

BLAKELY ISLAND FIELD STATION

Timothy Nelson (<http://spu.edu/academics/college-of-arts-sciences/biology/faculty-staff/nelson-tim/>), PhD, Director

Blakely Island Website (<http://blakely.spu.edu/>)

In 1977, the University was given 900 acres of land and granted an open-space conservation easement on another 3,000 acres on Blakely Island, which is in the San Juan archipelago of northwestern Washington.

Programs

The Blakely Island Field Station serves as the teaching site for upper-division biology courses in marine, aquatic, and terrestrial ecology; and oceanography, introductory biology, and astronomy for non-science majors. Research conducted by faculty and students has included baseline surveys of major island habitats, and the ecology of lakes, marine bays, and forests.

Island and Facilities

Although only a few miles from the mainland, the island is isolated and home to only a few year-round residents. Facilities include a dining hall-library-classroom building that accommodates 24 students and staff, a residence hall with 10 double-occupancy rooms, and a dive shop.

The island is surrounded by lush kelp forests, eelgrass meadows, and spectacular rock walls. These subtidal and intertidal habitats support a diversity of seaweeds, invertebrates, fish, and marine mammals.

In the island interior, the lakes provide habitat for river otters, herons, kingfishers, bald eagles, and osprey, as well as a diverse invertebrate fauna. The terrain is rugged, rising sharply from sea level to more than 1,000 feet, and it supports several distinctive forest types.

For a complete listing of courses offered at Blakely Island Field Station, visit the BIFS website (<http://blakely.spu.edu/>), or contact Dr. Timothy Nelson (tnelson@spu.edu), field station director.