refuge on May 19th, 20th, and 21st.
- Booth Display — Ilwaco Saturday Market and other events.
- Lead hikes on the Refuge.

To participate in any of the following activities, contact Kristine Massin at 360-484-3482 or send email to kristine_massin@fws.gov.

- Native plantings: Help plant the new Salmon Trail.
- Visitor counts, surveys, and sharing refuge information.
- Trail and campground maintenance on Long Island. Trail maintenance at Leadbetter Point.

NEW MEMBERS

(As of 3-16-2004)

Benefactor Membership

Port of Peninsula

Patron Membership

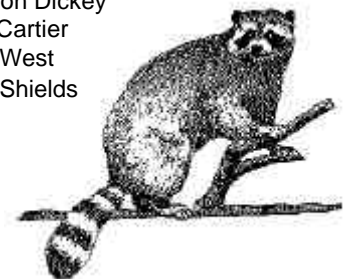
Howard Teague

Family Membership

Eric & Robin Stromholt
James Bohem & Johanna Nelson
Esther & James Kirkland
J. Douglas & Florence Sailor
Lee & Anita Townsend
Kylie Lewis & Family
Keith & Keleigh Schwartz
Harold & Mary Cook
Bob & Sharon Rockett

Individual Membership

Preston Dickey
S.B. Cartier
Gayl West
Terri Shields



President's Letter

During the past couple of months, the 2004 board members have been reviewing the Friends of Willapa NWR goals for the coming year and in the years to come. Briefly, they are:

1. To provide education and awareness programs at the primary and secondary school levels, as well as at the adult level.
2. To support the operating activities of the Refuge.
3. To advocate issues supporting the Refuge.
4. To establish and maintain programs for recruiting new and retaining existing members.

To support goal #1, we continue to provide an excellent 4th grade environmental education program for three school districts in the county. We also have been working on a middle school curriculum that focuses on "mudflats", which will be taught as a science module in the fall of 2004. Our scholarship program is off and running as of March 15th. Our program will award two \$250 scholarships to deserving seniors (see the article on page 6). Our "Quarterly Members Gathering" beginning with "Critter Talk" on February 25th kicked off our adult education series. It was well attended and our survey said that it was very informative and fun! (see the article on page 3).

For the support of goal #2, our Friends volunteers have recently helped with monitoring the Goose Check stations, building the photo blind near Tarlett Slough, spreading oyster shells for the Snowy Plover habitat, and assisting the refuge staff with the deer relocation program at Julia Butler Hansen Refuge. I'm sure the refuge staff has plenty of other projects that need Friends volunteers now and in the future!

Goal #3 was in evidence by the trip back to Washington D.C. to attend a National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) Advocacy Bootcamp and to visit members of Congress on Capital Hill in early March. Friends members Kelly Rupp, Carole Wiegardt, and I attended the workshop and met with our senators and congressional representative. Our purpose on Capital Hill was to drive home how important it is that federal funding continues

for the multi-year Spartina control program for Willapa Bay (see the article on page 1).

Goal #4 is the reason why this Friends group is so active. Without your financial support and volunteerism, we would not be able to continue and initiate many of the programs we either have in place or in their early planning stages. We thank you for your continued support.

We invite all of our members to our monthly board meetings generally held on the third Thursday of each month, starting at 5 pm. Contact me for details if you are interested in attending.

-- Beverly Arnoldy (beva@pacifier.com)

"Critter Talk" Answers

1. True. (*Ariolimax columbianus*) Slug slime assists movements both horizontally and in vertical drops, much like rappelling with a rope.
2. False. Murrelets (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) do not build nests using sticks. Rather, they need to find tree branches that are covered in heavy layers of moss from which the birds scrape and form a cup-like nest.
3. True. Marsh Shrews (*Sorex bendirii*) often swim in their hunt for food.
4. True. The Pacific Giant Salamander (*Dicamptodon ensatus*) is a voracious cannibalizer, eating other amphibian larvae as well as insects, mice, and garter snakes.
5. True. When escaping predators, the Jumping Mouse (*Zapus trinotatus*) has been observed to leap up to 70 inches and is capable of climbing bushes, as well as swimming and even diving!
6. False. Porcupines (*Erethizon dorsatum*) do not "throw their quills." Rather, they place their posterior towards the attacker and swing their tail in a swordlike fashion to defend themselves.

- New membership
 Renewal

Membership Form



Make checks payable to: Friends of Willapa NWR

Send to: Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
 PO Box 1130
 Ocean Park, WA 98640

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____

Yes! I want to receive Friends e-mail announcements. My e-mail address is _____

Volunteer interests

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental education | <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership recruitment | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat restoration |

Invite a friend to become a member!

Amount Enclosed:

- \$10 Individual Membership
 \$15 Family Membership
 \$50 Patron Membership
 \$100 Benefactor Membership
 \$500 or over Advocate Membership

Contributions to FWNWR are tax deductible. No goods or services are provided in exchange for your donation.

- Special Projects and events
 Trail and campground maintenance
 Shorebird and waterfowl monitoring
 Fish and amphibian monitoring

Friends of Willapa NWR Scholarship Program

by Bibbi Lee and Bev Arnoldy

One of the goals of the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge is to promote environmental educational efforts. What better way to ensure continued support of our future than by funding a scholarship program for young people pursuing careers in fish, wildlife, environmental education and conservation.

The Friends group has planned a scholarship program since our establishment in July 2000. Bringing these plans to fruition in three years is a major accomplishment. Now you can donate funds to a financially-dedicated scholarship program managed by the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, a 501(c)(3) group.

Initial scholarships are modest—two \$250 scholarships are available in 2004 for high school seniors in Pacific County, home of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. We've sent applications to counselors at the five Pacific County school

districts and have posted an application form on the Friends website in an effort to reach all students in the county who have chosen to pursue higher education in fish and wildlife management, environmental education, conservation, and related fields.

The application period is from March 15 to May 1, 2004 and selection will be made by May 25, 2004. In the months to come, we will introduce the chosen applicants to our membership as well as plans for expanding the program.

How You Can Help

Many of our members donate beyond the annual membership dues. Some donations are dedicated to our 4th grade education program, but many of them are general donations to be used as part of our operating budget. This year, we ask you to specify if your donation goes to the newly formed scholarship fund. We appreciate any amount that you are willing to give. If you would like to donate to our scholarship fund, please fill out the form below and send it with your membership form. Thank you for your generous donation!

Yes, I would like to donate to the dedicated scholarship fund in the amount of:

\$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 Other _____

Name: _____

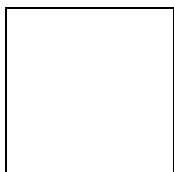
Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Make the checks payable to: Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, P. O. Box 1130, Ocean Park, WA 98640.

MANY THANKS TO OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT

- Astoria Real Estate
- Bay Center Mariculture, Inc.
- Beachdog.com
- Charles Nelson Guest House, Ltd.
- Coast Seafoods Co.
- The Depot Restaurant
- Ekone Oyster Co.
- Heckes Oysters
- Herrold Oyster & Fish Co.
- Jolly Roger Oysters
- Lighthouse Realty
- Lion's Paw Inn
- Northern Oyster Co.
- Oysterville Sea Farms
- Pacific Oyster Co.
- Port of Peninsula
- Sand Point Clam Farms
- Sea Tow Portland/Vancouver
- Sheldon Marine Enterprises
- Sid's Supermarket
- The Shoalwater Restaurant



Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
 P.O. Box 1130
 Ocean Park, WA 98640

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