

Strathcona Park

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At long last the idyllic weather we have enjoyed is changing. We would have loved for the weather to stay hot and sunny but rain is desperately needed here and it is in the forecast for the next week. Today the sky was overcast and the air is still warm so we decided to go and play some miniature golf, then hike at Strathcona Park. For the first time in my life I actually played a decent game and we had a fun time. (Golf of any kind is typically NOT my game!)

[Strathcona Park](#) is accessible from the Mt. Washington ski area so we drove the 25 minutes to our destination and parked on the road near the trail entrance. There is a network of fabulous trails, well marked for hikers of all abilities. We chose to take the trail to [Lake Helen Mackenzie](#)

, roughly 2.5 kilometres along a fabulous path through a coniferous forest. The trail itself is a mixture of boardwalks, wood chips and bare earth and it winds over meadows and through the trees. We met several other hikers on their way to that lake or one of the many other lakes farther away. Hikers can camp in the park for a nominal fee of \$5.00 per person per night and there are outhouse facilities in several locations. The park is peppered with lakes, some large, some not much bigger than small ponds and there is an abundance of wild berries everywhere. I could only think that between the blackberries, huckleberries, blueberries and salmon, it is no wonder that there is a large bear community on Vancouver Island! We didn't see any bears but we did see some woodpeckers and some bold whiskey-jacks, a native bird, looking for handouts.

We chose to take a longer route back and when we returned to the car we had hiked a total of 7.5 kilometres. We inhaled the beauty of the scenery around us appreciating the freedom to explore it and considered our good fortune. We had reaped the benefits of paradise again.