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EDITION 2: DECEMBER 2, 2020

During these challenging times, it is easy to feel a little disconnected from our communities. We are hoping this newsletter will help to reconnect people with nature through a common goal of a healthy Sound.



FEATURED VOLUNTEER

Here is where you can learn about a featured volunteer that is championing the Sound's protection - Luke Scott



Luke on the Providence 1903 tall ship during their Ocean Bridge learning journey.

Hi there! Like many coastal lovers before me, I swapped Lake Ontario for the Pacific Ocean.

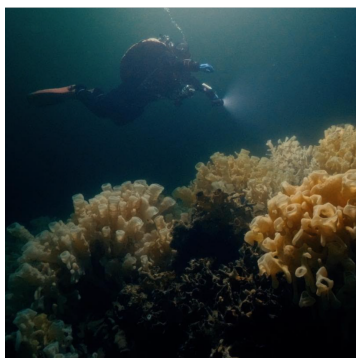
Through a youth program known as [Ocean Bridge](#), I am developing a deeper connection and understanding with the area. As an introduction to the West Coast, the experience was nothing short of extraordinary. We spent five days on Gambier Island at Camp Fircom, learning about the ways of knowing of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

We explored Gambier by kayak, and by foot, reveling in its peace and natural beauty. We spent an afternoon brainstorming and working in collaboration with the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative. In the following days, we toured the Gulf islands on The Providence - a breathtaking ship, the likes of which I have never seen. Built in 1903 she is a classic seven sail working cargo vessel, who has spent over a century plying the sea earning a living as a commercial fishing vessel, coastal freighter and charter vessel.

On day one of our voyage, we made our first stop at Bowen Island. We unloaded the ship and spent the afternoon planting trees in a riparian zone in Crippen Park. The focus for the riparian planting was to restore and enhance the wetlands, rivers or streams inside the park. The new trees planted will help stabilize the land by filtering the water, preventing erosion, and moderating flow.

GOOD NEWS

Here is where you can read about a positive story in Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound



Documentary film Moonless Oasis sheds light on Átl'ka7tsem's unique sponge reefs

Written by - Jessica Schultz, [Marine Ambassador for the Biosphere Region](#)

Few people are aware that below the surface of Átl'ka7tsem lies a wondrous and unique world: deep

sea reefs made of glass. Glass sponges - so-named because their skeletons are made of silica - build critical ecosystems that filter sea water, store carbon and create important biodiversity hot spots. Unfortunately, many people don't know about them.

Connecting people to nature is key for conservation. Knowing this, many members of our community have worked tirelessly for years to raise awareness about the sponge reefs. Thanks to their work, the reefs caught the attention of filmmakers Nate Slaco and Bryce Zimmerman, who produced [Moonless Oasis](#). The documentary, free to [watch on CBC Gem](#), showcases the organizations and individuals working on sponge conservation, and tells the story of how all of us as ordinary people can move the needle on the things we care about. The film has garnered attention from national media including Canadian Geographic, CBC and many others, further amplifying awareness about the reefs. Learn more about sponge reefs from some of their early discoverers [here](#).

The glass sponge marine refuges are among the core protected areas of the Biosphere Region. At a time when the world is losing many species and wild places, sponge reefs provide a hopeful example of how communities can do things right. There is still time to protect and properly manage sensitive and valuable ecosystems. By connecting more people to the underwater world, Moonless Oasis is a collective win for ocean conservation in Átl'ka7tsem.

GET INVOLVED

Here is where you can learn about some opportunities to help contribute to a healthy Sound



Tide coming in at Kwil'akm / Mannion Bay on Nexwlélexwem / Bowen Island
Photo credit: Viv Lynch

- **iNaturalist:** [Add your biodiversity observations and images](#)
- **Observe Record Report (ORR):** [Report a fisheries violation](#)
- **Ocean Wise:** Check out the [Ocean Watch Education Kit](#) with connections to the BC Curriculum
- **Sailors for the Sea:** [Join the Green Boater](#) community to protect our oceans

For more ways to get involved click [here](#) for a list of our partners in Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound.

EVENTS

Here is a place to learn about some of the events happening around the Sound

Monthly Bird Count in Lighthouse Park

- December 6th 2020 8:30am hosted by the Lighthouse Park Preservation Society [click here](#)

Healthy Oceans, Healthy Communities ~ Speaker series

- December 16th 2020 6:30pm hosted by the Nicholas Sonntag Marine Education Centre [click here](#)

35th Brackendale Winter Eagle Count

- January 3rd 2021 hosted by the Squamish Environment Society [click here](#)

Stories from the Bay - Stewardship storytelling event about Kwil'akm/Mannion Bay

- January 20th 2021 6 - 7:30pm hosted by the HSA Marine Reference Guide [click here](#)

**Thank you for reading and loving
Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound as much as we do!**

Read [Edition 1](#) to hear about the creation of these newsletters. Edition 3 of the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Volunteer Newsletter will be out March 3rd 2021.

We want to hear from YOU! Know about something or someone that you would like to be featured? [Contact here](#)

Newsletter by - Bridget John

A warm thank you to our partners listed below



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Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative Society
howesoundbri.org

You have received this email because you are connected to one or more of the following groups: the Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region Initiative, the Future of Howe Sound Society, Ocean Bridge and/or the Howe Sound/Átl'ka7tsem Marine Reference Guide.

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