

SHORE STEWARDS NEWS

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Beach Etiquette

We teach our children important lifetime values when we introduce them to the wonders of nature and instill a sense of respect and stewardship toward all life. The following Beach Etiquette guidelines were borrowed from the WSU Beach Watchers website, courtesy of Island County Coordinator Dot Irvin. Please visit the website at <http://www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu/>

A marvelous window opens for us during spring and summer low tides. This is when we can explore the rich diversity of intertidal life otherwise out-of-sight and out-of-reach on our favorite beaches. Good beach etiquette calls on us to respect these creatures, their dwelling places and all life. A meaningful way to learn about marine life is to take photographs or draw pictures, being careful not to poke, injure or disturb creatures and not to remove them from their natural setting.

We recommend the following "beach etiquette" be observed by adults and children during spring and summer low tides. Feel free to copy and distribute to kids and houseguests:

- **Please leave** all living organisms in their native habitat, where you find them on the beach.
- **Walk with care** to avoid injuring plants and seaweed. Plants and seaweed prevent erosion, provide habitat and hiding places for intertidal organisms. They also provide food for many animals and insects.
- **Step on bare spots** as much as possible, walking slowly and at a safe pace.
- **Overturn rocks with care**, if doing so. When finished looking, return them gently to their original position to avoid crushing anything that lives underneath.
- **Kneel quietly by tidepools**, taking care not to walk in them or put your hands into them.

- **Fill any holes** you may create if digging for clams. Piles of sand left on the beach can smother other organisms.

- **Leave creatures attached to rocks**, rather than removing them for study, since removal may kill them. Since it is natural for them to be attached, more can be learned about them by observing where and how they choose to live.

- **Enjoy anemones** without prodding them. Anemones will often squirt water if poked, but sadly this can kill them because they need that water for survival until the next tide covers them.

To view archived copies of past Shore Stewards Newsletters, go to www.shorestewards.org

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