

Enjoy Spring along Hood Canal

From the Olympian

- **What:** A day trip to Hood Canal, with stops at Potlatch State Park and Dosewallips State Park
- **To do:** Spring is a great time to visit Hood Canal. You'll beat the summer crowds and see a lot of wildlife, enjoy beautiful beaches and maybe even dig a clam or two.

The trip really begins at Potlatch State Park, which is 12 miles north of Shelton on U.S. Highway 101. In the spring, Potlatch's 9,570 feet of beachfront comes alive. Look into the water, and you'll see oysters and clams — and their empty shells — along with chum salmon fry and other fish. Shorebirds and ducks always are hanging around the park.

Lots of people scuba dive, kayak and windsurf from the beach. Potlatch is a popular spot for fishing, clamming and shrimping during the spring and summer. Potlatch also has beautiful lawns and wooded areas, and the many picnic areas make it a great spot to stop for a snack.

- **Camping:** U.S. 101 cuts Potlatch into two areas. The beach side of the park is day-use only. Camping is available year-round across the highway. There are 19 tent spaces and 18 utility spaces. Go to www.parks.wa.gov for more information on camping.
- **Comforts:** Potlatch has a restroom with two showers and a picnic shelter.
- **Directions:** Stay on U.S. 101 through Shelton. Keep a sharp eye on you odometer, and you'll see the sign for the park about 12 miles from Shelton.
- **Safety:** Don't walk on the beach barefoot, as the many shells and barnacles will cut your feet. Be careful if you cross U.S. 101.
- **Gear:** All Hood Canal visitors should bring rain gear, sunscreen, a change of warm clothes, birding guides, binoculars, spotting scopes, sunglasses, cameras and refreshments.
- **History:** The park was the site of tribal potlatches, which are gift-giving ceremonies. The area later became a resort and sawmill. The park was created in 1960.
- **Rules:** Pets must be on a leash, and owners must clean up animal waste. No fireworks allowed. No glass or metal cans allowed on the beach.
- **Information:** Call the state Department of Fish and Wildlife at 866-880-5431 for up-to-date information on shellfishing, shrimping, fishing and crabbing. For more information about the park, call 360-877-5361 or go to www.parks.wa.gov.

Dosewallips State Park

If you prefer a longer adventure, drive to Dosewallips State Park, which is 40 miles from Shelton on U.S. 101.

The big attraction at Dosewallips this spring starts April 1, when the sport clamming season starts. Clammers are restricted to the area inside the boundary markers and signs posted on the beach.

The season will be open through Sept. 30.

Clam diggers must have a valid license. Call 360-902-2500 and press 2 for more information, or go to <http://wdfw.wa.gov>. For the Shellfish Rule Change hot line, call 866-880-5431. • **Other activities:** Dosewallips is popular with anglers, beachcombers and wildlife watchers.

Dosewallips also offers year-round camping, 5,500 feet of beach on Hood Canal and 5,400 feet of shoreline on Dosewallips River. This is a beautiful park, with lots of flat, grassy areas.

- **Camping:** Dosewallips has 100 tent sites, 40 utility spaces, a dump station, three restrooms and two showers. Dosewallips also has three platform tents for overnight rental.

To reserve a campsite or platform tent, call 888-226-7688.



An early season fly looks for an easy meal in an English daisy growing on the lawns at Potlatch State Park. (Chester Allen/The Olympian)



A male robin searching for an early spring meal is a common — and welcome — sight at many spots along Hood Canal. (Chester Allen/The Olympian)