

MUD GALLERY



Olympia Arts Month
April 2021

We are a group of three landscape architecture students from Olympia, Seattle and Baltimore. We share a deep love of this region and a desire to connect people with place. We are excited about the way the community of Olympia is coming together right now to decide the future of Capitol Lake, formerly the Deschutes Estuary or the Steh-Chass. For our graduate capstone project we have taken a closer look at the aesthetics of a restored estuary, with a particular focus on mud. This body of work explores our own evolving relationship with mud through a series of playful art explorations. We are imagining a future in which mud is celebrated for both its ephemeral beauty and for the life it supports.

Zoe, Alanna, Dani

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MUD FLATS

PUBLIC COMMENTS COLLECTED FOR THE CLAMP STUDY

"It will become a sea of mud," Reale said. "If that lake drains, it's a problem."

"stinky mud flats"

"Mudflat: Worse than bad"

"Odoriferous mudflats and low tide mud views"

"few people can stand being outdoors by the unpleasant and **unattractive mud bog**"

"we need to dredge this beautiful lake before it becomes a mud hole with swamp grass."

"This is one of the rare occasions where esthetic considerations outweigh those of environmental purity."

"just a glistening dunn stinking mudflat devoid of wildlife or any recreational aesthetic"

"the mud flat estuary...will not be as aesthetically pleasing as the lake."

"the site was originally changed from an estuary...because it was such an **EYESORE!** And it didn't smell all that good either."

"the current gem of Olympia, Capitol Lake, will turn to **stinking mud** if have an estuary."

"there is **nothing attractive visually** (and certainly won't be olfactory)."

"A mud flat is a mud flat regardless of what you call it."

"I am concerned about the odor of mud flats."

"Mud Flats are not wanted."

"I do not want to have a big mud flat that is home for **a bunch of bugs** in the middle of our Capitol City."

"Mudfair does not have the same cache as Lakefair."

"The views and smells are not very attractive."

"The stench of mud flats."

"Mud flats are not pleasing to the eye or nose"

"An ugly mudflat is inconsistent with a vital downtown."

"remember the smell of mud flats at low tide on a summer evening."

"a saltwater mud flat with an accompanying, nasty stink."

"Do people want to live next to an estuary, that may have many species but **smell like salty rotten mud.**"

"I don't want the lake removed and have a

smelly mudflat to walk around on our beautiful summer days."

"Unobstructed views of mud with the accompanying **stench.**"

"smelly mud flat."

"A muddy sticky swamp for 12 hours a day – not something we need in the shadow of our Capitol and next to our waterfront and downtown area."

"Failure to protect Capitol Lake would replace its mirroring and sparkling presence with the **dismal** mud flats of the past."

"the significant aesthetic improvements that came with the elimination of the previous tidal mudflats."

"A tidal mudflat...would give off foul odors at times, **provide little or no recreation**, and could be hazardous."

"Please take a look at Mud Bay just west of town, would anyone really choose to have that in the middle of town?"

"we would have nothing but MUD FLATS in downtown Olympia in place of a wonderful lake."

MUD GALLERY

INFORM



THE STORY

- 1. THE DISPLACED
(PEOPLE, SPECIES, NAMES)
- 2. THE EXISTING
(NZ MUDSNAIL, TOXIC, NO ACCESS)
- 3. THE FUTURE
(ESTUARY, MUD, KIN)

INTRIGUE



EXHIBIT DISPLAY

- 1. TIDAL LANDSCAPES
- 2. MUD FLAT IKEBANA
- 3. TIDAL BEAUTY
- 4. MUD DYEING
- 5. MUDSNAIL INVASION
- 6. ESTUARY COOKBOOK
- + MORE

ENGAGE

OUTREACH IDEAS

- MUD PAINTING + TRACKS
- FORAGED IKEBANA
- BEAUTY SCENT EXPLORATION
- DYEING RECIPE
- RICE TRACKS
- COOKBOOK ZINE

TIDAL LANDSCAPES

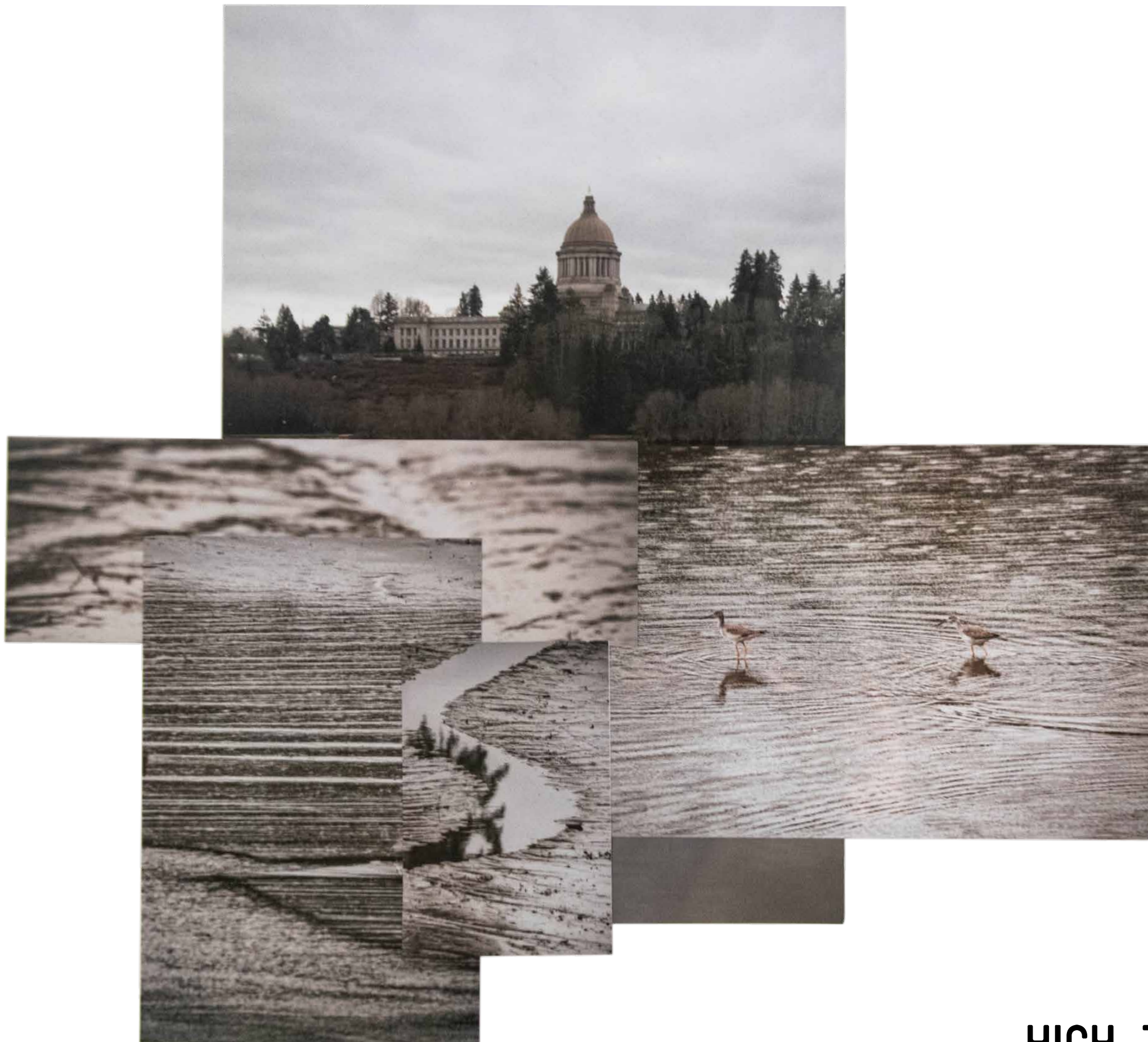
These paintings and collages imagine what a future tidal landscape will look like. Using mud and photographs taken at healthy, South Salish Sound estuaries, we layer over top images of Captiol Lake to envision the ephemeral tidal landscape.





TIDE GOES IN, TIDE GOES OUT





HIGH TIDE COLLAGE



LOW TIDE COLLAGE





MUDFLAT IKEBANA

These arrangements convey a simple reverence for the plants that make their home in the salt marshes of the Salish Sea. Inspired by Ikebana, or the traditional art of Japanese flower arranging, we use mud in place of kenzans to both physically support and honor the life and context of these humble and lovely species.



FORAGED ON THE MUD FLATS



TIDAL BEAUTY

These wild skincare products clarify our connection to the mudflats and their healing properties. Through the art of sustainable harvesting we bring you natural products foraged in Olympia. Rich with minerals and nutrients unique to the Steh-Chass watershed, these products will enliven your skin through pure, balanced blends.





low tide

Pungent sulfur top notes and fermented seaweed undertones melt into the salty heart of this enigmatic and soulful elixir. This is for the one who wakes before dawn to squelch quietly along the tidal flats, sips nettle tea while watching Buffleheads and Scoters, and just might have a shell or two in their pocket. Low Tide is as understated and irresistibly alluring as the one who wears it.

MUD DYEING

Variations of mud dyeing have been used by different cultures for at least 1300 years since Amami Oshima created a technique called *Dorozome* to produce the unique black color of the traditional Japanese silk garment, *Oshima Tsumugi* (1). Other records of mud dyeing techniques come from Malian culture. *Bògòlanfini*, or “mud cloth”, is a handmade cotton fabric traditionally dyed with fermented mud used in fashion, fine art, and decoration, and has become an important symbol of Malian culture (2). Using mud dyeing techniques, you can produce pieces that are connected to the place of its origins. Exploring the different colors of mud offered in the Steh-Chass watershed, I experimented with mud-dyeing socks.



A How-To

Pair of fresh white socks

Your friends oversized boots

Lots of MUD (extra muddy mud)

At least one clumsy human

1. Find mud.
2. Walk *in* mud.
3. Get boots *stuck* in mud.
4. Try to *unstuck* boot from mud.
5. **Oops!**
6. Foot now in mud.
7. Remove muddy sock.
8. **Woah!**
9. Fresh white sock has now successfully been mud-dyed.



An Actual How-To

Fabric(s)

Soy Milk

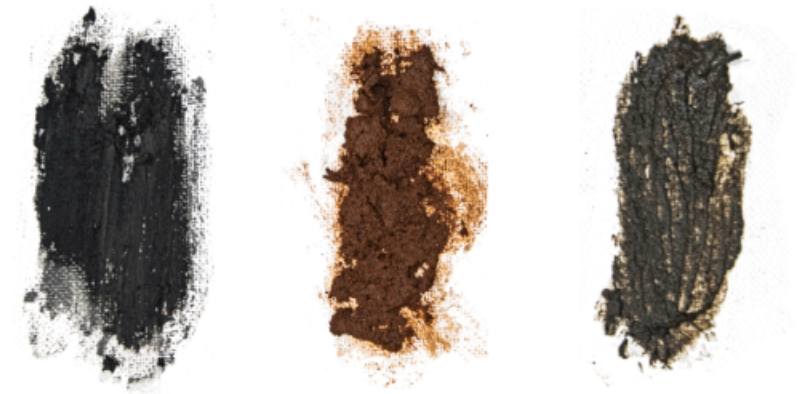
Container for Dyeing

Vinegar

Rubber Bands

MUD (various colors if possible)

1. Combine mud and milk in a ratio of roughly 1:3, using more or less mud/milk based on how rich you'd like your color. It is also important that the mixture not be too thick. The enzymes in the soy milk aid in binding the mud to the fabric.
2. If you choose to play with patterns, use your rubber bands to twist, roll, and/or tie the fabric.
3. Submerge fabric in mud mixture for at least 4 hours. The longer it stays in, the more mud will stain the fabric. Overnight is good.
4. After dyeing, hang it to cure (even up to a week). Consider dipping multiple times in the mud mixture.
5. Rinse the fabric in a mixture of vinegar and water (1 cup of vinegar for every gallon of water). This will help the pigments of the mud to be more soluble and therefore transfer to the fibers better.
6. Handwash with soap and water. Then hang or dry in hot dryer.
7. Don't be afraid to play around with the steps or quantities and see how the result changes.



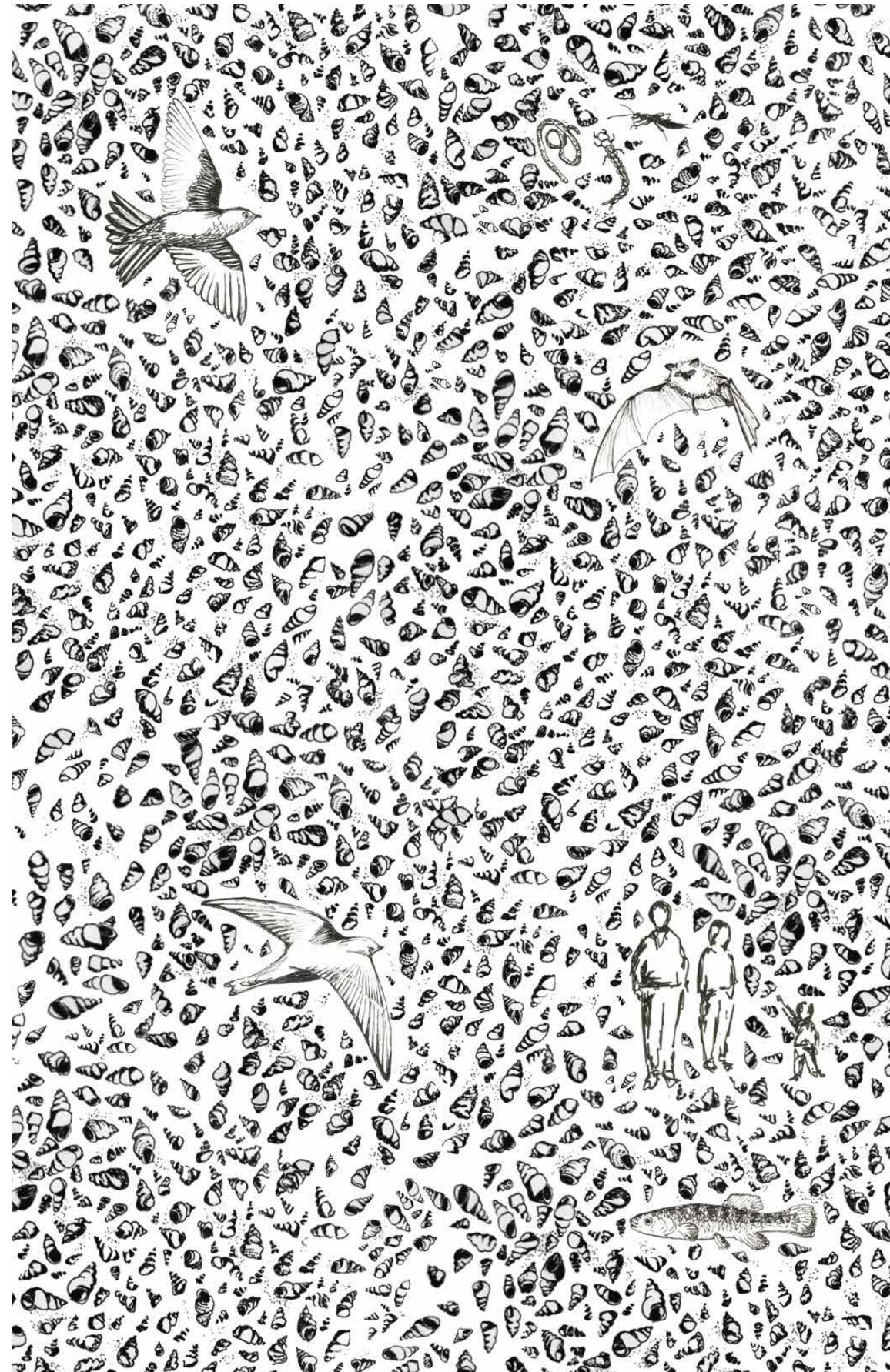


MUDSNAIL INVASION

Non-native species that are categorized as invasive are often used as a scapegoat to avoid truly looking at how human movement and globalization has disrupted ecosystems across the world through the transport of non-native living things. In the case of the New Zealand Mudsnail, we have witnessed how an animal the size of a grain of rice can impact a whole city.



THE LITTLE CREATURE
THAT CLOSED THE LAKE



ECOSYSTEM ENTANGLEMENT



THE NEW ZEALAND MUDSNAIL: THE SIZE OF A GRAIN OF RICE



ESTUARY COOKBOOK

“When the tide goes out, the table is set”

Coast Salish Proverb

These recipes are about interspecies connections and how the estuary is an important food web for humans and more-than-humans. By de-centering humans in this cookbook, we are able to think more broadly about the life that the mudflats support.

RECIPES



A Crow’s Snack



Detritus Smoothie



Pickleweed Salad



Mudsnail Diet



Clam Bake



Sylvester Clam Chowder

A CROW'S SNACK

1 littleneck clam

A flock of foraging sea birds

1 clumsy gull

Cluster of rocks

High perch

Low tide

1. Fly to a high perch to watch the flock of foraging sea birds
2. Once one catches a clam swoop in to snag
3. As the bird dodges your attempts, follow the clumsy gull that is also swooping for a clam
4. Once the gull successfully grabs the clam, stage a surprise attack
5. Grab the dropped clam and immediately fly back to your high perch
6. Hold on to clam until the coast clears and take to a cluster of rocks
7. Fly up about 40 feet above the rocks and drop the clam, breaking the shell
8. Repeat until the shell has broken open enough to extract the meat
9. Enjoy your hard earned snack





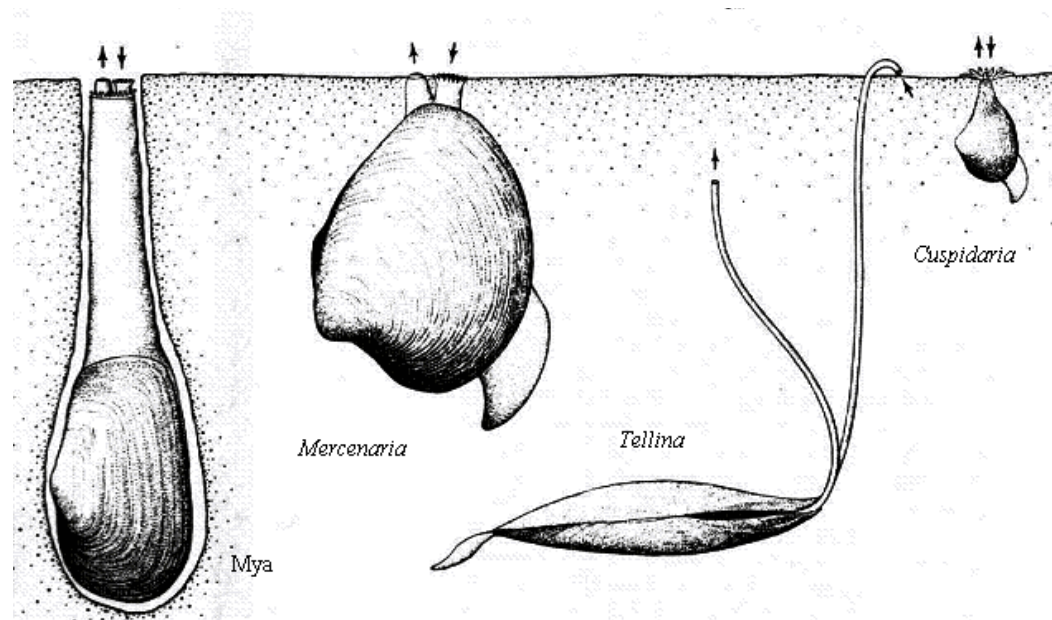
DETRITUS SMOOTHIE

An abundance of detritus laden salt water

Two siphons

One filter

1. Safety first! Burrow all the way down into the mud until just your siphons are sticking out.
2. Suck in some salt water through your inhalant siphon and let it pass through your filter.
3. Savor the delicate flavors of phytoplankton, zooplankton and other salty detritus.
4. Expel the filtered water through your exhalant siphon.
5. Repeat again and again.



PICKLEWEED SALAD

1 pound pickleweed

1 large garlic clove, minced

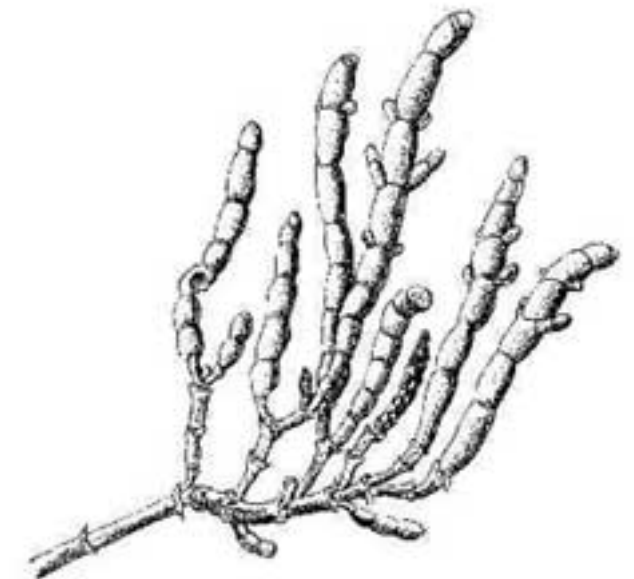
3 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Black pepper to taste

1/4 cup crumbled feta

Lemon or lime juice to taste



1. Pick a pound of pickleweed and bring it home.
2. Boil the pickleweed for one minute then transfer to a bowl of ice water to cool.
3. Lay out pickleweed on a towel and pick out any residual flotsam and jetsam.
4. Trim the top 2-5 inches of the plant and discard the rest.
5. Pat dry and toss with the other ingredients.
6. Serve cold.

THE MUDSNAIL DIET™

Looking to lose weight?

Want to lighten your plumage?

Look no further than the Mudsail Diet™



*“The best thing about this diet is you still get to eat!
The mudsnail gets fully digested and spit out the
other side still alive!”*

“The mudsnail supply will never run out!”