

PQBWMA & Nearby Inland Areas

BIRD TRAIL

Spotted Sandpiper by Dave Erickson

This **Bird Trail** has been designed for people to enjoy and learn about birds found along the coastal Parksville-Qualicum Beach Wildlife Management Area and nearby inland areas on Eastern Vancouver Island. The eight locations listed are known to be birding "hot spots" during the spring bird migration and the Brant Wildlife Festival. The bird trail can be started at any point you wish!



Photo by Fern Fennell

Tip 1: For coastal locations, the best time to see birds is during or close to low tide when birds are drawn to exposed feeding areas along the shore. Upland birds: best viewing time is early morning.

Tip 2: Check the weather and dress appropriately. Sturdy shoes are recommended.

Tip 3: For a much better viewing experience, a pair of adequate binoculars is helpful (8 x 42 binoculars recommended).

Tip 4: A field guide for birds for Southwestern BC or a bird ID app such as <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/> can be very helpful.

Tip 5: Stick to the trails and be respectful of vegetation, wildlife and private property. Note: Dogs are not allowed off leash in Wildlife Management Areas or on local beaches. During March and April - the prime bird migration period - no dogs, even on leash, are allowed on the beaches. Steep fines are levied.



Bird Trail Guide

Bird Trail - listed from east to west

- 1. Rathrevor Provincial Park** (washrooms, picnic areas) - Two observation spots:
 - Beach: Park in Parking lot #1 and walk trail to the beach.
 - "Brant Point:" Follow walking trail north to the Brant Point viewing area.

- 2. Englishman River Estuary** - Two entry points with trails that offer different perspectives:
 - Plummer Road: Walk through native vegetation along estuarine marsh. Raised viewing stand.
 - Shelly Road: Walk through beautiful forest, along the river and on to spectacular estuary views.

- 3. Parksville Community Park** (washrooms, arboretum, playground, picnic areas):
 - Drive along the beach to the end (near labyrinth), park in the small lot to the right. View Parksville Bay and glimpse the west edge of the Englishman River Estuary.

- 4. Silver Meadows Farm** - (pond, fields, trees, and fresh produce)
 - 1019 Errington Road. Park in front of the fresh produce store. Views of a large pond and expansive fields with spectacular Mt. Arrowsmith in the background. Trumpeter Swans *might* be seen.

Note: Working farm. View ONLY from the parking lot. Do not wander around fields.

- 5. North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre** (admission fee, www.niwra.org, washrooms, gift shop)
 - 1240 Leffler Road. This renowned wildlife rehabilitation facility houses 35+ non-releasable native raptors, other birds and wildlife for educational purposes. See eagles, owls, falcons, vultures, and more!

- 6. French Creek Estuary & Marina** (washroom, fresh seafood outlet, pub) - Two observation spots:
 - Estuary side to the left (west): Creek and estuary views. Parking fee/some free spaces.
 - Marina side to the right (east): Drive past marina. Just past the seafood building turn left down a narrow road, pass DFO office and park on east side of marina. Birds and Sea Lions.

- 7. Seaside Nature Park** (public washrooms along Hwy. 19A near Qualicum Beach Visitor centre)
 - A lovely pavilion nestled within a native plant garden offers all-weather viewing. Informational signage and Qualicum First Nations artwork enhance the visit. Spectacular views of islands and the mainland provide a backdrop for viewing birds. Black Oystercatchers frequent this area.

- 8. Little Qualicum River Estuary** - Two observation spots:
 - Estuary: Head down Surfside Drive and park to observe birds in the estuary to the left (south). Great Blue Heron are often seen here during low tide.
 - Seashore: Continue to small parking lot on right at end of the road for seabird viewing.

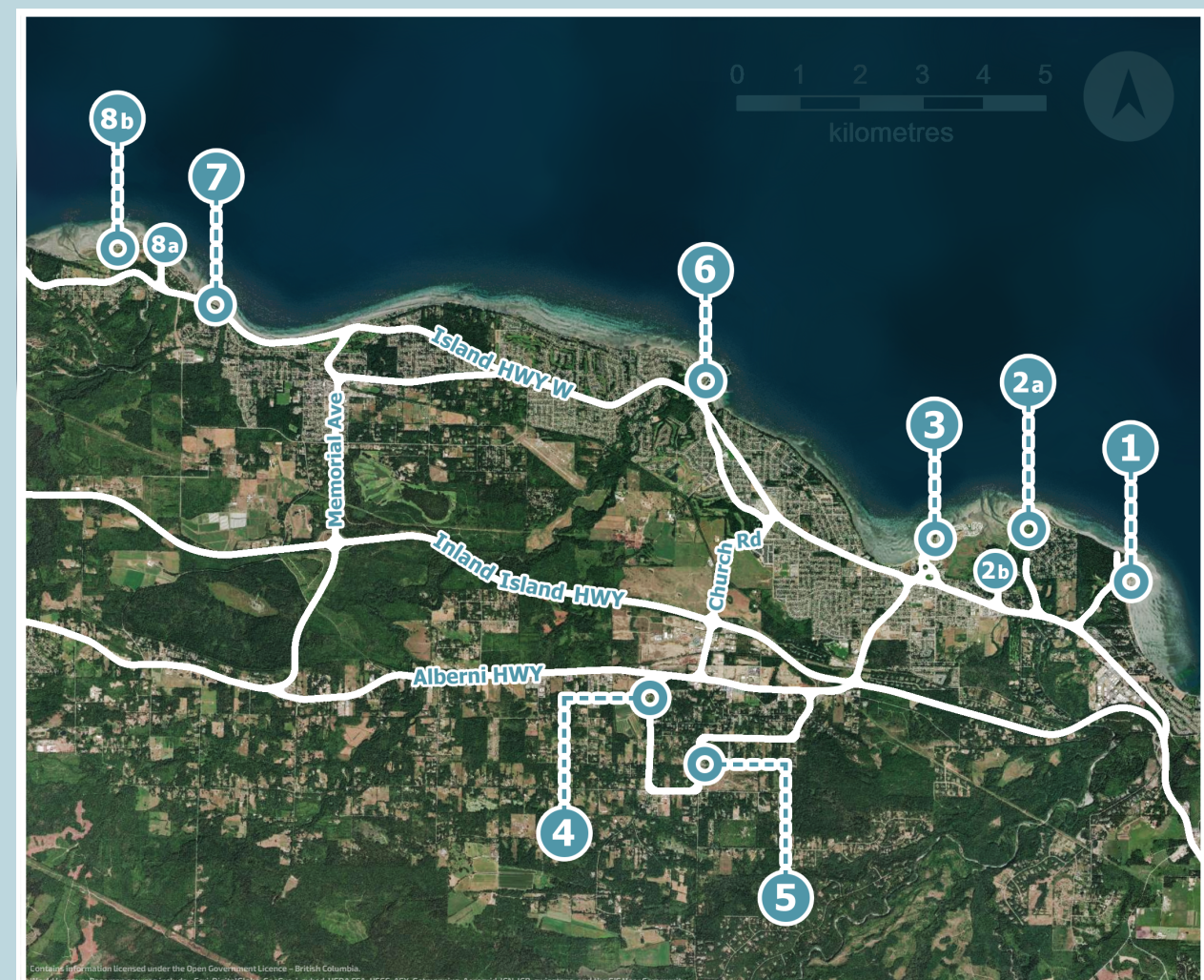


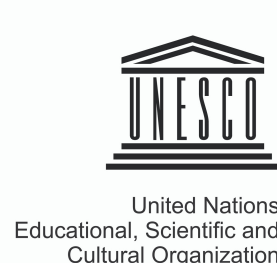
Photo by Fern Fennell



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BRANT WILDLIFE FESTIVAL



For more information:

Arrowsmith Naturalists & Downloadable Bird Checklist: <http://arrowsmithnats.org>

Brant Wildlife Festival & Downloadable Bird Trail: <https://brantfestival.bc.ca>

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Arrowsmith
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