

Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

Comox Valley Area

Bear Creek Nature Park



Varied Thrush:
Bill Heybroek drawing



Bear Creek Nature Park: Krista Kaptein photo



Red Squirrel: fr. Charles Brandt photo

Photo Gallery

Bear Creek Nature Park, situated along the Oyster River half way between Courtenay and Campbell River, offers fine opportunities for wildlife viewing and recreation. The newly acquired 161-acre park features habitats rich in biodiversity, including floodplains, wetlands and second-growth forest. In the forest, listen for the long whistle of the Varied Thrush, or check the river for Common Merganser ducks. Hooded Mergansers may be seen in the wetlands of the park, and nesting boxes have been placed to attract colourful Wood Ducks. Many wildflowers bloom along the floodplains in the spring including spectacular pink and white fawn lilies. For many years the Oyster River Enhancement Society (ORES) has operated a volunteer-run salmon hatchery that is now within the park, and extensive work has been done to improve salmon habitat in the area. Bear Creek Nature Park has a network of multi-use trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding. The main entrance to the park is on Macaulay Road in Black Creek.

Site Map

Geographical Description

Along the Oyster River at Oyster River Hatchery, 3 km upstream from Oyster River Estuary.

Area/ Trail

64 ha.

Length

Some hills.

Habitat

Riparian 2nd growth forest, wetlands.

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Highlights	Large tract of forest; wetlands; woodland birds.
Best Season	Spring for flowers; autumn for spawning salmon; year-round for woods.
Main Access	2700 Macaulay Rd. Black Creek.
Secondary Accesses	
Cautions	Trails can be wet in winter & flood occasionally; trails may be unsafe during strong winds.
Jurisdiction	Comox Valley Regional District Park (Area C)
Birds	Common Merganser, Wood Duck, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Spotted Towhee, Varied Thrush, American Robin, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Dark-eyed Junco, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Pacific Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Song Sparrow, Purple Finch. Wood Duck boxes. Bird List
Mammals	Roosevelt Elk possible, Black Bear, Red Squirrel, Black-tailed Deer.
Reptiles	
Amphibians	
Fish	Steelhead & Cutthroat Trout; Pink, Coho, Chum & Chinook Salmon.
Insects	
Trees	Mostly western hemlock, grand fir, redcedar, bigleaf maple, cottonwood, Sitka spruce, few Douglas-fir, cascara, Pacific crab apple, willow sp.
Shrubs	Red elderberry, red huckleberry, salmonberry, salal, Pacific ninebark, wild black gooseberry.
Flowering Plants	Trillium, tall fringe-cup, Pacific bleeding heart, vanilla leaf, false bugbane, false lily-of-the-valley, pink fawn lily, skunk cabbage, stream violet, evergreen violet, oxeye daisy, western bittercress, draba verna, hedge-nettle, woolly sunflower, western meadowrue, Lyall's anemone .
Ferns, Lichens, Mosses	Licorice fern, sword fern, bracken fern. Lungwort, Usnea sp. , script lichen, tattered rag lichen. Oregon beak moss.
Other Species	Giant scouring rush.
Invasive/Non-native species	
Mushrooms	
Geology	

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Regulations	Dogs on leash from August to December in Oyster River Enhancement Society area. Share trails with horses.
Facilities	Parking area.
Other Features	Oyster River Hatchery: spawning & rearing channels, ponds & wetlands. Volunteers work on Tuesdays.
Other Connections	
History	Qualicum Farms Ltd. purchased the property from the University of British Columbia in 2006. In 2010, Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), in partnership with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) and in conjunction with the land owner and other private parties, agreed to a combination of purchase and donation of the property. The donation was certified as an Ecological gift under the Ecological Gifts program administered by Environment Canada.
FMI	Comox Valley Regional District Parks Oyster River Enhancement Society eBird Hotspot