



# THE BRANT

VOLUME 1

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WINTER 2020

## Dungeness Discovery Day

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 1, 2020. Refuge staff, volunteers, and Friends are working together to plan and organize an educational event for kids and families at the Refuge this summer. The all-day event will be similar to the Kid's Day event held in celebration of the Refuge's 100th anniversary in 2015. If you are interested in assisting with planning the event, or know a local business interested in participating or becoming an event sponsor, contact Dave Falzetti.



## 2019 Volunteers Awarded

The Refuge held the 2019 Volunteer Awards Banquet on February 20th. This past year required a minimum of 50 hours of service to receive a dinner invitation. It was a fun filled evening and many volunteers put in well above the minimum of hours required. Pictured below are the volunteers with the most hours in 2019.



Jennifer Brown-Scott presents awards to the top hour-earners. From the left: Jessie Christiansen (302 hrs), Lizzie Baatz (491.5 hrs), Ron Andris (630.5 hrs), Tom McKinney (407 hrs), Grant Rollins (524 hrs), and Lynn Drake (341 hrs).

### REFUGE EVENTS

#### March 12th

Discovery Day Planning at the Refuge Conference Room 10:00 a.m.

#### April 3rd

Annual Volunteer Training Sequim Prairie Grange Hall New Volunteers 8:00 a.m.

#### Lunch Canceled

Returning Volunteers  
**Refresher Canceled**

#### May 2nd

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

#### June 6th

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

#### July 4th

Beach Cleanup 9:00 a.m.

#### August 1st

Dungeness Discovery Day 10:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.

# 2019 Volunteer of the Year

Tom McKinney has served as a Refuge volunteer since 2016, with 950 hours in his career, including 407 hours in 2019. Tom earns his hours greeting visitors, roving trails, maintaining trails, picking up trash on the beach and at the lighthouse, and installing signs on the Spit. Congratulations, Tom! We appreciate your hard work.



Tom McKinney is presented with the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award by Jennifer Brown-Scott.

# Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade

The Refuge awarded Janet Bruening with the first ever Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade Award. Janet has nearly two decades of service with the National Wildlife Refuge System and is active with both the Weed Warriors and Green Crab Team. Congratulations, Janet, and thank you for your many years of service!



## CONTACTS

**Friends of Dungeness  
National Wildlife Refuge**

Mailing Address  
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Sequim, WA 98382

**Web Site**

<http://www.fodnwr.org>

**Friends Email**

fodnwr@gmail.com

**Refuge Phone**

(360) 457-8451

## FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Ellie Ausmus**, Secretary

**Bruce Brod**, Treasurer

**Jessie Christiansen**

**Linda Gutowski**

**Glenn Harris**

**Jeanie McNamara**, Vice Pres.

**Dan Shappie**

**Jason West**, President

## FRIENDS COMMITTEES

**Environmental Education**  
Linda Gutowski

**Environmental Restoration**  
Jessie Christiansen

**Fundraising**  
Dan Shappie

**Membership**  
Ellie Ausmus

**Outreach**  
Jason West

**Refuge Protection**

# Winter Storms Batter the Spit

This winter saw a series of storms with heavy rain, wind, and pounding surf which caused breaches in areas of the Dungeness Spit and significant new landslides along the bluffs. The trail along the bluffs in Dungeness County Park has been relocated east along the road. Portions of what was previously the trail and parking area have washed away and will feed new material on to the Spit. Strong winds toppled trees which closed the primitive trail.



In January bluff erosion required moving the trail away from the bluffs to the main road.



Wind and waves washed massive logs, sand, and rocks into Dungeness Bay.



Primitive trail closed.

# Survival by Degrees: The Impact of Climate Change on our Birds in the Olympic Peninsula

by Judith White

As the climate warms, birds are forced to adapt by searching for suitable habitat and climate conditions elsewhere. When the places where they live (their ranges) shift, they may not adapt quickly enough to survive. The new *Survival by Degrees* publication from the National Audubon Society includes models with precision down to 1 kilometer, how each bird species' range will likely shift from climate change and other human impacts. The study takes advantage of 140 million observations by birders and scientists, and 70 data sources including the US Geological Survey, eBird, and the North American Breeding Birds Survey.

This model breaks down vulnerability by degrees of climate warming. At 3 degrees Centigrade (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) temperature rise, of the 157 species of our local summer birds included in the study, 56% face high to moderate threat, losing more than half their current seasonal range.

One example of a highly threatened species is the Red-breasted Sapsucker. Living in temperate coastal Pacific habitat, it is the least migratory of the sapsuckers. In the Pacific Northwest, coastal birds may be permanent residents. The model predicts 93% of their current summer range will be lost if global warming reaches 3 degrees C, and on the Olympic peninsula, they will likely move up in elevation where they will gain 10% new range amid the highest peaks of the Olympics.

Thirty-six highly threatened summer species include 5 species of waterfowl, several shorebirds, many flycatchers, 3 thrush species, White-crowned and Savannah Sparrows, and 3 warbler species.

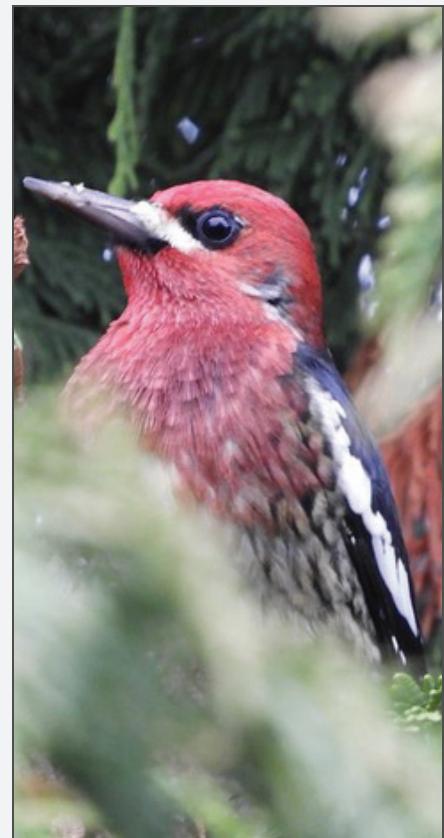
Moderately threatened summer species are even more numerous, including the Harlequin Duck, Common Loon, Pigeon Guillemot, crows, jays, and most gulls, several swallow species and most other waterfowl.

What summer birds are less threatened or stable? Turkey vultures, Brown Pelican, Kildeer, herons, most hawks, falcons, woodpeckers, blackbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Pacific and Bewick's Wrens are predicted to be stable.

The model for 165 species of winter birds identifies 11 highly vulnerable birds at 3 degrees C global warming, including the American Dipper, California Quail, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Barrow's Goldeneye, Townsend's Solitaire and Canada Jay.

For context, according to NASA's web site, Global Temperature Latest Annual Average Anomaly for 2019 is 0.98 °C or 1.76 °F

<https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/global-temperature/>



Red-breasted Sapsucker  
Photo: Bob Boekelheide



Savannah Sparrow Photo: Judith White

# Survival by Degrees

*Continued from page 4*

The Brant is projected to lose 84% of its current U.S./Canadian summer range, gaining only 17% of new summer range. No other geese nest as far north in the high Arctic, and Brant are under Special High Risk from sea level rise. The Brant in the Pacific Flyway gather in large numbers at Izembek Lagoon in Alaska after breeding, and depart together for a long overwater migration, flying at altitudes of several thousand feet, until dispersing to their wintering areas on the Pacific Coast. On their wintering grounds, 52% of their U.S./Canadian range is projected to be lost. The remaining 48% of their maintained winter range includes the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, using detailed projections.



Brant Photo: Judith White

Overall, 2/3 of birds in the US face increased risk of extinction from climate change. By habitat, the birds most at risk are Arctic, Boreal and Western Forest Birds, and Waterbirds - encompassing many of our summer and winter birds here in the Olympic Peninsula.

These projections are especially concerning because overall bird populations have declined significantly since 1970. In “Decline of the North American avifauna” published in the October 4, 2019 volume of the prestigious journal *Science*, Rosenberg and colleagues found that 29%, or about 3 billion fewer birds were found in the US and Canada compared to 1970.

The *Survival by Degrees* model offers hope. If we are able to keep climate change in the 1.5 degrees C range, we can improve the chances for hundreds of bird species. Birds are resilient, and only 3 winter species in our area will remain highly vulnerable under a 1.5 Centigrade degree warming scenario – Rock Sandpiper, Clark’s Nutcracker and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch. In summer, our Red-Breasted Sapsucker and Barrow’s Goldeneye remain highly vulnerable.

Simple ideas to help birds include making windows safer from collisions by using screens or films, reducing lawn and planting native plants, and avoiding pesticide use. For more simple steps, take a look at:

<https://www.3billionbirds.org/7-simple-actions>

To find out more about the *Survival by Degrees* model, and the specific information for each of our bird species, go to:

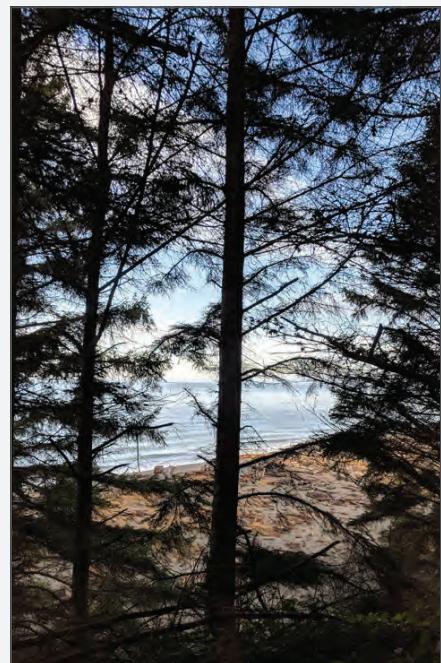
<https://www.audubon.org/climate/survivalbydegrees/county?zipCode=98382>



Wilson's Warbler Photo: Judith White



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch  
Photo: Bob Phreaner



# Oyster Farm Proposal Update

After an extended review, Clallam County Hearing Examiner Andrew Reeves determined that the proposed oyster farm may move forward with a phased approach. The phased approach was required because “There is insufficient current data...to fully assess long-term impacts from this type of operation, especially in relation to the Refuge.”

Phase 1 would establish five acres of on-bottom bag cultivation with a maximum commercial bag density of 4,000 bags per acre (up to 20,000 bags), within a closed area of the Refuge that is heavily used by wildlife.

The approval requires that the applicant coordinate with both Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and US Fish & Wildlife Service. “...the Applicant shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) prior to commencing operations with the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and USFWS concerning the monitoring of shorebirds and waterfowl and the scientific approach that will be taken toward monitoring impacts of the proposal on the Refuge.”

At this time it is unclear how the monitoring of the aquaculture impacts will take place since the mere presence of humans on site may adversely impact wildlife.

You can read the full text of the decision on our web site:

[http://www.fodnwr.org/Clallam\\_Oyster\\_Farm\\_Decision.pdf](http://www.fodnwr.org/Clallam_Oyster_Farm_Decision.pdf)

The hearing examiner’s decision will be sent to Washington State Department of Ecology and to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Each agency has its own regulations that must be met and there may be additional opportunities for public comment.

Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge believe this is not the right location for aquaculture activity as it poses several potential negative impacts on the Refuge, its visitors, and especially its residents, the wildlife.

Learn more about our concerns and updates here:

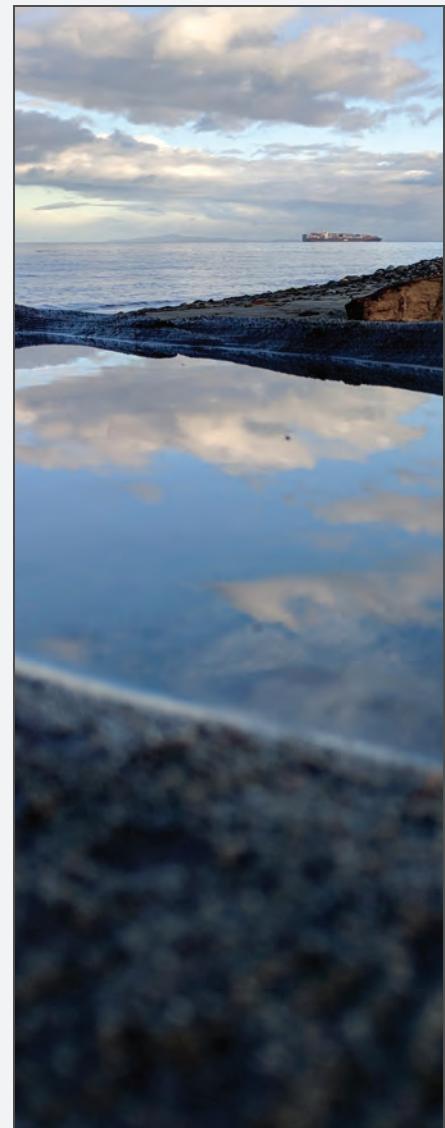
[http://www.fodnwr.org/dungeness\\_oyster\\_farm.html](http://www.fodnwr.org/dungeness_oyster_farm.html)

## Volunteer Refresher and Lunch Canceled

The volunteer refresher and lunch scheduled for April 3rd at the Sequim Prairie Grange Hall has been canceled due to concerns about COVID-19. Attendance for the new volunteer training session has been limited, and is still scheduled to take place. Please check the Friends web site for current updates.

Did you know you can earn money for Friends while shopping on Amazon?

Sign up for AmazonSmile and select Friends as your designated charity and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchase to Friends.



# A Note From the President:

by Jason West

It's still winter, but **Friends** are off to a busy start. At our January meeting we held officer elections for 2020. Ellie Ausmus was elected to the position of Secretary. Bruce Brod will serve another term as Treasurer. Jeanie McNamara will serve as Vice President and I will serve as President.

I'm pleased to announce that Glenn Harris has been elected to the Board. Glenn is active with Sequim Sunrise Rotary and joins our other Board members Jessie Christiansen, Chair of Environmental Restoration; Linda Gutowski, Chair of Environmental Education; and Dan Shappie, Chair of Fundraising.

**Friends** recently provided applications to Sequim High School for Class of 2020 seniors to apply for the first John and Margaret Maxwell Future of Conservation Award. We expect to announce a winner by April 30th.

**Friends** are supporting Refuge staff and volunteers with planning and preparation for Dungeness Discovery Day, including purchasing backpacks for kids. We're also planning other educational events for the year which will help achieve one of our primary goals this year: **community awareness**.

While visiting with friends that happen to have a lovely view of both the New Dungeness Lighthouse and Protection Island, I mentioned what I was working on for **Friends**. Their response was "How have we lived here for over 30 years and never heard of **Friends** before?" I thought this was a good question and something we need to work on, getting our local community more aware of **Friends** and what it is that we do.

Increased awareness of **Friends** will translate into more awareness for wildlife. Perhaps more locals will view the Refuge first as a home for wildlife, not just another public beach or place to go jogging. Additional contributing members and donors will translate into an increased ability to provide educational events like Dungeness Discovery Day that engage and encourage kids to explore and learn about wildlife, or fund more conservation awards to local students.

So how do we make our community aware of who **Friends** are and what we do?

A simple step is if each of **you** share with your friends and relatives what it is that **you** do to support **Friends** and why. Let them know why you volunteer your time or make a donation. Share with them that you are making a difference for wildlife and environmental education right here in our community. You just may inspire someone to join **Friends**, make a donation, sponsor an educational event, or learn more about the wildlife in their own back yard.

**Let's make 2020 the Year of Awareness for Friends.**



Rough-skinned newts are out on the trail doing some sole-searching. Please watch your step.



## 21 Years of Volunteer of the Year Recipients

1999: Gwen Pierce

2000: Barbara Williams

2001: Carmelinda Wiley

2002: Lou Peterson

2003: Gail Smith Early

2004: Paul Runyon

2005: Steve & Lois Siebersma

2006: Mary Nilsen

2007: Bill Petrie

2008: Carol Babcock

2009: Rod Norvell

2010: Kermit Reister

2011: Lynn Drake

2012: Bob Larsen

2013: Pat Schoen

2014: John Maxwell

2015: Elizabeth Baatz

2016: Ron Andris

2017: Grant Rollins

2018: C. Jessie Christiansen

2019: Tom McKinney

*Thank You  
to all volunteers!*



Volunteer of the Year recipients past and present. From the left: Jessie Christiansen, Elizabeth Baatz, John Maxwell, Ron Andris, Tom McKinney, Grant Rollins, and Lynn Drake.

## Distinguished Volunteer of the Decade

2010 – 2019: Janet Bruening