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Dungeness River Audubon Center
Railroad Bridge Park
2151 West Hendrickson Road
PO Box 2450
Sequim, WA 98382
360-681-4076
rivercenter@olympus.net

Summer Hours: Apr. - Oct: Tues. - Sat. 10am - 4pm, Sunday noon - 4, Closed Mon.
Winter Hours: Nov - March: Tues. - Fri. 10am - 4pm, Saturday noon-4, Closed Sun. & Mon.

Director’s Message: Powell Jones

As most if not all of you are aware, we have fended off a Drugstore Beetle attack on our priceless collection of mounts. With a lot of help from our partners and volunteers, we ended up freezing our entire collection along with all our books to make sure everything was “clean.” If you are frequent visitor to the center or a volunteer, you will most likely notice some changes to the exhibit and how we operate. Even with it being an extensive process our collection is in a better place in the end after our “Spring cleaning.”

Speaking of which, Spring has started showing up with the first signs of Pacific Chorus Frogs singing and Indian Plum blooming, albeit a little later than normal. I typically record the first date of frogs singing in a pond of ours in late February, and this year they were a full 3 weeks later. Most likely the late singing is a result of colder than usual water temperatures. Don’t let the late spring fool you; our snow pack in the Olympics is very low this year, and it will be important for all of us to continue to work on ways to conserve water for Dungeness River salmon.

Spring is also the time for two of our largest fundraisers; the Olympic Birdfest and our River Center Rally. Please help support our programming by participating in either event or finding a team or individual to sponsor for the River Center Rally. You can find more information about both events on our website.

Last but not least, please take a moment to celebrate our 25th anniversary as a Non-Profit Organization. What an amazing journey it has been serving our members and community with programs and classes that have enriched tens of thousands of people. I can’t wait to see what the next 25 years will bring! All of our successes would not be possible without the support of members and donors like you. See you outside!
Dungeness River Audubon Center at Railroad Bridge Park turns 25! A Brief History

As we mark the 25th anniversary of the Dungeness River Audubon Center being incorporated as a non-profit, its volunteer board is raising funds to ensure the River Center is ready for the next 25 years. The project will enlarge the building and construct a new road and parking lot. Now is a great time to take a look at the history of “one of this county’s true gems.”

Trains first travelled the bridge across the Dungeness River in 1915. Called a Howe Truss Bridge, it was built by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway, later called the Milwaukee Road. The bridge had a 70-year history of both freight and passengers crossing it until the rail company went bankrupt in 1985, removed the rails and ties, and began selling the right-of-way. Possibly only one other working bridge of this design still exists in the state of Washington today.

Beginning of a Museum and Park

Fast forward to 1984, when Annette and Mark Hanson gathered volunteers to build the Sequim Natural History Museum in a vacant room in the old Sequim High School building. With the help of local artists, they constructed an entire model watershed, from mountain to sea, filled with specimens of the appropriate flora and fauna in floor-to-ceiling dioramas. Mark was a Sequim Middle School science teacher and hobby taxidermist who contributed most of the specimens, some of which are still on display today. This was the beginning of the flora and fauna collection now housed in the River Center. Scores of elementary classes were guided through the Museum by volunteers for years, until the high school needed the return of the room in 1993. The Museum contents then went into storage, while the search began for a new home.

In 1990 when the bridge and right-of-way became available, a group of concerned citizens and organizations worked together to purchase the bridge and a half mile right-of-way as Railroad Bridge Park and the first piece of the Olympic Discovery Trail in Clallam County.

Peninsula Trails Coalition volunteers contributed hours and hours of work to make the bridge easier to access and to be enjoyed by visitors. They replaced the railroad ties, planked the deck of the former railroad bridge and trestle, and built a ramp structure to provide easy access for physically-challenged visitors.

Combining the Museum and Railroad Bridge Park

With amazing foresight, volunteers associated with the Museum, led by Annette Hanson, applied for grant funds to buy additional land next to the bridge, build a paver trail, install interpretive signs, and construct a natural history center. They were successful in raising $400,000 in State funds in 1993, but then their government sponsorship fell through. Needing a new sponsor, they approached the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. The Tribe’s reac-
tion was positive, and they assumed responsibility for the awarded grants and ownership of the land and buildings, expanding the park by ten acres on the east side of the river to provide a new home for the Sequim Natural History Museum. To manage the expansion of the park and develop an educational center, the Museum volunteers formed a nonprofit organization and applied for and received incorporation as a 501(c) non-profit organization in 1994. Once called the Rainshadow Natural Science Foundation, the organization is now named the Dungeness River Audubon Center. The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and National Audubon Society joined the partnership in 1997 and the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Dungeness River Audubon Center, and Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society jointly manage the park and the center.

Building the Park
Between the time the organization was formed and the center was opened in 2001, classes, festivals, lectures, field trips, and summer camps were held outdoors. Broad pathways of paver-stones laid by volunteers led to the RiverStage, an open amphitheater with seating for 75, and the RiverShed, a timber-frame shelter with picnic tables and benches. October 21, 2001 marked the grand opening of the River Center building and its multi-purpose space for scientific exhibits, hands-on displays, physical specimens, and classroom study aids that are still used today for educational classes. A variety of community organizations also hold meetings there.

Looking Forward: Expanding the River Center
Capital Campaign Progress
River Center volunteers are now looking to enlarge the building to better accommodate the popular educational activities and meetings that now jockey for space in the Center building. An Inspire Wonder Capital Campaign kicked off publicly in 2018 to raise funds to build a new wing with a large multipurpose room, commercial kitchen, small classroom, and concession stand; to remodel the existing building; and to construct a new access road and parking lot. The current building will stay open during the construction to avoid any disruption in activities. The beautiful new entrance to the addition is designed to echo the Railroad Bridge truss and will be built with natural materials. This expansion and renovation will add 5000 square feet of education, office, and meeting space.

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe has contributed and pledged more than $714,000, including the purchase of 4.5 acres east of the Center to make possible the new road and parking lot, and as of March 16th, 2019, the Center has received over 56% of its Capital Campaign budget of $3 million in contributions and pledges, thanks to the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s donation, generous contributions from board and River Center members, local businesses, and individuals. Grants have already been awarded with work underway on more (see below). A Capital Campaign Committee is pursuing a variety of methods to raise the additional funds, including a golf tournament set for June 15th, 2019.

Donations to the campaign may be made through the Dungeness River Audubon Center’s website: dungenessrivercenter.org/our_story/support-us. Inquiries may also be made by calling 360-670-6774 or 360-681-4076. Center staff and campaign volunteers are also available to give a program about the project to large and small groups. Sue Dryden

Capital Campaign receives M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust grant
The Capital Campaign Committee has recently received word of a $300,000 grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust of Vancouver, Washington. Funds will go towards the expansion of the Center’s building. The grant is offered as “top-off” or final funds – to become available as soon as the remaining dollars are raised. Grants have also been received from several other local and regional organizations. Kudos to the Capital Campaign Committee for all their hard work and success, both with the grants and encouraging the many individual donations from members!

Annette Hanson, chair of the Inspire Wonder Capital Campaign said, “We are thrilled with the Murdock grant and the trust they have placed in our project and organization; we hope this top-off grant will inspire many more Center
and Park enthusiasts to support this project so we can reach our goal and begin building.” More project information and a campaign video can be viewed at www.dungenessrivercenter.org.

The M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, created by the will of the late Melvin J. (Jack) Murdock, provides grants to organizations in five states of the Pacific Northwest—Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington—that seek to strengthen the region’s educational and cultural base in creative and sustainable ways. Since its inception in 1975, the Trust has awarded more than 6,500 grants totaling more than $975 million.

Upcoming Events

The First Annual Dungeness River Audubon Center Charity Golf Tournament will be held on June 15th at the Cedars Golf Course. This is a fundraiser for the Audubon River Center Capital Campaign. Anyone interested in playing should contact the golf pro at the Cedars, and if you would like to be a sponsor, please contact Tuttie Peetz, 360-683-6860 or trpeetz@gmail.com. There are many possible levels of sponsorship. So come out and help with fundraising for this wonderful community resource, advertise your business, play golf, and have an enjoyable day.

Tuttie Peetz

Join the River Center Rally

Spring is the time to Rally!

Our teams, or yours, have many reasons to rally during the event period of March through late June. There are many ways to connect with the outdoors though the River Center rally.

Participating in River Center Rally is easy

You can do River Center Rally on your own or join a team.

Choose one or more favorite activities, e.g., walking, biking, gardening, birding, horseback riding, removing invasive plants, or anything else you can track the time, mileage, etc. of the activity.

Email RiverCenter@olympus.net to get the materials you need to turn your outdoor activity into supporting a park and center that our community loves, and check the River Center website to see a list of teams already formed. You can call the River Center and say you are interested in participating, or pick up signup forms at the River Center, 2151 W. Hendrickson Road, Sequim, WA.

Broom Busters, removing invasive Scotch Broom along the Discovery Trail: one of the many Spring Rally teams raising money for the River Center. A complete list of teams coming soon on the River Center website!

6th annual Olympic Peninsula BirdFest!
April 12-14, 2019

This festival provides participants the opportunity to view a wide variety of birds normally seen on the Olympic Peninsula. Field trips are planned for Sequim Bay, Port Angeles Harbor, Ediz Hook, Dungeness Spit, the Elwha River and at Neah Bay, as well as trips through wooded areas to view songbirds and locate owls in the evening. Boat trips to Protection Island are also planned. Spaces are still available on some of these trips! In addition to the field trips, birders may participate in
presentations, workshops and a banquet. A tour explaining the Jamestown S’Klallam tribal totem poles at the Tribal Center and the Seven Cedars Casino will also be offered.

The Olympic BirdFest is a partnership of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, Dungeness River Audubon Center and Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. Proceeds from this festival help support the educational programs of the Dungeness River Audubon Center. For more information, call 360-681-4076, or email: info@olympicbirdfest.org.

Award Winning Audubon Nature Photographs on Display at the Sequim Civic Center

The City of Sequim City Arts Advisory Commission is partnering with the Dungeness River Audubon Center to host the 2018 Audubon Society's Best Avian Photography. The photographs will be on exhibit at the Sequim Civic Center, 152 West Cedar Street, April 5th through April 24th. Civic Center hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The winning photographers and their stunning photographs were selected from more than 8,000 entries submitted by photographers from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and 10 Canadian provinces. This year’s exquisite photographs celebrate the splendor of many bird species protected under the 100-year-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), the most important bird conservation law which is currently under siege in Congress and by the Department of the Interior. The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters and partners have an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon’s vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Audubon is a nonprofit conservation organization. Learn more at www.audubon.org.

For more information please contact the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 360-681-4076.

Education and Classes

First, a message from Gregory Voyles, President of the Board of the River Center. His message is a good illustration of the importance of the River Center’s educational mission:

“Personally, this is my favorite time of the year. I love Spring and the new beginnings it brings. This is also the time of year I get to help out with the River Center's first and second grade school programs. We just finished up our second first grade visit to Greywolf Elementary last week. We do three lessons for the first graders (What Makes a Bird a Bird, Habitat, and Intro to the Salmon Life-cycle), and one for the second graders (focus is on ducks, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, and raptors). I think this is the 4th year I've been involved with first grade and the 3rd year with second grade, and the response we get from both the students and teachers never ceases to amaze me. I have a degree in Environmental Education, but my focus was geared towards adult education. I had never really worked with kids in a classroom setting until Enid Phreaner and I made our first visit to Greywolf for first graders. I remember being incredibly nervous to start, but by the end of the first day my nerves were gone. I found that it’s hard to be nervous when your audience is completely enamored with everything you say, especially if it’s something you are obviously passionate about. Their curiosity and enthusiasm is infectious! This year, my oldest daughter is in second grade, and next year my youngest will be in first grade. As of this moment, I'm confident I could ask half of the students at Greywolf Elementary "What makes a bird a bird," and 80%+ would respond "FEATHERS!" And honestly, it gives me goose bumps every time!”

Nature Journaling

There is beauty and wonder all around us! Learning how to keep a nature journal of our observations and reflections can help deepen our experience and connection to the natu-
natural world. We will start this five part class learning how to draw landscapes, and for each class after that we will zoom in and focus on the different interconnected parts that make the big picture whole. Each class will include an ecology lesson, art lesson, and field exploration.

Classes will be held on the third Thursday of each month from 1:00 p.m. to 4 p.m. The fee for the 5 session class is $150.00.

- May 16 – Landscape
- June 20 – Water/Rock/Sun
- July 18 – Plants
- August 15 – Birds
- September 19 – Insects

2019 Instructors: Jenna Ziogas and Robert Amaral. Please Call The Dungeness River Audubon Center for more information: 360-681-4076 or email: rceducation@olympus.net

Learn By the Light of the Moon

The Dungeness River Audubon Center is bringing back the “Learn by the Light of the Moon” speaker series this spring with a whole new line-up. These talks will happen once a month, as the full moon dictates. The series provides opportunity for our community to hear from local naturalists and scientists, working to better understand the world around us. Please join us under the light of the full moon in our beautiful outdoor amphitheater for an evening of discovery and wonder.

Where: Dungeness River Audubon Center (outdoor amphitheater in Railroad Bridge Park)

Dates:

May 18th:
"From the subalpine to the sea: assessing the status and trends of key natural resources within Olympic National Park"
Dr. Rebecca McCaffery, Wildlife Biologist, USGS.

June 17th:
“A Look into the Beach Lake Conservation Area Nearshore Restoration Project”
Jamie Michel, Nearshore restoration biologist, Coastal Watershed Institute.

July 16th:
“Hunting Behaviors of Cougars “
Mark Elbroch, PhD, Director & Lead Scientist, Puma Program - Panthera

August 15th:
“Behind the scenes at the Burke Museum: recent and ongoing bird studies”
John Klicka, Curator of Birds, Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, Department of Biology, University of Washington

September 14th:
“Bioluminescence: who needs the light of the moon when you can make your own!”
Neil Harrington, Environmental Biologist, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe

Time: All talks will begin at 7pm
Cost: Free.
For more information, contact 360-681-4076 or rceducation@olympus.net

Flowers of the Olympic Peninsula

Join experienced leader John Bridge on a search for wild treasures. John has been leading this class for several years and knows his flower locations! Take a look at flowers from low elevation riparian forest, up into the alpine. All classes will meet at the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 9am and strive to return by 3pm. Sign up for either the Tuesday or Wednesday class on the dates below.

April 16th & 17th – Dungeness Forks and Graywolf River Outlook
May 14th & 15th – Fish Hatchery and Graywolf River Outlook
June 11th & 12th – Deer Park
July 9th & 10th – Eagle Point

Cost: $25 per class or $80 for all four, preregistration required. To sign up, or for more information call 360-681-4076, or email rceducation@olympus.net
Get your children outside this summer! Explore the natural world through hands-on learning!

Summer Nature Camp
June 24th—28th ($200)

Bike Camp
July 22nd—25th (half days) $120

Girls in Science
August 5th—9th ($200)

Summer Nature Camp 2
August 26th-30th ($200)

For more information or to register, visit http://dungenessrivercenter.org/summer-camps, Email: rceducation@olympus.net, or call 360-681-4076

Explore, learn, create, enjoy!
**Getting to know your DRAC Board members:  Shirley Anderson**

**What do you get from the Dungeness River Audubon Center?**
I have been a teacher for more than 50 years. I was able to spend the last 11 years of my high school biology teaching at Sequim High School. The most special times for me are continuing to support programs that involve people from infancy through the end of their lives. Helping to provide life-long experiences that engage individuals and families in our unique part of the world - it's a wonderful life.

**How would you describe yourself?**
I like to help things happen...whether it's an event like a festival or a small project, I like to learn new information and share ideas. I try to be thankful for every day and its opportunities. I try to keep frustrations from taking over my thinking.

**Why do you donate to the Center and to the campaign to enlarge the Center?**
It takes both professional staff and materials to make ideas become real. I like to help that happen. An oasis on the Olympic Discovery Trail will be a fantastic gift to the North Olympic Peninsula. The energy it takes to make one big room (the current Center) ready for the vast number of activities, classes, events, and presentations will be spent in more productive ways when we have specialized areas for exhibits, interactions, classes, library, wildlife viewing, and community gatherings.  *Sue Dryden*

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**MEMBERSHIP FORM: Dungeness River Audubon Center and Railroad Bridge Park**

Name____________________________________________________________________Date___________

Mailing Address______________________________________________ City_________________________

State______ Zip___________ Phone_____________________________ Cell_________________________

Email address ________________________________________ Signature_____________________________

Please circle your membership donation category below. Is this is a new membership ____or a renewal____?

$35 Annual Membership $500 Life-time Membership

Here’s my additional gift to support the Center and Park $_______, Legacy Fund $_______ and/or Building Fund $_______.

The *River Current* quarterly newsletter is delivered via E-mail (as a pdf). To receive a paper copy by U.S. Mail, please check here ___and add $10 to cover printing and postage.

My check for $______________ made out to **Dungeness River Audubon Center (or DRAC)** is enclosed.

I prefer to charge my membership/donation to: MasterCard /VISA Amount $______________

Acct. Number _________________________________ Expiration Date _________ 3 Digit Security Code ____________

I would like information about volunteer opportunities for the Center and Railroad Bridge Park_______

**Please send completed form and payment to: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382**

THANK YOU!! Your contributions to the Dungeness River Audubon Center are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Rev. 10-01-2016