

MOUNT ARROWSMITH BIOSPHERE REGION



GEOFOUR FIELD GUIDE



*Experience 10 Amazing Places
in the Mount Arrowsmith
Biosphere Region. Adventure
and inspiration await you!*

- A**
 - 1** **MacMillan Provincial Park**
Enter Cathedral Grove, where old-growth Douglas firs abound.
 - 2** **Cameron Lake**
View glassy waters embraced by majestic mountains.
 - 3** **Little Qualicum Falls Prov. Park**
Feel the power of waterfalls cascading down a rocky gorge.
- B**
 - 4** **Heritage Forest**
Discover a forest floor alive with fascinating fungi.
 - 5** **Milner Gardens & Woodland**
Experience gardens and winding pathways of colour.
- C**
 - 6** **Parksville Community Park**
Explore beautiful promenades and vast sandy beaches.
 - 7** **Rathrevor Beach Prov. Park**
See waves and winds shift sand along shorelines.
 - 8** **Top Bridge**
Follow twisted trails to secret look-outs and rock-faced cliffs.
- D**
 - 9** **Englishman River Falls Prov. Park**
Escape through hemlocks and cedars to magnificent waters.
 - 10** **Notch Hill**
Explore Garry Oak and Arbutus meadows by the sea.



To view a Google Maps version of the MABR Amazing Places map, please visit:
mabr.ca/apmap



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- Park Areas
- Trans-Canada
- Mountains
- Highways
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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



**MOUNT
ARROWSMITH**
BIOSPHERE REGION

In partnership with

PARKSVILLE
QUALICUM**BEACH**

and

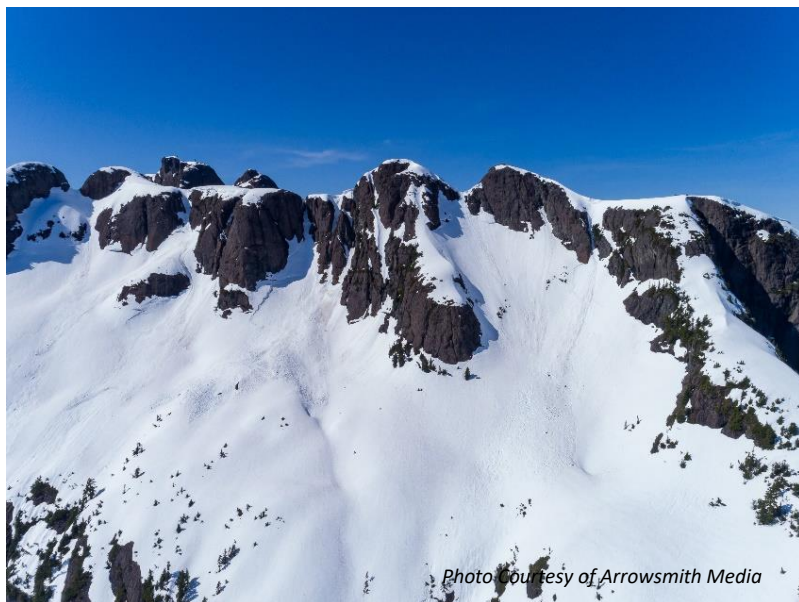




DISCOVER THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH BIOSPHERE REGION

The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR) joined the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme as part of a worldwide agenda to designate regions around the globe that serve as excellent examples of places where people are living and working in harmony with nature. The MABR received its designation as a UNESCO biosphere reserve in 2000.

Today, the MABR follows a Roundtable governance structure that consists of regional stakeholders, such as provincial and municipal governments, First Nations, environmental groups, private industry, and community representatives. Biosphere reserves are considered model regions for sustainable development. They work to promote the conservation of biological and cultural diversity in addition to economic and social development. The MABR Roundtable, along with community partners, work together to find innovative ways to achieve a balance between the needs of humans and nature. In short, the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region inspires a positive future for all living species by facilitating collaboration, coordinating participatory research, and supporting environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability.



What makes the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region unique to other Canadian Biospheres is its vertical elevation range—spanning just over 2100 meters from the highest peaks of Mount Arrowsmith (1817 metres) to 300 meters into the Salish Sea. The biosphere region is approximately 1200 square kilometers and is encompassed by the boundaries of five watersheds: Englishman River, Little Qualicum River, French Creek, Nanoose Creek, and Bonnel Creek. The MABR is situated within the traditional territories of seven First Nations.

For more information on the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region, please visit www.mabr.ca

ABOUT GEOCACHING

Geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunting game. Millions of players use the Geocaching® app or a GPS to find cleverly hidden containers called geocaches and log their experiences online.

Geocaches come in many shapes and sizes, and every geocache has a difficulty (D) rating and a terrain (T) rating on a five point scale known as a D/T rating.

The Amazing Places GeoTour geocaches may be traditional or multi-caches and consist of a physical container each containing a logbook, pencil and unique coin. The coins are there so you can prove your find by making a pencil rubbing into the corresponding box on the Collection Page. To answer the GeoClue, visit the Amazing Places sign at each location. The GeoClue is written in the side bar on the corresponding page of the Field Guide. Redeem your completed Cache Code Collection Page to get a prize!

How to Find a Geocache:

- Download the free Geocaching® app to see the Amazing Places GeoTour (GT8F)
- Select a geocache on the map and the app will help you navigate to it!
- Once you are near the geocache, start looking for it. If you need help, view the cache description, photos, and hints.

Once found, be sure to sign the logbook. Small toys, knick-knacks or other treasures found in a geocache are called SWAG. These are meant to be traded. Trackables are items that have a unique code engraved on them and move from geocache to geocache towards a goal, such as visiting every province in Canada. Be sure not to mistake a trackable as SWAG – you can take them but they should stay with the game by being placed in another geocache.

Place the geocache back exactly as you found it, even if you think you see a better spot for it. Finally, log your find in the app and share your experience with others. You can log geocaches on the Geocaching® app or on Geocaching.com. Don't spoil the fun for other geocachers by revealing the hide in your log or photo!

Tips for Beginners

Always be prepared for the weather and activity with suitable clothing and supplies (Field Guide, snacks, GPS enabled device, pen, trading SWAG, phone, etc.).

If you can't find a geocache, view the cache description, photos, recent logs, and hints.

When you're within about 30 feet/10 meters of the geocache, put your phone/GPS down and search with your eyes and hands. Be stealthy in busy, muggle*-filled geocache locations. *Muggles are non-geocachers.

Always CITO (Cache in Trash Out) when you geocache.

HAVE FUN ON THE AMAZING PLACES GEOTOUR!

CACHE CODE COLLECTION PAGE



Each time you visit a physical cache, be sure to find the unique metal coin and take a pencil rubbing in the square below to prove your find. Then visit the Amazing Places sign waypoint to answer the GeoClue on each page of this guide.

Collect them all and bring your completed collection page during open hours to:

- Parksville & District Chamber of Commerce, 1275 Island Hwy E, Parksville, BC, V9P 2G3 or,
- Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Spa Resort Gift Shop, 1155 Resort Drive, Parksville, V9P 2E3

Or mail to: MABR, Vancouver Island University, 900 Fifth Street, Bldg 305, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5S5

*Only one collection page can be redeemed per person per year.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

1

Rubbing

1. MacMillian Provincial Park

(Cathedral Grove)

Answer to GeoClue:

2. Cameron Lake

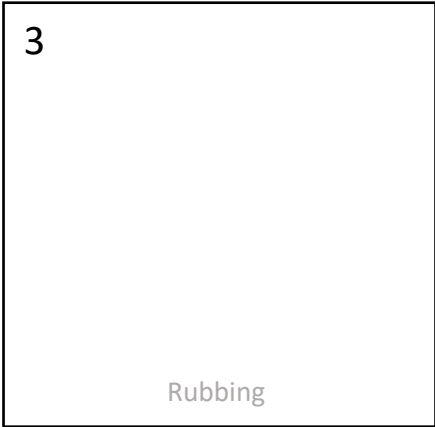
Answer to GeoClue:

2

Rubbing



Name: _____

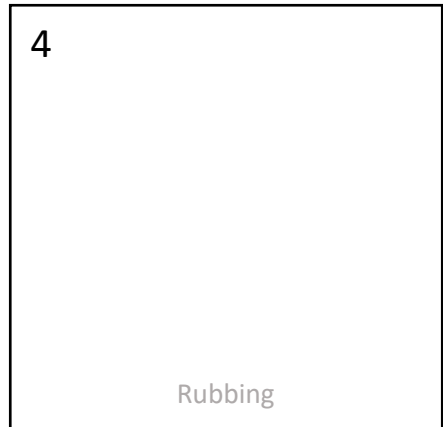


3. Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park

Answer to GeoClue:

4. Heritage Forest

Answer to GeoClue:



5. Milner Gardens & Woodland

Answer to GeoClue:

(No Rubbing)



6. Parksville Community Park

Answer to GeoClue:

Name: _____

7

7. Rathrevor Beach Provincial Park

Answer to GeoClue:

Rubbing

8. Top Bridge

Answer to GeoClue:

(No Rubbing)

9

9. Englishman River Falls Provincial Park

Answer to GeoClue:

Rubbing

10. Notch Hill

Answer to GeoClue:

10

Rubbing



NOTES



MacMillan Provincial Park

(Cathedral Grove)

CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Traditional

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 17.460 W 124° 39.895

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 17.425 W 124° 39.703

Traditional Territory:
Hupacasath First Nation

Town: Qualicum Beach

Land Manager: BC Parks

Access Information: From Hwy #19 and Hwy #19A take the exit to head west on Hwy #4 toward Port Alberni

Services Available: parking, washrooms

GeoClue:

Songbirds explore the tree canopy hunting for insects. How many species of insects may be found in the upper branches?



The early 1900's saw the creation of a railway on the North side of Cameron Lake linking Parksville to the Alberni Valley. In 1910 portions of a wagon road were completed along the South side of Cameron Lake linking Parksville and the Alberni Valley. Some sections of this wagon road would become Highway 4. These transportation routes allowed locals and tourists an opportunity to visit the large growth forest in what is known today as MacMillan Park. By the 1920's this large old growth forest was one of the few easy access large old growth forests left. The local boards of trade, town councils, outdoor groups and individual citizens vigorously sought protection of this area. For many years the public lobbied the government to acquire lands from the Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing company to create a park. The name Cathedral Grove was starting to be used when describing the area. This name is reputed to have originated from the Governor General Viscount Willingdon in 1928.

In 1944 HR MacMillan donated 136 hectares of forest for a park, including what was now known as "Cathedral Grove." The Government went on to create MacMillan Provincial Park in 1947. The Class A park has had additions to the original size over the years and is now 301 hectares. The vision of these early pioneers allows you to experience Cathedral Grove today.

When you visit Cathedral Grove you will be awed by the size and height of the Douglas fir trees. Many of the Douglas fir are 800 years old and survived a fire 350 years ago. They are spectacular. You will also be impressed by the red cedar, maple and Western hemlock trees that you will encounter. This is a living old growth forest and older trees are falling, creating openings for the future trees to spring up from the valley floor as they seek sunlight and nutrients to allow them to become the future giants of this park.

Read the park signs and learn about the major 1967 storm which did significant damage to MacMillan Park. Learn how forest succession works, what is in the soil, what wildlife lives in and among the trees, what is a living stump, and what nurse logs do.

The trees are not the only thing to see in MacMillan Park. It is part of a complex and rich ecosystem. You will see many other types of vegetation, huckleberries, Oregon grape, moss, and salal, to name a few. The cool moist environment of MacMillan Park provides great habitat for amphibians as well, such as the Pacific tree frog, red legged frogs, rough skinned newts, Northwestern salamander, Western red backed salamander and garter snakes. The beautiful Cameron River that flows through the park and Cameron Lake support rainbow, brown and cutthroat trout.

As the park is relatively small, large mammals are not usually year round residents, but transition through the park seasonally. Large mammals that pass through the park include black tailed deer, elk, black bear and cougar. You may also encounter small mammals like bats, voles and squirrels. A variety of birds frequent the park also. If you have a keen eye you may be lucky to hear or see Red breasted sapsuckers, Downey woodpeckers, Hairy woodpeckers, Northern flickers, chestnut backed chickadees, and American robins among the many other birds found here.

Note: If it is very windy, please leave the park. Trees or debris may fall under windy conditions.



Written By: Dave Forman

Sources:

MacMillan Masterplan

BC Parks website and signage



Cameron Lake



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 1.5

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Traditional

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 17.338 W 124° 35.162

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 17.393 W 124° 37.107

Traditional Territory:
Kwalikum First Nation

Town: Qualicum Beach

Land Manager: BC Parks

Access Information: From Hwy #19 and Hwy #19A take the exit to head west on Hwy #4 toward Port Alberni

Services Available: parking, picnic tables, washrooms

GeoClue:

Cameron Lake is one of the few lakes in British Columbia known for fishing what type of fish?

In 1886, an 85km wagon road was constructed on the north side of Cameron Lake to allow for the movement of goods and people between Nanaimo and Port Alberni. In 1911, the road was moved to the south side of Cameron Lake and a railway constructed in its place. This railway exists today, although the Cameron Lake station does not.

On December 20, 1940 the Province of British Columbia designated 440 Hectares of land as Little Qualicum Falls Park. The park protected an area that includes Cameron Lake Day Use Area at the South end of Cameron Lake.

Cameron Lake was named in 1860 by Captain Richards of the HMS Plumper after the Honourable David Cameron, the Chief Justice of Vancouver Island. Cameron was the first judge of the colony but was not originally a professional man. Many apparently thought he was a good judge despite his lack of professional training.

Cameron Lake is approximately six kilometres in length and averages one kilometre in width. The Cameron River flows into Cameron Lake and then into the Little Qualicum River. The lake’s maximum depth is approximately 43 metres with relatively shallow areas occurring at both the inlet and outlet of the lake.

The day use area has impressive views of the Lake and surrounding mountains. The highway corridor leading to MacMillan Park also provides incredible vistas for picture taking. This is one of the locals’ and tourists’

favourite places to swim and play in the summer months. The lake provides opportunities to paddle board, kayak and canoe. It is also an ideal place to sailboard due to a wind funnel created by the surrounding mountains. There is no boat ramp in this day use area as parking is extremely limited. The day use area has picnic tables and outhouses for the public's use. The Arrowsmith CPR Regional Trail starts just west of the Cameron Lake Parking Lot. Built in 1912 to provide a hiking opportunity for guests at the Cameron Lake Canadian Pacific Railway Resort, it provides a steep trail challenge with beautiful views.

Large red cedar trees, Douglas fir, Western hemlock, red alder and broad leaf maples provide the canopy for the Cameron Lake day use area. The understory includes huckleberry, Kinnikinnik, ocean spray, Oregon grape, twin flower, Western sword fern and salal. Saprophytic and parasitic ground plants are also present in this area.

Large mammals are not usually seen in this small day use area, but deer, black bear, and cougar may occasionally pass through. Small mammals such as Wandering shrew, long eared bat, American red squirrel and white footed mouse may be seen. The day use area is in the Coastal Douglas fir biogeoclimatic zone. The area is partially representative of the Georgia Strait Lowlands and Island's regional landscape.

Between 1933 and 1968 brown trout, cutthroat trout, steelhead and rainbow trout were stocked in Cameron Lake. Many fishers still enjoy fishing the descendants of this stocking program.



Old Cameron Lake Train Station

Written By: Dave Forman

Sources:

Little Qualicum Falls Masterplan

BC Parks website and signage

RDN website



Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 2.5

Type of Cache: Traditional

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 18.907 W 124° 33.421

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 18.835 W 124° 33.260

Traditional Territory:
Kwalikum First Nation

Town: Qualicum Beach

Land Manager: BC Parks

Access Information: 19 km west of Parksville on Highway 4. Signs from highway.

Services Available: parking, washrooms, campground

GeoClue:

What type of slow-growing trees at this Amazing Place prefer wet areas near streams and are a source of taxol, an anti-cancer drug?

Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park was established on December 20, 1940. It's 440 hectares provide a beautiful setting for its campground, day use area and trails. It was established to protect the old growth Douglas-fir forest and the associated plant communities as well as the area around the river.

The park straddles the Little Qualicum River and includes a stunning set of waterfalls that cascade down a rocky gorge. These impressive waterfalls provide incredible natural vistas for reflection and picture taking.

In 1936-37 the BC Forest Service established a depression era work camp in the park area that employed 50 men drawn chiefly from the Canadian Prairies. Their task was to develop vehicular access from the Alberni Highway to the falls area. This included the road, picnic shelter, fire pits, toilets and a trail and bridges to the waterfalls. Work was completed in 1939 and the area became an immediate success. If you take the trail leading up from the middle bridge you will find the Beau Cedre cabin, the original small cedar log cabin used by the park patrolmen. The cabin has been rebuilt, but the design remains as it was in 1940.

The park is a very popular camping destination that provides swimming opportunities at Cameron Lake. It also has a beautiful shaded river trail system leading to the upper and lower falls. The day use area has a picnic area that includes a 1940's designed picnic shelter that has been rebuilt to resemble the original picnic shelter.

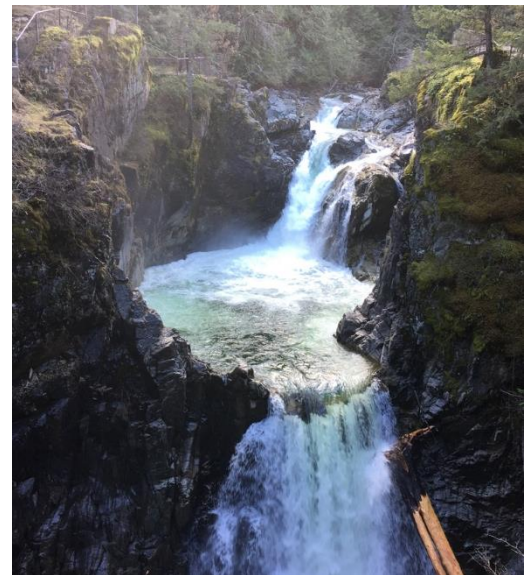
The campground has a lower section that provides shaded areas for those hot summer days while many of the upper area campsites are sunny. The bedrock of Little Qualicum Falls Park consists of folded and faulted volcanic and sedimentary rock, chiefly Mesozoic in origin and relating to the Vancouver Island Insular Range.

The park supports a population of small mammals and birds. These include the wandering shrew, long eared bat, California bat, American red squirrel, white footed mouse and beaver. Large mammals that may pass through this park are the coast deer, cougar, and the American black bear.

Brown trout, cutthroat trout, steelhead and rainbow trout can be found in the park waters as a result of early stocking programs.

Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park lies within the Province's Coastal Lowlands Natural Region. It is partially representative of the Georgia Strait Lowlands and Islands' Regional landscape. This landscape is characterized by a combination of flat areas with prominent hills, and hilly, slightly higher elevation areas with rolling treed summits.

Swimming in the park portion of the Qualicum River is not recommended, and many areas are closed to swimming. It is recommended that you take the 15 minute drive to Cameron Lake where you can enjoy the safe swimming there.



Written By: Dave Forman
Sources:
Little Qualicum Master Plan
BC Parks website



Heritage Forest



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Multi-cache

Geocache Coordinates:

Start with Milner Gardens to solve for these coordinates

Sign Coordinates:

N 49° 21.212 W 124° 26.108

Traditional Territory:

Kwalikum First Nation

Town: Qualicum Beach

Land Manager: Town of Qualicum Beach

Access Information: Crescent Road E in Qualicum Beach

Services Available: Parking

GeoClue:

Heritage Forest is supported by an invisible support network of mycorrhizal fungi. What are the only visible signs of this network?

In 1913, development company, Merchants Trust and Trading, owned the large land parcel that encompasses Heritage Forest, and built the Qualicum Beach Hotel and Golf Links. That same year, Brigadier General Noel Money bought the land, including the golf resort, and built a family home on it. A well liked socialite, Money played host to such notable people as the King of Siam (Thailand), John Wayne, Rita Hayworth, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Errol Flynn, Spencer Tracy, Shirley Temple and others, in what is now known as The Crown Mansion – located immediately next to the Heritage Forest.

In 1941, Noel Money died and the property changed hands several times until a man named Bobby Brown bought it in 1954. The Brown family used it as a weekend retreat and summer home, and in 1955, purchased the adjacent golf course in order to ensure his ocean views were maintained. He died in 1972, and nine years later the golf course was sold to the Town of Qualicum Beach and preserved as the Memorial Golf Course – the fourth oldest in the province.

Then known as the Brown Mansion, the Brown Family Trust decided to sell the house with its 5 acres plus the fifty acres of forest in 1995. In March of 1996 Anne Klees, a local neighbour, was walking along a nearby street when she noticed a piece of paper on the road. It was a detailed map showing plans for the forest to be subdivided into 110 building lots. Anne and her husband Leo contacted as many people as possible and

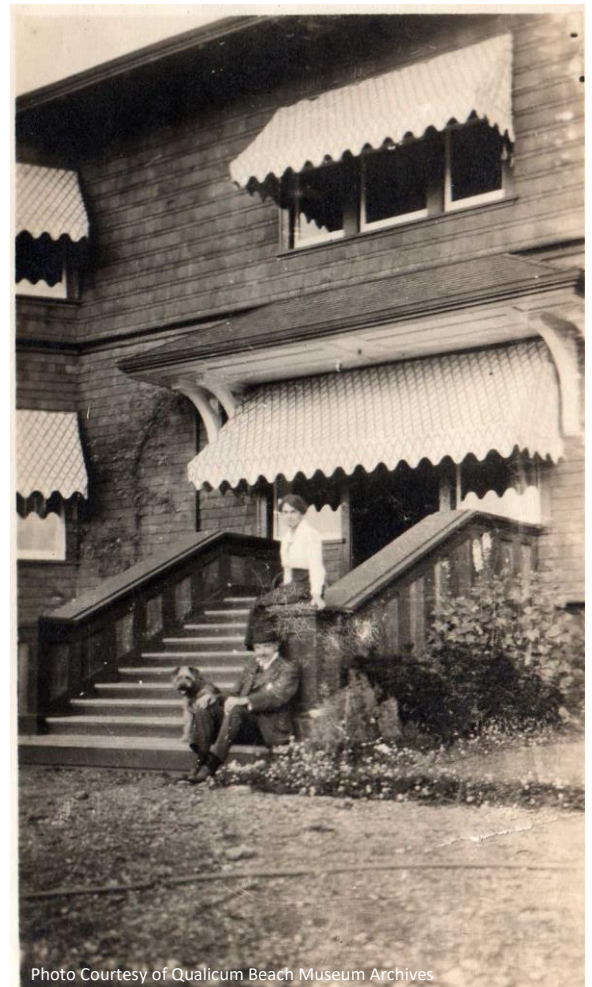
formed the Brown Property Preservation Society (BPPS) to raise funds and protect these lands from development.

It took 8 years, and the tireless efforts of hundreds of dedicated volunteers to raise 68% of the purchase price for the land. The Town of Qualicum Beach contributed the balance and the Forest was saved! When the BPPS turned the property over to the Town, the name was changed to 'Heritage Forest,' and a Commission was appointed to act as stewards of the land. A Conservation Covenant was signed in 2008, thereby forming a partnership between the BPPS, the Town of Qualicum Beach and The Land Conservancy of British Columbia (TLC). This Covenant ensures that these Lands will be protected from development in perpetuity.

The Heritage Forest contains impressive pockets of remnant old growth Douglas-fir trees within a second growth forest that has grown back since being logged in the 1910s. The old Douglas-fir trees left standing primarily along Beach Creek are about 400 years old, and the oldest tree in the Forest is about 800 years old. These magnificent giants are a reminder of what the forests were like prior to development.

Today, the Heritage Forest provides old growth attributes such as snags and wildlife trees supporting notable key featured species as barred owls, great-horned owls, and pileated woodpeckers and bald eagles. It is also home to black-tailed deer, coho salmon and many species of songbirds, along with a wide variety of flora and a host of fungi. There is an impressive array of mushroom diversity, both in the number of species and in numbers of mushroom fruiting bodies. A mix of tree species of both young and old ages combine within a variety of unique ecological niches that contribute to this richness.

The Heritage Forest lies within the Moist Maritime Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic subzone, which is found in low elevations (sea level to about 150 meters or 435 feet) along southeast Vancouver Island. It lies in the rainshadow of adjacent Vancouver Island Mountains, resulting in warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Growing seasons here are very long and the zone represents the mildest climate in Canada.



The original Crown Mansion

It is worth noting that the Heritage Forest represents a significant portion of those lands in the Coastal Douglas-fir forest ecosystem that are preserved today.

Written by: Tom Whitfield; *Edited by:* Michelle Harnett

Sources:

Whitfield, T. (February, 2015). *The Heritage Forest Story*. Retrieved from <http://www.qualicumbeach.net/heritage/history.htm>
Qualicum Beach Memorial Golf Club (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved from <http://golfqualicum.ca/about-us/>
Wylie, B. (2003). *Qualicum Beach...a History*. 2nd ed. Hignell Printing Ltd., Winnipeg



Milner Gardens & Woodland



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Multi-cache

Stage One (Sign) Coordinates:
N 49° 21.218 W 124° 24.875

Traditional Territory:
Kwalikum First Nation

Town: Qualicum Beach

Land Manager: Vancouver
Island University

Access Information: 2179
Island Hwy W, V9K 1G1

Services Available: parking,
washrooms, tea room & gift
shop (during open hours)

Note: The Gardens do not need
to be open to solve this cache

GeoClue:

Ray Milner was the recipient of
what prestigious national
award?

Ray Milner, a renowned philanthropist and businessperson, and his first wife Rina purchased this 28 hectare estate in Qualicum Beach in 1937 as a retreat from their busy life in Alberta. They soon began work on the garden which they both loved. Sadly, however, Rina passed away in 1952. More extensive work on the 4 hectare garden portion of the estate was started in 1954 after Ray's marriage to his second wife, Veronica.

Born of the British aristocracy, Veronica Milner was the widow of Desmond Fitzgerald, 28th Knight of Glin, County Limerick, Ireland. Her mother was a cousin of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Veronica hosted the Prince and Princess of Wales at the garden in the mid-1980s. Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip later stayed at the estate for three days in October the following year.

Veronica Milner's artist's eye and horticultural expertise combined to shape the garden. Veronica acquired many of the trees and shrubs at the estate when she accompanied her husband on his many business trips abroad.

The garden is a sensuous delight. Old growth Douglas fir and cedars frame breathtaking views of the Strait of Georgia. The garden lawns slope

gently to meet a precipitous bluff which plunges to the beach below. Beyond the strait, the Coast Range Mountains of the British Columbia mainland can be seen. To the north, Denman, Hornby, Lasqueti and Texada Islands are visible.

Started in 1929 and completed in 1931 the gabled house includes features of a Ceylonese tea plantation house. Its covered veranda looks out on both garden and sea views and serves as an outdoor room. Vines cling to the walls while Rhododendrons and Camellias surround it.

Bald eagles patrol the beach head and circle above their feeding grounds, their distinctive cries carrying across the forest. Blue herons fish the shore, while the dappled shade of the garden shelters songbirds. Purple finches and wrens nest in the camellias near the house. The garden features 500 specimens of rhododendrons, whose colours and textures grow against the majestic forest trees. Blue-green hostas, fragrant honeysuckle, and delicate lace-cape hydrangeas soothe the eye. The forest shelters wildlife.

The significance and complexity of the estate go beyond this aesthetic richness, however. The property is located within the coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone. These forests are dominated by towering Douglas-fir, western red cedar, and grand-fir. Development and logging have taken their toll and very few old growth forests remain. The estate is one of a group of properties (totaling over 56 hectares) which comprise one of the last such forests. As a result, the estate has a very high conservation value.

Today the multi-layered forest canopy casts shade over much of the garden area. The understory includes the extensive collection of rare rhododendrons as well as fine specimen trees. There are several formal areas with lawns and edge plants, a small orchard, berry and vegetable gardens. The garden includes specimens of Japanese maples, Davidia, Stewartia, beeches, laburnum, Katsura, dawn redwood, birches and Spanish chestnut.

The estate was acquired by Malaspina University-College (now Vancouver Island University) in 1996. The garden was dedicated in May of that year as “The Milner Gardens” in recognition of Ray and Veronica Milner.

Today the estate is used a living laboratory for students of Vancouver Island University as well as hosting the successful children’s educational program Shoots with Roots. The estate is open for the public to enjoy much of the year but check for open hours if you wish to view the garden while geocaching. The programming and public access to the estate is only possible with great thanks to a large, dedicated team of volunteers and a number of generous donors.

The gardens do not have to be open to solve this multi-cache.



The Milner House, circa 1960s



Parksville Community Park



Photo Courtesy of City of Parksville

CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 1

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Traditional

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 19.583 W 124° 18.483

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 19.458 W 124° 18.650

Traditional Territory:
Snaw-Naw-As First Nation

Town: City of Parksville

Land Manager: City of
Parksville

Access Information: Turn onto
Corfield St N from Island Hwy E
in Parksville (19A)

Services Available: parking,
washrooms, picnic tables,
seasonal food trucks

GeoClue:

How many Brant geese stop in
this area each year before
continuing to their breeding
grounds in the Arctic?

The City of Parksville is located along the Salish Sea (Strait of Georgia) on the sheltered east coast of Vancouver Island. Surrounded by stunning beaches and mountains, Parksville is a recreation mecca for both visitors and residents. The Community Park is one of the City's most popular attractions, affectionately referred to as the jewel of the Parksville.

The Community Park is within the traditional territory of the Coast Salish whose people have lived in the region from time immemorial. The Coast Salish people were the first to call the Parksville area home and the area known today as the Community Park served as a traditional settlement. Captain Vancouver came to explore Vancouver Island in 1792 and not until 1850 was the Parksville area named Englishman's River due to the drowning of an Englishman trying to cross. Ten years later, a trail was built joining Victoria to Comox and in 1883, the construction of the trail led to the first non-First-Nations permanent settlement beside the Englishman River. In 1887, the Englishman River Post Office was renamed the Parksville Post Office after its postmaster, Nelson Parks. Parks lived in a small shack near the land and it is said during a gathering in his humble shack is where the City gained the namesake, "Parksville".

The Women's Institute, a group of women who collectively led the way for social and patriotic activities in the district for seventy years, sparked the Community Park's beginnings. At the time the Community Park was purchased, there were two pieces of land available. A vote took place to determine which piece of land would be used for the purpose of parkland

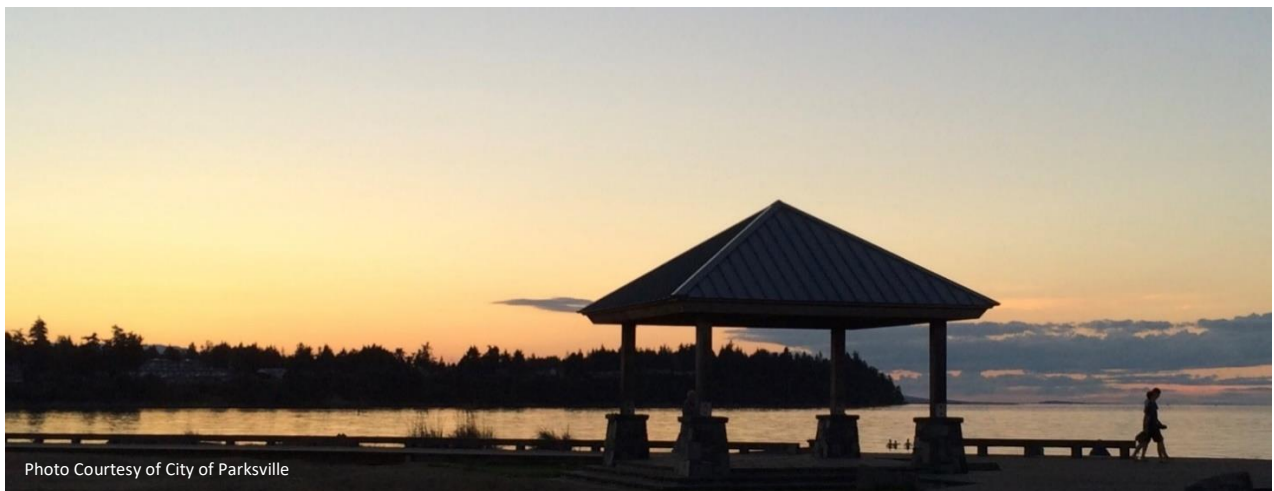
and a board was elected to carry out the project. In 1923, the Parksville women's Institute purchased the 39 acres of waterfront property from Joe Hirst for \$3,500 and through determination, the loan was paid in three years to take advantage of a \$500 discount.

Shortly after the purchase of the land, change houses were built and the area became a hot spot for camping and recreation. The space officially became known as the Community Park and was maintained by the Community Park Society for thirty years. In 1963, the Village of Parksville assumed responsibility for the park; however, community involvement did not stop here. The Parksville Lions Club took charge of the children's playground in 1985, naming it the Lions VentureLand Playground. Over the years, a water park, outdoor fitness facility and skateboard park were added. In 2017, with help from the Rotary Club of Parksville AM, the Parksville Lions continued their fundraising efforts, contributing more than \$100,000 to build a new splash park. In 2010, the City completed a 445 metre, waterfront walkway from the Community Park to the foot of McMillan Street, creating a beautiful spot for a stroll and easier accessibility to the beach.

Around the time the Community Park gained its identity, tourism in the Parksville region began to take shape. Evelyn Gibbs and successful Hong Kong businessman, Mathew B Beattie, moved to the area and settled on the forty-acre oceanfront property south of Rath Trevor after purchasing it from her father, Samuel Gibbs. In 1920, the couple built their home, Newbie Lodge, in old Scottish hunting-lodge style. In 1929, due to the stock market crash, the Beattie's were forced to sell their beloved home and move to England. In 1948, after a succession of owners, the property was purchased by the Charters' and it opened as the Beach Acres guesthouse. This was integral in making Parksville and the Community Park a popular year-round vacation destination for people from all over the world, as it remains so to this day.

The Parksville Community Park is a vibrant and unique space with something for everyone; sports fields, horseshoe pits, lacrosse box, tennis/pickleball courts, kite field, picnic shelter, gazebo, beach volleyball, outdoor fitness gym, skateboard park, labyrinth, washroom facilities, accessible children's playground and splash park, as well as the stunning, protected sandy beach of Parksville Bay.

The Parksville Community Park is a community treasure and central gathering place. It remains a vital part of the City's history and plays host to many annual festivals and community events, most notably the Parksville Beach Festival featuring the Quality Foods Canadian Open Sand Sculpting Competition and Exhibition in July and August.



Written by: City of Parksville



Rathrevor Beach Provincial Park



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Multi-cache

Geocache Coordinates:

Start with Top Bridge to solve for these coordinates

Sign Coordinates:

N 49° 19.273 W 124° 15.843

Traditional Territory:

Snaw-Naw-As First Nation

Town: City of Parksville

Land Manager: BC Parks

Access Information: Exit #51 from the Island Highway 19 and follow signs to the park.

Services Available: parking, washrooms, campground, gas station, convenience store

GeoClue:

In what two ways does American searocket respond when it gets buried in sand?

Rathrevor Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches on Vancouver Island. This park has 240 hectares of foreshore and 108 hectares of upland area. It was established on April 20, 1967.

Rathrevor offers excellent panoramic views across the Strait of Georgia towards the Coast Mountains and inland towards Mt. Arrowsmith. Check out the beach signage to learn the names of nearby islands and mountains.

Rathrevor is named after the Irish family who homesteaded on this land. William Rath was a gold prospector who arrived in 1886 with his young wife and baby daughter. They built a log cabin, cleared the land, and in 1895 they built a barn. William died in 1903, leaving Elizabeth the farm and five children. She proved to be an industrious person, successfully running the farm and eventually operating it as a campground. The suffix “trevor” was added to give the campground a more lyrical name.

The Rath farm house that replaced the log cabin is now used as an interpretive centre and can still be found among the Douglas fir trees to the west of the gatehouse. The old barn collapsed a number of years ago and was removed for safety reasons. You can still follow the back trails to see the fields that the Rath family farmed.

Easily accessible, Rathtrevor provides almost a kilometre of beach for visitors to walk and play on. As the water flows over the sand it gets warmed, making it an ideal place to swim. The park has 226 vehicle accessible campsites, 25 walk in sites, 4 group sites and two picnic shelters.

The rapid transition from beach to grassland to marsh to old growth forest, along with the many edges created by the various ecotypes (a population or subspecies that is adapted to local environmental conditions), is not found in any other Provincial Park, making Rathtrevor Beach a unique place to visit. The park has a mixed forest with Douglas fir, hemlock, alder and broad leaf maple trees.

Rathtrevor is in the Dry Maritime Subzone of the Coastal Douglas fir biogeoclimatic zone. Several species of wildlife can be seen in the park including deer, raccoons, squirrels, otters, mink, bears and cougars, who occasionally pass through the park. Bird watching is also a popular activity at the park, particularly in the spring when large numbers of seabirds congregate for the annual herring spawn. The most famous migratory shore birds are the Brant geese, who use the beaches of Rathtrevor in February, March and April to rest and feed. The park is part of the Craig Bay staging and feeding areas during the Brants spring migration from Mexico to northern Canada and Alaska.

Other birds that frequent the park include eagles, osprey, hawks, vultures and owls. There are over 200 species of birds inhabiting or using the park. Marine fauna includes mussels, Littleneck clams, Sculpin, hermit crabs, and many more interesting creatures that can be found in the park beach areas. Park interpreters provide interesting talks on the park and its resources during the summer months. See the gatehouse staff for details.

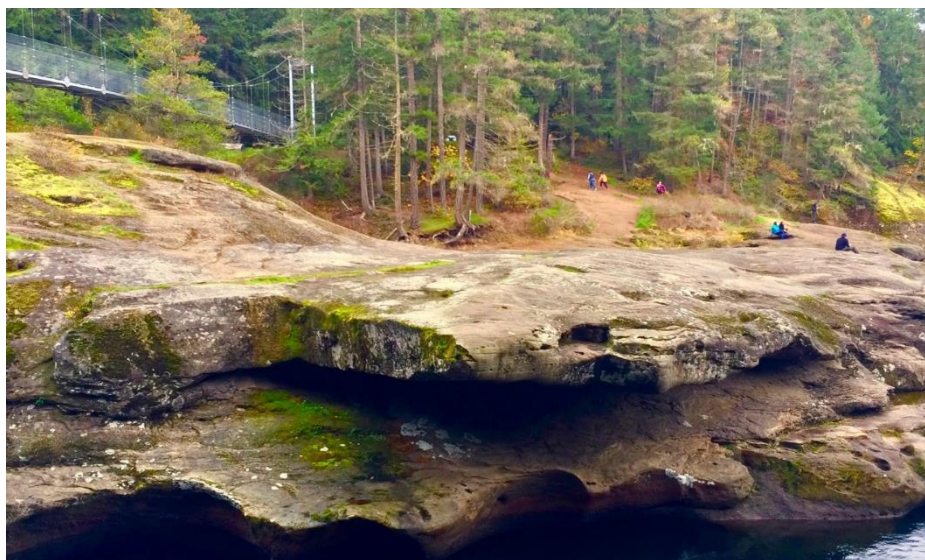


Written By: Dave Forman

Sources: Rathtrevor Beach Master Plan, BC Parks Website & Signage



Top Bridge



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Multi-cache

Stage One (Sign) Coordinates:
N 49° 17.885 W 124° 16.060

Traditional Territory:
Snaw-Naw-As First Nation

Town: City of Parksville

Land Manager: Regional
District of Nanaimo

Access Information: End of
Chattell Rd, off Kaye Rd, off
Hwy 19A

Services Available: parking,
washrooms

GeoClue:

The parks and conservation areas that join at Top Bridge protect habitat for species at risk. Name one such species listed on the sign:

Top Bridge Regional Trail is a five kilometer span of scenic trail located at the junction of five parks and a conservation area. The trail leads to a grand suspension bridge that connects the east and west side of the Englishman River and two separate trail networks. Exploring this expansive trail system is an activity highly recommended by locals during all seasons because you'll never have the same experience twice! In the winter you can expect to be awed by the roaring river running at 29.8 m³/ sec, while in the summer when waters only flow at 0.95 m³/sec you can cool off in it's natural swimming pools.

The land Top Bridge is situated on was acquired by Nature Trust in 1978, but it wasn't inaugurated as a trail until 1999 when the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) obtained a 30 year lease and took on management responsibilities of the land. The Arrowsmith Mountain Bike Club has also built the Top Bridge bike park in this area, which has eight intermediate loops of varying difficulty. The Hammerfest is supposed to be the most challenging trail if you're looking for a thrill!

As observant visitors walk along the paths, you will note evidence of this riparian area's importance to Coast Salish people since time immemorial. There are many culturally modified trees throughout the forest; the most obvious being western red-cedars that were harvested for their bark, which can be identified by long scarred over strips where outer layers of bark were removed. If you take a look around near the river you may

even spot one of three distinct petroglyphs carved into the rocks.

Top Bridge is within the Coastal Douglas Fir moist maritime biogeoclimactic zone, so you will be able to see lots of the massively tall Douglas firs this region is famous for. You're also likely to spot a lot of salal, oregon grape, and red huckleberry in the understory. These berry-bearing bushes support some of the large mammals that use Top Bridge as a corridor for travel, including black-tailed deer, Roosevelt elk, black bears, and cougars. Bird species such as the yellow bellied sapsucker and pileated woodpecker also take advantage of the food abundance at Top Bridge. Closer to the river, you might encounter a western toad, pacific tree frog, or northwest salamander. During their respective spawning seasons, you can see pink, chinook, coho, and chum salmon in the Englishman River. During the spawn you're also more likely to see bald eagles and the aforementioned black bears gathering for a fish feast!

Although the Englishman River still supports an impressive amount of biological productivity, land development, agriculture, logging, and water licenses have impacted its water flows and habitat in the last century, and the river supports far fewer salmon than it did historically. Further, the floodplain has suffered considerable lateral erosion and bedload movement. Due to this ecological sensitivity, and the fact that the trail's midsection runs through private property, the RDN requests that visitors stay on the authorized paths and respect all trail closures. Luckily, there is no lack of beautifully maintained trails here to explore!

There are several access points to get to the Top Bridge Regional Trail. If walking, you can get on the trail at Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park, anywhere along Resort Way, at Industrial Way and Tuan Road (one block inland from Highway 19A). Alternatively you can drive to the end of Chattell Road, which is off Kaye Road, off Highway 19A by the truck scales. There is also access at the end of Allsbrook Road (off Bellvue Road, off Highway 4A). The entry from Chattell Road is the quickest and most accessible way to get to the suspension bridge. There are stairs and steep inclines that prevent most of the other trails from being wheelchair or stroller accessible.



Written By: Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute

Sources: Englishman River Masterplan, BC Parks Website, RDN website, Parksville- Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area Management Plan



Englishman River Falls Provincial Park



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 1.5

Type of Cache: Regular

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 14.778 W 124° 20.862

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 14.633 W 124° 20.913

Traditional Territory:
Snaw-Naw-As First Nation

Town: Errington

Land Manager: BC Parks

Access Information: Take
Errington Road off Highway 4
to the end

Services Available: parking,
washrooms, campground

GeoClue:

What species can be heard
singing along the river and
nesting in the cliffs at
Englishman River Falls:

The Province of British Columbia designated 97 hectares of land as Englishman River Falls Park in 1940. The park was established to protect the old-growth Douglas fir forest and the associated plant communities, as well as the area around the river and the waterfalls.

According to an old legend, First Nations people in the area found the skeleton of a white man along the river near the waterfall, thus giving the falls its name. Today the park is noted for its natural beauty, which includes a deep crystal clear pool with a small rocky beach downstream the lower falls bridge – a great fresh water swimming hole and sunbathing area.

Situated along the Englishman River East of Parksville, Englishman River Falls Provincial Park features a stunning upper waterfall cascading along the descending riverbed into a deep canyon. This can be seen from the upper bridge. What use to be the lower falls has disappeared. When standing on the lower bridge looking upstream you will see a huge boulder. The lower falls use to flow over this boulder. A few years ago the plug that stopped the water from running under and to the side of this boulder was washed away. This allowed the water to flow around and under the boulder rather than over the top which leaves us with only one waterfall in Englishman River Falls Park. According to a local geomorphologist, this occurs often in wilderness areas on Vancouver Island, but rarely happens where we can observe it.

The park has a large day-use area and campground and contains several trails that meander through the forest and along the river. Visitors can expect spectacular views along the way, particularly from the two bridges that cross the river where it plunges down the narrow rock canyon toward quieter waters below.

This park makes a small contribution to the protection of the Nanaimo Lowlands Ecosystem, which is a major landscape on Vancouver island. The park also protects a small example of Coastal Western hemlock forest.



By Walter Sigmund [GFDL (<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>)]

Woodland Penstemon



Coastal Western hemlock, red cedar, red alder, broad leaf maple and Douglas fir provide the canopy in this park. The understory includes Oregon grape, salal, western sword fern and huckleberry. There are both first growth and second growth trees in this park. Two blue-listed plant species – the Woodland Penstemon and the Macoun’s Groundsel – are also found in the park.

Large mammals that transition through this park are deer, black bear and cougar. The park also provides an ideal place to view spawning salmon in the fall, both in the deep crystal clear pool above the lower bridge and in the river below the bridge.

Written By: Dave Forman

Sources: Englishman River Masterplan, BC Parks Website and signs



Notch Hill



CACHE INFORMATION

Level of Difficulty: 2

Terrain: 2.5

Type of Cache: Traditional

Geocache Coordinates:
N 49° 16.548 W 124° 09.838

Sign Coordinates:
N 49° 16.428 W 124° 09.220

Traditional Territory:
Snaw-Naw-As First Nation

Town: Nanoose Bay

Land Manager: Fairwinds

Access Information:
Exit Island Hwy E at NW Bay Rd.
Right on Powder Point Road

Services Available: parking

GeoClue:

How many species at risk are associated with Garry Oak ecosystems:

Notch Hill sits on the north side of Nanoose Harbour, in the community of Nanoose Bay. For thousands of years this area, along with much of the West Coast of North America, has been inhabited by Native peoples. On Vancouver Island, they are referred to as the coast-dwelling Salish people, in whose language this area is called Hwi-alas.

Its English name – Notch Hill – was given by John Enos, the area’s first settler who arrived in 1862. Born in Sao Pedro, Santa Maria, Azores, John Enos (Joao Ignacio), set sail on a whaling ship for America in 1848 when he was just 14 years old. He arrived in Boston where he worked as a servant before heading west for the gold fields of California. When he arrived, however, he found all the good claims had already been staked, so he sailed north to British Columbia with hopes of becoming rich off the Fraser River gold rush in 1858.

He made various attempts over the years to find prosperity through gold by following the Northwest gold rushes, but his lack of success resulted in his return to Vancouver Island to take work as a seaman moving coal from Nanaimo to Esquimalt. Following this he worked for the Hudson’s Bay company squaring timbers, and built Nanaimo’s first bridge. In 1863, he decided to settle on the Nanoose Peninsula.

Named for the shape of the mountain’s silhouette, John Enos cleared the land to build Notch Hill Ranch. He planted a large orchard, and raised

cattle, bulls, and pigs who roamed the hill's steep slopes. He continued to live on the ranch for 27 years when, in 1894, he retired to the men's ward at St. Joseph's Hospital in Victoria. Today, Nanoose Bay's Notch Hill, Enos Creek, and Enos Lake are reminders of his legacy in the area.

Over time, the community flourished as several prominent employers began to establish in Nanoose Bay. The Great Powder Company was founded in 1911 and made products for land clearing, mining and World War I armaments. Brickyard Community Park, at the Southeast end of the peninsula, is named for a brick making

company that was founded around the same time, the remnants of which can still be found today among the tree roots. As lumber became the predominant industry, the Straits Lumber Company was established and ships from all over the world arrived in Nanoose Harbour to transport lumber, mainly to Japan. Although it provided gainly employment for many local residents, it was forced out of business when Canada entered World War II against Japan.



Straits Lumber Company, Circa 1920s

Just below Notch Hill on the harbour side is the Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental Test Range (METR), a jointly operated US - Canada Naval base that tests torpedoes, sonobuoys, sonar and other maritime warfare equipment in waters nearby. Established in 1967, the base tests 500-800 air, ship and submarine-launched torpedoes each year. The site is operated principally by the US, and was chosen for its unique seabed and shallow average depth of just 410 metres. Unlike the American test ranges off Hawaii and California, these features make retrieval of the test torpedoes easier and more cost effective, and the US Navy reported in 1996, that it had saved \$30 billion over the previous 30 years by testing in Nanoose Bay.

Interestingly, Nanoose Bay is also the site of the first hostile expropriation of provincial land by the federal government in Canadian history. In May 1997, American fishing vessels were overfishing BC salmon stocks, so the province issued a 90-day notice of cancellation for licenses until they signed the Pacific Salmon Treaty. This impacted use of the test range since the seabed was no longer available for American use. A number of court challenges followed between the federal and provincial governments, resulting in Ottawa's hostile expropriation of Nanoose Bay in 1999 and ensuring American use of the test base for years to come.

As you walk up Notch Hill, be sure to take note of the beautiful Garry Oak ecosystem at the plateau where the Amazing Places sign is. You will find yourself in one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada.

Written By: Michelle Harnett

Sources: Shangaan Webservices Inc. (2017). Nanoose Bay. Retrieved from <http://vancouverisland.com/plan-your-trip/regions-and-towns/vancouver-island-bc-islands/nanoose-bay/>

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Cover Images: Vecteezy.com

