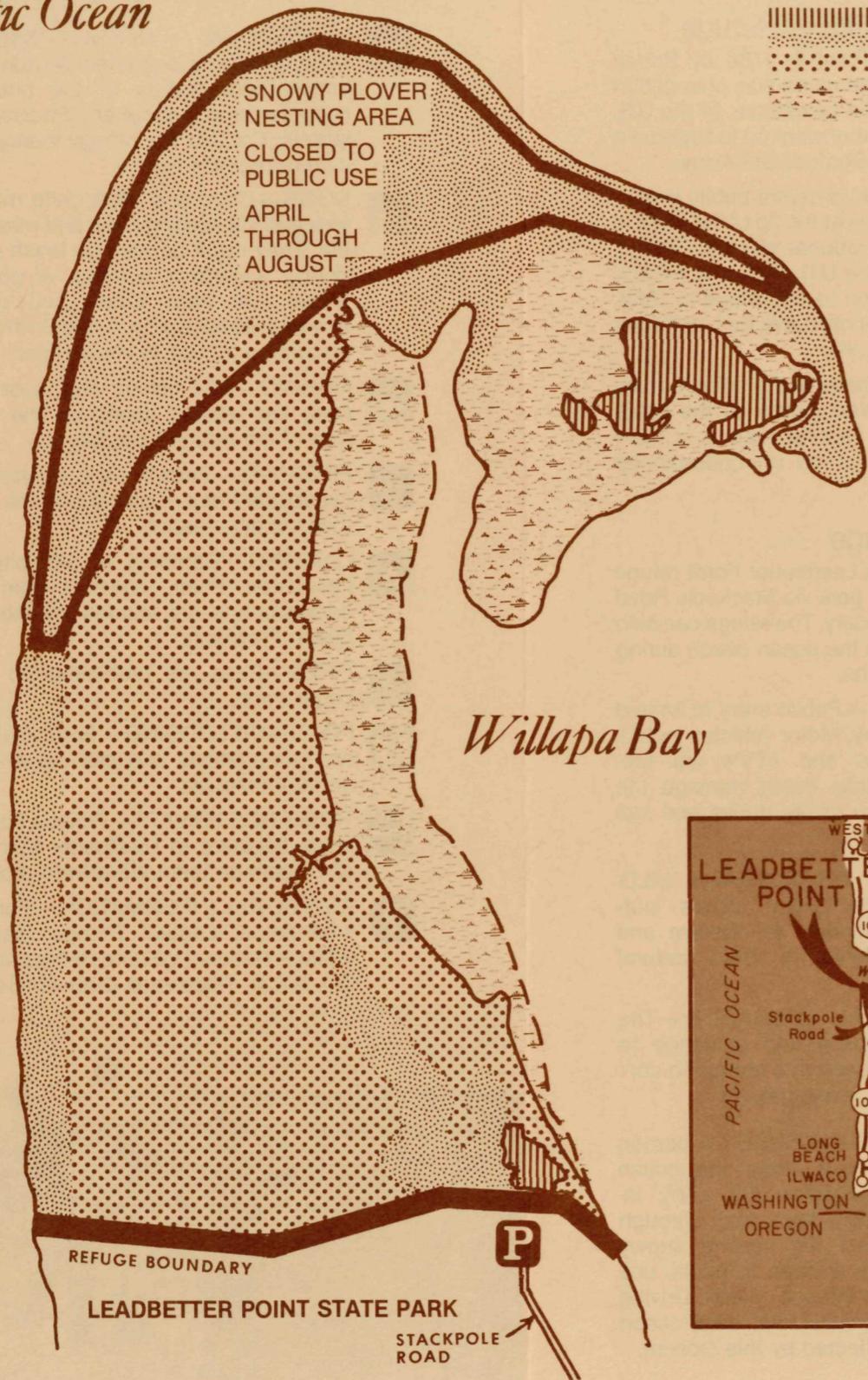
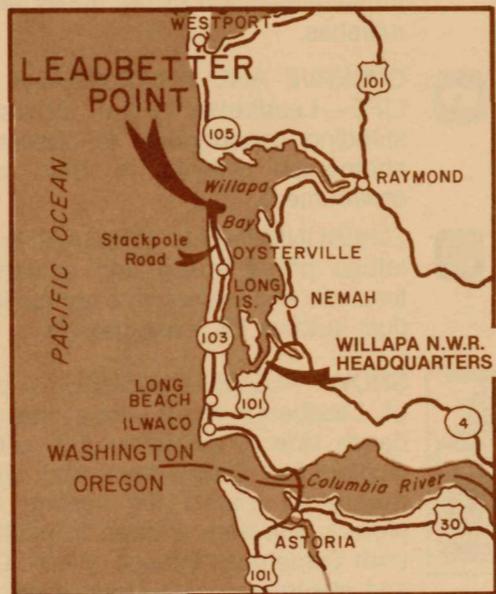
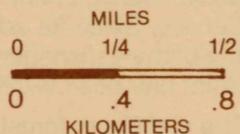


Pacific Ocean

# LEADBETTER POINT



- CLOSED AREA BOUNDARY  
(NOTE: Closed Area Boundary may vary due to natural changes in shoreline.)
- LODGEPOLE PINE FOREST
- UNSTABILIZED SAND
- STABILIZED SAND
- SALICORNIA MARSH (MUD FLATS-LOW TIDE)



# Leadbetter Point

## Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Washington



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE  
RF13552-1B  
March 1981

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1981-796-119 (81-9)



## A Dynamic Environment

Leadbetter Point is the northern extremity of the Long Beach Peninsula, a narrow, sandy strip of land extending north from the mouth of the Columbia River some 20 miles along the southwestern Washington coast. The peninsula separates Willapa Bay from the Pacific Ocean.

At Leadbetter Point, the processes of wind, tidal action and waves that created the entire peninsula can still be seen in action. The peninsula is in its geologic "youth" at Leadbetter Point, where it still continues to grow.

Beach pines are invading here and there, but this is a world of sand, grass and small shrubs. Picturesque sand dunes support sparse stands of beach grass, lupine, wild strawberry, sand verben, sea rocket and beach pea. Potholes scoured by the wind between the dunes fill with winter rains and support stands of willow and marsh plants. A salt marsh of pickleweed (*Salicornia*) and arrowgrass on the bay side of the point is flooded and drained twice daily with the rhythmic movements of the tides.

From year to year the face of Leadbetter Point changes. Sand dunes shift, become stabilized with low vegetation or erode away. Plants struggle for existence against encroaching sand or replace one another in rapid successional change as the sand is stabilized.

## Abundant and Diverse Wildlife

The dynamic, changing environment of Leadbetter Point creates a diversity of food sources and cover for wildlife. Biologists have recorded over 100 species of birds here.

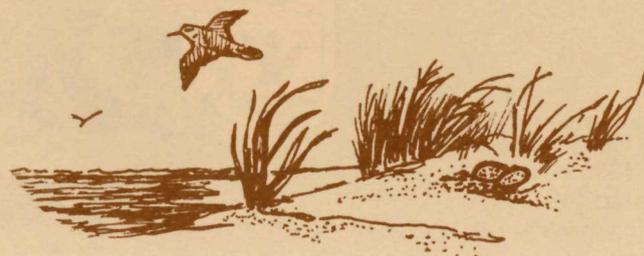
The waters of Willapa Bay and the salt marshes of Leadbetter Point are important feeding and resting areas for black brant, a sea goose that migrates along the Pacific Coast between Alaskan breeding grounds and Mexican wintering grounds. During April and May, thousands of brant on their northward migration stop to feed and loaf in the salt marshes or rest on nearby mudflats.

Joining the brant on salt marshes and tidal flats are all the species of shorebirds regularly found on the Oregon and Washington coasts—sandpipers, turnstones, yellowlegs, sanderlings, knots and plovers. They can be seen by the tens of thousands during the peaks of migration in late April and early May and again from late August through September.

Masses of sooty shearwaters pass Leadbetter Point each August in the course of their migration between summering waters around the Aleutian Islands and nesting islands off the coast of New Zealand.

Shorebirds and waterfowl also use the interior dunes of Leadbetter Point. Thousands of sandpipers rest in sheltered depressions in the dunes when high tides inundate their tidal flat feeding areas. Winter pools among the dunes attract waterfowl to feed on the marsh plants.

The snowy plover reaches the northern limit of its breeding range here. These small shorebirds, which have not been reproducing well, nest on the upper ocean beach in small scrapes in the sand. Camouflaged eggs are inadvertently stepped on or run over, or incubating parent birds are frightened off the nests, allowing predators to destroy the eggs, so that successful nesting has become difficult for the snowy plover.



## State Park and Wildlife Refuge

Originally named Low Point in 1788 by British explorer John Meares, the name was changed in 1852 to honor Lt. Danville Leadbetter of the U.S. Coast Survey. Lt. Leadbetter went on to become a brigadier general in the Confederate Army.

Leadbetter Point is in two different public ownerships. The open dune area at the tip of the point is a part of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, under management of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Since its addition to the refuge in 1968, the primary management objective for Leadbetter Point has been wildlife use.

The stabilized, forested base of the point is managed by the State of Washington as the Leadbetter Point State Park Natural Area. It is managed for public recreation in an undeveloped setting.

## Enjoying the Refuge

The main access to the Leadbetter Point refuge unit is through the state park via Stackpole Road to the south refuge boundary. The refuge can also be reached on foot from the ocean beach during the fall and winter months.



**PUBLIC ENTRY**—Public entry is limited to foot travel only. Motor vehicles including motorcycles and ATV's are prohibited. Tire tracks easily damage the fragile vegetation of the dunes and salt marshes.



**OBSERVE AND PHOTOGRAPH WILDLIFE**—Leadbetter Point offers outstanding opportunities to observe and photograph wildlife in their natural environment.



**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**—The refuge offers space and guidance to teachers and educational groups to conduct outdoor EE investigations.



**SNOWY PLOVER CLOSURE**—A portion of Leadbetter Point along the ocean beach side is closed to ALL entry, including foot travel, from April through August to protect the nesting snowy plovers. The area is open to public use from September through March. Driving and clamming on the hard sand ocean beach are not affected by this closure.



**WATERFOWL HUNTING**—Waterfowl hunting only is permitted on the Leadbetter Point portion of the refuge in accordance with State and Federal regulations. Consult the refuge manager for current regulations.



**DOGS**—Dogs and other pets may disturb and kill nesting birds and other wildlife. They must be kept on leash except during waterfowl hunting. A good retriever will help locate and retrieve downed waterfowl that might otherwise be lost so its use is encouraged.



**FISHING**—Surf fishing and razor clamming are popular sports on the ocean side of the refuge boundary.



**FIREARMS**—Firearms are prohibited on Leadbetter Point except during the waterfowl hunting season.



**CAMPING**—Camping is prohibited on Leadbetter Point, however, numerous campgrounds are located on the Long Beach Peninsula.



**FIRES**—Fires are prohibited on Leadbetter Point.



**FOOD AND LODGING**—Food, overnight accommodations and gas are available on the Peninsula.



**TIDELANDS PRIVATE**—Willapa Bay tidelands adjacent to Leadbetter Point and all oysters on them are private property.



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**—For more information, contact Refuge Manager, Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, Ilwaco, WA 98624. Telephone: (206) 484-3482.

