



Boggy, Foggy, Lulu

When you stroll through Richmond Nature Park you are walking on some of the youngest land in B.C. If you visited this site 10,000 years ago you would be swimming in the Strait of Georgia! By about 6000 years ago the Fraser River had dumped enough sediment at its mouth to form mudflats and later, mist enshrouded Lulu Island.

Digging into the soil allows us to see how the island's ecology has changed. Deepest layers show that sedges and other marsh plants were the first to grow. By about 2500 years ago peat had built up and poor drainage provided sphagnum with an ideal home. The Lulu Island bog was born.



Arctic Affinities

Would you like to visit the Arctic without leaving Richmond? When you walk in the bog you come close to doing that. Many of the plants you see here are also found in the vast muskeg of Canada's north. They are specially adapted to the bog's wet, acidic, peaty soils and thrive where delicate southern species fail. These hardy northerners are remnants of the Ice Age, when arctic conditions existed even here.

People and the Bog

In the past, the Lulu Island bog provided a wealth of cranberries and blueberries to visiting First Nations people. Today, most of the bog has been converted to farmland, where the same berries are now cultivated.

Fur and Feathers

Douglas squirrel and blackcapped chickadees greet you year round, and spotted towhees do their trailside two-step. Spring brings hummingbirds and migrating warblers.

What Lies Ahead?

Richmond Nature Park is changing. Cultivated blueberries are forming dense thickets and shading out other plants. Altered land use around the park is increasing water drainage, speeding the transition from bog to forest. Future visitors will see a different landscape.

RICHMOND NATURE PARK: CONTEXT MAP



The Nature Park is open daily from dawn to dusk.

The Nature House is open daily 9:00am-5:00pm

Admission is by donation

For more information about Richmond Nature Park and its programs please call 604-718-6188 or email nature@richmond.ca

Richmond Nature Park

11851 Westminster Highway, Richmond, B.C. V6X 1B4 Tel: 604-718-6188 Fax: 604-718-6189

To learn more about Richmond's many parks and facilities, please visit the Parks, Trails & Cycling web page at www.richmond.ca



Nature Park



discover Richmond...





Bog or Forest?

Scrubby trees and a bed of spongy, wet moss. Is this a pine forest or a sphagnum bog? The soil is acidic, nutrient-poor, and very wet, so only the most tolerant plants will grow. When they die, their remains add to the depths of peat below. This is certainly a bog environment, but increased drainage is changing this ecology and permitting growth of shore pine. We now have both a bog and forest.



Sphagnum:

The Moss Moss. It creates and maintains bog conditions by holding water like a sponge, producing acid, and retarding bacteria growth. You will find it as foot level hummocks of green and red.



Blueberry:

The native bog form has been overshadowed by large, dense, cultivated varieties. Birds feast on the berries in late summer.



Labrador Tea:

White pom-poms cover the bog when this waist-high heath blooms. The evergreen leaves have rust-coloured woolly undersides and leave a pleasant smell on your fingers if you rub them gently.



Cranberry:

Tart berries on this small trailing vine are preceded by beautiful "crane's head" flowers. Put your nose to the ground to see them.



Shore Pine:

This hardy conifer is dwarfed and contorted by the stresses of bog life. Check the branches for knobby rust fungus galls.



Sundew:

A rare and bizarre little plant of very wet areas. The tiny leaves have sticky hairs which trap and digest insects.

Between the Birches

Tall, paperwhite trunks. A lush undergrowth of ferns. An evergreen tangle of salal and blackberry. This is the birch forest. Clay fill was dumped here in the late 1950's, providing higher ground and better drainage, and allowing this fertile ecosystem to develop.



Western White Birch:

Paperlike bark with dark blotches make this tree easy to identify year-round. The leaves fall by winter, after a flash of autumn gold.



Salal:

An important plant for Coast Salish people, who ate the berries both fresh and dried and used the tough leaves to line food steaming pits.



Sword Fern:

Look for the "hilt" of the sword at the base of each leaflet. Spores are produced in the brown spots on the leaf's underside.

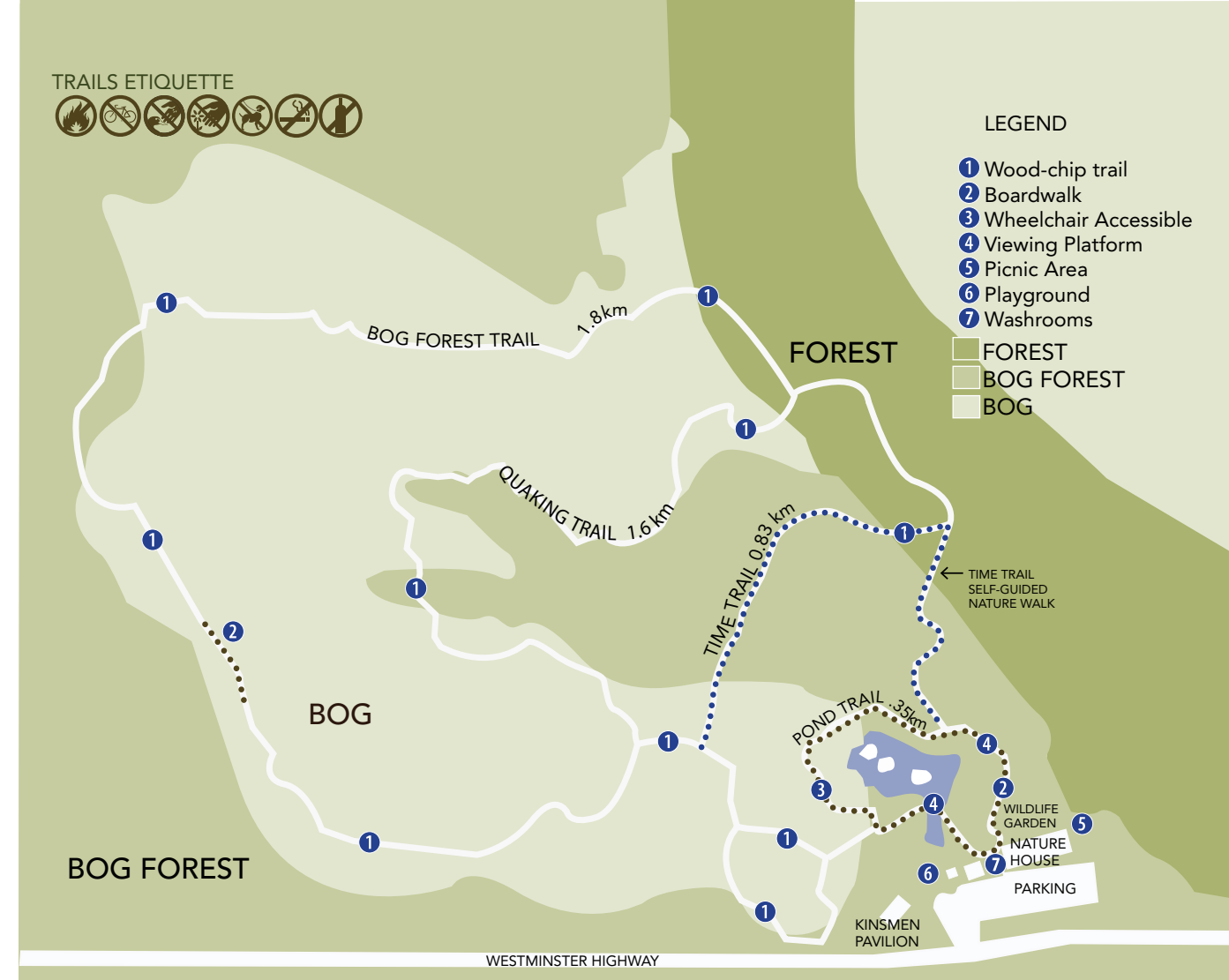
TRAILS ETIQUETTE



LEGEND

- 1 Wood-chip trail
- 2 Boardwalk
- 3 Wheelchair Accessible
- 4 Viewing Platform
- 5 Picnic Area
- 6 Playground
- 7 Washrooms

- FOREST
- BOG FOREST
- BOG



Blackberry:

Angular, trailing stems armed with sharp spines. These introduced brambles remind us to stay on the trail.



Hemlock:

A tall and graceful conifer with soft needles and drooping branches. It can reproduce in its own shade and may one day dominate this site.



A Just Ducky Pond

Visit the pond trail any time of year and you will see mallards tipping their tails at you. The pond was created especially to attract waterfowl and a few ducks are always dabbling for plant and insects here.



The underlying peat imparts a tea colour and high acidity to the water, home to a specialized community. Dragon flies may whiz by your head as they hunt the mosquitoes that are hunting you.