Happy 2018!!

Our SEA Board sends Happy New Year wishes to all, hoping for good health, peace in the world, and greater awareness for the preservation and health of our earth. We are very excited about our upcoming Winter/Spring seminar schedules (see schedule in this newsletter and on our website). We hope that the turnout will be robust and the current research/information presented will be enlightening.

This year, SEA will be developing a way to track volunteer hours for any and all involvement of our volunteers. We have been tracking interpretive hours for many years, primarily as a way to recognize and appreciate the dedication of our volunteers at the nesting birds sites and Simpson Reef. But also, as a Friends Group to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, this information is submitted to Congress for funding and continued support. This data justifies our existence to the powers that be. It supports SEA’S mission to educate, interpret, and contribute to the conservation efforts of the Oregon Islands and Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuges. In the current political climate and ongoing crisis with endangered ecosystems, our efforts are more critical than ever. SEA organization truly appreciates all of your financial, physical and educational support and we now plan to track those many hours that you put in (in so many ways) in order to formally recognize all that you do. SEA will continue to thrive as a viable part of our community but only through your hard work. Stay tuned for more information on tracking hours.

Mary Garrett
SEA President

Annual Meeting News

At the October Annual Meeting, two new Board members were elected. Bruce Williams and Nancy Bailey. Sadly, we bid farewell to Board Members, Harv Schubothe and Roy Green. Harv’s dedication spanned nearly three decades and Roy’s professional demeanor and input were always appreciated. We extend best wishes to Roy and Harv on their next adventures! For those who were unable to attend, a good meeting and outstanding presentations were missed. Much business was processed, good ideas circulated, new Board committees formed, and valuable information presented by Eric Mruz, USFWS, and our guest presenter Jaime Belanger, Education Lead at South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. Both Eric and Jaime provided power point presentations on projects and educational opportunities with special emphasis on partnering with SEA. Congratulations, Bruce and Nancy!

Jaime Belanger, South Slough National Estuarine Reserve Ed. Lead (photo by Anna Diehl)

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Where Did All the Puffins Go?
By Eric Mruz
Oregon Coast NWR Complex Manager

There is no doubt that our weather patterns are changing and the animals are adapting to this change as well. Climate change is affecting animals all over the planet from microscopic organisms to polar bears. While we may feel overwhelmed with the enormity of the changes happening globally, now is the time to act locally.

GET INVOLVED with your National Wildlife Refuges:
The first one started in 1903 by Teddy Roosevelt. There are over 540 National Wildlife Refuges in the United States. The Refuge System provides and protects over 150 million acres of land and water from the Caribbean to the Pacific, Maine to Alaska, plus more than 418 million acres of national marine monuments. There is at least one national wildlife refuge in every state. The Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

GET INVOLVED with your Refuge Friends Group:
Refuge friends groups are independent, nonprofit organizations run by citizens that support the purposes and objectives of national wildlife refuges. Many groups are well established and provide extensive assistance to their refuges; others are just beginning, but all provide support to their local national wildlife refuge. Refuge volunteers and refuge “Friends” provide a 20 percent boost to the National Wildlife Refuge System workforce – the equivalent of 618 full time employees and valued at $32 million per year.

Today more than 230 Friends organizations work in support of wildlife refuges across the nation, with 36,000 volunteers contributing 1.4 million hours a year to the Refuge System. With Refuge System funding declining, the need to recruit and train additional volunteers is more pressing than ever! You can make a difference, contact your local National Wildlife Refuge or Refuge Friends group and volunteer to make a change.

SEA & Coastal Refuges Volunteer Projects List
Volunteer projects include flexible schedules. Ask our SEA Volunteer Coordinator or the South Coast Refuge Manager about project particulars! Phone 541-260-7770 for more information or to sign up!

**Pollinators, Habitat Restoration, and Artistry**
- Pollinator Gardening
- Bandon Marsh Refuge Clean Up Day
- Shed Mural Painting Project
- Invasive Species Removal

**Citizen Science**
- Refuge Mosquito Monitoring
- Bandon Marsh and Ni-les’tun Unit Bird Surveys
- Bird Breeding Season at Coquille Point Photo Documenting

**Outreach, Education and Interpretation**
- Seabird Nesting & Natural Resource Interpretation
- Shorebird Sister Schools Program Assistance
- Nature & Birding Tours Guides
- Interpretive Guided Paddle Tours (Coquille River)
- Coastal Wildlife Interpreters
- Community Presentations
- Historical Document & Photo Archiving

Don’t Forget!
Membership Dues in February!
The 2017 Whale Watching Week was held December 27-December 31, and what a great week it was! Total numbers are not yet in, but according to Luke Parsons, Interpretive Ranger for Oregon State Parks, thus far the data is showing 1,220 gray whales were sighted and a whopping 14,945 visitors were contacted! Thanks to Oregon State Parks Whale Watching volunteers, some of who are our very own SEA members, each visitor contact represents one more person educated with eyes wide open about the significance and beauty of these marvelous creatures. Maybe you’ll learn whale-speak next year! Thanks to Jeanine Rachau for collecting these whale watch statistics!

SEA Launches Scopes Fundraising Campaign

SEA’s Wildlife Interpretive work at Simpson Reef and Face Rock, and pretty much anywhere a SEA volunteer has a chance to show off pelagic birds and other sea-life most of the time relies on the use of spotting scopes. The spotting scopes gives visitors an up close and personal connection with the wildlife and coastal landscapes. Science has long proven that humans have remarkable visual memory, better than auditory member. As with all equipment, there comes a time when replacement is inevitable. That time is now for SEA’s scopes. A few months ago, SEA launched an informal campaign to raise money for this effort. More recently, the campaign has taken a more formalized shape beginning with extending the fundraising through GoFundMe. SEA Vice President, Bill Stenberg took the initiative to launch the GoFundMe piece of the campaign to reach out to all possible venues. Mary Garrett, SEA President says, “the spotting scopes are central to all our wildlife interpretative and field education work. Our current scopes were purchased many years ago and have had considerable use. If we are to continue this important interpretative work we must replace the scopes soon.” At a total estimated replacement cost of $7,960 for four scopes and tripods, SEA has our work cut out for us. So far, the GoFundMe effort has collected $940. We have a long way to go. If you have ideas or resources who may be interested in making a tax deductible contribution toward the scopes, please go to GoFundMe.com and search for Shoreline Education for Awareness spotting scopes or contact any Board Member listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Another scope fundraiser taking place is the raffle for two beautiful pieces of artwork. Pictured below are a stunning necklace handcrafted by skilled jewelry makers, Bruce Williams and Nancy Bailey. The pendant is made with heavy gauge 100% solid sterling silver wire and features a tumble-polished piece of Anadara fossil clam shell from Bullards Beach. The other is a lovely quilted Bandon Lighthouse wall hanging by quilter, Susan Ryan. Both, Susan and Bruce, are SEA Board Members.

Raffle tickets will be sold at each of SEA’s 2018 Educational Seminars with the drawing being held during our Annual Puffin Party at Face Rock at the end of April 2018.

Please Support SEA’s Fundraisers! See you at the seminars!
This edition’s SEA Board of Directors introduction is our Treasurer, Susan Ryan. Susan is a “passionate volunteer” whose career prepared her to be a productive “retiree.” Her life began in San Francisco, where she was the middle child of five. Her professional life began as a bookkeeper, and she quickly worked her way up to General Accounting Manager of a fortune-500 company in Silicon Valley. In 1998 she became a systems analyst and configured accounting software for that same company. She was transferred to the company’s Massachusetts office and became a “globe-trotting consultant” for its overseas offices. Through hard work and good fortune, she retired in 2004 and moved with her husband to Gold Beach. There they volunteered at a salmon hatchery. Quite naturally she quickly began handling the hatchery’s financial books as well as managing the spawning process, lovingly given the nickname “sperminator”. In 2011, finding she needed a major change following divorce, Susan moved to Bandon where she immediately got involved. She sewed for the local theater, was an Aspire counselor, and joined the Good Earth Community Garden board where she has been both treasurer and president. In June of 2014 she met Bill Stenberg (now her life partner) who introduced her to SEA. Without hesitation Susan became SEA’s treasurer. She and Bill are strong advocates for SEA’s causes and genuinely enjoy showing off the Oregon Coast’s marine life to visitors. When Susan isn’t volunteering for SEA and the Good Earth Community Garden, she squeezes in her other passions: quilting, cross-stitching, and crocheting as well as yoga, hiking, kayaking and meditative beach walks. When friends and family ask her about Bandon, her answer is always the same: she wouldn’t live anywhere else!

Hope Emerges for Sea Stars

Article & Photo by Teri Spencer

Journey to our Southern Oregon beaches at any significantly low tide and you will invariably find numerous “locals” as well as visitors trying to catch a glimpse and photos of the sea stars attached to the exposed subtidal rocks. During my walks on Bandon beaches, I am frequently stopped by someone asking where these highly sought after coastal inhabitants can be found. When the seekers, young and old, find sea stars on the rocks, they are always noticeably delighted at the sight.

The beloved sea stars, formerly known as star fish to many of us (scientists have corrected this misnomer, since these creatures are not, in fact, fish), have had a really rough time over the past 4 years. According to the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Ecology and Evolutionary Biology department, the sea star population along the entire North American west coast suffered from the most extensive die-off on record: the largest known Sea Star Wasting Syndrome (SSWS) incident. The die-off was first reported by an ecologist in Olympic National Park in the summer of 2013, and then was seen along the California coast in late 2013, spreading to Oregon beaches by April, 2014. A May, 2016 article based on an Oregon-specific study by the Evergreen State College describes the profound impact on the ochre sea star (the dominant type in Southern Oregon) population as up to 90% with SSWS symptoms, and up to 84% reductions in density. In other words, most of the sea stars along the Oregon coast were lost. But, alas, in 2018 there is a hopeful ending to the sea star story. The data collected by UCSC and others shows significant reduction in affected sea stars since 2015, with most areas along the North American west coast that once had high rates of disease now have no observation of SSWS or low rates observed. For example, UCSC observations of sea stars at Cape Arago demonstrated high rates of SSWS symptoms in July of 2014 and 2015, however in July, 2017 there was no observation of SSWS in the ochre sea stars. Only one area, the Salish Sea of Washington showed resurgence of SSWS symptoms in late 2017. In Southern California, the Orange County Register reported in December, 2017 that the populations of juvenile sea stars in Orange County beaches are increasing with no SSWS symptoms observed. The article quotes the education coordinator of an Orange County beach conservancy...
describing how they lost all of the sea stars from SSWS, but that she currently observes sea stars 7-8 inches long, “the biggest” since before the disease struck. Although there are several theories regarding the cause of this SSWS incident, including virus (Sea Star Densovirus) and warmer sea temperatures, there seems to be no definitive attribution. In December, 2017 the UCSC web site included the statement “We do not know what is causing Sea Star Wasting Syndrome, and the cause may be different in different regions.”

On the Bandon beaches I am grateful to have at least a few orange and purple ochre sea stars to see at low tides, in hopes their numbers will continue to climb. I will continue to appreciate and take photos of them, and direct seekers to them so as many people as possible can share and delight in their unique charm. For more information on SSWS, including maps of observed areas, the UCSC sites are: seastarwasting.org and pacificrockyintertidal.org.

Nature is not a place to visit. It is home. –Gary Snyder

(photo by Anna Diehl)
CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF SHORELINE EDUCATION FOR AWARENESS

Your tax-deductible contribution to Shoreline Education for Awareness directly supports SEA’s coastal wildlife interpretation program as it continues its crucial role in the education of local residents and the growing number of visitors to our coast from around the world. You can also contribute by becoming a volunteer. Please use the form below to become a member, make an additional contribution to the program, or to indicate your interest in volunteering.

Enclosed is my contribution to help support SEA

I would like to volunteer for the wildlife interpretation program

Please call me at:

Or send me an e-mail at:

Suggested Donations (Check One):

$20 Individual Membership
$35 Family Membership (2 or more in same household)
$25 additional contribution

$50 additional contribution
$100 additional contribution
Other $

Name:
Address
City, State, Zip:
E-mail:

Use the PayPal link on our website or make your tax-deductible check payable to:
Shoreline Education for Awareness
P.O. Box 957
Bandon, Oregon 97411
2018 Coastal Education Series
presented by
Shoreline Education for Awareness (SEA)

January 20  Wine & Learn at Washed Ashore Gallery, Old Town Bandon, 3 pm
Hitching a Ride on the Marine Debris Superhighway: Lessons from Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris, presented by Nancy C. Treneman, Marine Biologist & Educator, Oregon Institute of Marine Biology & Southwestern Oregon Community College: A massive amount of debris enters the oceans every day, much of it consisting of man-made materials such as plastic, fiberglass, and Styrofoam. This debris is harmful in many ways to marine ecosystems. How species are transported, what species are transported, and possibly even the ecology of the open ocean is changing because of this new ‘Age of Marine Debris’ and is the topic of this presentation. Join us at 3 pm for wine, cheese, and learning about a topic that impacts us all. Make sure to allow extra time to view the gallery!

February 17 Coos Kings, Coos River Basin Fall Chinook Through the Hourglass, Charleston Marine Life Center, 9:30 am
Presented by Chris Claire, Habitat Protection Biologist, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife on the South coast. Chris will provide insight to the Coos River Basin wild and hatchery Fall Chinook population trends from the late 1800s to current. Chris provides technical guidance on numerous instream, wetland, tidal, and fish passage restoration projects relating to design, implementation and fish salvage. In 2009-2013 Claire was involved as a restoration team member on the Bandon Marsh National Wildlife refuge Ni-les’t’un Unit restoration of 418 acres of tidal marsh. Claire also served as a partner on the Coos Watershed Association East Fork Oxbow reconnection project in 2015. This presentation promises to provide thought provoking information on a very important ecological resource.

March 25 A Pint of Pub Science at the 7 Devils Pub, Coos Bay, 3 pm
Why Size Matters: Tracking Rockfish at the Redfish Rocks Marine Reserve, presented by marine biologist, Tom Calvanese, MSc, with Oregon State University. Tom is also Manager of the Port Orford Field Station and part of the Marine Studies Initiative. Tom will share his knowledge and experiences observing the behavior of rockfishes and the integral part they play in the coastal environment. Tom is an aficionado of Pacific rockfishes of the genus Sebastes.

April 13 A Dawn of New Era in Ocean Stewardship, An Oceanography Film, at the Bandon Library, Sprague Room, 6 pm
This excellent 60-minute film, produced by Green Fire Productions Ocean Frontiers videos, focuses on the ocean environment, man -caused environmental impact, and solutions. Overall, the video gives positive hope to the future of our oceans if humankind can continue to cooperate in truly symbiotic relationships with one another and with our oceans.

April 28 Annual Puffin Party at Face Rock, 10 am to 1 pm
Presented by SEA each year, this fun and educational hands-on event affords the public a unique opportunity to learn from volunteers and experts about one of the most elusive coastal seabirds, the Tufted Puffin. Through the lens of a spotting scope, visitors can spy the elusive birds possibly nesting among the Oregon Islands. There is also plenty of opportunity to observe other varieties of seabirds, pinnipeds or perhaps even spot a whale! Learn about the species you see and how each integrates into the coastal environment. This is a wonderfully fun educational experience for people of all ages, especially children who receive special SEA Children Activity Packets. Hot chocolate and delicious cookies are always on hand to take off the Spring chill!

For more information, contact SEA at 541-313-6751 or visit us on our website: www.sea-edu.org