

South Bay Overlook by Rebecca Lexa

The Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge are pleased to announce that the South Bay Overlook is complete! Located at the end of the South Bay Trail at the Tarlatt Unit of the Refuge, this overlook provides a magnificent view of hundreds of acres of restored tidal wetland at the south end of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

Along with a host of native plants, to include those planted around the overlook itself, a wide variety of animals may be seen here throughout the year. Year-round residents include river otters that swim through Tarlatt slough, and great blue herons seeking food in the shallows. Look up, and you may see red-tailed hawks, northern harrier hawks, bald eagles, and a variety of gulls. Nearby you may see the Columbian black-tailed deer, Roosevelt elk, and black bears, along with their tracks in the wetland soil. Winter often brings waterfowl to the area, like pintails, green-winged teals, and mallards, among many others. Summer visitors include Caspian terns fishing in the slough, turkey vultures, and flocks of white pelicans circling above. The warmer weather also encourages common and northwestern garter snakes out into the open, along with rough-skinned newts and Pacific tree frogs, and you may see these smaller creatures on your walk to and from the overlook.

These are just some of the wildlife that benefit from the restored habitats at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. Plan your visit to the South Bay Overlook today!