

## **Intertidal Walk 9:20 min**

### **Ali Pearson, Interpretation Officer, Gwaii Haanas National Park Preserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, Haida Heritage Site**

Today it will be a lot of fun because we take the kids out to take a peak at the intertidal area. That boundary between the land and sea is always moving around and the intertidal area is where that happens and today we take the kids out and see what we can see and let them find some interesting things on the beach.

### **Jody Bissett, Interpretation Coordinator, Gwaii Haanas National Park Preserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, Haida Heritage Site**

Can everybody look out at the ocean. Can everyone see the ocean way down there. So right now is what we call low tide. So the ocean is way out there. What happens, does anyone know what happens when there is high tide? So maybe everybody can stand up and sort of put on your detective glasses and can you guys see or guess where the tide, the ocean will come up to at high tide? Can you use your detective glasses to see if you see any clue along the beach that might tell us how high the water comes at high tide?

When we're on the beach and can sort of can see this line of seaweed and sticks and debris, this is a good clue of how high the tide comes at high tide.

So we have this amazing space between high tide and low tide. So this area between high and low tide is called the intertidal zone. And the intertidal zone is this amazing area we can explore, we can harvest food from, we can get a glimpse, a peak into the ocean world and we can and we actually can walk through it. But the intertidal zone is also an area people can harm when we're not careful.

This is a great beach to explore and see a lot of different habitats, a lot of different creatures in a small area. So when you look out you see the green, that's eelgrass. So it's not seaweed, it's a true plant and eelgrass is an incredible important habitat for a lot of different marine creatures.

Often people call eelgrass meadows the nurseries of the ocean. So this is a very important habitat. It's also a habitat that's very easy for people to disturb. So you can imagine pulling boats up or anchoring boats or building docks, the eelgrass because it's a true plant, it has a root system, once that's disturbed it's not necessary gonna grow back. And because it's sort of the nursery of the oceans you can imagine the repercussions of harming those nurseries, you'll have less babies, less successful reproduction, less creatures in the ocean. So a really, really rich area.

Are you guys ready to do some exploring? We've done a lot of talking. We need to be respectful, we need to be responsible and we need to be ready to learn. So let's see what we can find.

A crab! But now watch this! It is empty, there is no crab in the shell! So where do you think the crab went? It grew itself a new bigger shell and because the shell can't grow the crab actually backs itself out of the old too small shell and it grows a much bigger one.

So what I'm going to look for is a moon snail. Oh you found a moon snail?!

What do you think this is?

Kelp!

It kind of looks like kelp. Other guesses?

That is a moon snail casing. The moon snails lay their eggs inside these casings.

Oh the moon snail casing. I'll try to find a real moon snail because there were a bunch here yesterday. Can you see this poking out of the sand? You know what that is? Be gentle! This is a giant clam called a gooey duck. Oh, here is another one. We need to walk softly and do you see this? They can camouflage very well. That means they can hide within their environment. So those are clams that are under the sand. So as we're walking along there are actually hundreds and hundreds of animals under the sand, under our feet.

**Jody Bissett, Interpretation Coordinator, Gwaii Haanas National Park Preserve, National Marine Conservation Area Reserve, Haida Heritage Site**

We all are stewards of the earth and it can be a big job of thinking of being a steward of the entire earth, so how I like to think of it is that I like to pick a special place I'd like to be steward of. And maybe that's your backyard, you can keep it clean, you can look after it. May that is a special section of beach, you can go to and check on the plants and animals.

What kind of animal is this?

This animal is called a Moon snail. You can see its big snail shell. If you like you can touch the skin of the moon snail. And tell me what it feels like.

Slimy! Slimy!

It likes to cruise around with this fleshy, gooey, slimy foot. And it actually goes under the sand and it hunts for clams. So this animal likes to eat clams. And have you guys ever seen a clam shell that has a hole in it like that?

So how do you think the moon snail makes that perfect circle in the shell to eat the clam?

Digging?

You think it digs in?

Drills!

It drills, that's a great word, It drills.

Moon snail have this special appendage called a radula. It's really really rough like a drill and they actually will drill that hole into the clam shell and then they will drink the clam out of the shell. So when you find shells like this with a hole in it you know it's been eaten by a moon snail.

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Because it's totally overwhelming to think about the entire planet we might pick little areas, there might be a small section of forest that is very special to you and you can be the steward of that spot. You can go and check on the plants and animals. You can walk carefully and observe what's living there and growing there. You can pick up garbage you can see. You can tell other people how they can be stewards in their own special place. And if everybody picks a section of beach or a little bit of forest and looks after it, all of sudden we have this are taking care of and are stewards for. The plants and animals can live and thrive. And in little ways we can make sure we're protecting the entire planet because if everybody in the world picked a special space or place to be the steward of then we would be looking after the entire world.

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**Coastal Guardian Watchmen is not transcribed.**