Welcome to Mount Douglas Park

Mount Douglas Park is a large forest surrounded by residential and agricultural land that provides recreation and education opportunities for many visitors. This large forest and the historical First Nations presence makes the park significant to our area and warrants its protection and preservation. Archaeological surveys since the 1990s have uncovered “culturally modified” artifacts, remnants of shell middens and a First Nations burial site.

This land was established as a Government Reserve by Sir James Douglas in 1858. On September 30, 1889 the land was transferred to the City of Victoria and named Mount Douglas Park. The park was transferred to Saanich in 1992, and the spirit and intent of the original Crown Grant of 1889 was expanded in the Mount Douglas Park Charter which states:

“...reserved in perpetuity for the protection and preservation of the natural environment for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of the public... so that the whole will continue as a wilderness preserve for generations to come.”

Habitat Zones

Coastal Zone
Bas the most rolling and mixed veal valley of the Park. On the eastern shore we experience small lowland wading rocks, while the western side is a series of lower small wetlands and the lower slopes. Approximately 70% of the area is designated as a biological pan.”

Lower Forest
Here a dense, lush canopy consisting of Douglas fir, hemlock, western red cedar and a diverse understory. Douglas fir cover the most of the forest floor throughout the park. The understory is dominated by a variety of trees, shrubs and ferns.

Upper Forest
Provides a diverse and rich mix of forest vegetation. The main species are red alder, hemlock, and tanoak. The understory is dominated by a variety of trees, shrubs and ferns.

Garry Oak Rock Outcrop
Provides a unique and diverse species of Garry oak and shrubs such as the cow parsnip, the native California poppy, the California goldenrod, and the California lupine.

Preservation Challenges
The popularity of the park demands on the various ecosystems throughout the park. There is a need to establish a balance between preserving the Park as a natural ecosystem while providing access for outdoor recreation and resource appreciation. The primary method of visiting the balance is through established well-designed trails and encouraging visitors to stay on the marked trails.

On-going restoration by Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society with Saanich Parks includes removal of invasive plants and replacement with native species.

Stream Channel Restoration and Stewardship Projects
Long ago Douglas Creek was a salmon bearing stream, but surrounding urbanization altered the creek’s natural flow and its ability to provide aquatic habitat. A long-term restoration project involving bank stabilization, new spawning pools, and riparian vegetation planting has returned the creek to its former salmon bearing status. In addition, this has provided wonderful opportunities for participation and environmental education for the public.

Park Wildlife
With a wide variety of bird and animal you wander through the different habitat zones. You might see elk and other shore birds in the coastal zones; bald eagles and turkey vultures are often seen soaring above the summits. Throughout the Park, you are likely to encounter bald eagles, osprey, kestrel, hawks, falcon, and many small birds. Park animals are shy, but they are there. Be patient and observant and you could see deer, raccoons, rabbits, squirrels, and even mice often.

“Churchill Challenge”
As encouragement to those walking Church Drive to the summit, stone markers are placed hourly (2.5 km) along the road. Each shows the distance from metro station at lower parking lot and the current elevation.

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