



Welcome to the new Current!

We hope you will enjoy our new digital format and what we have to share with you each month!

The end of 2017 and beginning of 2018 kept us busy! We have a new park ranger, Jason Armstrong, taking over for Jack Hartt who retired, we had another successful Bowman Bay Holiday event and started the new year with the annual 1st day hike.

Read on to get to know a little more about Jason

Armstrong, the successes of our recent events and more!



Meet the new park ranger:
Jason Armstrong

We would like to introduce you to the new park ranger, Jason Armstrong, who took over for Jack Hartt who retired late last year. Read on for a little Q and A with Jason to learn a little more about him and his connection with Deception Pass State Park.

1. How are you involved with Deception Pass State Park and what do you do that helps make the Park better for the next visitor?

Meeting the new Park Manager... Jason has been a lifelong resident of Washington State, growing up in Tacoma, WA., and graduating from Lincoln High School. Jason attended Tacoma Community College, Whatcom Community College, Western Washington University, and Kaplan University. Jason has a Master's Degree in Criminology, a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology, and a Minor in Psychology and Anthropology. Jason has been married since 1989 and has one son, who recently graduated from Eastern Michigan University with his Master's Degree and currently works for Washington State University. Jason has a passion for outdoor activities that focus on hunting, fishing, and

hiking. He has recently taken up gardening, which has proven to be a steep learning process. His wife is heavily involved in training canine's for hunting, obedience, and agility trials and is routinely relied upon to judge hunting trials.

Jason Armstrong began his life as a public servant with the Washington State in July 1990 with the Washington State Patrol. As a young Washington State Trooper, graduating from the Washington State Patrol Academy in Shelton, he started his career in the south end of King County, assigned to the Federal Way Area. After a year of service, Jason was afforded the opportunity to transfer to Whatcom County, where he has resided for the past 25 years. Jason served as a State Trooper in Whatcom County from 1992 through 2004. During this time, Jason's passion was ensuring that the roadways were safe by aggressively targeting impaired drivers. During these years of service, he had some

great opportunities serving as part of the Washington State Patrol Executive Protection Unit (EPU), as an Instructor for the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC), a trainer as part of the Field Training Officer (FTO) program, and being assigned to the Aggressive Driver Apprehension Team (ADAT).

In 2004, Jason was promoted to Sergeant, assigned to Skagit County. During this time Jason supervised an eight-person detachment. During these years Jason had the opportunity to supervise some amazing people, which resulted in this team being recognized as Detachment of the Year numerous times, and two officers successfully intervening on two active homicides. Jason was the supervisor for the North Region FTO program, was the Tribal Liaison for the Swinomish and Upper Skagit Tribes, and was heavily involved in community based and government programs like the Skagit Community Connection, the 9 to 5 Corridor Project and the State

Route 20 Corridor Project.

In 2010, Jason was promoted to Lieutenant and was initially assigned to District 3 Kennewick. His area of responsibility included Benton, Franklin, Whitman, Garfield, Walla Walla, Columbia, and Asotin County. He served as the Assistant District Commander, the Public Information Officer (PIO), and the Problem Orientated Public Safety(POPS) Manager. While in Kennewick, he served as part of the Unified Command for the last execution in Washington State and served as the Family Liaison for the loss of three State Patrol employees in a house fire in Grandview.

Jason was transferred to District 7, Marysville in late 2010, initially overseeing the freeway section of Snohomish County, but eventually supervising Skagit, Island, and Whatcom County. Jason served as Assistant District Commander, the POPS Manager,

Tribal Liaison for the Tulalip Tribes, Upper Skagit, Swinomish, Sauk-Suiattle, Nooksack, and Lummi Tribes. He managed the FTO Program, the Control Tactics and Weapons Program, and served on numerous committees to include the Whatcom and Skagit County Sherriff and Police Chief's Association, the Skagit Valley College Advisory Board, and the State Route 20 Elk Herd Public Safety Committee. Jason was part of the response team for the Skagit River Bridge collapse and the Oso Mudslide.

In June 2015, Jason retired from the Washington State Patrol after 25 years of service, starting a new adventure as a Community Corrections Supervisor with the Washington State Department of Corrections in Bellingham. Jason supervised a small unit that provided community supervision to approximately 500 high violent felons. During this time Jason served as an instructor in Supervision & Leadership

and Emergency Management Systems. Jason left this position in October 2017 to serve as the new Area Manager for the Deception Pass State Park Area. Jason believes these past experiences and education will be an asset to the park.

As the Park Manager, Jason is responsible for all the area parks associated with Deception Pass; Dugualla, Kiket Island (Kukutali Preserve), Hope Island, Skagit Island, and Ben Ure Island. This includes the Cornet Bay Retreat Center, Cornet Bay, Bowman Bay, Pass lake, Cranberry lake, Hoypus Hill, Pass Island, Deception Island, and all the shorelines of Deception Pass State Park. Jason oversees 27 employees during the peak season, which includes the Assistant Area Manager, the Construction & Maintenance Supervisor, five Rangers, 3 maintenance staff, support staff, park aides, and numerous seasonal staff. Jason frequently engages a broad spectrum of stakeholder groups (Non-profit, private, and

government) to ensure the visitors, contributors and interested parties needs are met and that the parks historical heritage is preserved.



2. What do you remember from your first visit that made you want to come back to the park?

As a young father to a toddler in 1994 I remember visiting the area of Cranberry Lake and the West

Beach and North Beach area. It was amazing to me that there could be a fresh water lake so close to the salt water. I enjoyed exploring the park with my wife and watching how our toddler enjoyed the experience. I think all of us can relate to those experiences as a young child with our parents or as a parent to our children and how impressionable those nature related experiences can be. Every time I am at the park I am just amazed at the iconic and scenic images.



3. What is your favorite spot in the park?

What is your favorite plant or Animal within the Park?

As a daily visitor in the park, and yes, I do have the best job in the world, I cherish the view from Bowman Bay and more specifically from the Bowman Bay Pier. There is just so much you can do from piers and/or docks in Washington. A person can fish, crab, have iconic pictures taken, visit with family and friends, or just relax at the end of the pier with the sun shining on you, giving you a burst of energy.

Thinking about the pier, I was just visiting it again. I got the chance to watch the kelp floating around and looking so peaceful. However, greater than that, I love watching waterfowl. On a rare occasion, I get the opportunity to see a birds that I rarely see inland or on small lakes. Just the other day I happened to

watch a small group of Common Goldeneye
(*Bucephala clangula*).



[Read on for more about our recent events!](#)

Annual Bowman Bay Holiday



Holiday ornaments

Our premier holiday event was the recent **BOWMAN BAY HOLIDAY**, held Saturday, 16 December. With temperatures in the low 40's it was a crispy, star filled night to stroll on the beach among lots of twinkling lights, excited kids, and lots of Christmas cheer. Our park neighbors were well represented by the 425 friends who came out to share in the spirited tempo

of our 3rd annual DPSP Christmas party.

Looking to next fall we invite you to come out and join in the preparation fun, you would find it has its special personal rewards in helping to support our own community, making new friends, sharing and working together in the great outdoors, helping keep our park a really fun family & friends experience!



Santa and helpers, upper shelter

Some of the things we shared together: Starting well ahead of time, DPPF volunteer groups spent hours in preparations. Team leaders were DPSP Interpreter Jacqueline French, Barb Shaw, Estelle Johnson, and Barry Wenaas planning out the event and setting up advertising; Barb & Estelle tinkered at home with many helpful hands preparing several hundred Santa's craft kits for assembly at the event, pulling all those needed supplies together, baking dozens of homemade cookies, and gathering hot chocolate, condiments, and decorations. Matt Klope pulled a firewood crew together, chopping / delivering / staking firewood to feed the giant hearths and fireplace in the shelters. Also, thanks to the park maintenance crews who tuned up the facilities / grounds making this event possible.

We all melded together the week before with 12+ volunteers laboring cheerfully to bring the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) picnic shelters and

Interpretive Center alive with holiday cheer, bright lights, and a whale with a tail this year.



"Gracie" the Gray Whale

Sammye Kempbell set up her Christmas village in the CCC Interpretive Center. Strong backs like Dan Maul, Dave Myers, Rick & Crystal Colombo, folks from the NAS Whidbey Retired Chief Petty Officer's Association, Matt & Bill from park staff, and some cheerful local residents like Julee Rudolf all helped

by adding to the mix of worker bees lighting up the CCC picnic shelters; setting up displays, traffic control signage, and parking lot canopies; building up “Gracie” our gray whale head skeleton with a 35’ body; laying out the thousands of twinkling lights that brought the many visitors to the candy cane lit paths to share Santa’s big smile, and the largest, most eye catching, toasty fireplace in the park at the upper CCC shelter.



Santa's Crafts workshop, lower shelter

That Saturday night the fun started at 4PM, seemed like everyone just showed up at once. They kept all 24 volunteers running hard to keep up with cups of cider/hot chocolate, handing out cookies, firewood stoking, getting candy canes to Santa, making Christmas ornaments, directing carsto parking lots in the dark, retail sales, handing out souvenir DPPF flashlights, and sharing Christmas stories. We were all in full fun mode for 4 hours, FUN STUFF!!! Another of our unsung heroes Pat Johnson, had canvassed local vendors and pulled together a beautiful “Christmas Basket of Goodies”, with donations from Starbucks, Safeway, Deception Pass Tours, and many more. Congratulations to lucky winner Sandra Dee Shimkus of Anacortes!



Sandra Dee Shimkus - winner!

The Annual First Day Hike

January 1, 2018

The beginning of the year started off right with the FIRST DAY HIKE. With Americorps interpreter Jacqueline French at the lead, we greeted about a 100 folks who came out to share a marvelous morning on West Beach and the Dunes Trail.

We also had opportunity to meet and greet the new DPSP Manager Jason Armstrong, his family, and many of the DPPF volunteers. Park staff had groomed the trails and cleaned up after the start of winter. Foundation volunteers supported the event with setup, morning snacks & beverages, and handed out the 5th edition of the First Day Hike pin! What a great way to start out the New Year,

visiting the #1 State Park in all of Washington.

Jacqueline French our AMERICORPS Interpretive Intern, is directly supported by your generous donations to the DPPF, along with our varied summer programming, the new Discovery Center, Rosario Beach Naturalist Programs, and many of the parks heritage building upgrades, repairs, and signage.



[Keep reading about how you can help DPPF!](#)

Giving Wall

We are looking forward to the summer programs this year at our new Deception Pass Amphitheater Stage.

We are in the final stages but need YOUR help in completing it! There is still time to donate and have your name on the "Giving Wall" on the back of the stage.

There are various sized plaques to recognize our generous supporters. To have your name added to this permanent place of honor you can send a donation by mail, on our [website](#), or our [gofundme](#) campaign.

DPPF WISH LIST

Want to help older household items and equipment be re-used and have a new life?

DPPF can help!

[Contact us](#) if you have any of the following you can give as in In-Kind donation (or have any other times you think may be useful!):

2 Laptop computers

Microsoft Office suite software

Flat screen TVs



[Learn about upcoming local events, read on!](#)

Upcoming events

Friends of Skagit Beaches 2018 Lecture Series

Biological Invasions: How Species Become Invasive

Please join us for the first of our 2018 Lecture Series! Hear about how the success, impacts, and long-term effects of introduced populations determine whether or not they become invasive species. Dr. Emily Grayson , PhD, Univ. of Washington, Washington Sea Grant, will illustrate these potentially environment changing processes with real-time examples. Friday, January 19, 7:00 pm - 8:30pm., NW Ed. Services Building, 1601 R Ave., Anacortes. Lectures are free and open to the public. Sponsored by [Friends of Skagit Beaches](#).

For more information contact:

Matt Kerschbaum: cherrytree2@comcast.net.

Friends of Skagit Beaches



2018 LECTURE SERIES

**Biological Invasions:
*How Species Become Invasive***

Presented by Dr. Emily Grason, Washington Sea Grant.

Natural processes and mechanisms enable living organisms to move into new habitats where they compete with both native species and others already present. The reasons, impacts, and long-term effects of introduced populations determine whether or not they become invasive species. Dr. Grason will illustrate these potentially environment-changing processes with real-time examples.



A European green crab – one of the Skagit Sea's newest invaders

Friday, January 19 at 7 PM
NW Educational Services District Building
1601 R Ave., Anacortes



Upcoming Lectures Topics:

- 2/16/2018: Hummingbirds
- 3/16/2018: Naming the Salish Sea
- 4/20/2018: Story of NOAA



Emily Grason, PhD
University of Washington

Lectures are free and open to the public.
Sponsored by Friends of Skagit Beaches
For more information: friends@skagitbeaches.org

Friends of Skagit Beaches is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Sign up for the Friends newsletter and learn more about programming at www.skagitbeaches.org. Like us on Facebook and keep up to date on future events and funding opportunities.

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Our mailing address is:

41020 State Route 20

Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Phone: (360) 675-3767 ext. 226

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