



Pigeon Guillemot

# Welcome to the Salmon Highway

*In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand.*

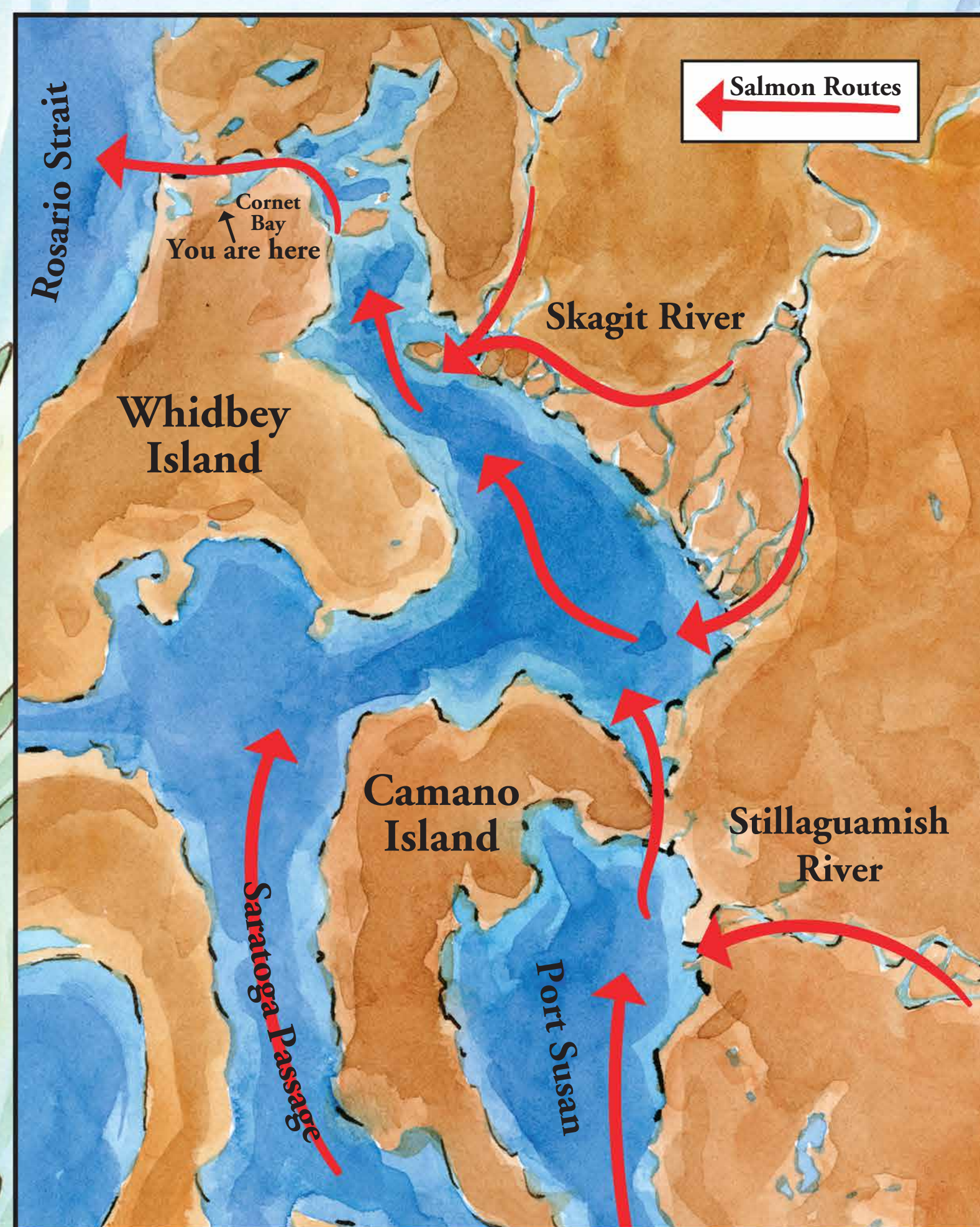
– Baba Dioum, conservationist

Goose Rock

Ben Ure Island

## You're On a Salmon Highway

Did you know it's just five miles to the Skagit River, Puget Sound's largest salmon-producer? Every year 7 to 10 million salmon parr (juveniles) migrate to sea from their birthplace in the Skagit. On the way, they feed and shelter in shallow nearshore waters such as Cornet Bay until large enough to survive in the deeper, open areas. More than half the Skagit River fish swim through Deception Pass.

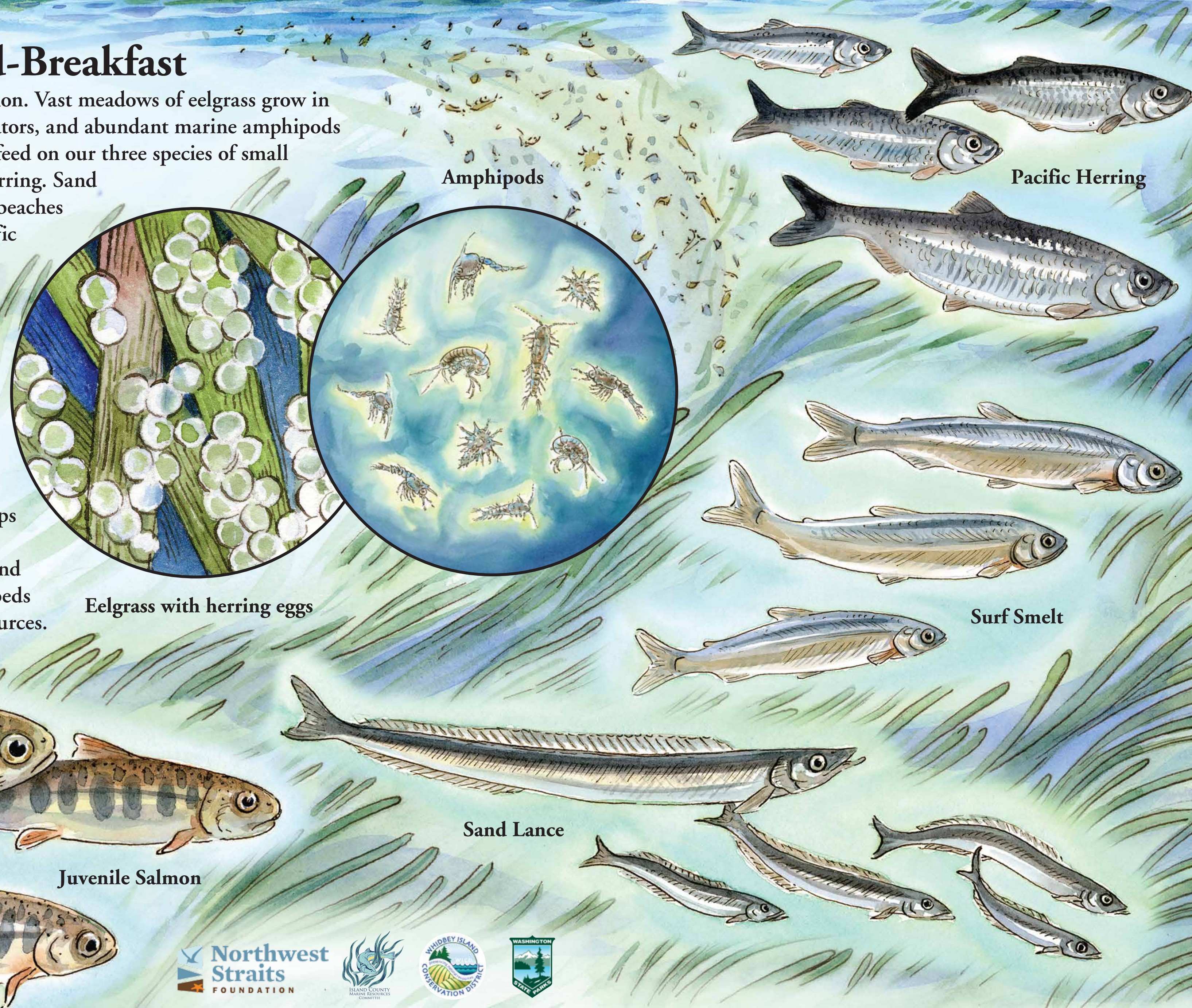


## And This Is Their Bed-and-Breakfast

Cornet Bay is a paradise of food and shelter for salmon. Vast meadows of eelgrass grow in the shallows, providing rest from currents and predators, and abundant marine amphipods for juvenile salmon to eat. Larger salmon and birds feed on our three species of small forage fish – Sand Lance, Surf Smelt and Pacific Herring. Sand Lance and Surf Smelt typically spawn on unaltered beaches of mixed sand and gravel, with a natural slope. Pacific Herring lay their eggs on eelgrass.

## Feeding the Food Chain

Natural beaches with overhanging trees and shrubs support the food chain. Insects fall into the water, where small fish eat them. Native plants and overhanging trees shade the eggs of forage fish from hot sunshine. Beaches free of bulkheads, ramps and other man-made structures provide a gentle, energy-absorbing environment for both terrestrial and marine life, and help support the offshore eelgrass beds containing abundant crustaceans and other food sources.



Cornet Bay restoration was a partnership of Island County Marine Resources Committee, Northwest Straits Foundation, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Whidbey Island Conservation District and Island County. Funding by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Northwest Straits Commission, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Puget Sound Coastal Program, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington Dept. of Natural Resources, Puget Sound Partnership, and the City of Oak Harbor.