



ROSARIO BEACH NATURALISTS

Volunteer Handbook
2019



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Beach Naturalist Volunteer Training

Humans have been connected to the natural resources at Rosario for generations and it is up to all of us to take care of these resources for the future. Through stewardship messaging, educational opportunities, and informal interpretation, Beach Naturalist volunteers promote understanding and appreciation for the stewardship of this sensitive and unique ecosystem.

And so, on behalf of Deception Pass State Park and the Deception Pass Park Foundation, thank you in advance for volunteering your time and expertise as a Beach Naturalist at Rosario. It is through your generous efforts; we are able to inspire stewardship of a truly special place.





Section 1: Background Information

Deception Pass State Park

As Washington's most visited state park, Deception Pass State Park is the ideal location for visitors to connect to the natural world. Designated as a state park in 1922, this iconic park encompasses a little over 3,850 acres of towering old growth forests, rocky beaches, unique intertidal habitat, and iconic historic features.

As the governing agency, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission "***cares for Washington's most treasured lands, waters, and historic places***" and believes in the importance of creating memorable experiences for visitors.

State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide memorable recreational and educational experiences that enhance their lives.

- Mission Statement, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Deception Pass Park Foundation

The Deception Pass Park Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation which was created by park neighbors in 2006 with the goal to help support their local state park and mitigate the enormous backlog of resource protection and education projects.

Today, the Deception Pass Park Foundation works to support Deception Pass State Park and provide valuable services to its visitors. The Deception Pass Park Foundation believes that we can protect our resources through education.

Our Mission is to encourage general awareness and further public education in an effort to promote the responsible use and protection of the Park and its cultural, recreational, historical and natural resources.

- Mission Statement, Deception Pass Park Foundation

Rosario Tide Pools and Beach Naturalist Volunteer Program

Rosario Beach and the rocky intertidal zone on the north side of Rosario Head have been an important place to humans for many years.

Native American groups, like the Samish and Swinomish, were known to have used the areas in and around Rosario Head for various purposes throughout their history. Anacortes families can be seen in photos dating back to 1907 enjoying a day on the beach while visiting Rosario. And as the park's infrastructure was developed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), recreational use has continued to increase.

As in many parks, the increased visitation created natural resource protection issues. And unfortunately, the easily accessible Rosario Tide Pools have not above the degradation. In 1995, park staff along with volunteers worked to mitigate the impacts visitors by developing new resource management strategies.

The Beach Naturalist Program was formally adapted by the park in 2006 along with the designation of the tide pool area as an active restoration zone. These efforts have led to the development of an intertidal rope trail and educational programs to help preserve and restore this special natural area.



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Today, thousands of students and park visitors explore the intertidal habitats of Rosario but with the aid of volunteers, park staff are able to provide important educational stewardship messaging so this delicate and loved ecosystem can be protect for future generations.

Section 2: Beach Naturalist Volunteer Program

The Rosario Beach Tide Pools are one of the few active and publicly accessible rocky intertidal restoration zones in the entire Puget Sound. This means that our program is constantly evolving to address the needs of the natural resource and our visitors.

The Beach Naturalist Volunteer Program believes that through “understanding, appreciation and protection”. It is the goal of the program to “provide visitors with the opportunity to develop meaningful connections to the resource” which is done through school programming in the spring and informal interpretation in the summer.

Spring - School Programs

Each year, hundreds of students join park staff and Beach Naturalist volunteers at Rosario to participant in tide pool field trips. Students explore the unique intertidal habitat and discover the amazing adaptations which allow life to survive. Field trips are offered May to mid-June for all ages.

Summer – Informal Interpretation

In the busy summer months, Rosario is a popular place for park visitors to explore. Beach Naturalist volunteers spend their time encouraging stewardship and protecting the tide pools by providing informal interpretive opportunities. Volunteers may be found in the tide pools assisting in a family’s exploration of the intertidal zone or on land providing engaging touch table activities and crafts.

Volunteer Expectations

Beach Naturalist volunteers are a critical part of the successful stewardship messaging and protection of Rosario Tide Pools. Due to this, we expect the following of our volunteers:

1. **Safety first:** Keep yourself safe! This applies to adverse weather conditions and visitor contacts alike. Look out for yourself and other naturalists while working.
2. **Be professional:** We ask that our volunteers dress appropriately, use suitable language, and their best judgement when talking with visitors. Please remember you are representing both Deception Pass State Park and the Deception Pass Park Foundation as a volunteer.
3. **Learn the resource:** All volunteers are required to attend the Beach Naturalist training. During training you will learn about tide pool life and how to create interpretive opportunities for our visitors. We ask that our volunteers do their best to learn the resource and develop their own educational styles. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the park interpretive program.
4. **Model tide pool etiquette:** We ask that our volunteers help us by modeling good tide pool etiquette for our visitors.
 - a. Stay on the designated rope trail.
 - b. Do not move or touch tide pool organisms. If you must touch always wash hands in salt water first and limit contact as much as possible.
 - c. Avoid lifting rocks and disturbing vegetation.



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- d. Do not collect, disturb, or destroy organisms.
5. **Wear volunteer uniform:** We ask that our volunteers wear a volunteer vest when working. This helps visitors and staff to recognize who you are.
6. **Minimum of 12 hours each year:** Due to our high need for volunteers, we ask that volunteers work a minimum of 12 hours each year. Hours can be completed between May and August.
7. **Have fun!**

Becoming a Volunteer:

- Complete Volunteer Application
- Complete a background check (two finger print cards required)
- Complete the Beach Naturalist Training Section 3: As a Beach Naturalist

Section 3: As a Beach Naturalist

Signing Up for Programs

Volunteers are asked to use **SignUp.com** to sign up for school programs and summer interpretation. SignUp.com is designed to allow Interpretive Staff to organize and keep a record of what volunteer is available to assist in the park's school program and summer interpretive opportunities. This website also offers volunteers information on the school program or summer interpretive slot in which they have signed up. The process for using SignUp.com is located below:

1. Visit www.deceptionpassfoundation.org.
2. Once on this website, click the tab labeled Beach Naturalists.
3. Once on the Beach Naturalist page, there are two sign up links.
 - a. For group visits and field trips.
 - b. For low tide exploration.
4. By clicking the links, it will bring you to the SignUp.com website.
5. On the SignUp website page, there will be a list of days the park needs volunteer assistance for these programs.
6. Follow the website prompts to sign up for programs.
 - a. Enter email
 - b. Confirm Email
 - c. Make password
 - d. Enter phone number
7. Once completed, the volunteer will receive a confirmation email with all the information included in that day's event.

Rosario Office

In order to get into the Rosario office, the code for the hide-a-key is **2014**. Please put the key back in the case after opening the door.

Once in the office check the log book on the desk and information board for any new or relevant information. After making sure you have a Discover Pass or volunteer hang tag (loaner volunteer hang tags available on the desk if your car does not have a Discover Pass), grab a vest, your name tag, clickers (adults and children), and appropriate program materials.



Section 4: School Field Trips

School field trips are valuable opportunities to introduce students to the unique natural resources within the intertidal zone of Rosario. All field trip programs are connected to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and challenge students to answer the question **“How do organisms adapt to live in the harsh climate of the intertidal zone?”**

Fields trip programs are organized into different stations. Each station is led by either a park staff, Beach Naturalist volunteer, or adult chaperone. The number of stations for each field trip will depend on the number of students attending the program. Students are led between the stations during their field trip by their group leaders.

Beach Naturalist volunteers assisting with school field trips should expect to receive an email before the field trip date outlining the details of the program. We expect that volunteers arrive before the start of the program to go over educator duties and set up for the students arrive (program times will be outlined in the email). If for some reason you are unable to make it to the program, please let us know **as soon as possible** as we will need to find another educator.

Section 5: Summer Interpretation

Summer informal interpretation at the Rosario Tide Pools are vital to the success of the protection of the resource. Beach Naturalist volunteers may assist in informal interpretive opportunities in three different ways.

Summer Volunteer Positions

Tide Pool Exploration

Beach Naturalist volunteers who are participating in Tide Pool Explorations should plan to spend the majority of their time in or near the tide pools. Volunteers are asked to “rove” the tide pools answering questions, aiding in species identification, as well as encouraging visitors to protect the resource by following the rope trail and not picking up the tide pool organisms. Volunteers should plan to wear appropriate clothing/shoes and feel comfortable walking on slippery uneven surfaces. We ask that volunteers in the tide pools refrain from talking to visitors outside of a three-foot radius to help us maintain quality customer service and ensure safety for all. Volunteers may switch to the Identification Table part way through their shifts if interested.

Identification Table

Beach Naturalist volunteers who are participating in the Identification Table should plan to spend the majority of their time at the wooden table above the tide pools. Volunteers are asked to develop fun and creative ways to “hook” visitor interest into learning about the various biofacts displayed. Volunteers should be prepared to answer tide pool and/or park related questions. Volunteers may choose to pack up materials part way through their shift and explore the tide pools. Please do not leave materials unattended.

Discovery Center

Beach Naturalist volunteers who are participating in the Discovery Center should plan to spend the majority of their time within the building engaging visitors in Discovery Center exhibits. Many of the exhibits are self-guided in nature but a craft and science station may involve more guidance. Volunteers should be prepared to answer tide pool and/or park related questions. Volunteers may choose to staff the Tide Pool Exploration or Identification Table part way through their shift though if no volunteers, staff, or interns are present in the building the Discovery Center must be locked.



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Recording Stats

We ask that our Beach Naturalist volunteers help us by recording their program stats after each shift. The stats you record help us to understand visitor impacts on the tide pools and the influence of the Beach Naturalist Volunteer Program. Your stats help us to secure funding for educational program, staff, and guide the continued management of the resource.

Volunteers should plan to carry a clicker for *Adults* and *Children* while at the Discovery Center, Tide Pool Exploration, or Identification Table. Please record your stats in the appropriate binders located in the Rosario Office.

Common Questions

What are these ropes?

The ropes form a trail for people to walk on to protect the animals from getting trampled. Please stay close to the ropes and listen to the Beach Naturalists.

Do the crabs pinch?

Yes, if you stick your finger in their pincer. Otherwise, our crabs are quite gentle.

Do sea anemones or sea urchins sting?

Well, technically the anemones DO sting, but not enough to penetrate our thick skin. Sea urchins in warmer waters commonly sting, but in Puget Sound they are totally safe. We ask that you do not touch the tide pool creatures but if you already have, make sure to wash your hands after touching them.

Can anything harm you in Puget Sound?

Generally, the only animals that can cause harm are octopuses (venomous bite), jellies (usually if the jelly is colored red or yellow, it can give a painful sting), and some fish with venomous or sharp spines (such as pacific spiny dogfish).

Why can't we touch the fish in the pools?

Fish have mucous on their skin that helps protect them from abrasion or infection.

If our fingers wipe off their "slime", it can be bad for their skin.

Can I pick one up?

We do not pick them up because animals in the touch pools cling tightly to the rocks, and it might hurt them to be pulled off.

What's that red spiny thing in the tide pool?

We have many sea cucumbers that like to hang out under the rocks in the tide pools.

Why are the sea stars different colors/shapes?

There are several different species on display that have different colors and numbers of arms. Most species also have large color variation within the species.



Section 6: Park Contact Information

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY – Call 911

Contact a Park Ranger:
(360) 914-0118

Contacts for Non-Emergency Situations:
(please call in the order listed)

1. **Welcome Station:** (360) 675-2417
2. **Park Office:** (360) 675-3767
3. **On-Duty Ranger Cell:** (360) 914-0118

General Questions:

Interpretive Office: (360) 675-3767 ext. 231

Lauren's Cell: (239) 404-1910

Joy's Work Cell: (360) 228-5758

Locations:

Park Office: First building on the left after bridge (going south)

Park Entrance Booth: Right at Cornet Bay Road (going south)