

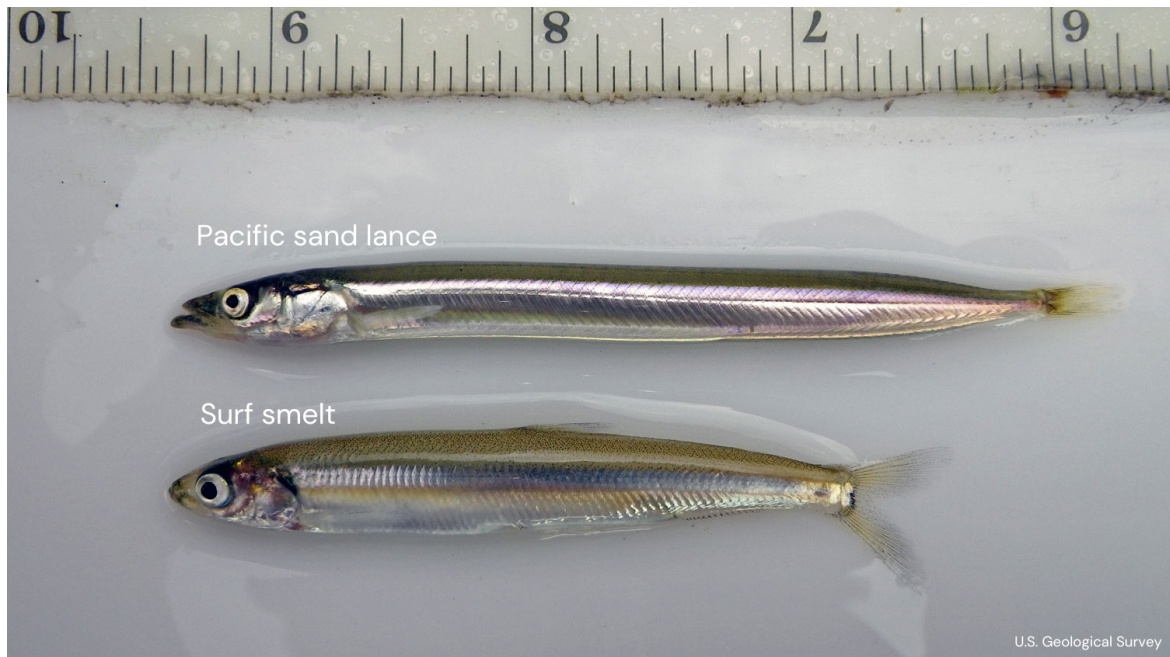


Hey there!

You're receiving this email because at some point you've lended a helping hand to our **community science forage fish monitoring program**. Whether you're an active part of it now, or have moved on from the program, we want to sincerely thank you for your participation; this program would not be what it is today without our fantastic volunteers.

Welcome to the first issue of **The Schooler**—your bimonthly PSS newsletter for all things forage fish. If you've been with us for a while, you might remember a version of this newsletter from a few years ago. We've given it a revamp with the goals of: (1) fostering a greater sense of unity amongst our forage fish volunteer teams, (2) providing regular updates on our survey results, and (3) helping you to stay connected to forage fish in the news.

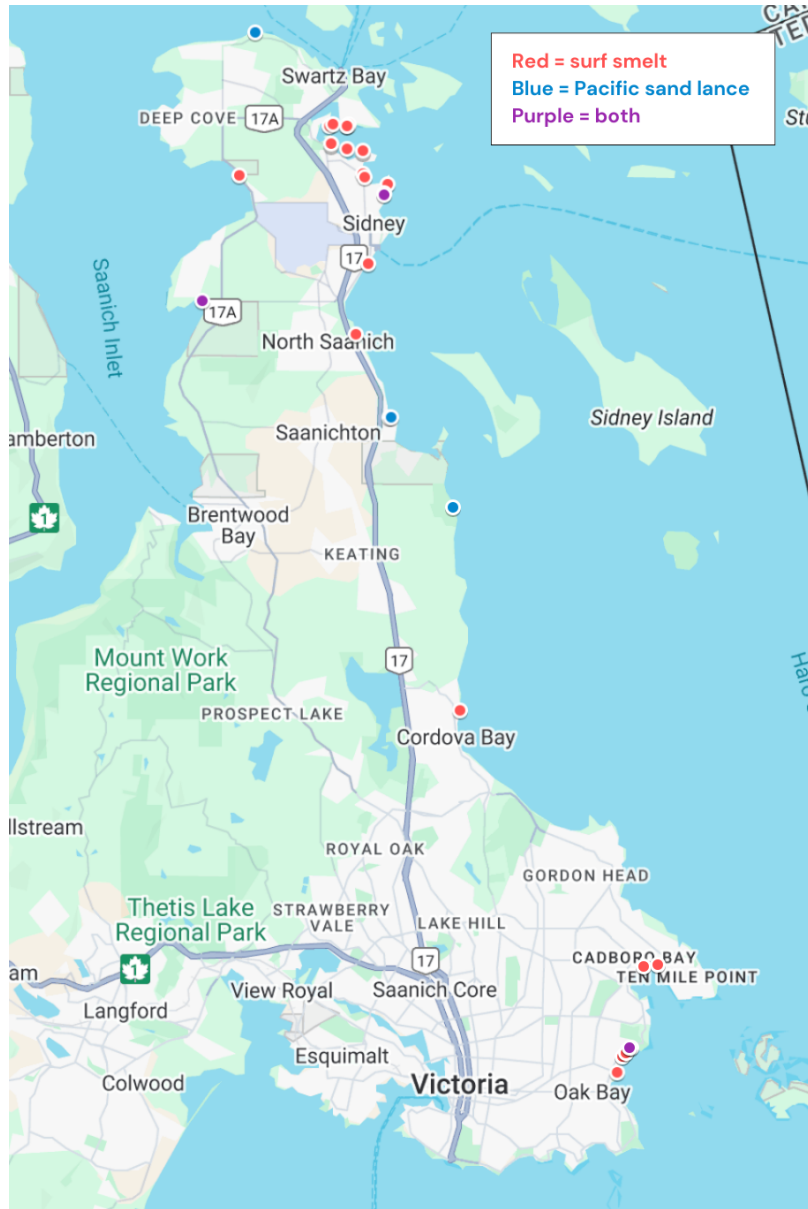
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Here are the results for surveys completed in **January and February of 2025**:

Location	Date	Surf smelt	Pacific sand lance
Surfside Beach (Amherst): Site 2	Jan 3, 2025	5	0
Seaspan Beach: Site 1	Jan 5, 2025	0	0
Arthur Drive Beach: Site 2	Jan 7, 2025	0	4
Patricia Bay Beach: Site 1	Jan 7, 2025	1	0
Coles Bay Beach: Site 3	Jan 7, 2025	0	10
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 2	Jan 8, 2025	712	0
Albert Head Lagoon Beach: Site 2	Jan 9, 2025	0	0
Tryon Beach: Site 1	Jan 10, 2025	512	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 3	Jan 11, 2025	1	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 1	Jan 11, 2025	0	0
Cadboro Bay Beach: Site 5 (Gyro Park)	Jan 15, 2025	8	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 2	Jan 15, 2025	1	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 4	Jan 15, 2025	0	0
Breakwater Beach: Site 1	Jan 16, 2025	28	0
Roberts Bay Beach: Site 4	Jan 17, 2025	95	0
Seabreeze Beach: Site 1	Jan 19, 2025	0	0
Seabreeze Beach: Site 2	Jan 19, 2025	0	1
Lillian Hoffar Park Beach: Site 1	Jan 19, 2025	2	0
Tulista Park Beach: Site 1	Jan 21, 2025	11	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 3	Jan 22, 2025	202	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 2	Jan 22, 2025	1,232	0
Cadboro Bay Beach: Site 5 (Gyro Park)	Jan 22, 2025	3	0
Taylor Beach: Site 4	Jan 23, 2025	0	0
Cy Hampson Beach: Site 1	Jan 23, 2025	13	0
Cordova Bay Beach: Site 1 (Agate Park)	Jan 23, 2025	19	0
Tryon Beach: Site 3	Jan 24, 2025	796	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 2	Jan 24, 2025	2	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 3	Jan 24, 2025	10	1

Willows Park Beach: Site 8	Jan 24, 2025	16	1
Victoria International Marina: Site 1	Jan 25, 2025	0	0
Cadboro Bay Beach: Site 1	Jan 27, 2025	8	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 5	Jan 27, 2025	7	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 6	Jan 27, 2025	15	0
Arthur Drive Beach: Site 1	Jan 31, 2025	23	0
Coles Bay Beach: Site 3	Feb 1, 2025	2	3
Seabreeze Beach: Site 2	Feb 1, 2025	0	0
Willows Park Beach: Site 7	Feb 2, 2025	35	0
Cattle Point: Site 1	Feb 5, 2025	0	0
Spoon Bay Beach: Site 1	Feb 5, 2025	0	0
Spoon Bay Beach: Site 2	Feb 5, 2025	0	0
Roberts Bay Beach: Site 1	Feb 6, 2025	111	0
Island View Beach: Site 3	Feb 6, 2025	0	4
Goddard Beach: Site 1	Feb 7, 2025	6	0
Spoon Bay Beach: Site 1	Feb 8, 2025	0	0
Spoon Bay Beach: Site 3	Feb 8, 2025	0	0
Finnerty Cove Beach: Site 1	Feb 10, 2025	0	0
Tryon Beach: Site 2	Feb 13, 2025	291	0
Lillian Hoffar Park Beach: Site 2	Feb 15, 2025	111	0
Resthaven Island Beach: Site 1	Feb 16, 2025	45	0
Driftwood Beach: Site 2	Feb 16, 2025	0	0
Weir's Beach: Site 2	Feb 17, 2025	0	0
Cadboro Bay Beach: Site 5 (Gyro Park)	Feb 17, 2025	1	0
Haynes Park Beach: Site 4	Feb 19, 2025	0	0
Flea Beach: Site 1	Feb 20, 2025	0	0
Trafalgar Park Beach: Site 1	Feb 20, 2025	0	0
Trafalgar Park Beach: Site 2	Feb 20, 2025	0	0
Surfside Beach (Amherst): Site 5	Feb 21, 2025	15	1
Secret Beach: Site 1	Feb 22, 2025	0	0
Breakwater Beach: Site 2	Feb 23, 2025	3	0



That's a total of **58 surveys—38 positive for eggs!** Over **300 volunteer hours** went into these results; a huge congratulations and thank you to each and every community scientist who contributed their time and hard work.

Highlights:

- Eggs found for the first time at Willows Beach (surf smelt).
- Eggs found for the first time at Island View Beach (Pacific sand lance).

Don't see one of your submitted surveys? If it was towards the end of the month, it likely didn't make the cutoff for the issue and will be included in the next. If not, please email chloe.kraemer@peninsulastreams.ca.



The **Beach Bulletin** is a living space for sampling tips & tricks, program updates, volunteer features, and any other tidbits ("beach bites" if you will!). This is **open to all volunteers for contribution**; if there's anything you'd like to share with your fellow forage fish community scientists—some sampling/microscoping advice, a survey anecdote, team member feature, or cool wildlife sighting—we warmly encourage you to send it our way! Photos are always appreciated.

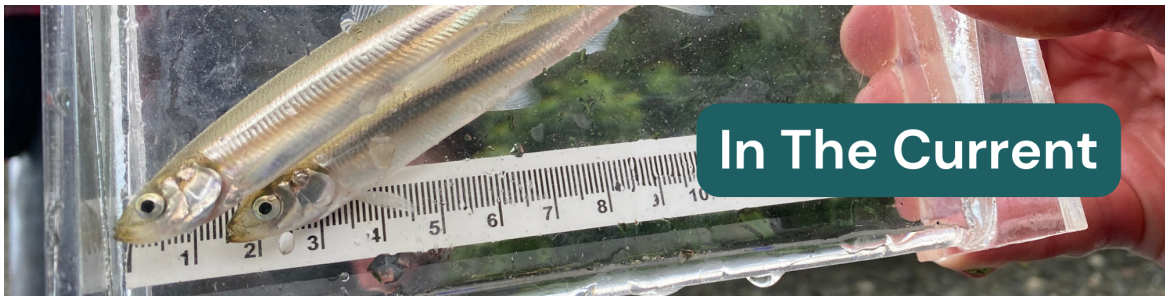
This issue's beach bites:

Egg-citing discovery: Shoutout to Oak Bay team lead Tony Otten and his crew for discovering surf smelt for the first time on Willows Beach in January! A blitz of surveys across the whole beach revealed 78 eggs. Such an exciting find for the south end of the peninsula, congrats! Read our official press release [here](#) and check out this awesome [news article](#).

Provincial protections: On Jan 28th, we met with an Aquatic Ecosystems Biologist from the BC Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship, who's currently building a forage fish file and scoping the potential for provincial protections of sand lance and surf smelt habitat. We toured a few of the most productive spawning beaches on the South Island, including Tryon Beach and Nymph Point Park, as well as other beaches where spawning has been documented but the habitat has been greatly altered by backshore armoring, such as Roberts Bay and McMicken Beach.

Team expansion: On Feb 18th, we trained and provided equipment to the Tsartlip Nation Stewardship Team, who will now monitor beaches within their territory. On Feb 20th, we trained and provided equipment to [Jordan River Watershed Awareness \(JRWA\)](#), who will now sample beaches along the west coast, particularly helping us to identify critical summer spawning beaches. We've also brought on a few new Victoria-area team leads, helping to strengthen our sampling in Central Saanich, Saanich, and Victoria. Welcome aboard!

Creosote log watch: Walking along beaches in Sidney? Be on the lookout for creosote logs. Creosote, a known carcinogen and source of harmful chemicals, persists in the water and sediment, leading to increased forage fish spawn mortality and amplifying up the food chain through bioaccumulation, directly impacting salmon and resident orcas. Creosote logs are easily identified by their strong petrochemical smell and often darkened appearance—report all sightings to engineeringervices@sidney.ca for immediate removal. *(Adapted from the Roberts Bay Residents newsletter with information from [Chris Robertson, WA NDR](#))*



Wanting to dive in deeper? Wade into this issue's current events and news below:

[Listening to the Smelt](#): Fantastic article about important research being done in Washington on the effects of pollution on developing surf smelt embryos, featuring beautiful imagery. Thank you to Sidney team lead Sandra Foss for flagging this!

[HELIT TFE SŁON,ET \(Let the Herring Live\) Forum](#): On Feb 13th, First Nations, environmental organizations, scientists, students, and community members gathered to discuss the revitalization of the Salish Sea's herring populations. Watch a short video recap [here](#).

Thanks so much for tuning in! Catch you in our next issue in April.

Chloe Kraemer

BEACH Program Coordinator

Peninsula Streams & Shorelines

Living and working within Coast and Straits Salish territory, the territories of the Lekwungen peoples, known today as Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the WSANEC peoples, known today as WJOLELP (Tsartlip), BOKECEN (Pauquachin), SFAUTW (Tsawout), WSIKEM (Tseycum), and MALEXEL (Malahat) Nations.

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