

Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

North Island Area

Mateoja Heritage Trail, Malcolm Island



Snags in Melvin's Bog: photo by Krista Kaptein



Big Lake: photo by Krista Kaptein

Mateoja Heritage Trail follows the path of pioneer Finnish homesteaders on Malcolm Island. Behind the town of Sointula, the path leads through an area of a 1923 forest fire, an old farm site, past forestry artifacts through a second-growth forest. Two small ponds, an unusual bog, and a large lake have good bird viewing opportunities.

[Photo Gallery](#)

Geographical Description	Located in the centre of Malcolm Island.
Ecosection	Queen Charlotte Strait
Area/ Trail Length	3.2 km one-way trail.
Seasons to Visit	Year round.
Habitat	Second growth hemlock forest, former homestead site & burn area, bog, ponds, lake.
Viewing Highlights	Variety of ecosystems including an interesting bog with acid-loving plants & candelabra snags. Some areas of mistletoe infestation in the woods. Forest & water birds. Marine wildlife including whales may be observed from the ferry to Sointula.
Other Features	Logging artifacts.

Main Access From Vancouver Island, Malcolm Island is reached by ferry from Port MacNeill. Once at Sointula on Malcolm Island , the trail begins on Third Street above the townsite.

[Map](#)

Secondary Accesses From Mitchell Bay Access Road.

Cautions

Jurisdiction

Regulations

Facilities Viewing stands, benches, sign, boardwalk.

Other Recreational Activities Sointula hosts the annual Doug Innes Memorial Bird Count every April in conjunction with the Comox Valley Naturalists Society.

Other Connections

History Sointula on Malcolm Island has a fascinating history. It was settled in 1901 by Finnish settlers aiming to create a communal Utopian community. After four years the group sold the assets, but the people who remained purchased the land & descendants continue today.

FMI "Sointula: Island Utopia" by Paula Wild, published 2007.

Links

[Sointula Resource Centre Society](#)

[Living Oceans Society](#)

[Sointula: Island Utopia by Paula Wild](#)

[A Place of Rainbows](#)

[BC Ferries](#)