



# 2006 Guide to American and English Camps

## Park founded to celebrate peace, nature

Created by an act of Congress in 1966, San Juan Island National Historical Park commemorates the peaceful resolution of the North-west Boundary dispute between Great Britain and the United States.

The boundary dispute is perhaps the best-known period in island history. The park's American Camp and English Camp units are administered to preserve and protect historic buildings and archaeological remnants, and interpret the "Pig War" crisis and joint military occupation of San Juan Island by the United States and Great Britain from 1859 to 1872. (See page 2.)



English Camp's barracks, blockhouse and formal garden sit at the edge of Garrison Bay.

## Things to see and do

### Hiking

American and English camps abound with opportunities for strenuous hiking, taking a leisurely stroll through a field of wildflowers or finding a log and enjoying the seashore.

(See pages 6 & 7.)

### History

The park is a tangible reminder that the San Juan Islands and Pacific Northwest were once contested by Imperial Spain as well as the United States and Great Britain. But at each critical point along the way, the competing nations chose peace over war.

(See pages 3 & 4.)



### Wildlife

There's plenty to see here—orcas, seals, fox, deer, more than 200 species of birds, 32 species of butterflies and the occasional harmless garter snake sunning on the trail. (See back page.)

### Eagle's nest

Ask a park ranger or volunteer to show you the active bald eagle's nest in a Douglas fir near the American Camp visitor center. Please remember not to stand in the road. (See page 11.)



### Wildflowers

In spring and summer, wildflowers blanket the meadows and adorn the forest floors. You'll see Calypso orchids, fawn lilies, seashore lupines, western buttercups, chocolate lilies, shooting stars and swaths of purple camas. Pick up a Native Wildflower Guide, available at the visitor centers or online at [www.nps.gov/sajh](http://www.nps.gov/sajh).

### Earn a Junior Ranger badge

Ask a park ranger or volunteer at American Camp or English Camp visitor centers about how you can do this. It's easy and fun!

### Special programs

San Juan Island National Historical Park offers a full range of special programs, most of which are scheduled during the summer season. Visit our website to view the park's 2006 Summer Program Guide. (See pages 5 & 8.)

[www.nps.gov/sajh](http://www.nps.gov/sajh)

## Public transportation to English and American camps

**Island Bicycles: 378-4941**  
Bicycles

**Susie's Mopeds: 378-5244 or (800) 532-0087**  
Mopeds and automobiles.

**M&W Rental Cars: 378-2794 or (800) 323-6037**  
Automobile rentals and sales.

**San Juan Taxi: 378-3550 or 378-TAXI**

**Island Tours/Taxi: 378-4453**

**Bob's Taxi & Tours: 378-6777 or (877) 4-TAXIBOB**  
Service to all points on request.

**San Juan Transit & Tours: 378-8887 or (800) 887-8387**  
Regularly scheduled routes north to English Camp during the summer season with a reservation-only schedule available to American Camp three times daily. Guided tours available.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**San Juan Island  
National Historical Park**

**Superintendent**  
Peter Dederich

**Chief of Interpretation**  
Mike Vouri

**Editor**  
Julia J. Coffey

**Contact Information**

**Mailing Address**  
PO Box 429  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

**e-mail**  
SAJH\_Administration@nps.gov

**FAX Numbers**  
(360) 378-2615 (Administration)  
(360) 378-2996  
(Visitor Information)

**Park Headquarters**  
(360) 378-2240

**Visitor Services**  
(360) 378-2902

**Website**  
<http://www.nps.gov/sajh>

The park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. For information, write: Superintendent, P.O. Box 429, Friday Harbor, WA 98250; or call (360) 378-2902. Web site: [www.nps.gov/sajh](http://www.nps.gov/sajh); FAX (360) 378-2996.

*Park Guide 2006* is published in cooperation with the *Journal of the San Juan Islands*. The National Park Service cannot guarantee the relevance, timeliness, or accuracy of the materials provided by advertisers or other agencies or organizations, nor does the NPS endorse other agencies or organizations, their views, products or services.

**Basic information**

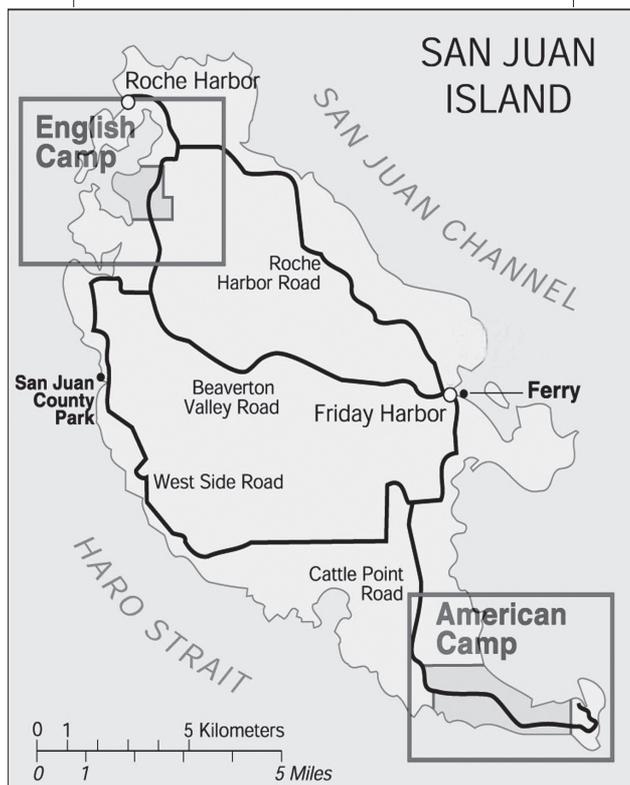
**Finding your way to the parks**

**American Camp**

The **American Camp** visitor center is about six miles southeast of Friday Harbor along Cattle Point Road. Simply drive west on Spring Street to Mullis Street and turn left. The road will wind a bit and change its name twice until it becomes Cattle Point Road. Remember to turn right on the visitor center entrance road *after* you see the large park entrance sign. If you turn before the sign, you'll be in the Eagle Cove housing development. Cattle Point Road passes three miles through the park right-of-way and the speed limit is 45 mph. Please be mindful, especially in the wooded stretch, that wild animals cross this road and bicyclists may be around one of the blind corners. Startled cyclists tend to turn and look over their left shoulders, which causes them to swerve toward the center line. Park speed limits are 15 mph on the visitor center entrance road and 25 mph on Pickett's Lane (which leads to South Beach). Remember to be especially careful when exiting the American Camp visitor center entrance road.

to Second Street and turn right. Go straight. At the first stop sign you encounter, Second becomes Guard. Go to the next stop sign and continue

The speed limit on this gravel track is 15 mph, and we urge you to take it seriously. English Camp also may be accessed via Roche Harbor Road. To reach the Roche Harbor Road from Friday Harbor, turn right at the second stop sign onto Tucker Avenue. Tucker becomes Roche Harbor Road just outside of town. Take Roche Harbor Road to West Valley Road and turn left. The parade ground entrance road will be your second right after you pass the park entrance sign.



**A Word About Road Safety**

The island is only 54 square miles (about 16 1/2 miles long and 6 1/2 miles wide at the midsection). That means not only is it hard to get lost, you don't have to be in an all-fired hurry to get anywhere!

If you're driving an automobile or truck, be especially mindful of bicycles, mopeds and three-wheeled motorized

scooters. They have the right-of-way the same as you. If you must pass, do it carefully and do not cross a solid double line. Conversely, cyclists should remember that, while they *do* have the right-of-way, it is considered a courtesy here to form a single line right.

to go straight. The street runs past the library, bends right and left and becomes Beaverton Valley Road. Follow Beaverton Valley Road over Cady Mountain (it's a small mountain). The road becomes West Valley Road. About 500 feet past the park entrance sign, on the left, is the entrance road to the parade ground.

**English Camp**

**English Camp** is located about nine miles northwest of Friday Harbor on West Valley Road. Take Spring Street

**Things to know**

**Picnic areas are available at both camps.**

**Off-road travel (by vehicles, mopeds or bicycles) is not allowed in the park.**

**Pets must be kept on leash and picked up after within park boundaries.**

**Natural features and ruins must be left undisturbed.**

**ONLY fruits, nuts, unoccupied seashells and mushrooms may be collected for personal use.**

**Digging or using metal detectors is prohibited.**

**Using or possessing fireworks is prohibited year-round.**

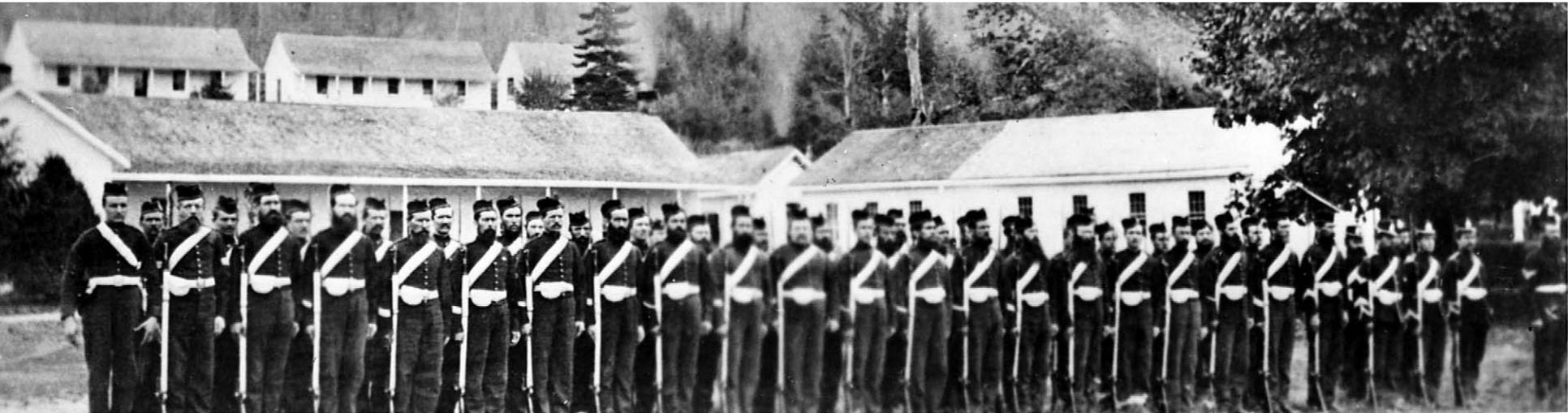
**Hunting, trapping or carrying firearms on park lands is prohibited.**

**Horseback riding is allowed by permit in designated areas only.**

**The park is a day-use only area, open from dawn to 11 p.m. No campgrounds are available at either camp. Several private facilities and a county-owned campground are available on the island.**

**[www.nps.gov/sajh](http://www.nps.gov/sajh)  
FAX (360) 378-2996.**

# The Pig War: Close call for the United States and Great Britain



The British Royal Marine Light Infantry company comes to attention on the parade ground in their camp on Garrison Bay in the late 1860s.

On July 27, 1859, George E. Pickett's Company D, 9th Infantry arrived on San Juan Island with a mission to protect United States citizens from the British government on Vancouver Island. The reason? An American settler named Lyman Cutlar had shot a pig belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. Everyone overreacted, particularly U.S. Department of Oregon commander, Brigadier General William S. Harney, who had issued Pickett his orders.

But more was involved than just a dead pig. For nearly 50 years, the two nations had been contending over the international boundary in the Oregon Country, a vast expanse of land consisting of the present states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, portions of Montana and Wyoming and the province of British Columbia. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 had given the United States undisputed possession of the Pacific Northwest south of the 49th parallel, extending the boundary to the "middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and thence southerly through the middle of said channel and of Fuca's straits to the Pacific Ocean." But while the treaty settled the larger boundary question, it created additional problems because its wording left unclear who owned San Juan Island.

The difficulty arose over treaty language that referred to the boundary as the "middle of the channel." There were actually two channels, Haro Strait nearest Vancouver Island, and Rosario Strait, nearer the mainland. San Juan Island lies between the two. Britain insisted on the Rosario Strait; the U.S., Haro Strait. Thus, both sides claimed San Juan Island.

To solidify the British claim, the Hudson's Bay Company occupied the southern end of San Juan, first with a salmon-salting station in 1850, followed by a sheep ranch—Belle Vue Farm—three years later. The Americans, meanwhile, declared the island within the limits of first Oregon (1848) then Washington Territory (1853). By 1859 about 18 Americans, including Cutlar, had settled on San Juan Island in anticipation of official American possession. Neither group acknowledged the jurisdiction or taxing authority of the other. Tempers were growing short.

Then Cutlar shot the pig. The Hudson's Bay Company allegedly threatened the American with arrest by British authorities if he did not make fair restitution for the pig. This compelled U.S. Army Department of Oregon commander Brigadier General William S. Harney to dispatch Pickett to San Juan Island.

British Columbia Governor James Douglas responded by sending three warships under Royal Navy Captain Geoffrey Phipps Hornby to dislodge Pickett. The two sides faced off on the Cattle Point peninsula for more than three months until the arrival of U.S.

Army commander Lieutenant General Winfield Scott. Scott and Douglas negotiated a joint occupation of the island until the dispute could be resolved through diplomatic channels. The Americans remained at Cattle Point while Royal Marines established in March 1860 a comfortable camp on Garrison Bay, 13 miles north.

The joint occupation ended 12 years later when, on October 21, 1872, Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany, acting as arbitrator, settled the dispute by awarding the San Juan Islands to the United States. Thus ended the so-called Pig War—with the pig the only casualty.

# Take a journey in time at English and American camps



## Geologic evidence tells deep time tale

Scenic vistas at American and English Camps are the handiwork of glaciers and their effects on sea level changes.

The open grassland (prairie) at **American Camp** is studded with glacial erratics (rocks and boulders which were deposited as the glacial ice melted). Terraces denoting former beaches reflect changing sea levels and rebound following the most recent glaciation.

Although sea levels actually rose after glaciation, the rate of rebound (the rising [rebound] of land as it recovers from the extreme weight of glacial ice) was greater, thus forming a succession of beaches that today are

viewed as terraces above today's **South Beach**. These features are best viewed from the Redoubt. Thick deposits of glacial till can be viewed while walking South Beach east of Pickett's Lane or looking down from Cattle Point Road from the observation pullouts. Looking toward 290-foot **Mt. Finlayson**, the contrast between forest and grassland is striking in its abruptness. The north-facing slope is densely forested, retaining moisture, while the south-facing slope is an open prairie, exposed to the drying effects of wind and sun.

## Tracking human history

From the **Redoubt** (an earthen fortification) one gets a feeling of the historic landscape set against the

backdrop of prairie, sea and sky. American Camp dates from 1859, the time of the Pig War. The wooden officers' quarters and laundress' cabin and the white picket fence encompassing the parade ground recall the tensions of the boundary dispute when war nearly broke out over the shooting of a pig.

The interpretive trail and prairie walk to the coast pass directly through the site of **Belle Vue Sheep Farm**, where the Hudson's Bay Company established a corporate farm in 1853. Look closely and you will see grassy mounds of chimney brick and in mid-winter the hollows where foundations once sat. Further along the trail is the head of

**Grandma's Cove**, where the HBC steamer *Beaver* unloaded supplies.

The **English Camp** parade ground features four original historic structures, including the accessible Royal Marine barracks and blockhouse. The hospital and storehouse are closed to the public. From Officer's Hill, see if you can spot at low tide the rock piles that once supported a pier where

Royal Navy warships docked. The rock walls on Officer's Hill also were constructed by Royal Marines.



# 2006 Summer Program Schedule: Something for Everyone

## Weekly Programs

**Pig War Story Guided Walk**—Park rangers and volunteers describe events leading up to and including the Pig War and the peaceful joint occupation of San Juan Island by British and American troops. **Walks are scheduled at American Camp 11:30 a.m., Saturdays, June 3 to September 2.**

**Living History: Life during the Joint Military Occupation on San Juan Island**—Park rangers and volunteers create military and civilian life during the island's early pioneer period. Activities include blacksmithing, coopering, weaving, needlework and exhibitions of military equipment and skills. **12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Saturdays, June 3 to August 26, English Camp.**

**Wildlife in the San Juan Islands**—Puzzled by an animal or bird? Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Education Coordinator Shona Aitken answers questions and uses a variety of media to talk about wildlife in the San Juan Islands. **1 to 3 p.m., Fridays, June 9 to September 1, English Camp barracks.**

**Historical Songs at English Camp**—Folk singer and musicologist Michael Cohen strolls the grounds inviting visitors to listen or sing along to a selection of traditional songs. Cohen's roots go back to the Washington Square folk movement in 1950s New York City. He has played with everyone from Pete Seeger to the New Lost City Ramblers. **7:30 p.m., Thursdays, June 8 to August 31, on the English Camp parade ground.**

## Special Programs

**Ancient Visitors: Tracing the Pre-history of San Juan Island through Archaeology**—University of Washington archaeologist, Dr. Julie Stein, traces ancient habitation of San Juan Island in this guided walk on the American Camp prairie. **10 a.m., Sunday, June 4, South Beach main parking area at American Camp.**

**The Birds of American Camp**—Come join San Juan Island bird expert and former national park ranger Barbara Jensen for a colorful 90-



Cowlitz Nation weaver Judy Bridges is scheduled August 5 at English camp.

minute walk through American Camp's prairies. The program is suitable for beginning as well as veteran birders and provides insights into the park's rich flora and fauna. **7:30 a.m., Sunday, June 4, American Camp visitor center.**

**Tide Pool Walk at Grandma's Cove** Learn about plant and animal life, from algae to invertebrate animals, during this tide pool walk with biologist

Bob Lemon and naturalist Annie Prevost. Bring rubber boots and an old towel for use as a kneepad and hand wiper. Also bring sunscreen and rain gear. Some agility is required for jumping around slippery rocks. **9 a.m., Sunday, June 11, American Camp visitor center parking area.**

**Outpost of Empire: The Royal Marines on San Juan Island**—Who were the Royal Marines that occupied

San Juan Island from 1860 to 1872 and why were they on the Northwest Coast? Find out during this slide lecture by historian and author Mike Vouri. **2 p.m., Saturday, June 17, English Camp barracks.**

**The Disputed Islands: Early Settlement on San Juan Island**—Learn about daily life on San Juan Island from 1853 through the joint military occupation in 1872. Historian Boyd Pratt talks about settlers from Hudson's Bay Company employees to discharged soldiers to failed miners. **2 p.m., Saturday, June 24, English Camp barracks.**

**Pickett's Irish: The Irish in the U.S. Army in the 1850s**—Historian Mike Vouri and folk musician Michael Cohen present this program that takes a closer look at the Irish in the U.S. Army in words and song. **2 p.m., Saturday, July 15, English Camp barracks.**

**Life and Times of General George Pickett**—Park Ranger Mike Vouri and folk musician Michael Cohen join with the San Juan Community Theatre in presenting an evening of drama and song as George Pickett comes back to life to talk about his days on the frontier and Civil War battlefields.

(Continued on Page 8)

## English Camp Attractions

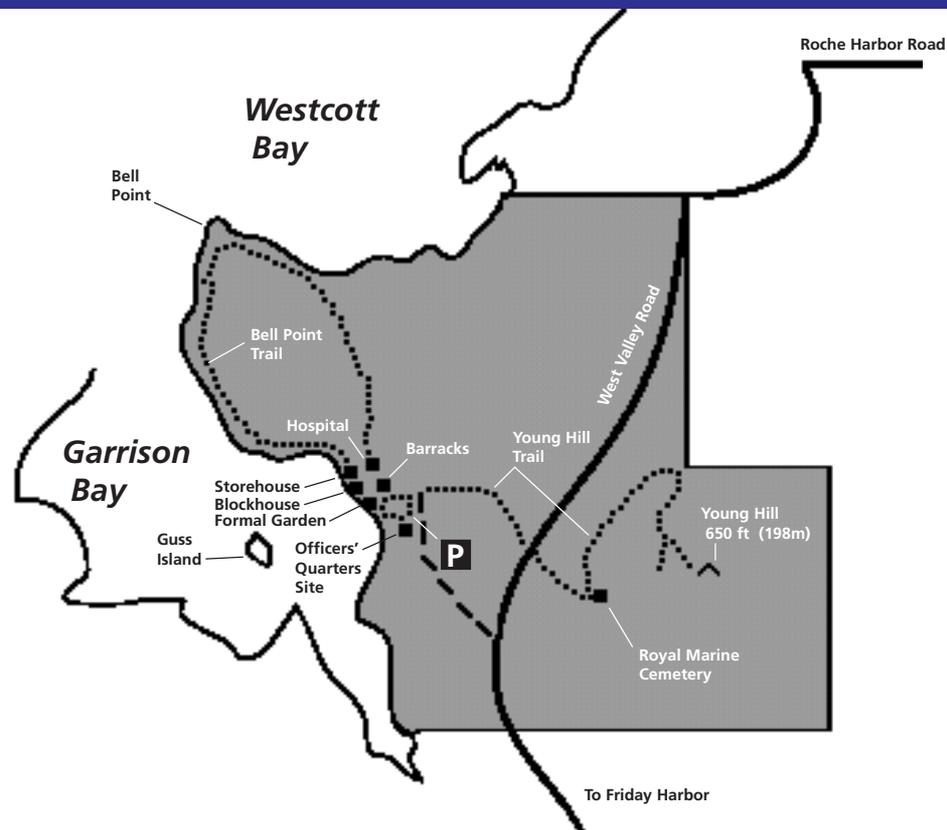
**Young Hill trail** - Hike this fairly steep trail up 650 feet to the top of Young Hill for a panoramic view of the island's northwest corner. Novice walkers should take care to pace themselves as most of the gain is in the last half mile. An exhibit panel identifying geographic features is mounted on an overlook about two-thirds of the way up the hill. (1.25 mi.)

**Royal Marine cemetery** - The Royal Marine cemetery is about 50 yards off the Young Hill trail, about a third of the way up. Five Royal Marines are interred, while a memorial stone is in place for two other marines. A stone also commemorates a civilian who was accidentally shot by his brother while hunting.

**Bell Point trail** - Walk the mile-long, fairly level trail to Bell Point for a view of Westcott Bay. If you like to harvest shellfish, check with the park ranger at the visitor center for locations, daily limits and red tide warnings. (2-mi. loop)

**Self-guided walk** - Relive the Royal Marine era along the trail that starts at the base of the main entrance trail. Pick up guides in the box next to the bulletin board and follow the numbered posts. Please return when finished to the box provided at the end of the walk. If you wish to purchase a guide, they are available for a one dollar donation at the visitor center. (.25 mi.)

**English formal garden** - The garden lies between the officers' quarters sites and the parade ground. The camp's second commanding officer had it built for his family to remind them of home.



## Visitor center resources

Both American Camp and English Camp (summer only) have visitor centers with maps, books and gifts. The bookstore at American Camp is more comprehensive. Here are some of the more popular guides and book titles.

Booklets for guided walking tours of American Camp, English Camp and Jakle's Lagoon.

*The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay*, by Mike Vouri.

*Outpost of Empire: The Royal Marines and the Joint Occupation of San Juan Island*, by Mike Vouri.

*Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast: Washington, Oregon, British Columbia & Alaska*, by Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon.

*Wild Plants of the San Juan Islands*, by Scott Atkinson & Fred Sharpe.

*The Butterflies of Cascadia: A Field Guide to All the Species of Washington, Oregon and Surrounding Territories*, by Robert Michael Pyle.

*Seashore Life of the Northern Pacific Coast, An Illustrated Guide to Northern California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia*, by Eugene N. Kozloff.

*Birds of the Puget Sound Region*, by Morse, Averza and Opperman.

*Birding in the San Juan Islands*, by Mark G. Lewis and Fred A. Sharpe.

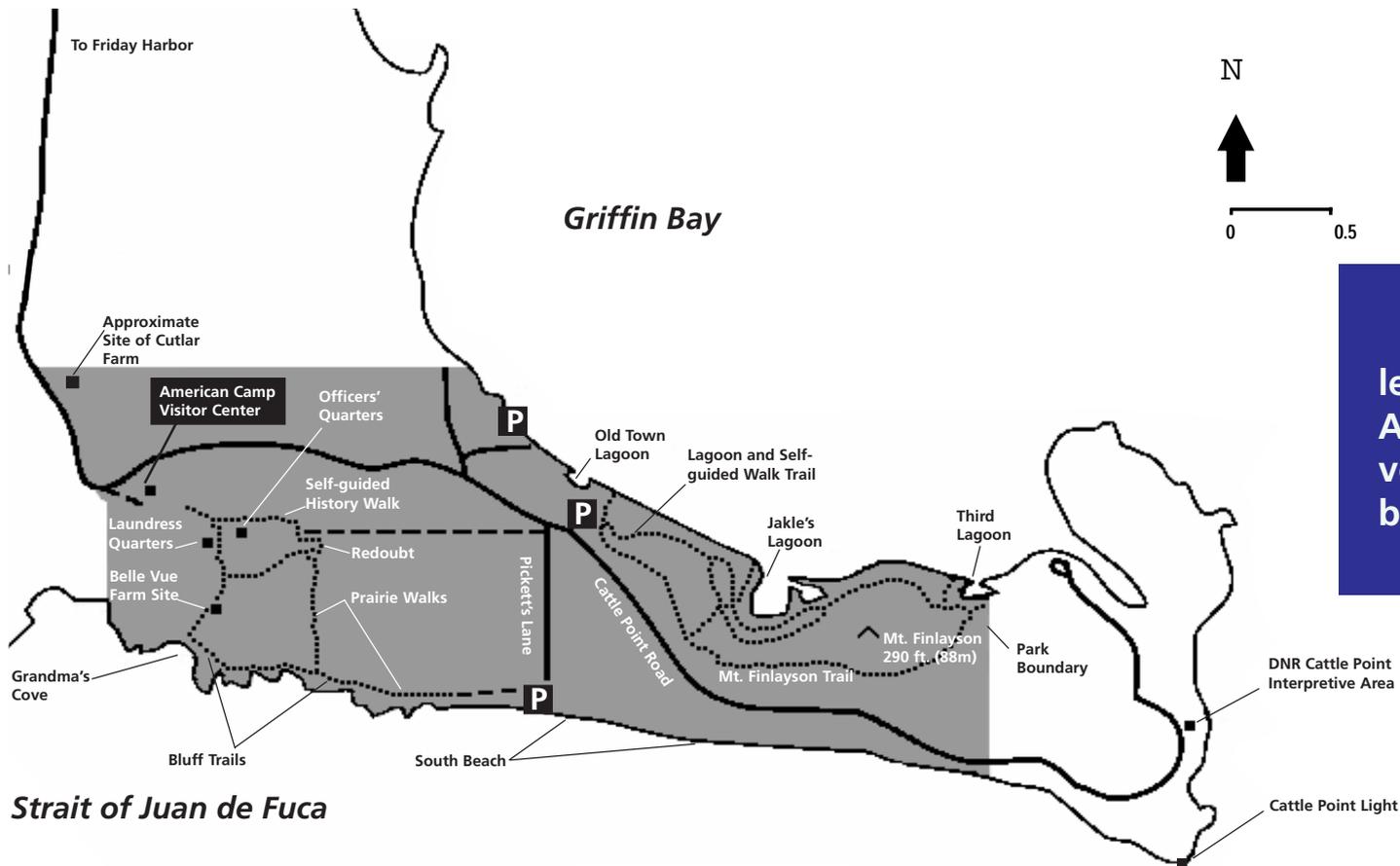
*The Audubon Society Field Guide to the Bald Eagle*.

*American Cetacean Society Field Guide to the Orca*.

*The Restless Northwest: A Geological Study*, by Hill Williams.

Free: *Guide to Native Wildflowers of American Camp*.

# American Camp



Trails range from leisurely to strenuous. Ask a park ranger or volunteer about the best hike for you.

## Strait of Juan de Fuca

**Self-guided history walk** - Relive the Pig War along the trail that starts and finishes in the visitor center parking area. Pick up guides in boxes at the trailhead and follow the numbers. (1.25 mi.)

**Prairie walks** - Primitive tracks crisscross the prairie and trace the bluff from Grandma's Cove to South Beach and back to the visitor center via the Redoubt. A great place for viewing Orca whales, the Redoubt also offers a regional perspective with views of Mt. Baker, the Olympic and Cascade ranges, Vancouver Island, and on an exceptionally clear day even Mt. Rainier, 130 miles up Admiralty Inlet. Sweeping views are also plentiful from the Cattle Point and Redoubt roads and Pickett's Lane. Walkers are advised to use caution as rabbits have excavated warrens throughout the prairie. Stepping in a hole can cause injuries. (2.5 mi.)

**Grandma's Cove** - Stroll downhill to one of the finest beaches on the island. Use caution in descending the bluff. (.25 mi.)

**Mt. Finlayson trail** - Hike along the grassy ridge to the top of Mt. Finlayson where you can see Mt. Baker to the east, Mt. Rainier to the southeast, the Olympic Mountains to the south and Vancouver Island, British Columbia to the west. Come back the way you came or through Jakle's Lagoon. (3-mi. loop)

**Jakle's Lagoon trail** - Pick up a self-guided walk booklet, hike along the old roadbed and enjoy the quiet of a Douglas fir, cedar and hemlock canopy. This wooded area shelters deer and many types of birds, and remains one of the most popular hiking areas on San Juan Island. (1.5 mi.)

**South Beach** - Walk along the longest public beach on the island. This is a great place to see an abundance of shorebirds, and in spring and summer, Orca whales. The beach is mainly gravel, so shoes or sandals are advised. Fires are limited to grates in the picnic areas. (2 mi.)

Hikes

# 2006 Summer Program Schedule: (Continued from Page 5)

(Continued from Page 5)

**Friday, July 21 and Friday, August 25. All shows 7:30 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre. Tickets: \$10 adults, \$6 students.**

**In Concert: Sugar on the Floor**—Folk singer Michael Cohen and the group "Sugar on the Floor" present a variety of songs from the 19th century and other genres. Cohen has worked with the Smithsonian Institution in searching for and cataloging American folk tunes. **7 p.m., Saturday, July 22, English Camp barracks.**

**The People of the Cedar**—Richard Vanderway, education coordinator for Bellingham's Whatcom Museum, makes his seventh annual presentation in the park with an array of objects to provide a glimpse into Northwest Coast Indian culture. **2 p.m., Saturday, July 22, English Camp barracks.**

## Northwest Pioneer Folkways Demonstrations

Janet Oakley, education coordinator for the Skagit County Historical Museum in LaConner, demonstrates pioneer folkways from butter churning to Dutch oven baking and other tasks.

**Noon to 3 p.m., Saturday, July 29, English Camp parade ground.**

**Soldier Games**—Are your competitive juices bubbling? If so, join park staff and volunteers for the Second Annual "Soldier Games," an afternoon of competitions featuring the very events in which U.S. Soldiers and Royal Marines competed during the joint occupation. Records will be kept year-to-year. Fun for all ages. **1 p.m., Sunday, July 30, English Camp parade ground.**

**A Weaving Legacy**—Join Cowlitz Nation weaver Judy Bridges and Fort Nisqually interpreter and storyteller Karen Haas for a fun afternoon of weaving with all-natural fibers, including wild reeds. Bridges is a direct descendant of Hudson's Bay Company pioneers. **Noon, Saturday, August 5, English Camp parade ground.**

**First Nations Flute Concert**—Paul Wagner of the Saanich (Northwest Coast Salish) tribe comes from a lineage of Shneh'em, medicine people who in healing use many tools, including music. Paul also plays the *mbira* and *Chipendani* from Zimbabwe, *didgeridoo*, guitar, bass and drum. He has performed extensively throughout the Pacific Northwest. **2 p.m., Saturday, August 12, English Camp barracks.**

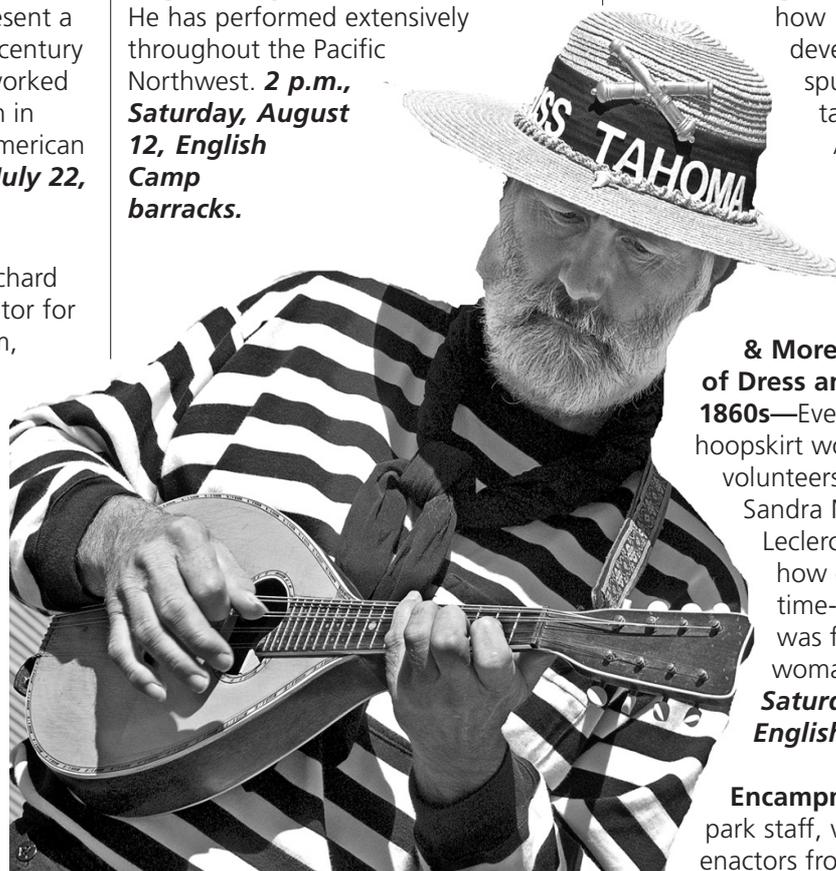
**Gunsmithing on the Frontier**—NPS volunteer Greg Hertel explains the attributes, use and repair of a variety of 19th century firearms, including both flintlock and percussion cap weapons. In addition to demonstrations of disassembling for cleaning, he also will discuss how 19th century development of arms spurred changed tactics during the American Civil War. **1 p.m., Sunday, August 13, English Camp parade ground.**

**Dresses, Drawers & More: The Importance of Dress and Style in the 1860s**—Ever wonder how a hoopskirt worked? NPS volunteers Anne Lorgen, Sandra MacKinnon and Judy Leclercq will demonstrate how complicated and time-consuming dressing was for the 19th century woman. **1 p.m., Saturday, August 19, English Camp barracks.**

**Encampment 2006**—Join park staff, volunteers and re-enactors from throughout the

region as they recreate life on San Juan Island at mid-19th century. The annual event commemorates the peaceful joint occupation of San Juan Island by British and American forces from 1859 to 1872, and the final, peaceful settlement of the Northwest Boundary dispute. Throughout the joint occupation the garrisons regularly exchanged visits to celebrate holidays that included Christmas, the Fourth of July and Queen Victoria's birthday. Typically the men would participate in athletic contests, imbibe in spirits and other refreshments and usually host a dance to which the community was invited. Encampment 2006 includes camp life, blacksmithing, cookery, woodworking and drilling. The highlight of the weekend is Saturday's **Candlelight Ball**, an evening of dancing and refreshments from 7 to 10 p.m.—**All day, Saturday and Sunday, August 26-27, English Camp.**

**All programs are free and open to the public, except where noted. Programs are subject to change. For updates and accessibility information, call San Juan Island National Historical Park at (360) 378-2902 or (360) 378-2240; [mike.vouri@nps.gov](mailto:mike.vouri@nps.gov); or <http://www.nps.gov/sajh>.**



# Archaeology reveals a rich and diverse park heritage

Lying as it does at the crossroads of three great waterways, with sheltered harbors, open prairie and secluded woodlands, San Juan Island has always been a magnet for human habitation. People have been drawn here whether it be to stake a life or find rest and relaxation amid an abundant food source.

As a result, San Juan Island National Historical Park has one of the most significant collections of artifacts in the national park system. The park's collection represents more than 2,500 years of continuous occupation by human beings.

American and English camps have been cited as winter and summer homes of the Lummi, Saanich, Samish and Songhee peoples, as well as the British Royal Marines and U.S. Army during the joint

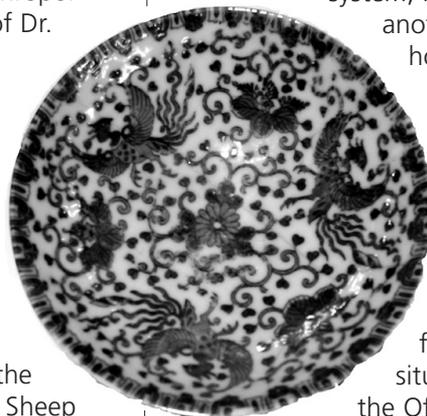


occupation period. The artifacts were excavated over more than 50 years by field schools from the University of Washington and the University of Idaho. The historical objects were unearthed in successive summers between 1970 and 1979 by students from the Laboratory of Anthropology, under the direction of Dr. Roderick Sprague.

Specific sites included English Camp, San Juan Town, Bellevue Farm and the Parade Ground and Laundress' Quarters areas of American Camp. All of the sites date from the Pig War era, 1859-1872, with the exception of Belle Vue Sheep Farm, which was established in 1853 by the Hudson's Bay Company. The students often lived in primitive conditions during the excavations, which lasted several weeks. However, they often were richly rewarded, such as when they discovered the remains of an ancient Coast Salish plank house

under the site of the Royal Marine commissary; or when the flagpole was excavated at the same site, revealing not only an elaborate crib anchoring system, but

another plank house. Idaho crews also succeeded in determining the site of the Laundress' Quarters and found the stub of the flagpole, situated in front of the Officers' Quarters at American Camp.



## Where to see artifacts

Prehistoric artifacts from the UW projects are held in the **Burke Museum** in Seattle, while the historic objects from the UI excavations are being stored at the archival laboratory

and storage facility at **North Cascades National Park** in Marblemount, Washington. A selection of artifacts from the joint military occupation are on view in the **American Camp** visitor center.

The cases are arranged by location—American and English camps and Old Town Lagoon—and contain buttons, badges, company and regimental insignia, tableware and even a chamber pot. Each object represents an aspect of daily life long vanished.

A display of prehistoric artifacts from the park's Burke collections is scheduled to be installed at American Camp by June 2006. Among these objects are projectile points, scrapers, grinding stones and fishhooks.



University of Idaho Field School conducts a dig at American Camp in the 1970s.

## Safeguard your heritage Collecting forbidden

Artifacts within the boundaries of San Juan Island National Historical Park, or any known archaeological site, are protected under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. It is illegal to disturb, dig, remove or possess archaeological objects.

If you encounter archaeological objects on surface areas in the park, please leave them where they are and report the finds and their locations as soon as possible to a park ranger or volunteer. Always remember that each object, no matter how insignificant it may appear, could hold the key to opening a door to the past and further enriching our lives.

# Prairie restoration underway at American Camp

## Long-range project to restore native grasses

If current trends continue, American Camp's prairie may become only a memory. Native grasses and wildflowers are being crowded out by exotics (nonnative plants), and woody species are slowly replacing the grasslands. These changes are occurring because fire is no longer used as a way to regularly restore the prairie, and because Europeans who arrived in the 1850s introduced livestock and invasive, nonnative plants that continue to alter the habitat.

**Why restore the prairie?** The prairie in its original state is integral to the history of the park, which was originally established to interpret the story of the Pig War. Also, this type of landscape is becoming increasingly rare in the Pacific Northwest. "Nearly 95 percent of lowland Puget Sound prairie habitat has been destroyed or heavily altered," said Peter Dederich, superintendent of San Juan Island National Historical Park. "We are trying to restore the native plant community not only to maintain one of the last remaining prairies for future generations, but also to preserve the habitat for many species that are rare and becoming rarer."



**What would happen with no restoration?** "Initially the nonnative plants would force out the natives," Dederich said. "The long-term prediction is that the prairie would all become forested. If you walk to the Redoubt, continue down the steps and look to the left, you'll see where Douglas firs are coming in strongly. That area has been prairie for 3,000 years, but is slowly changing."

**How do native and nonnative communities differ?** "There's a huge difference," Dederich said. "Native plants include wildflowers like camas, chocolate lilies, lupines, blue-eyed Marys and shooting stars, plus lots of native grasses. It's like a little garden. If you go to altered areas, you'll see thistle and three or four species of nonnative grasses that form



NPS fire crews prepared the dark area (above), just down from the Redoubt, for replanting, which is ongoing by Friday Harbor home-school students (below right) and other volunteer groups.

mats so dense they won't support any other plants."

**Initial studies:** Last year preparation began, which included inventory and monitoring of plants, small mammals and birds; mapping remaining concentrations of native plants; and observing the life cycle and ecology of the rare Island Marble butterfly. NPS

fire crews prepared the dark area (above), just down from the Redoubt, for replanting by Friday Harbor home-school students (below right) and other volunteer groups. Planting will continue in this area for two more years.

**Encouraging results:** "Here at American Camp, we have one of the largest remaining pieces of prairie

in Puget Sound at 600 acres," Dederich said. "When we mapped the patches of native prairie, we were pleasantly surprised at how much was left, considering the heavy pressure it has endured for 150 years."

## Findings include three methods of restoration:

**• Removing invasive plants:** Methods to control invasive, nonnative plants include pulling them by hand and selective treatment with herbicides to eliminate the most resistant grass species. Among the targets are Canada thistle, Himalayan blackberry and tansy ragwort.

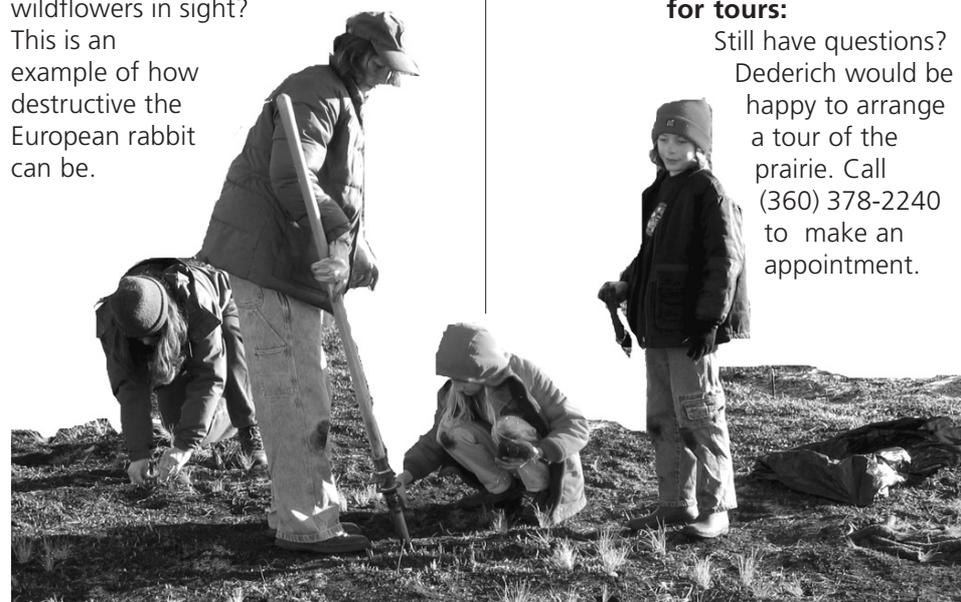
**• Planting native plugs:** Last year National Park Service biologists gathered seeds from the prairie for cultivation. The tubes you see adjacent

to the visitor center contain the native bunchgrass, Roemer's fescue, which is being transplanted in designated sites on the prairie. Newly planted plugs are taking hold in the area west of and below the Redoubt. This year additional grasses and wildflowers will be cultivated as well.

**• Burning designated areas:** Using fire as a way to encourage growth of valuable plants is a time-honored method that was practiced by the Indians. "Many native plants evolved in the presence of fire and need it in order to thrive," Dederich said. "For instance, chocolate lilies are one of the first plants that come back after a burn. There's no real substitute for fire. You can mow or cut back woody growth, but it never really completely duplicates the role of fire in restoring the ecosystem."

**What about the rabbits?** Have you noticed the barren "moonscape" along Pickett's Lane, the stretch with no grasses or wildflowers in sight?

This is an example of how destructive the European rabbit can be.



A nonnative species brought to the island in the late 1800s, they are destroying the prairie by digging extensive burrow systems. Fencing constructed in recent years prevents them from entering certain areas targeted for restoration, and additional ways to control them are currently under discussion.

**How you can help:** You can contribute to prairie restoration in the park! Many groups and individuals are helping by:

- Growing native grasses and wildflowers at home.
- Transplanting plugs on the prairie.
- Pulling invasive plants such as tansy ragwort, thistle and blackberry.

If you would like to participate, call Bill Gleason, chief of resource management, at (360) 378-2240.

## Superintendent available for tours:

Still have questions? Dederich would be happy to arrange a tour of the prairie. Call (360) 378-2240 to make an appointment.

# American Camp eagles' nest marks decade at center

By Susan Vernon

Bald Eagles are prominent members of the San Juan Islands wildlife community. They soar over the island scape on broad, dark wings, and perch atop the conifers, often along the south-facing slopes of the rocky shoreline. Their gleaming white heads are an unmistakable field mark, giving the birds an authoritative air.

Long before European settlement of the islands, bald eagles held forth here. They were totem animals to the First People of the Northwest Coast. Images and stories of eagles figured prominently in their culture. In 1792, Captain George Vancouver explored the archipelago during his Voyage of Discovery. The ship's naturalist, Dr.

Archibald Menzies, wrote of "white-headed eagles" perched in the trees along both sides of the shore and hovering over "the Arms." When American Camp was established in 1859, the presence of bald eagles was cited in post reports. During the boundary survey of that era, the team



A bald eagle hovers over her young in the nest at the American Camp visitor center. All three eaglets fledged.

2003 photograph by Russ Illig.

even dined on bald eagle. Now, nearly 150 years later, the majestic birds still claim the islands as their domain.

The San Juans have one of the highest densities of breeding bald eagles in the lower 48 states. There are over 100 nesting pairs here. While

many bald eagles are migratory, there is a resident population, too. More than one pair of balds reside in the vicinity of American Camp.

An active nest close to the visitor center provides a rare opportunity for the public to watch the big birds raise

a family nearly every year. The bald eagle's nest has been there a long time. It is anchored in an old, broken-topped Douglas fir. The nest tree stands amidst a band of conifers that form a wind break upland of Haro Strait. The aerie is a massive structure of branches, sticks and vegetation nearly nine feet across and three feet deep—not a big nest compared to some others in the islands, but impressive nonetheless.

The nest is ideally situated to give the eagles a panoramic view of their domain. To the west, the inland sea is rich with salmon and other fish, seabirds and waterfowl; and to the south, the prairie hosts rabbits, voles and snakes to feed upon. Griffin Bay, to the northeast, offers more opportunities for prey. Among the conifers, snags provide excellent perching sites for the big birds.

Eight eaglets have survived to fledge from the nest in recent times. The life history of the pair using the site is unknown, for neither bird is banded. But as eagles mate for life and defend their territory year-round, it is relatively easy to monitor their activities.

## BALD EAGLE FACTS

- \* The scientific name *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* means white-headed sea eagle.
- \* Eagles mate for life; if one member of the pair dies, the survivor may take a new mate.
- \* Female bald eagles are larger than males. They weigh up to 14 pounds and have a wingspan of seven feet.
- \* Balds, surviving to maturity, may live 15 to 20 years or more in the wild.
- \* Eaglets fledge in approximately 10 to 12 weeks.
- \* Eagles are opportunistic feeders. They prey upon fish and other marine life, birds, frogs, snakes and small mammals. They also scavenge along the beach.

All eagles are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Possession of an eagle feather, or other body parts, is a felony with a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment.

# Where the wild things are

One of the most remarkable things about San Juan Island is its easy access to wildlife. Here is a sampling of what you may see at American and English camps. Stop by the visitor centers for maps and books.



## Land mammals

### Red fox

Because the red fox can be orange, silver, black or any combination thereof, look for its distinguishing mark: a bushy, white-tipped tail.

### Columbian blacktail deer

This is the largest land mammal in the San Juans, and native to the islands. They can be spotted almost anywhere in the park and on roadsides. Note their large, sensitive ears and tails—black on top and white underneath.

## Sea and shore

### Orca whales

As you walk the bluffs of American Camp between April and September, listen for the soft spouting of an Orca. You can't miss them: a male's dorsal fin can be as tall as a man.

### Dall's porpoises

Don't mistake these for the much larger Orca whale. They have similar markings, but are only about six feet long and have a smaller dorsal fin. When surfacing, they create rooster tails of spray.

### Pacific Harbor seals

Hike to the overlook above Grandma's Cove in American Camp and look down. You may see a seal or two on the rocks or in the water, heads up like periscopes. If you have a powerful scope, you'll see that their whiskers are beaded like strings of pearls.

### River otters

If you think you see a sea otter foraging in the intertidal areas, look again. It's most likely a river otter. Look for them all along the American Camp bluff

trail, at Jakle's Lagoon and in Garrison Bay at English Camp.

### Intertidal creatures

Tide pools are especially rich with sea anemones, pink, purple and orange sea stars, sea urchins, crabs, periwinkles, dogwinkles, great tangles of kelp and the largest chiton in the world: the gumboot.



## Island Birds

With over 200 species and a varied habitat, many birders consider American Camp to be one of the best birdwatching areas in the state. In the woodlands, you'll find winter wrens, chestnut-backed chickadees and rufous

hummingbirds. On the prairie, look for American goldfinches, great

horned owls and 18 varieties of raptors, from merlins to peregrine falcons to northern harriers. In spring, you'll also see Savannah sparrows and vesper sparrows. On rocky shorelines, listen for the piping calls of oystercatchers, and look for surf scoters in protected bays and rafts of seabirds on the open water. Pick up a checklist at the visitor centers.

## Butterflies

A 2004 survey reported 32 species of butterflies on San Juan Island. First to arrive are sky blue Spring Azures, then Pale Tiger Swallowtails, Purplish Coppers, Silvery Blues, Brown Elfins, Two-Banded Checkered Skippers... This is also home to the rare Island Marble butterfly, thought to be extinct but recently discovered on the island in 1998.

## More information

For more information on wildlife in the park, please ask a park ranger or uniformed volunteer. They'll be happy to help. Also, visit our website at [www.nps.gov/sajh](http://www.nps.gov/sajh). On the homepage, click on the "Nature and Science" link.

