



Winter 2009

Fun Events

Puget Creek Restoration Work

2nd Saturday of each month

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Meet at

3505 North Alder Way.

Parking available along Ruston Way and west side of Alder. Walk half of a block on North Alder Way to the entrance to Puget Park.

Look for our PCRS banner.

We will provide refreshments, work boots, and gloves.

Annual Meeting

February 28, 2009

5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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It is time for our Annual Meeting!

The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity to get updates on all of the exciting progress being made by PCRS, meet new staff members, enjoy some good company, and grab a bite to eat. Recently, we have expanded our office and made some other improvements. We'd love to show you around!

Pizza and drinks will be provided, but this is also a potluck. Please bring a favorite dish to share.

Come for 5 minutes or come for two hours!

February 28, 2009
5 p.m.—7 p.m.
702 Broadway, Suite 101

Current Puget Creek Projects, by Heather Valtee

Over the last year, I've been volunteering a few hours here and there helping with the newsletter at PCRS. As of last month, I've been working more hours, partially filling the position of executive director. One of my first goals is to get up-to-date on all of PCRS' projects. The two projects that have been the most surprising to me, so far, are the bat houses and the protection of an elephant seal.

Currently, we are installing bat houses down at the creek. One of the interns has painted them black (to preserve heat) and another intern is installing small shelves. The shelf will catch droppings when bats are using the houses which will allow us to quantify use. Bats are native to Puget Sound and are excellent for controlling mosquitoes among other things, so we are trying to increase their population in the gulch.

During January, we had a visit from a young female northern elephant seal down at our beach. Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife thought she was there to molt.

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Board with News, by Susan Penhale

Welcome to our new column in the newsletter, "Board with News." Each newsletter one of the board members will provide an article here to foster a sense of stewardship and to further our mission of protecting, restoring and enhancing green areas in Puget Sound.

I am Susan Penhale, the new President of the Board of Puget Creek Restoration Society. By profession, I manage hazardous chemicals to keep them out of our natural environment, or to minimize their effects. My objective today is to educate on the risks, effects, and proper management of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW).

What is HHW? Simply speaking, HHW includes any chemical you might find

in your house *for which you no longer have a use*. Paint, cleaners, automotive supplies, art supplies, herbicides, and pesticides are some of the most common items. They share characteristics with fully regulated hazardous waste, such as the tendency to catch fire, corrode skin or metal, react in a bad way with other common substances, like water, or are toxic. Some of them stay in the environment for a long time, ending up in the water we swim in, fish in, cook with and drink.

While businesses are required to dispose of chemicals properly by Local, State and Federal regulations, households are not. These chemicals may

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BOARD OF DIRECTORSSue Penhale, *President*Dr. Sherry Graham, *Vice President*Jack Maichel, *Secretary*Steven Beckstead, *Treasurer*

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HONORARY BOARD OF DIRECTORSNorth End Neighborhood
Council**ADVISORY BOARD**

Edward S. Winskill

Michael A. Corsini

Heather Valtee, *Executive Director*

The Puget Creek Restoration Society protects, enhances, and restores the Puget Creek Watershed and similar streams, wetlands, and green spaces.

We serve the South Puget Sound communities and invite their participation through hands-on restoration, research, education, advocacy, and by promoting a sense of stewardship.

*A tax-exempt 501(c)(3)
nonprofit organization*



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Since she was very close to the sidewalk along Ruston Way, PCRS coordinated interns and other volunteers to protect her from possible harassment by humans and their dogs. She was there for about 4 days before she moved on, hopefully to a



safer spot. If you want to hear more about her visit and learn about the species

and their recent activity in Puget Sound, come to the annual meeting; we'll be happy to share pictures and information.

Dragonflies

by Meagan Bordeaux & Alissa Larcom

Is a dragonfly a fly? Some people think it is, since it has the word "fly" in it, but a dragonfly is not a fly. Flies have only two wings, while dragonflies have four. However, they are both considered insects, which means they have six legs and three body parts, a head, a thorax, and an abdomen. Dragonflies got their name from their fierce jaws, which they use to catch flies, among other winged insects. Dragonflies are ancient insects; they were even around before dinosaurs. Ancient dragonflies might have been even larger than the ones we see today. The largest known dragonfly had a wingspan of twenty-four inches. Today, the largest dragonfly is found in Costa Rica and has a wingspan seven and a half inches. Other than their size, modern day dragonflies do not look different from their ancestors.

Are damselflies and dragonflies the same? Although the two are similar, dragonflies are larger than damselflies. While damselflies are at rest they can fold their wings over their backs, while dragonflies cannot fold their wings, so they have to rest with their wings out. Damselflies and dragonflies belong to an order of insects all their own called Odonata. The dragonfly belongs to the suborder Epiprocta or in strict sense "the infraorder Anisoptera." It's characterized by

large multifaceted eyes, two pairs of strong transparent wings, and an elongated body. Dragonflies' diet consists of mosquitoes, midges, and other small insects such as flies, bees, and butterflies. Their natural predators are birds. Dragonflies can typically be found around lakes, ponds, streams, and wetlands because their larvae, also known as "nymphs," are aquatic.

Female dragonflies tend to lay their eggs in or near water, often on floating or emergent plants. While laying eggs, some

*(Continued on page 3)***THANK YOU!**

PCRS thanks the following organizations for their generous support:

**The Mountaineers Foundation
Port of Tacoma**

We would also like to thank these members for their recent activity and/or donations:

New Members

Margaret Elofson
Puget Sound Flyfishing Club
Patricia Chandler

Renewing Members

Tim Allen
Jessica Spring
Lee & Paula Roussel
Native Plant Salvage Alliance
Katie Downs Tavern & Eatery

Donations

Margaret Elofson
Tim Allen
Jessica Spring
Native Plant Salvage Alliance
Gwyneth Jones
Robert Viens

Volunteers

Hedden Elementary
CenterForce
Keystone
Clover Park High School
United Way Pierce Co
Clever Tacoma
Seabury School
Annie Wright School
Mt Tahoma High School
Brownie Troop
Washington Native Plant Society
McChord Airman Leadership School

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be responsible for biological and genetic changes in animal and human life, including malignant cancers, and birth defects. Even before they reach the natural environment, bad combinations of chemicals have resulted in the injury or exposure of people locally and nationally.

The best practice for household chemicals is to use safe alternatives to harsh chemicals. When stronger substances are necessary purchase in a limited quantity, use them up according to the label provided by the manufacturer. The next best option is to give them to someone who can use them. Lastly, dispose of leftover chemicals properly.

Where? The City of Tacoma maintains a household hazardous waste facility 7 days a week at the landfill. Pierce County maintains another facility 2 days a week, with a third in the permitting process. Pierce County Public Works and Utilities provides links on their website under Solid Waste with more information.

I look forward to working with everyone these next two years, and always welcome questions or suggestions! Please feel free to contact me at the PCRS office 779-8890, or at president@pugetcreek.org.

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species will submerge themselves completely in order to lay their eggs in a suitable place. Most of a dragonfly's life is spent in the larval naiad, aka nymph, form beneath the water's surface. They use internal gills to breathe and extendable jaws to catch other invertebrates or vertebrates, such as tadpoles and fish. The larval stage of dragonflies lasts from two months up to five years depending on species. When a larva is ready to turn into an adult, it climbs up a reed or other emergent plant at night and its breathing pattern changes. Then the skin splits at a weak spot behind the head and the adult dragonfly crawls out of its old larval skin, waits for the sun to rise, pumps up its wings and is off to eat midges and flies. The adult stage of larger species can last up to four months.

Dragonflies are considered predators that help with the population of harmful insects, such as mosquitoes. Dragonflies are commonly referred to as "mosquito hawks" in North America, "Old Glassy" in China, "Water Dipper" in England, and "Big Needle of Wings" by ancient Celts. People once believed that dragonflies could "sew up" a person's lips or ears. That may be the reason why some dragonflies are called "darners," which is a type of knitting needle. It is also believed that dragonflies caught insects for snakes or otherwise helped care

for snakes, including helping raise baby snakes. So they are also referred to as "snake feeders" or "snake doctors." There are five thousand different species of dragonflies around the world. There are 450 different species in the United States alone. You can often identify the type of dragonfly by the veins in its wings.

Dragonflies also have excellent eyesight. Both of their large eyes are made up of thirty thousand six-sided units. Together these smaller eyes enable a dragonfly to see even the slightest movement. If you were to try to sneak up and catch a dragonfly, you're more than likely going to come up empty-handed. Normally dragonflies do not bite or sting humans, although in order to escape they will bite if grasped by the abdomen.

Dragonflies have the ability to maneuver, which helps them out-fly their prey. They only flap their wings at 30 beats per second while bees flap their wings at 300 beats per second. They do not have to beat their wings in unison like other insects do. Their front wings can be going up while their back wings are going down. Dragonflies are excellent flyers that can loop-the-loop, hover, and fly backwards. Dragonflies in Australia have been clocked at 36 miles per hour.

Calling Future Board Members!

There are currently vacant spots on the PCRS Board of Directors. This is a well organized, committed board that would welcome your participation. If you are interested in filling a board position, please contact us for an application.

Board meetings are the third Monday of each month, at 6:30 p.m.

GardenSphere proudly supports the efforts of PCRS.

To offer our thanks to members of PCRS,
GardenSphere will donate 10% of member purchases to PCRS
as well as give an additional 10% off.

OR

Members can choose to be truly generous and
pledge the full 20% to PCRS!*



*Valid in-store only, name on newsletter or e-mail must match purchasers ID, valid during dates of newsletter.

GardenSphere LLC
3310 N Proctor, Tacoma, WA 98407
253.761.7936, www.gardensphere.biz

Join the Puget Creek Restoration Society

Note: The PCRS is a 501c(3) organization and your dues are tax deductible.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership Dues - Please choose one:

_____ Business - \$50/year

_____ Family - \$30/year

_____ Individual - \$20/year

_____ Work nine or more volunteer hours

_____ Other

Which of the following types of activities are you interested in? *Please check all that apply.*

_____ Office work

_____ Research

_____ Restoration activities

_____ Education/Outreach

_____ Legislative issues

_____ Salmon enhancement projects



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