

Vancouver Island Nature Viewing Region

Comox Valley Area

Brooklyn Creek/Mack Laing/Baybrook Park & Macdonald Wood Park



Wilson's Warbler:
Bill Heybroek drawing



Brooklyn Creek salt marsh: Krista Kaptein photo



Macdonald Wood boardwalk: Krista Kaptein photo

Photo Gallery

Situated between Comox town centre and Goose Spit, Brooklyn Creek flows through the second-growth forest of Mack Laing Park ending in an extensive salt marsh and the tidal flats of Comox Bay. A good example of stream restoration, Brooklyn Creek provides close-up views of spawning salmon in late autumn. Deer are occasionally seen, Bald Eagles are usually present, and the tidal flats are great for exploring at low tide. Winter brings a variety of water birds, and flowering plants add colour in the spring. From the beach there is a view across the bay to Goose Spit and the Beaufort Range. The parks can be visited separately or together. The trail near the former Mack Laing house has a gentle downwards slope while the trail adjacent to Brooklyn Creek includes some short hills and stairs. Baybrook Park is a recent Town of Comox acquisition adjacent to the west. A private property separates these parks from Macdonald Wood Park to the east - connect along Balmoral Rd. or the waterfront.

Site Map

Geographical Description

Along Brooklyn Creek to Courtenay River Estuary (Comox Bay);
Waterfront from Brooklyn Creek estuary to Macdonald Wood Park.

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Area/ Trail Length	1 km trail (one-way) along Brooklyn Creek from Cedar Ave to estuary. Brooklyn Creek Park about 3.4 ha; Mack Laing Park= 2.5 ha., 650 m. trail; Macdonald Wood Park = 3.4 ha., 650 m. trail; Baybrook Park = 2.6 ha. 75 m waterfront along Macdonald Wood; 85m waterfront along Mack Laing Park; 150 m waterfront along Baybrook Park. Some stairs, short hills & slopes.
Habitat	Brooklyn Creek & Mack Laing Parks: riparian 2nd growth forest; wetter habitat. Macdonald Wood Park: 2nd growth forest; drier habitat. Waterfront: salt marsh; tidal flats.
Highlights	Good example of stream restoration; early spring flowers; fish viewing from bridges; deer likely; extensive salt marsh & tidal flats at low tide; Bald Eagle & nest, waterbirds, Anna's Hummingbird around former Mack Laing house.
Best Season	Spring for flowers, Late autumn for fish; Winter for waterbirds; Summer for low tide & intertidal life.
Main Access	Brooklyn Creek Park: east end Cedar Ave., Comox; Mack Laing Park: east end Comox Ave., Comox; Macdonald Wood Park: south end Croteau Rd., Comox.
Secondary Accesses	Pedestrian access to Brooklyn Creek Park and Mack Laing Park at 1440 Balmoral Rd.; to Brooklyn Creek park at east end Robb Rd.; to Baybrook Park at 70 Orchard Park Dr.
Cautions	Trails can be wet in winter. Boardwalk may be slippery when wet. Use caution crossing Balmoral Rd. Watch for deer crossing road. Tide should be lower than 4m. in order to connect along waterfront.
Jurisdiction	Three adjacent Town of Comox Parks; private property between Mack Laing Park & Macdonald Wood (public connection along street or waterfront only) Intertidal zone: Provincial MOE; Fish & fish habitat: Federal DFO.
Mammals	Black-tailed deer, red squirrel.
Birds	Bald Eagle & nest; Mallard, American Wigeon, Surf Scoter, Greater Scaup; Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pileated Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pacific Wren, Bewick's Wren, Pine Siskin, Steller's Jay, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Spotted Towhee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Common Raven, Anna's Hummingbird, White-crowned Sparrow, American Robin, Red-breasted Nuthatch.

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[Bird List](#)

Reptiles

Amphibians

Fish

Coho salmon, cutthroat trout, occasional chum salmon; stickleback, sculpin.

Insects

Trees

Predominantly red alder & bigleaf maple; Sitka spruce & grand fir in the lower areas, Douglas-fir on the upper slopes, some redcedar.

Shrubs

Salal, trailing blackberry, red elderberry, red huckleberry, snowberry, dull Oregon grape, baldhip rose. Salmonberry in wet areas.

Flowering Plants

Wild ginger, false bugbane, bleeding heart, skunk cabbage.

Ferns, Lichens,

Mosses

Ferns: bracken fern, sword fern, spiny wood fern, lady fern.

Lichens: antlered perfume, lungwort .

Other Species

Scouring rush in wet areas.

Invasive/Non-native species

Invasive: holly, daphne laurel, cherry laurel, ivy, Himalayan blackberry, yellow-flag iris, yellow archangel.

Many non-native plants including: herb-Robert, forsythia, English oak, hazelnut (very early catkins: mid-January)

[Plant List for Brooklyn Creek & Mack Laing Parks](#)

Mushrooms

Witches' butter, turkey tail.

Geology

Downstream of Balmoral Ave: 'Ghost' of oxbow lakes from meandering creek; exposure of glacial (Vashon) till, stratified layer of Marine Veneer above, small exposure of Quadra Sand below. Diorite pebbles on beach.

Regulations

Dogs required to be on leash in the whole Town of Comox jurisdiction. Waterfront closed to shellfish harvesting.

Facilities

Limited roadside parking; waterfront boardwalk in Macdonald Wood & Mack Laing Park; occasional benches; picnic table at Macdonald Wood Park entry; interpretive signs.

Other Features

Mack Laing Park: Cairn with plaque near waterfront ; 'Shakesides': Mack Laing home built 1950; fish ladder at Balmoral Ave.

Macdonald Wood Park: Commemorative plaques.

Other

Connections

To Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park along Comox Ave. or along waterfront at low tide; to Goose Spit along waterfront at low tide.

FMI

[Town of Comox Parks](#)

[Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society](#)

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[K'omoks Important Bird Area](#)

[Town of Comox Beach Access Map pdf](#)

[Brooklyn Creek Map pdf](#)

[Nature Trust of BC](#)

[Fish Species in the Courtenay River Estuary and Baynes Sound 2001 pdf](#)

[Tide Tables](#)

[WSU Intertidal Life Identification](#)

[Virtual Museum of Canada-Hamilton Mack Laing](#)

[eBird Hotspot](#)

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