

# EAST SOOKE Regional Park

## East Sooke boasts an active past

Coast Salish people (the *T'Sou-kes*) reef-netted salmon around Becher Bay, and collected shellfish, berries and roots for winter months spent at Pedder Bay. Spanish explorer Manuel Quimper first entered Sooke Inlet in 1790, but within five years all lands north of the Strait of Juan de Fuca became British. Three years later, Vancouver Island was granted to the Hudson Bay Company, under the direction of its chief factor, James Douglas. The late 1800s were busy years in East Sooke: large sailing ships and dugout canoes ran supplies to and from Fort Victoria, and a steam-powered sawmill provided lumber for the small community.

Within what is now East Sooke Regional Park, loggers, miners and fishers sought their fortune. In the heart of the park, loggers selectively harvested trees. Stumps 2–3 metres in diameter hold clues to the era of the springboard, axe and crosscut saw. At Iron Mine Bay and Mount Maguire, copper and iron were mined on and off for nearly 100 years. The quality and amount of ore, however, were limited, and never led to significant commercial success. Fishers reaped the richest bounty. From spring to early autumn, fish traps were secured in the sea bed. The trap shack at Cabin Point is solitary witness to those days.



Capital Regional District Parks

## How To Get There

East Sooke Regional Park is located on the East Sooke Peninsula, 35 kilometres west of Victoria.

To reach the park, take the Old Island Highway to Sooke Road. Follow Sooke Road (#14) to Gillespie Road, turn left and continue down Gillespie Road. Turn right on East Sooke Road to reach the park entrances at Anderson Cove and Pike Road, or turn left to reach the park entrance at Aylard Farm.

Allow approximately 60 minutes driving time from downtown Victoria.

## A Message to Park Visitors

CRD Parks belong to you. Park regulations exist so residents and visitors will always be able to enjoy and appreciate protected natural landscapes.

### To help preserve parks for everyone to enjoy, obey all signs and:

- carry out any litter
- respect adjacent private property
- keep dogs under control
- pick up your dog's droppings and deposit in garbage cans or pack out

### To protect your parks, the following are prohibited:

- bicycles, horses and motorized vehicles on park trails
- firearms and hunting
- alcohol consumption
- camping and open fires
- removal of any natural/cultural objects from park

Phone 1-800-663-5555 to report wild fires

## What's Happening in CRD Parks?

Find out more about CRD Parks in the brochure **Parks for All Seasons**, or . . . Dial 474-PARK for 24-hour access to nature house hours, nature walks, and special park events. Or find us on the Web at [www.crd.bc.ca/parks](http://www.crd.bc.ca/parks)



### Capital Regional District Parks

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*West Coast wilderness awaits you at East Sooke Regional Park. Experience it as you hike along the windswept rocky coast, over dry hilltops, through dark rain forest to sheltered coves.*

**East Sooke's Coast Trail** is considered one of the premier day hikes in Canada, a west coast wilderness experience within easy reach of the city. The 10-kilometre trail is rough and winding, a challenging 6–8 hour trip even for experienced hikers. One moment you travel across a bluff of windswept pines, the ocean crashing at your feet. Next you enter a dark rainforest at the end of a ravine. Turn a corner, and you're back in sunlight, at the edge of the sea.

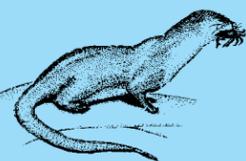
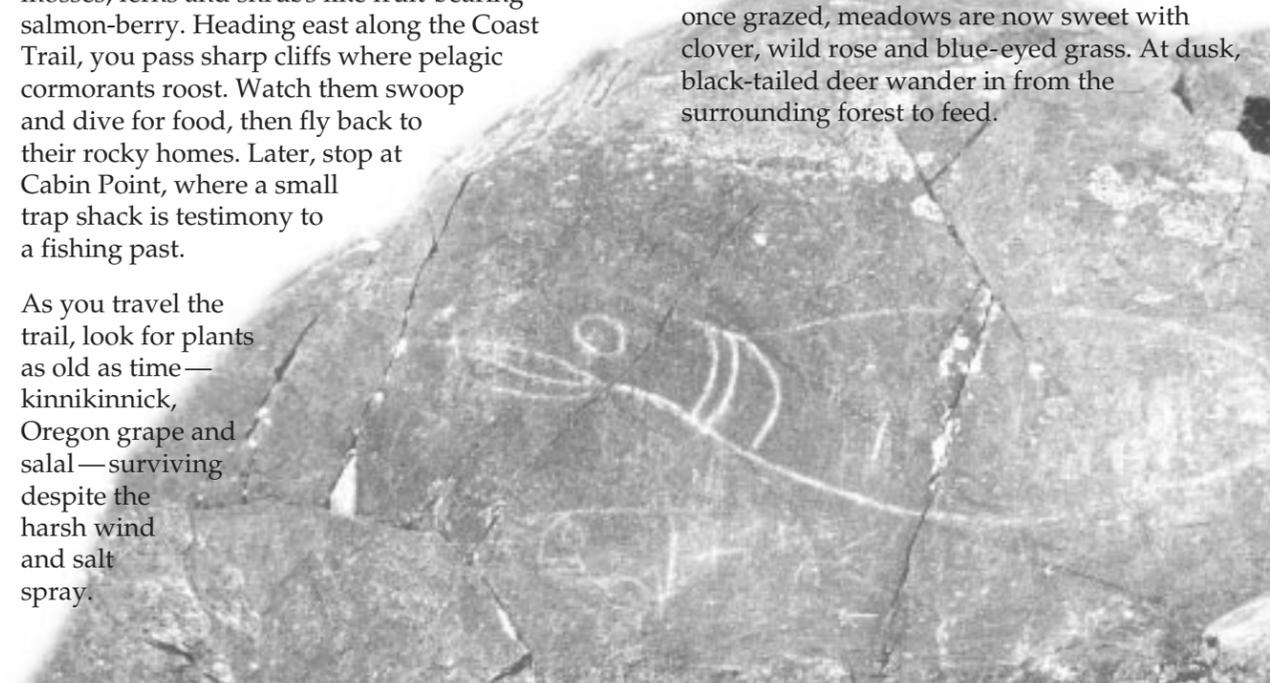
Begin your hike at Pike Road, and take the trail to Iron Mine Bay. The forest is thick with Douglas-fir, western hemlock, and closer to shore, Sitka spruce. The route to the small, horseshoe-shaped bay is lush with mosses, ferns and shrubs like fruit-bearing salmon-berry. Heading east along the Coast Trail, you pass sharp cliffs where pelagic cormorants roost. Watch them swoop and dive for food, then fly back to their rocky homes. Later, stop at Cabin Point, where a small trap shack is testimony to a fishing past.

As you travel the trail, look for plants as old as time — kinnikinnick, Oregon grape and salal — surviving despite the harsh wind and salt spray.

Continue east to Beechey Head. Here the wild and beautiful coastline is marked by jagged bluffs, a reminder of the ageless struggle between land and sea. Beechey Head is also a well-known site for observing the annual fall hawk migration.

Feel the presence of the Coast Salish people at Alldridge Point, designated as a Provincial Heritage Site in 1927. Here you'll see petroglyphs bruised into the rock, a style particular to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Near the end of the Coast Trail is Creyke Point, a rocky headland of unusual shapes against emerald green water.

Your hike ends at Aylard Farm. A heritage apple orchard and cleared pasture are all that remain of the last settlement. Where livestock once grazed, meadows are now sweet with clover, wild rose and blue-eyed grass. At dusk, black-tailed deer wander in from the surrounding forest to feed.



**East Sooke Regional Park** encompasses 1422 hectares

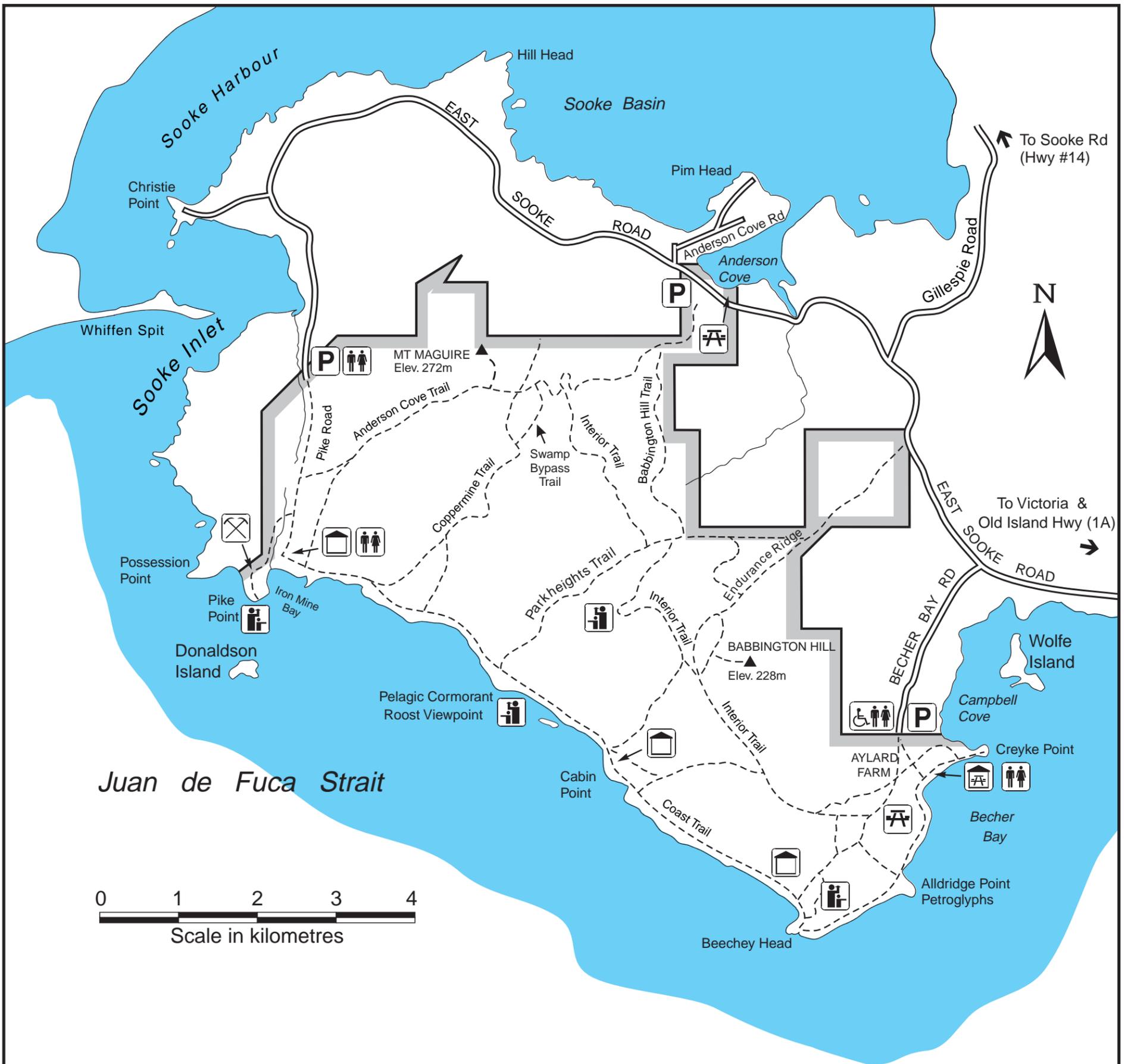
(3512 acres) of natural and protected coastal landscape. In this wilderness park, you'll experience solitude and harmony with nature.

Over 50 kilometres (31 miles) of trails draw you into the timeless beauty of East Sooke. Begin your exploration at one of three entry points:

**Aylard Farm** is popular with picnickers, and those looking for easy excursions. A 5-minute walk through open fields leads to a pocket beach where you can discover intertidal life, or watch river otters scurrying across the sand. Trails head inland to hilltop views, or along the rugged Coast Trail.

**Anderson Cove**, on the Sooke Basin, is the starting point for hikers heading to Babbington Hill and Mount Maguire. On these hilltops, bald eagles, turkey vultures, and red-tailed hawks join you for sweeping views of the Olympic Peninsula.

**Pike Road** is the most westerly access to the park, and to the Coast Trail. An old logging road winds through forest to meadow and beach. Here, at low tide, look for periwinkles, goose neck barnacles and purple sea stars...but do not remove!

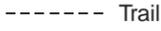


## Be Prepared for Wilderness

East Sooke is one of the most spectacular parks in the region, attracting those looking for challenging hikes in a wilderness setting. This attraction can also be a danger. The mystical pull of East Sooke — sharp cliffs wrapped in mist, crashing waves, sudden tides — are all natural hazards, especially if you're unprepared.

To ensure your hike in East Sooke Regional Park is safe and enjoyable, remember these important hiking tips:

-  Know the trails — read maps, brochures and information panels.
-  Leave enough time to return before dark.
-  Don't hike alone.
-  Let someone know where you are going and when you will be back.
-  Stay on designated trails.
-  If lost, stay calm, make yourself visible and stay where you are until help arrives.
-  Winter hiking can be hazardous. Some inland trails can become submerged after heavy rains. Trails on rocky ledges are very slippery.

LEGEND	
	Old Mine Site
	Viewpoint
	Trail
	Park Boundary
	Picnic area
	Group Picnicking
	Shelter
	Parking
	Toilets
	Toilets (accessible)