



Qualicum Beach and Area Newcomers' Club

Friday Walking Group

Walks 2019-2020

This document provides a summary of the walks taken by the Friday Walking Group from April 2019 to March 2020, along with driving directions and coffee location. In many cases, the walking route is obvious; in other locations, there are several different routes that can be taken from the trail head. Where possible, a simple route description is provided to help you find the trail. You can also find trail descriptions and maps through BC Parks (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/>) or the RDN (<https://www.rdn.bc.ca/regional-parks-and-trails>). The AllTrails website shows dozens of trails in the area (<https://www.alltrails.com/explore/canada/british-columbia/nanaimo>), and the AllTrails app allows you to access these maps and navigate the trail using your mobile phone.

Happy trails!

Table of Contents

About the Friday Walking Group	4
List of Walks, April 2019 – March 2020	5
Coffee shops, restaurants and pubs visited in 2019-20.....	7
Photo credits.....	7
Big Qualicum Steelhead Trail	8
Bowser Forest Trails.....	9
Cable Bay/Dodd Narrows.....	10
Cameron Lake	11
Colliery Dam, Nanaimo	12
Craig Bay to Pacific Shores Resort, Parksville	13
Englishman River Falls Provincial Park.....	14
Enos Lake	15
Grandon Creek.....	16
Helliwell Park, Hornby Island	17
Judges Row and Heritage Forest.....	18
Laburnum to Whiskey Creek.....	19
Lake Helen Mackenzie	20
Lighthouse Trail (North End).....	21
Lighthouse Trail to Thames Creek.....	22
Linley Park, Ion-Serenity Loop	23
Little Mountain	24
Little Qualicum Falls.....	25
Loon Lake	26
Nanoose Bay Trail	27
Nile Creek.....	28
Notch Hill.....	29
Nymph Falls.....	30
Parksville to Top Bridge	31
Pheasant Glen to French Creek.....	32
QB Beach Front and Heritage Forest	33
Qualicum Beach Exploration.....	34
Rath Trevor Park, Parksville.....	35

Ravensong Forest to Waterfront to QB Town Centre	36
Ravensong to Grandon Creek	37
Rogers Creek Nature Trail, Port Alberni.....	38
Rosewall Creek	39
Schooner Cove to Enos Lake	40
Sleeman’s Bridge.....	41
The Abyss, Nanaimo.....	42
Top Bridge along Englishman River.....	43
Westwood Lake, Nanaimo	44

About the Friday Walking Group

We are a group of people who like to walk. We walk every Friday morning at 9:30, rain or shine, barring exceptional circumstances. The group coordinators send out an email every week, usually on Tuesday, describing this week's walk and providing driving directions to the trailhead. **No RSVP is required;** whoever shows up by 9:30 on Friday will walk.

We usually walk for an hour and a half or two hours, and cover 5 to 7 km. It is not a very fast pace, but it is a walk, not a saunter, and there are sometimes steep sections or rough trails with exposed rocks and roots. We advise that everyone wear sturdy shoes and bring poles or walking sticks when warranted.

We try to go someplace different every week, though there are some favorite trails, and some trails are worth visiting several times a year because they change with the season. Most of the trails are within about 30 minutes drive from Qualicum Beach, but we sometimes go a bit further afield. Once or twice a year we undertake a more ambitious full-day trip to Mt. Washington, Hornby Island, or the like.

Dogs are welcome on most walks. However, they must always be on a short leash to ensure the safety of everyone on the walk and any wildlife in the area. Notice of dogs not being permitted on a particular walk will be given in the walk description email.

In addition to walking, we talk. We are more a social group than a serious hiking group; we just find that walking provides a great activity to do together so that we can get to know each other. After each walk, we generally meet for coffee and snacks – and more talking!

Walk leaders: please note that the coordinators are not responsible for leading the walks – the **group members** choose and lead the walks. We ask each member to lead a walk every few months. This is a great opportunity to share your favorite walk, or to explore someplace that you have always wanted to go. Walk leader responsibilities:

- Pick a suitable walk from those described below or from another source.
- Walk the trail a few days before the group walk, to ensure that the trail is in good shape and of suitable length and difficulty (and to ensure you know the route).
- Choose a suitable location for coffee after the walk and make a reservation if required.
- Send an email to the coordinator by Tuesday before the walk, providing the walk description, driving directions, and coffee location.
- Assign a walker to be the “sweep” on the walk.
- Adjust your pace as required to keep the group together.

Safety is a factor in determining the choice of walks. However, all walkers are ultimately responsible for their own personal safety and comfort. We recommend that all walkers:

- Remain with the group until it returns to the point of departure.
- Try to maintain the pace of the walk leader.
- Assess your personal fitness and suitability for walks over various types of terrain.
- Wear footwear that is suitable for occasional rough or slippery terrain.

In summary, the Friday Walking Group provides a great opportunity to explore some great trails in the area, get to know some new friends – and get a little bit of exercise.

List of Walks, April 2019 – March 2020

Date		Location	Coffee
April	5	Lighthouse Trail	Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course
	12	Enos Lake	Picnic at the lake
	19	Big Qualicum River	Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course
	26	Notch Hill	Rocking Horse Pub, Nanoose
May	3	Craig Bay	Serious Coffee, Parksville
	10	Rosewall Creek	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
	17	Bowser Forest Walk	Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course
	24	Grandon Creek	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
	31	Ravensong Forest to Waterfront	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
June	7	Westwood Lake	Picnic at the park
	14	Schooner Cove	Fairwinds Bar & Grill
	21	Little Mountain	Pheasant Glen Golf Course
	28	Top Bridge & Englishman River	Serious Coffee, Parksville
July	5	Little Qualicum Falls	Pheasant Glen Golf Course
	12	Colliery Dam	The Buzz Coffee House, Nanaimo
	19	Nymph Falls	Wandering Moose, Cumberland
	26	Nile Creek	Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course
August	2	Rosewall Creek	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
	9	Lake Helen Mackenzie	Picnic at the lake
	16	Notch Hill	Rusted Rake Farm, Nanoose
	23	Rogers Creek	Starboard Grill, Port Alberni
	30	Sleeman's Bridge	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
September	6	Lighthouse Trail to Thames Creek	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
	13	Westwood Lake	The Buzz Coffee House, Nanaimo
	20	Cable Bay/Dodd Narrows	Crow & Gate Pub, Nanaimo
	27	Parksville to Top Bridge	Serious Coffee, Parksville
October	4	The Abyss - Nanaimo	The Buzz Coffee House, Nanaimo
	11	Big Qualicum River	Deez Bar & Grill, Qualicum Beach
	18	Rath Trevor Park with ONAS	Barbecue at the park
	25	Hornby Island	Forage Farm & Kitchen, Hornby Island

List of Walks (continued)

Date		Location	Coffee
November	1	Little Qualicum Falls	Coombs Country Market
	8	Linley Valley/Cottle Lake	Serious Coffee, Nanaimo
	15	Judges' Row	Shady Rest, Qualicum Beach
	22	Rosewall Creek	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
	29	Loon Lake	Coombs Country Market
December	6	Craig Bay	Serious Coffee, Parksville
	13	Englishman River Falls PP	Coombs Country Market
	20	Pheasant Glen to French Creek	Pheasant Glen Golf Course
	27	QB Village trail to Laburnum	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
January	3	Laburnum to Whiskey Creek	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
	10	Enos Lake	Serious Coffee, Parksville
	17	QB Beachfront and Heritage Forest	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
	24	Ravensong to Grandon Creek	Bailey's, Qualicum Beach
	31	Parksville to Top Bridge	Serious Coffee, Parksville
February	7	Westwood Lake	The Buzz Coffee House, Nanaimo
	14	Nanoose Bay Trail	Rocking Horse Pub, Nanoose
	21	Notch Hill	Fairwinds Bar & Grill
	28	Cameron Lake	Creekmore's Coffee
March	6	Sleeman's Bridge	The Brew Coffee House, Bowser
	13	Nile Creek	Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course
	20	Cancelled – COVID-19	---
	27	Cancelled – COVID-19	---

Coffee shops, restaurants and pubs visited in 2019-20

Location	Phone	Description	Reservation
Bailey's in the Village 670 Primrose St, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-7584	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	Recommended
Old Country Market 2326 Alberni Hwy, Coombs	(250) 248-6272	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	Recommended
Creekmore's Coffee 2701 Alberni Hwy, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-5343	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	Recommended
Crow & Gate Pub 2313 Yellow Point Rd, Nanaimo	(250) 722-3731	English pub	Yes
Deez Bar & Grill, 3353 Island Hwy W, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-8055	Pub lunch	Yes
Fairwinds Bar & Grill 3730 Fairwinds Dr, Nanoose Bay	(250) 468-9915	Pub lunch	Yes
Forage Farm & Kitchen 5875 Central Rd, Hornby Island	(250) 335-1487	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	Yes
Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course 2250 Fowler Rd, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-9727	Coffee & snacks, pub lunch	Yes
Pheasant Glen Golf Course 1025 Qualicum Rd, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-8786	Coffee & snacks, pub lunch	Yes
Rocking Horse Pub 2038 Sanders Rd, Nanoose	(250) 468-1735	English pub	Yes
Serious Coffee, 6357 Hammond Bay Rd, Nanaimo	(250) 390-0868	Coffee & snacks	Recommended
Serious Coffee, 1209 Island Hwy E, Parksville	(250) 586-0188	Coffee & snacks	Yes
Shady Rest, 3109 Island Hwy W, Qualicum Beach	(250) 752-9173	Pub lunch	Yes
Starboard Grill, 5440 Argyle St, Port Alberni	(778) 421-2826	Pub lunch	Yes
The Brew Coffee House 6996 Island Hwy W, Bowser	(250) 757-9565	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	No
The Buzz Coffee House 1861 Dufferin Crescent, Nanaimo	(250) 591-8310	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	Recommended
Wandering Moose 2739 Dunsmuir Ave, Cumberland	(250) 400-1111	Coffee & snacks, sandwiches	No

Photo credits

Many thanks to Galina Cooper for providing the photos that appear throughout this book. Photos used by permission.

Cover photo: Helliwell Park, Hornby Island, October 25, 2019.

Big Qualicum Steelhead Trail

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking lot at the Big Qualicum Fish Hatchery

Driving directions:

Via 19A: From the foot of Laburnam, follow 19A west 10.6 km to Kensmuir Road. Turn left, following the sign for the hatchery. After 650m, turn right on Leon. After 400m, turn right on Horne Lake Road, then immediately turn left on River Road and follow it to the end. There is a washroom at the hatchery. Travel time from QB is 15 to 20 minutes.

Via 19: follow Hwy 19 west (up-island) and turn right at exit 75. Follow Horne Lake Road 2.1 km, then turn left on River Road following the signs for the hatchery.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Big+Qualicum+Hatchery/@49.3937092,-124.6189767,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54888a9c8c761c1b:0xd05f9bde854ff5b9!8m2!3d49.3937092!4d-124.616788?hl=en>

Warning: your GPS might direct you up 19A to Fisheries Rd, but it does not go through. Take Kensmuir.

Walk description: This is a nice forest and riverside walk in the Big Qualicum river valley. From the hatchery, we will head up the north side of the valley. After crossing under the highway, we descend back into the valley, cross the river, and return to the hatchery along the Steelhead Trail, which follows quite close to the river. We should have lots of opportunities to see spawning salmon. Part of the trail is narrow and twisted, and there are several river crossings on log bridges. There are the usual exposed rocks and roots, and some areas may be slippery due to wet leaves. Sturdy hiking shoes and poles are recommended. Total distance is 6 km, which should take us 90 minutes or so.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must remain on-leash when walking with the group. There may be bears in the area.

Coffee: will be at Deez Bar and Grill in Qualicum Beach. From the hatchery, return to QB via 19A; Deez will be on your left near the intersection with Laburnam.

Bowser Forest Trails

Start time: 9:30 am from the Bowser communications tower.

Driving routes:

Via 19A: follow Hwy 19A north from Qualicum Beach to Bowser (~19 km from 19A & Laburnam). Just after the Bowser Legion (7035 Island Hwy W) turn left on Crosley Road. Take the right fork at the junction with Cowland Road onto the old, unpaved Crosley Road. The communications tower is approximately 300m on the left; turn around and park on the road.

Via 19: from Qualicum Beach, head up-island on Hwy 19 to exit 75 (Horne Lake Road). Turn right and proceed to Hwy 19A. Turn left and proceed to Bowser, then follow the instructions above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/49%C2%B026'21.8%22N+124%C2%B042'10.5%22W/@49.439389,-124.7051057,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x0!8m2!3d49.439389!4d-124.702917?hl=en>

Please note: there are no washrooms available at the trailhead.

Walk description: This 90-minute walk consists of about 15-20 minutes total on paved road, 30 minutes on unpaved roads and the remainder on wide forest trails with a couple of very short stretches negotiating roots and rocks. Very minor grade changes. Depending on the amount of rainfall received in the days prior to the walk there may be some puddles to skirt. As usual, wear sturdy hiking boots or shoes, and bring a walking stick if you wish.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: Coffee will be at Micky J's at the Arrowsmith Golf Course. After the hike, return to 19-A, then turn right and drive 10km back toward Qualicum Beach. Just after passing the railroad tracks, turn right on Boorman Rd and follow the signs to the golf course.

Cable Bay/Dodd Narrows

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking lot at Cable Bay Trail.

Directions: Follow Hwy 19 through Nanaimo. At exit 9, keep left to follow Cedar Road. After 3.2 km, continue straight onto Harmac Road. Follow Harmac for 1.0 km, then turn right on McMillan Rd. After 350 m, turn left on Holden Corso Rd. After 2.0 km, continue straight onto Barnes Rd. Follow Barnes for 1.3 km, then turn left onto Nicola Rd. and follow it to the end. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is 45 to 50 minutes. There is a toilet at the parking lot.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Cable+bay+trail/@49.1228984,-123.8249529,17z/am=t/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488a647931e83dd:0xc1ca5bb7475d7ab8!8m2!3d49.1228984!4d-123.8227642?hl=en>

Walk description: Cable Bay Trail winds its way down to the oceanfront overlooking Gabriola Island and back towards the Nanaimo harbour. This lovely forest trail leads to Joan Point Park, which provides a great vantage point overlooking Dodd Narrows, between Vancouver Island and Mudge Island. The tidal flow creates impressive rapids in the narrows; seals can often be seen playing in the currents. As always, there are some ups and downs and lots of exposed roots and rocks, so sturdy shoes and walking sticks are recommended. The walk duration is about 1.5 to 2 hours.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome, but must be on leash at all times during our group walks.

Coffee: and/or lunch will be at will be at the Crow and Gate pub, 2313 Yellow Point Rd, Nanaimo. If you haven't been, this is a VERY popular pub and well worth the visit. From Cable Bay, head south on Nicola and turn right on Barnes. Follow Barnes/Holden Corso for 2.3 km, then turn left on Woobank Rd. After 1.9 km, turn left onto Cedar Road, and continue left onto Yellow Point Road. The pub will be on your right after about 1.4 km. Total distance is about 6 km from the trailhead.

Cameron Lake

Start time: 9:30 AM from the parking area at Cathedral Grove, MacMillan Provincial Park

Driving directions: Take Highway 4 toward Port Alberni. Continue past the Cameron Lake Picnic Ground to the parking area at Cathedral Grove (about 19.5 km past Hwy 19). Pull in and park on the right-hand side of the road. Total distance from QB is about 22 km and should take about 20 minutes. There are outhouses at the trailhead.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Cathedral+Grove/@49.2911376,-124.6650409,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488f4918ef12d3b:0xe8c21ef30642be2b!8m2!3d49.2911376!4d-124.6628522>

Walk description: 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. At the end of the cabin road we will enter the forest and walk on a trail to see an old wooden trestle high above - then we will turn around and follow the same route back. There will likely be some muddy patches, so wear sturdy waterproof hiking shoes.

Coffee: will be at Creekmore's Coffee Roasting Co. From the trail, head back toward Qualicum Beach, then turn right at Hwy 4A (traffic light at Coombs jct.). Creekmore's will be on the left about 150m up the road.

Colliery Dam, Nanaimo

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking area at Colliery Dam Park in Nanaimo

Driving directions: take Highway 19 through Nanaimo. At Exit 16, turn left on 5th Street. After 800 m, turn right on Wakesiah Ave, and continue 450 m to the parking area at the corner of 6th Street. There are plenty of spaces and washrooms.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Colliery+Dam+Park+-+Parking/@49.1512485,-123.9629674,17z/data=!4m13!1m7!3m6!1s0x5488a3e93aabc74f:0x81cd9d95b39e4488!2sWakesiah+Ave,+Nanaimo,+BC!3b1!8m2!3d49.1622084!4d-123.9610791!3m4!1s0x5488a38cb68b7a77:0x6a6fd8cadd27ad94!8m2!3d49.1514189!4d-123.9611019?hl=en>

Walk description: This is a forest walk in an urban setting. It starts at the Colliery Dam Park in Nanaimo and takes in a portion of the Trans Canada Trail. We'll cover about 4-5 kms in total. This park is one of Nanaimo's larger destination parks popular especially in the summer as a fresh water swimming spot and dog walking destination. The trails through the park are a mix of wide paved sections and unpaved single file trails with exposed rocks and roots. The paved section is a long gradual uphill path. On the way back, there are some steep trails and narrow bridge crossings along the upper dam trail. As usual, we recommend that you wear sturdy hiking shoes, and bring poles or a walking stick if desired. The dam has considerable historic significance; Ted and Darrell will fill us in.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome. The trail around the upper dam is an off-leash area. Please keep dogs on-leash when walking with the group.

Coffee: will be at the Buzz Coffeehouse, 1861 Dufferin Crescent. Head straight north out of the park along Wakesiah Ave to the T-intersection at Bowen Road (2.4 km). Turn left and continue along Bowen Road for 2 km, then turn left on Dufferin (just after McDonald's). The Buzz will be on the left in about 130m. Parking might be limited; additional parking is available across the street at the Country Grocer.



Craig Bay to Pacific Shores Resort, Parksville

Start time: 09:30

Directions/Meeting Place:

We will meet at 9.30am at 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 very small parking lot at the start point. There is also parking available near Serious Coffee. There is not a washroom at the start point.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/NW+Bay+Rd+%26+Franklin's+Gull+Rd,+Parksville,+BC+V9P+2E5/@49.3062381,-124.2625112,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889ab9c8163f9d:0x65cdce040bfcc060!8m2!3d49.3062381!4d-124.2603225?hl=en>

Description:

This walk, approximately 90 minutes long, will take us along a trail to the shore by Craig Bay, then along a short paved road and a well-packed private road before following an estuary trail to Pacific Shores Resort. The trails are fairly level with a few small inclines. If conditions are good, we might do part of the return leg along the beach.

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.

Coffee: will be enjoyed at Serious Coffee at 1209 Island Hwy East in Parksville. From the parking lot, turn right onto 19A, then take the first right into the strip mall and you will see the coffee shop.



Englishman River Falls Provincial Park

Start time: 9:30 AM from the parking lot at Englishman River Falls Provincial Park

Directions:

From Qualicum Beach, follow Memorial Rd (Hwy 4) to Hwy 4A (about 3 km past highway 19). Turn left at the traffic lights. Follow Hwy 4A about 6.5 km, then turn right on Errington Road, and follow it 9 km to the parking lot at the end. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 25 minutes. There are pit toilets at the trailhead.

From Parksville, follow the Alberni Highway (4A) to Errington Road (3 km past highway 19), then turn left and follow Errington Road to the end.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Englishman+River+Falls+Provincial+Park+Parking/@49.2455568,-124.3509151,113m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548891e81b798abf:0xce798071b064d7e1!8m2!3d49.2455566!4d-124.3503682?hl=en>

Description:

This Friday's walk is at the Englishman River Falls 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 wet (fingers crossed). Walking shoes with good treads are required and walking poles might be helpful. Total walking time is about 1.5 hours.

Dogs are welcome on this walk, but for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our walking group activities.

Coffee: will be at the Coombs Country Market ("Goats on the Roof"). From the trailhead, follow Errington Road for about 9 km, then turn left on Alberni Highway (4A). Continue for 4.1 km; the coffee shop will be on your left.

Enos Lake

Start time: 9:30 AM from the trailhead on Powder Point Road, Nanoose Bay.

Driving directions: from Qualicum Beach or Parksville, follow Highway 19 toward Nanaimo. At the PetroCan station, turn left on Northwest Bay Road. After 1.2 km, turn right on Powder Point Road, and continue for 2.4 km. The trailhead and parking area will be on your left. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is 20 to 25 minutes (27 km). There is no toilet at the trailhead.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/2944+Powder+Point+Rd,+Nanoose+Bay,+BC+V9P+9E9/@49.2788435,-124.1655203,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889bc9694e4e3b:0xb0a7f523de017864!8m2!3d49.278843!4d-124.163331>

Walk description: We start off on a very nice forest trail; after about 1 km we intersect a wider trail which takes us past the end of Enos Lake and gives a spectacular view of the lake. We'll follow the trail along the lake and upward to a high point with views of Notch Hill to the west and the Salish Sea and mainland mountains to the northeast. There are some narrow sections, moderate slopes, exposed roots and rocks, and likely some muddy sections given this week's rain. Wear sturdy, water-resistant walking shoes, and bring your poles. We will cover 6 or 7 km, which will take a little over 90 minutes.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on-leash during our group walk.

Coffee: will be at Serious Coffee, 1209 Island Hwy E, Parksville. From the trail, return to the highway 19 and head back toward Parksville. Take the first Parksville exit (exit 46 – Rathtrevor Park), and continue for about 1.5 km. Serious Coffee is in the strip mall on the right.

Grandon Creek

This Friday we will visit explore Grandon Creek and the Little Qualicum River.

Start time: 9:30 am from the Brant Viewing pavilion on the Island Highway near Crescent Rd W.

Driving routes:

The Brant Viewing pavilion is on the Island Highway just west of the intersection with Crescent Rd W, about 600m west of the Shady Rest pub, and 600m east of Laburnam Rd. Here are the google coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/3223+Island+Hwy+W,+Qualicum+Beach,+BC+V9K+2C6>

Walk description: From the parking area, we will head across the highway and up Grandon Creek – a beautiful oasis of green and calm right in town. We'll then follow streets and the bike path over to the Little Qualicum River, and follow it downstream through the forest. Finally, we will cross back over the highway and down to the beach near the Little Qualicum estuary. Keep an eye out for eagles, owls, and other interesting denizens of this area. The walk will take roughly 1.5 hours, and will be partly on pavement and partly on gravel or wood-chip paths. The trail is in good shape, but there are a few exposed tree roots and rocks, so good hiking boots/shoes are recommended.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: Coffee will be at Bailey's at 670 Primrose street, beside the Qualicum Beach library.

Helliwell Park, Hornby Island

This week we will explore Helliwell Park on Hornby Island. Because it takes two ferries to get there, car pooling has been arranged and the walk is limited to confirmed walkers.

Start time: 10:20AM from the parking area at Helliwell Provincial Park

Directions: head north on 19A to the Ferry terminal at Buckley Bay. Leave QB by 8:00AM to arrive at the ferry terminal by 8:30. We will catch the 9:00 ferry to Denman Island. When we arrive at Denman Island, follow the highway to the Hornby ferry terminal and catch the 9:40 ferry to Hornby.

From the ferry, follow Shingle Spit Rd for 2.9 km, then turn right on Central Rd. Continue for 5.9 km, then turn left on St. Johns Point Rd. In 800m, turn right and continue on St. Johns Point Rd for 3.6 km to the park. There is a pit toilet at the trail head.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/search/Helliwell+NW+Outhouse,+Helliwell+Road,+Hornby+Island,+BC/@49.5213415,-124.6044236,16z/data=!3m1!4b1>

Walk description: We will make a counter-clockwise circuit around the park. From the trail head, we will head east toward the coast, then turn right and follow the trail along the beach and bluff to St. Johns Point. We'll then proceed west along the bluff to Mushroom beach, then cut north to get back to the parking area. We will have great views across the Strait of Georgia to Lasqueti and Texada Islands, and may have great close up views of sea lions and other ocean life.

Dogs: are welcome but must be leashed at all times when with the group.

Coffee and lunch: will be at Forage Farm & Kitchen, 5875 Central Rd, Hornby. Return along St. Johns Point Rd to Central Rd; the Forage will be on your left near the intersection.



Judges Row and Heritage Forest

Start time: 9:30 am from the Qualicum Beach Visitor Information Centre

Directions: The Visitor Information Centre is on the beach just west of the intersection of Hwy 19A and Memorial Ave in Qualicum Beach. Memorial Ave is currently closed northbound between Village Way and Crescent, so if you are coming in along Memorial, you will need to detour onto Berwick (at Village Way). There is plenty of parking on the beach side of the highway near the visitor centre.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Qualicum+Beach+Visitor+Information+and+Chamber+of+Commerce/@49.355836,-124.4431778,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548888d42835febb:0x44c58b10c22112da!8m2!3d49.355836!4d-124.440989?hl=en>

Walk description: From the visitor centre, we'll head east along Elizabeth Ave and Judges Row, then climb the wooden stairs at the end of Judges Row and return via the Heritage Forest and Hoylake Road (or Sunningdale). The total distance is 5.5 km; most of it is paved and fairly level. The stairs provide a good workout, and the Heritage Forest woodchip trail does have a few protruding rocks and roots, so wear sturdy walking shoes and bring poles if you wish. The outbound walk offers great ocean and beach views; the return takes us through a very rare and special old-growth forest grove right here in town. Thanks to the work of a group of concerned residents, this forest has been designated a permanent ecological preserve.

Dogs: are welcome but must be leashed at all times when with the group.

Coffee: Coffee, snacks, and/or lunch will be at the Shady Rest, 3109 Island Hwy W, Qualicum Beach. From the trailhead, proceed west up Highway 19A about 1.6 km. The Shady Rest will be on your right.

Laburnum to Whiskey Creek

This Friday we will explore the trails between Laburnum Road and Whiskey Creek.

Start time: 9:30 am from the corner of Claymore Road and Laburnum Road, Qualicum Beach.

Driving routes:

Claymore Road intersects Laburnum just south of the railway tracks, about halfway between Rupert Rd and Highway 19A. Turn east onto Claymore, and park on the non-residential side.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Claymore+Rd+W+%26+Laburnum+Rd,+Qualicum+Beach,+BC+V9K+2T6/@49.3505532,-124.4785863,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548889383a01793f:0xdbdc6d311db13348!8m2!3d49.3505532!4d-124.4763976?hl=en>

Walk description: From Claymore, we'll head up Laburnum and then enter the forest and begin our trek to the cliffs above Whiskey Creek. The trails vary from single file with roots, etc. to historical logging roads wide enough for companionly conversation. We will pause for a brief view over the Salish Sea and North Shore mountains, and then continue through the woods to the cliff edge above Whiskey Creek before heading onward to find our return trail. There is a large (30 cm) log to step over, parts of the trail will be very muddy, and there will be a few non-trivial puddles to cross (an inch or so deep). Waterproof hiking boots are preferred. Poles are optional but helpful at the puddles.

Total distance is a little over 7 km, which will take us between an hour and 45 minutes and 2 hours.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: will be at Bailey's, 670 Primrose St, in downtown Qualicum Beach.

Lake Helen Mackenzie

Start time: 9:30 AM from the Strathcona Park Wilderness Centre (Mount Washington)

Driving directions: follow Hwy 19 west (up-island) to exit 130 and turn left on Strathcona Parkway. After 17 km, turn left onto Nordic Drive and follow the signs for Raven Lodge. Park near the Paradise Meadows trailhead. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 1 hour. There are toilets near the trailhead and near the lunch area midway along the trail.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Paradise+Meadows+Trail,+Comox-Strathcona+C,+BC/@49.7443114,-125.3212324,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548822ff4fcb1d2b:0x99fd147b1b6fb8ff!8m2!3d49.744193!4d-125.3191921?hl=en>

Walk description: This week, we'll take the delightful Paradise Meadows trail past Battleship Lake and Lake Helen Mackenzie. The trail passes through meadows (on boardwalk) and a beautiful forest. There is a bit of elevation gain from the start to the lakes, but the grades are mostly gentle. Total distance is about 9 km, which will take us about 3 hours including a lunch stop. As usual, there are some exposed roots and rocks, so sturdy footwear is a must, and you might want your walking stick.

Bears: Hikers in the park do occasionally encounter bears while hiking, though bears almost always avoid people if they hear us coming. We'll make sure that nobody is walking alone.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on-leash in the park.

Snacks: We will stop for lunch near one of the lakes, so bring your own snacks, sandwiches and drinks. Be sure to bring plenty of water and keep well-hydrated.

Lighthouse Trail (North End)

Start time: 9:30 AM from the end of McColl Road.

This Friday's walk is the north part of the Lighthouse Country Regional Trail. We'll meet at the trail head and the walk begins at 9:30 AM.

Directions:

From the Highway 19A and Laburnum intersection, drive up island towards Bowser for approximately 20 minutes. After you cross the Nile Creek Bridge, turn left onto McColl Road (you will see Island Gospel Church on the corner as you turn). McColl Road is the 4th street past the bridge. Follow McColl Road a short distance to the trail head just past the subdivision.

Walk Description:

We will begin our walk following Nile Creek up to Kings Creek, crossing to the power lines and then loop back to the Lighthouse Trail and eventually back to McColl Road. The route comprises mainly flat trails with some steeper sections. Boots/shoes with good treads and walking poles if you have them are recommended.

Coffee:

Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course. The Arrowsmith Golf Course can be reached off the Island Highway on your way back to Qualicum.

Lighthouse Trail to Thames Creek

Start time: 9:30 am from the end of Linx Road

Driving directions:

Via 19A: follow 19A west past Qualicum Bay. About 14.7 km past Laburnam Road, turn left on Charlton Drive, immediately before the overhead flashing light denoting a 40km/h left turn. After 400m, turn left on Linx Road and follow it to the large turning circle just before the railroad tracks. There is a toilet at the Lighthouse Country trailhead, just past the tracks. Travel time from QB is about 20 minutes.

Via 19: follow Hwy 19 west (up-island) and turn right at exit 75. Follow Horne Lake Road to 19A, then turn left. After 3.8 km, turn left on Charlton Drive and continue as above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/160+Linx+Rd,+Qualicum+Beach,+BC+V9K+1Z3/@49.4170619,-124.6526575,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54886175801520e1:0xb1d111bff0a1cf20!8m2!3d49.4170619!4d-124.6504688?hl=en>

Walk description: This week we will try another walk in the Bowser area. From the parking area, we will head north across Nile Creek, and connect with the north loop of the Lighthouse Country trail. This forest trail takes us to Wildwood Park (where we started last week's walk). From there, we proceed up McColl Road and another forest path to Thames Creek. After crossing the creek, we'll follow it downstream for about 20 minutes through temperate rain forest with awesome old growth trees.

About half of the route is wide and flat (great for conversation); the rest is a narrow forest path with some ups and downs as we go along the creek. There are lots of exposed roots and rocks, so wear sturdy footwear and bring your walking stick (you will use it this time). Distance: 6.5 km, estimated time about 1 hour 45 minutes.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome. Please keep dogs on-leash when walking with the group.

Coffee: will be at The Brew coffee house at Magnolia Court in Bowser. From the hike, return to 19A and turn left (up-island). After 3 km, you will see Magnolia Court on your left. They have coffee, cold drinks, and both sweet and savory snacks.



Linley Park, Ion-Serenity Loop

Start time: 9:30 am from the Burma road entrance to Linley park in Nanaimo

Directions: Follow Hwy 19 southeast from Qualicum Beach to Nanaimo. Turn left onto Aulds Road and continue straight ahead (east) as Aulds road becomes Hammond Bay Road beyond highway 19a. Follow Hammond Bay Road for 5km and turn right at Malspina Road, where you continue for 200m. Take a left on to Laguna Way, and after 350m turn right onto Lost Lake Road. Follow this road for 300m, then turn left on to Burma Road and follow it to the parking area at the end of the road (about 200m).

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/4473-4451+Burma+Rd,+Nanaimo,+BC+V9T+5X4/@49.2249172,-123.9836034,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488a1e0956fb3df:0x336de69d9acb73a9!8m2!3d49.2249452!4d-123.981304>

Walk description: This trail will allow us to explore a hidden urban park in North Nanaimo. The first 40% of the hike takes us through some steeper terrain allowing some views of the Salish Sea. The trail then leads to a wider pathway in the valley bottom for the remainder of the walk. It would be advisable to wear sturdy, waterproof hiking shoes and bring pole(s), as the beginning of the trail has rocky and root covered sections. There is currently no washroom to be encountered during this hike.

Dogs are welcome but must be leashed at all times in the park.

Coffee: Coffee and snacks will be at Serious Coffee in North Nanaimo (6357 Hammond Bay Rd). From the parking area for the hike, retrace your steps downhill to Hammonds Bay Road where you will turn left (West). Follow Hammonds Bay Road 4.3km and turn left on Marlin Way then take your first right.

Little Mountain

Start time: 9:30 am from the bottom of Little Mountain Road (at Bellevue), Parksville

Driving directions:

From QB: take Highway 19 toward Parksville, then take exit 51 toward BC-4A. Turn right on 4A, then immediately (100m) turn left onto Bellevue. In 500m, turn right onto Fair Road and park on the side of the road. We will cross back over Bellevue onto Little Mountain Road.

From Parksville: follow the Alberni Highway west past Highway 19, take the first left onto Bellevue, then proceed to Fair Road as above.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/dir//49.3008584,-124.3360466/@49.301251,-124.3400868,16z/data=!4m2!4m1!3e0?hl=en>

Walk description: This Friday we will walk up 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. Bring your camera for pics of the sweeping vista at the summit.

Special conditions: Be aware of the following conditions and take the measures you deem appropriate.

- **Steep incline:** the ascent up Little Mountain Road is relatively short (about 1 km), but very steep. If you are not in good physical (aerobic) condition, you may wish to skip the climb. Instead, drive your car to the top of Little Mountain Road, park in the small parking lot adjacent to the telecommunications tower, and wait for the rest of the group to arrive. The walkers should arrive within 20-30 minutes.
- **Exposed cliff:** There is a sheer cliff at the top of 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.

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

Coffee: will be at Pheasant Glen Golf Course. Return to Qualicum Beach via 4A or 19, head down Memorial Ave to the round-about, turn right onto Rupert, then right at the sign for the golf course.

Little Qualicum Falls

Start time: 9:30 am from the day-use parking lot at Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park.

Directions: From the roundabout on Memorial Ave, follow Hwy 4 west toward Port Alberni. About 11 km after the roundabout, turn right into Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park, and follow the road all the way to the end (about 1.3 km) and park in the day-use area. There are flush toilets at the parking area.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Little+Qualicum+Falls+Provincial+Park/@49.3160086,-124.5570184,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54888b81f708f44f:0x634f3def9051b399!8m2!3d49.3160051!4d-124.5548297?hl=en>

Walk description: Little Qualicum Falls is one of the true jewels of our neighborhood, with two magnificent waterfalls connected by a deep, waterworn canyon featuring beautiful deep green pools and gurgling cascades. The park was devastated by a windstorm last December, which brought down more than 300 large trees. The damage has been cleared and the park reopened, but there is still dramatic evidence of nature's power. We will cross the river near the lower falls, then walk upstream to a viewpoint at the upper falls. We will continue upstream through an area of wind damage, then cross the river again and return downstream to the starting point. The trail is in good shape, but there are a few sets of steep stairs, and the usual exposed rocks and roots. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring poles if you use them.

Dogs are welcome, but must be leashed at all times in the park.

Coffee: Coffee and refreshments will be at Pheasant Glen Golf Course. Return to Qualicum Beach via Hwy 4. At the roundabout, take the first exit (i.e. turn right) onto Rupert. After 1.5 km, turn right on Qualicum Road, and follow the road to the clubhouse.



Loon Lake

This Friday we will visit Loon Lake, near the Alberni Highway summit.

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking area on the Loon Lake Main logging road.

Driving routes:

Loon Lake is located just past the summit of the Alberni Highway. Head south on the Alberni Highway (Hwy 4) from the roundabout at Memorial Road & Rupert Road for 29 kms. Just over the summit and just past the truck chain up pull off, turn right on the logging road. Drive a few hundred meters to the wide parking area. Driving time from the roundabout is about 25 minutes. Winter tires (snow or M/S) are required for the Alberni Highway as of 1 Oct.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/dir/49.3388414,-124.4421144/49.2512219,-124.7043214/@49.3004808,-124.6837229,11z/data=!4m2!4m1!3e0?hl=en>

Walk description: The Loon Lake area was once a provincial park. It is now part of a logging operation. The lake is stocked and is described as a gem of a fishing hole. From the parking area, we will head along the logging road for a few hundred metres before accessing the trailhead beside the lake. The forested trail around the lake is in good shape, but there are exposed tree roots, slippery leaves and uneven ground in spots so good hiking boots/shoes are recommended. Bring walking poles if you use them. Part of the walk will be along the railway tracks and we will cross a few low (5-15 ft) trestles. The walking distance is approximately 4 km and the walk will be close to 90 minutes.

There are no washroom facilities at the trailhead. There are pit facilities at Cathedral Grove and a port-a-potty at the truck chain up pull off.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks. Because of the trestles, dog owners may want to leave the dogs at home for this walk.

Coffee: Coffee will be at the Coombes Country Market (Goats on the Roof).

Nanoose Bay Trail

This Friday we will explore the forest above Nanoose Bay.

Start time: 9:30 am from the end of Stirrup Place, Nanoose Bay.

Driving routes:

Via 19: Follow Hwy 19 south to exit 46 (Scale), then take 19A back north toward Parksville. Turn right at the first traffic light (Franklin Gull), then right again on Northwest Bay Road. After 4.8 km, turn right on Sanders Road, then left on Saddle Drive. Continue 1.1 km, then turn left on Stirrup Place and continue to the end. Total distance from QB is 24 km (20 minutes). There is no toilet at the trailhead.

Via 19A: Follow Hwy 19A south all the way through Parksville past Serious Coffee. Turn left on Franklin Gull, then right on Northwest Bay Road, and proceed as above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Stirrup+Pl,+Nanoose+Bay,+BC+V9P+9C2/@49.28274,-124.2197049,18z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889a5e6d5260d7:0xb013f71382be49f9!8m2!3d49.2827383!4d-124.2186106>

Walk description: This is a nice forest walk on the high hill behind Nanoose Bay. We will pass through a mixed forest area, including an Arbutus grove, an area being logged, and an area being replanted. There are a few spectacular old firs remaining in this area – who knows for how long. We will have good views of Notch Hill and Nanoose Bay in the first half of the walk. The trail varies from single-track path to wide forest access road suitable for talking. The slopes are moderate, but the narrow portions have the usual exposed roots and rocks, and there will be some wet spots. Wear sturdy shoes with good treads, and bring poles if you use them. Total distance is about 6 km, which should take us about 90 minutes.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: Coffee and/or lunch will be at the Rocking Horse Pub, 2038 Sanders Road, Nanoose Bay. From the trailhead, retrace your path back down Saddle Drive to Sanders Road, then turn left and proceed about 300m to the pub.

Nile Creek

Start time: 9:30 am from the end of Charlton Drive

Driving directions:

Via 19A: follow 19A west past Qualicum Bay. About 14.7 km past Laburnam Road, turn left on Charlton Drive, immediately before the overhead flashing light denoting a 40km/h left turn. Follow Charlton Drive to the end. Park on the side of the road, taking care not to block any driveways. There are no bathrooms at the parking area. The trail head is 20 km (20 minutes) from Qualicum Beach.

Via 19: follow Hwy 19 west (up-island) and turn right at exit 75. Follow Horne Lake Road to 19A, then turn left. After 3.8 km, turn left on Charlton Drive and continue as above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/3900+Charlton+Dr,+Qualicum+Beach,+BC+V9K+1Z3/@49.4182337,-124.6541274,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54886175a0d80a35:0xb3f49035e9fb0b51!8m2!3d49.4182337!4d-124.6519388?hl=en>

Walk description: This week, we'll walk the scenic lower Nile Creek trails for approx. 2 hrs. We follow the creek part way up and then and on the hillside through the woods part way. Then cross the creek and follow it down before climbing up to the ridge for a ways then back to the creek to cross a small bridge to return to the cars. This is a classic walk through the temperate rain forest.

This is mostly a creek-side forest path with some ups and downs as we go along the creek. There are exposed roots and rocks. Footwear with good treads are a must and walking sticks may help. Sticks are available at the trail head for those who want to borrow one. There are some small trees to step over during the walk and one log bridge with a cable handrail.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome. Please keep dogs on-leash when walking with the group.

Coffee: will be at Micky J's at Arrowsmith Golf Course. From the hike, return along 19A toward Qualicum Beach. After 7 km, turn right on Boorman Road. After about 900m, turn left on Fowler Road and follow it to the golf course.

Notch Hill

Start time: 9:30 AM from the Notch Hill Park parking lot, Nanoose Bay

Driving directions: from Qualicum Beach or Parksville, follow Highway 19 toward Nanaimo. At the PetroCan station, turn left on Northwest Bay Road. After 1.2 km, turn right on Powder Point Road, and continue 3.4 km to the Park. The hike and the main parking area are on the right, but there is additional parking across the road on the left. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 25 minutes (30 km).

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Notch+Hill+Park/@49.3045941,-124.2421367,11z/am=t/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889bcfe4cf306b:0x39c76faa77cbe32c!8m2!3d49.2756761!4d-124.1517533?hl=en>

Walk description: The walk is a loop through a Garry Oak ecosystem, with an ascent to the top of Notch Hill. There are two high points with spectacular views across Nanoose Bay and along the coast. The trail is in good condition, but there are some steep sections which can be slippery (especially coming down), so wear good walking shoes and bring walking poles if you have them. Total time on the trail is 70 to 80 minutes.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on-leash during our group walk.

Coffee: and snacks (or beer and lunch) will be at the Fairwinds Bar and Grill at Fairwinds Golf course, 3730 Fairwinds Drive, in Nanoose Bay. Continue down Powder Point / Fairwinds Road 2.3 km past the trailhead. There is a lovely pub menu for those wanting lunch.



Nymph Falls

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking area at Nymph Falls Nature Park (near Courtenay)

Driving directions: take Highway 19 northwest past Courtenay. At Exit 127, turn right onto Piercy Road. After 1.5 km, turn right onto Forbidden Plateau Road. Continue for 3.2 km, then turn left into the parking area at 4481 Forbidden Plateau Road. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 45 minutes. There are washrooms near the parking area.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Nymph+Falls+Nature+Park/@49.6718218,-125.0849248,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548815c5ee2f7463:0x73307cb3c4fd5cb8!8m2!3d49.6718218!4d-125.0827361?hl=en>

Walk description: This is a beautiful forest and river walk along the Puntledge River a few km upstream from the river mouth at Courtenay. We will walk upstream through the forest, then return downstream along the river to the falls. The falls is a series of cascades over flat rocks into deep green pools – it is a popular sunning and swimming spot, so bring your suit! The trail is mostly level, with a few short hills, and has some exposed rocks and roots. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a walking stick if you wish. There are some amazing carvings near the falls.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome and are allowed to be off-leash in some parts of the park. Please keep dogs on-leash when walking with the group.

Coffee: will be at the Wandering Moose in Cumberland. Return along Forbidden Plateau Road, turn left at Piercy, then left again at Highway 19. At exit 117, turn right onto Cumberland Road. Continue for 2.1 km, then turn right onto Dunsmuir Ave. The Moose is one block up on the left (2739 Dunsmuir Ave).



Parksville to Top Bridge

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking area on Industrial Way at Tuan Road, Parksville.

Directions:

Via 19A: Follow 19A south all the way through Parksville and across the Orange Bridge (Englishman River). Immediately after the turnoff for Rath Trevor Park, bear right on Industrial Way. The parking area will be on your right after about 600m.

Via 19: Follow Hwy 19 south to exit 46 (Scale), then take 19A back north toward Parksville. Just before the second traffic light (Resort Way), turn left onto Tuan Rd. After 1 block, you will reach Industrial Way, and the parking area will be directly in front of you.

Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 20 minutes. There is no toilet at the trailhead.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/RDN+Top+Bridge+Trail+Parking+Area/@49.3095993,-124.2725748,17z/am=t/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889ab159f76741:0x235eda9c93b61217!8m2!3d49.3095993!4d-124.2703861?hl=en>

Walk description: The trail winds through the fields and forest behind the industrial park, then follows the Englishman River to the Top Bridge Regional Park. The trail is in good shape, but there are some ups and downs and the usual assortment of roots and rocks, so wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring a walking stick if you wish. The walk duration is about 1.5 hours.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome, but must be on leash at all times during our group walks.

Coffee: will be at Serious Coffee, 1209 Island Highway East, in Parksville. From the parking area, return to the Island Highway via Tuan Rd., then turn right. Serious Coffee will be on your left in about 400m (in the Heritage Centre mall).

Pheasant Glen to French Creek

Start time: 9:30 AM from the top of Qualicum Road

Directions:

From the roundabout on Memorial Rd, follow Rupert Rd E for 1.6 km, then turn right on Qualicum Rd toward the Pheasant Glen Golf Course. After 300m (just before the entrance to the golf course), you will see the parking area on the left side of the road. Travel time from downtown Qualicum Beach is about 5 minutes. There are no toilets at the trailhead.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/984+Qualicum+Rd,+Qualicum+Beach,+BC+V9K+1M5/@49.3370348,124.4219692,18z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54888edf7c08df63:0xaa331d8bb41ee783!8m2!3d49.3370348!4d-124.4208749?hl=en>

Description:

This Friday we will explore the network of trails just east of the Pheasant Glen golf course. The trail passes through a number of different forest environments as it meanders from the trailhead to French Creek (just downstream of Hwy 19), and loops back via Hollywood trail. The trail is mostly gentle and wide, but there are a couple of moderate slopes, and one section is narrow and has a lot of protruding roots and other tripping hazards. Some sections may be muddy. Wear sturdy walking shoes with good treads, and bring poles if you use them. Total distance is 6 km; walking time will be about 1.5 hours.

Dogs are welcome on this walk, but for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our walking group activities.

Coffee: will be at the Pheasant Glen Golf Course, immediately adjacent to the parking area.

QB Beach Front and Heritage Forest

Start time: 9:30 am from the Qualicum Beach Visitor Information Centre

Directions: The Visitor Information Centre is on the beach just west of the intersection of Hwy 19A and Memorial Ave in Qualicum Beach. There is plenty of parking on the beach side of the highway near the visitor centre.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Qualicum+Beach+Visitor+Information+and+Chamber+of+Commerce/@49.355836,-124.4431778,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548888d42835febb:0x44c58b10c22112da!8m2!3d49.355836!4d-124.440989?hl=en>

Walk description: From the visitor centre, we'll head east along Elizabeth Ave and Judges Row, then climb the loooong stairs to Hemsworth, and return via the Heritage Forest, Hoylake Road, and Bay St. The total distance is 5.5 km; most of it is paved and fairly level. The stairs provide a good workout, and the Heritage Forest woodchip trail does have a few protruding rocks and roots, so wear sturdy walking shoes and bring poles if you wish. The outbound walk offers great ocean and beach views; the back stretch takes us through a very rare and special old-growth forest grove. Bay Street provides an awesome view over the straight, then we return to the starting point along the boardwalk.

Dogs: are welcome but must be leashed at all times when with the group.

Coffee: Coffee, snacks, and/or lunch will be at Bailey's, 670 Primrose St, Qualicum Beach. Bailey's is on Primrose, between First and Second Ave. From the trailhead, follow Memorial Ave up the hill to First or Second, then turn right and go one block to Primrose.

Qualicum Beach Exploration

This Friday we will visit explore trails in and around Qualicum Beach.

Start time: 9:30 am from the Qualicum Beach Museum.

Driving routes:

The Museum is right in Qualicum Beach at the corner of Beach Ave and Sunningdale Rd W just across Beach Avenue from the old Railway Station. There is lots of parking in the Railway Station parking lot or along Mill Rd.

Walk description: From the parking area, we will head west along the village railway trail. This first part of the walk is on well-maintained trails and some asphalt. We walk past Grandon Creek trail and continue on to Laburnum Rd. We then cross Laburnum Rd and walk a good trail up a “steepish” but fairly short hill parallel with the road. At the top we cross back over Laburnum and enter a different forest. Keep an eye out for eagles, ravens, owls, and other interesting creatures. We exit the forest onto Arbutus Street and cross over and walk one block down Chestnut street and re-enter a forest. Again, we walk the forest trails until we exit at the Civic Centre and go out onto Jones Street from where it is an easy walk back to the parking area. The walk will take roughly 1.5 hours, and will be partly on pavement and partly on gravel or wood-chip paths. The forest trails are in good shape, but there are couple of muddy spots and exposed tree roots and rocks, so good hiking boots/shoes are recommended.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: Coffee will be at Bailey’s at 670 Primrose street, beside the Qualicum Beach library.

Rathrevor Park, Parksville

Start time: 9:30 am from the day use parking lot at Rathrevor Beach Provincial Park

Driving directions:

Via 19A: Follow 19A south all the way through Parksville and across the Orange Bridge (Englishman River). About 800m after the bridge, turn left at the sign for Rathrevor Park and Resort Dr. At the stop sign, turn left onto Resort Dr, then turn right onto Rathrevor Drive, and follow it to the large day-use parking lot at the bottom of the hill. Washrooms are available at the parking area. Travel time from QB is about 20 minutes.

Via 19: Follow Hwy 19 south to exit 46 (Scale), then take 19A back north toward Parksville. 650m after the second traffic light (Resort Way), turn right following the signs for Rathrevor Park. Turn left onto Resort Dr, then right onto Rathrevor Drive, and continue down the hill to the parking area as above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Rathrevor+Beach+Path,+Parksville,+BC/@49.3213703,-124.2667329,449m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548885342c70a4fb:0x9dbc80a57c07658a!8m2!3d49.3213703!4d-124.2645442?hl=en>

Walk description: The walk will involve a bit of bushwalking, beach walking, and navigation of some muddy areas. We will view residential, temporary and natural habitats! The trail is flat with a few roots but mostly groomed trails and a bit of tarmac! It will take about 70-90 mins. High tide will be at 10AM so much of the beach will be submerged ;-)

Dogs: Dogs are not allowed on the day-use beach at Rathrevor. For further info see <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/rathrevor/>

Coffee: after the walk, we will join our fellow walkers from ONAS for a barbecue at the park. ONAS has reserved a picnic shelter; they have asked us to bring firewood if any of you have a supply. And, of course, bring hot drinks, snacks, and anything that you might like to barbecue for lunch!

Ravensong Forest to Waterfront to QB Town Centre

Start time: 9:30 AM

The meeting place is in the parking lot of the Ravensong Aquatic Centre on Jones Street in Qualicum Beach by the entrance to the off-leash walking trails on the south side of the parking lot.

Walk Description: The first part of the walk is a loop through the Ravensong Forest (Community Woods), then down to the Waterfront via a lookout (Sunset Terrace), along the Waterfront Boardwalk to Memorial Avenue and returning to the Qualicum Beach town centre. The walk will finish at Bailey's on Primrose Street.

The walk on the forest trails will be a combination of gravel and natural trails with some roots. The rest of the walk will be on pavement. There is a steady uphill section from the Waterfront to the town centre. Sturdy walking shoes are recommended. As some of the route will be in the open, a hat, sunscreen and water are advisable. There is a washroom on the Waterfront Boardwalk.

Coffee: Coffee will be at Bailey's at 670 Primrose Street, beside the Qualicum Beach library. Please note that the walk will finish at Bailey's. If you are not staying for coffee, you can return to the Ravensong parking lot via Second Avenue and Jones Street (4 blocks).

Ravensong to Grandon Creek

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking lot for the QB Civic Centre, 747 Jones Street, Qualicum Beach.

Directions: From Qualicum Foods, follow Fern Road West 3 blocks to Jones Street. Cross Jones Street into the parking area, and park at the south end of the parking lot near the off-leash dog park.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Qualicum+Beach+Offleash+Dog+Park/@49.3451118,-124.453001,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x54888ed298234e53:0x8591748f45457473!8m2!3d49.3451118!4d-124.4508123>

Walk description: The exact route will depend on weather and trail conditions, but we will follow trails and streets west toward Laburnum Rd and the Island Highway. We'll return up Grandon Creek and across the Hoylake Trail. We will be partly on trails, and partly on streets. The trails are fairly smooth, but there is a good climb up Grandon Creek. The snow should be all gone by Friday, but some parts of the trails are likely to be wet or muddy. Wear sturdy waterproof walking shoes, bring poles, and take care on the slippery bits. Total distance is about 6 km (90 minutes).

Dogs: are welcome but must be leashed at all times when with the group.

Coffee: Coffee, snacks, and/or lunch will be at Bailey's, 670 Primrose St, Qualicum Beach. The walk will end at Bailey's. After coffee, walk south on Primrose to Fern, then turn right and walk two blocks to return to your car.

Rogers Creek Nature Trail, Port Alberni

Start time: 9:30 AM from trail entrance at 3885 Whittlestone Ave, Port Alberni

Driving 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 at the Visitor Centre. Turn left, following the signs for Bamfield (the Visitor Centre will be on your right). Continue until you are past the hospital (on your left) and then turn left onto San Mateo Dr, then immediately turn left onto Galiano Dr. Follow Galiano until you get to Whittlestone Ave. and turn right. Parking is along the residential street. Travel time is about 45 minutes. There are no washrooms on the hike, so stop at the Visitor Centre if needed.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/dir//49.246068,-124.7838091/@49.2462884,-124.782876,17.5z/data=!4m2!4m1!3e0?hl=en>

Walk description: Rogers Creek Nature Trail (Port Alberni) TRAIL: This is a beautiful hike through the forest and along a Roger creek. Historically, Roger Creek was the source of drinking water in the early days of Alberni. The walk is fairly easy with small hills, some roots, and one uphill section which is not overly strenuous. Good walking shoes and walking poles are recommended. The walk will take about 1 hr 45 minutes including a little break near the old logging bridge on the creek.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must be kept on-leash during our group walk.

Coffee: will be at the Starboard Grill in Harbour Quay overlooking the water. (5440 Argyle St, Port Alberni)

Rosewall Creek

This Friday's walk will take us up scenic Rosewall Creek.

Start time: 9:30 am from the trail head in Rosewall Provincial Park.

Driving directions:

Via 19A: follow Hwy 19A north from Qualicum Beach to Berray Road (26 km from 19A & Laburnam). Turn right on Berray, then left into the park.

Via 19: from Qualicum Beach, head up-island on Hwy 19 to exit 87 (Cook Creek Road). Turn right and proceed to Hwy 19A. Turn left on 19A and proceed to Berray Road (about 2 km).

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Rosewall+Creek+Provincial+Park/@49.4563895,-124.7771054,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488670e0e1fb9f7:0xdfbc154902c89d6!8m2!3d49.4563895!4d-124.7749167?hl=en>

Walk description: This is a beautiful walk up the banks of Rosewall Creek, a crystal-clear creek with a rocky creek-bed, passing through moss-covered forest. The walk is about 6 km and will take 1.5 to 2 hours. The trail is in good shape but does have some challenging sections. There are a few short steep sections; the trail 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. There are a few trees down across the trail, but they are fairly easy to step over. Good hiking boots/shoes are a must and walking sticks are a good idea if you have them.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Coffee: Coffee will be at The Brew coffee house, in the Magnolia Court shopping area at 6996 Island Highway in Bowser, about 8 km back along 19A toward Qualicum Beach from the park.



Schooner Cove to Enos Lake

Start time: 9:30 am from the end of Schooner Cove Drive in Nanoose Bay.

Driving routes:

Via 19A: Follow the Island highway (19A) through Parksville toward Craig Bay. Turn left on Franklin Gull (traffic lights), then right on Northwest Bay Road. After 6.6 km, turn left onto Stewart Road, then after 1.8 km, turn right onto Davenham Road (which becomes Dolphin Road). After about 3 km, turn right on Schooner Cove Drive, and follow it to the parking area and yellow gate at the end.

Via 19: Take the inland highway (19) past Parksville. Turn left onto Northwest Bay Road at the traffic lights (at the PetroCan). After 3 km, take a slight right onto Stewart Road, then continue as above.

By GPS: use 3260 Schooner Cove Drive, Nanoose Bay, or this link:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/3260+Schooner+Cove+Dr,+Nanoose+Bay,+BC+V9P+9H6/>

Walk description: From the parking area, we will head up through a forest setting on a dirt trail and past one end of Enos Lake. The trail has some charming sights, including a boot-shaped tree trunk, a little forest bridge, and a tiny creek. We will walk in the forest on beautiful trails for about 45 minutes, then we will loop past a meadow and back to near where our cars are parked. We will continue past our cars along Redden Road to the Schooner Marina and over to the little park at the Marina overlooking the ocean, then walk back to our cars. The total hike should take about 1 1/2 hours. There are some exposed rocks and roots along the trail, so sturdy hiking shoes are recommended.

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Refreshments: Coffee and snacks (or beer and lunch) will be at the Fairwinds Bar and Grill at the club house at Fairwinds Golf course, 3730 Fairwinds Drive, in Nanoose Bay. It is about 3 minutes drive from where we are parked for the hike. We will be in the area to the right of the Bar and Grill, which is open to the restaurant and overlooks the golf course. There is a lovely pub menu for those wanting lunch.

Sleeman's Bridge

Start time: 9:30 am from Wildwood Community Park in Bowser.

Driving directions:

Via 19A: follow 19A west past Qualicum Bay. About 16.8 km past Laburnam Road, turn left on McColl Rd (follow signs for Wildwood Community Church; Island Gospel Centre is on the corner). Follow McColl past the railroad tracks to a small parking area on the left (about 350m). If the parking is full, you can park on McColl just north of the tracks. There are no bathrooms at the parking area or on the trail. Travel time from Qualicum is about 20 minutes.

Via 19: follow Hwy 19 west (up-island) and turn right at exit 75. Follow Horne Lake Road & Kenmuir to 19A, then turn left. After 6.2 km, turn left on McColl Road and continue as above.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Lighthouse+Country+Regional+Trail+NORTH+LOOP/@49.4279434,-124.6675997,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x548861f29dde6975:0xf8f3723d953d57d9!8m2!3d49.4279434!4d-124.665411?hl=en>

Walk description: This week's walk is a very nice excursion through the forest behind Bowser, with two creek crossings on Thames Creek. There is an interesting juxtaposition of older trees with younger, second or third-growth forest. Much of the trail is wide enough for conversation, but there are also single-file sections. One creek crossing has a steep descent and ascent, but otherwise the trail is quite level. There will be some deep puddles, and the usual protruding roots and rocks, so wear sturdy waterproof walking shoes and bring a walking stick if you wish. Total distance: 7 km. Estimate time: 1 hour 45 minutes.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome. Please keep dogs on-leash when walking with the group.

Coffee: will be at The Brew coffee house at Magnolia Court in Bowser. From the hike, follow McColl back to 19A, then turn left (up-island). After 1 km, you will see Magnolia Court on your left. They have coffee, cold drinks, and both sweet and savory snacks.



The Abyss, Nanaimo

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking area at the Trans Canada Trailhead on Harewood Mines Road in Nanaimo. This will be a 2 to 2½ hour hike along Extension Ridge and will cover about 5.5 kms.

Driving directions: take Highway 19 through Nanaimo. At Exit 16, turn left on 5th Street. After 800m, turn right on Wakesiah Ave, then turn right onto Nanaimo Lakes Road. After 2.9 km, make a sharp left onto Harewood Mines Road. After 600 m, you will see the trailhead parking area on the right side of the road as you pass under the powerline. Travel time from QB is about 45 minutes.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/1121+Harewood+Mines+Rd,+Nanaimo,+BC+V9R+5W9/@49.1333417,-123.9702954,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488a47c896393a5:0xbb45d61565050406!8m2!3d49.1333417!4d-123.9681066?hl=en>

Walk description: This is a forest walk along Extension Ridge offering spectacular views of Nanaimo's waterfront. It features "The Abyss", an unusual rift on an exposed meadow of conglomerate rock, and a quirky peculiar rock circle. There is a short steep climb on rough stairs to the ridge and then an undulating ridge top hike on a trail with exposed roots, loose gravel and large conglomerate rocky patches. Sturdy hiking shoes, poles and water are recommended.

Dogs: Dogs are welcome but must remain on-leash when walking with the group. The trail is also used by mountain bikers and other hikers.

Coffee: will be at the Buzz Coffeehouse, 1861 Dufferin Crescent. Follow Nanaimo Lakes Road back to Wakesiah Ave. Turn left, and follow Wakesiah Ave to the T-intersection at Bowen Road (2.4 km). Turn left and continue along Bowen Road for 2 km, then turn left on Dufferin (just after McDonald's). The Buzz will be on the left in about 130m. Parking might be limited; additional parking is available across the street at the Country Grocer.

Top Bridge along Englishman River

Start time: 9:30 am from Top Bridge Suspension Bridge

Driving routes:

Via 19A: Follow the Island highway (19A) through Parksville, and continue to the 4-way stop at the weigh scales just past Highway 19. Continue straight through the intersection, take the first right on Chattell Road, and follow it past the firing range to the parking lot at the end.

Via 19: Take the inland highway (19) past Parksville to exit 46 (Rathtrevor Park). After the exit, turn right at the stop sign onto Kaye Road, then right again on Chattell Road, and follow it to the end.

Google map coordinates: <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/PQFG+Henry+Range/@49.2981729,-124.260454,17z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x54889abcfc734807:0x4b27cbbabad9e44e!8m2!3d49.2992051!4d-124.2606396?hl=en>

Walk description: From the parking area, we will cross the Top Bridge pedestrian suspension bridge, and proceed south on the Allsbrook Trail, an easy level wide gravel path that goes upstream to the picnic area at the historic Steelhead spawning area and then on to the hydro lines. We then loop back on forest path closer to the river. This will be single file in some areas with the usual care required for roots, rocks, logs, etc. Although there is little elevation change on this walk, good sturdy walking shoes are recommended. It will probably be warm, so don't forget water, hats and sunscreen!

Dogs are welcome but, for the comfort and safety of all, must be kept on leash during our group walks.

Refreshments: Coffee and snacks will be at Serious Coffee in Parksville. Exit the way you came in. Turn left at Kaye, then go straight through the 4-way stop and continue along Highway 19A about 1.3 km toward Parksville. Serious Coffee is on the right just past the traffic light at Franklin's Gull.

Westwood Lake, Nanaimo

Start time: 9:30 am from the parking lot at Westwood Lake park.

Directions: Follow Hwy 19 southeast from Qualicum Beach to Nanaimo. Continue through the lights at Auld's Road, Mostar, and Northfield, then turn right at Jingle Pot Road (exit 18). After about 500m, turn left on Westwood Road and follow it to the park (about 1.5 km). Go past the first (paved) parking lot, and park in the unpaved lot near the children's play structure. There is a washroom at the park. Travel time from Qualicum Beach is about 40 minutes.

Google map coordinates:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Westwood+Lake+Park/@49.164143,-124.0032368,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x5488a3a5b1466b47:0x5bfcdb006acbbabf!8m2!3d49.1641395!4d-124.0010481?hl=en>

Walk description: Westwood Lake Park is one of Nanaimo's best loved parks, nestled in the foothills of Mt. Benson. We will follow the 6 km trail around the lake, which should take about 90 minutes. The trail is well groomed and, apart from a steep knoll near the east end of the lake, is considered an easy walking trail. There are a few exposed rocks and roots, so sturdy walking shoes are recommended.

Dogs are welcome, and there is a dog off leash area on the hydro easement on the far side of the lake. Dogs must be leashed along the main chip trail within the park.

Coffee: will be at The Buzz Coffee House, 1861 Dufferin Crescent, Nanaimo. From the park, follow Westwood Road to the T intersection at East Wellington. Turn right, cross over the highway, and take the first left onto Madsen. At the roundabout, turn right on Dufferin. The Buzz will be on your right.