



# Short Wave

San Juan Island National Historical Park

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



## THIS WEEK: JULY 25-31, 2011

### Special Programs

**A** Prairie's Life — in a region known for its ample amount of rainfall, lush forests and coastal climate, American Camp's prairie is unique in the Puget Sound/Salish Sea Basin. Join Park Historian Mike Vouri and Integrated Resources Chief Jerald Weaver for a journey across time as they explore changes in the resource from the glacier to today's restoration efforts. **7 to 8:30 p.m., Monday, August 1, San Juan Island Library.**



The Hudson's Bay Company recognized the American Camp prairie as an ideal place to establish Belle Vue Sheep Farm in December 1853.

### Clammers beware: biotoxins are deadly



**T**he Pacific Northwest is world famous for its shellfish. But did you know harvesting your own clams and mussels can be deadly?

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) is a potentially fatal illness caused by eating shellfish that have consumed a microscopic organism called *Alexandrium cantenella*. The toxins found in this organism are extremely potent nerve poisons.

While commercially harvested shellfish must meet rigorous state health standards, recreational harvesters on San Juan Island must pay careful attention to Marine Biotoxin Closures which are declared by the state.

Clamming is permitted in San Juan Island National Historical Park at English Camp, north of the dinghy dock on Garrison Bay, and around Bell Point to the Wescott

Bay boundary. A valid Washington State fishing license is required. Be sure to check park bulletin boards for the latest information on PSP, or ask the park staff in the Royal Marine barracks, which is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Additional information is available by calling the Washington state PSP hotline at 800-562-5632 or go online to [ww4.doh.wa.gov/gis/mo-gifs/biotoxin.htm](http://ww4.doh.wa.gov/gis/mo-gifs/biotoxin.htm)



### Park goal is to restore balance to AC prairie

**F**or thousands of years prior to European contact, native peoples regularly visited the prairies of San Juan Island. They collected flower bulbs for food and grasses to weave into baskets. They hunted for deer and fished for salmon. They kept the prairies clear of encroaching trees and weeds by burning the grass each year.

With the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company and other settlers in the mid-1800s, the prairies were turned into pastures, potato fields and hay fields. Nonnative plants replaced many of the native prairie plants. Nonnative European rabbits dug tunnels in the fragile soil and ate native plants. By the 1900s, agriculture, grazing, and fire suppression had greatly altered the natural prairie ecosystem.

Today, the prairie at American Camp is preserved, but not unaltered. Park employees are working hard to restore the prairie's natural balance by, on a limited basis, removing nonnative weeds and grasses, planting native grasses and reintroducing prairie fires.

### Program of the Week

**Contra Dancing at English Camp** — Folk singer Michael Cohen and local folk musicians present an evening of traditional folk tunes and dancing. **Mondays from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., June 20 to August 15, English Camp barracks.**

**For dates and times of weekly programs go to [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) or visit us on Facebook or Twitter.**

**English Camp Visitor Center**  
3905 West Valley Road  
(360) 378-4409, Open 9-5 Daily

**American Camp Visitor Center**  
4668 Cattle Point Road  
(360) 378-2240, ext. 2233, Open 9-5 daily