

ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS Atlas















SAANICH'S ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS ATLAS

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgements

As with the first (1999) and second edition (2003), there are many individuals and agencies to thank for updating this atlas.

Saanich Environmental Services would like to thank the GIS section of the Engineering Department for supporting a student GIS technician and providing the technical oversight to this revised edition.

Past external funding and support was received by the Real Estate Foundation of BC, the Urban Salmon Habitat Program, the Provincial Ministry of the Environment, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund.

Suppliers of Data:

- Conservation Data Centre (2011)
- CRD Natural Areas Atlas (2011)
- Environment Canada (2011)
- Ministry of Environment (2011)
- District of Saanich Engineering Department (2003, 2011)
- Wildlife Tree Stewardship Initiative (2011)
- Veins of Life Watershed Society (2003)
- Cascadia Biological Services (2003, 2011)

Welcome to the 2011 Third Edition!

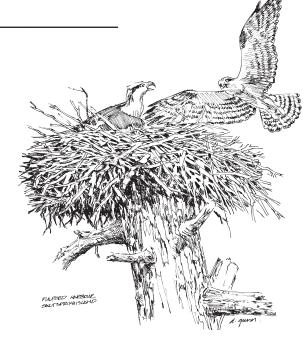
Saanich Environmental Services is very pleased to present the 3rd edition of the Environmentally Significant Areas Atlas. The information will also be accessible on the Saanich website for the first time. As well as more current data, there are also three new layers: bird sanctuaries, wildlife trees, and significant trees.

Register Now!

Be sure you are on our list if you want to keep your atlas current. Register your atlas with Adriane.pollard@saanich.ca or call 475-5494, ext. 3556. Similarly, you are encouraged to use this contact information to register any errors you notice while using the atlas or suggest new data sources.

Cover Graphics:

Beacon Hill Communications designed the cover and title page.



What does Environmentally Significant mean?

To be included in the ESA atlas, data must be from a comprehensive environmental inventory using technically acceptable standards. Not all features in this atlas are protected. For more information about Saanich's environmental bylaws and policies, please see the brochure "Protecting the Environment in Saanich", available at the Municipal Hall. Features that are specifically protected will be shown in environmental development permit areas and associated atlases.

Not everything that is environmentally significant will ever be shown on maps. This atlas should be used as a flagging tool and should not be used in place of individual site assessments.

WHAT IS IN THE ATLAS?

Provincial and Federal Data:

Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI)

The SEI was collected by the Ministry of Environment and Environment Canada. There are seven types of Sensitive Ecosystems and they are considered fragile or rare. Two additional ecosystem types are included in the inventory—Older Second Growth Forest and Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Field—because of their contribution to biodiversity. Not all SEI polygons have been ground-truthed and the inventory is known to be incomplete. The District of Saanich has modified the 2002 version of SEI mapping to remove some areas lost to development.

First Published: 1998. Last Revision: 2002.

Conservation Data Centre Rare Plants, Animals, & Plant Associations

The best way to obtain data on these locations is to use the Conservation Data Centre (CDC) website mapping tool or contact the CDC directly. Some CDC rare plant and animal locations were purposefully excluded from this atlas because they are known to be extirpated, or they have not been seen for decades and their exact location is not known. *First Published: 1992. Last Revision: 2009.*

Wildlife Tree Areas (WiTS)

Wildlife tree data was supplied by the Wildlife Tree Stewardship initiative. The information is current as of 2011. This layer is by no means exhaustive, as new nests are found regularly. For the most up-to-date wildlife tree mapping information visit http://www.wildlifetree.org.

Federal Bird Sanctuaries and Ecological Reserves

The Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary extends into Saanich waters along the Gorge and Portage Inlet. The Ten Mile Point Ecological Reserve is located in Cadboro Bay. Data was provided by the Capital Regional District.

Aquifers (separate insert)

Aquifer data was obtained from the Ministry of Environment. The aquifer boundaries are general "administrative" boundaries created from limited data sources. They may be inaccurate and may not line up with geological mapping or existing landforms. Site specific information should be independently verified. Because of the scale of the aquifers, they are shown on an individual map at the beginning of the atlas. Last revision: 2007.

Municipal Data:

Marine Feature Key and Areas

These are ecological features mapped during the 1990-2000 marine inventory conducted by Veins of Life Watershed Society and Saanich Environmental Services. Typical areas include kelp beds, eel grass beds, pocket beaches, and isolated stands of mature trees. Exact data can be obtained from Saanich Environmental Services.

Backshore Units

Backshore units classify the backshore area based on their land use and bio-physical characteristics using enhanced SHIM standards. This was mapped during the 1999-2000 marine inventory conducted by Veins of Life Watershed Society and Saanich Environmental Services. The depth of the backshore unit was assessed visually.

Marine Biodiversity Areas

These are ecological features located just offshore mapped during the 1990-2000 marine inventory conducted by Veins of Life Watershed Society and Saanich Environmental Services. Biodiversity areas were recorded wherever there was a marked increase in the abundance and variety of species found in a concentrated area. Exact data can be obtained from Saanich Environmental Services.

Natural State Covenants

These are properties, or portions of properties, that have entered a legal agreement that is permanently registered against the property. Covenants have been used in Saanich since 1995 to protect plants and natural features that may be otherwise negatively impacted by development.

Significant Trees

Significant Trees are trees which are protected under Schedule "B" of the Tree Preservation Bylaw, 1997, Amendment Bylaw, 2009, No. 8977. The trees have importance to the community for heritage, landmark value, or as wildlife habitat.

Saanich Wetlands

These wetlands were recorded in Saanich where the Provincial Significant Ecosystem Inventory was found to be incomplete, requiring supplementation.

Watercourses and Waterbodies

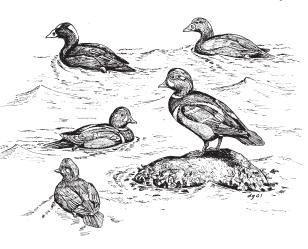
Watercourses are defined under the Watercourse Bylaw as meaning a river, stream, creek, waterway, lagoon, lake, spring, swamp, marsh or other natural body of fresh water; or a canal, ditch, reservoir or other man-made surface feature in which water flows constantly, intermittently or at any time.

Culvert Sections

Watercourses in culverts and pipes come from Saanich Engineering's planimetric data.

Watersheds (separate insert)

Watersheds are approximate representations of the flow of water in an area. In most cases, water flows downhill into the nearest creek or river. Watershed information was compiled using Saanich contour maps. Because of the scale of the watersheds, they are shown on an individual map at the beginning of the atlas.



Marine Backshore Units	
Code	Description
NNB	natural rock faces, boulders and bluffs
NEC	erosion control measures (rip rap, erosion cloth and blocks, gabion baskets, retaining walls)
NUG	garden/domestic land and other small-scale agricultural crops (<5 ha)
NUL	landscaping and/or cultivated lawn (may be non-native spp) (residential areas, golf courses, parks)
NHR	high stability man-made surfaces (roads, sidewalks, parking lots, other concrete surfaces)
NLR	low stability man-made surfaces (dirt and gravel roads; hiking, biking, horseback riding trails)
NUD	undeveloped (may include native and non-native vegetation)
VBF/VBFv	>80% broadleaf forest (v=veteran trees present)
VMF/VMFv	mixed forest (v=veteran trees present)

Codes are based on the SHIM (Sensitive Habitat Inventory and Mapping) methods.

