

## **Saanich Peninsula Discovery Ride** - Printable Version

*For Week of May 4th*

Explore the 'points of interest' outlined in each ride package and send us a photo, story, or video telling us about your experience or something you discovered on your Discovery Ride.

**Photos, videos, drawings, and other media can be sent to us by filling out the short 'experience reflection form' on the GVCC website under 'themed rides', or via Facebook and Instagram by tagging us at @biketoworkvic or #yyjbike!** With every submission, you will be entered into a draw for a chance to win a gift card for take-out food from a local restaurant or bike shop near you. Prizes for this Saanich Peninsula challenge will be mailed to draw winners on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

*Activities are designed with adult supervision in mind. Before undertaking any outdoor activities, please be sure to follow the latest COVID-19 Provincial Support and Information.*

This ride will take you from Saanichton to East Saanich and from the sea shores of Sidney Harbour to the Victoria International Airport and Coles Bay. Enjoy a quiet ride along the Lochside Regional Trail and McTavish Road to reach Coles Bay Regional Park, the Victoria International Airport, and the daffodil fields at Longview Farms.

### **Points of Interest:**

#### **Point 1:**

##### **Background**

The roots of agriculture in North Saanich run deep, beginning with the WSÁNEĆ First Nations stewarding, harvesting and preserving traditional foods on the land for thousands of years. One of the important native food plants for the WSÁNEĆ and Coast Salish Nations is Kwetlal also known as "purple camas."

##### **Action item**

Explore your neighbourhood...Can you find camas blooming near your home? Describe where it is.

#### **Point 2:**

##### **Background**

*Stanhope Organics and Dairy Farm* is located along the Lochside Trail between Martindale Road and Dooley Road. This farm is home to a few beloved hogs! "In the 1950's, Stanhope Dairy Farm was the largest milk producer on Vancouver Island, milking 26 cows and supplying the Jubilee Hospital with their dairy requirements. In recent years, this farm's system has allowed them to divert large volumes of unnecessary waste from the landfill and integrate into their farm waste management program as an essential component." (Stanhope Organics website, Farm History. 2008)

**Action item**

Whether you've visited them five years ago or last week, get on your bike and go pay these beautiful creatures another visit!

**Point 3:**

**Background**

In 2018, Central Saanich celebrated a milestone of rich agricultural heritage with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Saanich Fair. As described in The Times Colonist article of August 30<sup>th</sup> 2018, by Pedro Arrais, *"the Saanich Fair is a local tradition that began in 1868 when 10 local farmers got together to create an agricultural fair to show off their accomplishments, on and off the field, in the spirit of friendly competition."* A century and a half later, local food still continues to bring people together at the fair.

**Action item**

Share a photo, make a video or draw an illustration from outside the fence of your favourite farm on the Saanich Peninsula! What agricultural goods are produced on this farm?

**Point 4:**

**Background**

Plants that occur naturally in an area are called native or indigenous species. Acclimatized to the soil and weather conditions of their home region, native plants are resilient, and provide an integral habitat and food sources for insects and wildlife.

**Action item**

Western sword fern, Dull Oregon-grape, salal, and western trillium are some of the native plants that can be found throughout the Saanich Peninsula. Explore your neighbourhood or an accessible local park to see if you can spot any! Snap a picture or sketch your rendering when you find one. Be courteous and remember social distancing expectations of giving space when passing others.

**Point 5:**

**Background**

The Saanich Peninsula is home to many bird species including Pelagic cormorants, Belted kingfishers, ravens, crows, eagles, and gulls. While they might all enjoy a picnic sandwich, there is one species in particular that tends to persist in the pursuit of sandwich thievery more than others... What bird is this? Be specific, there are many subspecies of this bird on the Peninsula! *Fun fact: This bird can drink sea water!*

**Action item**

Take a photo, draw a picture, make a video or write a song about this common seabird.

Song inspiration: *Seabird* by Alessi Brothers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lgz9k46o7tl>

**Point 6:**

**Background**

Sidney by the Sea is situated on the traditional territory of the W̱SÁNEĆ People. The W̱SÁNEĆ People are saltwater people; meaning the sea is very important to their way of life. The language of the W̱SÁNEĆ People is SENĆOŦEN. The name of the site which the Town of Sidney sits on is called "SET,TINES", which means "chest sticking out." This name refers to the way the land juts out into the water.

**Action item**

How do you connect with the sea and marine life in your neighbourhood? Share a photo or video with us of you or your family connecting with the sea in some way.

**Point 7:**

**Background**

Have you heard of clam gardens? Clam Gardens are ancient intertidal features, constructed by the coastal First Nations and Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest, that were created to enhance shellfish productivity. Made by constructing rock walls along the low tide lines of bays and inlets, they transformed naturally-sloping shorelines into productive, level beach terraces; expanding the optimal habitat zone where clams thrive. Clam gardens ranged in size from a few square metres to well over a kilometre in length - wow! **You can learn more about clam gardens and a local restoration project [here](#).**

Butter and Littleneck clams are two commonly found clam species on the Pacific coast, both living buried in the sand of tidal beaches or the ocean floor. Butter clams are yellow or greyish-white, square or oval, reach a maximum length of 13cm and stay on a single beach for life. Littleneck clams are white or grey with brown areas, round, reach a maximum length of 7cm and, like a tree, have rings on their shell showing their age.

**Action item**

On the Saanich Peninsula, we are fortunate to have access to beautiful beaches and plenty of coastline close to home. What's your favourite beach in the area? Do you think it could be a good habitat for clams? Pop by and see if you can find one - or signs of one, like an empty shell. Don't forget to snap a pic!

**Point 8:**

**Background**

Coles Bay Regional Park is known for its enchanting forest and winding nature trail that passes through towering Western red cedars along a quiet creek. Coles Bay beach is also home to many diverse marine creatures, including Moon snails, acorn barnacles, and Oyster catchers.

**Action item**

Take a walk or bike ride down to Coles Bay, Tulista Park, Patricia Bay, Island View Beach, or another Regional Park along the waterfront. When you reach the beach, listen closely to the seaside sounds. What do you hear?

**Point 9:**

**Background**

Along Willingdon Road, en route to the Victoria International Airport, there is a large boulder diverting the bicycle path. This boulder is known as a 'sleeping giant' or glacial erratic. This glacial erratic was transported here after the most recent Fraser Glaciation period which occurred between 15,000 and 29,000 years ago.

**Action item**

Your challenge is to find this glacial erratic and take a photo of it! However, please do not climb on, or touch, this erratic. Remember to be courteous while on the path and step aside as needed to allow others to pass.

**Point 10:**

**Background**

Spring has sprung and everywhere you look beautiful wild flowers, tulips, blossoms, and more are in bloom - including bright, cheery daffodils. Derived from the Dutch, 'affo dyle' or 'that which cometh early', daffodils are among the first signs of plant life each spring. Did you know Roman soldiers once carried daffodils across Europe wrongly believing their sap had medicinal properties? Careful – this is not the case! In fact, daffodils contain a toxic chemical which makes ingesting them harmful. Their toxicity, however, does make them resistant to damage by deer and other wildlife.

**Action item**

Being such a symbolic flower in the area, if you look closely at the District of Central Saanich crest you will see it includes a daffodil. See if you can locate a District of Saanich crest, then send us a picture (or sketch your rendering) of the daffodil!

**Congratulations! Thank you for taking part in our Discovery Ride in and around the Royal Oak/Cordova Bay area. We hope you enjoyed your ride.**