

Jellyfish show up by the hundreds on North Coast

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

An incomplete list of things that have recently washed up on North Coast beaches: a giant octopus, dead whales, pyrosomes, Japanese fishing boats, hundreds of Humboldt squid, so much bull kelp, so much plastic.

And now, earlier this week, moon jellyfish as far as the eye could see around Haystack Rock.

Large numbers of stranded jellyfish are not an unusual sight on local beaches, especially after storms or during times of strong waves and seasonal upwelling, the Haystack Rock Awareness Program noted on Facebook.

Moon jellyfish are just one type of jellyfish that shows up frequently. Pacific sea nettles, which do sting, are a common find. These jellies are yellow-brown with a sort of frilled edge when nestled in the sand. Tiny comb jellies will dot



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program recommends avoiding jellyfish that wash up on local beaches.

the beach, looking like oversized water droplets frozen in place.

Most years, rafts of Velella velella — or by-the-wind sailors that float on the water’s surface and are propelled across the ocean thanks to a triangular sail

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program noted that jellies like the Pacific sea nettle do wash up and can still sting even after the animal is dead.

— blow onto the beach and carpet the sand. They bleach white in the sun, send up a briny stink and are munched upon by fool-hardy dogs.

In recent years, the North Coast has hosted unexpected creatures like pyrosomes. The little-studied rubbery, tube-shaped, semitranslucent colonies showed up en masse on beaches across Oregon, and especially around Cannon Beach and Ecola State Park, in 2017. More common in warmer waters, pyrosomes confounded researchers and clogged up commercial fishing gear.

Oregon researchers continue to study the role of jellyfish in marine food webs and their potential impact on coastal fishing.

Jellyfish may drift gracefully and dreamily when in water, but on land they are gelatinous blobs sometimes spiked with intricate colors. They are always a fascinating find for beachgoers and tempting to poke or even pick up.

The Haystack Rock Awareness Program noted that moon jellyfish do not sting most people, but jellies like the Pacific sea nettle do wash up and can still sting even after the animal is dead.

“So that’s why we recommend not handling jellies unless you’re 1,000 percent sure what it is,” the organization wrote.

Boone behind bill to tighten public records requests

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
The Daily Astorian

In one of her last legislative actions before retiring, state Rep. Deborah Boone recommended a bill that would tighten requirements for public records requests.

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, introduced Senate Bill 609 at the session’s open this month on Boone’s behalf.

Under state law, public records requests can be broad, covering an entire topic rather than a specific piece of information.

The bill Boone supports seeks to tighten the process, requiring people requesting records to specify “with particularity” a description of the records being sought and how they will be used.

“It’s to hopefully winnow out the fishing expeditions and allow the legitimate (requests) to move forward,” said Boone, a Democrat who represented Cannon Beach in the House for 14 years.



Tiffany Butler/The Daily Astorian

Outgoing state Rep. Deborah Boone, D-Cannon Beach, left, was honored by state Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, during a Clatsop Economic Development Resources business awards ceremony last year.

Ginger McCall, Oregon’s public records advocate, released a report last year that found governments often unreasonably delay releasing public records or charge too much for access.

The public records law has also been criticized for the large number of exemptions — more than 500 — that have been carved out over the years.

The bill has drawn criticism from journalists, including The Oregonian’s Gordon Friedman, who first reported on the legislation and balked at the requirement of stating with particularity the records he seeks.

“As a requester I often can’t do that because I don’t

know what records exist — only that I would like to request records pertaining to a topic,” he wrote on Twitter.

Boone’s legislation is one of 11 new public records bills this legislative session. Others would reduce public records fees from state agencies by half, award attorney fees against public bodies that don’t respond to requests in a timely manner, explore creating a chief privacy officer position and prohibit using personal email for official business.

The state House on Monday also passed several new rules related to transparency.

The first will require all amendments submitted to policy bills bear the name of a member or stakeholder group. The second will require that all committee bills bear the name of a member or stakeholder group that has requested the bill, effective Jan. 22. The third will require at least one hour to pass during the short legislative session before the House can act on a bill returned with changes from the Senate.

“This is a positive step to bring greater transparency to the business of the House,” said state Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene, in a news release. “These rule changes are in the public interest and will provide Oregonians a better understanding of which legislators and stakeholders are proposing bills in the Capitol.”



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