

## NEWS RELEASE

Distributed April 14, 2025

### Off road vehicles damage Lotus Pinnatus Park, home to Nanaimo's floral emblem

#### Summary

The City of Nanaimo is reminding residents that the use of ATVs or any motorized vehicle is not permitted on any parkland. Use of these vehicles can be particularly damaging in sensitive ecosystems, where on the afternoon of April 1, 2025, multiple all-terrain vehicles caused damage at Lotus Pinnatus Park.

Lotus Pinnatus Park encompasses over 15 hectares across four parcels of land located along the southern border of Nanaimo. The park is intersected by the Nanaimo Parkway, with the parcels south of the Parkway forming part of the expansive Harewood Plains. These lands were acquired to preserve these sensitive ecosystems and contribute to the area's ecological and recreational value.

The park is named after Nanaimo's floral emblem, the Lotus pinnatus. This flower is extremely rare, found in only five known sites in Canada.

The area is environmentally sensitive, featuring a mosaic of Garry oak associated ecosystems such as woodlands, wildflower meadows, vernal seeps and vernal pools. Both vernal seeps and vernal pools are conservation priorities due to their critical importance as habitats for many species. These ephemeral wetland ecosystems support a unique set of organisms. Therefore, it is important to avoid disturbing them by not trampling them or altering the inflow or outflow of water while exploring the park. Disturbances like those that occurred earlier this month can disrupt these fragile ecosystems enough to alter the growing conditions of the specialized plants that depend on them for survival.

For more information on Lotus Pinnatus Park: <https://ow.ly/XL9350VxP4L>

*Strategic Link:* Commitment to communication is important for engaging with our community.

#### Key Points

- The use of ATVs or any motorized vehicles is strictly prohibited on all City Parkland.
- Lotus Pinnatus flower blooms between May and June. There are five known sites for this rare flower Lotus Pinnatus in Canada, three of these sites are on Harewood Plains, one on Gabriola Island and one near Ladysmith.
- New environmental fencing along with mapping signs have recently been installed in the park. The signage includes a park map, a list of permitted recreational activities, a welcome message to visitors and information about the park's unique vegetation,

#### Quotes

"It's hard to imagine a field of wildflowers as being endangered, but like the Vancouver Island Marmot, respecting their space is critical to their survival. We need to enjoy these flowers from a safe distance and without disturbing them. If we do, they'll be around for our future generations to enjoy."

Leonard Krog  
Mayor  
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Off road vehicles damage Lotus Pinnatus Park, home to Nanaimo's floral emblem

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