Stream Team News

FREE

OLYMPIA • LACEY • TUMWATER • THURSTON COUNTY

EDUCATE • PROTECT • RESTORE

SPRING EDITION
March–April–May 2021

Inside...

To keep everyone safe during this time, Stream Team is following the Governor's most up-to-date COVID-19 guidelines in response to the COVID-19 virus.

We are modifying some of our programming to accommodate restrictions while still helping you learn and stay involved with Stream Team. Volunteer events will be held following State & City health guidelines.

In the meantime, we will post links to exciting videos and provide additional online educational opportunities.

Please visit **streamteam.info** to learn more!

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram to learn what you can do while staying home to keep our waters clean and habitat healthy for wildlife.

Did you know?

Much of the information we reference in our quarterly newsletter can be found on our website! Articles marked with a dragon damselfly icon, like the one to the right, will be posted on our website for easy access under the Library tab.

What else can you find on the Stream Team website?

- Links to virtual presentations, online workshops, and more than 50 educational videos
- Upcoming events and registration information
- Hands-On Science opportunities
- Past issues of the Stream Team newsletter
- Actions for clean water
- A Reference Library to easily locate information for natural yard care, pollution prevention tips and much more!

Visit us at streamteam.info today!

ON THE COVER: Help monitor purple martins. See page 7 for details. Photo by Michele Burton Photographer.

STREAM TEAM MISSION

To protect and enhance the water resources and associated habitats and wildlife in Thurston County through citizen action and education.

Stream Team is funded and jointly managed by the stormwater utilities of the Cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater and Thurston County. Stream Team programs meet the requirements for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for stormwater.

SPECIAL NEEDS?

Citizens requiring special accommodations can call one of the coordinators listed at least one week prior to an event to make special arrangements.

FOLLOW US:

Thurston Stream Team
thurston_stream_team
Thurston County Stream Team

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NEW! NATURE SLEUTHS

Family Fun Adventures!

Are you ready to get outside and shake off winter? Join us for a fun outdoor adventure of discovery! Explore and sleuth-out your chosen mission(s) in one or many of our beautiful local parks. This scavenger hunt will allow you to explore parks and trails throughout Thurston County.

Play along with the Goose Chase app on your phone or iPad, as you look for clues along the trails. Complete each park's mission and receive a Nature Sleuth (park specific) sticker and be entered into a drawing for cool prizes! The more missions you complete, the higher your chances are to win! **Join us April 1 through Sept. 30 with prize drawings held on June 15 and Oct. 1, 2021.**

What is a SLEUTH?
noun: a person who investigates; a detective

Don't have a device for apps? No problem, contact us!

For GooseChase app directions, see the side bar or visit **streamteam.info/nature-sleuths**.

For more information, visit **streamteam.info/nature-sleuths** or contact Michelle **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us** or April **aprilroe@nisquallyestuary.org**.

GooseChase Directions

Participants can join the Nature Sleuths Scavenger Hunt by following these simple steps:

1. **Download** the **GooseChase** iOS or Android app.
2. **Choose to play** as a guest or register for a personal account with a username & password of your choice.
3. Search for and **select the Nature Sleuths 2021 game**, or search by game code **DDK6PJ**.

Complete each park's mission and receive a Nature Sleuth (park specific) sticker like this one! Sticker shown not actual size.

SURVIVE THE SOUND

- **Mon., May 3 – Fri., May 7**
- **SurvivetheSound.org/home**

Join the team with 3 easy steps!

1. Visit **SurvivetheSound.org/home** and choose a fish!
2. **Join** the Thurston County Stream Team group!
3. Tune in all week, **May 3–7**, to see if your fish can Survive the Sound!

Survive the Sound!

Ready, Set, Migrate!

Join Stream Team's salmon migration team and see if you can Survive the Sound! This interactive online game allows users of all ages to follow their favorite fish character as it migrates through the Puget Sound.

The Survive the Sound game uses real data collected from out-migrating fish as part of Long Live the King's, a local non-profit, research efforts in telling the story of salmonids in Puget Sound and the challenges they face. Currently, almost 50% of juvenile fish that try migrating past the Hood Canal floating bridge are eaten by predators. The bridge is supported by floating concrete pontoons, which create almost a solid barrier across the waterway, leaving the fish confused and easy to be caught and eaten.

Thanks to this knowledge, engineers are currently working on designing minor modifications to a few of the pontoons to help the fish find their way past the bridge and out to the ocean! You can also help these fish survive their journey by protecting the water they swim in. Picking up after your pet, fixing vehicle leaks, using a commercial car wash and practicing natural yard care can all help protect water for these fish every day.

Join the Thurston County Stream Team group and see if you can Survive the Sound!

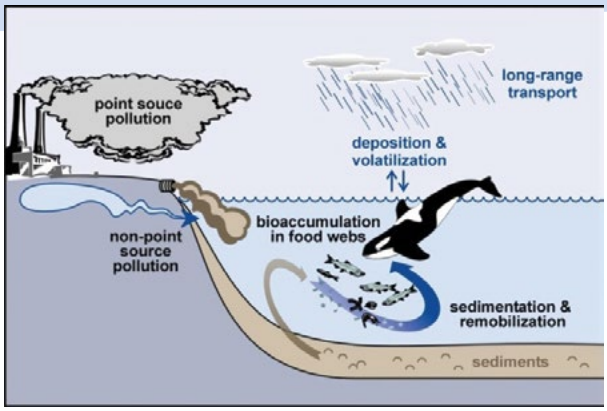
Springtime *Whale Watching* in Washington

Marine wildlife sightings in Puget Sound and even Thurston County have become increasingly common. Both resident and transient orcas travel our waterways in search of food. In 2019, whale sightings set a new record with 740 orca whale sightings in the larger Salish Sea! This includes the Strait of Georgia, Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound. If you were lucky enough to spot any whales this winter, it was likely one of our endangered resident orcas from the J, K, or L pod. Our resident orcas travel throughout the Salish Sea from late spring to late summer and are often spotted between October and February each year.

Transient orcas travel the Pacific Coast throughout the year and enter Puget Sound in spring and fall. Some marine biologists theorize that the increase in sightings may be due to improved water quality and increased seal and prey populations. This is good news, but transient orcas still need our help to improve our local water quality and recover from human-caused challenges to their survival.

Better Water Quality Equals More Whale Sightings

Like all marine species, whales and porpoises need clean water and access to food free of contaminants for their survival. Unfortunately, water-born pollutants accumulate in whales from eating contaminated prey, such as Chinook salmon, which make up 80% of resident orcas diet. Other challenges orcas and various whale species face, include underwater noise pollution, declining populations of prey species, and loss of habitat. Luckily, there are many ways to protect and improve local water quality.



Saving Orcas Begins with Protecting Local Water Quality!

Remember, stormwater runoff flows directly into local streams and Puget Sound. Keep our waters clean by:

- Picking up after your pet—bag it, trash it, EVERY TIME
- Installing a rain garden
- Fixing vehicle leaks
- Practicing natural yard care and planting native vegetation
- Reporting spills—only rain down storm drains
- Taking your vehicle to a commercial car wash

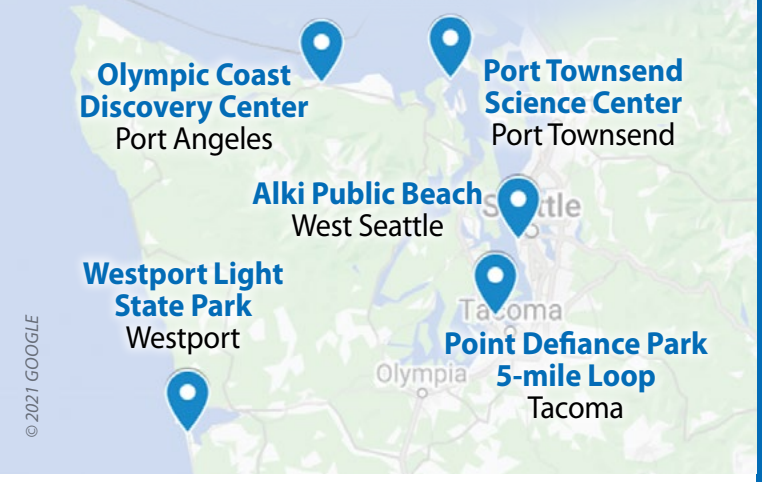
To learn about more simple actions, visit the Georgia Strait Orca Actions page **georgiastrait.org**.

WATCHING MARINE MAMMALS BY BOAT

- **Remain at least 100 yards from whales and at least 50 yards away from dolphins, porpoises, seals, and sea lions.** Federal law has specific distance requirements for some species including keeping **200 yards away from killer whales** in Washington State inland waters.
- **Limit time** spent observing individuals and groups of animals to **30 minutes or less**.
- **Do not chase, encircle, or leapfrog animals with any watercraft.** Do not trap animals between watercraft or the shore.
- **Avoid approaching marine mammals when another watercraft is near.** Multiple vessels are more likely to disturb marine mammals.
- **Avoid excessive speed or sudden changes in speed or direction** near whales, dolphins, or porpoises.
- **When encountering marine mammals, slow down and operate at no-wake speed.** Put your engine in neutral when whales approach to pass.
- **Avoid approaching whales, dolphins, and porpoises when calves are present.** Never put your watercraft between a mother and calf.
- **Be wary of breaching and flipper-slapping whales** that might injure people or watercraft.
- **Stay clear of light green bubble patches** from humpback whales. These are sub-surface bubbles before whales rise to feed at the surface.
- **Never pursue or follow marine wildlife**—any vessel movement should be from the recommended distance and slightly parallel to or from the rear of the animal. If you need to move around marine wildlife, do so from behind. Never approach head-on.
- **Do not intentionally direct your watercraft or accelerate toward a marine mammals** with the intent of creating a pressure wake allowing them to bow or wake-ride.
- **Slowly leave the area if marine mammals show signs of disturbance.**

Where to See Whales

Whale watching can be done from watercraft or from popular whale-watching destinations accessible along Puget Sound and coastlines throughout Washington. Near Port Townsend or Seattle, gray whales, Minke whales and dolphins can be spotted. Here are just a few of Stream Team's favorite road trip destinations for whale watching this spring:



Know Before You Go!

- Check out the Whale Trail viewing guide for more locations and whale-watching tips by visiting **thewhaletrail.org/regions**.
- Check the Whale Sightings report and Map for updated information on where whales are being seen at **tinyurl.com/ya6knoqb**.

Remember, when watching marine wildlife on shore or from boats and other watercraft, keep your speed slow and keep your distance. Follow NOAA's guidelines for safe viewing at **fisheries.noaa.gov/insight/viewing-marine-life**.

Share your whale watching experience!

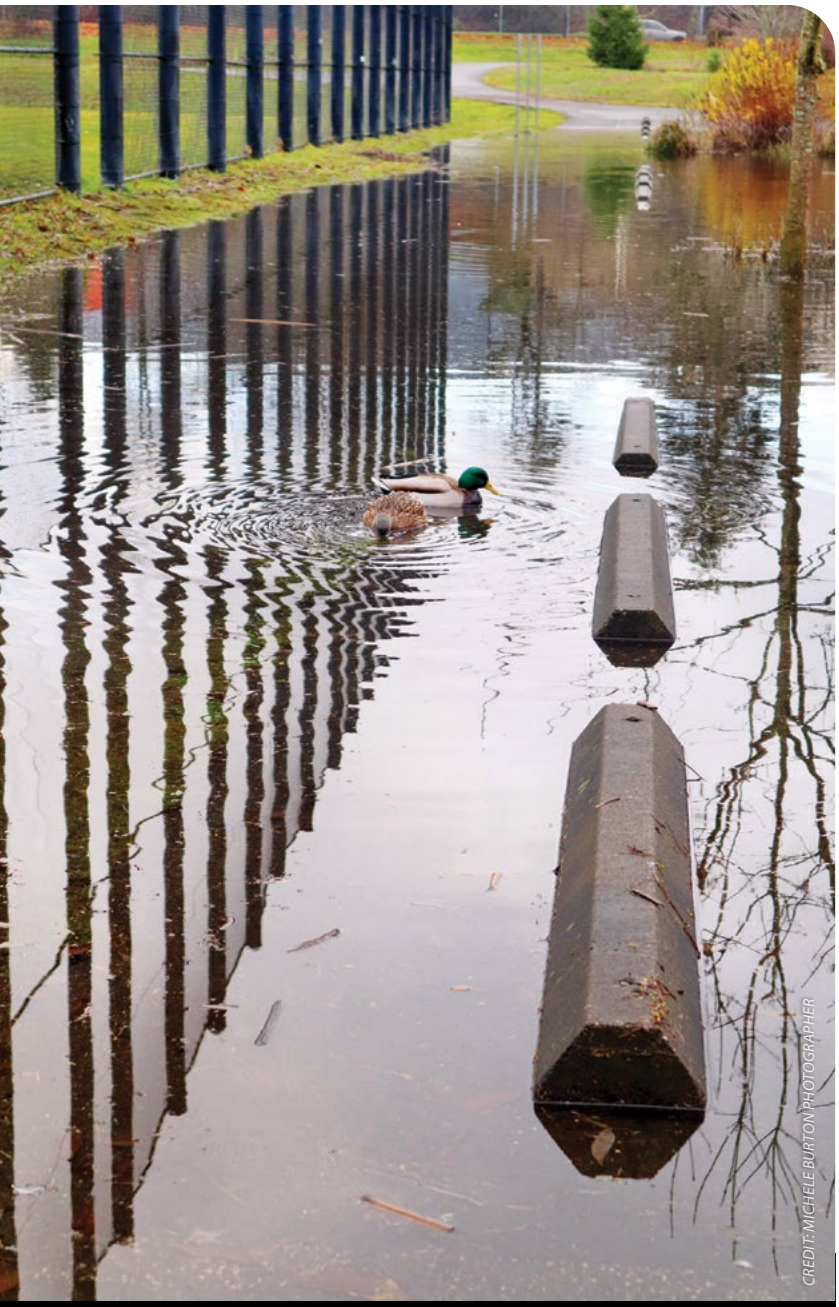
Email pictures of your whale watching adventures to **streamteam@ci.lacey.wa.us** and we will share them on Stream Team's Facebook and Instagram pages! Happy viewing!

Work-Life Balance at *Yauger Park*

Did you know that Yauger Park is not only a great place to play, it's also a critical part of Olympia's stormwater management system? The Yauger Park Regional Stormwater Complex is designed to store, channel, and filter runoff from 700 acres of surrounding land. These key functions work to reduce pollution in our local waterways and flooding in Olympia's streets. The 29-acre stormwater facility was constructed in 1977 when the Capital Mall was built. In 2010, the wet pond was deepened and enlarged to create more stormwater storage capacity and add water quality treatment.

The Urban Water Cycle

Before Yauger stormwater facility was built, rainstorms caused nearby roads to flood frequently. This was due to changes in land cover that occurred over time. As Olympia's West Side grew, trees and plants were removed and more hard, impervious surfaces covered the landscape. Impervious surfaces, like roads, parking lots and roofs played a big part in the changes to the natural water cycle. Rain no longer soaked into the ground as it used to and stormwater runoff became a problem, causing flooding.



CREDIT: MICHELE BURTON PHOTOGRAPHER

Yauger Park is designed to flood, it's parking lots slowly infiltrate stormwater.

As cities grow and develop, stormwater management also needs to grow. During an average year, Olympia receives 51 inches of rainfall. Due to the 3,096 acres of impervious surface, this much rain **creates over 4 billion gallons of stormwater annually!** Yauger Park is one of five regional stormwater facilities in Olympia designed to tackle localized flooding and provide cleaner water for salmon, wildlife and people to enjoy.

Letting the Rain Soak In

When rain or snow falls on undisturbed natural areas, it infiltrates or soaks into the ground. Water is held in the ground for months or years and is slowly released into local waterways and groundwater. This is part of the natural water cycle that helps maintain water levels in streams, rivers and wetlands during the dry summer and autumn months. Abundant, cool, clean water is essential to the survival of salmon and other aquatic species. It also helps recharge aquifers that supply Olympia's drinking water.

When it rains hard in Olympia, water pours from surrounding storm drains into Yauger Park. It's clouded with sediment and pollution that gets picked-up along the way. The low impact development features at Yauger are designed to mimic the natural water cycle found in nature by absorbing and filtering stormwater runoff:

- **Permeable and porous parking lots** soak up rain and help filter out heavy metals, oils, and gasoline from vehicles.
- **Rain gardens** are designed to filter, store and infiltrate stormwater runoff. There are eight rain gardens scattered throughout the Yauger Park parking lot.
- **Series of Bioswales** have been installed that pre-clean stormwater coming from storm drain pipes.
- **Concrete weirs** were designed to slow the flow of stormwater, creating pools for sediment to settle out. obble bars below the weirs also help to prevent erosion.
- **The Pond** is designed to hold and filter runoff and provide urban wildlife habitat. It can hold up to 27 million gallons of water. That's enough to fill 36 Olympic swimming pools! The water is slowly released to Black Lake Meadows, then through Percival Creek and ultimately into Budd Inlet.
- **Native plants** help to filter stormwater in the pond, rain gardens and bioswales.


CREDIT: MICHELE BURTON PHOTOGRAPHER

Added Benefits

The primary job of Yauger Park's stormwater features are to help control flooding and treat stormwater runoff. But it also has an additional benefit—like providing habitat for wildlife. The plants at Yauger were chosen to support the site's water detention and treatment functions but they also provide beauty and needed habitat for wildlife. The pond, rain gardens and bioswales bring a reliable source of water, protective native vegetation and abundant food (leaves, seeds, and berries), which attracts birds, amphibians and insects.

Designed to Flood

Even with its water-helping features, Yauger Park is not big enough to manage all of the stormwater runoff it receives—there is just too much impervious surface in the surrounding area. That is why the park is designed to flood. During exceptionally high water events, standing water can fill the park all the way to its northern boundary. City crews monitor the water levels and release the excess water in a controlled manner, minimizing flooding downstream.

Next time there is a heavy rainfall you might think about visiting Yauger Park and see for yourself all the work it is doing to protect our local waterways and neighborhoods!

Coming Soon

The City of Olympia will begin developing informative signs for the stormwater features at Yauger Park later this year. If you are interested in helping us tell Yauger Park's stormwater story by providing input and feedback on the new signs, please contact Susan McCleary by email at **smcclearly@ci.olympia.wa.us** or by calling 360-570-3794.

For more information on the urban water cycle, visit **wetsciencecenter.org/aboutwater/urban-water-cycle-story**.


CREDIT: MICHELE BURTON PHOTOGRAPHER

PURPLE MARTIN MONITORING TRAINING

- **Wed., April 14 • 5 – 6 p.m.**
- **East Bay Nest Boxes located at Olympia Ave NE and Marine Drive NE**

With the help of conservation efforts, purple martin populations are on the rise! Purple martins are the largest swallow in North America and every year they migrate from the southern climes of South America to nest over the waters of Puget Sound. Our most visible colony resides in downtown Olympia on East Bay. Nest boxes are mounted to the existing pilings just off Marine Drive NE, across from the Hands On Children's Museum. Like other migrating birds, purple martins have high site fidelity. This means that they come back to the same nest box year after year to nest and raise their young. Everyday actions that protect clean water like fixing leaking vehicles and planting native trees help to ensure these birds have healthy habitats to return to every year.

Interested in tracking the nesting habits of these beautiful birds? Stream Team is looking for volunteers interested in monitoring the nest boxes at East Bay in downtown Olympia from April to September. Attend a short training on monitoring basics and bird identification.

In keeping with State guidelines this is an ideal COVID-19 event that easily allows for 6 feet of physical distancing. Please comply with State guidelines and wear a mask for everyone's safety.

To register, visit **streamteam.info/events**. For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

Featured Creature

Northern Flying Squirrel
(Glaucomys sabrinus)

Mysterious Creatures of the Night

Northern Flying Squirrel *(Glaucomys sabrinus)*

The northern flying squirrel is Washington's smallest tree squirrel and is rarely seen, as they are strictly nocturnal. Being nocturnal, they are active for about two hours beginning an hour after sunset and an hour and a half to two hours before sunrise. They have large black eyes that help them see in the night and measure about 10–12 inches long from nose to tail. They have soft silky cinnamon brown and gray fur above with creamy white fur below. Their tail is furred, long, and flat. These squirrels have a short life span of about four years in the wild.

Flying squirrels might be more appropriately called gliding squirrels, as they do not possess true flight as a bird or bat. Flying squirrels have a loose fold of skin called a patagium, or fleshy membrane that is furred and extends from the wrist of the foreleg to the ankles of the hind leg. This fold allows the squirrel to glide from branch to branch, acting as a kind of parachute. When gliding, it uses its legs to steer and its flat tail as a rudder to help it change direction and "brake". Flying squirrels can cover more than 150 feet in a single glide.

The northern flying squirrel lives in dense or mixed conifer and deciduous forests. They are found in the northern United States along the Canadian border and into Canada and Alaska. Flying squirrels are omnivores, eating mostly nuts, lichen, fungi, and supplementing their diet with fruit and insects. These squirrels love to eat truffles and it is believed that they may have an important role in the dispersal of mycorrhizal fungi spores throughout the forest.

Flying squirrels nest above the ground in trees, making their nests out of twigs and bark, lined with fur, feathers, leaves, and conifer needles. Northern flying squirrels are social animals and have been known to share nests with groups of up to eight adults and juveniles. Individuals also join into single-sex groups for warmth during the winter.

Northern flying squirrels are prey to owls, hawks, weasels, martins, coyotes, and domestic cats. They are a primary food source of the endangered spotted owl. They can avoid predation through their nocturnal habits and their agility in trees. Currently it is believed that northern flying squirrels are surviving well, although there are few to no studies being conducted on their presence or population status. It can be predicted with the harvesting of mature forests and urbanization, that the northern flying squirrel faces an increase in habitat loss and possible decline in population.

Your Own Backyard Bird Count

You can contribute to science and make a difference!

This spring, help scientists by collecting data in your own backyard! For just 10 minutes a day, at least one day a week, record all the birds you see in your backyard. Submit your findings to eBird at **ebird.org/home**, an easy to use data collection site hosted by Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Citizens, like yourself, all over the world are participating in this endeavor to help scientists understand the changes in bird populations and migration timing.

For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

CREDIT: MICHELE BURTON PHOTOGRAPHER

Celebrate Earth Day with Us!

Each year, on April 22, we celebrate the beginning of the modern environmental movement. Join us this spring as we reflect on how our everyday actions impact local waterways and Puget Sound, and what we can all do to prevent stormwater pollution.

Making small changes in our daily lives can help keep pollution out of our waterways. Visit our Actions for Clean Water pages at **streamteam.info** to learn more about how you can help make a difference.

Earth Day Video Contest:

Middle School & High School students, this challenge is for you!

This spring, we want you to show us how you can help protect Puget Sound. It's easy! Submit a short video highlighting an action you can take to help keep water clean and then email it to us!

- Visit **streamteam.info**
- Select one of the five Actions for Clean Water
- Use your creativity to produce a video highlighting that action!
- Submit the video to **streamteam@ci.lacey.wa.us**

Submit videos by Monday, Mar. 29.

Online voting will open Friday, Apr. 2, and winners will be announced on Earth Day! Prizes will be awarded for the first, second, and third place videos, including up to a $100 gift card.

For more information, visit **streamteam.info**.

CREDIT: MICHELE BURTON PHOTOGRAPHER

Marine Creature Adventures!

This spring follow videographer and underwater drone operator, Matt Balder, as he partners with diver, Kevin Seslar, bringing us live footage of the marine critters that call the waters of Puget Sound home. Matt and Kevin will be traveling to different locations around South Sound to bring you a glimpse of the fascinating world below the sea.

Tune in! To see the live stream or the recorded videos go to **youtube.com/user/jazzorama2000/featured**.

5 Steps to a *Healthier Lawn* This Spring!

Spring is finally here!

Flowers are blooming, grass is growing, and so are weeds!

Weeds often outcompete the grass in our lawns because they can survive in soil conditions that are stressful for grass, such as compacted, acidic, or low nutrient soils.

Follow these 5 steps to create good growing conditions for a healthier lawn:

1 Test your soil.

A basic soil test will help you find out if your soil needs lime. A soil test will also tell you how much nutrients, such as nitrogen and potassium, that your lawn needs.

Did you know most soils in Thurston County are high in acid? When the soil beneath your lawn is too acidic your lawn can't get the nutrients it needs. That's because acidic soils slow down microbial activity in soil. Microbes in soil help make nitrogen and potassium available for your grass to use. Adding lime to your lawn helps to reduce the acid by raising the pH in your soil. This helps make nutrients, such as nitrogen, available for your lawn to use.

TIP ***Thurston Conservation District provides soil testing for a small fee.*** *For more information, call 360-754-3588 or go to* **thurstoncd.com/working-lands/soil-testing**.

2 Aerate your lawn before you add lime or fertilizer.

Overtime the soil beneath your lawn becomes compacted from tires rolling over it, heavy foot traffic, and even from heavy rains. Compacted soil cannot hold as much water, oxygen, and other nutrients that grass needs to thrive.

On the other hand, many weeds thrive in compacted soil and will outcompete your grass in these conditions.

Aerating your lawn removes small "plugs" of soil, which creates spaces in the soil. Aerating helps grass improve root development by allowing air and water to soak into the soil.

If you are a resident of the City of Olympia, you can apply for a free one-day rental of an aerator. Go to olympiawa.gov/pollutionprevention for more information.

TIP *You can hire a lawn care service to aerate for you or rent an aerator. To save money, you could* ***share the rental of an aerator with your neighbors!***

3 Add Lime

Pacific Northwest soils tend to be acidic (low pH), which is ideal growing conditions for moss, but not for grass to grow. Washington State University recommends a soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 for lawns. If your soil pH is less than 5.5, it will take multiple applications of lime over time to help increase the pH. If your lawn is also shady consider embracing the moss!

TIP *Apply up to 35 lbs/1,000 sq. ft. of pelletized dolomite lime up to four times per year to help increase your soil pH over time.* ***Apply lime during spring and fall rains to help it work into the soil faster.***

How to Maintain Stormwater Ponds (and other stormwater facilities)

This spring, due to Covid-19, Thurston County and the Cities of Lacey, Olympia & Tumwater are hosting our popular workshop online. You will learn how to inspect and maintain stormwater ponds, storm drains and other stormwater facilities located in your neighborhood.

This online workshop will combine self-paced learning with a virtual field trip to help you learn:

- How to identify parts of your neighborhood's stormwater system
- How to determine if they need to be cleaned or repaired
- How to fill out and turn in your inspection and maintenance form
- Things to consider if hiring a contractor

For more information, contact Kelsey Crane at **kelsey.crane@co.thurston.wa.us** or 360-409-1703.

To register, go to **thurstonlearning.org/courses/stormwater-inspections-maintenance-for-neighborhoods-spring2021**

FREE ONLINE WORKSHOP

■ **April 12 – 30**

4 Overseed your lawn and cover with a thin layer of compost.

Overseeding your lawn will help grass take root in bare and thinning areas instead of those pesky weeds!

After you overseed, lightly rake in ¼ inch to ½ inch of fine compost. The compost will cover the seed and add nutrients and microorganisms to the soil that will help your lawn thrive!

TIP *Use a perennial rye/fine fescue grass seed mix that is designed for growing conditions in the Pacific Northwest.* ***The best time to overseed is right after you aerate!***

5 Use a slow-release fertilizer

When applying fertilizer, use a slow-release natural organic fertilizer. Slow-release fertilizers rely on soil organisms and other processes to "release" nutrients at a rate at which plants can use them, making it less likely that the nutrients will wash away and be wasted.

Use a calibrated fertilizer spreader and follow package instructions carefully. Measure your lawn size and weigh the fertilizer. More is not better!

Watch the City of Olympia's short yard care videos. Go to ***olympiawa.gov/city-utilities/water-resources/pollution-prevention/natural-yard-care.aspx***

TIP *Go to* **co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg/pdf/FertilizerGuide.pdf** *for information on how to select a slow-release fertilizer.*

Four Reasons to Just Say "No" to Fertilizers that Include Insect, Disease or Weed Control

1. Weed and feed fertilizers spread harmful chemicals throughout your lawn (even where they are not needed).
2. Weed and feed fertilizers include herbicides or pesticides that target weeds that don't even grow in the Pacific Northwest!
3. Weed and feed fertilizers kill the helpful microorganisms in your soil that help your grass grow green and healthy.
4. Pesticides from weed and feed fertilizers can run off with stormwater and end up in our local waterways.

For information about how to choose lawn and garden products that are less toxic, visit **growsmartgrowsafe.org**.

Habitat Restoration Begins at Home

One of the best ways you can help protect and restore Thurston County's forests and natural areas starts in your own backyard! Invasive plants are not only problematic for the landscaping around your home, they are also a source of infestations in our public spaces. Many problem weeds are in fact garden plants that have been transported outside of our own yards. Once they escape, they become invaders that crowd out native plants and damage local ecosystems. Problem weeds can quickly overtake surrounding natural areas and stormwater facilities. Some are toxic to humans, pets, and livestock.

Removing invasive plants at home is the first step in habitat restoration. Here is what to do:

- Identify and remove invasive plants
- Replant the area with native understory plants to help keep invasive plants from returning
- Avoid wildflower seed mixtures (these can contain up to 90+% invasive weed seeds)
- Remove spent flower heads from problem weeds to reduce propagation
- Remove any volunteer seedlings that emerge

Invasive Plants

Invasive plants tend to grow and mature quickly and are well adapted to our environment. They have no natural predators to keep them in check. Here's a list of invasive plants to look for:

- Butterfly bush
- Yellow archangel
- Periwinkle
- Ajuga
- Himalayan blackberry
- English ivy
- Tansy ragwort
- Herb Robert
- Scotch broom
- Knotweed

Invasive Trees

You might be surprised to learn there are also invasive tree species in our region. They are more common than you may think. Some invaders like English holly and laurel can grow in dense shade and produce fruit that attract birds. Birds carry the seeds to nearby yards, forests and natural areas where they displace beneficial plants and trees. Please avoid planting these trees:

- English (or cherry) laurel
- English holly
- European hawthorn
- Black locust
- European mountain ash

Invasive Plant Disposal

Invasive plants must be bagged and disposed of in the trash. Never put them in the compost or yard waste bin or dump them in natural areas! Some problem weeds can be disposed of for free at the Thurston County Waste and Recovery Center and Drop boxes. To find out what to do with knotweed, Scotch broom, blackberry, English Ivy and other invasive weeds, visit **co.thurston.wa.us/tcweeds/docs/bad-weeds.pdf**. For more information about identifying, removing, and replacing problem weeds, visit **co.thurston.wa.us/tcweeds** or visit Stream Team's reference library at **streamteam.info/home-stewardship-reference-library**.

5 Spring Cleaning Tips

Are you feeling the buzz to start cleaning this spring? Here are 5 tips to make sure your cleaning activities don't create pollution that can wash into our streams, lakes or Puget Sound.

- Sweep driveways and sidewalks to remove dirt and debris (instead of pressure washing or using a hose). Dispose of dirt and debris in the garbage.
- Cover the ground with tarps before pressure washing your house to capture paint flakes. Direct dirty wash water into a grassy or graveled area to keep debris from washing into storm drains.

  If your home was built before 1978, test your paint first before pressure washing or repainting to find out if it contains lead or heavy metals.

- Cleaning out your garage or cabinet? Take old paint, thinners, motor oils, chemicals and cleaning supplies to Thurston County's HazoHouse to dispose of for FREE! For more information, call (360) 867-2912.

- When cleaning your carpet, make sure to dispose of the dirty wash water properly.
  - If on a sewer system, filter out the debris and flush dirty wash water.
  - If on a septic system, filter and spread dirty water over a landscaped area. Place filtered debris into the trash.
  - If contracting a service, ask the company about their wash water disposal policy.
- To clean outdoor windows, wash with a sponge and warm water mixed with a few drops of soap and vinegar. Rinse and squeegee dry.

REPORT SPILLS!
If you see something, report it.

If you see someone dumping anything into a storm drain or drainage ditch, or if you find a small-scale spill, call the City or County 24-hour hotline. Feel free to remain anonymous.

Olympia 360-753-8333
Tumwater 360-754-4150
Lacey 360-491-5644
Thurston County ...360-867-2099

If you find a large-scale spill, call the Washington Department of Ecology at (360) 407-6300. For life-threatening spill emergencies, call 911.

Kids' CORNER

Park Trail Scavenger Hunt

There is a lot to see and discover walking along trails in our local parks!

CIRCLE THE FOLLOWING THINGS YOU FIND IN THIS PICTURE.

- Nurse log
- Madrone Tree
- Mushrooms
- Sea Star
- Stream
- Duck
- Blue heron
- Salmon
- Deer
- Frog
- Racoon
- Fern

CREDIT: ARTIST LISA DONZE

NATURE SLEUTHS

Do you want to participate in Stream Team's outdoor scavenger hunt?

Turn to page 3 to find out more about Stream Team's Nature Sleuth scavenger hunt running April 1st – Sept. 30th.

COLOR THIS PAGE YOURSELF! Visit **streamteam.info** to download and print this coloring page.




Stream Team *Events*

In keeping with State guidelines, these ideal COVID-19 events easily allow for physical distancing. Please comply with State guidelines and wear a mask for everyone's safety.

For additional events, event details or to register, please visit our website at streamteam.info and click on the calendar icon.

MARCH – MAY

Backyard Bird Count

March – May

This spring, help scientists by collecting data in your own backyard! For just 10 minutes a day, at least one day a week, record all the birds you see in your backyard. Submit your findings to eBird at **ebird.org/home**, an easy to use data collection site hosted by Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Citizens, like yourself, all over the world are participating in this endeavor to help scientists understand the changes in bird populations and migration timing.

For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

Climate Quilt Exhibit

Spring Arts Walk
April 2021
Olympia City Hall, 601 E 4th Ave, Olympia

Join us for an innovative display of art reflecting climate solutions. In this inspiring exhibit. *Quilting for the Climate*, 'squares' painted by community members come together in a quilt to express how together, we can lower our collective carbon footprint. See page 16 for more details.

Interested in creating a "square" for the quilt display? Contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

New! Family Fun Adventures! Nature Sleuths Scavenger Hunt

April 1 – Sept. 30
streamteam.info/nature-sleuths

This scavenger hunt will allow you to explore parks and trails in Thurston County while looking for clues! Join us on the Goose Chase app to play along April 1 through September 30. See page 3 for more details.

For more information, contact Michelle **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us** or April Roe **aprilroe@nisquallyestuary.org**.

How to Maintain Stormwater Ponds (and other stormwater facilities)

April 12 – 30

Learn more about inspecting and maintaining your neighborhood's stormwater pond with this free online workshop!

For more information, see details on page 11 or contact **Kelsey Crane at kelsey.crane@co.thurston.wa.us** or 360-409-1703.

Purple Martin Monitoring Training

Wed., April 14 • 5 – 6 p.m.
East Bay Nest Boxes located at Olympia Ave NE & Marine Drive NE

Interested in tracking the nesting habits of these beautiful birds? Stream Team is looking for volunteers interested in monitoring the nest boxes at East Bay in downtown Olympia from April to September. Attend a short online training on monitoring basics and bird identification.

To register, visit **streamteam.info/events**. For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

Survive the Sound!

Mon., May 3 – Fri., May 7
SurvivetheSound.org/Home

Join Stream Team's salmon migration team and see if you can Survive the Sound! This interactive online game allows users to follow their favorite fish character as it migrates through the Puget Sound. To learn more, visit page 3 or contact Meridith at **mgreer@ci.tumwater.wa.us**.

Climate Conversations: Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Webinar Panel

Wed., May 12 • 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Join us to learn about this new innovative plan and ask questions of our panel of experts. See page 16 for more details.

To register, visit **streamteam.info/events**. For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Home Rain Gardens for the Salish Sea: Two-part Webinar

Tues., April 13 & 20 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Create a dazzling landscape feature while protecting our South Sound water resources and waterways! Join a live two-part webinar on rain garden design, construction, planting and care.

For details, visit **nativeplantsalvage.org/rain-garden-webinar** or contact **info@nativeplantsalvage.org** or 360-867-2167.

COVID-Safe Spring Native & Water-wise Plant Sale

Late April: online ordering
May 7 – 9: "Curbside" pick-ups by appointment

Safely shop online beginning late April, then drive to the nursery for curbside pick-up the weekend of May 7 – 9, by appointment.

For details, visit **nativeplantsalvage.org/online-spring-plant-sale-1** or contact **info@nativeplantsalvage.org** or 360-867-2167.

Stream Team

EDUCATE • PROTECT • RESTORE

2000 Lakeridge Dr SW
Bldg 4 #100
Olympia, WA 98502
streamteam.info

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS

- **Wed., May 12 • 6:30 – 8 p.m.**
- **streamteam.info**

Climate Conversations: Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan Webinar Panel

In September 2020, Thurston County and the cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater presented the science-based Thurston Climate Mitigation plan. The plan identifies strategies and actions the Thurston region can take to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change and meet emissions-reduction goals.

The Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan proposes to:

- Achieve a 45% reduction of 2015 greenhouse gas levels by 2030.
- Achieve an 85% reduction of 2015 greenhouse gas levels by 2050.

Join us to learn about this new innovative plan and ask questions of our panel of experts. To register, visit **streamteam.info/events**. For more information, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us** .

Did You Know...

CO_2

In 2018, the Thurston region's carbon footprint was **3,070,839** metric tons of carbon dioxide. That's an average of almost 11 tons per person.

The 3 largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions within Thurston County are energy use in **residential buildings** (32%), **passenger vehicles** (27%), and energy used in **commercial buildings** (22%).

In 2019, Washington State passed legislation that requires Puget Sound Energy and other utilities around the state to transition to **100% renewable energy by 2045.**

More than **10,000 customers** in Thurston County participate in a **"Green Power" program** offered by Puget Sound Energy.

An acre of forest can store, or sequester, **4–10 tons of carbon dioxide per year,** depending on the mix of species and age of trees.

CLIMATE QUILT EXHIBIT

- **SPRING ARTS WALK**
- **Olympia City Hall, 601 E 4th Ave, Olympia**
- **April 2021**

Climate Quilt Exhibit

Join us for an innovative display of art reflecting climate solutions.

Quilts have been used as a way to share messaging and create change in America for hundreds of years, from abolition in the 19th century to equality in the 20th. This year, we are compiling individual art pieces and constructing them into quilts to tell a story about climate action in Thurston County.

In this inspiring exhibit, *Quilting for the Climate*, 'squares' painted by community members come together in a quilt to express how we can lower our collective carbon footprint.

Many things contribute to climate change including our everyday actions. This means the solution lies with each of us to do our part to lower our collective carbon footprint like reconsidering our transportation, our food supply, and our energy use.

Through art, we will bring each individual's creative reflection on climate change into one meaningful work, pieced together and on display through Spring Arts Month in the windows of Olympia's City Hall.

If you are interested in creating a "square" for the quilt display, contact Michelle at **mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us**. Finished art due March 22, 2021.