

word nerd

By RYAN HUME

Dungeness  
[dʌnˌjəʊnəs]

noun

1. a headland and rocky stretch of beach in Kent, England, on the south coast, where there are two nuclear power plants and an automated lighthouse that bear the same name

2. *Dungeness Spit*: the longest natural sand spit in the United States, which juts 5.5 miles out into the Strait of Juan de Fuca from the top of the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state. The bay enclosed by the spit and a river on the peninsula share the same name

3. *Dungeness, Washington*: an unincorporated community that sits atop of the Olympic Peninsula near the spit on the bay of the same name. Now called Old Town Dungeness, the area is separated from Canada by the Strait of Juan de Fuca

4. *Dungeness crab*: meta-

*carcinus magister*, a large, delicious, edible crab that lives in the eelgrass beds off the West Coast of the United States between the Gulf of Alaska and central California. Dungeness is the only crab commercially harvested from the waters off Washington and Oregon's coastline. In 2009, the Dungeness crab was designated the state crustacean of Oregon



Origin:

The word originally comes from the Old Norse, meaning "headland," and was applied to the coastal area in Southern England. The crustacean, which is also known as a market crab, takes its name from the fishing village in Washington State, where it was first commercially harvested throughout the late 19th century. The first known use of the word as applied to the shellfish was recorded in 1925.

"After getting the all-clear from

state health departments, Oregon and Washington's commercial Dungeness crab fishermen finally hit the water Monday after being delayed for weeks due to elevated levels of the marine toxin domoic acid."

—Katie Wilson, "Crab kicks into gear with healthy start," *The Daily Astorian*, Jan. 6, 2016

"When Dungeness crabs tested positive for domoic acid in the early 1990s, 2003 and 2004, the crab industry kept on harvesting. Razor clams and mussels keep the poison in their meat, so they were unsafe to eat, but crab fishers simply killed the crabs, ditched the butter and sold the meat.

"This year was different because of Asia's newfound appetite for the crabs. For the past eight years, Chinese crab buyers have paid high-dollar prices for live crabs to export to Asia. According to Corbin, about 40 percent of Oregon's crabs have been sent to China alive in the last few years."

—The Associated Press, "Crabs safe after toxin scare, but prices plummet," *The Daily Astorian*, Jan. 19, 2016

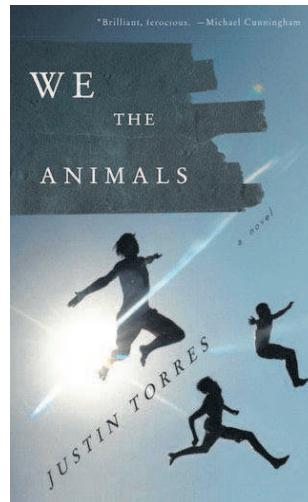
"Five pairs of legs keep the Dungeness moving swiftly through the eelgrass beds and sandy ocean bottoms that are its home, and it can be found from the shallows of the inter-tidal zone all the way to depths of about 800 feet."

—Lynette Rae McAdams, "Wilde Side: The Dungeness crab," *Coast Weekend*, April 23, 2015

BOOKSHELF

By RYAN HUME

Just finished:



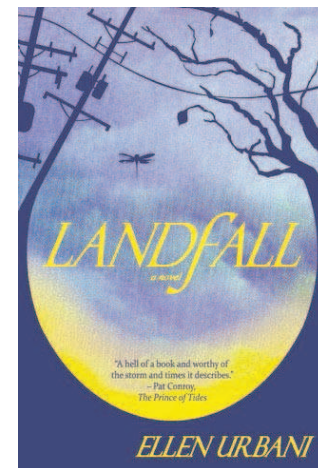
"We the Animals: a Novel" by Justin Torres  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011

**Plot Notes:** Three feral, mixed-race brothers grow up in a rural part of upstate New York. Equally torn between caring for their exhausted and underappreciated mother and acquiring admiration from their strong-willed and macho father, this slim novel is a struggle for the brothers' identity both collectively and alone through a number of tense, funny and fresh vignettes that can range anywhere from exploring their neighborhood and getting into trouble to accompanying their dad to his job as a night watchman. Ultimately, the novel becomes less about the brothers and more about the narrator's struggle with his sexual identity.

**Take Away:** In Torres' hands the most familiar of emotions and even the most inane of events can feel as it has been rendered anew and jolted full of electricity. In one of my personal favorites, called "Never-Never Time," first published in Tin House, the simple act of three kids smashing fruits and vegetables in their kitchen a la Gallagher becomes a lesson in birth, rebirth and regret. Torres' voice is funny, quirky and full of wild life. As the boys age and begin to gather their own identities, some readers may be put off as the rest of the family falls by the wayside and the narrator begins to explore his sexuality, but even this seemed to be a fundamental truth that Torres had tapped into: When we are young we are saturated and surrounded by our families, but as we age we may only remain in each other's orbits. We can grow to become things that even our parents and brothers do not understand.

**Recommended For:** Fans of Dorothy Allison's "Bastard Out of Carolina," fans of contemporary literature and minimalism, like Denis Johnson, Aimee Bender, and others. Also, a good all-around introduction to contemporary literature for young adults, perhaps especially those interested in LGBT coming-of-age stories.

Other books:

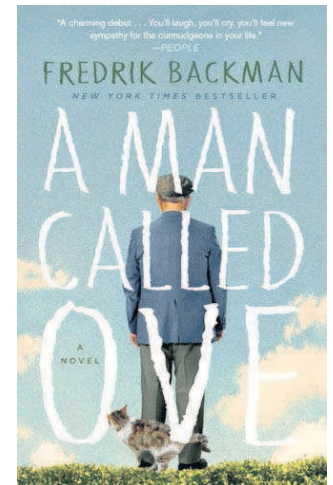


"Landfall" by Ellen Urbani  
Forest Avenue Press, 2015

**Recommended By:** Karen Emmerling of Beach Books in Seaside.

**Plot Notes:** This visceral, historical tale follows two mothers and their teen-aged daughters — one black family, one white — through the devastation of New Orleans in Hurricane Katrina.

**Why You Should Read:** Urbani, who now lives in Portland, was a recent guest for Lunch in the Loft at Beach Books, where she read from her acclaimed debut novel, which Emmerling described as one of her favorites of 2015. Emmerling says that Urbani really captures the chaos of the horrible tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and brings it to life.



"A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman, translated by Henning Koch  
Washington Square Press, 2015

**Recommended By:** Karla Nelson of Time Enough Books in Ilwaco, Washington.

**A Bestseller:** Nelson has watched this charming, irreverent tale by first-time Swedish author and blogger Backman steadily climb the New York Times Best-seller List ever since she was hand-selling it at Time Enough last summer.

**Plot Notes:** Ove is an old grump set into conflict with a young family when, on the first day they move into the house next door, they accidentally flatten his mailbox. What "A Man Called Ove" reminds us of is there might be more going on under the crusty exterior of an old curmudgeon than we initially realize.

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