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Gulf Islands

National Park Reserve of Canada

Visitor Guide



parkscanada.gc.ca/gulfislands

1-866-944-1744



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Website information
parkscanada.gc.ca/gulfislands

Emergency Numbers

Police, Fire, Ambulance 911

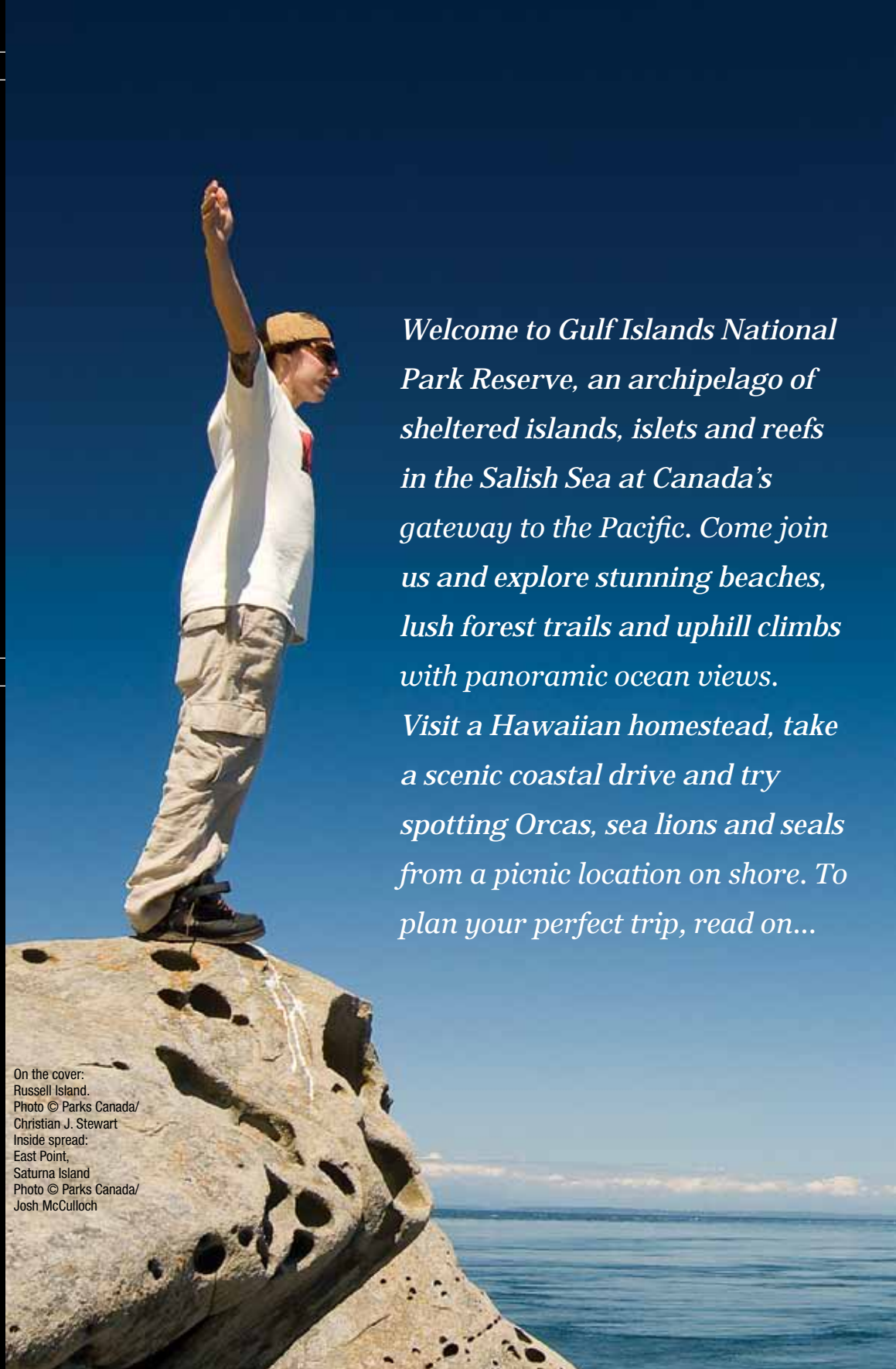
**Marine Distress VHF
Channel 16**

**Park offences or emergencies
1-877-852-3100**

**Park Office
250-654-4000
Toll Free 1-866-944-1744**

**Sidney Operations Centre
2220 Harbour Road
Sidney, B.C. V8L 2P6**

**RCMP detachment offices
located in Sidney and on the
Penders.**



*Welcome to Gulf Islands National
Park Reserve, an archipelago of
sheltered islands, islets and reefs
in the Salish Sea at Canada's
gateway to the Pacific. Come join
us and explore stunning beaches,
lush forest trails and uphill climbs
with panoramic ocean views.
Visit a Hawaiian homestead, take
a scenic coastal drive and try
spotting Orcas, sea lions and seals
from a picnic location on shore. To
plan your perfect trip, read on...*

On the cover:
Russell Island.
Photo © Parks Canada/
Christian J. Stewart
Inside spread:
East Point,
Saturna Island
Photo © Parks Canada/
Josh McCulloch

Want to know more?

Plan your trip by visiting our refreshed website at
parkscanada.gc.ca/gulfislands or by contacting
the office at 1-866-944-1744. Share your pictures and
stories on Tripadvisor.ca.

Learn at your own pace

Check out our interpretive signs found at
various locations throughout the park and
learn more about the area, its rare ecology
and storied past.

What's New

Park Expansion

The park has added new protected lands on Pender, Saturna and Prevost islands, including forested areas and over 2,700 metres of beaches.

A Step Forward for a National Marine Conservation Area Reserve

The Strait of Georgia and Haro Strait are among the most productive marine ecosystems in the world due to the fresh water from the Fraser River mixing with the ocean waters flooding through the Juan de Fuca and Haro Straits. The area is also home to some of Canada's iconic marine animals such as orca whales, salmon and seals. Since 2003, Canada and British Columbia have been working closely with stakeholders, Coast Salish First Nations and local governments to explore their interests and values associated with the protection and conservation of the ecologically rich marine environment also known as the Salish Sea. Visit parkscanada.ca/straitofgeorgia for more information about the NMCA proposed boundary.

Help us set the direction

Work continues on the first management plan for the park, with completion expected later this year. To provide input, check out our website and sign up for e-mail updates by sending us a request at gulfislands@pc.gc.ca.

Minimum Age Requirement for Permit Holders

In order to facilitate safe and enjoyable camping experiences in the park, and in keeping with British Columbia's age of majority, campers must be at least 19 years of age to obtain a camping permit at Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

Reservations available for Sidney Spit Camping

You can now reserve your campsite at Sidney Spit (Sidney Island) simply by visiting the Parks Canada Campground Reservation Service at reservation.parkscanada.gc.ca or by phone at 1-877-737-3783. Sites remain reservable at McDonald and Prior Centennial campgrounds.

Park Fees

Please note that current park fees are in place until March 31, 2013 and are subject to change. Fee adjustments may be implemented in summer 2013. Please check the park website for the most up-to-date information.



Summer Fun Guide

Looking for things to do in the park this summer? Check out the park's summer program guide where you'll find a host of engaging interpretive programs and activities offered from June to August – ideal for the whole family. Available online or ask park staff.



Hiking & Camping

Available onboard BC Ferries or when you arrive at the park, this guide features a detailed map with hiking trails and camping opportunities in the park.



TOP 10



Hawaiian homestead



peace and quiet



geocaching

Try one of our **GEOCACHING PROGRAMS**, and embark on a self-guided trip to experience some of the park's most interesting cultural and natural hotspots. Choose from two routes: a family-friendly treasure hunt or a more strenuous route.

MEDITERRANEAN ON A SHOESTRING:

Grab the clan and a gourmet picnic for a "cruise" by passenger ferry to Sidney Spit's warm sandy beaches and inviting blue waters. Lie back and unwind on your beach blanket or catch up with a favourite book.

IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK: Book a kayak guide or water taxi, and head to Russell Island where a forested trail takes you to a historic **HAWAIIAN HOMESTEAD**. On summer afternoons and evenings, descendants of the original settlers will regale you with stories of their ancestors' lives on the island. Or, take a ferry to visit the Pender Island Museum or the Fog Alarm Building at East Point (Saturna Island) where you will **MEET THE LOCALS AND HEAR TALL TALES OF THE ISLANDS**.

ONE-DAY WONDERS: Pack the picnic basket for a new family adventure each weekend: Sidney Spit – make sandcastles; Mt. Warburton Pike – spot a goat; East Point –hear sea lions; Winter Cove—watch the water do tricks; Roesland—take a family picture.

FLOAT YOUR BOAT: Cruise to Cabbage Island and enjoy the **PEACE AND QUIET** or circumnavigate Princess Margaret (Portland Island) for 360 degrees of stunning views. If you don't have your own boat, hire a kayak guide for the day or treat yourself to a guided eco-tour.

Interpretation programs

Touch a slug, smell a tree, hear an eagle call and get your feet wet while you discover the plants and animals of the park reserve on a free and fun nature program. Check the website or information kiosks throughout the park for a list of program locations and times.



PARK EXPERIENCES



mini-breaks



drive-to vistas



get away from it all

CAMPING MINI-BREAK: Gather the gang around a crackling campfire at McDonald Campground, a lush forest setting only minutes away from Sidney and Victoria.

Step up to a challenging one-hour hike at Mount Norman (South Pender Island) where you will get some exercise and be rewarded by **PANORAMIC OCEAN VIEWS.**

Pack your camera and a lunch and head to East Point (Saturna Island), Georgina Point (Mayne Island) or Sidney Spit for your best chance to **SEE EVERYTHING FROM BIRDS TO SEA LIONS TO WHALES.**

SCENIC ROAD TRIP: Drive to the top of Mt. Warburton Pike on Saturna Island and enjoy the breathtaking bird's eye view. Or, cruise along the stunning ocean-side road to East Point on Saturna Island where you will find an unmatched view of the Strait of Georgia.

GET AWAY FROM IT ALL: A peaceful forest trail leads you down onto a beautiful rocky point, surrounded by crystal clear turquoise waters and tall echoing cliffs. Take a seat, breathe in the clean forest air and admire your stunning surroundings at Narvaez Bay on Saturna Island.



Go to our website, take the *Explorer Quotient™* test and find a menu of itineraries designed just for you!

parksCanada.gc.ca/gulfislands



Ever wondered what the park looks like underwater?

Parks Canada is pleased to collaborate with the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre in the areas of public outreach, education and visitor experience. Located in Sidney, British Columbia, the centre is an aquarium and marine education centre offering visitors a unique glimpse of the park reserve's extraordinary underwater life.

For more information visit oceandiscovery.ca



First Nations

There are many Coast Salish First Nations with long and continuous ties to the Gulf Islands. The Coast Salish people have a special bond with the environment—a spiritual connection to the earth and the water. Their knowledge of natural systems has been passed down from generation to generation through their oral tradition. Over millennia and to this day, the forests and seas have provided food, materials for everyday life and places for spiritual contemplation. First Nations' scientific and traditional knowledge is being used alongside modern science to help park managers make decisions on how to restore and maintain park ecosystems.

The ocean has always been the First Nations' central source of food—a rich harvest of shellfish, seal, sea lion, whale, six-gilled shark, porpoise,

halibut, salmon and other fish. The hunting of deer and small mammals and the harvesting of berries and plants are done in rhythm with the seasons.

Today, First Nations can pursue traditional activities—including hunting and harvesting of plants and other materials—within the national park reserve. Parks Canada works with First Nations to ensure that these activities are done in ways that respect the conservation of species and the ecosystem, and do not endanger the safety of other park users.

Hunting of such species as deer and waterfowl by First Nations occurs within the park reserve, most often during the fall and winter months. Park visitors should exercise due caution. For public safety reasons, visitors in the park reserve who observe hunting are asked to call Parks Canada Dispatch at 1-877-852-3100.



First People, First Voices

The Coast Salish First Nations speak three major dialects of the Coast Salish language: Sencot'en, Hul'q'umi'num' and Samish. The park's website offers you an opportunity to learn a few words of one of these languages, Hul'q'umi'num'.

By clicking on the interactive park map, you'll be able to hear place names as well as some common day-to-day words spoken in Hul'q'umi'num'.

Explore the islands through this linguistic lens by visiting the park website at parkscanada.gc.ca/gulfislands

Coast Salish Ancestral Sites

There are many Coast Salish ancestral sites within Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. These sites are former villages and seasonal use sites, and may include grave sites. These culturally-important sites are also records of past use and continue to connect the Coast Salish people to the Gulf Islands.

Their Elders tell us that we need to take great care and caution around these places because they may contain burials. They remind us that these places are *xe'xe'*. In the Hul'q'umi'num' language, *xe'xe'* suggests "don't go there", "don't walk there", "don't even look in that direction". With their help, we are finding solutions that keep trails, picnic tables and other facilities off important ancestral sites.

These sites are meaningful to us all for the rich and complex perspective that they add to the history of the park reserve. You can help by leaving them undisturbed: abide by area closures, stay on designated trails, and camp only in designated sites. Use the stairs provided at some beach access points to help reduce erosion. If you witness desecration of any cultural site, please contact us immediately. It is illegal to remove or disturb cultural objects in the park reserve. If you find artifacts, leave them in place, and notify park staff.

PUBLIC SAFETY ANNUAL CLOSURE AT SIDNEY SPIT

A portion of Sidney Spit is closed to the public annually from November 1st to the end of February to facilitate hunting by Coast Salish First Nations. Please visit the park website for more information.



Protection of sites

SENĆOŦEN and HUL'Q'UMI'NUM' are the two predominant language groups of the Coast Salish First Nations in the Gulf Islands. Some place names and their translations appear below.

SENĆOŦEN NAMES

	Meaning	Location
ĆTESU	Just arrived	D'Arcy Island
SXEĆOŦEN	Dry mouth	Portland Island
XEXEĆOŦEN	Little dry mouth	Brackman Island
S,DĀYES	Wind drying	North Pender Island
TĀ,WEN	Coho salmon	Georgeson Island
WĀWEN	Place of seal hunting	Prevost Island
WYOMEĆEN	Land of caution	Sidney Island
XELEXĀTEM	Crossways	Isle-de-Lis
TEKTEKSEN	Long nose	Saturna Island
TEMOSEN	Becoming a	Tumbo Island
good fishing tide		
WSI,I,KEM	Little land of clay	McDonald Campground

HUL'Q'UMI'NUM' NAMES

	Meaning	Location
Tl'uqtuqsun	Pointed or long nose	East Point, Saturna Island
Xwixwyus	Swift, narrow passage	Boat Passage, Saturna Island
Tl'uqayum	Calm waters	Lyall Harbour, Saturna Island
Tl'uli	[uncertain]	North end of Samuel Island
Hwu'eshwum	Place of seals	Prevost Island
Hwtl'uquyxum	Whirlpool place	Annette Inlet, Prevost Island
Ste'yus	Wind drying	Bedwell Harbour, Pender Island
Tl'e'ulthw	Permanent houses	Pender Canal, North Pender
Sq'e'utl'um	Place of otters	Otter Bay, North Pender Island
Tth'umuqwa'	Kelp greenling	Russell Island



Camping























Docking &



Mooring



New!
You can now reserve
your site at Sidney Spit
as well as McDonald and Prior
Centennial Campgrounds
reservation.parkscanada.gc.ca
1-877-737-3783

Sites	Dates Open	# of Sites					Access			Fees***
							Road	Marine	Trail	
Vancouver Island										
 McDonald*	May 15 - Sep 30	49	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			\$13.70**
Sidney Island (Accessible by a foot passenger ferry. For schedule and fees: 250-474-5145 or alpinegroup.ca)										
 Sidney Spit*	May 15 - Sep 30	27	✓	✓				✓		\$13.70**
 Mooring Buoys	May 15 - Sep 30	21						✓		\$9.80
 Dock	May 15 - Sep 30							✓		\$1.90/metre
Group camping or picnicking is available at Sidney Spit by reservation only - maximum group size of 30. Fee is charged per party** or \$49 for youth group. For more information or reservation, call 1-877-944-1744.										
D'Arcy Island										
 D'Arcy Island	May 15 - Sep 30	7	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
Isle-de-Lis										
 Isle-de-Lis	May 15 - Sep 30	3	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
Princess Margaret (Portland Island)										
 Shell Beach	May 15 - Sep 30	6	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
 Princess Bay	May 15 - Sep 30	12	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
 Arbutus Point	May 15 - Sep 30	6	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
Pender Islands										
 Prior Centennial*	May 15 - Sep 30	17	✓	✓	✓		✓			\$13.70**
 Beaumont	May 15 - Sep 30	13	✓					✓	✓	\$4.90/person
 Beaumont Mooring Buoys	May 15 - Sep 30	15						✓		\$9.80
Prevost Island										
 James Bay	May 15 - Sep 30	10	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
Saturna Island										
 Narvaez Bay	May 15 - Sep 30	7	✓					✓	✓	\$4.90/person
Cabbage Island										
 Cabbage Island	May 15 - Sep 30	5	✓					✓		\$4.90/person
 Mooring Buoys	May 15 - Sep 30	10						✓		\$9.80
* RESERVABLE ON-LINE AT RESERVATION.PARKSCANADA.GC.CA OR BY PHONE AT 1-877-RESERVE (1-877-737-3783). ** A party includes up to 8 people with a maximum of 4 persons aged 16 years or older, and 1 vehicle. Maximum 2 tents, or 1 RV or 1 motorhome per site. Additional vehicle fee is \$6.80. *** Current fees are in place until March 31, 2013 and are subject to change. Fee adjustments may be implemented in summer 2013. Please check the park website for the most up-to-date information.										

Things you need to know about camping

- You must be at least 19 years of age to obtain a camping permit.**

- You must have a valid permit at all times. Payment is in cash only. Exact change is preferable in case the visitor services personnel have missed you.
- Bring plenty of drinking water with you.** Although potable water is available at Sidney Spit, the sodium content is high and is not recommended for people with health conditions.
- Maximum length of stay is 14 days per calendar year.
- Consumption of alcohol is permitted only at your registered campsite or onboard your vessel.
- Visitors camping at Sidney Spit must be registered before the last ferry leaves the island for the day. Reservations are recommended at Sidney Spit.

Things you need to know about mooring and docking

- Fees apply after 3 p.m., self-registration.
- Rafting is prohibited. One vessel only per buoy.
- Vessel size guideline on mooring buoys:
 - Up to 15m with winds under 30 knots
 - Up to 12m with winds from 30-37 knots
- Mooring is prohibited when wind speeds exceed 37 knots.
- Docks at Sidney Spit and Princess Bay (Princess Margaret) are removed for the winter from Oct. 1 to May 14.

Quiet Hours: 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.



Hiking



	Difficulty	Distance	Time	Loop	One Way
Inner Islands					
Russell Island	E	1.0 km	30 min	X	
Sidney Spit	E	2.0 km	45 min	X	
Princess Margaret	M	6.5 km	3 hrs	X	
Pender Islands					
Mt. Norman	A	2.3 km*	1 hr*		X
Beaumont	A	1.6 km*	1 hr*		X
Roe Lake	M	1.5 km*	45 min*		X
Roesland	E	0.5 km	15 min	X	
Mayne Island					
Bennett Bay	E	1.5 km*	15 min*		X
Saturna and Tumbo Islands					
Winter Cove	E	1.5 km	25 min	X	
Narvaez Bay	M	1.7 km*	30 min*		X
Monarch Head	M	2.5 km	1.5 hr	X	
Lyall Creek	M-A	2.0 km*	40 min*		X
Tumbo Island	E	3.5 km	1.5 hr	X	

E = Easy M = Moderate A = Advanced

*** Trail distance and time is calculated one-way only. Does not include return trip.**

Special Note

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning and sanitary contamination



The algae responsible for paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) produce a potent toxin that can

lead to paralysis of muscles and asphyxiation. Sanitary contamination can also cause serious illness.

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada issues warnings and closures for PSP and sanitary contamination. It is illegal—and could be deadly—to harvest shellfish in a closed area. Don't take chances.
- Permanent annual closures are in effect at Bedwell Harbour (South Pender Island), James Bay (Prevost Island), Princess Bay (Portland Island), and the west side of North Pender Island. Seasonal closures are in effect at Hood Island (Portland Island), Reef Harbour (between Cabbage and Tumbo Islands), Winter Cove (Saturna Island), and Sidney Spit.
- Closures can occur at any time! Be sure to check before you harvest. For further information contact Fisheries and Oceans Canada: 1-866-431-3474 or at pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Visiting during the off-season

- Gates are locked during the winter at McDonald and Prior Centennial, and camping is prohibited.
- Backcountry campsites are accessible year round. No fees are charged during the off-season and services are reduced.

A public safety closure is in effect at Sidney Spit from November 1 to the end of February to facilitate hunting by Coast Salish First Nations.



Marine Hosts

Volunteer Marine Hosts provide general information to boaters during the summer months. Members of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club are your hosts at Princess Bay, Princess Margaret (Portland Island).

The Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club greets marine visitors at Beaumont near Bedwell Harbour, South Pender. Look for the Parks Canada Marine Host floats at these locations. Our volunteers are waiting to share park information, local knowledge, friendly tips and advice to make your visit safe and enjoyable.



Beaumont, South Pender Island

What you need to know

The Gulf Islands National Park Reserve protects many plant species that are at their northern limit or exist nowhere else in Canada as well as animals and unique historic features. Help us to protect them.



leave no trace
CANADA

DON'T JUST DO IT...PLAN IT FIRST

Because this is the best way to have a safe and enjoyable visit.



- Check weather forecast and sea conditions.
- Be responsible for your own safety and the safety of your group.

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Many areas of the park are very sensitive to human use and it takes several years for eroded soil to re-build.



- Stay on designated trails.
- Camp only in designated areas and use tent pads where provided.
- Respect closures for Special Preservation Areas. Stay at least 100 metres from islets.
- Bike on traffic roads. Cycling on park trails is prohibited.

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND AND TAKE WHAT YOU BRING

Keep in mind that every item removed or introduced threatens the integrity of the park.



- Leave natural and cultural objects such as flowers, plants, antlers, rocks, shells, driftwood, bricks and other artefacts undisturbed for others to discover and enjoy.
- Pack out all garbage including dog feces. There are no garbage facilities on the islands.

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS

Others have the right to enjoy the park in peace and quiet.



- Consume alcohol only at your campsite or in a properly equipped, moored vessel.
- Respect quiet hours in campgrounds, 10 p.m. – 8 a.m.
- Respect no-wake zones in moorage areas.

DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE!

Fires are prohibited everywhere in the park, including beaches and below the high tide mark; the only exception is in the fire rings provided in drive-in campgrounds. The risk is too great in such a dry area, especially during summer drought conditions.



- Do not collect deadwood, bark or branches from the forest.
- Use a gas stove for cooking.

PREVENT CONFLICT WITH WILD ANIMALS

Viewing wildlife is a unique way to connect with nature. Make it a safe and rewarding experience:



- Store your food and garbage where wildlife can't get at it.
- Admire wild animals from a distance. Leave plenty of space for animals that may seem to be in distress, especially seal pups. Attempting to assist them often harms these animals.
- Take particular care on shorelines, wetlands and intertidal areas; they are critical habitats for birds and other marine creatures.
- Respect Marine Wildlife Viewing Guidelines, see park website.

MANAGE YOUR FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND

Others may not appreciate your dog's company. Unleashed dogs may damage sensitive plants, harass wildlife or disturb cultural items. Even their scent can scare nesting birds away.



- Keep your pet leashed at all times.
- Take with you anything left behind by your dog.

A Message from the Park Wardens...

The whole Parks Canada team (including staff responsible for visitor services, resource conservation, visitor facilities/assets and law enforcement) look forward to welcoming you to Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. We want your visit to be both enjoyable and memorable. Park wardens are here to protect you as well as the natural and cultural resources that the park is responsible for.

Did you know that every item found in the park, from the smallest grain of sand to the largest tree, receives the highest degree of protection under the law?

Along with that protection comes certain rules and regulations. Please be aware and respect all park regulations.

REGULATIONS

- It is illegal to remove, deface, damage or destroy any flora or natural or cultural objects in a Park.
- It is illegal to entice, approach, feed, disturb, possess or remove wildlife from the park.
- Fires are prohibited in the park, including below high tide mark, except in the designated fire pits in the drive-in campgrounds. Watch for fire ban postings.
- Pets must be on a leash at all times and their droppings removed.
- Camping is permitted only in campgrounds and campers must have a valid permit at all times.
- It is illegal to consume alcohol in public places, including day use areas, beaches and docks.
- A tidal water sport fishing licence is required to fish. Fishing in fresh waters inside the park is prohibited.
- Firearms are prohibited; except for First Nations engaged in traditional hunting.

Failure to comply with these or any other regulations may result in fine, permit cancellation, eviction or court prosecution.

I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY OWN SAFETY, I

- Tell someone where I am going and when I plan to return
- Wear a lifejacket or PFD
- Learn rescue skills for myself and for others
- Know first aid
- Go with a buddy
- Am aware of my environment and watch my footing
- Know how to obtain help in case of an emergency

Traditional hunting by First Nations occurs in the park reserve. Consider wearing bright colours, particularly in the winter. For public safety reasons, if you observe people hunting in the park, please contact Parks Canada at 1-877-852-3100.

Emergency Numbers

Police, Fire, Ambulance 911

Marine Distress VHF Channel 16

Park offences or emergencies 1-877-852-3100

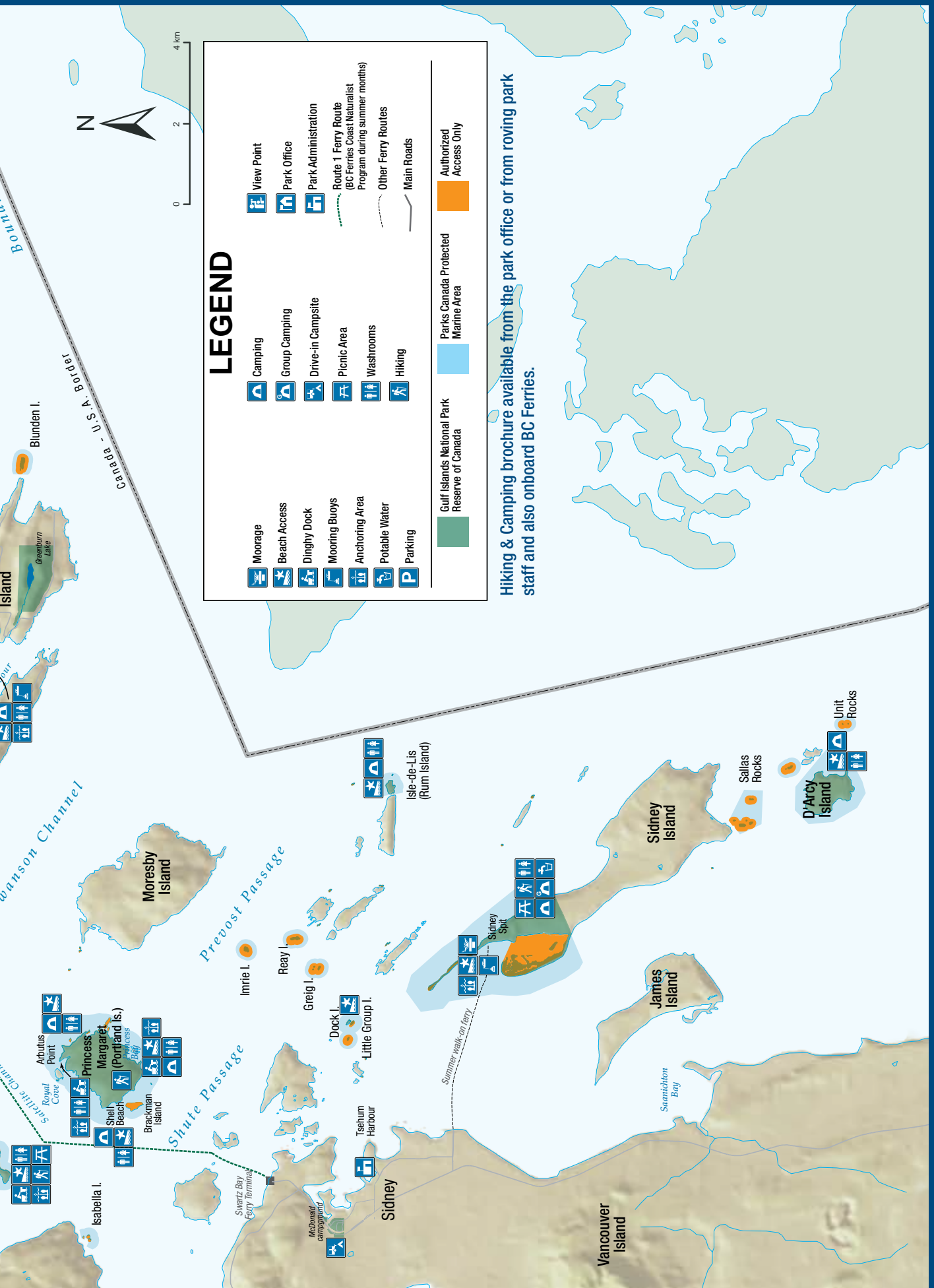
BC Ferries Coastal Naturalist Program

During the summer months, Parks Canada and BC Ferries present the Coastal Naturalist program onboard BC Ferries vessels travelling between Vancouver and Victoria and West Vancouver and Nanaimo. Meet a naturalist on the outer deck to enjoy conversations and short presentations about BC's wildlife, marine life, culture, history, geography and coastal national parks.



For schedules and more information:
bcferries.com





Species at Risk

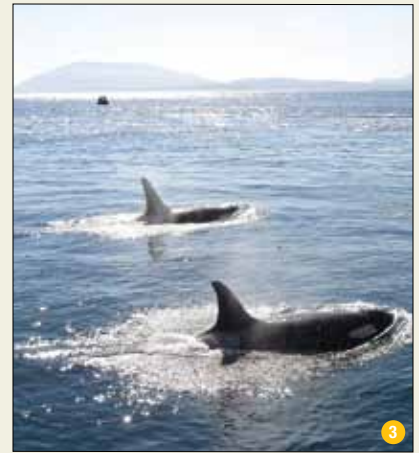
From butterflies to orcas (killer whales), over 500 species of animals and plants face an uncertain future in Canada. Habitat loss, human disturbance and pollution are just some of the contributing factors. Each species depends on intricate ecosystem webs, to which we are all connected. Maintaining these connections is key for environmental health and ecological integrity.



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1 Golden Paintbrush

Golden paintbrush is a perennial herb with showy, golden-yellow flowering shoots. This species only grows in grass-dominated meadows associated with Garry oak ecosystems. Only two known populations of golden paintbrush remain in Canada, hence the species' status as "endangered" under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*. In 2009, Parks Canada established an experimental population of golden paintbrush on an islet in Gulf Islands National Park Reserve to investigate recovery measures for bringing this species back from the brink. Several years later, these tiny recruits are doing well. They now even flower and produce seeds of their own each summer!

2 Sharp-tailed Snake

The Sharp-tailed snake—a slender snake with smooth scales—is one of the smallest and most elusive snakes in BC. It gets its common name from its tail, which ends abruptly in a tiny, thorn-like spike. It's nice to know that these attractive snakes are harmless to humans. In BC, sharp-tailed snakes are typically found on south-facing, rocky slopes. They spend most of their time under cover, which explains why few people have encountered them. While these snakes have been observed in the southern Gulf Islands for a number of years, it was only in 2007 that one was found in the national park reserve. The Sharp-tailed snake is protected under Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (endangered).

3 Orcas

(also known as killer whales)

The southern Gulf Islands area is a feeding ground for orcas. Resident pods of these whales frequent this area between May and November to feed on salmon and other fish. They are impressive with their black and white colouring, blunt head shape, and dorsal fin. On males the dorsal fin stands as tall as a grown man.

Orcas are protected under Canada's *Species at Risk Act* (endangered), BC's *Wildlife Act*, the *Fisheries Act* of Canada, the United States *Marine Mammal Protection Act* and the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*.

Marine Wildlife Viewing Guidelines

It is important that whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals and sea lions be able to carry on with their daily and seasonal routines without interference from human activity. Federal regulations are in place to prohibit harassment and disturbance of these marine mammals. Their survival depends on it.

Viewing etiquette to protect marine mammals

- **Keep your distance** – never within 100 metres/yards
- **Slow down** – to 7 knots at 100 metres/yards and any time mammals are near
- **Stay out of their path** – it is illegal to "park" in a whale's line of travel
- **Stay on the offshore side** – avoid positioning your boat between whales and shore
- **Limit your time** – less time equals less disturbance (30 minutes maximum)

Admire from a distance...for your safety and their protection.



© PARKS CANADA



4 Common Nighthawk

Common Nighthawks are not so common any more – in Canada their population has dropped over 50% since 1995. They are now listed as threatened species under Canada's Species at Risk Act. Declining insect populations and shifting insect hatching times are thought to be playing a significant role as many other insect-eating birds are experiencing similar population declines. Other factors include loss of habitat, disturbance of nest sites and predation. Nighthawks nest in open beach and sand dune areas like Sidney Spit. Nests are typically out in the open, but may also be near logs, boulders, grass clumps or shrubs.

Because they are so well camouflaged they can easily be trampled and destroyed by visitors and off-leash pets. During the breeding season (mid-May to mid-August) the adults are territorial and may try diversion displays to draw intruders away from their nests.

You can help by keeping your pet on a leash and staying out of the dune grass areas at Sidney Spit.

5 Garry Oak Ecosystem

Garry Oak associated ecosystems are uncommon in Canada but widespread in the park reserve. Since 2007, a Garry Oak site that includes plants like camas is in the process of being restored on Eagle Island within Sidney Island Lagoon.

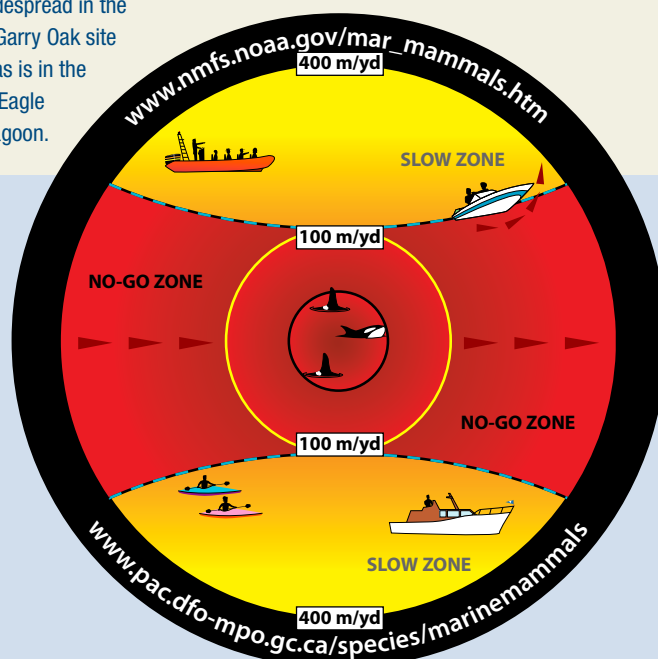
You can learn about the species at risk of the Gulf Islands during your visit or on-line at cosewic.gc.ca

If dolphins or porpoises "bow ride" your vessel

- Do not suddenly change direction
- Discourage this activity by gradually slowing down

If seals, sea lions, or birds are observed on land

- Keep your distance – never within 100 metres/yards
- You are too close if wildlife is paying attention to you
- Never touch, swim with, feed or harm wildlife



Extreme Take-Over

Many plant and animal species have been introduced to the southern Gulf Islands since the mid-1800s. These species become a problem when they out-compete native plants and animals for habitat, resulting in a disruption of the natural food chain. A lack of natural predators often contributes to rapid take-over. Invasive plants are the second greatest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss.



2 Himalayan blackberry



3 Carpet burweed



1 Fallow deer

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Watch out for the Bullfrog

Although native to some parts of North America, the Bullfrog has been widely introduced to areas it does not normally live in. Bullfrogs are real “bullies”: they prey on any animal they can overpower and stuff down their throat! They also reproduce rapidly.



1 Fallow deer vs. black-tailed deer on Sidney Island

Fallow deer were introduced to Sidney Island from Devonshire England in the early 1900s. The population of fallow deer peaked in the mid 2000s at an estimated density of over 200 deer per hectare – six times more than native black-tailed deer populations on neighbouring islands and far exceeding the habitat and food available. Parks Canada is working cooperatively with island landowners and First Nations to reduce the fallow deer population. Numbers were as low as 450 animals in 2010 but without continued pressure are quick to rebound. The 2012 fallow deer population estimate is now over 1000 animals.

2 Himalayan blackberry vs. dewberry (trailing blackberry)

Himalayan blackberry was introduced from Eurasia in the late 1800s. Dewberry is the only native blackberry in British Columbia. Both have deciduous leaves, white to pink flowers, produce

blackberry fruits, and favour disturbed sites and dry open forest habitat. Himalayan blackberry predominates with its fast-spreading growth that chokes out other plants. Parks Canada is treating and removing Himalayan blackberry infestations on several sensitive islets.

3 Carpet burweed vs. Macoun's meadowfoam

Carpet burweed, an introduced plant from South America, was discovered in the Gulf Islands about ten years ago on Salt Spring Island. As the name infers, this plant spreads out “carpet-like” and can outcompete native plants like the threatened Macoun's meadowfoam. The burr-like seed of the plant is easily transported to new sites on hiking boots, dog paws and tent floors. Park sponsored surveys have detected this plant at two locations on Portland Island and one location on D'Arcy Island. An early detection and rapid response has been successful in controlling these outbreaks and we continue to look for new outbreaks in the park.

Did You Know?



PARKS CANADA/MATTHEW PAINÉ

Have you ever wondered about eelgrass beds?



Eelgrass is a flowering sea grass rooted in areas of sandy seafloor close to shore. Eelgrass is a critical habitat in which many marine species lay their eggs or hide from predators. It is a nursery for a variety of fish species including salmon and rockfish. Eelgrass also prevents shoreline erosion by slowing the movement of water, and allowing sediments to settle out among its interlocking roots.

Fannini...that sounds funny!



Great Blue Herons (*Fannini* subspecies) make quite a distinct screech during take-off. These noisy wading birds stand over one metre tall and double back their necks against their shoulders while in flight.

They are often seen wading in shallow water where they prey on fish, crayfish, crabs and frogs. They also forage in grasslands for salamanders, snakes, large insects and small mammals. They eat pretty much anything nature has to offer!

What do Purple Martins and the lunar cycle have in common?



28 days! It only takes Purple Martins 28 days from hatching to fledging.

Like many small birds, they experience a mortality rate of more than 50 percent. This means they need to produce 2 – 2.5 chicks per nest to maintain their current population. This year, research conducted in Gulf Islands National Park Reserve showed a healthy population growth, with 3.8 chicks per nest.

Black Oystercatchers fussy about oysters



You would think that with such a name Black Oystercatchers would favour oysters as their main food source. However, they are rarely seen feeding on oysters! These large noisy birds prefer limpets, mussels and clams as well as urchins, crabs and barnacles. Their bright orange chisel-shaped bill is used to slice the adductor muscle of slightly open mussels and remove the soft parts with its tip.

What baby weighs as much as three human babies?



At birth, a harbour seal pup weighs 8-12 kg (18-26 lbs.) but it's not quite ready to face the frigid ocean waters. A pup needs to "haul out" for a week or so on land and rest while its mother searches for food. She might be gone for a few hours, but don't worry or interfere: it's OK for her to leave her pup unattended.

Ecological Integrity

Ecosystems are dynamic ever-changing entities. They are formed by the interaction of all living things with one another and with their physical surroundings. People are an integral part of these ecosystems and we influence them in many ways. The key to integrity of these ecosystems is to minimize human impact by undertaking appropriate activities in the right places at the right times.

How do we maintain or restore ecological integrity?

To ensure integrity of our park, we must try to maintain or restore critical parts and processes as well as all the interactions that these ecosystems rely on for their resilience against natural and human-caused disturbance.

Ecosystem management

What we learn from research influences how we manage the park. Hands-on monitoring by park staff, students, university professors and researchers, government departments and non-governmental organizations helps us better protect the ecosystem.

Taking our pulse

Like a doctor performing a check-up, we regularly take the pulse of our ecosystems. Our resource conservation staff conducts several ongoing monitoring programs within the park and its greater ecosystem to determine the health of the park.



Ecological Monitoring Clams

Clams are filter-feeders that live 14 – 20 years and spend the majority of their lifespan in one location. As adults they settle into the sediments and are capable of only limited movement. These characteristics make them an ideal indicator of the health of intertidal ecosystems. For more information on clams and other ecological monitoring programs, visit the park website.

Sidney Spit, D'Arcy Island & Isle-de-Lis

The proximity of the inner Gulf Islands to Sidney and Victoria makes for a perfect day trip for kayakers, boaters and visitors looking for a walk or beach opportunity. For those wishing to extend their visit, designated campsites, dock space and mooring buoys allow for overnight stays.

Located at the north end of Sidney Island, **Sidney Spit** is a popular family destination. Its sand bluffs, tidal flats and salt marshes teeming with birds and marine life provide lots to explore. The spit is accessible May to September by a walk-on ferry service from the town of Sidney. For fees and sailing schedules, please check the website. Camping reservations available online at reservation.parkscanada.gc.ca or by phone at 1-877-737-3783.

PUBLIC SAFETY

ANNUAL CLOSURE AT SIDNEY SPIT

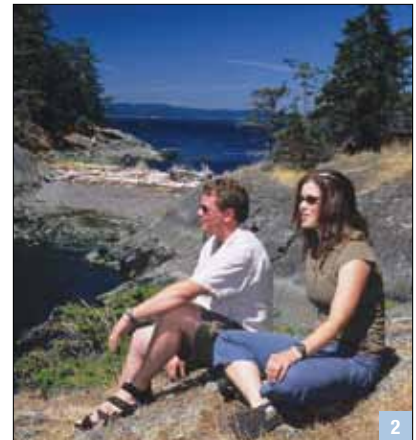
A portion of Sidney Spit is closed to the public annually from November 1st to the end of February to facilitate hunting by Coast Salish First Nations. Please visit the park website for more information.

With striking views of the Gulf Islands, numerous coves, cobble beaches and sheltered campsites, **D'Arcy Island** is a haven for kayakers.

Isle-de-Lis (Rum Island) is another favorite retreat for paddlers. There are only three campsites on Isle-de-Lis, and they are very popular. A gravel beach connecting it to neighbouring Gooch Island is the best place to land a kayak. Gooch Island is privately owned. Please stay on park lands.



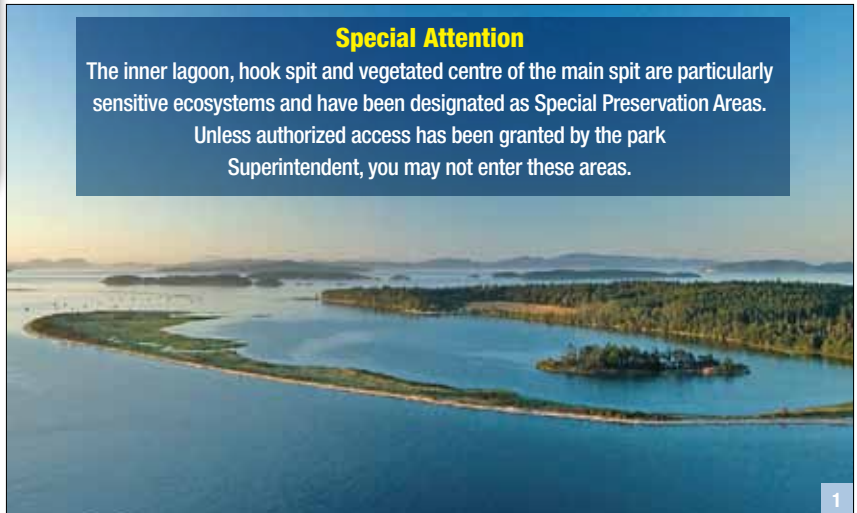
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Special Attention

The inner lagoon, hook spit and vegetated centre of the main spit are particularly sensitive ecosystems and have been designated as Special Preservation Areas. Unless authorized access has been granted by the park Superintendent, you may not enter these areas.



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Suffering in Isolation

D'Arcy Island has a unique history. Members of Victoria's Chinese community affected with leprosy were exiled there to live out the remainder of their lives. In the early years, their only contact with the outside world occurred when a supply ship arrived four times a year. From 1891 to 1924, a total of 49 people, including white people, were banished and/or relocated to the island that served as a quarantine station. The inhabitants were fed, clothed and housed, but received no medical attention. An orchard and the disintegrating remains of a few buildings are the legacy of this sad chapter of Canada's history. In 2001, a plaque was dedicated on the island by the City of Victoria.

Princess Margaret (Portland Island), Brackman & Russell Islands



© PARKS CANADA / CHRIS CHEADLE

3

3 Princess Margaret (Portland Island) was presented as a gift to Princess Margaret in 1958. She returned the island to British Columbia in 1967. The island features cliffs, protected coves and sand beaches. The island has long been used by First Nations, and its shell beaches are the most visible reminder of their presence. The fruit trees, roses and garden plants also found on the island testify to the more recent settlement by Hawaiian (Kanaka) immigrants in the 1880s.



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4

4 Adjacent to Portland Island, **Brackman Island** has been designated as a Special Preservation Area. **Only authorized access is allowed.** The island is unique because it has remained undeveloped; its original ecosystem remains virtually intact. Thirteen rare plant species have been identified here.

5 At the mouth of Salt Spring Island's Fulford Harbour, **Russell Island** is blessed with many natural features typical of the southern Gulf Islands. Open meadows of native grasses host yearly bursts of camas lilies and a variety of other wildflowers.

Hawaiian homestead on Russell Island (see page 4 for more information on Mahoi Host Program.)



5

Islet Alert! Small Places, Big Protection

Parks Canada has designated all islets and several small islands in the park reserve as Special Preservation Areas. Although small, they are very important ecologically. Human activity can damage their environment irreparably. Only authorized access is allowed. This applies to the Isabella Islets; to Imrie, Reay and Greig Islands, Dock Islet and the Little Group Islands, all located north of Sidney Spit; and to Sallas and Unit Rocks, located south of Sidney Island. Day use access is permitted on Dock Islet (north shoreline only).



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Hawaiian (Kanaka) Settlement on Russell Island

During the fur trade, the Hudson's Bay Company hired several hundred Hawaiians as labourers. After their contract expired, some decided not to return to their homeland and many settled on southern Salt Spring, Portland, Coal, Piers and Russell Islands. Russell Island was settled by William Haumea and inherited from him in 1902 by Maria Mahoi. Both were of Hawaiian ancestry. A house, orchard and remnants of what was once a flourishing vegetable garden prove that Maria and her family lived an almost self-sufficient life there. Maria lived on Russell Island until her death in 1936 at the age of 81.



Pender Islands

The Penders—North and South Pender Islands—were once one island connected by a narrow strip of land. A canal between the islands was dredged in 1903 to allow boats passage to the outer Gulf Islands. In 1957, the two islands were reconnected with the construction of a one-lane bridge.



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1 At **Beaumont**, mooring buoys are available. Visitors can beach their kayaks or dinghies to enjoy this popular picnic and camping spot. The peninsula is a sensitive area and has been fenced off to permit natural regeneration of the area. Nearby Skull Islet is a Special Preservation Area with only authorized access allowed.

Trails depart from Canal Road, Ainslie Point Road and Beaumont campground leading to incredible views from **Mount Norman**.

2 **Prior Centennial** is the only vehicle-accessible campground operated by Parks Canada on the Penders. This small and rustic campground is set in the shade of a rich forest of cedar, fir, maple and alder.

3 **Shingle Bay** Sitting below Roe Lake, this newly acquired property connects to existing park lands and includes over 335 metres of waterfront. The area includes a beach with views of Captain Passage and nearby islets, a small waterfall, wetland, creek and

artificial pond. The property hosts the remnants of the Shingle Bay fish reduction plant that operated intermittently between 1927 and 1959. It served as an important part of the local economy, employing 15 to 20 men at a time, mainly Pender Island residents.

The wetlands of **Greenburn Lake** are vital to the recharge of South Pender's scarce water supply. This area contains pockets of the endangered Garry oak ecosystem.

Roesland: A Cottage Resort

Forest gave way to farmland on North Pender's Ella Bay when Robert Roe settled on the property in 1908. In 1917, the Roe family began turning the farm into a cottage resort. Families came back year after year—often to the same cottage—to enjoy the beauty and solitude of the Gulf Islands. The resort closed down in the 1990s, but the site remains a wonderful spot to picnic, enjoy the afternoon sun or to discover the islands' history at the on-site museum run by the Pender Islands Museum Society.



Mayne Island

Mayne Island offers many services, including lodging, restaurants, grocery stores, docks and art galleries. It's also well known for its birdwatching, kayaking, whale watching and cycling opportunities. Park Reserve lands include Bennett Bay, Georgina Point, and adjacent Georgeson Island and the Belle Chain Islets.



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Bennett Bay, located on the Strait of Georgia, is a popular launch point for kayakers. The Campbell Point peninsula features a walking trail through mature forest to superb views of nearby Georgeson Island—a picturesque sandstone ridge clad in old-growth forest. The park, in partnership with the Mayne Island Conservancy Association, is working towards restoring ecological integrity at Bennett Bay.

4 Farther off, **Anniversary Island** and the **Belle Chain Islets** are highly valued as marine mammal haulouts and nesting sites. The sensitive ecosystems on these islands and islets are

Special Preservation Areas and only authorized access is permitted. Only **Lot 65** (the Belle Chain Islet closest to Samuel Island) is accessible for day use rest stops.

5 **Georgina Point** sits at the east entrance to Active Pass. The point provides spectacular views across the Strait of Georgia and is an Important Bird Area (IBA) for migratory birds. The site is also a very popular day use area for picnicking, wildlife viewing and special events.

Prevost Island

National park reserve lands are located on both the north and south shores of **Prevost Island**. The majority of the island, however, remains in the hands of the descendants of Digby de Burgh, an Irish nobleman who bought it in the 1920s. The de Burgh family continues to farm and raise sheep on the island.

James Bay and **Selby Cove** are located at the northern tip of the island. The park lands form a narrow point adjacent to a deep cove with a shoreline that varies from steep rock faces on the Trincomali Channel waterfront, to gently rising rock shelves near Peile Point, to a gravel beach in James Bay. Kayakers favour its campsites, and boaters enjoy the good anchorage in Selby Cove. The shoreline of Portlock Point/Richardson Bay on the northeast shore of Prevost Island offers kayakers a location to take a break on longer paddling routes. The Portlock Point automated navigation light can easily be seen by ferry passengers as they exit Active Pass on the way to Victoria.



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The Light at Georgina Point

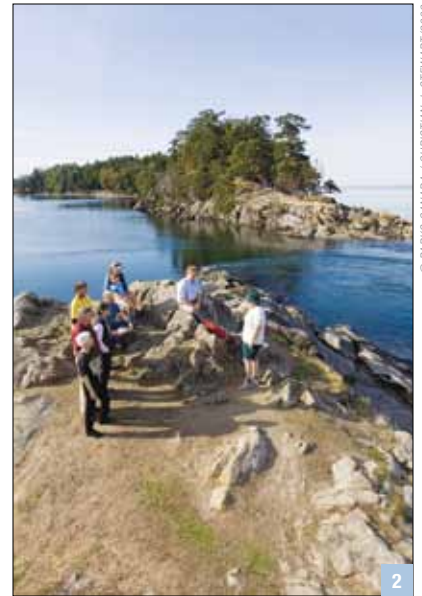
Originally established in 1885, the site was automated and de-staffed in 1996. The light continues to be in active service as a navigational aid used by vessels transiting Active Pass or passing through the Strait of Georgia.

Saturna Island

Saturna Island is a magical place: quiet and remote, yet accessible by vehicle and boat—a perfect retreat location. Incredible panoramic views, spectacular rocky shorelines and peaceful bays are all part of the charm.



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© PARKS CANADA / CHRISTIAN J. STEWART/2009

1 Narvaez Bay is one of the most beautiful and undisturbed bays in the southern Gulf Islands. The dark green of a regenerating Douglas fir forest is punctuated with the contrasting lime green and copper colours of arbutus trees.

2 Winter Cove is backed by forested uplands, open meadows and salt marshes. Local residents and visitors enjoy the picnic area

and easily accessible walking trail. A strong tidal current rushes through Boat Passage and can be viewed close-up from the viewpoint. The cove itself is an excellent, sheltered moorage area and a new dinghy dock provides boaters access to the shore.

The virtually undisturbed mature forest with patches of old growth running north from **Taylor Point**

to a private vineyard is one of the longest uninterrupted stretches of protected shoreline in the southern Gulf Islands. Its cliffs are part of the rare coastal bluffs ecosystem. There are currently no designated trails here. Goats and deer have traced paths running along the cliff edge, but these informal trails can be dangerous.



A Legacy in Stone – Taylor Point

The remnants of a farm with its old stone house and nearby sandstone quarry are reminders of one of the island's past commercial enterprises. Sandstone from this quarry was used in the construction of several buildings in Victoria.

George Taylor, a mason by trade, designed and built his family home in 1892 from stone quarried on his property. With his wife Anne and five children, he carved out a living on this isolated point of land. An orchard bore apples, cherries and pears for preserves. There were cows to milk, sheep to shear, and cod, salmon, clams and crab to be gathered from the ocean. The Taylors lived there until their house was destroyed by fire in 1932. Anne then moved to North Pender Island but George remained. He died the following year. Anne, described as a "hard-working Lancashire woman," lived to the age of 90.

Tumbo & Cabbage Islands

A "tombolo" is a sandbar either extending outward from shore connecting with an island or from island to island. The distinctive shape of Tumbo Island is a perfect example of this landform. First Nations used the island for shelter while hand trolling for fish offshore or on their journeys across the strait. The island remains an important spiritual place. Today, kayakers or boaters like to come ashore to stretch their legs.

The marsh and stands of Garry oak, arbutus and coastal Douglas fir on Cabbage Island are some of the most intact vegetation communities remaining on the Gulf Islands. The island is an important nesting site for shorebirds. While walking along the shore, extra care must be taken to minimize disturbance to nesting birds.



3 Lyall Creek is a significant protected salmon-bearing watershed in the southern Gulf Islands, a success achieved through the long-time efforts of Saturna Island volunteers.

4 East Point has many features to explore. Intriguing patterns on sandstone cliffs, green carpets of kelp dotted with colourful sea stars and an old foghorn building. Built in 1887, the original lightstation here warned sailors away from the turbulent waters of Boiling Reef, just offshore. Orcas and other ocean wildlife are often seen here as nutrient-rich upwellings in this vicinity provide an important source of food.

5 The summit of Mount Warburton Pike provides breathtaking panoramic views of the southern Gulf Islands and the neighbouring San Juan Islands in the United States. At 397 metres (1,303 feet), Mount Warburton Pike is the highest point on Saturna Island.

The open, grassy slopes of the ridge are unique in the Gulf Islands, and the slopes and ridge itself are significant habitat for falcons and eagles.

Who Was Warburton Pike?

Warburton Pike was born near Wareham, Dorset, in 1861. Like many young Englishman of his time, Pike was attracted to outdoor life and distant lands. In 1884, drawn by the wilderness and immensity of British Columbia, he purchased land on Saturna Island, where he thereafter resided periodically. His life was full of wilderness travel adventures and he was renowned for his feats of endurance.



Why stop now?

Keep exploring
Canada's national treasures.



Pacific Rim National Park Reserve

Expand your journey across Vancouver Island to Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. This lush coastal rainforest abounds with life and offers a plethora of activities and endless opportunities to see wildlife. Hikers can choose from a variety of trails, and dozens of sheltered coves and bays beckon to kayakers. Check out the new exhibits at the newly redesigned K'isitis Visitor Centre.



1



2

Fort Langley National Historic Site

Watch a blacksmith bend steel, learn the art of barrel-making, or simply take in the sights and sounds of BC's pioneering spirit at historic Fort Langley.



3

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites

A stunning view across Juan de Fuca Strait enhances a relaxing seaside afternoon as you explore historic fortifications and Canada's first west coast lighthouse.



4

Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site

Take a walk through charming Steveston, enjoy a summer's day picnic, and experience one of BC's oldest canneries through interactive displays and visuals at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery.



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