

Strait Talk

Quarterly Newsletter of the
GEORGIA STRAIT ALLIANCE

July 2003



www.GeorgiaStrait.org



Joseph Lin photo

GSA's Clean Air and Water Program Coordinator, Christianne Wilhelmson, providing ToxicSmart information to the Taiwanese Green Club in Vancouver. While a growing number of people are concerned about the impact of toxic chemicals on their health and the environment, they often don't know what alternatives are easily available at their local store. GSA is helping by providing ToxicSmart information in more locations in the Vancouver area and more workshops, such as the one shown above, to teach people how easy it is to 'de-tox' their homes and gardens.



Alan Wilson photo

The biannual Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference attracted 700 scientists, managers, students and others to Vancouver in early April. Orca Pass was featured in several presentations and poster sessions and via GSA's large, colourful new display. An inspiring highlight came when former BC premier Mike Harcourt, recovering from a near fatal spinal cord injury, walked into the conference center supported only by two canes, to the resounding applause of all present. Harcourt, an early Orca Pass endorser, posed with Environment Minister David Anderson and GSA's Laurie MacBride above. (For more on the Conference see page 10.)

What's New in the Strait?

- J pod, one of the three southern resident pods listed by Canada as endangered, has at least two new calves. In January a new baby was seen with mother J22, and in April, J11 was seen spotted with a new baby. With these additions, J pod's total population is now 22 individuals. Both calves appear to be healthy, which is very good news since the pod has been in decline for the past decade.

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- The federal government has committed \$144 million over the next 5 years to Parks Canada, to establish 10 new national parks and 5 new National Marine Conservation Areas, one of which will be in the southern Strait of Georgia (see more on page 10).

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- In April federal Environment Minister David Anderson announced a five-year renewal of the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative, to be renamed as the Georgia Basin Action Plan. Funding will be directed towards protecting, conserving and restoring key ecosystems; research on wildlife, air quality, and endocrine-disrupting chemicals in waste water and other sources; development and support of stewardship tools and best management practices; and improved accessibility of data.

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- Last year the province allowed 769 million cubic litres of industrial pollution to be dumped into Burrard Inlet, through effluent permits granted to 25 industries and agencies. This is a 24-fold increase in effluent from 1957, when permits were first issued, and is the equivalent of 223,014 Olympic size swimming pools. Pollutants in the effluent include cadmium, cyanide, zinc and MTBE gas additive. These were among the findings of a review of provincial effluent permits conducted by SPEC with support from GSA and the BC Environmental Network. For the full report: www.spec.bc.ca.

Georgia Strait Alliance (GSA) is a charitable, non-profit society formed in 1990 to protect and restore the marine environment and promote the sustainability of Georgia Strait, its adjoining waters and communities. Members include about 50 organizations and hundreds of individuals from around the Georgia Strait region.

GSA NEWS & EVENTS



And the Winners Were . . .

GSA's "Great Georgia Strait Escapes" Raffle was a success once again. Of the nearly 1,000 tickets in the drum on May 31, the following three were drawn:

- *Natalie Ban of Vancouver won the Bluewater Adventures seven-day, all-inclusive sailing trip off Northern Vancouver Island aboard the beautiful 68-foot ketch, Island Roamer.*
- *Peter Grainger of Salmon Arm won two days of complete serenity for two at the renowned Hollyhock Retreat on Cortes Island.*
- *Steve Stack of Vancouver won an unforgettable grizzly bear eco-adventure with Tide Rip Tours.*

Many thanks to all who sold and purchased tickets. A special thank you to Randy Burke at **Bluewater**, Howard Pattinson at **Tide Rip** and all the folks at **Hollyhock** for their generosity in donating these great prizes. ☐

THANKS to this issue's contributors: Bill Austin, Cathy Booler, Linda Bristol, Suzanne Connell, Fin Donnelly, Ken Gurr, Kate Leighton, Bryan Nichols, Pat Nordin, Mike Richards, Jay Ritchlin, Peter Ronald, Sierra Legal Defence Fund, SPEC, Christianne Wilhelmson.

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Caring for our Coastal Waters

Congratulations

Congratulations to GSA Director **Chief Robert Joseph**, who received an Honorary Doctorate of Law degree from UBC in May. "Bobby" is a Hereditary Chief of the Gwa wa enuk First Nation (Hopetown) and a respected aboriginal leader. He divides his time between the north Island and Vancouver, where he works as Executive Director of the Provincial Residential School Project, working to bring healing and reconciliation for those who suffered from the residential school system—an experience he's all too familiar with, having entered that system as a six-year-old boy speaking only Kwa Kwala. He has served as an advocate for aboriginal people in the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Native Brotherhood of BC, First Nations Summit, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, Kwakiulth District Council, Musgamuagw Tribal Council and a number of Bands. He has been active in the campaign to remove net cage fish farms from his traditional territory and has helped strengthen relationships between aboriginal and environmental groups. In all his work, Bobby brings a true spirit of goodwill as he seeks to bridge the differences brought by intolerance and lack of understanding. Congratulations, *Dr. Joseph*—the degree is well deserved! □



Alan Wilson photo

Welcome

A big welcome to our two summer students, Miki Klaver and Menita Prasad!

Miki is in our Nanaimo office, coordinating public outreach and logistics for this summer's raffle, Pant & Paddle registration and other events. She'll be returning to school this fall to finish her BA in English and Liberal Studies, then plans to get her teaching certificate. It's actually "welcome back" to Miki, as she worked with GSA in the summer of 2000.

Menita is in our Vancouver office, focusing on our ToxicSmart program and getting our message and information out to a broader range of people in the Lower Mainland. She has a degree in Conservation Biology and is returning to school this fall to complete her teaching certificate. She volunteers at a local elementary school and also works two days a week as an interpreter at the Vancouver Aquarium. □



Miki Klaver



Menita Prasad

Alan Wilson photo

Christianne Wilhelmsen photo

Pant & Paddle Off and Running!

Mark your calendars and start training: the third Yellow Point Pant & Paddle is a "go" for Sunday, **September 28, 2003**. The event has



quickly become well known as one of the most fun, yet challenging athletic events on Vancouver Island. It's open to teams of seven, and all entrants must be over age 19. The race entry fee is \$189 per team. Categories include Open Men's, Open Women's, Mixed, and "Gettin'-on" (minimum total ages add up to 350 years).

Beginning and ending at the renowned Crow and Gate Pub, there are six race legs winding through the pastoral landscape of Cedar-Yellowpoint: an 8-km run, 5 km by canoe across Quennel Lake (2 contestants), 26 km by road bike, 5 km by ocean kayak, 11 km by mountain bike, and finally, a 9-km run to the finish line, where participants will enjoy the post-event festivities.

Once again, a dedicated volunteer group of Yellowpoint-Cedar community members, outdoor sports enthusiasts, and area businesses are organizing the event with all net proceeds going to GSA.

Registration information will be available at the end of June from the GSA office in Nanaimo. If you would more information about participating or donating a prize for participants, please call Miki Klaver at 250-753-3459 or email: miki@georgiastrait.org. □

Musician on a Mission



In late August and early September, Steve Karajanis, a Gibsons-based singer/songwriter and "guitarist extraordinaire", will be on tour through the Strait of Georgia, giving concerts and raising awareness and funds for GSA, Sierra Club and other environmental groups.

He will be performing in Vancouver, Bowen Island, Squamish, Gibsons, Pender Harbour, Powell River, Quadra Island, Courtenay, Denman Island, Parksville, Nanaimo, Gabriola Island, Duncan, Victoria, Saltspring Island, and Mayne Island. As if all that wasn't grueling enough, he will be travelling between gigs via kayak!

Steve is a graduate of the UVIC School of Music. Since then he has performed, recorded, and toured on four continents at coffeehouses, festivals, folkclubs, pubs, and concert halls. His music has developed into contemporary folk with pretty, gritty vocals and funky, virtuoso finger-picking. More info and audio samples can be found at www.stevemusic.com

If you would like to receive a concert schedule contact Miki Klaver at our Nanaimo office 250-753-3459 or miki@georgiastrait.org. □

Annual General Meeting —Victoria

GSA's Annual General Meeting was held at the Bedford Regency Hotel in Victoria on May 31. Five of the six Directors whose two-year terms were ending opted to stand again and were elected along with new Director, **George Winn**. A big thank you to outgoing Director **Jacque Pearce** of Vancouver, who served on GSA's board for the past three years.



Alan Wilson photo

Past President David Pinel receives Lifetime Membership from Laurie.

Lifetime memberships were awarded to **David Pinel** and **Joan Merrifield** in appreciation of their many years of service to GSA and their dedication to the marine environment. Joan served on our Board from 1996 to 2001, including terms as Co-Chair and Treasurer, and has continued since then as a hard-working member of our Personnel Committee. David was first elected to our Board in 1998 and served as President from 1999 until he stepped down from that role last fall; he remains on our Board and three of its committees. Both of them continue to bring invaluable skills, experience and insightful perspectives to GSA and we are delighted to list them among our lifetime members.

Following the AGM, GSA hosted a special public event entitled "From Orcas to Oystercatchers: Orca Pass, where it all connects". The evening event included a beautiful slide show on orcas by naturalist/photographer, **Gary Woodward**, and a fascinating and inspiring presentation by research scientist and author, **Dr. Rob Butler**, on the lives of shorebirds and the international significance of the Orca Pass area to them. Our thanks to both presenters and everyone who helped make the event a success. □



Alan Wilson photo

George Winn

GSA's Board of Directors, Elected May 31, 2003

JOHN CASHORE spent 15 years as an elected MLA, serving as Minister of Environment, Aboriginal Affairs, Labour, and as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. Prior to entering politics, worked as a United Church Minister.

RAMONA DE GRAAF is a marine biologist and educator living in Vancouver and working on her Master's degree. She also owns and operates a marine education business in Barkley Sound.

JULIE EDWARDS is a manager in the fish processing industry who lives and works in Ucluelet.

PAUL FLETCHER is a professional photographer who lives in Duncan. He is a co-founder and president of the Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society.

JULIA GARDNER is a consultant involved in fisheries issues, marine protected areas and related projects. She lives in Vancouver.

ROBERT JOSEPH is Hereditary Chief of the Gwa'enuk First Nation (Hopetown) and works as Executive Director of the Provincial Residential School Project in Vancouver.

JIM MANLY (President) is an author, retired United Church minister and former federal MP, where he served as Critic for Aboriginal Affairs, Fisheries, and International Development. He lives in Nanaimo.

DAVID PINEL coordinates and teaches in the Coastal Adventure Tourism Program at North Island College, is a seasonal kayak guide, and consults in community research and planning. He lives in Courtenay.

JOHN RICH is a lawyer specializing in aboriginal law who lives on Bowen Island. He has served as Chairman of the Islands Trust and on Boards of a number of environmental organizations including Sierra Legal Defence Fund and West Coast Environmental Law Association.

SUZANNE SIEMENS is a Chartered Accountant and co-owner of a manufacturing and marketing company specializing in environmentally responsible personal care products for women. She lives in North Vancouver.

GEORGE WINN is as consultant in Quality Management, owns an importing business and lives in Victoria. He serves as Treasurer and Environmental Officer for the local Power Squadron and is an avid recreational boater.

ALLIANCE NEWS

The **Rivershed Society of BC** is now accepting applications for its 2003 Sustainable Living Leadership Program (SLLP).

Last summer seven young leaders from different Fraser River Basin communities traveled by raft and canoe, 1,200 km down the Fraser River, BC's longest river. The trip took 23 days, from the pristine riversheds of the Fraser's Headwaters to the highly urbanized waters of the Lower Fraser. They explored, hiked, canoed, rafted, discussed, wrote, questioned, listened and absorbed much of what the Fraser has to offer.

During week one, they practiced their leadership, communication and team-building skills and were introduced to the landscape of the Upper Fraser and to local community groups active in conservation and stewardship work. During week two, they learned about the four pillars of sustainability: deep ecology, voluntary simplicity, bioregionalism and choices for sustainable living, as they rafted through the Fraser Canyon. In the third and final week they learned about stewardship and how they might 'make a living making a difference' as they traveled through some of the most urbanized riversheds in British Columbia.

By the end of the program the SLLP participants were exhausted, thrilled, excited, motivated and enlightened. Put simply, the SLLP is about people (emerging leaders and community specialists), place (the riversheds and ecosystems of the Fraser River Basin) and subject (sustainability, deep ecology, bioregionalism, voluntary simplicity, eco-economies, leadership, team-building and stewardship).

If you would like any information or to apply for this year's program, visit www.rivershed.com or contact Fin Donnelly, Executive Director at 604-941-5937.

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Reach for Unbleached! wants to get everyone who shares a commitment to the environment, sustainability, and socially responsible business to turn that commitment into action.

Almost all of us use paper in some form or another. Paper has a big impact on our lives and a big impact on the environment. By using paper better (reduce, reuse, recycle), and using better paper (recycled, chlorine-free, no endangered forests), we can help clean up the environment.

Paper is one of the biggest purchases for many companies, by volume and by cost. According to sustainable business experts at Hewlett Packard, improving paper consumption is the easiest thing most companies can do to take a cost-effective step towards meeting environmental and sustainability goals.

Reach for Unbleached! is reaching out to members, environmental groups, co-ops, churches and socially responsible businesses and asking them to commit to

reducing paper use and to buying chlorine-free recycled paper whenever they can.

Reach is also offering help through:

- the Office Paper Buying Club (see below), which provides high quality, reasonably priced paper that has excellent environmental and performance properties;
- building new partnerships that will further increase availability of these papers and lower the cost;
- helping to evaluate companies' needs, make presentations to purchasers, and facilitate the location and procurement of any paper requirements.

Many organizations and businesses are already implementing Sustainability Policies. *Reach for Unbleached!* wants to help. For info: Jay Ritchlin, 604-879-2992 (ritchlin@rfu.org).

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The **David Suzuki Foundation** is promoting a new initiative, David Suzuki's Nature Challenge. The Foundation has researched and selected 10 of the most effective ways that people can protect nature, and is asking people to pick any three of these actions and promise to do them over the next year. Each activity is simple, yet can make a substantial difference. Signing up is effortless, and the 10 steps are surprisingly easy. The Nature Challenge is a good way for individuals to help nature, without having to make difficult changes to their lifestyles. It's an educational initiative to show how small changes can make a difference, and how individuals acting together can make our world a better place. For information or to sign up: www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge/

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WaveLength Magazine is producing a special 'Orca Pass' feature for its August/September issue, looking at ecotourism opportunities in the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area, as well as species at risk and related issues. Contact: info@WaveLengthMagazine.com. □

STEWARDSHIP

Green Boating Update

Mike Richards

Busy but quiet. That's how I would describe this spring for the Green Boating Program. No wrecked vessels to speak of. No overwhelming events and no slack times.

Late winter through early spring is Boat Show Season. This year we had displays at the Vancouver and Victoria events that garnered plenty of positive responses and follow-up, along with an outdoor display at the Silva Bay Maritime Festival, a fabulous event with an interesting assortment of participants. I also attended the Port Sidney Floating Boat Show and made our presence known. More and more, marine industry folks are becoming supportive of our work.

My biggest time commitment since our last newsletter has been our involvement with the Vessel Sewage Regulation working group. As the only non-government environmental organization in this group, GSA's presence is vital and we have a strong role to play. The working group is attempting to meld Canada's recreational and commercial vessel sewage regulations into a single law, intended to be practical for all users and to provide real protection for sensitive areas such as bays, inlets, estuaries and inland waters. This is a complex issue involving a very broad range of interests, but everyone at the table is committed to an outcome that will work for all.

I have also been involved in a sub-group tasked with simplifying the process for applying for a sewage no-discharge designation for a specific body of water. The current process is confusing and daunting to say the least, and a number of groups have not pursued applications because of its complexity. The new process will be better and will still be directed by the current federal regulatory policy, which includes an extensive consultation process for each designation.

The BC Shellfish Growers Association and Georgia Strait Alliance are submitting a joint application for the designation of Baynes Sound as a sewage no-discharge zone, with the aim of having this in place by next summer. Baynes Sound is an extremely important commercial shellfish growing area and high fecal coliform counts in summer have caused temporary closures of some shellfish leases.



Mike and family will be setting off on their sailboat this fall en route to his native Australia. We wish them well!



Laurie MacBride photo



Laurie MacBride photo



GSA file photo

Ferries, cruise ships, and private boats all will be subject to new Vessel Sewage Regulations in the near future.

From June through August GSA will be out on the water in our inflatable, the *Cynthia*. Look for us in the southern Gulf Islands/Sidney/Victoria area, where we'll be working to promote stewardship projects in Orca Pass.

I will be leaving GSA at the end of July, and then in early September, setting off with my family to pursue offshore cruising for the next year and a half. GSA's new Green Boating program coordinator will start in July. Thanks to everyone for your great support. □

New Green Boating Tips

- Use pickling vinegar instead of white vinegar for tough cleaning and deodorizing jobs. It's stronger!
- Tea tree oil has a multitude of uses: cleaning; disinfecting; deodorizing. It works wonders on mould.
- Don't use holding tank treatment products—some can be worse for the marine environment than the sewage itself. Instead, make sure you have enough ventilation to allow for aerobic decomposition, and that there are no dips in your inlet or outlet hoses that could hold sewage (odors will pass through conventional sanitation hose eventually).

Seashore Surveys—Fun in the Sun

Volunteers are hitting the beaches this summer in a continuing effort to monitor life in the intertidal zone. Everyone is welcome to come out at low tide and help count critters on their local beaches. Communities with ongoing GSA quadrat studies include: Victoria, Nanaimo and Comox as well as Pender, Saltspring, Gabriola, Valdes and Cortes Islands.

Bryan Nichols is back again this summer as our Quadrat Biologist. He'll be meeting with volunteer leaders and team members in each participating community to review species identification and methodology. He'll also help with any questions that may arise as the teams begin to input the data from the last three years of quadrat surveys into our long-awaited—and now finally available—intertidal database.

We'll be hosting a workshop for Intertidal Stewardship volunteers in the fall. We're aiming to have the data entered into the database and available for review and discussion at the workshop. We'll also be using the workshop as a way to gather useful input from inter-



Judy Sigmund photos

tidal volunteers, as part of our overall review of GSA's intertidal program. For info: Cathy Booter, 250-753-3459 (cathy@georgiastrait.org).

If you'd like to volunteer to help with the studies this summer, please contact one of the following local volunteer leaders:

- **Victoria**—Chuck & Judy Sigmund, 250-384-3841, juchu@telus.net
- **Pender Island**—Patricia Haugh, 250-629-9991, npep@gulfislands.com
- **Saltspring Island**—Roger Webber, 250-537-5342, webber@saltspring.com
- **Cortes Island**—Friends of Cortes Island, 250-935-0087, foci@island.net
- **Nanaimo, Comox, Gabriola, Valdes**—Bryan Nichols, 250-729-9156, brynichols@wildmail.com. □



Volunteers Needed for Courtenay Estuary Clean-up

If you live in the Comox Valley, don't miss our 6th Annual Courtenay Estuary Clean-up, scheduled for **Sunday, September 14**.

GSA is co-sponsoring the clean-up again this year with the **Comox Valley Naturalists Society**. The event is fun, open to all, and a useful way to help promote stewardship and research. Last year volunteers collected and removed over 3,000 pieces of debris from this sensitive habitat, and each year they find an amazing assortment of items including new oddities.

Volunteers count and itemize the trash on data forms, then it's taken off for delivery to the landfill or recycling depot as appropriate. We forward the data to the Vancouver Aquarium, where it's added to data from beach clean-ups all around BC, then passed on to the Ocean Conservancy, a US non-profit that maintains a worldwide database on marine debris. The compiled information is used in public education, policy and legal efforts to reduce marine pollution and harm to wildlife worldwide.

Participants will meet at the Rotary Viewing Stand on Dyke Road. Be sure to wear sturdy shoes or gumboots, and to bring gloves, a hat and sunglasses. We'll provide data sheets, garbage bags, refreshments and prizes for some of the volunteers.

For information or to get involved, call **Cathy Slater** at 250-339-9895 (hapyclam@shaw.ca). □

SPECIES AT RISK

Northern Abalone (*Haliotis kamtschatkana*)

Christianne Wilhelmson

If you've been following this series on 'Species at Risk', you can't be blamed for thinking that to qualify for this less than coveted title, you have to be a vertebrate, and if possible, a charismatic megafauna!

But populations in decline are not limited to these lofty groups. Even lowly invertebrates can be pushed to the brink by over-harvesting and other pressures. The northern abalone (pronounced ab'-a-lone-ee) is such a species.

The northern abalone (also known as Japanese or Pinto abalone) is one of more than 70 species of abalone worldwide, but

the only one in BC waters. A marine mollusc, it makes its home in both the lower intertidal zone and in depths of up to 15 to 20 metres. Northern abalone live attached to rocky surfaces, where they feed on algae.

You can recognize Northern abalone by its oval-shaped, wavy and flattish shell, which is thicker on one edge than the other and has from three to six open holes along one side (the holes allow the animal to expel wastes from its digestive system). The inside of the shell is iridescent white.

Abalone reproduce by releasing eggs or sperm. Fertilized eggs develop into planktonic larvae which are carried off by the current. The young feed on diatoms and microalgae, and as they become juveniles, they remain grazing herbivores, focusing on one of their favourite foods, kelp. This continues into adulthood, when abalone can be found in colonies in kelp beds.

The abalone's natural predators include octopus, sunflower stars, wolf eels, and sea otters, and in the intertidal zone, humans, oyster catchers, otters and mink. Of all these predators, however, the greatest pressure comes from humans.

Northern abalone was a traditional food of aboriginal people, who gathered it from intertidal areas. With that level of harvest, the population of abalone was sustainable. But with the advent of SCUBA diving, commercial and recreational abalone harvesting became much more intense.

During the 1970s and 80s, BC had a commercial dive fishery for abalone. The harvest reached its peak in 1977, when 1,047,000 pounds were taken. By 1990, this had declined to only 110,000 pounds (a drop of 89%). Due to declines in the abalone population, the entire BC abalone fishery (commercial, recreational and aborigi-

nal) was closed to harvest, coast-wide, in 1990, and remains closed today. It is the only species on the BC coast with no harvesting allowed whatsoever.

The northern abalone can live up to 15 years and reach a maximum shell length of approximately 15 cm (6 inches). But like rockfish (see June 2002 *Strait Talk*), abalone is sensitive to harvesting pressures primarily because it takes so long to reach maturity. This is the reason that, when harvesting was allowed, a minimum size limit of 10 cm was in place. It can take the abalone from 6 to 10 years to reach 10 cm

and it doesn't become sexually mature until it reaches at least half this size.

The northern abalone population declined by more than 75% between 1977 and 1984, and continued to decrease after 1990 despite the closure. On BC's central coast, abalone density declined by 92% from 1979 to 1990; in Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlottes) it went down by 82% from '77 to '98.

In 1999, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada declared the Northern abalone a threatened species, a status that was reconfirmed in 2000.

Because of this, a National Recovery Strategy for Northern Abalone in BC has been developed, with the goal of getting the population back to a level where it can sustain itself. But the biggest threat remains continued illegal poaching.

Several factors make this species popular to poachers: market demand, its location near shore and its sedentary nature. Because poachers remove abalone of any size, they often remove individuals before they've had a chance to reproduce, which helps explain why even with a total fishery ban, the population is not recovering.

More than 70 charges have been laid in BC for illegal harvest of this species since 1997. Yet poaching continues, primarily because the closure is difficult to enforce. For this reason, part of the Recovery Strategy is a public awareness campaign to increase understanding in local communities of the biology and management of northern abalone.

BC is not the only region that has struggled to maintain its abalone population. Alaska, California and other US states have had to close their abalone fisheries,



GSA file photo

while South Africa and Australia have seen declines. Several aquaculture projects are underway in BC in an attempt to rebuild stocks, but while some progress is being made in stock restoration worldwide, poaching continues to threaten rebuilding efforts in many jurisdictions.

It's too early to predict if, when or how well this population will recover in BC, even with a concerted focus on rehabilitation. Scientists don't know how many new individuals are being added to the population annually or how environmental changes are influencing abalone. More research on the species will be needed, and more publicity and improved monitoring and enforcement to eliminate the illegal harvest. Until these efforts result in a significant change, it's a safe bet the fishery will remain closed.

What can you do?

- Spread the word! If you know someone who dives for abalone, share this story with them. Educate them on the threatened state of this species and urge them to stop taking any abalone.
- Urge the federal government to increase resources for monitoring and enforcement by Fisheries and Oceans staff, and to ensure that penalties are serious enough to deter illegal harvesting.
- If you see abalone on a restaurant menu, ask where it's from. Unless you're sure that it is from a legal source, don't order it, and let the manager know you consider the sale or consumption of a threatened species to be unacceptable.

For information on the National Recovery Strategy, see: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ops/fm/shell-fish/Abalone/default.htm>. □

GSA Joins Orca Lawsuit

In February we reported that a coalition of US conservation groups had filed suit against the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), seeking to reverse its decision not to list the southern resident orca population as "endangered" under the US Endangered Species Act (ESA).

In late May, GSA joined the lawsuit, when Sierra Legal Defence Fund filed "*amicus curiae*" (friend of the court) legal papers in the US federal court on behalf of our organization and the Western Canada Wilderness Committee. Our brief supports the US groups' legal challenge, explaining why the southern residents are of great significance to Canadians.

The NMFS made its decision not to list the whales because, it said, it is not known definitively whether they are a distinct population and therefore "significant" under the law. Yet scientists agree that these whales are biologically isolated and they do not interbreed or communicate with populations of killer whales elsewhere, even with BC's northern resident pods. Ironically, the economic significance of the southern residents may be even less disputable than their ecological significance: the whale-watching operations out of Victoria, which depend on the southern residents, are now worth over \$100 million annually.

The population of the southern resident pods has fallen by about 20% over the past decade, down to just 78 whales last fall, leading some scientists to suggest they could be extinct in as little as 30 years. In Canada, they were listed as Endangered in 2001. While the NMFS designated them instead as "depleted" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), this is a much less powerful tool than the US's Endangered Species Act and does not invoke the wide suite of actions that



Bryan Nichols photo

Lone orca cruises down the Strait of Juan de Fuca towards Orca Pass.

would be required under the latter. For example, ESA listing would require actions to clean up sites in Puget Sound that are leaching PCBs into the ocean and contaminating the whales, whereas the MMPA would not.

Through the legal case, we hope to help our US colleagues in fighting for the orcas' survival. Without meaningful legal protection on both sides of the border, these whales will not survive.

The Court will consider our material along with that of the US coalition and US government. The US government's brief and the Plaintiffs' reply are to be filed by the end of August. Then the court will decide if and when there should be an oral hearing, which would most likely be held this fall in Seattle. □

Each Step Brings Orca Pass Closer

Peter Ronald

Over the past few months some significant milestones have been achieved that support the overall vision of the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area and bring us closer to establishing it.

Park brings marine protection within reach

In May, Canada and BC formally established the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. Our 40th National Park, it will protect 2,588 hectares (25.9 sq. km) of ecologically sensitive land, spread out over 29 sites on 15 islands. The federal government will also have management responsibilities for over 3,328 hectares of submerged crown lands (i.e. nearshore waters) adjacent to the Park.

The National Park was pieced together on lands purchased and donated since 1995 under the federal/provincial Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy program, which aimed at achieving a comprehensive network of protected areas within one of the Canada's most rapidly developing regions. A contiguous section of central Saturna Island forms about 45% of the Park. Portions of North Pender, Mayne and Prevost islands were also acquired. The Park includes wetland and riparian areas, coastal bluffs and dry, shallow-soiled woodlands populated with Garry Oak, Arbutus and Douglas fir.

Several terrestrial and marine parks are being transferred from BC to Canada, along with other Crown lands, ecological reserves, and a Capital Regional District regional park. Portland, Russell, Cabbage and Tumbo Islands, Beaumont, Sidney Spit, Isle de Lis, and Princess Margaret Marine Parks are among the more than 30 islets and reefs included in the designated area. Though small, they are important ecologically. These isolated islets represent some of the best remaining examples of relatively undisturbed vegetation in our region, and allow for the protection of critical seabird nesting and roosting habitats and seal and sea lion haul outs.

Let the study begin!

The National Park announcement clears the way for the long-delayed feasibility study and public consultations that will lead to eventual establishment of the National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA). Parks Canada says the consultation could begin as early as this fall. The NMCA feasibility study will lead to a long-term management plan for the marine portion of the southern Strait of Georgia, much of which we expect to fall within the area we've defined as Orca Pass. The eventual outcome, we hope, will be a NMCA that provides effective protection to important marine ecosystems in our region.

Rockfish get a break

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), in consultation with sport and commercial fishermen, has proposed over 100 sites as potential Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs), where fishing would be closed in order to protect these largely sedentary fish. In taking this action, DFO is following the prescription for marine reserves advocated by conservationists and scientists worldwide.

We're pleased to note that of the 28 RCAs that DFO established in 2002, four are in Orca Pass, and all of these correspond to the "biodiversity richness" zones that People for Puget Sound, GSA and our other Orca Pass project partners have identified for possible special management. These areas are D'Arcy Island, Portland Island, Saturna/Belle Chain Islets and North Mayne, just outside Active Pass.

This year, the rest of the proposed 100+ RCAs will be reviewed. Another eight of these fall within Orca Pass, and several coincide with our biological richness zones: Zero and Little Zero Rocks, Gooch/Domville Islands and Bedwell Harbour/South Pender.

The life history of rockfish make them particularly vulnerable to over-harvest, and so Rockfish Conservation Areas are critical to give these fish a chance to grow old and successfully reproduce. Rockfish grow slowly and are extremely long-lived, reaching 90 centimetres and in some species, over 100 years. They're slow to reach sexual maturity (for most, around 20). Survival of young rockfish is subject to ocean conditions, and years of good survival seem to occur every 15 to 20 years. Over the past few decades rockfish have been harvested to such a degree that they are now being considered for listing under Canada's Species at Risk Act.

Conferences galore

Through a suite of protected area conferences this spring, we've been able to raise the profile of our Orca Pass initiative on both sides of the border and continent.

The biannual Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Research Conference attracted 700 scientists, managers, students and others to Vancouver in early April. Orca Pass was featured in several presentations and poster sessions and via GSA's large and colourful new display, which helped us to engage with a great many attendees.

The conference was the setting for the annual meeting of the BC/Washington Environmental Cooperation Council, at which the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Task Force (made up of government agency staff) presented 10 recommendations, supporting efforts to establish Orca Pass, to senior government members from BC, Washington, and the two federal governments.

Later in April, along with Jacques White (People for Puget Sound), I delivered a presentation at the Restore America's Estuaries Conference in Baltimore, on Orca Pass and the opportunities and challenges for transboundary environmental cooperation.

In May, the annual conference of the Science and Management of Protected Areas Association included a presentation by Russel Barsh of the Samish Indian Nation (an Orca Pass endorser), "Orca Pass or Salish Sea". Russel described human alteration of the environment of our region over thousands of years and challenged people to draw on the deep knowledge that still resides within Coast Salish Nations, to live in balance with this land- and seascape.

In July, I'll be presenting a paper on Orca Pass at the "Leading Edge" stewardship conference at UVIC.

Petitions en route

This month we began a series of meetings with government officials to brief them on the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area and hand over the petition, calling for its establishment, that GSA and project partners have been circulating over the past two summers on both sides of the border. Thanks to everyone who helped gather signatures: the final count is over 7,500. MLA Murray Coell (North Saanich & the Islands) will be taking the petitions forward to the BC government, and we'll be meeting with the Victoria MP and Environment Minister, David Anderson, in early July to deliver them to the federal government. Copies are also being provided to all of the First Nations with traditional territory in Orca Pass.

Navy blamed for marine mammal deaths

While awareness and momentum for the Orca Pass Stewardship Area are growing, some major challenges remain for the wildlife that make this region home.

On May 5, a US Navy vessel, the *USS Shoup*, conducted sonar exercises for five hours in Juan de Fuca and Haro Straits (in the heart of Orca Pass), in the presence of orcas, harbour porpoises and a minke whale—animals utterly dependent on sound for navigation, hunting, communication and virtually all aspects of their lives. The sonar "pings" from the ship were so powerful (>200 dB re 1 uPa) that people on the beach on San Juan Island could hear them through the air.

The whales and porpoises exhibited avoidance behaviors as the ship came closer, but according to the Center for Whale Research, the terrorized animals could not escape the intense mid-frequency (3 kHz), long duration "pings". Among those in the area at the time were J pod, an endangered southern resident pod with only 22 whales left (including two new calves). Observers watched as they abruptly stopped feeding and gathered in a tight group, swimming close to shore at the surface for the duration of the sonar exercise.

Several porpoises stranded and died following the event, and several more were later found beached on nearby San Juan Island.

In documented incidents elsewhere, mid-frequency sonar has been shown to cause ear and brain trauma in cetaceans and lead to beachings. Since March 2000, when their sonar drove 17 whales ashore in the Bahamas, the US Navy has known that its sonar kills and injures whales at distances well beyond the visual horizon. The Navy is seeking exemption from the US Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection Acts. □

Overcoming the Barriers

Linda (George) Bristol

Since joining GSA as First Nations Outreach Facilitator last October, I have come to appreciate scientific approaches to environmental issues. Since Creation, First Nations have been stewards, instinctively protecting Mother Earth and respecting Life. Overwhelmed with facts and data, I have come to realize that Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge need to find a way to merge with one another, to save and restore our environment.

In the same way, aboriginal and non-aboriginal people must find effective ways to work together. GSA recognizes that it's essential to have the involvement of the First Nations whose traditional territories lie within Orca Pass if this initiative is to move forward. But many factors make this difficult. The constant crisis management mode that many Chief and Councils must operate in, the many different hats they and their staff must wear, lack of funds, community activities and needs—added up, only a small amount of time remains to meet with others, despite the importance of the issue. Very few First Nations are able to run an environmental program, and their presence at conferences and environmental efforts here and in Washington State is limited. But the good news is, participation is growing with each event.

The future is bright. By the time this newsletter reaches you, GSA will have met with the Saanich Bands, Tsawwassen, and perhaps additional First Nations. I expect that Orca Pass is not the only topic that we'll be discussing. Fish farming, GSX, the new National Park and treaties are all of concern to First Nations. A certain degree of skepticism will likely be present; after all, First Nations have often found that "consultation" hasn't been meaningful or in good faith. It is important to sit down and discuss the barriers we need to overcome, so that we can establish a true working partnership to protect and restore our local environment. □

Salmon Farming Still in the Hot Seat

Suzanne Connell

Despite major efforts to counter the work of GSA and our allies in the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR)—including hiring the notorious PR firm, Hill & Knowlton, which specializes in damage control for major corporations—the BC salmon farming industry continues to feel the heat from a growing public opposition to net cage salmon farming. Since our last newsletter, articles highlighting problems with the industry and farmed salmon have appeared in publications worldwide, including the *New York Times*.



In March GSA teamed up with an impressive five-member First Nations delegation, to meet with Sustainable Resource Management Minister Stan Hagen to discuss our opposition to proposed salmon farms in Bute Inlet and off Texada Island. L-R: Chief Darren Blaney (Homalco First Nation), Councillor Denise Smith (Sliammon Band), Eric Blueschke (GSA). Also attending were representatives of the Hamatla Treaty Society.

Closed Containment bill

In March the leader of the BC Opposition, MLA Joy MacPhail, introduced a Private Members bill that would require all future fish farms in BC to use closed containment. Typical of a Private Members bill, it did not pass, but it did open the door to begin a focused dialogue with Members of the Legislative Assembly. For the last three months, along with Theresa Rothenbush (Raincoast Conservation Society), I have been meeting with MLAs to provide information on and discuss the merits of alternative technologies. To date, we have met with the Hon. John van Dongen, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Fisheries; the Hon. Joyce Murray, Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection; and several MLAs. Overall, the reception has been positive, and we'll be continuing these meetings through the next few months.

Legal action in the US...

In April a Seattle law firm filed an unprecedented class action lawsuit against grocery giants Albertsons, Safeway and the Kroger Company for failing to label farmed salmon as artificially coloured. In the US, unlike Canada, federal laws require retailers to label farmed salmon because colour additives (astaxanthin and canthaxanthin) are provided in the feed to give the flesh a reddish-pink colour. Wild salmon, by contrast, acquire pigments naturally by eating shrimp-like crustaceans called krill.

In total these grocery store chains own over 6,000 stores in 30 different states. The plaintiffs claim that because the farmed salmon in these stores was not labelled, they were misled into thinking that it was wild. The lawsuit is seeking millions of dollars of compensation for consumers and asking for a court order requiring the companies to label their farmed salmon as artificially coloured.

About a week after the case was launched, all three grocery chains pledged to begin labelling. The lawsuit is expected to begin in 18 months. If US consumers are

deterred from buying farmed salmon as a result, it could have a significant economic impact on salmon farming companies in BC, where approximately 80% of the farmed salmon is exported to the US.

...and in BC

In the same week as the US class action suit was introduced, Sierra Legal Defence Fund filed a lawsuit in the BC Supreme Court on behalf of the Tsawataineuk, Kwicksutaineuk-ah-kwaw-ah-mish and Namgis First Nations and the Gwawaenuk Tribe of the Broughton Archipelago. The lawsuit, calling for the immediate protection of wild salmon, is aimed at the two salmon farming companies operating in the Broughton (Stolt Sea Farm and Heritage Salmon) and the federal and BC governments. The plaintiffs contend that the government and salmon farming industry have violated their aboriginal rights by promoting aquaculture despite a major collapse of pink salmon populations in the Broughton (see *Strait Talk*, November 2002).

The lawsuit demands a court injunction preventing the companies from stocking their farms; calls on the companies to stop using Slice (a toxic pesticide) to treat sea lice; asks that diseased farmed salmon be removed from open net cages; requests that key data be made available, such as the number of sea lice on farmed salmon; and calls on the government to stop granting net cage salmon aquaculture licences until a comprehensive environmental assessment of the impacts from salmon farming is undertaken.

Removing local authority

Despite public opposition, in May Agriculture and Fisheries Minister John van Dongen introduced a bill to amend the Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act. The Act, passed in 1996, restricts nuisance lawsuits against farmers using "normal" farm practices. Among the amendments is an expansion of the definition of Crown Land to include land covered by water and allow Cabinet to designate Crown Land as a farming area. This amendment effectively extends the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to water and brings aquaculture under the Right to Farm Act, without hav-

ing to actually tinker with the ALR—something the BC government may have seen as a messy can of worms.

The bottom line: the province is giving the agriculture and aquaculture industries protection against local bylaws and nuisance suits, and eroding the right of local governments to restrict practices they consider inappropriate. This means that local governments will no longer be able to pass or enforce bylaws aimed at restricting disturbances to the community, including the discharge of firearms, stench of rotting fish, noise level of generators or use of bright night lights at salmon farms. Delta councillors have called the legislation “totalitarian”. Second and third readings are expected during the fall sitting of the Legislature.

The Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Statutes Amendment Act can be found at www.legis.gov.bc.ca/37th4th/1st_read/gov48-1.htm. □

FROM THE FISH FARM LOG BOOK

FEBRUARY 2003: A salmon farm at Sir Edmund Bay (in the Broughton Archipelago) is placed under “quarantine” due to an outbreak of Infectious Hematopoietic Necrosis (IHN). Workers dispose of dead fish but can’t remove them fast enough to contain the disease.

A net-washing company in Campbell River is ordered to temporarily shut down while the province decides how to deal with its application for a waste management permit. The company has been washing and cleaning salmon farm nets (covered in toxic anti-fouling compounds) on Crown land for almost two years without proper zoning or a permit.

MARCH 2003: Biologist Alexandra Morton reports that her preliminary research shows 50 per cent of young pink salmon passing fish farms on their way out to sea through the Broughton Archipelago are infected with lethal levels of sea lice.

Marine Harvest resumes transporting its farmed salmon through Bella Coola, this time with a three-car RCMP escort (an earlier attempt by the company had resulted in a blockade by the Nuxalk and a promise by the company that it would change its route to avoid Nuxalk territory).

APRIL 2003: At least seven fish farms owned by Pacific National Aquaculture in Clayoquot Sound are infected with IHN, forcing the company to harvest sites early and shut down the processing plant.

MAY 2003: Nuxalk hereditary chiefs block two freight trucks loaded with farmed salmon and ask Marine Harvest to provide them with letters from the Nuxalk authorizing access through their traditional territories.

Sewage Sorrows *Christianne Wilhelmson*

The fight to get sewage treatment for Victoria’s Capital Regional District (CRD) was dealt a blow this spring when BC’s Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection, the Hon. Joyce Murray, quietly approved the region’s Liquid Waste Management Plan.

The plan does not require the CRD to take any immediate steps to stop dumping raw sewage into the Strait of Juan de Fuca. In fact it will be another decade before the regional district even has to consider the possibility of secondary treatment. Instead, the Minister agreed to public education to reduce toxic contaminants in sewage, and the development of a “trigger” process to identify if and when enough harm might be occurring to the marine environment to require treatment.

The Minister’s letter of approval outlined a number of monitoring requirements and deadlines for the CRD to meet over the next few years, beyond what the CRD had proposed. The “trigger” approach means that if certain levels of contamination are exceeded, the CRD would be required to build a primary treatment plant within the subsequent three years.

If the CRD and province develop a process that is biologically sensitive and comprehensive enough to detect the earliest signs of contamination, and set these as the trigger, it is possible that some waste treatment could be in place within a few years in Victoria under Minister Murray’s plan. It’s a risky approach, based on the assumptions that those setting the trigger will get it right and that three years will be fast enough to prevent irreparable harm—but of course, there is no “signpost” showing what precisely what level of cumulative damage to the marine environment is “too much”.

Victoria is not the only trouble spot in our region to get off lightly. Two of the Greater Vancouver Regional District’s treatment plants are still only at primary level, and the GVRD’s antiquated combined sewage overflows are still allowed to discharge raw sewage and toxic contaminants into local waters whenever a heavy rain causes an overflow.

Minister Murray recently approved the GVRD’s liquid waste management plan, which sets an extremely slow timeline for resolving these issues. The approved plan gives the GVRD until 2030 to upgrade the two plants to secondary treatment and 2050 to eliminate the combined sewer overflows!

We’ll be keeping a close eye on the Ministry, the CRD and the GVRD, and working to ensure they live up to all the commitments and deadlines outlined in the approvals. We’ll also be urging the federal government to take the necessary steps to begin enforcing the federal *Fisheries Act*. If this Act was applied consistently to municipal waste water, it could go a long way toward eliminating sewage pollution and moving all our communities to a minimum of secondary treatment. □

Energy Decisions Pending

Peter Ronald and Cathy Booler

In February and March the National Energy Board (NEB) panel assessing the proposed Georgia Strait Crossing (GSX) natural gas pipeline project heard evidence from intervenors that the project is unnecessary, expensive and harmful both to the environment and to human health. The environmental hearings were held in Sidney, and GSA participated as part of two coalitions opposing the project.

The GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition highlighted BC Hydro's pattern of exaggerating peak load forecasts and overstating economic, population and power demand growth forecasts. The Coalition questioned the need for the pipeline and pointed out that the associated power plants will increase pollution in local airsheds and contribute significant greenhouse gases, while locking Vancouver Islanders into an expensive, fossil fuel-dependent energy future.

The Marine Coalition showed how the pipeline would disrupt sea bottom marine communities, increase opportunistic predation, cause "reef effects" and interfere with marine mammal echo-location. The route would bisect two proposed protected areas, Parks Canada's Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area and the Orca Pass International Stewardship Area.

The NEB panel will deliver its decision by this fall.

The BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) hearings on the pipeline's associated gas-fired power plant proposed for Nanaimo got underway on June 16 and is scheduled to run for two weeks.

Meanwhile, in late May Hydro was dealt a serious blow when pulp and paper giant NorskeCanada and Terasen (formerly BC Gas) presented the BCUC with an alternative plan to achieve the same energy goal sooner, cheaper, and more cleanly. The Terasen/Norske plan involves a combination of conservation measures, added compression in the existing northern Georgia Strait gas pipeline, and electrical co-generation at three pulp mills, by far Vancouver Island's largest energy users.

The plan appears to be an improvement over Hydro's approach, as it would be less dependent on natural gas, would produce less greenhouse gas, and could serve as a stepping stone to future green energy alternatives. However, the Terasen/Norske project could go ahead without any Environmental Assessment, so needs to be watched carefully. In any event, the new proposal proves that building a new pipeline and natural gas power plants is, at least in economic terms, poor value for the money compared to other alternatives. □

Cruise Calamity

Christianne Wilhelmson

In May, Washingtonians had a first hand view of the down side of welcoming cruise ships to their communities. On the first day of the Seattle cruise season, the *Norwegian Sun* accidentally dumped approximately 62,000 litres (40 tons) of raw sewage off Port Townsend, southeast of Victoria. This is not the first such incident for Norwegian Cruise Lines, which has been cited for illegal dumping twice in the last two years.

Though still under investigation, the incident shows what could happen in Georgia Strait if we continue to encourage this under-regulated industry to operate in our waters. The *Norwegian Sun*, like many other cruise ships, is a virtual floating city, carrying 3,200 people and generating all the wastes you would expect from any town of that size. The dumping of these wastes is not unusual, as seen by the increasing number of reported incidents all over the world.

There are currently no laws to mitigate the impact of cruise ships in Canadian waters. The federal government is developing "guidelines" to encourage cruise ships to limit the dumping of wastes including photo-finishing and dry cleaning solutions, batteries, printing inks, black water (raw sewage) and grey water (other waste water). However, since these will not be binding regulations they are unlikely to have any force.

With no federal regulations and no monitoring to ensure that impacts on the environment are minimal, it's disappointing to see local governments courting the cruise ship industry.

When it comes to the dumping of sewage in Canadian waters, however, there's some hope on the horizon. GSA is working with government agencies and the marine industry to create new vessel sewage regulations for all of Canada that will apply to all vessels, including cruise ships. We hope to have the first draft of these regulations by this fall.

There are many challenges to changing the face of this industry, including the fact that it is subject to international rules, regulations and interests. However, a first step is to ensure that while in Canadian waters, cruise ships respect our environment. The industry must be made to take responsibility for the wastes it creates and adopt practices that ensure that 'accidents' like the one in May never occur.

For more information on cruise ships and their impacts:

- Oceans Blue Foundation: www.oceansblue.org
- Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group - "Ripple Effects: The Need to Assess the Impacts of Cruise Ships in Victoria BC": www.vipirg.ca
- GSA's submission on cruise ship guidelines for Canadian waters: www.georgiastrait.org/cruise/cruiseship2.php#2. □

Thumbs Up...



- to **Milestones**, two **Romano's Macaroni Grill** restaurants, and **The Bread Garden**, for having listened to customer demand and stopped selling farmed salmon.
- to the **state of Oregon**, which has adopted a state regulation and begun to enforce the US federal rule that requires retailers and processors to use a "color-added" label on farmed salmon containing artificial color.
- to the **RCMP and provincial court judge** in Gold River, for charging and fining a woman found petting the killer whale, L98 (Luna), which has stayed in Nootka Sound since being separated from his pod. Though the fine was small, the judge promised a much stiffer penalty the next time someone is convicted of a similar crime.
- to **Governor Gary Locke** of Washington, who has granted five years of funding for an escort tug at Neah Bay to respond to shipping emergencies and prevent oil spills. The tug has been funded only sporadically since December 1999 yet even so, has been called out almost two dozen times to aid vessels in trouble.
- to federal **Environment Minister David Anderson**, who says there is no reason to proceed with offshore oil exploration and no interest among oil companies in doing so at this time. Minister Anderson said in April he is "not going to provide a dollar from [his] budget" to pay for the review announced this spring by Natural Resources Minister, Herb Dhaliwal, who supports offshore oil development.

Because the sea can mean so much in someone's life

Commemorative gifts can provide meaningful opportunities to recognize a significant person in your life and at the same time, support Georgia Strait Alliance's programs. Options include:

- A **memorial gift** to honor the passing of a loved one
- A **tribute gift** to celebrate a birthday, anniversary or any other special occasion

When you make a *memorial gift*, a GSA Director will send a card to the family of the deceased to let them know about the gift. With a *tribute gift*, we'll send a card to the person you have chosen to honor. (The amount of the gift amount is not disclosed unless you wish it to be.) With both types of gifts, you will receive an acknowledgement and tax receipt for your charitable contribution.

Honor a friend or family member with a charitable gift, and help protect BC's spectacular coastal waters and marine life.

Contact Ken at (250) 753-3459 or by email (ken@georgiastrait.org) for GSA's tribute gift kit for memorials, anniversaries, or other special occasions.

Thumbs Down...



- to North Coast MLA **Bill Belsey**, who suggested a commercial seal hunt despite rejection of the idea by the Council of Haida Nations. Though seals are often blamed for negative impacts on salmon fisheries, a study in Georgia Strait has shown that salmon account for only about 4% of seals' diets.
- to the **federal Justice Department** for dropping charges against the Bahamian-registered bulk carrier *Tecam Sea* for dumping oil resulting in a 116-km-long slick off a Newfoundland bird sanctuary last fall.
- to the BC industries that discharged 73% more chemicals into the air in 2000 than in 1998, for the biggest increase in chemical pollution in any province or US state. BC companies spewed out 8,539,000 kg, with the pulp and paper industry identified as the worst culprit. (*Report from Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America, April 17/03*). □



Photo © Alexandra Morton

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE!

To all those listed elsewhere in this newsletter plus others who have helped or contributed since our last issue:

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Our apologies to anyone we have missed.

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Or donate online at www.georgiastrait.org: www.GeorgiaSrait.org.

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