

# Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

## North Island Area

### Alert Bay Ecological Park, Cormorant Island



*Ecological Park Bog: photo by Krista Kaptein*



*Bog Cranberry & Salal: photo by Krista Kaptein*

The Alert Bay Ecological Park is an interesting wetland area in the centre of Malcolm Island. Connecting trails lead through an area of big trees as well as through woods along the shoreline of the island.

#### [Photo Gallery](#)

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Geographical Description</b> | Located in the centre of Cormorant Island.  |
| <b>Ecosection</b>               | <a href="#">Queen Charlotte Strait</a>  |
| <b>Area/ Trail Length</b>       | 1.8 km trail one-way.   |
| <b>Seasons to Visit</b>         | Year round.   |
| <b>Habitat</b>                  | Second growth hemlock forest, bog.  |
| <b>Viewing Highlights</b>       | Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Belted Kingfisher year round. Violet-green Swallow in late spring and early summer. Downy Woodpecker, Varied Thrush and Song Sparrow in the woods. Hooded Merganser in the wetland in spring.<br><br>Dragonflies in the wetland bog.<br><br>Interesting bog plants. Large Sitka spruce on the Big Tree Loop Trail.<br><br>Marine wildlife including whales may be observed from the ferry to Alert Bay. |

**Other Features**

**Main Access** From Vancouver Island, Cormorant Island is reached by ferry from Port MacNeill. Once at Alert Bay on Cormorant Island, the trail begins from several locations along Broughton Street near the Alert Bay Campground.  
[Map](#)

**Secondary Accesses** From the north end of Poplar Rd.

**Cautions**

**Jurisdiction**

**Regulations**

**Facilities** Boardwalk, benches, signs.

**Other Recreational Activities** The village's U'mista Cultural Centre, incorporated in 1974, is Canada's longest-running First Nations museum and cultural centre. U'mista showcases the famed Potlatch Collection of ceremonial regalia, taken by Canadian authorities in 1922 during the potlatch ban era and finally returned in 1980.

**Other Connections**

**History** Alert Bay on Cormorant Island, formerly a thriving fishing village on the BC coast, is the oldest community in the northern Vancouver Island area. Heritage buildings and old village houses are adjacent to the thriving culture of the 'Namgis First Nation of the Kwakwaka'wakw.

Alert Bay Ecological Park is a natural wetland fed by an underground spring. Originally, this site provided a water source for the Spenser and Huson's fish saltery(1870), that later became a cannery. When a dam was built half way up the hill to store water for the cannery it caused the springs at the top of the hill to flood the surrounding area, thus killing the trees.

**FMI** An island trail map is available at the U'mista Cultural Centre.

**Links** [Alert Bay Natural History](#)  
[Cormorant Island Map](#)  
[BC Ferries](#)