

Davis Slough Heronry – A Nearby Treasure

'I hope you love birds, too. It is economical. It saves going to heaven.'

– Emily Dickinson

Can You Find The Herons?

Can you spot any long-legged Great Blue Herons perched on pilings or standing in the shallows? This park is right next door to Davis Slough Heronry, where hundreds of these majestic birds nest. The 31-acre rookery is closed to the public because herons are easily driven from nesting areas by human activity, but herons forage over many square miles. They often hunt right here at English Boom.

Healthy Habitat Attracts Birds

Davis Slough is our island's only heron rookery, providing privacy from people, dogs, machines and other human disturbances. It is one of the five largest in Puget Sound and is growing, with hundreds of nests. They come for the small fish of our natural shoreline, with its remaining fresh-water streams, lagoons and marshes, and the rich feeding grounds of the Skagit and Stillaguamish river deltas. How we care for our rivers and shores will determine whether we continue to have Herons, forage fish, salmon and other wildlife.

Saved By Our Community

These birds seem like relatives from the dinosaur age – nearly four feet tall with a six-foot wingspread. They court with elaborate rituals, bond with their mate and build nests of twigs nearly three feet across. They nest condo-style in the tree canopy. The heron colony almost was developed for home sites in 2003. It was saved by a private fund-raising effort led by Whidbey Camano Land Trust, which raised over \$250,000 to buy the land in donations from 550 people, matched by a Conservation Futures grant from Island County. You can help by working to keep our shores natural and healthy. Learn more about good stewardship and shoreline practices as a WSU Beach Watcher or Shore Steward. Volunteer with Friends of Camano Island Parks. Support habitat preservation by joining Whidbey Camano Land Trust.



This signage by Island County Marine Resources Committee is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, CZM310 grant agreement G0800002. Text: Dan Pedersen. Design and Illustration: Kris Wiltse, www.kriswiltse.com