



# Weekender

March 12, 2010

## TENTATIVE SPRING CLAM DIGS ANNOUNCED

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Marking the start of the spring season, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has tentatively scheduled razor-clam digs on ocean beaches late this month and again in mid-April.

As always, final approval of both digs will depend on results of marine toxin tests that show the clams are safe to eat.

Prospective diggers should note that the first opening – scheduled March 26-April 1 at various ocean beaches – starts on evening tides, then switches to morning tides for the final four days, said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager.

“The digs planned this month span the seasonal change, when the lowest tides shift from evening to morning hours,” Ayres said. “As in past months, razor-clam digging will be allowed after noon for the first three days of the opening, but will then switch to morning hours starting Monday, March 29.”

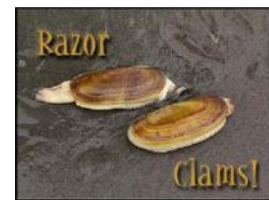
Tentative days, tides and beach openings for this month’s dig are:

- Friday, March 26, (4:29 p.m., +0.1)
- Saturday, March 27, (5:19 p.m., -0.1)
- Sunday, March 28, (6:04 p.m., 0.0)
- Monday, March 29, (6:35 A.M., -0.1)
- Tuesday, March 30, (7:22 A.M., -0.7)
- Wednesday, March 31, (8:07 A.M., -1.0)
- Thursday, April 1, (8:52 A.M., -1.0)

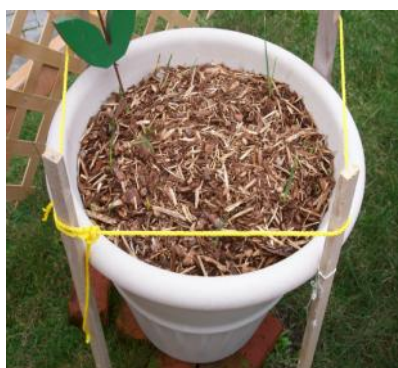
Another dig is also tentatively scheduled on morning tides in mid-April at Long Beach on the following days and beaches:

- Friday, April 16, (8:32 A.M., -0.7)
- Saturday, April 17, (9:12 A.M., -0.7)
- Sunday, April 18, (9:56 A.M., -0.6)

Any 2009-10 annual shellfish/seaweed license or combination license is valid through March 31. However, a new license will be required for anyone age 15 or older to participate in the April dig. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at <https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov>.



## 100 DAYS OF COLOR PROGRESS



January 7, 2010 peeking thru.



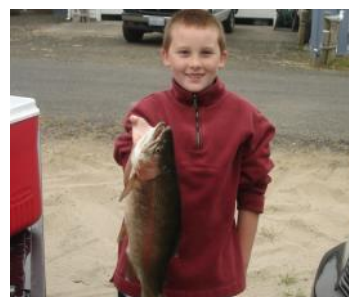
March 4, 2010



March 12, 2010

## FISHING DERBY CHAIRPERSON NEEDED

The date for the annual Fishing Derby is fast approaching. This is a great activity for the children and grandchildren of Surfside members. As of this date we do not have anyone to organize this event. If you would like to see this event continue, please think about helping. If you would chair the committee, or be an active participant with this committee for this event please call the Surfside Office. Traditionally this event is held Memorial Day Weekend. This event has always been well received.



Last year's proud winner!

## NOTES FROM THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Community Relations Committee is working on the upcoming events:

1. A spring Planting Demonstration for late April, in preparation for Mother's Day.
2. The 3rd Annual Memorial Day Weekend Garage Sale....May 28, 29 and 30
3. Dedication of the Surfside Veterans Memorial at the 306th Place bridge mid June (hopefully for Flag Day)

## PENINSULA QUILT GUILD SHOW

March 19-21, is the annual Peninsula Quilt Guild Show at the Columbia Heritage Museum in Ilwaco. The prize quilt is called "Oh My Stars" and is beautiful a \$1.00 raffle ticket might make it yours!

Janet King, last year's featured quilter at this event, will be unveiling her newest work of art, "Chinook Winds"; there will be other Surfsiders exhibiting their designs and handiwork as well. We would love to know more about all of you..why not send some updates to the Weekender?



"OH MY STARS"

## Spring has sprung!

The growing season seems to have started early this year.

Wow that new mown grass smells good!

Look for Chuck Smith to be out and about on his mower, keeping the office and cabana areas manicured!



## NOMINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

**This year Surfside Homeowners Association has four board positions up for election. Three with three year terms and a one year position.**

**We are in need of members for the nomination committee. If you would be interested in serving on the nomination committee and or serving as the chairperson for this committee, please contact the Surfside Homeowners Association as soon as possible.**

**Candidates need to be recruited for these board positions and the application completed and submitted before Saturday, May 1, 2010.**

**You as members of the homeowners association have the responsibility to seek the best candidates possible for these positions, to assure that Surfside Homeowners Association is served by the best possible Board.**



## Candidates for Board Positions Sought

There are four Board Positions that will be open for election at the annual meeting in July. Three of the positions are for three year terms. One is a one year position. If you have an interest in serving your community, and helping to assure that Surfside is a great place to live, consider running for one of these open positions.

If you are interested please contact Debbie Richmond at (360)665-5956 or

Email: [drichmond@surfsideonline.org](mailto:drichmond@surfsideonline.org)

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## Canadian Geese

**Canada geese** (*Branta canadensis*) are among the most familiar birds in Washington. They are a source of recreation for bird watchers and hunters and symbolize nature for many people. No one can miss the clear honking call of Canada geese when they fly overhead in their V-shaped formation.

Two groups of Canada geese populate Washington—migrating geese and nonmigrating (often called resident) geese. For a goose to migrate, it must be taught the flight path by its parents. Therefore, all following generations of nonmigratory Canada geese will also be nonmigratory, or resident geese, which will stay year-round in the vicinity where they were born.

Populations of resident Canada geese have dramatically increased over the past 25 years, particularly in urban areas where there are few predators, prohibitions on hunting, and a dependable year-round supply of food and water.

Canada geese are particularly attracted to mowed lawns around homes, golf courses, parks, and similar areas next to open water. Because geese and people often occupy these spaces at the same time of the year, conflicts arise. Many citizens enjoy the presence of geese, but others do not.

Several subspecies of Canada geese breed or migrate through Washington. Their taxonomy has been confused by the introduction of mixed subspecies, and will likely remain unclear for a long time.

The **Western Canada goose** (*Branta canadensis moffitti*, Fig. 1) is the largest resident subspecies, referred to in the following as Canada geese, or geese.

### Facts about Washington's Canada Geese

**Food and Feeding Habits** Canada geese graze while walking on land, and feed on submerged aquatic vegetation by reaching under the water with their long necks. Wild food plants include pondweed, bulrush, sedge, cattail, horsetail, clover, and grass; agricultural crops include alfalfa, corn, millet, rye, barley, oats, and wheat. Geese also eat some insects, snails, and tadpoles, probably incidentally.

**Nests and Nest Sites** Canada geese nest in areas that are surrounded by or close to water (Fig. 2). Nest sites vary widely and include the shores of cattail and bulrush marshes, the bases of trees, the tops of muskrat lodges and haystacks, and unoccupied nests of eagles, herons, and ospreys. Nests have produced successful broods of geese and ospreys in the same year. Other nest sites include planter boxes and nesting structures provided specifically for geese. The nest is a bowl-shaped depression approximately 1½ feet in diameter lined with grass, leaves, and goose down.

A pair of geese may return to the same nest site in consecutive years.



**Figure 2.** Nest sites vary widely and include the shores of cattail and bulrush marshes.



## Geese

### Reproduction

- Canada geese usually begin nesting at three years of age.
- Adult pairs usually stay together for life unless one dies. Lone geese will find another mate, generally within the breeding season.
- Between one and ten, but normally five to six eggs are laid in the nest in March, April, or May. Eggs are incubated by the goose (female) while the gander (male) stands guard nearby. The female leaves the nest only briefly each day to feed.
- Eggs hatch after 25 to 30 days of incubation. The young, called goslings, can walk, swim, and feed within 24 hours.
- Both parents (especially the gander) vigorously defend the goslings until they are able to fly, which is at about ten weeks. The young geese remain with their family group for about one year.
- If the nest or eggs are destroyed, geese often re-nest in or near the first nest. Canada geese can raise one clutch per year.

### Longevity and Mortality

- Predators of Canada geese and their eggs include humans, coyotes, raccoons, skunks, bobcats, and foxes, as well as gulls, eagles, crows, ravens, and magpies.
- Canada geese hatched in urban environments may have very low first-year mortalities due to the abundance of food and relative scarcity of natural predators.
- Canada geese can live more than 20 years in captivity; in the wild they have a much shorter life span.

### Viewing Canada Geese

Geese are among the few water birds that will tolerate the environmental conditions found in urban areas. They are often the largest and most conspicuous bird species that people see.

Geese are often seen in a V-shaped formation when flying (Fig. 3). Such a formation allows each trailing bird to receive lift from the wingtip vortex of the bird in front of it, saving energy and greatly extending the range of a flock of birds over that of a bird flying alone. Scientists have suggested that flying in V-formation may also be a way of maintaining visual contact and avoiding collisions.

### Displays

Visit nearly any body of water in a nearby park (especially during the breeding period) and you will likely observe several obvious visual displays within a large active flock.

The alert display is given when a goose is wary of some danger. The neck is vertical and straight and the head is horizontal.

The bent-neck display is given in conflict situations with other geese. The neck is coiled back and the head is lowered and pointed toward the opponent. This display may be accompanied by a hiss.



**Figure 3.** The V-shaped flight formation allows each trailing bird to receive lift from the wingtip vortex of the bird in front of it, saving energy and greatly extending the range of a flock of birds over that of a bird flying alone. (Photo by Russell Link.)

# Geese

## Nest Sites

Early in the breeding season, watch for a pair of geese quietly exploring an area. Later, listen for the honking call, which may be geese either greeting each other or engaging in a territorial squabble. Also, look for a lone male, feeding or resting, who is aggressive toward other geese or to you. Chances are its mate is on a nest nearby.

Because Canada geese are aggressive defenders of their nests and young, do not approach too closely; they may charge, and can inflict bruises with their beaks and wings.

## Calls

The typical goose ahonk, ahonk, ahonk call is given during aggressive encounters, as a greeting, and when calling a mate. The call of the male is thought to be lower than that of the female, and when a pair flies overhead, you may be able to distinguish the two sounds.

A hiss-call is given when geese are defending their territories, their nests, or their young, and is usually given only at close distances.

## Tracks

Canada goose tracks are often seen on mudflats in conjunction with their sausage-shaped droppings. Their feet turn inward when they're walking. The foot's three main toes fan out in front and are connected by webs. The claws are broad and blunt, and their imprint can usually be seen.

## Droppings

Droppings are cylindrical and five to eight times longer than wide. Fresh droppings are greenish and coated with white nitrogenous deposits. Older droppings are darker.

Because geese have a rudimentary digestive system, they eat often and expel undigested remains in short order. Adult geese produce 1 to 3 pounds of droppings per day per bird.

## Preventing Conflicts

- Canada geese are extremely adaptable. They use food and other resources present in urban landscapes for nesting, raising young, molting, feeding, and resting. This has led to increasing conflicts between geese and people.
- In parks and shorelines with short grass, large flocks of geese can denude areas of vegetation and litter them with their droppings and feathers. Public swimming areas used by many geese have been closed to swimming (see Public Health Concerns). When nesting, geese can be aggressive toward humans, and may "attack" people who come near their nests or young.
- In public areas with favorable habitat, it is rarely desirable, or possible, to eliminate geese entirely. Ideally, management programs should strive to reduce goose numbers and related problems to a level that a community can tolerate.
- No single, quick-fix solution is likely to solve conflicts with geese. An integrated approach using several of the techniques described below in combination is required. Any approach to controlling geese ideally should be in place before the conflict starts—or quickly thereafter—as it is much more difficult to discourage geese after they have become attached to a site. After nesting has started, moving or scaring geese off a nest is illegal.

## To prevent conflicts or remedy existing problems:

**Stop feeding geese:** When the diets of geese are no longer supplemented with handouts and they have to depend on the natural food supply, some or all the geese will move elsewhere.

In public areas, it is helpful to first install interpretive signs explaining the problems caused by feeding geese. Such signs might include the following in their text, preferably in the appropriate languages:

- Please don't feed the geese!
- Human food is not good for the geese because it lacks proper nutritional value.
- Feeding attracts more geese than the area can support naturally.
- Geese in high concentrations are more likely to get diseases and parasites.
- Geese droppings harbor parasites that can cause human health problems.
- Goose droppings increase algae growth that, in turn, results in fish kills.
- Goose droppings are unsanitary, unsightly, and contain parasites irritating to humans.
- Geese eat plants needed for ground cover and erosion control.
- Too many geese in one area may force the municipality to have them killed.
- Goose-management costs taxpayers money.

In order to prevent well-intentioned people from feeding geese, some localities may need to pass ordinances to regulate feeding and create authority to enforce such regulations.

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# March 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Architectural Meeting 9:00 AM Community Relations	3	4	5 Water/Field Service Meeting 1:00 PM	6
7	8	9 Architectural Meeting 9:00 AM Bunco 6:30 PM	10 RV/RV Storage Meeting 9:00 AM	11	12	13
14 Daylight Savings Set your clocks ahead one hour.	15 Land and Buildings Meeting 1:00 PM	16 Architectural Meeting 9:00 AM	17 	18	19 Annual Quilt Show at Columbia Heritage Museum	20 Board Meeting 9:00 AM Annual Quilt Show at Columbia Heritage Museum
21 Annual Quilt Show at Columbia Heritage Museum	22	23 Architectural Meeting 9:00 AM Community Relations Fourth of July Float Meeting 1:00 PM	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Architectural Meeting 9:00 AM	31			