

OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

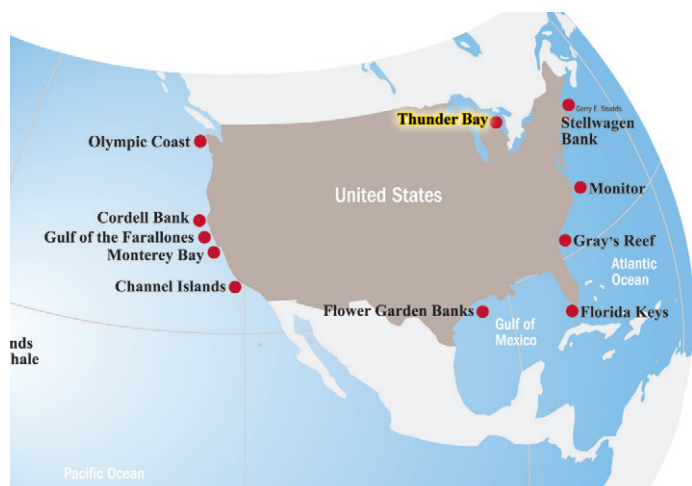
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V O L U N T E E R N E W S L E T T E R - J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 0

Happy New Year everyone!

Great news! The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary has tentatively accepted our invitation for a volunteer exchange in July. There are many details to be worked out, but approximately ten guests will arrive about July 14, joining us for a week to explore Port Angeles, the north Olympic Peninsula, and our sanctuary, and to experience the canoe landing at Neah Bay on July 19. I think at this point we have sufficient housing for our guests, but I hope all of you will participate in special events planned for the week. We will probably need people to help with transportation, too. Stay tuned for more information....



Meanwhile, closer to home, we are invited to the Seattle Aquarium for a “behind the scenes” tour on Wednesday, January 20. You are certainly free to arrange your own transportation, but I’d suggest carpooling from the OCDC. If we leave by 7:30 we should be able to drive to Bainbridge Island, find parking, and walk on the 9:40 ferry. That gets us to the Aquarium about 10:30 with

two to three hours for the tour, and time for lunch and exploring the waterfront before heading back to the ferry. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes and dress for the weather. We will do a lot of walking, at least part of it outside. I expect the aquarium admission to be free, but you will want to bring money for parking, ferry fare, and lunch. Let me know if you have questions or need more information.

Barbara Blackie, former OCNMS staff member and birder extraordinaire is teaching “Our Coastal Issues” at Peninsula College this quarter. She writes, *“I am hoping it will attract people who are curious about the science behind the news stories on coastal issues. We will select a few topics to explore in depth and we’ll read some scientific literature and other materials about such things as ocean acidification, fisheries management, noise pollution, hypoxia. I am hoping that it doesn’t sound too grim! My goal is to help us all better understand the issues so that there can be constructive problem solving. Ultimately I hope it is a hopeful class!”* Classes meet from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays in January (N510) or February (N515).

Brown Bag Lunch on Thursday

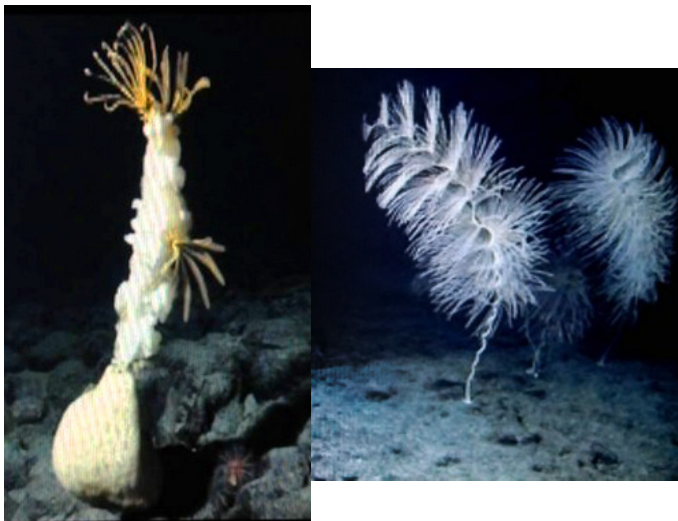
Hope you can join us this Thursday, January 7 at noon for lunch in the classroom. We’ll preview all the fun, exciting events planned for 2010.

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New Sponges & Corals found in Hawaii

December 15 researchers returned from Papahānaumokuākea with incredible images of sponges and corals never before identified. The “Dr. Seuss” sponge, and a forest of 10-foot tall corals were found about one mile deep in an area of strong currents. Biologist Christopher Kelley said that while the sponges that look like “Alien” — or something out of a “Dr. Seuss” drawing — are the headline grabbers, he was intrigued by another huge sponge whose brilliant white color changed to a tinge of red in the precise area where the submersible clipped a tissue sample.

“Of course, sponges have no blood,” Kelley said. But whether the sponge was indicating it had been injured or felt pain in the area from which the sample was plucked remains to be seen. For more details go to <http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com>

An Exceptional Visit to the *Active*

November 17, 2009 was a typical day in Port Angeles. The weather forecast was “mainly cloudy with rain possible.” Translated it meant misty rain all day with brief appearances by the sun. Although it wasn’t cold but it was damp which felt as if it was seeping into our bones as we stood outside. Fortunately our perceptive guide took us on board when it became apparent that we were becoming increasingly uncomfortable.

Our host and guide was Commander Chris Hollingshead. He was the main reason our visit to the *Active* was exceptional. He was knowledgeable and demonstrated his patience by answering every question comprehensively. As his crew passed through the narrow passageways they obviously knew who he was, paying deference with their posture and attention.



To be honest, I didn’t understand some of the questions the volunteers asked and I certainly didn’t comprehend their answers. What I did observe was that this young man’s behavior clearly defined him as a leader. He inspired

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confidence and showed genuine interest in others. He gave us almost two hours of his precious time. That is exceptional for anyone with his rank and level of responsibility.

If you want to know particulars about the trip or the ship, you should talk with Janet or one of the other volunteers who attended. They were probably paying better attention than I was. ~ **Carol Huard**



Impressions from the visit to the Coast Guard vessel *Active*

I was very impressed after touring the *Active*. The broad duties of the Coast Guard and the unique responsibilities and unique position they have as compared to the other services were something I had not previously known about.

The vessel looked good despite its age, it has tight quarters but what surprised me the most was the crew size. I expected to hear they had 15-20 crew not over 70!! The breadth of the Commander's knowledge and authority was also impressive.

There was a clear dedication and pride shown and goes to reinforce and strengthen my respect for those who serve in the military and provide the protection and security we often take for granted. These folks do it right off our own shore! And there are lots of bad guys trying to sneak in.

~ **Bill Bjorklund**

Our Tour of the Coast Guard Cutter *Active*

This was the first time I have seen the *USCGC Active* in eight years. Although there were some changes, most of the ship looked the way I remember. The captain, Commander Hollingshead, showed us the helicopter deck, mess deck, a berthing area, the laundry, and the pilothouse, which is where I used to work. He took time to explain how the Coast Guard and the cutter operate. He answered a lot of questions and seemed to enjoy telling us about what he does. Everyone left with a better understanding about the ship we often see across the harbor from OCDC. ~ **Rob Rountree**

