

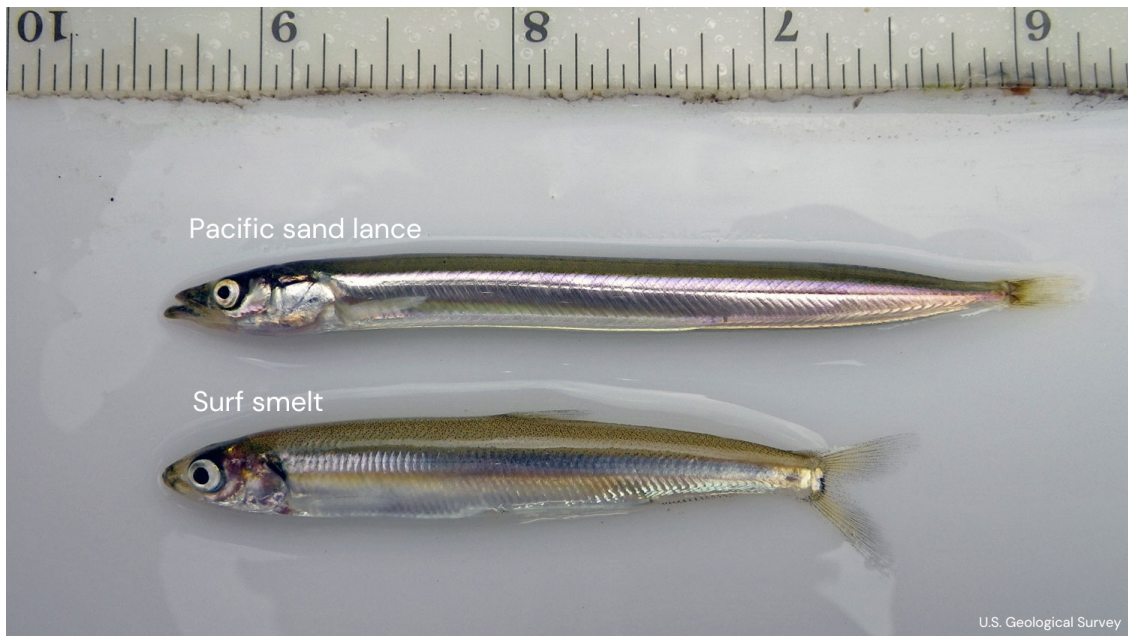


Hey firstname,

Welcome back to **The Schooler**, your bimonthly PSS newsletter for all things forage fish.

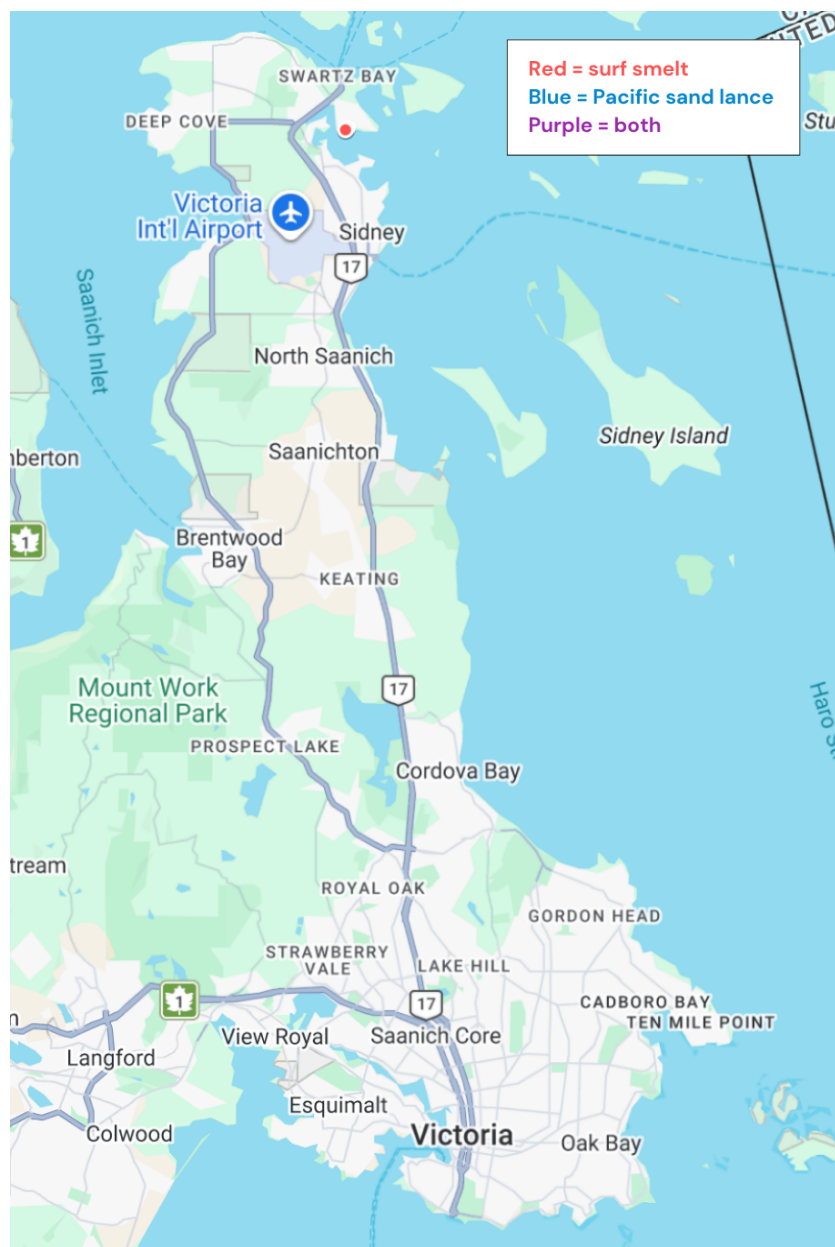
As summer comes to a close, we're starting to plan for our fall and winter forage fish spawning season. Get ready to dust off your kits, charge up your batteries, and put your boots on!

Let's dive in!



Surveys completed since the last edition in June 2026:

Location	Date	Surf smelt	Pacific sand lance
Esquimalt Lagoon Beach: Site 5	Jun 30, 2026	0	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 2	Jul 3, 2026	0	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 3	Jul 3, 2026	0	0
Roberts Bay Beach: Site 2	Jul 6, 2026	0	0
Amherst Beach: Site 1	Jul 16, 2026	0	0
Roberts Bay Beach: Site 1	Jul 17, 2026	0	0
Tulista Park Beach: Site 1	Jul 18, 2026	0	0
Maple Beach: Site 2	Jul 25, 2026	0	0
Glencoe Cove Beach: Site 1	Jul 28, 2026	0	0
Tryon Beach: Site 2	Jul 30, 2026	13	0
Victoria International Marina: Site 1	Jul 30, 2026	0	0
Lillian Hoffar Park Beach: Site 2	Jul 31, 2026	0	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 2	Aug 16, 2026	0	0
Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club Beach: Site 3	Aug 16, 2026	0	0
Roberts Bay Beach: Site 5	Aug 17, 2026	0	0
Tryon Beach: Site 1	Aug 18, 2026	473	0
Arthur Drive Beach: Site 2	Aug 20, 2026	0	0
Victoria International Marina: Site 1	Aug 27, 2026	0	0
Big Rock Beach: Site 1	Aug 28, 2026	0	0



That's a total of 19 surveys, 2 positive for eggs. 40 volunteer hours went into these results—a huge heartfelt thank you to each and every community scientist who contributed their time, hard work, and expertise, especially throughout the slow season!

Highlights:

- Spawning was only recorded at our known regional hotspot spawning beach: Tryon Beach in North Saanich. On August 18th, 473 surf smelt eggs were found—setting a record for that beach for summer spawning! Unfortunately, most of the eggs were dead, which is not uncommon for the summer given the warm temperatures.

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 program updates and announcements, volunteer features, and any other tidbits.

This issue's beach bites:

Beach seining reveals juvenile surf smelt in Victoria Harbour: This summer, we launched a new beach seining and nearshore monitoring program in the Gorge Waterway and Sooke Basin. Working with First Nations and local partners, the project explores how sea-run coastal cutthroat trout and Pacific salmon use nearshore habitats throughout the year. By combining beach seining with PSS' ongoing acoustic telemetry and forage fish monitoring, we will be able to better understand where fish are feeding and moving, how long they remain in key habitats, and whether enough prey is available to support their growth and survival. The program will help identify important nearshore "hot spots" and movement corridors, while linking fish use to shoreline condition, eelgrass, freshwater influence, and other habitat features. Ultimately, this information will help guide shoreline protection and restoration, support Indigenous-led fisheries stewardship, and build a stronger understanding of the interconnected food webs that sustain salmon and other coastal species.

Recent seining surveys in the Gorge and Victoria Harbour off Songhees Point revealed a large number of juvenile surf smelt, estimated to be around three months old, along with several adult surf smelt. The presence of young-of-year fish suggests that successful spawning is occurring somewhere within the surrounding area, although relatively little is known about how far juvenile surf smelt may travel from their natal spawning beaches. Despite several years of forage fish surveys, PSS has yet to identify an active surf smelt spawning beach within Victoria Harbour or the Gorge Waterway. Locating these spawning areas will therefore be a priority for the coming year, helping us better understand how surf smelt use this highly urbanized shoreline and identify beaches that may warrant additional monitoring, protection, or restoration.

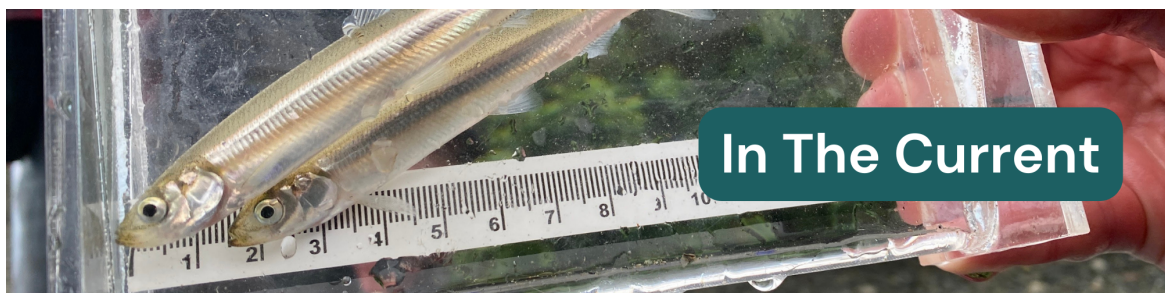


BEACH Program Fundraiser: This summer, our community came together in an incredible way, raising **\$27,257** to support the continued growth of our BEACH Program.

These funds make a meaningful difference, allowing us to expand shoreline monitoring and research, restore important coastal habitats, train and support volunteers, and better understand and protect the species that depend on our local beaches. From forage fish spawning surveys and contaminant research to beach seining, shoreline restoration, and invasive species removal, this support helps turn community generosity directly into action along our coast.

We're especially grateful to [Eagle Wing Tours](#), which generously matched donations up to \$5,000, and [Philbrook's Boatyard Ltd.](#), which matched donations up to \$2,000. Their support helped make every contribution go even further.

To everyone who donated, shared the campaign, or helped spread the word: thank you. Your generosity is helping us build a stronger future for local shorelines and the many species and communities that depend on them. We truly couldn't do this work without you!



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

Modelling forage fish species distribution in the Canadian Salish Sea

New research from [Project Watershed](#) and partners is helping reveal where forage fish are most likely to concentrate across the Canadian Salish Sea. Using more than 20 years of DFO juvenile salmon survey data alongside environmental factors such as ocean currents, nutrients, and zooplankton abundance, researchers mapped important pelagic forage fish hotspots, including areas around southern Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, and Fraser River delta. The findings offer a valuable new tool for marine spatial planning, cumulative effects assessment, and protecting the small fish that support salmon, seabirds, marine mammals, and the broader Salish Sea food web. Read the article [here](#).

Can restoration save the Delta smelt?

California's Delta smelt population has declined by an estimated 99% since it was federally listed in 1993, reflecting decades of habitat loss, altered freshwater flows, and dramatic changes to the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta. A new *High Country News* feature looks at the 3,400-acre Lookout Slough tidal wetland restoration project and asks whether large-scale habitat restoration, and the growing role of private mitigation banking, can help recover the smelt and the broader estuarine food web it represents. Read the article [here](#).

Thanks so much for tuning in! Catch you in the next issue in October.

Sincerely,

Chloe Kraemer

BEACH Program Coordinator





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Living and working within Coast and Straits Salish territory, the territories of the ɬəḱʷəŋən People, known today as Songhees Nation and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nation; the ƳSÁNEĆ People, known today as ƳJOŁŁP (Tsartlip), BOĆEĆEN (Pauquachin), SƧÁUTƳ (Tsawout), ƳSIƧEM (Tseycum), and MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nations; and the T'Sou-ke First Nation.

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