

## Homeless man pleads not guilty to attempted murder

Alleged assault with hatchet at makeshift camp

By JACK HEFFERNAN  
The Daily Astorian



Ryan Joseph Dawson

A man who was living in a Warrenton homeless camp pleaded not guilty Friday to charges that he tried to murder another man at the camp with a hatchet.

Warrenton police responded to the camp near the woods behind Goodwill at about 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 8. Ernest Charles Bean Jr. had been struck in the head with the hatchet handle and needed medical attention.

Bean, sitting in his tent and holding a blanket against the left side of his head, told police that Ryan Joseph Dawson, 33, had struck him after screaming about his girlfriend, according to court documents.

After medical personnel arrived to tend to Bean,

police searched the wooded area. About 30 minutes later, the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office Parole and Probation Division told the officers that Dawson was at the office.

Police questioned Dawson, who claimed he did not know about the incident with Bean. He was charged with first-degree assault, along with parole violations stemming from resisting arrest, menacing and harassment convictions in March.

An indictment filed Tuesday charges Dawson with attempted murder and first-degree assault.

Dawson is being held without bail for the alleged probation violations. He is scheduled for an early resolution conference later this month.

## Baby salmon shark dies after washing ashore at Sunset Beach

The Daily Astorian

A juvenile salmon shark was stranded near Sunset Beach on Saturday morning, prompting a rescue operation that ultimately ended with the shark dying a few hours later at Seaside Aquarium.

An Astoria man saw the struggling 3 1/2-foot shark in the surf and called the aquarium to see if anyone could help. Attempts to return the shark to the ocean by taking the shark back into the surf failed and the shark kept returning to shore, staff of the Seaside Aquarium said in a Facebook post.

Aquarium staff worked to get the shark into a holding tank so it could be transferred to the aquarium, and then, eventually, to a bigger facility with larger tanks for rehabilitation.

The attempt was not successful and the shark died a few hours later. It is not uncommon for juvenile salmon sharks to strand themselves this time of year, aquarium staff said. Salmon sharks that beach themselves rarely survive the ordeal.



Seaside Aquarium

A juvenile salmon shark washed ashore at Sunset Beach on Saturday morning, but died a few hours after rescue attempts.

The reason for juvenile sharks washing ashore this time of year is still a mystery, aquarium staff said. The animals are often mistakenly reported as "baby great white sharks," aquarium staff said,

which is to be expected when the two species only have a couple of small identification clues to separate them.

"The aquarium often tries to collect those which have passed away. We use them

for education, allowing people to watch the dissections, while we take tissue samples which are sent off to biologist(s) studying this phenomena," the staff said in a Facebook post.

## Wild bees may benefit from cleaning up after clearcuts

By JOSEPH WINTERS  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

After cutting down trees in a section of forest, logging crews can do their local bees a favor by sticking around to clear the debris and flatten the ground.

A recent study from Oregon State University suggests that removing timber harvest residue — also known as "slash" — could help wild bee populations thrive in the wake of a clearcut logging operation.

The study was led by wildlife biologist Jim Rivers, principal investigator in Oregon State's Forest Animal Ecology Lab. It was part of an effort to find out how the removal of slash to be used as biofuel might affect forest ecosystems — including the populations of many pollinators, like bees.

Bees have been in the spotlight recently due to concerns

about pollinator shortage caused by colony collapse disorder. Cultivated bees are vital for agriculture; by some estimates, bees pollinate \$15 billion worth of U.S. crops every year.

But what about wild bees? Even far from farmland, insect pollinators are responsible for fertilizing up to 90 percent of the world's flowering plants. This promotes biodiversity and creates a healthy food supply.

Of these pollinators, wild bees may be the most important. Not only are they the most abundant, they're the only ones that feed on pollen and nectar for their entire life cycles.

"When bees are present, they're helping to maintain plant populations, and those plants are producing fruits and nuts, which in turn support smaller mammals and up through the food chain," Rivers said. "We call it ecosystem services."



Jim Rivers/Oregon State University

Wild bees are more abundant than cultivated bees. That's one reason they are considered important pollinators.

That's why Rivers and his team wanted to know how land management decisions might impact wild bee populations.

To find out, Rivers turned to a managed conifer forest in western Oregon, near Springfield. From 2014 to 2015, his team assessed bee populations on 28 one-acre clearcut plots.

Each plot received a different level of management, ranging from minimal slash removal and no ground compaction, to complete slash removal and total ground compaction.

Against expectations, more land disturbance — that is, removing more slash and compacting more land — appeared to give greater benefits to wild bee populations.

"It was really surprising

to me the diversity that was there, and also the number that was there," Rivers said.

Not only this, but the researchers also recorded a threefold increase in wild bee population in the second year of the study, suggesting the original population was thriving and that new bees were arriving, too.

Although 92 distinct species of bees were identified during the course of the study, the researchers found that soil-nesting varieties dominated. According to Rivers, this is normal; 70 percent of wild bee species nest in the ground.

This isn't the first time ground-nesting bees have been linked to disturbed land; sweat bees have been known to proliferate in forest patches that have recently burned.

On scorched land and in clearcuts, the absence of other varieties of bees like cavi-

ty-nesters — which make their homes in places like blackberry canes and in old beetle burrows — raises questions about the evolution of bee communities over time.

"At what point do these communities change?" Rivers wondered. How does the forest evolve after these trauma? There has been much research has on old growth forests, but the early stages of forest regeneration have received relatively little attention.

"At this point, we just don't know," Rivers said.

Across the United States, native bee species appear to be in decline. But Rivers and his colleagues hope their research may be able to help conservationists create more habitat for at least one kind of native bee. In clearcuts, burn sites, and other disturbed areas, these key pollinators could be a boon for the whole ecosystem, all the way up the food chain.

## Scientists blame 'The Blob' for decline in Alaska cod

Another sign of climate change

By ANNIE FEIDT  
National Public Radio

A hint of optimism creeps into Darius Kasprzak's voice as he pilots his boat, the Marona, out of Kodiak harbor on a recent calm day.

"We're in the morning, we're at the start of the flood tide," he says. "This is where you want to be."

He is fishing a bay on the northwestern edge of the Gulf of Alaska, about 200 miles southwest of Anchorage. The chilly waters here are some of the most productive fish habitats on Earth. In a good year, Kasprzak could catch more than 100,000 pounds of cod.

On the screen of his echo sounder, he sees a dense cluster of dots on the ocean bottom.

"Let's drop on it," he says. "That looks pretty darn good."

He kills the engine, leaps onto the deck and lowers one of his fishing lines into the water.

And then ...

Nothing.

For years, Alaska fishermen like Kasprzak have worried that climate change would threaten their livelihoods.

Now it has. The cod population in the Gulf of Alaska is at its lowest level on record, according to an expert at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The culprit is a warm water mass called "the Blob" that churned in the Pacific Ocean between 2013 and 2017.

At its peak, the blob stretched from Alaska to South America. In the Gulf of Alaska, the cod population plummeted by more than 80 percent.

Climate change didn't cause the blob all on its own. But scientists say global warming made it worse, pushing high ocean temperatures to the extreme.

Kasprzak says he used to think the rich ocean ecosystem he fishes was unshakable. But he has mostly given up on finding more cod here.

"We've just seen now that even the mighty Gulf of Alaska, how fragile it actually is, when all you've got to do is warm it up," he says. "You don't even have to warm it up that much, a couple of degrees. It doesn't take that much."

Since early 2017, the temperature of the Gulf of Alaska has been close to normal. Now everyone in Kodiak is asking: Will the cod come back?



Darius Kasprzak is a cod fisherman in Alaska.

Mike Litzow is trying to answer that question. He is a fisheries biologist who works for the University of Alaska and is based in Kodiak. With his wiry frame and thick beard, he looks more like a fisherman than a scientist.

Litzow does go fishing every few weeks in the spring and summer — for science, in search of young cod. He stands

in shallow water near Kodiak and uses a net called a beach seine to sweep up fish hiding in the eelgrass and kelp beds.

"There's all kinds of information you can get over time, once you catch the fish," Litzow says.

He doesn't find any cod in this net. But by the end of the summer, Litzow hopes to catch enough tiny cod to pro-

vide clues on whether the population will recover.

Litzow doubts it will. He thinks the cod decline may have been so steep that other fish might fill its place in the ecosystem.

"When you push a population down really hard, the resources that population used to rely on can be exploited by other populations," he says.

Other scientists are more optimistic. But everyone seems to agree on one point: The blob is a dress rehearsal for a future with climate change. Marine heat waves are expected to happen more often and, overall, ocean temperatures will warm.

Litzow says it's hard to know what kind of ripple effect that will have. If you had asked a bunch of scientists to predict how fish would do during the blob years in the

Gulf of Alaska, "it would just be like drawing names out of a hat," he says. "It's not like all of the scientists would say cod are going to be the ones that collapse."

Litzow says fishing communities must get used to the prospect of more frequent shocks to the ocean ecosystem. And Kodiak certainly isn't the only place that has seen them. Those changes aren't all bad, he says. When one species declines, others do well. Right now, sablefish populations are booming in the Gulf of Alaska.

But the cod decline could be a disaster for fishermen and for Kodiak. Already, cod boats are traveling more than 1,000 miles away to find fish. That means crews aren't stocking up at stores in town and boats aren't paying the local fish tax.

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