



THE CAMAS



EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE. CHANGING LIVES.

SIZZLING SUMMER!

CLIMATE SUMMIT

In early May, WSU Extension hosted a cross-departmental climate summit organized by Jefferson County Public Health and the Department of Community Development. This initial gathering, facilitated by Cascadia Consulting, helped us to understand and connect existing climate-related initiatives, policies and projects already underway in Jefferson County. The two half-day sessions walked us through what is already being done, what more we would like to do, and how to better partner with one another in the future. The Cascadia team prepared a report for us that can serve as a launching document for moving forward.



Cross-department county Climate Summit,
 May 2-2, 2024 (Apple Martine photo)

Huge thanks to Apple Martine, Director of Jefferson County Public Health, and Josh Peters of the Department of Community Development for their leadership and vision for this important gathering.

WELCOME, KATIE KOWAL!



We are excited to have Katie Kowal join our Jefferson County Extension team! Katie is our new Water Resources Program Coordinator. Katie will be the lead coordinator for the grants management, outreach, and volunteer activities for the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) and other water resources projects.

Katie is a Marine Ecologist with a background in grants management, environmental monitoring and science outreach and education. She was most recently a Water Quality Specialist for Clallam County Environmental Health. We are thrilled to have Katie join the Extension team!

WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES



Partnership in Action

The Water and Natural Resources program of WSU Extension, Jefferson County, drew on numerous partners to recently complete a successful large-scale raingarden project.

A high volume of water run-off from a busy commercial area in Port Hadlock runs toward the bay near the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding (NWSWB) and the Port Hadlock Marina. This very large raingarden basin project is meant to slow, filter, and absorb the run-off.

WSU Extension Faculty Bob Simmons partnered with Jim Argites of the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding and Joe Holtrop with Jefferson County Conservation District to plan the project. Blackberries, brush, and other debris were removed from the site, the basin was excavated, and new soil deposited. A jute mesh was anchored over the whole basin to keep soils intact.

Extension's Master Gardeners program partnered with Habitat for Humanity to salvage native plants from a new building site. From there, a truckload of sword ferns were transplanted along some of the steep edges of the raingarden basin. The conservation district is contributing a host of native plants as well.

NWSWB volunteers as well as Master Gardener volunteers will next plant many more native species that will be a good fit for this particular site. They will help to fix the slope and absorb and filter water.

Managing and filtering water run-off is one of the many things our Water and Natural Resources Program has contributed to. Faculty member Bob Simmons, who has led some 40 raingarden projects over the years, is retiring this summer (see story on p. 8).



MORE WATER RESOURCES



Photo credit: Katie Kowal
MRC volunteers spend a sunny Saturday morning counting Olympia oysters in Discovery Bay.

As the weather has started to warm up, the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) has been hard at work out in the field. We've been weeding Rain Gardens, deploying No-Anchor Zone buoys, sampling forage fish, and scoping out the local kelp beds. Our Olympia Oyster team has been out at Discovery Bay, where 25 volunteers helped spread culch (oyster shells) to attract settling Olympia oysters and conducted a population survey event where they counted 894 individual Olympia Oysters!

Our Education and Outreach Team has also been busy. We had a blast in our booth at Fjord Fest in Brinnon where we talked with over 300 visitors about a range of marine topics, such as safe shorelines and green crabs. We've also held multiple workshops on harvesting local shellfish, seaweed, and crabs at our Digging for Dinner, Searching for Seaweed, and Crabbing 101 Workshop events. We had a great time connecting with our local community and sharing our tips and tricks for a fun and safe harvest. Keep an eye out next spring when we announce the dates for our 2025 workshops!



Photo caption: Talking marine science and stewardship at the MRC booth at Fjord Fest.

The Marine Resources Committee, in partnership with Washington Sea Grant and the Port Townsend Marine Science Center, will be hosting the brand-new Marine Science and Stewardship Stage at the Wooden Boat Festival September 6-8. We'll have three days of presentations packed with fascinating facts and insights from leading scientists. They will address everything from harbor porpoises and orcas, to plankton, local marine restoration efforts, and sustainable fishing! Stop by the stage to learn more about the incredible marine life in our local waters, and meet the folks working to preserve our marine environment!

Go to this link for more information: <https://woodenboat.org/highlights/dive-into-marine-science-at-this-years-wooden-boat-festival/>

NOXIOUS WEEDS



In June of 2024, The Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board and their Washington Conservation Corps crew worked to remove common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) from the understory at Anderson Lake State Park. Common holly is not a legally designated noxious weed, but it is an insidious invasive that Washington State Parks feels is imperative to remove from their properties. Whether it is spread by seeds or vegetatively through suckers, this species can quickly colonize the forest understory, competing with native flora for resources and light. They can get up to 50 ft tall and 15 ft wide. Berries are toxic to both humans and animals. If even one branch is left on the ground, it can resprout, creating a dense thicket or wall of holly. It makes for a formidable foe, even if we love seeing it around Christmas time.



Over two days, the crews worked on over 15 acres, removing dozens of patches of common holly, as well as freeing a few trees from the clutches of common ivy (*Hedera helix*). The effort to remove these species helps to promote a healthy forest understory so that the forest at Anderson Lake can thrive for many years to come. While scouring for holly, the crew also got to enjoy low growing natives such as trilliums, selfheal, and orange honeysuckle, as well as the towering cedars and firs of the park.



MASTER GARDENERS

Celebrating the New Graduates of WSU Jefferson County Master Gardener Program!



We are thrilled to announce that 16 dedicated individuals have successfully completed the rigorous WSU Jefferson County Master Gardener training program. This marks a significant milestone in their journey to becoming Certified WSU Master Gardeners.

The path to certification begins with an intensive 11-week course that combines classroom instruction and hands-on training. This academically demanding program requires trainees to dedicate approximately 3-6 hours per week to outside lectures and homework, ensuring they receive over 60 hours of college-level, WSU-certified training. The curriculum is designed to cover core competencies necessary for WSU Master Gardener volunteers, with modules taught by university faculty, local and state experts, and experienced Master Gardeners.



Throughout the course, trainees delved into a variety of horticultural topics, ranging from Botany and Soils to Weed Control and Invasive Species Identification and Management. In addition to the academic lectures, the program featured hands-on learning activities, providing trainees with practical experience under the guidance of seasoned Master Gardener volunteers.

As a capstone to their training, each trainee delivered a 15-minute presentation on a horticultural topic of their choosing. These presentations covered a wide range of subjects, such as aphid biology, mountain beavers, square foot vegetable gardening, solving plant damage, and gardening in a bog, showcasing the diverse interests and expertise of our new graduates.

MASTER GARDENERS, CONTINUED

Upon completing their training, the new graduates enter a two-year internship period, during which they are required to contribute 40 hours of service each year (80 hours total). During this time, they assist the public with home gardening problems and answer gardening-related questions. After fulfilling these service requirements, they will achieve the esteemed status of Certified WSU Master Gardeners.

We congratulate our new graduates on their hard work and dedication and look forward to seeing the positive impact they will have on our community's gardening and horticultural knowledge!



photo by Greg Suskin

REGIONAL SMALL FARMS

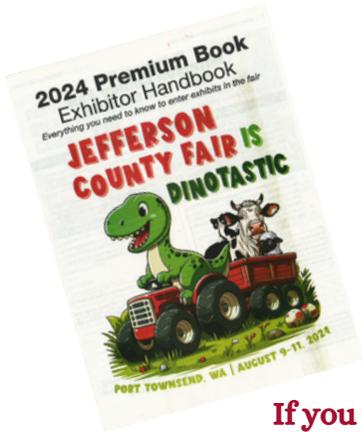
Regional Small Farms Coordinator participating on Farm Steering Committee

In 2023, the Port of Port Townsend acquired the 250+ acre Short's Family Farm in Chimacum with the aim of supporting agricultural development in Jefferson County. A Farm Steering Committee made up of local farmers and representatives from the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, Jefferson County Conservation District, and the North Olympic Salmon Coalition has helped to guide the process of developing a Farm Plan. Through a series of intensive meetings in the spring of 2024, hosted at the WSU Extension classroom, the Port gathered input from community members to work toward developing their plan. Graduate students and faculty from the University of Washington's Urban Design and Planning Department assisted in the process. Kellie Henwood, WSU Regional Small Farms Coordinator and Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative Coordinator, along with representatives from the Farm Steering Committee presented a draft plan to the Port Commission on July 10th.



photos by Greg Suskin

4-H NEWS: GETTING READY FOR FAIR!



This is the season of big activity for 4-Hers!
The Jefferson County Fair is August 9-11.
And 4-Hers are working hard to get ready.

If you need a 2024 Jefferson County Premium Fair book, come by our office at 121 Oak Bay Road in Port Hadlock (Monday through Thursday, 9-4).

Bring the whole family for a fundraiser dance for the fair! A Fair Kick-Off Dance will be held July 13 from 5-9pm at the Fairgrounds in the Erickson Building. Snacks will be on sale, there will be a silent auction, and admission is a suggested \$10 per person.

And July 13th and 14th is Yester Year Clean up at the Fairgrounds, from 10-4 pm.

If you are available to help volunteer any time between July 31 and August 12 for setting up exhibits, judging and clerking, serving as an adult host, helping in the 4-H building or taking down exhibits, please contact Anji Scalf at anji.scalf@wsu.edu.

Information about the fair can be found at the Port Townsend and Chimacum Farmers Markets. In Port Townsend, market dates are July 13, 20 and 27th. In Chimacum, July 12 and 28, and August 4.

For other questions, please call the Fair Office at 360.385.1013.



Youth Overnight Camp at Lake Crescent August 19-23 is the perfect opportunity for kids to get outdoors, make new friends, and HAVE FUN! Register online at <https://bit.ly/3nLyLxO> Financial assistance is available to any child who wants to attend camp and needs a little extra help.

SAYING GOODBYE TO BOB SIMMONS!



We have mixed feelings about the retirement of faculty member Bob Simmons. On the one hand, Congratulations, Bob! We hope you enjoy an adventurous retirement! On the other, we will miss you and all of your amazing work for Water Quality and Natural Resources for Extension.

Bob has worked as a faculty member for WSU for 32 years. He started in 1992 at the WSU Extension Mason County office, and supported South Puget Sound programs across Mason and Thurston counties. He moved to Port Townsend in 2014 where he has served Kitsap, Jefferson, and Clallam counties.

In South Puget Sound, Bob worked with many partners on sewage management and stormwater management. He worked with small farms to help restore and protect riparian areas.

Here in Jefferson county, he has focused on stormwater management, which has included helping to install numerous rain gardens to help filter stormwater run-off before it enters sensitive fish habitat in surrounding waters. Bob also managed the Marine Resources Council (MRC) and their volunteer training for Beach Naturalists and Stream Stewards (see our website for more details on these programs).

Bob's work has involved working with numerous partners, envisioning good ideas to address water-related problems, writing grants to fund the idea, and then galvanizing both hired expertise and volunteers to help projects come to fruition. He has managed several million dollars worth of grant-funded projects in his tenure.

His work has meant navigating the sometimes-cumbersome administrative structures of both Washington State University and Jefferson County, with administrative responsibilities in budget management, personnel management, project management and volunteer training. Bob says it all pays off in seeing completed raingardens that work well aesthetically and functionally. Good examples of this are all throughout Port Townsend, such as at the County Courthouse or Point Hudson downtown.

In the future, Bob hopes that partners in the Salmon Coalition can continue to provide Stream Stewards training, that the MRC can support Beach Naturalist training, and that raingardens can be supported by the MRC and Master Gardeners and other volunteers.

Bob looks forward to camping and surfing, time with friends and family, and travel. He aims to continue to contribute to the community by volunteering and enjoying activities in the area.

COMING UP!

Please consult our online [calendar](#) for more upcoming events.

First Tuesday of each Month: “Ask a Master Gardener“ clinics 12:00-2:00 at Jefferson County Library

July 13 12:00 Master Gardener Series: Grow Gorgeous Dahlias, 12:00-12:30 Jefferson County Library

Aug 9-11 Jefferson County Fair!

August 10 Master Gardener Series: Welcoming Pollinators into the Garden Jefferson County Library

August 19 Cultivating Success: Explore your Farm Dreams; 6-9pm via zoom (with Spanish translation).

August 23-September 4 Cultivating Success: Whole Farm Planning via zoom (with Spanish translation)

Sept 6-8 Wooden Boat Festival: Marine Science Speaker Series/Stage

Sept 14 Master Gardener Speaker Series: Growing Succulents: Jewels in the Garden Jefferson County Library

CAMAS

Camas is a perennial native in the Lily family that grew abundantly in moist meadows and grasslands from southern British Columbia to northern California and inland to the intermountain west. Camas produces an edible bulb that resembles a small onion, and was a central food source for indigenous people in the region. They were eaten fresh or dried for use year round. Many camas fields were destroyed through agriculture and other development. But extant camas patches can be found at a number of places in Washington, including our own Kah Tai Prairie in Port Townsend.

For an interesting archeological study of camas by WSU PhD student Molly Carney, go to the following [link](#).

DID YOU KNOW?



HOW CAN WE HELP?

Did you know this is our mission?

“WSU JEFFERSON COUNTY EXTENSION programs connect the people and communities of Jefferson County with the knowledge base of Washington State University to promote quality of life and advance economic well-being through fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research.”

Do you have any questions for our team? We are here to help! If you have questions about your farm, garden, yard, soils, weeds, or pests, reach out to us! You can fill out an [inquiry form online](#), call, or drop by (contact info below). If we do not know the answer, we will help connect you to someone who can. We can also share more information about our Water Resources, Master Gardener, 4-H, Regional Small Farms, or Noxious Weeds programs.

And if you have feedback about this newsletter, ideas for stories you would like to share, or want to join our mailing list, please contact us at jefferson.county@wsu.edu.

OUR TEAM



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**Our work is only made possible by the time and energy of so many wonderful volunteers!
Huge thanks to all WSU Extension volunteers--you are central to our success!**



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