

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

Montague Harbour, with its sheltered waters and abundant salmon and shellfish, has a rich human history. The white shell beach on the north side of the park marks one of several shell middens (refuse heaps) that indicate native occupation that dates back over 3,000 years. Castaway shells left by centuries of harvesting form berms on the foreshore in many areas of the park. Wave action erodes the middens, crushes the shells and redeposits them to create Montague's white shell beaches. Middens contain many of the archaeological clues that help to unravel the stories of earlier cultures. Middens are protected by law. Do not disturb these archaeological sites.

The arrival of the Spanish explorer, Captain Galiano, in 1792, marked the European discovery of the Gulf Islands. Montague Harbour, named for a naval officer, first appeared on a British surveying chart around 1859. Gray Peninsula was settled in the late 1890's by Captain Gray, who cultivated an orchard that supplied fruit to residents in Victoria. Remnants of this old orchard can still be found.

## CONSERVATION

Montague Park is rimmed by diverse shoreline. Horse Clams, Littleneck Clams and Butter Clams find a safe sanctuary by burrowing beneath the shifting sands on the open shore.

In the nutrient-rich salt marsh located on Gray Peninsula, reeds, sedges, glasswort and other salt-tolerant plants can be found. Skirting the northwest of the peninsula is a spectacular rock ledge carved into rippling patterns by glaciers thousands of years ago. Barnacles grow in vast numbers along with mussels and sea snails.

Low tide reveals many tidepools in which crabs and sculpins hide beneath rocks and in crevices to avoid predators. Seastars, nudibranchs and chitons can also be found. In your exploration, please remember to carefully place overturned rocks in their original position. Look, but do not remove any shells or marine organisms from the park.

The forest at Montague is of Douglas-fir, Western Hemlock, Western Red Cedar and Arbutus. Common understorey plants include Salal, Swordfern and Oregon Grape. Here Black-tailed deer and raccoons are commonly seen. Protect foodstuffs in tight containers, and keep them out of your tent, to prevent raccoons and crows from stealing your provisions!

## WILDLIFE

The forest, rocky coastline and rich tidal lagoon attract many birds year-round. In the protected lagoon, Great Blue Herons silently wait to spear passing fish. Foraging at low tide on the rocky terraces, Glaucous-winged Gulls, Black Oystercatchers and Northwestern Crows scavenge and probe for crabs, clams, and limpets. Listen for a loud clattering rattle as the Belted Kingfisher plummets headlong into the water after fish. Overhead, Bald Eagles are often seen soaring over the sea in search of a meal.

The waters around Montague play host to flocks of wintering birds including diving ducks, such as Scoters, Buffleheads, Goldeneyes and Mergansers.

## For More Information

**BCParks**  
<http://www.bcparks.ca>

**K2ParkServices**  
1877 559-2115  
<http://www.gocampingbc.com>



08/2004

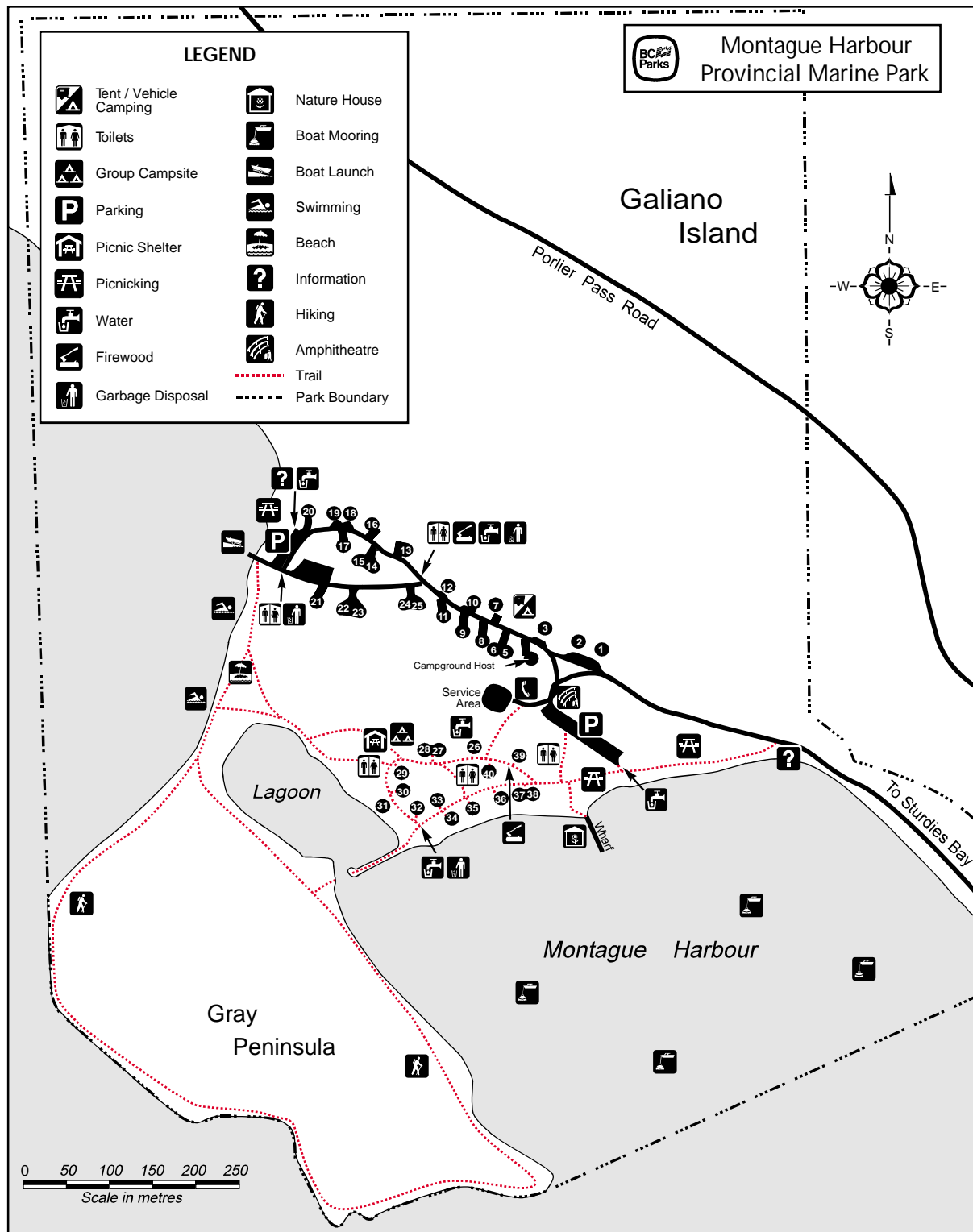
# Montague Harbour

## PROVINCIAL MARINE PARK



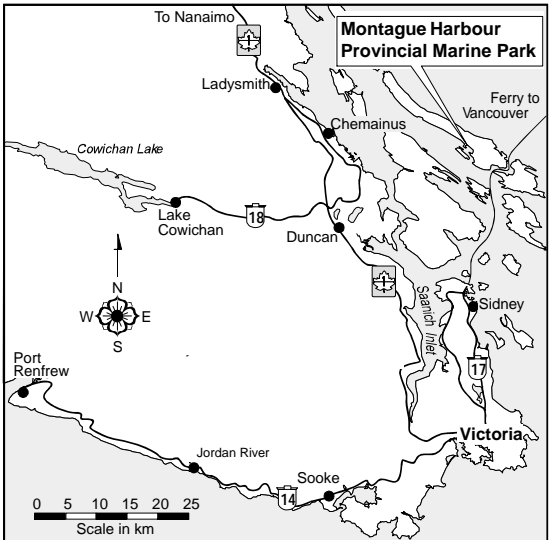
**W**elcome. This park on Galiano Island starts 5 metres below sea level and climbs 180 metres to a steep rocky precipice. White sand and shell beaches, open meadows, a tidal lagoon, towering forests and craggy headlands are waiting to be explored. Moor your boat or come by ferry and launch your boat at the park. Camp in one of the vehicle accessed campsites or walk/cycle to one of the walk-in campsites. Picnic and hike the trails and beaches or use the park as a base to discover Galiano Island.

*South Gulf Islands*



## LOCATION

Located on the southwest side of Galiano Island approximately 10 km NW of Studies Bay. British Columbia Ferries provides vehicle and passenger service to Studies Bay from Swartz Bay on Vancouver Island and from Tsawwassen south of Vancouver.



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- There are 40 campsites at this park (24 of which are vehicle accessible). Campsite reservations are accepted. First-come, first-served sites are also available. For campsite reservations call 1-800-689-9025 or (604) 689-9025 or [www.discovercamping.ca](http://www.discovercamping.ca). A park host is available at this park from June to mid-September. Camp only in designated sites and keep your tent or RV on the campsite pad.
- There is a group campsite available. This site can also be used for group picnics. Contact K2ParkServices as noted above for more details.
- There is a day-use/picnicking area with picnic tables and parking areas.
- Some facilities in the park are wheelchair accessible. Contact the district office for more information.
- Cold water taps are located throughout the park. Taps are shut off during the off season.
- The park only has pit toilets - no flush toilets are available.

- Please conserve firewood. This park has campfire time restrictions: Cooking fires are allowed from 7:00 am - 9:00 am; 11:00 am - 1:00 pm; and 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Small campfires after 7:00 pm. These restrictions will improve air quality and firewood conservation while still permitting fires. Campfire pits are provided. Fire bans may be implemented during extremely hot weather conditions. The Gray Peninsula is always closed to fires. Be prepared to bring a portable stove for cooking.
- Regularly-scheduled interpretive programs are featured in the park during the summer months. Programs may include guided walks, slide shows, children's programs and special events. A floating marine nature house provides knowledgeable tidal information. For program schedules, check the website.
- Various walking trails around Shell Beach and Gray Peninsula. For your own safety and the preservation of the park, obey posted signs and keep to designated trails. Shortcutting trails destroys plant life and soil structure. Ask park staff about other great hikes on Galiano Island.
- There are no lifeguards on duty in Provincial Parks. This park offers ocean swimming. The water is very cold and bring good footwear for the gravel beach.
- Canoeing and kayaking for experienced adventurers; know the ocean currents.
- This park has a boat launch.
- Saltwater/ocean fishing are allowed. Anyone fishing or angling in British Columbia must have an appropriate license.
- Bicycles must keep to roadways in the park to help prevent further erosion. Bicycle helmets are mandatory in British Columbia.
- Pets/domestic animals must be on a leash at all times and are not allowed in beach areas. You are responsible for their behaviour and must dispose of their excrement.
- Waste removal represents a special challenge on small islands. Galiano residents and visitors have met this challenge by recycling as much of their waste as possible. Please separate your refuse and use the correct bins for each type of garbage.
- The park has 35 mooring buoys that are first-come, first-served.