



# Whoo News October 2016

## Welcome to my favorite time of year!

Fall has arrived in a rather interesting manner, 100 degree temperatures giving us a little throw-back to summer. No matter how short the heat is, we all welcome each season here on the water as it brings with it different wildlife, sunrises and sunsets and beautiful boating weather. Daylight savings time doesn't change until November 6<sup>th</sup>, but I can feel the change coming. Looking at the foliage color is a beautiful sight to what's ahead.

Other exciting news is the addition of Cassandra, our new office assistant. Some of you have already had the pleasure of meeting her, with her infectious laugh, and if you happen to come by on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, you will have an opportunity to experience her and her dog Rawlings. They surely fit in with our Owl Harbor family, and we are glad they are here.

Looking forward to the  
Fall festivities,  
Devery,  
Max, Abby, Stephanie,  
Twitchell and Capt.  
Jack Sparrow

## What's Happening.....

### August 27<sup>th</sup>

The Dinghy Poker Run was a fun time with Diane coming in with the best hand and walking away with \$100 cash, second best hand went to team, Alan and Daniel, dock neighbors, who took the \$50 cash prize. It was followed up with a fun BBQ and good laughter.



### \*September 17<sup>th</sup>

Thank you to all that participated in this year's Owl Harbor Annual Coastal Clean Up. It was another huge success with great enthusiasm from our volunteers. We cleaned the waterways of Seven Mile Slough, and the road area on Jackson Slough Rd., and Brannan Island Rd. Afterwards we celebrated with a delicious BBQ, drinks and ice-cream.

### \*October 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>

Rio Vista Bass Derby Festival. Enjoy car show, fireworks, boat show, fishing gear, arts and crafts and much more. A fun family day.

### \*October 29<sup>th</sup>

Join in the fall fun for an afternoon of pumpkin carving and potluck. We will be gathering on the clubhouse decks around 11:30 am to carve pumpkins and eat and drink our way through some scary, but delicious, goodies. We will have the pumpkins, so bring your carving tools.



# Fishing

A great catch by Connor in our very own Seven Mile Slough. Looks like "Billy the Bass" is having a conversation with Connor!



# Happy Harvest

We gathered Kurtis's pumpkins that he grew on the levees this year. What a beautiful array of different styles, shapes and colors.

Happy Fall Y'All



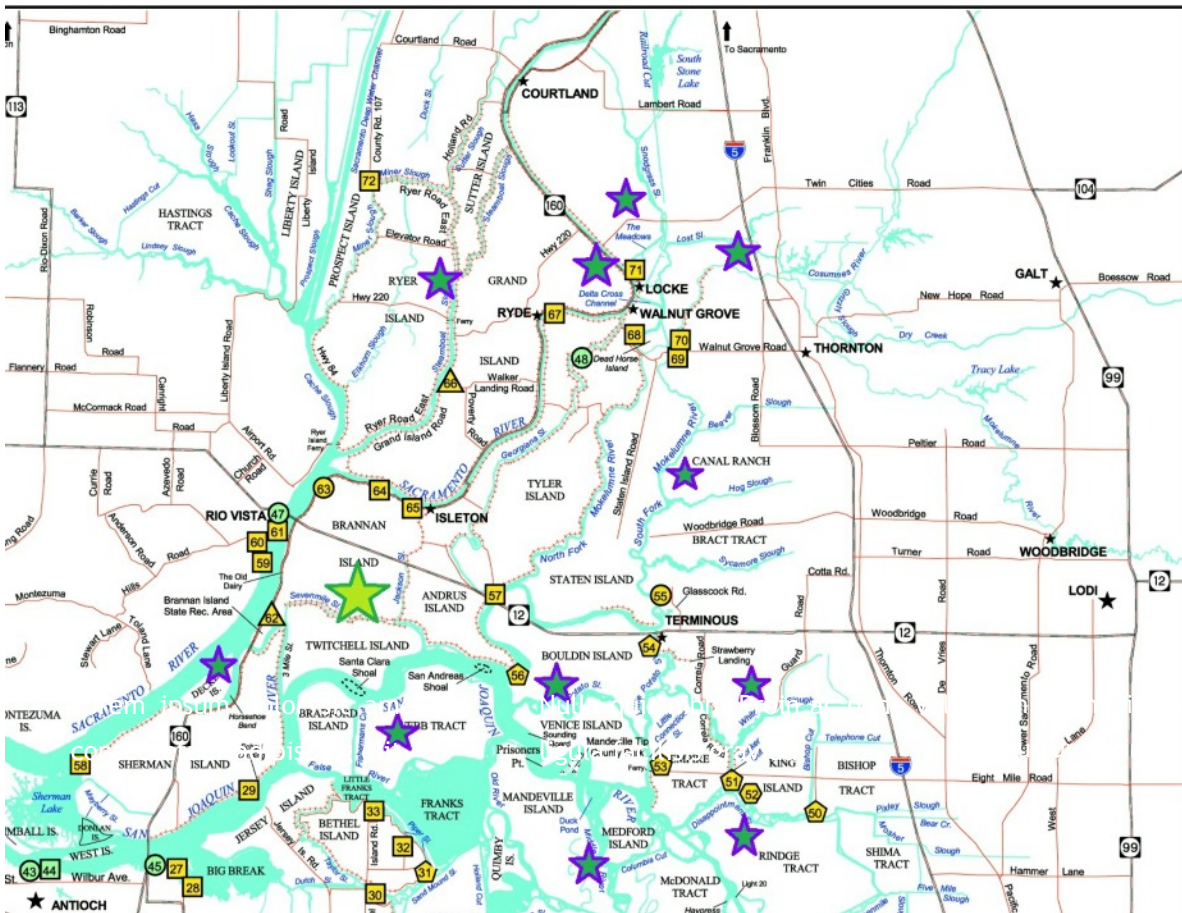
# First Geese

The first geese of the season flew over the marina on August 29th. A good indication that we will be having a wet winter.



# Best Places to Drop Anchor

We are gathering locations on a map in the office of the best places to anchor out. We would love to hear from you, and your favorite spot - if you feel like sharing the secret.



Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

1. Potato Slough
2. Bedroom Two
3. Frank's Tract
4. The Meadows
5. Walnut Grove/Locke
6. White Slough
7. Disappointment Slough
8. Middle River
9. Georgiana Slough
10. Decker Island
11. Steamboat Slough

## 10 Reasons Boating is Good for the Soul

Boat trips are just plain good for the soul. The sense of peace and tranquility that can be restored to you while gently rocking on the waves is undeniable. Although, if you need more reasons to take a boat trip, or are trying to convince someone else why a boat trip is well worth the time, look no further.

Take a look and see what you think.

1. Lasting Memories
2. Unplug
3. Lower Anxiety
4. Follow Your Passion
5. Soak Up the Sun
6. Learn Something New
7. Join the Community
8. Branch Out
9. Stay Balanced
10. Embrace Adventure

Reward yourself with sun and plenty of fun filled adventure on the water. Come stay at the dock or explore one of the many locations we've mapped out for you. It's all about boating!



## Mysterious “Blobs” are Bryozoans.....

Every year we are asked from concerned tenants describing peculiar, “jelly-like” masses spherical in shape. People most often see them either attached to standing timber or wind-rowed along shore after storms with strong winds. Most folks assume that these blobs are fish/frog eggs, potentially harmful freshwater jellyfish, or mutant organisms reflective of poor water quality conditions or pollution.

However, they are very unique invertebrates known as bryozoans, or more commonly “moss animals” and are generally a sign of good water quality and rarely cause problems.



Although there are over 5,000 species of bryozoans, only about 50 species inhabit freshwater. Bryozoans are sessile organisms, meaning that they attach to submerged surfaces like boat docks, standing timber, and brush piles. Bryozoans are colonial, as each blob is actually a large group of individual, identical organisms

called zooid's. Largest colonies can exceed two feet in diameter and contain several million zooid's, but most are one foot or less in diameter. Each zooid produces a gelatinous protective layer made mostly of water, giving the bryozoan colony a firm but slimy form. Each zooid also has whirls of feeding tentacles which filter microscopic plants and animals (plankton), similar to feeding mechanisms of sponges. Millions of feeding tentacles create constant water flow around the bryozoan, creating a constant food source for the colony as well as a host of other freshwater invertebrates that use the bryozoan as habitat.

Bryozoans require warm water to remain active in their colonial form. Colonies can grow very rapidly, doubling in size in about 4 days under ideal conditions. As water cools in late fall, the colony dissolves and releases floating reproductive structures called statoblasts, which are similar to eggs or spores. Statoblasts are transported by wind and waves but also have tiny hooks to aid in dispersal by attaching to other objects or organisms. They can remain dormant for extended periods and withstand drying and freezing. When conditions are favorable, statoblasts germinate into individual zooids which continue dividing to eventually form a new bryozoan colony.

Although much is still unknown regarding bryozoan impacts, all current research indicates they are completely harmless to humans. Since bryozoans are sessile organisms, they cannot move to escape predation. Most species have developed chemical defenses that prevent other organisms from eating them. In fact, preliminary studies indicate chemicals present in saltwater bryozoans may fight cancer and are now being tested in clinical trials.

This information was written by Todd Driscoll, a district fisheries management biologist in Texas.

So, there you have it.

# News & Noteworthy.....

## Whoopin' and a Hoppin' in the Delta

Whoopin' and hoppin', activities once thought to primarily apply to teenagers and the inebriated, is soon to be upon us again. Catching thermals in the sky as they make their way along the Pacific Flyway, the Sandhill Cranes are returning to the Delta.

### THE ANNUAL MIGRATION

Traveling from Canada and Alaska, the cranes fly south up to 400 miles a day to return to the same winter roost year after year. The Woodbridge Ecological Reserve (a.k.a. Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve) provides one of the Delta's premier viewing opportunities for these ancient birds. One of the oldest known surviving bird species, dating back 10 million years, sandhill cranes were nearly hunted to extinction in the 19th century. In 1983, state recognition of the greater sandhill crane as a threatened species began the recovery of the species through strategies to provide key habitat for wintering and nesting

cranes. Today, habitat loss, high-voltage power lines and human disturbance pose the greatest threats to sandhill cranes.

The Hoppin' is the crane's courting dance, though they are known to hop for any good reason, and sometimes for no reason at all. Distinctively dressed in shades of gray with a bright red forehead, they stretch their wings, pump their heads, bow and leap. Standing an average of four feet tall with a wingspan of seven feet, the cranes and their mating dance make quite a sight out in an open field. The Whoopin' begins at dusk. After feeding on bugs and leftover grains during the day, the cranes, who mate for life and stay with each other year-round, call for their mate at the communal roost. After reuniting each evening, they roost in shallow water, resting with heads tucked under their wings.

Come watch the Fly-In! Docents for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife take enthusiasts on tours of the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve on

weekends, October through February. Book a tour and plan to arrive 90 minutes prior to sunset, at the south viewing site of the Preserve, which is west of Interstate 5 off Woodbridge Road. Docents will explain crane lifestyle, the natural history of the surrounding area and the management of the Reserve before you caravan to the north site where a viewing shelter hides visitors from the incoming cranes. At dusk the fly-in begins as the cranes come to roost for the night. The tour ends about ½ hour after dusk, giving you plenty of time to enjoy a beautiful Delta sunset.



## Green Alternatives

White vinegar kills mold, cleans drains and as a varnish cleaner. Hydrogen peroxide is a great alternative to bleach. Baking soda is another great cleaner mixed usually with water for scouring, head cleaner, fiberglass stain remover and more. Try Gojo for cleaning shorepower cords as well as oily surfaces.



## Oil and Gas

Absorbent pads are always great to have and are always available in the office. They are good for catching fuel drips or oil. Other good preventative measures are to inspect fuel lines and hoses periodically - its always a good habit. Check out the bilge shark too, you may like what it offers.



## Minimum Required Safety Equipment Checklist

Vessels from 16' to less than 40' need the following items at all times:

1. Life Jackets USCG Approved,
2. Fire Extinguisher,
3. Visual Distress Signal
4. Bell and Whistle

For specifics on vessel sizes and details go to:

[www.dbw.parks.ca.gov](http://www.dbw.parks.ca.gov)

