

Strathcona Park Wilderness Code

By practicing this set of SEVEN guidelines you will minimize your impact and protect the park for future generations.

1 – PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

Research The Area: Questions to ask yourself.

- Last time a bear was spotted in this area?
- Are fires/fishing permitted?
- Are there any hazards I should be aware of?

Ask For Information: Great resources to learn more about your trip!

- Visitor Centres, Outdoor Stores
- BC Parks/SWI Websites
- Pamphlets, Maps, Books (Library)

Prepare Your Food:

- Pack light-Pack dried! Food is one of the best places to reduce your pack weight.
- Battle dehydration! Bring foods that contain electrolytes.
- Your diet shouldn’t change when you hike. Don’t try a new type of diet while hiking.
- Find out how many calories you will burn and plan accordingly.
- Cater to your cravings! Don’t forget some treats.
- Leave the garbage at home! Repackage all your food into resealable bags.

Bring the Right Clothes: Three-layer system!

- **Wicking Layer:** Wick the sweat away to regulate your temperature. The best is polypropylene.
- **Insulating Layer:** Easily added and removed as your body temperature rises and falls. The best materials are fleece, wool, and some synthetics.
- **Waterproof Layer:** This layer must be breathable! A great option is Gore-Tex.

Pack Efficiently/Lightly:

- Only bring essentials. Take note of things that you bring but never use.
- Use a compression sack for your sleeping bag.

Leave Contact Info with a Trusted Friend: Give a trusted person your trip details before you go out with an estimated time of return. Use the form below as a template.

Trip Plan and Group Details

Colour of your clothes: _____

Colour of your tent fly: _____

Trail name(s) you will be on: _____

Direction you will be traveling: _____

Time you will be out of the woods: _____

A brief description of what gear you have with you and the amount of food you’ll be bringing: _____

Where you will be camping (all sites): _____

Group Members with First Aid: _____

List of Group Members and Info:
Person #1 - Name, Phone #, Ability/Medical Info

2 – TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

Always remember to stay on designated trails! Camping within core areas of Strathcona must be done at registered campsites. Choose a backcountry campsite based on the following types of surfaces.

Good Camping Surfaces	Avoid Camping On
Rocks and Sand	Meadows
Dry Grass	Moist Ground
Snow	Vegetation
Pine Needles	Near/On Animal Trails

3 – PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!

Before You Go:

- Remove wrappers and excess garbage.
- Re-package in labeled Ziploc bags.
- Pack only light, waterless foods (no cans).
- Bring nuts and seeds that have been shelled at home.

While You’re Out There:

- Cook only what you can eat, pack out leftovers.
- Clean kitchen area thoroughly; no food scraps left!
- Nutshells, orange peels and all other organic materials **should be** packed back out.
- Toilet paper **should be** packed out in Ziploc – never buried!
- Keep trash in one piece: don’t rip off the corner of that granola bar!

4 – PROPERLY DISPOSE OF WHAT YOU CAN’T PACK OUT

Answering nature’s call: The proper way to “go to the bathroom” in the wilderness will depend on where you are. Your first option should include the many outhouses scattered around core areas of the Strathcona Provincial Park. Pack out all garbage, don’t put it down the outhouses.

Mountains and Lower Elevations: When outhouses are not an option, dig a “Cathole,” a small hole 6 inches deep, 4 inches wide and at least 75 metres away from any water sources (streams, lakes, creeks, rivers, etc.). A small garden trowel is a perfect tool for the job. Cover with the dirt you removed from the hole. *Pack out toilet paper!* Don’t rinse your hands in a stream, instead wash your hands by pouring water from a water bottle far away from any water sources.

5 – DO NOT BUILD FIRES IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

Why No Fires in Strathcona Provincial Park?

Most parks have a complete ban on fires in backcountry areas. This is because at elevation, it can take 500 years to produce a three-foot-tall tree. If it is burned, there is a missing link in soil production. Additionally, wildfires pose a large threat to Strathcona Provincial Park due to lack of accessibility for firefighting and the damage that can be caused to sensitive habitats. Always remember to bring a camp stove.

6 – MINIMIZE NOISE AND VISUAL INTRUSION

- Travel in groups of six or less.
- Choose campsites away from lakeshores, as sound carries over water.
- The quieter you are as you travel, the more animals and birds you will hear and see.
- Respect other campers’ rights to enjoy the quiet and solitude of the outdoors, go to bed when darkness falls.
- Don’t play music out loud on portable speakers while hiking or at camp.

7 – LEAVE IT BEHIND

Leave rocks, pinecones, flowers, feathers, shells, and pieces of wood where you find them. Don’t bring anything home that you didn’t pack in.

Leave the park the way you found it and help save it for future generations!



Leave No Trace⁷ Principles

- 1) Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2) Travel and Camp on Designated and Durable Surfaces
- 3) Dispose of All Waste Properly
- 4) Leave What You Find
- 5) Campfires Are Not Permitted in Strathcona Park Outside of Designated Steel Rings
- 6) Respect Wildlife
- 7) Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Strathcona Provincial Park is YOURS to preserve.
Please observe the principles of LEAVE NO TRACE

The **Strathcona Wilderness Institute** is a non-profit society incorporated in 1995 to promote responsible and enjoyable use of the natural wilderness area of Strathcona Provincial Park in central Vancouver Island, on the west coast of British Columbia, Canada. In partnership with BC Parks, and the support of the Friends of Strathcona Park, SWI serves as an interface between the Strathcona wilderness and the general public.

Contact Us

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Hiking Checklist: Essential Items and Considerations	
Use the list of items below to help prepare for your next wilderness adventure. Carry the essential items to keep you safe and prepared for most situations. Always use your best judgment and bring appropriate equipment for the conditions you expect to encounter.	
Backpack	Pack Size Guidelines: 1-5 Hours (0-20L), Full Day (20-40L), 1-3 Days (40-65L), 3+ Days (60-80L) Pack cover (For Rain)
Bear Spray	Know the wildlife in the area and how to respond to encounters.
Clothing	3 Layer Moisture Wicking System (See LNT Principle #1)
Emergency Kit	Emergency Blanket, Whistle, Matches/Lighter
First Aid Kit	Adhesive Bandages (Various Sizes), Gauze Pads, Adhesive Tape, Disinfecting Ointment, Pain Medication, Pen and Paper, Insect Repellent, Foot Care (Blisters)
Food	Bring enough food for the expected time hiking with a bit extra. It's a good idea to carry electrolytes (tablets/drink mix) as well in case of dehydration.
Headlamp	Fully charged with extra batteries.
Hiking Boots/Shoes	Consider ankle support needs and the type of terrain.
Hygiene	Hand Sanitizer, Toilet Paper, etc.
Knife or Multi Tool	Useful for first aid, gear repair and much more.
Navigation Tools	Compass, Maps - Cell phones don't work if the battery runs out; some areas may have "no signal".
Sun Protection	Hat, Sunglasses, Sunscreen Long sleeve clothing (breathable) is a good idea to help protect from the sun and insects.
Water	Sweat rates can range from 0.5 - 1.4L/Hr during physical exertion. Plan to carry enough water for the duration of your trip.
Water Filtration System	Chemical Treatment (Iodine Tablets)/Filtration System. It's important to be able to purify water while on the trail if needed.
Additional Items - Backpacking/Overnight Camping	
Clothing	Sleeping Clothes/Warmer Clothes for Nights
Kitchen Supplies	Cook Set with Pot Grabber, Dishes, Eating Utensils, Bear Canister/Food Sack, Biodegradable Soap, Quick Dry Towel, Collapsible Water Container, Garbage Bag.
Miscellaneous	Additional Toiletries, Hiking Poles
Sleeping	Sleeping Bag (with Stuff Sack), Pillow and Sleeping Pad
Stove and Fuel	Plan the number of meals you need to cook for, and the appropriate amount of fuel required to cook them. Consider how much water you will need to boil.
Tent	Rain Protection (Tent Fly/Tarp and Rope), Tiedowns/Stakes, Ground Cloth

Respecting Wildlife

Wildlife Viewing: Wildlife encounters can be some of the most memorable and amazing experiences of your trip. Remember to give all animals their space! Give them lots of space and keep quiet in order to watch them without scaring them.

Do Not Feed Wildlife! Wild animals and birds don't share the same food sources as humans. It's important to ensure that they don't become reliant on humans as this can lead to their eventual starvation.

Nesting and Feeding Habitats: Many species call Strathcona Provincial Park their home. Some live here year-round while others travel from great distances for food or nesting. One of these species is the Spotted Sandpiper. Each year around the marshes and lakes it establishes its feeding territories. It's important to keep to the trails and make sure all dogs are on a leash to not disturb their

Leave Pets at Home

Due to the sensitive habitats of the alpine ecosystems all pets should be left at home if possible! If you must bring your dog, then keep it under control and on a leash. Some provincial parks have banned dogs due to their impacts on wildlife and the ecosystems. Clean up after your dog and pack out all waste to dispose of in proper receptacles. Please keep dogs out of all drinking water sources.

Drones and UAV's

It's illegal to operate drones in BC's provincial parks and protected areas without proper permits. Drones and Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) cause noise pollution, disturb wildlife, raise privacy concerns and can be a nuisance to other park users. Unauthorized drone use can also get in the way of emergency activities such as Search and Rescue, putting the park, its users, and staff at greater additional risk.



Wilderness Code

Strathcona

Provincial Park

Community Guidelines for Hiking and Camping