

Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

Saanich Area

Mount Tolmie Park



Mt Tolmie Park



Mt Baker View from Mt Tolmie Park: Krista Kaptein photo

Panoramic views of Saanich and Victoria across to the Olympic Mountain Range and to Mt. Baker in the Cascades will entice you to hike to the summit. There is a roadway to the top and crossing the Park. Natural pathways through the rocky outcrops and Garry Oak meadows provide many different places to explore.

[Photo Gallery](#)

Geographical Description Mount Tolmie, in suburban Saanich and adjacent to the University of Victoria, is a gneiss bedrock hill with an elevation of 120 m. The west face is steep, with a very thin layer of soil and is covered mostly in Scotch Broom. The north and portion of east and south slopes have a gentler slope and are covered in Garry Oak meadows and rock outcrops. Outside of the Park, the lower slopes of the south and east slopes are subdivided into housing. From the top of the hill are unobstructed views of Greater Victoria and Mount Baker.

Ecosection Coastal Douglas Fir Biogeoclimatic Zone

Area/ Trail Length About 7 ha. area.
There are 2 – 3 km of walking pathways in the Park, most are hilly though not posing a challenging walk. You can drive a car to the summit and across the Park. It is an easy walk to the summit in about 20 minutes. There is wheel chair access along most trails.

Seasons to Visit	<p>Year round.</p> <p>During the spring months, April, May and June, there is a very good display of wild flowers including fawn lily, shooting stars, spring gold, and camas. Shrubs, such as Ocean spray and Nootka rose, are common. In the winter, summer and fall, the trails remain easy to walk and many native plants and animals can be seen. During the summer the area becomes very dry and occasionally poses a fire hazard.</p>
Habitat	<p>Garry oak meadows with grass and oaks, rock outcrops with licorice fern and stone crop, and dense thickets of shrubs including Ocean spray, Nootka rose, Snowberry and Himalayan black berry. There remains areas covered with Scotch broom on the steeper west slope.</p>
Viewing Highlights	<p>Mount Tolmie is a great place to see landscape views of Greater Victoria, the southern Gulf Islands, and off in the distance in the US the San Juan Islands, Olympic Peninsula, and Mt. Baker.</p> <p>In Mount Tolmie Park common plants include: Arbutus, Douglas fir and Garry oak, Indian Plum, Mock-orange, Nootka rose, Ocean spray, Oregon grape and Snow berry, Camas, Licorice fern, Onion grass, Peavine, Pacific sanicle, Satin flower, Sea blush, Shootingstar, Stone crop, Fawn lily, and Yarrow.</p> <p>Common birds seen include: Killdeer, Turkey vulture, Cooper's hawk, Red-tailed hawk, Barred owl, California quail, Pileated woodpecker, Northern flicker, Downy woodpecker, Anna's hummingbird, Olive-sided flycatcher, Steller's jay, Northwest crow, Raven, Chestnut-backed chickadee, Bushtit, Red-breasted nuthatch, Brown creeper, Bewick's wren, Golden-crowned kinglet, Ruby-crowned kinglet, Robin, Cedar waxwing, Orange-crowned warbler, Yellow-rumped warbler, Western tanager, Spotted towhee, Song sparrow, Fox sparrow, Lincoln sparrow, White-crowned sparrow, Dark-eyed junco, Brewer's black bird, Brown-headed cowbird, House finch, Pine siskin, Goldfinch.</p> <p>As well expect to see butterflies such as Common ringlet, Moss's elfin and Propertius duskywing, and mammals such as Black-tailed deer, Garter snake, Gray squirrel and Raccoon.</p>
Other Features	<p>Adjacent to the parking area at the summit is a covered water reservoir.</p>
Main Access	<p>Mount Tolmie is very close to the University of Victoria to the north, and Camosun College and Hillside Mall to the south. From Richmond Rd. or from Cedar Hill Cross Rd take Mayfair Dr. into the Park and up to the summit.</p> <p>Map</p>
Secondary Accesses	
Cautions	<p>Some of the steeper gravel trails could cause some people to lose their footing.</p>

Jurisdiction	Saanich Municipal Park.
Regulations	Dogs must be on-leash, and there is no cycling on trails. There are no camping facilities.
Facilities	Parking, trails, interpretive signs, and picnic tables.
Other Recreational Activities	
Other Connections	Trails in Mount Tolmie Park connect with trails in the University of Victoria.
History	Mt. Tolmie was officially named in 1934 after Dr. William Frazer Tolmie who was a senior employee of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Victoria area in the mid 1800's.
FMI Links	District of Saanich Parks Victoria Natural History Society Nature Guide to the Victoria Region