

# Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

## Saanich Area

### Francis/King Regional Park

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*Victoria Trails photo*

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Made up of two adjacent parks, the Francis/King Regional Park is home to some of the oldest Douglas firs in the Victoria area. The forest itself is estimated to be over 10,000 years old and houses some rare plant communities. With minimal elevation and boardwalks on some trails, this park is a suitable hiking location for people of all ages and mobility. Many travel to this area for the beauty of an ancient forest.

[Victoria Natural History Society](#)

#### [Photo Gallery](#)

<b>Geographical Description</b>	Francis/King Regional Park is located adjacent to Thetis Lake Regional Park just on the south edge of the Highlands. The entire forest is relatively flat and is mostly dirt and plants, there are no specific rocky features.
<b>Area/ Trail Length</b>	Area: 107 hectares  Trail: The entire area is an easy hike with over 11 km worth of different trails. The ground is relatively flat with a few wooden bridges to cross over ditches and muddy spots. One trail is mostly accessible boardwalk. The longest hike in the area should only take 2-3 hours.
<b>Seasons to Visit</b>	Visited year-round, but best to go during spring when rare wildflowers are in bloom.
<b>Habitat</b>	Old growth forest

<b>Viewing Highlights</b>	<p>Due to the age of the forest, some of the largest Douglas firs (up to 75 meters, up to 600 years old) can be found here; Garry oaks, Grand firs, arbutus, red alder, and bigleaf maple trees also grow in this park. Wildflowers and other plants found here include common camas, salal, horsetail, shooting stars, white fawn lilies, indian plums, and licorice ferns.</p> <p>Birds include Dark-eyed Junco, Anna's and Rufous Hummingbird, Barred owl, Great Horned Owl, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Hairy Woodpecker.</p>
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#### Other Features

<b>Main Access</b>	<p>Located 20 minutes (11 km) from downtown Victoria by driving. Take the Trans-Canada Hwy (Hwy #1) out of Victoria, exit towards Burnside Road West. Continue driving straight uphill and turn left on Prospect Lake Road. Turn left on Munn Road, and the parking lot will be on the right.</p>
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#### Secondary Accesses

<b>Cautions</b>	<p>During wet seasons like fall and winter, trails may be muddy and slippery, walk with caution with appropriate footwear.</p>
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<p>Capital Regional District</p>
<b>Regulations</b>	<p>Dogs must stay on leash. Do not remove or disturb animals or plants. Smoking, camping, open fires, and alcohol are prohibited.</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	<p>Parking lot (fits 17 vehicles), picnic areas, toilets (by the parking lot), nature center, water fountains, information kiosk.</p>

#### Other Recreational Activities

<b>Other Connections</b>	<p>Some trails connect to Thetis Lake Regional Park and eventually, Mill Hill Regional Park.</p>
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<b>History</b>	<p>Named after Thomas Samuel Francis and Freeman King, Francis donated the land that now comprises Francis Park to the province upon his death. A separate property was added to the park in honor of Freeman King, a good friend of Thomas Francis.</p> <p>Before becoming a park, the land Francis lived on was his families homestead which was established in the mid-1800s. Due to the abundance of large trees in the area, many people sought to pay Francis large sums for many for access to the timber. However, he refused, wanting to keep the forest in its natural state.</p> <p>CRD has been managing the park since 1979.</p>
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**Links**

[Parks Brochure](#)  
[Cultural History](#)  
[Management Plans](#)  
[Park Map](#)  
[Capital Regional District Parks](#)  
[Victoria Natural History Society](#)  
[Outdoor Club of Victoria](#)  
[Nature Guide to the Victoria Region](#)

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