

# Annual Report

## 2015



# HARBOR WILDWATCH



## Mission

To inspire stewardship of the Puget Sound by providing learning opportunities about the environment to the people of our local communities.

## Vision

To be a catalyst for environmental education contributing significantly to our community's understanding of the environment in which we live and our impact on the Puget Sound.

## Motto

Learn. Have Fun.



# About Us



Harbor WildWatch's public, youth and private programs are fun, interactive, and designed to educate and engage participants in the **preservation of our natural marine resources**.

Our individualized outreach gives citizens, students and visitors the opportunity to examine how their own behaviors impact the environment and **discover ways to become better stewards**.

## KGI Watershed

Our programs are primarily delivered in the Key Peninsula - Gig Harbor - Islands (KGI) Watershed - a unique area that covers over **100,000 acres** including **179 miles of saltwater shoreline** and is home to 70,000 residents. Our goal is to encourage residents and visitors of all ages to get outside and experience the marine environment through our fun and unique experiences.

We are pleased to continue our partnership with the City of Gig Harbor in bringing life back to the **Historic Skansie House in Downtown Gig Harbor**. Since moving in the summer of 2014, over 10,000 individuals have visited us at our new office, visitor information and marine interpretive center.



# Youth Programs

Our youth programs strive to close the educational gap by connecting **STEM-based learning** and ecological stewardship to everyday life. Our goal is to increase academic performance, proficiency in math and science, and access to community experiences for our local students. We do this by offering a variety of unique educational programs that **foster a passion for learning and encourage curiosity and critical thinking**.

In 2015, we delivered over  
**500** STEM-based programs  
to nearly **10,000** students  
in the community.

The **Explorer Series** immerses students in the outdoor classroom to get a firsthand perspective of one of three unique habitats – beaches, estuaries and wetlands. Students are challenged to put their classroom knowledge to work as they observe zonation, predation and adaptation demonstrated right before their eyes!



The **Harbor Outreach Program** supplements school curricula by providing unique STEM-based workshops to our local K-12 classrooms. Consisting of 20 interactive workshops, this program allows students to explore complex topics such as erosion, tectonics, transference and chemistry through the environmental lens.



# Youth Programs



Since 2013, Harbor WildWatch has provided an opportunity for students ages 13-17 to increase their eco-literacy and gain valuable social and life skills. Our **Teen Mentors** assist with a variety of activities including interpreting to the public, leading training activities and serving as mentors for our younger students.

**seaStars & Beyond** is our most intensive program for young nature enthusiasts. Over 11 months, students ages 8-12 explore a variety of environmental topics through monthly workshops—from marine mammal anatomy to ocean acidification. Students also learn to interpret scientific information to the public by volunteering and completing a self-guided service project to benefit the local environment.



The **Internship Experience** allows current high school, college and recent graduates to gain valuable, real-world experience in the environmental education industry. Interns learn to deliver classroom workshops and field courses as well as assist with marketing, fundraising and administrative activities.

# Public Programs

**Get You Feet Wet** introduces beachgoers to the animals that live in the intertidal zone at our local city, county and state parks. Visitors interact directly with marine invertebrates through guided beach walks or popular touch-tank events led by staff biologists and experienced volunteers.



In 2015, we delivered nearly **200** quality, interactive programs to nearly **20,000** adults, kids and families in the community.

**Pier Into the Night** allows visitors to catch a glimpse into Puget Sound nightlife through a virtual SCUBA diving experience. Underwater lights attract animals that are seldom seen during daylight hours. Simultaneously, our volunteer divers explore the waters below equipped with an HD video camera with a live feed to the surface!

The **Citizen Science Experience** allows us to contribute meaningful baseline biodiversity data from our local beaches, estuaries and creeks. With the help of our local and regional partners, regular citizens are trained to monitor water quality, shellfish and other plants and animals.



# Our Volunteers



As with many non-profit organizations, Harbor WildWatch relies on our volunteers to help deliver quality environmental education programs to our community. We are **lucky to have an incredible group of adults, teens and students** who have assisted us in spreading our mission of stewardship for the past 12 years! Without our dedicated volunteers, we would not be able to deliver over 600 programs annually in the South Puget Sound.

**Our volunteers are passionate about the Puget Sound.** They come from many different backgrounds—some with degrees in marine biology, some with a pure love for the great outdoors, other with a passion for civic engagement.

Whether they grew up on the shores of Puget Sound or relocated from a land-locked state, all of our volunteers share a common idea that **education is the key to inspiring personal stewardship for the local environment.**

Over **60** volunteers contributed their time and talents in 2015. In total, our volunteers dedicated nearly **2,000** hours of service!



They have fun engaging with their fellow community members at our local parks, piers and beaches and find it rewarding to share their knowledge on how to protect these creatures and their habitat.

We are so very **thankful to the commitment, passion and love for the Puget Sound** that exists within our volunteer force!

# The Steward Club

Residents and visitors have enjoyed our fun, family-friendly programs since 2004, but have long hoped for a way to connect with like-minded individuals on a larger scale. That is now possible with the launch of the **Steward Club** in June of 2015!

Becoming a member of the Steward Club provides individuals, families and businesses with the opportunity to connect with Harbor WildWatch through an annual financial contribution and a variety of benefits. We are grateful to all those who joined in our inaugural year!



## Individual & Family Members

Anonymous Donors  
Chris Arbak  
Gregory A. Baer  
Dr. Michael & Michelle Behrens  
Marcia Black  
Barbara Bourscheidt  
Eileen Cahill  
Lonna & Evans Calas  
Jim & Ginny Christensen  
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Verner & Marianne Stillner  
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Linda Troyer  
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Al. Weymiller  
Susan & Gary Whitney  
Ryan Will  
Mark Willson  
Gail Leese & Tom Wokasch

## Super Steward Club Members

### Contributor — \$250 to \$499

Anonymous Donors  
American Family Insurance (Tim Lopez)  
Joel Bird & Julianna Verboort  
Mary Buell  
Mitch Landry  
John & Pat Lantz  
Ryan Meissner  
Anthony & Heather Pennington  
Stearns Family Foundation  
Del & Jeni Woock

### Sponsors — \$500 to \$999

Anonymous Donors  
Dave Desertspring & Sherrie Spangler  
Gig Harbor Marina & BoatYard  
Harbor General Store  
Mark & Marilyn Hoppen  
Tom & Karen Larson  
Meacham Family Foundation  
Gunda Meissner  
Minterbrook Oyster Company  
Dan & Cheri Patch  
Wade & Beth Perrow  
Diani Taylor  
Taylor Shellfish Farms  
Tides Tavern

### Patron — \$1,000 to \$9,999

Dr. John & Susan Conway  
Brett Marlo Designs  
Tony & Erin Ewald  
Glein Family Foundation  
Miles & Cynthia Stover  
Howard & Elizabeth Svigals

### Benefactor — \$10,000 & Up

Anonymous Donors  
Babare Family Foundation

## Generous Grant Funders

Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council  
Charlotte Martin Foundation  
City of Gig Harbor  
Grindstone Foundation  
Greater Tacoma Community Foundation  
KGI Watershed Council  
Pierce Conservation District  
The Russell Family Foundation  
Seattle Aquarium



## Partners & Supporters

Citizens for a Healthy Bay  
Downtown Waterfront Alliance  
Foss Waterway Seaport  
Gig Harbor Boat Shop  
Gig Harbor Canoe & Kayak Racing Team  
Gig Harbor Chamber of Commerce  
Gig Harbor Life  
Gig Harbor Living Magazine

Greater Gig Harbor Foundation  
Harbor History Museum  
Heritage Distilling Company  
Key Pen Parks  
Kitsap County BeachWatchers  
NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region  
PenMet Parks  
Peninsula Gateway

Peninsula School District  
Pierce County ECO Network  
Pierce County Public Works & Utilities  
Pierce County Surface Water Management  
Tacoma School District  
Washington Sea Grant  
Washington State Parks

# By the Numbers

Harbor WildWatch had an amazing 2015! We expanded our classroom workshops to grades 9-12, hosted workshops in the Skansie lab and partnered with the Downtown waterfront Alliance and Harbor History Museum to bring a walking tour to the downtown waterfront.

In total, we delivered over **600** quality educational programs to over **30,000** adults, students, families and visitors to the greater Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula communities!



The Board of Directors is dedicated to carrying out the mission and vision of Harbor WildWatch through careful management of the resources of the organization.

In 2015, Harbor WildWatch received **\$267,562** in **total revenue** and **expended \$203,997**. These numbers align with our 5-Year Strategic Plan (2015-2019).

In addition to expanding programs, we are also working to **diversify our funding sources** in 2015 and beyond. This is being accomplished using several methods including the development of a **membership program**, **annual fundraising events**, and **expanded grant opportunities**.



## 2016 & Beyond

On the heels of a successful 2015, we have already had a great start to 2016! With half the year under our belts, we are on track or ahead of our goals in programming and fundraising areas.

As we begin the planning process beyond 2016, we will continue to use our 5-year Strategic Plan as a guide. Upcoming goals for 2017 include the expansion of our citizen science opportunities and the development of a SCUBA diving program. We are also working to add a staff member to the team to assist with administrative functions—allowing us to better utilize the talent and expertise of our current team members.

We are excited for the upcoming year and hope you will join us!



## Schedule of Events



### PROGRAM

**Pier Into the Night**

**Get Your Feet Wet**

**Farmer's Markets**

**Walking Tours**

**Salmon Tours**

**Wetland Tours (new!)**

**Citizen Science**

**Private Events**

### TIME OF YEAR

First Saturdays, October through March

Low-tide events, June through August

Every Thursday, June through August

June through September

Saturdays, November & December

Select Saturdays, Spring & Fall

Available year round

Available year round

### LOCATION

Maritime Pier

State, County & City Beaches

Skansie Brother's Park

Downtown Gig Harbor

Austin Estuary/Donkey Creek Parks

Sehmel Homestead Park

State, County and City Parks

Various Locations

## Visit Us



Visit us at the *Skansie Visitor Information Center* in downtown Gig Harbor — a dynamic destination for residents, visitors and boaters to learn about everything Gig Harbor has to offer.

Visit our interactive exhibits and laboratory Wednesday through Sunday (April-September) and Thursday through Saturday (October-March) from 10:00—4:00 PM.

## Staff Members



Lindsey Johnson  
*Executive Director*



Rachel Easton  
*Program Coordinator*



Jennifer Beard  
*Development Associate*



Stena Troyer  
*Science Specialist*

## Board of Directors

Join us in thanking our dedicated Board members for their commitment to environmental education. Especially Cheri Patch, long-time Board Member and volunteer who passed away too soon in early 2016. We will aspire to add your joyous spirit and smile to everything we do. You are *truly* missed.

Tom Larson, *President*

Brett Marlo DeSantis, *Vice President*

Howard Svigals, *Treasurer*

Erin Ewald, *Secretary*

Jack Conway, PhD, *Director*

\*Cheri Patch, *Director*

Julianna Verboort, *Director*

Joel Bird, *Director*

Mary Buell, *Director*



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Connect with us online today.  
[www.harborwildwatch.org](http://www.harborwildwatch.org)