

Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

Comox Valley Area

Williams Beach Forest, Williams Beach & Filberg Marsh



Downy Woodpecker:
Bill Heybroek drawing



Williams Beach Forest: Krista Kaptein photo



Filberg Marsh: Krista Kaptein photo

Williams Beach Forest is an area of second growth forest in the east Merville area between Seal Bay Forest & Miracle Beach. As one of the few remaining sections of Crown Land on the east side of Vancouver Island, it is part of proposed Treaty Settlement Lands for the K'omoks First Nation. The forest has numerous multi-use trails used by hikers, bikers & horse-riders; and there is ongoing harvesting of trees & other forest products. The rather homogeneous woods are mostly Douglas-fir with some redcedar & western hemlock. There are areas of both white pine & shore pine, but no deciduous trees, and the understorey is almost all salal. The terrain is flat with no water courses in the woods themselves. More varied habitat is nearby - the Filberg Marsh, part of which is protected by the Nature Trust of BC, offers glimpses of waterbirds from the roadside; and the Strait of Georgia shoreline can be accessed from a couple of spots, down rough, steep & sometimes wet trails.

[Site Map](#)

Geographical Description	Large contiguous piece of second growth forest near the Strait of Georgia. Adjacent freshwater marsh. Nearby beach access down steep escarpment.
Area/ Trail Length	Williams Beach Forest: approx. 350 ha. forest along Williams Beach Rd. Wide flat trails. Williams Beach: approx. 340 m trail down steep escarpment to shoreline. Filberg Marsh: approx. 18 ha. marsh southeast of woods.
Habitat	2nd growth forest; freshwater marsh; riparian along ravine; rocky beach.

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Highlights	Large tract of 2nd growth forest, mainly Douglas-fir; and shore pine & white pine. More varied habitat nearby.
Best Season	Year-round for woods; Summer at low tide.
Main Access	Forest: Williams Beach Rd. 2.6 km from junction with Old Island Highway North. Marsh: Williams Beach Rd. 1.6 km from junction with Old Island Highway North; roadside viewing only. Beach: east end of Serenity Rd..
Secondary Accesses	West end of Larkin Rd, along Williams Beach Rd.
Cautions	Trails can be wet in winter; with occasional deadfall; forest trails may be unsafe during strong winds. Trail to beach is steep & eroding.
Jurisdiction	Forest: Crown land under treaty negotiations with K'omoks First Nation. Marsh: Nature Trust of BC ; some private property. Public beach accesses. Intertidal zone: Provincial MOE.
Birds	Forest: Hairy Woodpecker, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Common Raven, Pacific Wren, Red Crossbill. Beach: Common Goldeneye, Harlequin. Marsh: Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead.
Mammals	Red Squirrel in forest, seals on beach.
Reptiles	
Amphibians	
Fish	
Other species	
Insects	
Trees	Douglas-fir, western redcedar, shore pine, western white pine, western hemlock.
Shrubs	Salal, red huckleberry, Oregon grape, twinflower. Hardhack, cattails in marsh.
Flowering Plants	Vanilla leaf.
Ferns, Lichens, Mosses	Bracken fern, sword fern. Reindeer lichen, Witch's hair. Step moss.
Other Species	

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Invasive/Non-native species

Mushrooms

Witch's butter.

Geology

Flat terrain, sandy soils.

Regulations

Multi-use trails.

Facilities

Roadside parking.

Other Features

Cell tower in forest.

Other

Connections

FMI

[Comox Valley Regional District Beach Accesses](#)

[Nature Trust of BC](#)

[Tide Tables](#)