
PERSpectives

Newsletter of the Pacific Estuarine Research Society Summer 2003

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Brett Dumbauld, PERS President
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This issue is a little late, and we desperately need a new newsletter editor!! If you're interested please give me a call at (360)665-4166 or email me at dumbabrd@willapabay.org. Serve your society and we promise to re-elect you at the next meeting! I also apologize for how short this is, but we were so spoiled with Rick Reynolds as our editor and wish him well in future endeavors. Please send any contributions you have for the fall newsletter to me for now.

PERS 2003

Thanks to all of you who attended the 2003 spring meeting! PERS met in conjunction with the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference (GBPS) which was held from March 31- April 3 at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, British Columbia (see our webpage for program and abstracts)! Thanks to the dedicated effort of our Canadian members (**Cynthia Durance** and **Michele Jones**) and the gracious support we received from the much larger GBPS group (especially co-chairs **Peter Dowty** from the Puget Sound Action Team and **David Fraser** from Environment Canada as well as **Joanie Pop** from Event Dynamics), it was a great show! A joint session on Thursday featured an array of speakers on assorted topics with some connection to the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin estuary. Congratulations to **Kathryn Sobocinski** (Univ. of Wash.) who took home an award for the second straight year and this year it was the top honor for graduate students with her presentation entitled "The impact of shoreline armoring on upper beach fauna of central Puget Sound". Kathryn was given the second Heinle award! **Danelle Heatwole** (Univ. of Wash.) took second place for her presentation entitled "Quantifying the impacts of tide restrictions in salt marshes of northern Puget Sound". A cozy social was held at the Steamworks Brew Pub on Thursday evening, even though the place was partially closed due to a flood event earlier in the day! *continued on next page*

ERF 2003 in Seattle

Wow it's August already and the Estuarine Research Federation Meeting in Seattle is just a month or so away! Its going to be an outstanding event and we expect to see the whole PERS crowd there. Registration materials, the scientific program, events schedule, lodging suggestions etc. are available at the ERF website <http://www.erf.org>. We have scheduled a brief PERS meeting to be held at ERF on Thursday, September 17 over the lunch break. Please plan on attending, and check your program for room location and details.

PERS 2004 and Other News

It looks like PERS 04 will be held in Port Townsend, Washington thanks to a gracious offer by Jim Norris (Marine Resources Consultants) and the Port Townsend Marine Science Center to host the meeting. Priving arrangements go smoothly, it looks like we will be making a friendly take over of Fort Warden State Park! The dates reserved are May 17 -18. Look for updates on the PERS website <http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~gilberj/pers.html>, but this will soon be changing as our web page manager, Jeannie Gilbert, is graduating. Congrats Jeannie, and thanks for staying on !!!

The Ruesink / Trimble Willapa Bay Research Collaboration

Since this will hopefully be my (Brett's) only chance as a stand-in newsletter editor to write about it, I offer the following addition! Most of you heard Alan Trimble (School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, University of Washington) speak at PERS and many of you have also heard Jennifer Ruesink (Dept. of Biology, University of Washington) speak at former PERS gatherings or on campus and already know the caliber of their work. *continued on next page*

The Ruesink / Trimble Willapa Bay Research Collaboration

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I just wish to formally acknowledge them for the enhanced approach they have brought to estuarine research in Washington and especially in Willapa Bay. They have recently purchased property adjacent to the bay, opened their house to students and other visiting researchers, and single-handedly or shall I say jointly, changed the face of the applied science world here for some time to come. Their research focuses on five questions which address basic ecological questions but realize that this estuary is home to a shellfish industry that continues to be extremely important to local and national interests.

1. What is the spatial pattern of oyster growth in the estuary? This question has been asked before but they are applying new tools such as stable isotope analysis to get at food sources.
2. What are the historical patterns of oyster recruitment in Willapa Bay and how do these relate to environmental conditions and records recorded elsewhere along the coast? They have re-initiated the WDFW monitoring program that ended 10 years ago due to budget constraints.
3. Where do native oysters recruit, grow and survive best, and what are the effects of competitors? Native oysters are still present in the estuary but some unknown factors have prevented their recovery to historical levels of abundance.
4. What are the population dynamics of two species of introduced oyster drills? They are monitoring reproduction, growth and survival of *Ceratostoma inornatum* and *Urosalpinx cinerea* in the estuary, describing their distribution and conducting experiments on what and how much they eat.
5. What are the effects of aquaculture practices on eelgrass? Submerged aquatic vegetation is protected as a highly valuable habitat, but little quantitative information is available on the effects of aquaculture practices on eelgrass and they are investigating both positive (nutrient supplementation, seed aggregation) and negative effects (uprooting due to harvest activity).

Jennifer and Alan have described the program and their current research ideas on their yet incomplete, but nice web page which I encourage you to visit at <http://depts.washington.edu/jrlrlab/>. It's a fun read (go to info and other stuff for last years annual report on Willapa Bay!) If I can speak for them, they also encourage input and especially visits from any interested parties!



I'm sure many of you have similar stories and people to thank for the genuine curiosity and delight you feel when you set foot or sail across your favorite estuary. We would be happy to share them and weblinks here so pass them on! "We are also planning to run an estuary of the month (quarter?) column in upcoming issues (coordinated by Ted DeWitt)!"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Dedicated PERSians returned for 3 sessions on Friday including a session on Oyster Aquaculture and Estuaries, Community Structure, and Eelgrass and Marine Vegetation (see program at our website). Congratulations to **Geoff Hosack** (Univ. of Wash.) for his third place graduate student presentation entitled "Does habitat structure influence low intertidal communities in Willapa Bay, Washington" and to **Ramona de Graf** (Univ. of British Columbia) for her poster entitled "Testing marine reserve boundaries in a complex seascape: a tale of eelgrass fish gene flow" which took honorable mention. Based on their outstanding performances so far, we expect all of our students to strut their PERS stuff and make a great showing at ERF 03!!