

Qualicum Beach Newcomer's Club Walking Group

Walk Narratives

Version 5 (February 2017)



Preliminary Notes

Introduction and thanks. This document is a compendium of the walk narratives collected over the years and refined by various walk leaders. Especially, it reflects the significant efforts of David and Louise Kelsey and Ralph and Isobel Moore. Their efforts have significantly lightened the loads of later walk leaders, for which we offer our collective thanks.

Caveat. The narratives reflect the situation at the various sites at the time the narrative was prepared. Things change, and for that reason it is important to recognize that various aspects of the narrative may no longer be current. It is therefore incumbent on walk leaders to make any necessary adjustments (e.g., date, meeting locations, trail conditions, coffee location—the list is not exhaustive) to the walk narrative before sending for circulation to walkers.

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Base of Little Mountain

This Friday we will introduce you to the trails that lead up to Little Mountain from the back route. We enter by way of a logging road. Then, the trail through the forest is a gentle incline with the usual roots and rocks. Access to the top is a steep incline and you have the choice to wait below or climb to the top. Hiking boots are recommended and walking sticks would be helpful. The walk will be 80 to 90 minutes.

DIRECTONS: From QB Roundabout, travel up Memorial and turn left on 4A towards Coombs. Travel 11 km to Errington Rd and turn right. Go 2km up to Grafton Rd and turn left (at gas station).Go to the first stop sign at Leffler Rd and turn right. Turn left at the second road which is Middlegate and drive to the end and park on the side of the road. The walk will start at 9:30am.

COFFEE: At Backroad Java for sticky buns, muffins and more. (4 corners at Grafton & Errington)

Beach Boardwalk/Community Woods Loop

This week's walk will go through the Community Woods, exit at Larch, down Alder to Poplar and then down Bay to the Beach Boardwalk. It will then traverse the boardwalk, up Memorial, along Crescent E. to Berwick, and then Sunningdale to Beach Ave. and the Village.

Except for the Community Woods the walk will be on pavement/sidewalks, but good sturdy walking shoes are still needed. There are some moderate steep sections and we will break them up into smaller bits to spread them out, though a reasonable fitness level is still required. The washrooms by the Beach Hut are open and since this is about the halfway point a rest stop will be made.

We will meet at Ravensong's parking lot near the dog off-leash area at 9:20AM, the walk will start at 9:30AM sharp.

Coffee following our walk will be at Bailey's (across from the Post Office on Primrose for new newcomers).

Hope to see you there on Friday

Big Qualicum Fish Hatchery

This week's walk will begin at 9.30am at the Big Qualicum Fish Hatchery located on the Big Qualicum River approximately 12 km north of Qualicum Beach off Hwy 19a.

Directions:

Using Hwy 19a from Qualicum Beach: § drive north from Memorial Avenue & Highway 19a intersection for about 10 minutes § Just before Horne Lake Road, look for clearly marked blue signage that says "Big Qualicum Fish Hatchery" and "Horne Lake Caves" with an arrow pointing Left § Follow the signs and turn Left onto Horne Lake Road § Look for a blue sign that says "to Hwy 19" and "Fish Hatchery" with an arrow pointing right § Turn right and continue following the clearly marked blue signs until you come to the hatchery where there is a large parking lot § Be careful when exiting your car as the paved surface can be very slippery in places!

Description:

We had the opportunity to enjoy this area last summer on our bicycles and thought it would be a good place to also explore on foot. It is a lovely flat, wide gravel road that runs alongside the river to its source at Horne Lake. During our pre-walk today, we encountered some slippery, slushy sections so it is advisable to wear waterproof footwear with good treads. We will be wandering off the road on a narrow trail closer to the river on our return to the hatchery. This trail is wet because of recent rain/snow but is very easy to walk upon (no rock outcroppings or roots to worry about) and the forest canopy overhead creates a wonderful ambiance. The walk will take about 90 minutes

Cameron Lake Walk

This Friday's walk is the "Cabin Road" along the back of Cameron Lake, which we will access through a short trail within beautiful Cathedral Grove. It is a mostly level trail and it provides lovely views of Cameron Lake and distant snowy peaks. The funky cabins and outhouses along the road reflect the humour and individuality of the owners. This is a good time to visit as none of the cabins are in use, so it will not be very busy. There has been lots of rain which translates to muddy patches so wear good boots. Rain gear plus sun glasses will probably also be needed based on Friday's forecast.

Directions; Take Highway 4 towards Port Alberni past Cameron Lake to the Cathedral Grove parking lot(approx. 19km from QB). Park on the right side of the road as indicated by the signs. There should be lots of room this time of year. The walk starts at 9:30AM sharp as usual.

Coffee

Coffee will be at Coombs (Goats on the Roof). There is good parking and an outside deck if the weather is nice.

Hope to see you Friday!

Craig Bay to Madrona Point

THE WALK:

This walk, at least 90 minutes, will take us along a trail to the shore by Craig Bay, then along the beach to Pacific Shores Resort and then a trail to Madrona Point. The trail is fairly level with a few small inclines, the beach area has lots of gravel and a little sand, good for the legs!!!

You will see signs of spring, with a large clump of snowdrops in bloom, as well as interesting shore birds and perhaps a basking sea lion off Madrona Point!

Please remember that dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash at all times during our walking group activities.

DIRECTIONS:

We will meet and leave promptly at 9.30am from the parking area located at the intersection of Northwest Bay Road and Franklin's Gull Road in Parksville. This is just off the intersection of Franklin's Gull and the Old Island Hwy (19A), where Franklins Gull turns into Northwest Bay Road. There is a small parking lot, and plenty of extra shoulder around for everyone to park.

COFFEE:

Coffee will be enjoyed at Serious Coffee: from the parking lot turn right onto 19A and a few hundred meters down the road you will notice a strip-mall on your right.

Hope to see you there,

Deep Bay

To the northwest of Qualicum Beach are a series of beautiful beach walks that start in Qualicum Bay and extend all the way to Deep Bay.

The Deep Bay walk is the furthest west of this group. Throughout the year, deep drifts of seaweed accumulate along the shore and in early spring during the herring run, the number of Bald eagles that gather along the rocky beaches staggers the mind. This loop starts along a shingle beach which changes to a sandy shoreline on the spit. There are close-up views of Denman and Chrome Islands and the marina in Deep Bay.

Directions. Two routes are possible:

1. Hwy 19. From Qualicum Beach proceed directly up-island on Hwy 19 to exit 87 (Cook Creek Road), exit right, and proceed to Hwy 19A. Turn right at 19A and proceed to Gainsburg Road (left turn about 2km.).
2. HWY 19A. Exit the Ravensong parking lot and turn right on Jones St. Turn right on Rupert Rd West and continue down Laburnum to Hwy 19A. Turn left and proceed west all the way up to Gainsburg Road. This exit is 26.2 km from Ravensong parking lot. a. exit right on Gainsburg Road; carry on approx. 500m to an intersection. Turn right b. turn immediate left on Kopina Drive (to go downhill), then left on Longview Drive; c. turn Left on Seaview Drive, which becomes Shoreline Dr. d. continue on Shoreline Drive to the turnaround with a bench near the end of the road; just to the east of the bench is a set of stairs down to the beach.

Our walk will take us around the spit into Deep Bay, continuing along the beach to just before some old concrete dock foundations. At that point, we'll cut up the bank to Deep Bay Road; there, we'll turn right onto Burne Road, left on Gainsburg Road, left on Kopina Drive, left on Longview, left on Seaview, and continue on Shoreline Drive to return to the start point.

There is no shade along this route so hats, sunscreen and water are strongly recommended. The walk will take us approx. 90 minutes for a 7.4 km trek.

Post-walk refreshments. The Sandbar Café in Qualicum Bay

Dodd's Narrows/Cable Bay

Always a popular trip, this Friday's walk is a scenic walk through forest and along the shoreline facing Gabriola Island, to Dodd Narrows (well known to boaters). It is rated as being of moderate difficulty, with a long downhill section that drops about 100 meters going to Cable Bay but, of course, is uphill coming back. Good walking shoes are a must and a walking stick would be helpful.

Meeting time will be at 9:30 a.m. Allow 55 minutes from Hwy. 19 Exit 60 or 45 minutes from Exit 46 to the walk parking area.

To get to our starting point, proceed as follows:

1. Drive down-island on Hwy. 19 past Nanaimo to the Cedar Road turnoff, Exit 9 (left lane);
2. Follow Cedar Road over the Nanaimo River bridge, make a right turn immediately after the bridge (set your trip-meter at this point - distances in parentheses are cumulative kilometers measured from here);
3. Turn left onto MacMillan Road (0.9 km, at commercial bldg. on your left with blue trim);
4. Turn right onto Holden Corso Road (1.4 km., at Esso station);
5. As Holden Corso Road veers left (3.5 km.) it becomes Barnes Road;
6. Watch for left turn onto Nicola Road (4.7 km., small red sign labeled "Cable Bay Trail"); and
7. Drive straight along Nicola to its end at the parking area (5.2 km.).

We'll conclude the walk with a pub lunch at the delightful Crow & Gate Pub. Driving directions will be provided at the end of the walk.

Please remember that dogs are welcome but must be kept on leash at all times during our walking group activities. This is for the comfort and safety of all.

Directions to Crow and Gate for delivery to drivers at end of walk

To get to the 'Crow and Gate' pub from the Cable Bay Trail parking area (dist. in km. measured from the parking area):

1. Drive back along Nicola Road, past the stop sign, to the T-junction at Barnes Road (0.4 km.);
2. Turn right onto Barnes Road and drive to Woodbank Road (2.7 km., at a blue bldg. "The Powder Coaters");
3. Turn left onto Woodbank, go ~2 km., past a primary school on your left, to the T-junction at Cedar Road (4.6 km.);
4. Turn left and then immediately left again (a 'Crow and Gate' sign on the far side of the intersection); and
5. Proceed

straight along this road to the pub entrance at the base of the microwave tower (6.1 km.).

To get to the 'Crow and Gate' pub from the Cable Bay Trail parking area (dist. in km. measured from the parking area):

Drive back along Nicola Road, past the stop sign, to the T-junction at Barnes Road (0.4 km.);

Turn right onto Barnes Road and drive to Woodbank Road (2.7 km., at a blue bldg. "The Powder Coaters");

Turn left onto Woodbank, go ~2 km., past a primary school on your left, to the Tjunction at Cedar Road (4.6 km.);

Turn left and then immediately left again (a 'Crow and Gate' sign on the far side of the intersection); and

Proceed straight along this road to the pub entrance at the base of the microwave tower (6.1 km.).

To get to the 'Crow and Gate' pub from the Cable Bay Trail parking area (dist. in km. measured from the parking area): 1. Drive back along Nicola Road, past the stop sign, to the T-junction at Barnes Road (0.4 km.); 2. Turn right onto Barnes Road and drive to Woodbank Road (2.7 km., at a blue bldg. "The Powder Coaters"); 3. Turn left onto Woodbank, go ~2 km., past a primary school on your left, to the T-junction at Cedar Road (4.6 km.); 4. Turn left and then immediately left again (a 'Crow and Gate' sign on the far side of the intersection); and 5. Proceed straight along this road to the pub entrance at the base of the microwave tower (6.1 km.).

Englishman River Estuary

Friday's walk will be at the Englishman River estuary. It is an easy, relatively short, 40-minute walk through tall trees very alive with the sound of birds, and a grove of wild rose bushes. We will start the walk at 9:30AM.

Directions. From the intersection of the old island highway (19A) and Shelley Road (Cannor Nursery) in Parksville, drive NORTH 0.4 KM and park at the end of Shelley Road.

Coffee. Coffee will be in the "Perk Avenue Restaurant" in the Parksville Quality Foods (QF) store.

Englishman River Falls

This Friday's walk will be at the Englishman River Provincial Park. It takes in the falls, a riverside walk, a trail through the forest and the campsite of the park. The trail is mostly gentle slopes, but there are some steep and uneven stairs, protruding rocks and roots, and slippery spots if it is wet (fingers crossed). Walking shoes with good treads are required as is a reasonable level of fitness, walking stick(s) would be helpful.

Directions. Access to the park is via Errington Road, which starts at Alberni Highway 4A , approximately 4km east (down-island from) of Coombs . When you turn onto Errington Road, just follow it for ten minutes to its end in the Provincial Park parking lot; the park is signposted along the road.

Parking. Park in the day use parking lot all the way to the end. The walk will be 1-1.5 hrs. We are in luck again as the flush toilets are open for the season and located at the far end of this lot where the walk will begin.

Coffee. Post-walk coffee will be at the Coombs Country Market ("Goats on the Roof").

See you Friday!

Englishman River Regional Park

This Friday's walk will take us to Englishman River Regional Park located South and East of Errington (not to be confused with Englishman River Falls). In 2005, the RDN partnered with The Nature Trust of BC, Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Province of BC to acquire this 207 hectare park and conservation area along the Englishman River. The regional park is home to numerous wildlife species including Roosevelt Elk and a community hatchery with extensive salmon side channels. We can wonder along the many forested park trails and admire the beauty of nature along one of BC's most important rivers. Spawning salmon return to Englishman River Regional Park every September and are celebrated annually there on BC Rivers Day. The trails are wide and dry with the exception of a few remaining damp spots. At the beginning of the trail there is a fairly steep descent with loose gravel so walking poles would be beneficial. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are strongly recommended. We will make several stops along the way to allow everyone to enjoy the views. The walk should take about 1.5 hours and will begin at 9:30 am.

Driving Directions – (From Ravensong) Take #4 West from turning circle. Turn left on 4A and head towards Coombs. Continue past Coombs to Errington Road and turn right. At four-way stop in Errington, turn left onto Grafton Avenue, then right onto Leffler Road and then left onto Middlegate Road. Follow Middlegate to the end of the paved road. Please do not park near the residents access roads. (see attached map-2 pages)

Driving Directions – (From Parksville) Take #4A to Errington Road and follow as above.

Coffee (and sticky buns) – Will be at Back Roads Java in Errington

Enos Lake Walk

This Friday's walk will be at Enos Lake, next to Notch Hill, at Nanoose Bay, and is rated as moderate to difficult (but easy enough for us!).

Drive down-island on Hwy. 19 to Northwest Bay Road (at traffic light & Nanoose Bay PetroCan station; an easy 20 min. from Memorial & Rupert in QB) and turn left. Drive 1.2 km to Powder Point Road and turn right (preceded by a green Fairwinds directional sign).

Drive along Powder Point Road 2.1 km to the stop sign. Continue straight (now Fairwinds Drive) for another 0.3 km. Park in the small parking area at the left edge of the road.

We'll begin the walk from the parking area at 9:30 a.m. The walk should take about 90 minutes through forest trails, with hills (some fairly steep but not strenuous) and some rocky sections, so good walking shoes are mandatory, and a walking stick will be useful.

We hope to see many of you there.

Fern Road/Heritage Forest

This Friday's walk will be a mixture of forested trails and quiet roadways through residential areas. The walk will be relatively level with a few gradually sloping climbs. It will take approximately 90 minutes.

We will meet in front of the tennis courts across from the Qualicum Beach Legion at the corner of Veterans Way and Berwick Road. Please do not park in the Legion's parking lot: use available street parking.

We will begin our walk at 09:30 am sharp.

Post-walk coffee will be at Bailey's, next to City Hall.

Looking forward to seeing you.

French Creek to Memorial Golf Course

This Friday's Walk will start a little "north" of French Creek (the beach at the bottom of Butterball Drive in Eaglecrest), but our meeting place will be the Qualicum Beach Memorial Golf Club parking lot, lower end. Starting time will be 9.30am as usual.

The walk will be in one direction only, so we will need to all take a ride from our meeting place to the starting point by filling several of the cars we arrive in. Those offering rides will be driven back to their vehicles at the end of the walk by filling one or two of the cars that were left behind at the Golf club. This will take a few minutes to organize so please clear your car seats and be prepared to try this arrangement out, it may come in handy for later events!

As this is along the beach it is all level, and we may have to cross very shallow streams, so you will need footwear with good grips for stony areas and tolerant of salt water. Walking sticks are highly recommended, as are shorts and sunscreen. We will avoid rocky areas but about half will be sand and the rest quite pebbly.

Coffee will be at the Memorial Golf Course club, and with any luck, we may be able to have it on the patio.

Note that during the Brant migration, until May 1st. NO DOGS are allowed anywhere along the shore. There is a stiff fine for any unaccompanied canines.

French Creek Trestle to Airport

This week's walk is new to most of us and will take us along the French Creek. We will begin the walk from the Q.B. Airport and head east along an existing trail which will lead us to the E&N Railway. About 500 meters down the track we will reach the French Creek Trestle and descend into the ravine below. We will follow the creek through a somewhat tropical-old growth forested area. You will see moss covered trees, a great deal of ferns and something most of us never knew existed so close to Qualicum (a giant cedar possibly 300-500 years old). The sound of birds seemed to fill the air everywhere as we did the pre-walk. There are also some great photo opportunities so bring a camera. The trail further down becomes a bit less obvious and passes through an area of Cow Parsnip and Giant Hogweed*. That being said, caution should always be exercised however, there should be no reason to come in contact with it during the walk. There are some exposed roots and a few fallen trees to cross and the trail passes close to the creek edge at several points. Hiking boots or very sturdy walking shoes are strongly recommended. Also, please wear long pants and long sleeves. There are two very steep sections, one, the descent into the ravine by the trestle and the other exiting the ravine just behind the runway of the Airport so a reasonable level of fitness is required. Walking poles would be particularly useful at these points. A spectacular view will reward you as we exit the ravine. If the timing is right, we could see planes coming in just meters over our heads.

Directions: to Airport: Take Bennet Road south off Hwy 19A and turn left onto Ravensbourne Lane or head east on Rupert Rd from the turning circle and turn right onto Ravensbourne Lane. Coffee will be at the Pheasant Glen Golf Resort 11:00 am.

*Pre-walking this trail is essential to ensure walkers can pass safely through without coming in contact with the Giant Hogweed.

Grandon Creek Walk

This week's walk will be to Grandon Creek in Qualicum Beach. We will start promptly at the usual time of 9.30 am, from the Ravensong parking lot by the dogs off-leash area.

The walk will go through the Community Woods, along Hoylake Rd. to Laburnum and then down Garrett to the Grandon Creek trail, returning to Ravensong. The trails are well maintained bark and some asphalt, but there are tree roots so footwear with good treads will be needed and walking sticks are an asset. Although most of the walk is on the flat the climb up Grandon Creek trail is fairly steep in sections, we will stop and enjoy the beautiful surroundings and catch our breath.

Coffee following our walk will be at Bailey's.

Hope to see you there!

Greenmax Anglers Trail (Port Alberni)

This week our walk takes us to the Greenmax Anglers Trail near Port Alberni. The trail is moderately easy with a few roots here and there as we walk beside the Stamp River through older second growth forest. Initially the trail takes us through the Greenmax Woodlot on a gravel road until we start the descent to the Stamp River (50 meter elevation change). The descent is fairly steep but of short duration - walking poles would be useful. We'll parallel the river, passing a popular swimming spot on the other side of the river, until we come to a small water fall where we'll retrace our steps back to the starting point. The hike will take about 1.5 hours. We'll depart from the Ravensong parking lot at 8:30 a.m. this Friday. It's about an hour drive to the trail head.

Directions: From the round-about on Memorial Ave. drive west on Highway 4W to Port Alberni (36 km.). As you come into Port Alberni you'll see the Visitors Information Centre where public washrooms are available. Keep to the right on Highway 4 (Johnston Road) and drive 4.2 km. through town until you come to the T-intersection by the river at the foot of Johnston Road. Turn right and follow Hwy. 4 (Pacific Rim Highway) along the river, across the Somass River bridge and out of town. After about 12 km. you'll cross the Sproat River bridge. After crossing the bridge turn right onto Coleman Road. Continue past Airport Road on your left. Coleman Road changes to gravel and the trail head is 0.6 km. down the gravel section. You'll see a sign for Greenmax Anglers' Trail as you enter the Greenmax Woodlot. Park on either side of Coleman Road. Please do not block either of the access roads to the Greenmax Wood Lot. We'll depart on our hike from the Greenmax Anglers' Trail sign at 9:30 a.m.

Coffee will be at Harbour Quay located at the foot of Argyle St. in Port Alberni. There are several places available on the Quay including Cecilia's Deli & Cafe and the donut shop next door. Public washrooms are available. Directions for coffee: Retrace our route up Coleman Road back to Highway 4. Turn left onto Hwy. 4 and continue back to Port Alberni. As you cross the bridge (just before the T-intersection of Johnston Road and the Pacific Rim Highway) keep to the right through the traffic light onto Victoria Quay keeping the river on your right. Bear to your left onto Roger St. Get in the right hand lane and turn right onto Stamp Ave. After Smitty's restaurant bear right onto Kingsway Ave. until you come to Argyle St. Turn right onto Argyle and drive a short distance to Harbour Quay. We'll meet at the water fountain in the centre of the Quay.

Hemer Park

This Friday's Walk will be through Hemer Park which is just below Nanaimo in the scenic village of Cedar. "Hemer Park was a gift from John and Violet Hemer of Cedar, BC in 1981. Homesteaded in 1860, the park still contains remains of the farmstead, offering a look at the region's farming history. The Pacific Coal Company railway traveled along the shores of the lake; their abandoned right of way now forms a trail called Heritage Way. Our route will take in part of the Morden Colliery trail which was the coal railway route that once linked the mines of South Wellington to the coal ships docked at Boat Harbour. The majority of the trail is wide and well groomed with few rocks or roots to worry about, however there are a few necessary detours involving hopping over logs and other obstacles. There is lots of mature forest and a lake as well as some marshes. Waterfowl abound. Our route will take us to a small peninsula with views of the ocean and the Gulf Islands and a chance to dip our toes in the salt water. In view of the season proper rain gear is strongly advised.

Directions

Take Highway 19 down past Nanaimo to the Cedar exit (9) and follow the Cedar road (watch for the right hand turn just past the bridge) to the village of Cedar. a. From Ravensong lot go S. on Jones for .8 km b. Turn Left onto Rupert St. W for .5 km c. enter roundabout and take the first exit onto Memorial for 1.8 km d. Merge onto Hwy 19 S via the ramp on the left towards Nanaimo – go 50.2 km e. Stay in left lane as you exit for Cedar -go 2.9 km f. turn right after the bridge to stay on Cedar Road – go 2.0 km and look for Village Square on left.

Due to limited parking space at the park we will all meet in the parking lot of Village Square (new buildings on your left across from the baseball field on your right). There is ample parking in the lot there. From there we will take as few vehicles as we can to the park where we can double park. Hemer Road just past the Village on the left is the route into the park.

We hope to start at 09:30 but may take a little longer due to all the shuffling of cars. The walk is 90+ minutes. (Depending on how long we stay at the ocean side)

Hornby Island

This week's walk, will be to Hornby Island. This is the one many have been eagerly anticipating!

The Walk; Helliwell Park has a 5km loop through old-growth forest and along spectacular bluffs that provide panoramic views. It is a sensitive area so we must stay on the marked paths. Dogs are allowed on a leash but not at Tribune Bay where we will picnic. The paths are well maintained but there are exposed roots and loose rocks so walking shoes with good treads and support are required, and walking sticks would be an asset. It is mostly flat but there are some short steep sections.

Logistics; We will take the 9AM Ferry to Denman and on arrival drive directly across to Gravelly Bay to catch the 9:40AM Ferry to Hornby. This ferry will wait but it is smaller and it is first come first serve. On arrival on Hornby we will take Shinglespit Rd. which turns into Central Rd. About 5km from the Ferry on the left is the Cardboard Café where we will stop for coffee and cinnamon buns (30 minutes only). We then continue along Central to a 4 way stop where we turn left onto St. John's Point Rd to Helliwell which is 5km along on the right. The walk will take 1.5-2hrs depending on how long we stop at view points and what wildlife we see. We will then return the way we came and Tribune Bay is 4km from Helliwell on the left, where we will enjoy a picnic lunch at the beautiful beach. Note; There are no change rooms at the beach so if you want to swim, come prepared or use the rustic facilities for privacy.

Bring; Lunch, sandals, towels, bathing suits, sunscreen, hats, water, snacks.

Toilets; Water is short on Hornby so the only public flush toilets we found were at the ferry terminals, the rest were pit toilets. At Helliwell there were 3 coed pit toilets along the trail so no coffee grandes at the Cardboard Café.

Other Activities; After lunch at Tribune Bay you are free to explore the island on your own. This could include the small funky market at the 4 way stop, a Winery, a Meadery, Artists Studios, etc. Visit <http://www.hornbyisland.com> for more information.

Judges Row/Heritage Forest

Friday morning's walk will keep us close to home. Our walk will take us through Heritage forest, followed by a walk on Judge's row and/or the beach.

Starting point will be the Qualicum Beach Memorial Golf course. Please park at the far end (ocean side) of the parking lot, we will leave from there at 9.30 a.m.

Coffee at the Golf course clubhouse.

Kitsukis Dyke Walk (Port Alberni)

This Friday will see us on the Kitsukis Dyke walk along Kitsukis Creek up to the railway trestle and waterfall.

Walk conditions. This will be mostly a level walk with a short bumpy hike up to the Falls.

Directions to start point. We will begin our walk will begin from the Alberni Athletic Hall--some of you may remember it from Octoberfest—at 09:45.

Driving instructions (once in Port Alberni).

a. Proceed to the T-Junction (traffic light) at the bottom of Johnston Road hill (HWY. 4) in Port Alberni. This is where you would turn right to go Tofino.

b. After turning right, go right immediately again on Beaver Creek Road just before the Co-op Gas station and park in the Athletic Hall parking lot near the mini golf. There is a large parking lot on the right hand side of the streets. (Suggestion: be wary of parking underneath the trees).

Coffee: The Donut Shop, 5440 Argyle St., Port Alberni

Laburnum Road Trails

The Walk: This Friday's walk will be a mixture of young open forest, old growth forest, old roads and power lines. Some of it will be wide and open, some on narrower trails that require walking in single file. The walk will take roughly 1.5 hours and requires a moderate fitness level. The route is somewhat hilly, though nothing too long or steep. If there has been rain there may be some damp spots and you may have to walk around small pools of water though most of the route is generally dry. Good hiking boots/shoes are always important and walking poles are a good idea if you have them.

Where: At the bend in the road where Laburnum Road turns into Rupert Road on the west side of town. We will begin our walk promptly at 09:30. Parking: Park on the shoulder at the big bend on the main Laburnum Road (where Rupert Road turns into Laburnum and it curves to head down to the ocean). Be sure to park on the WEST side of the road (i.e. the side with the wide shoulder) and park as far off the driving lane as possible. Be wary of traffic as this is a relatively busy roadway. Car-pooling. Because of the closeness to town there will be no need to carpool. Coffee: Coffee and snacks will be at Deez Bar & Grill at the foot of Laburnum Road (at the intersection with Hwy 19A).

Lighthouse Country Regional Trail

The Walk; This Friday's walk is part of the Lighthouse Country Regional Trail. Work on the LCRT began in the late 1990s when stalwart Lighthouse trail volunteers helped blaze over 5 km of route along undeveloped road allowance on the inland side of the E&N railway. Today, the North Loop and adjacent Wildwood Community Park provide about 2 km of easy wandering, while the South Loop offers everything from finished wheelchair accessible trail to woodlot road and rough trail experiences. We will walk the complete South Loop which will take us about 90 minutes. There are a couple of watery muddy patches.

Directions; Starting at the intersection of 19A and Laburnum Road travel direction Comox for 13 miles. Then turn left onto Lions way, follow it for 100 meters and turn right onto Lioness Blvd. The South Loop parking lot is located at the end of Lioness Blvd.

Hope to see you Friday!

Little Mountain

This Friday's walk will see us take the paved road from the base to the top of Little Mountain. This will be followed by a short tour around the summit which will afford a spectacular view of the valley below and the ocean. This will only take approximately one hour. Bring your camera for pics of the sweeping vista at the summit.

Special conditions. Walkers must be aware of two special conditions and take the measures they deem appropriate.

a. Steep road to the top. Our plan is to park on the road at the base of the mountain and walk the kilometre or so to the top. Although the road to the top begins with a short gentle rise, it very quickly becomes an extremely steep, continuous climb to the top; for that reason, the walk from the parking area to the top of the mountain is not for everyone.

If you are not in reasonable physical condition (we think, here, of aerobic fitness), or have hip/ankle/knee problems, we strongly advise that you not attempt the walk to the top. Instead, drive your car to the top of the mountain, park in the small parking lot adjacent to the telecommunications towers and wait for the rest of the group to arrive. The walkers should only take 20 minutes to get to the top.

b. Cliff. The walk at the top of the mountain poses a serious danger to the unwary. There is a sheer cliff at Little Mountain that is not protected by a railing. We are advised that it is safe, provided you keep well away from the cliff-edge.

c. Dogs. Because of the safety issues, do not bring dogs on this walk.

Driving instructions. To get to the start-point, take the Inland Highway 19 down- island direction to exit 51 and exit on the Alberni Highway. Turn right towards Coombs and take the first left onto Bellevue Road. Proceed south .4 KM to Little Mountain Road. Park on the side of the road here. The walk will start at 09:30 am sharp.

Coffee.

Coffee will be at Back Road Java. To get there, drive further up Bellevue Rd to the right hand turning onto Ruffels Rd which eventually makes a left turn onto Leffler. Carry on to Grafton Rd. and turn right and proceed to Errington Rd.

We look forward to seeing you on Friday.

Little Qualicum Falls Walk

This week, we will walk the trails at Little Qualicum Falls. We will start the walk at 9.30am sharp

Directions. The turn-off to Little Qualicum Falls is 10.8 km from the roundabout in Qualicum Beach as you proceed down the Alberni Hwy (Hwy 4)--direction-Port Alberni. Turn right at the sign for the Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park. Park at the furthest parking lot—the one nearest the falls. The flush toilets are open for the season and located near this lot.

Safety and terrain. This is a route that demands attention and caution: in a couple of spots, there is significant potential for danger for the unwary. The river is high, and the current exceptionally fast-moving, additionally some parts of the trail drop off steeply down to the river. There are lots of protruding tree-roots and rocks on the paths, which can be wet so walking shoes with good treads are necessary and walking stick(s) would be an asset. There are steep sets of stairs and some steep trail areas which we will traverse on our walk so a reasonable fitness level is required. However, the views of the falls and the walk through the forest by the river make it all worthwhile.

Weather/temperature considerations. The bridges, especially the upper bridge, across the gorge can be very slippery when wet. The railings are good, though, so make sure you hang on tightly as you cross!

Coffee. Post-walk coffee/sticky buns will be at Goats on the Roof (Coombs).

See you Friday!

Little Qualicum Fish Hatchery Trail

This Friday, we will walk the Little Qualicum Fish Hatchery trail, which is a pleasant level walk beside the river, and one short hill near halfway to reach the viewpoint at the end of Claymore Road.

The hatchery parking lot on Claymore Road is reached by turning left off Laburnum Road just before the railway tracks (near the Middle School). Laburnum is the 'new' bypass road running from Memorial and Rupert down to the ocean-side. If you are coming from the water, then you turn inland up the hill on Laburnum until you reach the tracks, then turn right on Claymore. Watch for the hatchery sign 1 km on the gravel road from Laburnum. Go through the gate to parking.

We will leave at the usual time, 9.30am. The walk will be 90 minutes, with coffee at The Step Above in Quality Foods. It should now be warm and sunny enough to use the outside deck with mountain view.

Little Qualicum River/Grandon Creek Trail

This Friday's walk will be Little Qualicum River/Grandon Creek trail starting at the Memorial Golf Course, parking lot (seaside end). We will start at 9.30AM as usual.

The route is variable for climbs, with only one short steep hill up to Andreef Road beside the river. Walking sticks are always a good idea.

Plan on a 90-minute walk followed by coffee at the Memorial Golf Club restaurant, "Thalassa [Greek for 'the sea'] Restaurant".

Madrona Point Walk

On Friday we will do the Wall Beach/Madrona Point walk.

Walking conditions. The first part of the walk (out-bound to Madrona Point) will be along the shore, which is composed of huge slabs of stone. It is not always level—some climbing up/down is necessary—and can be rough/rugged to negotiate; the rocks and sea-weed can make the walk slippery. The return trip will be along paved streets. We recommend a sturdy pair of walking shoes with a good gripping sole.

Timings. The walk will commence at Wall Beach at 9:30.

Directions. Proceed to the intersection of 19A and Franklin's Gull Road at the south end (Nanaimo end) of Parksville. It is the first traffic-light past the 'Heritage Centre' strip mall (which houses 'Serious Coffee', our post-walk 'watering hole'). a. Turn left at the lights and then Right onto Northwest Bay Road. b. At the Parksville Visitors' Centre, zero your odometer, c. Proceed 3.3 km to Wall Beach Road. It is directly opposite Springford Farm (which advertises "Hay, Eggs, Ground Beef"). The sign is sheltered under a shingled awning with two big, yellow wagon wheels below it. d. Turn left onto Wall Beach Road and proceed directly to the beach about 700 metres directly ahead.

The return walk from Madrona Point to Wall Beach. Because walkers will inevitably set their own pace, and yours may be slower than others, we recommend you bring a copy of these instructions with you: they will guide you back to your car. a. From Madrona Point, proceed down Madrona Drive to a T-Junction (Craig Drive). b. Turn Left onto Craig Drive and proceed to a T-Junction (the street, which is unsigned, is Balenas. Camelot Homes has a construction site—it is called 'Ocean Breezes'—on the opposite side of the road). c. Turn Left on Balenas and proceed to a T-Junction (possibly 300 metres); the street (Acacia) is not marked as you approach it. d. Turn Right on Acacia and proceed to a T-Junction (Wall Beach). e. The parking lot at the beach is just to the left.

Maplehurst Trails – Port Alberni

Walking conditions.

The trail consists of a series of interlocking loops which allow a variety of routes to be followed. The western Ridge Trail is on an old woodroad and goes through several maple and alder groves. The eastern trail follows Kitsukis Creek in places, there are a couple of sections where the bank is quite steep. There are several cedar trees that show claw mark where bears have climbed. There are some large veteran Douglas Firs and plenty of dead trees.

Directions. Leaving the Visitor Information Centre travel 4.0 km west on Highway 4 to the traffic lights at the intersection of Highway 4 and Gertrude Street. Turn right on Gertrude and travel 1.2 km to Compton Street. Turn right onto Compton and continue for 0.8 until a sharp corner which marks the beginning of Willow Street. Drive 0.7 km to the end of Willow Road. The trail begins on the left side of a small blue spruce.

Moorecroft Regional Park

This Fridays walk will take us to Moorecroft Regional Park in Nanoose. In 2011 the RDN with the assistance of the Nature Trust of BC and Nanaimo Area Land Trust purchased Moorecroft Camp from the United Church who had operated the camp since the mid 1930s. This 34 hectare oceanfront property features coastal bluffs, beach, a protected cove and spectacular views across Georgia Strait. The Coastal Douglas Fir and Garry Oak meadow woodland include a wetland, two seasonal creeks and eagle nest trees. The trail is in good condition, well-marked with no steep inclines. We will make several stops along the way to enjoy the views and the hike will take just over an hour.

Driving Directions - Follow Hwy 19A south to the intersection of 19A and Franklin Gull Road at the south end of Parksville, it is the traffic light past the Heritage Strip Centre where Serious Coffee is located. a. Turn left at the lights then right onto Northwest Bay Road. b. At the Parksville Visitors Centre zero your odometer. c. Proceed 6.5kms to Stewart Road and turn left at the Sanglen Farm Sign. d. Then proceed 1.5kms (small park sign at side of the road) and turn left onto Stewart Road. The road sign cannot be seen until you make the turn. e. If you miss the turn the road makes a sharp right onto Dolphin Road! f. Proceed to the end of Stewart Road where the entrance to the park is located. To take Hwy 19 from Qualicum Beach take exit 46 and follow the directions to the Parksville Visitors Centre

You may have to do some parts of the trails to make the walk closer to 90 minutes.

Mount Washington

This Friday's walk is pretty much an all-day affair. We will start from the Mount Washington ski-area in Strathcona Provincial Park at Mount Washington—straight up Hwy 19 just above Courtenay. Paradise Meadows, the walk we have planned, is approximately 7 to 8 km through delightful forest. Our walk will start from the cross-country ski-area at 10:00 sharp.

Bring a lunch. We did not see any place at the walk-area at which to buy food, so bring a lunch; you'll want a backpack to carry it as we plan a roughly 30-45-minute lunch-stop on the shores of Lake Helen MacKenzie--approximately one-third of the way into our walk.

Terrain. The initial 3 km of our walk will be a steady ascending, and occasionally steep, climb on gravel, mulch, and board-walk stairs. It will, however, level out after that, leaving us a pleasant combination of level walk terminating in a relatively steady, and easily negotiable, descent to our start-point. Good hard-soled boots/shoes will be useful as the trail has its share of protruding roots and rocks. Walking sticks will be useful as well.

Wild-life (i.e., Bears). The Strathcona Provincial Park website reports that "bears are being seen up in alpine areas throughout the park foraging on berries. Frequent sightings have been occurring in the Paradise Meadows/Forbidden Plateau area of the park." In the course of our pre-walk last week, we met two separate sets of walkers who had encountered bears on our intended route that day.

Toilets. There is a toilet at the trail head, one near where we will stop for lunch, and a third one on our return route.

Directions:

From Memorial at round-a-bout to Hw 19 (zero your odometer/trip-meter here). Bear Right (direction Campbell River) on Hwy 19. Proceed 69.4 km to Exit 130 and turn left on Strathcona Parkway. Drive 17.5 km up the steep hills of Strathcona Parkway and turn left at the Strathcona Provincial Park sign. Drive 2.5 km to a rock sign that shows Paradise Meadows – Raven Lodge. Parking is in the low-ground on the left—the trail head—by a log-cabin (Park Information) which is directly beside the Raven Lodge.

Nanoose Water Supply

This Friday's walk will be a new area just above the Craig Bay development in Parksville. This is a wooded area with mostly wide and clear trails. There is one small hill to give us some elevation gain. This is a seldom visited area known only to a few thousand mountain bike riders. The total walk will take us 90 minutes. We will meet for a 9.30 am start at the parking area located along Northwest Bay Road. This is 1 km past the intersection of Northwest Bay Road and Franklin's Gull road in Parksville (right at the Parksville Heritage Museum). Turn toward the water on Franklin's Gull road which makes an immediate right turn and becomes Northwest Bay Road. There is a small parking area on your right (on the curve).

Coffee: we will meet after the walk at Serious Coffee which is just up-island from the intersection of Hwy 19A and Franklin's Gull Rd. in the Heritage Centre mall.

Nature's Garden—Qualicum Beach

THE WALK

Hello Walkers! This Friday's walk is a relatively level and easy one which will take us through the Community Woods and on to a local treasure called Nature's Garden, then looping again through the Community Woods on a different trail, ending at the Civic Centre/Ravensong parking lot. It will take approximately 1.5 hours. We ask that the group remain cohesive and vigilant as there are numerous tree roots and rocks on the many intersecting trails as well as some interesting surprises along the way. Good footwear is recommended.

MEETING TIME/LOCATION

We will meet at the Qualicum Civic Centre (Corner: Jones and Fern Streets) dogs-off-leash area about 9:15. The walk starts from this area at 9:30 sharp.

Neck Point (Nanaimo)

Our walk this Friday, Feb. 19, will be at Neck Point Park in Nanaimo.

GETTING THERE.

Drive down-island to Nanaimo and exit left at Aulds Road.

Cross Hwy. 19A onto Hammond Bay Road (the northward extension of Aulds Road).

Drive along Hammond Bay Rd. For 5.7 Km and turn left into the Neck Point Park entrance road (well- marked). Just prior to the turn you will pass the Pipers Pub on your left.

Drive straight on to the end of the road at the parking lot.

Figure on 45 to 50 minutes driving time from QB.

THE TRAIL. The trail is well maintained and has some hills and stairs, so you'll get some exercise but not be stressed. If there is a wind it will be quite chilly, so dress warmly. Walking sticks are not a necessity. You will see some lovely scenery.

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Newcastle Island Walk (with Picnic)

Good day all,

The walk this Friday is around Newcastle Island, in Nanaimo Harbour, using shuttle ferries to and fro, with a picnic stop after the walk. The walk is quite easy and scenic; with good weather promised, it should be warm and very enjoyable. Return to your cars will be any time after we eat our picnic lunches, with ferries running every 20 minutes.

The ferry cost is \$8.00 per person, return. Please plan to arrive at Nanaimo Harbour by 9:45 a.m. so we can be sure to get the 10:00 ferry.

Directions:

- Drive to Nanaimo and exit Hwy. 19 at Northfield Road (Exit # 21) towards city centre.
- Turn right onto Hwy. 19A, which becomes Terminal Ave., and go to Comox Road (traffic light).
- Turn left onto Comox and immediately left again at Cliff St. (another traffic light).
- Park over by the washroom facilities (parking cost is \$2.00 for 3-6 hours).

Enter Maffeo-Sutton Park to the right of the washrooms, walk to the water opposite the children's play area and down the ramp to ferries.

Remember to bring a picnic lunch. You will need some kind of a backpack for your lunch because there is no place to leave your lunch during the walk.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Nile Creek Walk

This Friday morning, we'll be doing the very scenic Nile Creek trail for approx. 1.5 hrs.

Walking conditions: This is a creek-side forest path with some ups and downs as we go up the creek. There are exposed roots which will be wet, slippery and concealed by fallen leaves in places so a walking stick is advisable and footwear with good treads a must. There are some small trees to step over during the walk and one log bridge with a cable handrail. The scenery here is wonderful, similar to Rosewall Creek, but different enough to make this a delightful walk, further enhanced by the music of the flowing creek and the small birds. As bears may be in the area bringing a dog is not advisable. The only bathrooms are those provided by Mother Nature so minimize the morning coffee.

Directions: a. If using Hwy 19A from Qualicum Beach, pick up directions at sub-para d. below. b. If using Hwy 19, go up-island to Exit 75 and drive down to Hwy 19A. c. Turn left onto Hwy 19A d. Turn left into Charlton Road underneath the flashing yellow lights across from the Sea Flame Resort sign. (approx. 2 kms past the Sandbar Café.) e. Drive up Charlton Road to its end and park at the end of the road.

Notch Hill

This Friday's walk will be on Notch Hill in Nanoose. It's a perfect workout and requires a fairly robust fitness level. The trail has very little flat walking with the first half being mainly uphill and the second half being down-hill. Hiking boots as well as walking sticks are a good idea but the trail is smooth (few rocks and roots). We pass by a large water reservoir then climb through a lovely grassy meadow with Garry Oak and Arbutus trees. The view from the top is spectacular. With a couple of rest stops it will take just under 90 minutes return. We will start our hike from Notch hill at 9.00 am.

Directions:

From Qualicum Beach via Hwy 19A: Drive through Parksville to NW Bay Road (just past Serious Coffee). Turn left onto NW Bay Road. Continue until Power Point Road, just past Nanoose Bay School and Quality Foods. Turn left onto Powder Point Road. Continue for approximately 3.4 km, just past Bosun Dr to your right you will see the parking on your right.

From Qualicum Beach via Hwy 19: take HW 19 to Nanoose and turn left at the Petro-Canada on to North West Bay Road. Turn right on Powder Point Road. Continue for approximately 3.4 km, just past Bosun Dr to your right you will see the parking on your right.

Coffee: Serious Coffee

Hope to see you then,

Pheasant Glen

This Friday we will walk on trails that skirt around the Pheasant Glen Golf Resort for approximately 75 minutes. Take the opportunity to come back and drive to the clubhouse. Along the way you will see a spectacular view of Mount Arrowsmith as a natural backdrop. Pheasant Glen is a strikingly beautiful traditional walkable natural golf course, is dedicated to environmental stewardship and is now in the stage of certification as an Audubon Sanctuary facility.

We will begin at 9:30 AM.

Directions: a. From the Roundabout on Memorial Avenue, take the south exit onto Rupert Road East (toward the airport) b. Turn Right onto Qualicum Road. c. At the Y intersection (outlined in green on the map), you will find a parking area to your left. This is where we will meet.

Description:

For the first few minutes we will be on a gravel road and then we'll veer off onto a hiking trail through the forested area surrounding the golf course. The trail is narrow (single file) with protruding roots but is very flat and not at all difficult. Once in a while you must step over a fallen tree but if we can do it, you can! Please note that there are many trails that criss-cross each other and one could very easily get lost! So, don't lose sight of the group ahead! At one point you will be serenaded by the soothing sounds of chain saws as we traverse a clearing for future development. However, the sound quickly fades and one can soon hear and see Bald Eagles flying overhead.

Part of the walk takes us under the power lines where you will experience a view of the magnificent snow-capped mountains. Here, the ground becomes quite mucky and wet in places so it is recommended that you don't wear your brand new white shoes! Waterproof hiking boots or shoes with a good tread would be perfect.

Pheasant GlenEast - Airport

This Friday we will walk on trails between Qualicum Road and the Airport for approximately 75 minutes. Along the way you will see a spectacular view of Mount Arrowsmith as a natural backdrop

We will begin at 9:30 AM.

Directions:

From the Roundabout on Memorial Avenue, take the south exit onto Rupert Road East (toward the airport). Turn Right onto Qualicum Road. At the Y intersection you will find a parking area to your left. This is where we will meet.

Description:

For the first few minutes we will be on a gravel road and then we'll veer off onto a hiking trail through the forested area. The trail is narrow (single file) with protruding roots but is very flat and not at all difficult . Once in a while you must step over a fallen tree. Please note that there are many trails that criss-cross each other and one could very easily get lost! So, don't lose sight of the group ahead.

Coffee: coffee and muffins.

We look forward to sharing our walk with you, rain or shine.

Qualicum Beach Museum/Laburnum Rd.

This Friday's walk—Qualicum Beach Museum/Laburnum will keep us again closer to home.

Starting point: Qualicum Beach Museum. From there, our route is a mostly level, partially chip trail/road, scenic walk.

We will start our walk at 9:30 sharp. Duration will be approx. 90 min.

Park either in their lot or across the road at the train station's parking lot.

Coffee at Baileys!

We hope to see you all there, rain or shine.

Qualicum Farms

This Friday's walk is a new one we will call "Qualicum Farms" in Qualicum Beach.

The new meeting place is the intersection of Larch Drive and Dorset Road in Qualicum Beach.

Directions: a. Using the Petrocan station at Memorial and the rail tracks as a starting point, drive along First Ave. which starts at the Fire Hall. b. Once past the FRONT of the Fire Hall, cross Beach and Jones you will see the Ball Park on your left. c. Immediately after the Scout Hall turn left onto Park Road. d. Turn right onto Dorset Road and proceed to Larch Drive. e. The walk starts at the trail at the end of Larch, which is a cul de sac, but because this is a fire access turnaround (and because the Fire Chief lives a few doors down!), we'll park thoughtfully along Dorset and Larch.

We'll meet at the end of the Larch cul de sac.

The walk is relatively flat with one small muddy patch.

Coffee: TBA.

Rogers Creek Nature Trail (Port Alberni)

TRAIL: This is a pleasant hike along a creek near Port Alberni. Historically, Roger Creek was the source of drinking water in the early days of Alberni. At one point you will see unique shale cliffs on the other side of the creek. The walk is fairly flat with small hills, some roots, and one uphill section which is not overly strenuous.

Starting time is 09:30

DIRECTIONS: Starting at the traffic circle at Rupert and Memorial follow Hwy. 4 towards Port Alberni. After about 36 km you will come to a “Y” intersection and turn left, the Visitor Centre (washrooms available) should now be on your right. Continue approx. 1400 meters and you will notice a small parking lot on the left. Additional parking is a few meters back on the other side of the road.

Rosewall Creek Walk

This Friday's walk will take us to scenic Rosewall Provincial Park. We will begin our walk promptly at 09:30.

Driving routes. Two routes are possible: a. Hwy 19A. Drive directly from Qualicum Beach along Hwy 19A (direction—Courtenay). Distance is 26.2KM from 19A and Laburnum. Turn right on Berray Road. Allow 5-10 minutes longer for this route. b. Hwy 19. From Qualicum Beach proceed directly up-island on Hwy 19 to exit 87 (Cook Creek Road), turn right, and proceed to Hwy 19A.

Turn left at 19A and proceed to Berray Road (about 2km.).

Turn right on Berray Road (Rosewall Park sign). The park entrance is 200 meters down Berray Rd. on the left.

The walk: The walk will take roughly 1.5 hours and requires a fairly robust fitness level. We will follow Rosewall Creek, a crystal-clear creek with a rocky creek-bed, inland through moss-covered forest.

Terrain. The trail has some short, but fairly steep sections; it is occasionally narrow with sharp, steep drop-offs to the creek some 2-3 metres below. Much of our route will be covered with exposed/protruding tree-roots and rocks. Because the trail is so narrow, we will be walking single-file for the most part. Due to recent rains we will be crossing 2-3 wet areas on flat rocks so good balance or waterproof boots are required (they are not very deep or wide). There were also a couple of downed trees across the trail when we pre-walked but they can be stepped over if we are careful.

Good hiking boots/shoes are a must and walking sticks are a good idea if you have them.

Coffee. Coffee will be at the Sandbar Café in Qualicum Bay (13.2 km down 19A towards Qualicum Beach).

Rutherford-Carrington Trail

This Friday we will carpool to Nanaimo to walk part of the Rutherford–Carrington Trail.

We will start at the Burma trailhead, follow Cottle Creek through the ravine along the Linley Valley Trail and then loop by Cottle Lake on our return.

The province has put in boardwalks and bridges but the trail is wet and boggy in places so hiking boots are recommended and walking sticks would be useful. There are gradual elevation changes and a few broken branches & sharp rocks to circumnavigate but the trail is wide and easy to follow. Burma Road dead-ends at the trailhead. There is limited parking space so carpooling is encouraged. The walk will start at 9:30 am.

Note: Sorry—no dogs allowed on the lake trail.

Directions:

Take the inland Hwy. # 19 to Nanaimo.

Exit left on Mostar. Proceed on Mostar toward the ocean and cross hwy 19A.

Mostar now becomes Rutherford Road. Proceed on Rutherford (past mall & Grand Hotel) for 2.1km.

Turn Rt. on Vanderneuk Rd. for 0.3km

Vanderneuk now becomes Lost Lake Rd. Proceed along Lost Lake Rd for another 2.4km to Burma Rd

Turn right on Burma – proceed 0.2 km to trailhead sign.

We're looking forward to seeing you there.

San Pareil/Rathtrevor

The walk on Friday morning will be the San Pareil/Rathtrevor route.

To get to the walk start point at San Pareil: Drive down-island through Parksville on Hwy. 19A to just past the orange bridge over the Englishman River and turn left onto Plummer Road (it does a U-turn and leads you back to the river). Park your car at the side of Plummer where it turns away from the river and becomes Shorewood.

We'll begin the walk at 9:30. This is a gentle walk beginning alongside the river estuary, travelling along some quiet streets and moving into the forest at Rathtrevor. We hope to see some Brant geese at the estuary.

Coffee after the walk will be at Serious Coffee just down Hwy. 19A past the turn to Tigh-NaMara.

Stamp Long River Trail at Stamp Falls Park

This Friday's walk takes us to the Stamp Long River Trail at Stamp Falls Park near Port Alberni. The trail accesses 7.5 km of beautiful old growth forest. For most of its length it parallels the east bank of the Stamp River.

Terrain/Walking conditions. The trail has some short, steep sections with occasional steep drop-offs to the river below. Most of our walking will be single-file, and some of it will be covered with exposed/protruding tree-roots (watch your step!). Good hiking boots/shoes are recommended, as are walking sticks, if you have them.

Directions. The drive is approximately 1 hour. a. Follow Highway 4 (Pacific Rim Highway) through Port Alberni to the T-intersection by the river at the foot of Johnston Road. b. Cross the bridge over Kitsuksis Creek. c. Take the first right on to Beaver Creek Road immediately after the bridge and continue 12.5 km to the entrance to Stamp Falls Park. d. Turn left into the park and continue 1.7 km down the hill to the day use parking lot. No charge for day use in this park.

Logistics .

The walk will be in one direction only, so we will need to all take a ride from our meeting place at Stamp Falls Park to the starting point at the North end of the trail, by filling several of the cars we arrive in. Those offering rides will be driven back to their vehicles at the end of the walk by filling the cars that were left behind at Stamp Falls Park.

Top Bridge (Englishman River)

This Friday's walk will take us to the Top Bridge which spans the Englishman River near Parksville. The walk has a variety of open fields, rocks, and riverside forest. This is a very scenic route with some modest up and down short runs, but nothing strenuous. Good shoes are essential. We will start our walk at 9:30 am sharp. It will take us roughly 90 minutes, allowing for stops.

Directions: From Qualicum Beach. A 20 to 30 minute drive brings you comfortably to the trailhead. Drive south on Island Hwy 19A through downtown Parksville and cross over the Bridge at Englishman river.

Turn Right on Industrial Way. Proceed approximately 500 m down Industrial Way to the trailhead, which is across from a long, open red-roofed industrial shed on the left. A new Trailhead cedar sign (Top Bridge Regional Trail) on the right marks the start of the trail: the sign is set back about 25 m in the trees and so is not readily visible.

Directions driving up-Island from the south.

Exit HWY 19 at Exit 46.

Drive along 19A to the intersection of TUAN and Hwy 19A. It is immediately before the traffic lights at RESORT WAY.

Turn left on Tuan, and then turn immediately right at the first intersection--Industrial Way. Proceed about 50m to the trail-head on the left.

POST WALK COFFEE is at Serious Coffee on your right as you enter Parksville on 19A.

Wacky Woods

This Friday's walk will be most interesting, rain or shine. We will begin with a brisk walk that detours through Wacky Woods to the Fanny Bay Conservation Area. After enjoying a view of the mountains and the sea (with a glimpse of the houses on Tozer Road) we'll return to "The Woods" for a leisurely stroll through the series of winding trails that house the late George Sawchuk's creations.

Please be at the entrance to Wacky Woods to begin our walk promptly at 10:00 am.

Driving directions : a. Proceed directly up island on Inland Hwy.19 to exit #87 (26.4 km from Memorial Drive QB) b. Turn right at Cooke Creek Road c. Turn left at Hwy 19A and proceed for 7.1 km d. Turn right at Ships Point Road (Community Hall is on your left) e. Take 1st left onto Little Way f. Turn left at Bates Drive - proceed to the dead end g. Park in the cleared area to the right of Bates Dr.

Westwood Lake

This week's walk is around Westwood Lake. It is an easy walk with only a short uphill (about 8 percent slope) section at the outset, then down again to lake level for the rest of the walk. Drive down-island on Hwy. 19 virtually past Nanaimo to Jingle Pot Road (Exit #18), turn right and proceed a short distance to Westwood Road (the first road with a left-turn lane), turn left and follow the signs to the Westwood Lake Parking Lot.

We'll gather at the lakeside at 10:00 a.m. Some of us will be bringing a picnic lunch (with fingers crossed) and making use of the two picnic tables. If joining us, perhaps it would be good to have folding chairs in your trunk, if you have them. For those who may wish to go to a pub after the walk, we'll have a couple of establishments to recommend.

Here's hoping for good weather and a good turnout.