

## **BLUE HERON PARK**

This is a definite one-booter! If you do the whole thing it should take less than an hour – but there are lots of shortcuts that you can use if you don't want to do too much! Most of the route is along groomed trails or roadways.

1. Park in the parking lot at the north end of Tsehum Park off Resthaven Drive ('A') in Sidney – that's where the tennis court is. From the parking lot entrance you'll see a bus stop on the other side of the road with a grassy area adjacent to it – that's part of Melville Park.
2. A few metres into the park you'll come across a pathway with wood chips on it. Follow that (there's a bit just with grass) until you come to a paved walkway. Turn right, cross the small bridge, and then turn left. Across the field (much of it currently covered in gravel following a Town of Sidney project) you'll see a short trail leading out on to Patricia Place. Turn left and then right at the next road junction.
3. Cross McDonald Park Road on the crosswalk opposite the Coop gas station and then turn right. Just after the gas station you'll find a large parking lot associated with a church. Cross parking lot to a shed that sits in front of a small playground. Then cross over to the edge of the grassy area and continue towards Pat Bay Highway, staying close to the fenced school playing field.
4. At 'B' you'll see a pathway running off to the right. Follow that along the edge of the school's other field until you come to the end of John Road at 'C'. TO the left, just beyond the emergency vehicle barrier, you'll see a path off to the right. About 5m into the trees you'll see a trail junction. Take the left hand trail. Follow that trail, keeping left at 'G' until you come to one of Parkland School's playing fields. Over slightly to the left, you'll see a trail. Follow that, keeping left, until you come to a short footbridge over a small creek.
5. Climb up the short rise onto the soccer fields and walk along the edge of the two fields, parallel to the Pat Bay Highway. Walk past the changing rooms on the right. Off on the left, you'll see a gazebo (of sorts) and, immediately in front of you, you'll see a trail leading through the trees. After 10m you'll come to a roadway and you'll see a short footbridge at 'D' that will take you into the McDonald Park campground. It gets a bit tricky here because there are no signs and a number of informal trails wind through the forest!
6. Keep left until you spot the park toilets through the trees to the right and a camping area with a table directly ahead. Just before you get to the camping area and the table take, the informal trail off to the left (or cross the camping area if nobody's there). That will bring you onto a paved road that runs

through the campground. Turn left and wander around the campground. All roads lead, eventually, back to the two toilets that were mentioned earlier.

7. Pick up the trail that you used to enter the campground area and get back to the driveway that you crossed earlier. Turn left and look for a short path at 'E' that will take you onto an unpaved parking lot adjacent to the changing room building. Walk over to the left and through the grassy area overlooking the three now condo buildings. Walk along the fence until you come to its end. You'll see a gravel path down to the small creek that you crossed earlier.
8. Once over the very short footbridge you'll see a pathway running off to the left that leads to a parking lot at the school. Keeping right, you need to take the next graveled path up on to the playing field that you crossed earlier. From 'F,' walk back to the start of the pathway through the trees that you used earlier in the walk. A short distance down the trail you'll come to a graveled path leading off to the left ('G' on the map). That path will take you to McDonald Park Road.
9. Across the other side of the road, a little to the left, is the entrance to Lillian Hoffar Park. Follow the driveway down into the park and wander around, taking in the views of the harbour. You can also go for a beach walk from the northern end of the park if you wish. Return to McDonald Park Road along the driveway.
10. At McDonald Park Road turn left and walk along to White Birch Road, turning left when you get there. Walk down White Birch to the end and pick up the paved walkway along 'The Green' and back to the parking lot.
11. If you wish to, you can also walk along the water front (red arrow) to Resthaven Island, around the island, and back to the parking lot.