



Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society

www.birdsonthebay.ca

July 2010 Activities and Programs

Beach Hero School Field Trips on the Beach

The Beach Heroes and Educational Outreach volunteers were busy through May and June conducting class field trips speaking to hundreds of students - asking them to keep the crabs alive! Without knowing that crabs have gills and breathe water, children innocently collect them in their buckets and end up killing them. The Beach Heroes rove White Rock and Crescent Beaches to educate people about the creatures under their feet and to watch for illegal harvesting activities on behalf of the Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Beach Hero Scheduled Public Walks

The Beach Heroes program conduct schedules public walks along the Boundary Bay are throughout the spring and summer season. The goal is to educate the public on how to enjoy and visit the White Rock and Crescent Beaches in a way that conserves and protects the eco-system. All ages are welcome on the walks.

For more information on the Beach Hero Public Walks, please visit our website at:

<http://www.birdsonthebay.ca/heroes.htm>

Spartina Removal

Spartina is a fast-spreading invasive salt marsh grass that has moved North from Washington and is now found in sections of Boundary Bay. It crowds out all other native plants and has little nutritional value, so there is a Spartina group working to map and remove it. Spartina sites in Boundary Bay have been mapped and removal is in progress. Volunteers are welcomed to these invasive plant removal events:



"Alison Prentice maps the location of Spartina in Mud Bay using GPS."
Photo courtesy: Carolyn Prentice.

Invasive plant removal at Blackie Spit

Where: Meet at the kiosk at Blackie Spit
When: Aug 8, at 9 am – noon.

Spartina seed head clipping

Where: Brunswick Point and Boundary Bay.
When: Aug 22

Reporting Shellfish Harvesting

Serious risks from Contamination
DFO Observe and Report Hotline 604-666-3500

Both pollution and disease risks have closed down shellfish harvesting around the entire Lower mainland since 1970. Those risks have increased over the last 40 years. New risks are human diseases escaping into seawater and being harboured by shellfish: hepatitis, anti-bacterial resistant MSRA (the hospital superbug), Staphylococcus aureus bacteria.

The familiar risks are the shellfish diseases, *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and paralytic shellfish poisoning, in addition to the pesticides, herbicides, heavy metals and detergents from the two million residents of the Boundary Bay watershed and from the extensive agricultural activities in the Fraser Valley.



"Carolyn Prentice and Parker Bromley are roving the beaches this year educating people about the millions of tiny creatures under their feet at the beach."
Photo courtesy: Erik Poole

The illegal harvest and sale of shellfish have been linked to organized crime. DFO suspects the contaminated shellfish is sold into markets and restaurants locally, but they rarely have enough evidence to follow the shellfish from beach to restaurant.

Beach Heroes on Land

Sunday White Rock Farmers Markets - July and August

Crescent Beach Waterfront Festival - Wednesday, July 28

Spirit of the Sea Festival - Saturday, July 31 and Sunday August 1

Shorekeepers

Five out of six annual Shorekeeper's surveys have been completed at White Rock West Beach, Coldicutt Ravine, 1001 Steps, 24th Ave Steps and the Little Campbell River estuary. The last survey will be on July 24 at Blackie Spit.