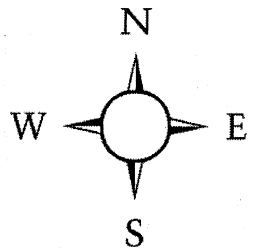


Welcome to Buttertubs:

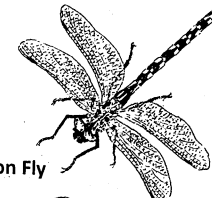
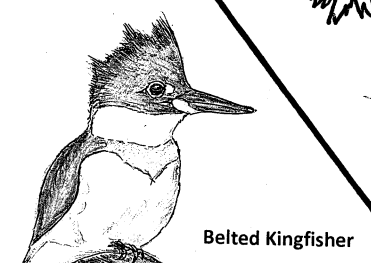
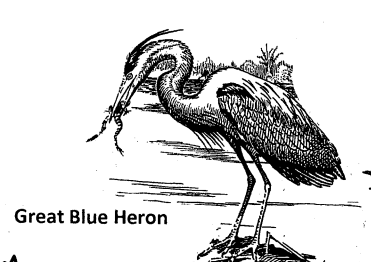
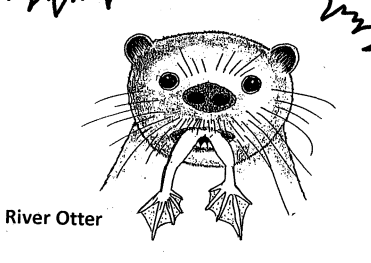
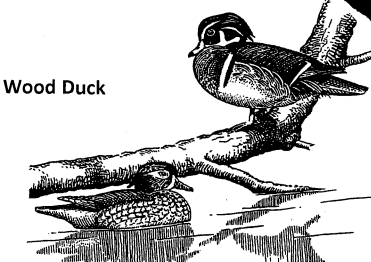
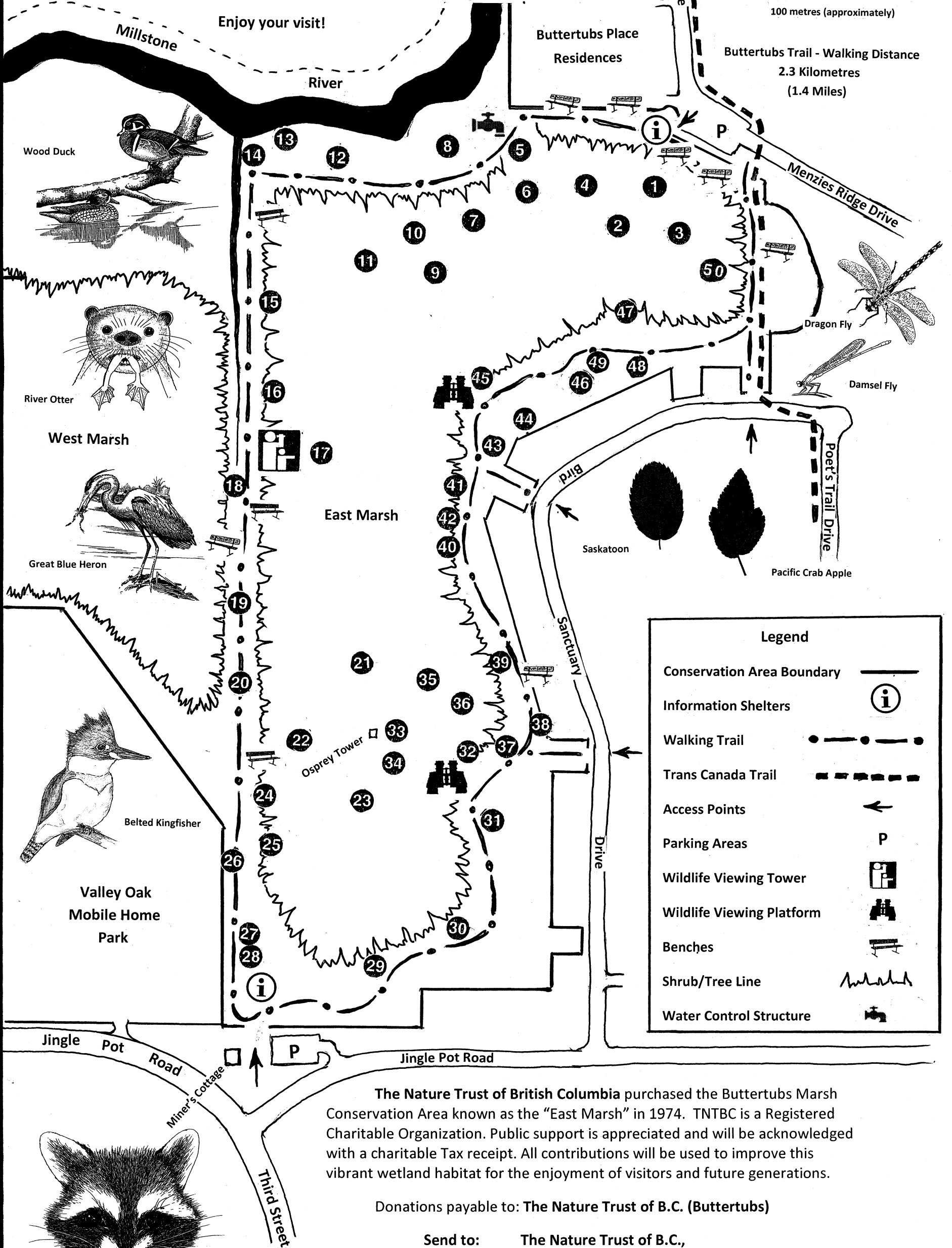
This marshland was originally a flood plain of the Millstone River that was drained for agricultural purposes by the Hudson Bay Company. In 1974, threatened by housing development, the 50 acre, "East Marsh", was purchased by The Nature Trust of British Columbia becoming the Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Area. Since 1974 a number of land parcels have been added including the 60 acre 'West Marsh' by Ducks Unlimited Canada and the City of Nanaimo. The goal is to acquire all the remaining flood plain for wildlife conservation purposes.

The Name Buttertubs comes, via the Morrell family, for an area in Yorkshire, UK, where limestone caves were used to store tubs of butter and cheese during warm weather.



100 metres (approximately)

Buttertubs Trail - Walking Distance
2.3 Kilometres
(1.4 Miles)



Legend	
Conservation Area Boundary	
Information Shelters	
Walking Trail	
Trans Canada Trail	
Access Points	
Parking Areas	
Wildlife Viewing Tower	
Wildlife Viewing Platform	
Benches	
Shrub/Tree Line	
Water Control Structure	

The Nature Trust of British Columbia purchased the Buttertubs Marsh Conservation Area known as the "East Marsh" in 1974. TNTBC is a Registered Charitable Organization. Public support is appreciated and will be acknowledged with a charitable Tax receipt. All contributions will be used to improve this vibrant wetland habitat for the enjoyment of visitors and future generations.

Donations payable to: **The Nature Trust of B.C. (Buttertubs)**

Send to: **The Nature Trust of B.C.,
260 - 1000 Roosevelt Crescent,
North Vancouver, B.C., V7P 3R4**

Map - Shane MacLellan
Text - Bill Merilees

1. Pondweeds: Buttertubs is blessed with many species of "pondweeds". Most are anchored to the bottom by roots. Their flowers are small.

2. Natural Succession: Nature is always changing; this is called succession where one group of plants replaces another. Here at Buttertubs we can observe this change as a shallow open-water pond slowly becomes a marsh, then a bog and in time a meadow.

3. Pied-billed Grebe: This is a small, not easily seen, common diving bird that feeds and nests here among the floating pondweeds.

4. Water Shield: This is the common pondweed seen here. It has large, oval, floating leaves (5-7 cm long) and, in-season, small purple flowers.

5. Pumpkinseed Sunfish: This non-native fish (up to 12 cm long) spawn in shallow water. They are food for herons & mergansers.

6. Turtles: There are two species here. The native Western Painted Turtle and the "pet store" Red-eared Slider that has been introduced. Both bask on logs placed in sunny locations.

7. Red-winged Blackbird: An iconic marsh bird with bright red epaulets and strident call, likes to perch on cattails in its breeding territory.

8. Raccoon: Raccoons primarily stalk the marsh at night then retreat to day time hide-aways. Look for them sleeping in oak trees along the Millstone River or find their hand-like footprints in muddy places along the trail.

9. Water Lilies: Our native water-lily has yellow flowers with 5-6 petals. Also present are non-native (garden pond) species that have large white or red flowers with many petals.

10. Mallard Duck: The male's iridescent green head is unmistakable. His mate is mottled brown. Mallards are "dabbling" ducks; they tip up to feed.

11. Wood Duck: The brightly patterned male is one of the most beautiful ducks in the world! A number of pairs nest in trees around Buttertubs.

12. Riparian Habitat: Riparian (stream & lake-side vegetation) is critically important to the well-being of water courses in B.C. It has special protected status, serving as wildlife corridors & feeding areas.

13. Salmon & Cut-throat Trout: The Millstone River at this location is a corridor for the passage of these species up stream, to their spawning areas.

14. Gray Squirrel: This squirrel, which ranges in colour from light gray to black, was introduced to Vancouver Island. Sadly, it has become a pest in settled areas.

15. Arbutus: Canada's only broad-leaved ever-green tree has found this raised trail to its liking. Robins and Band-tailed Pigeons enjoy its red berries.

16. Raptors: Cooper's Hawk & Merlin (a small falcon) often perch in these dead Oaks. In summer, Merlin catch dragonflies from these perches.

17. Bull Frog: This large 12-15 cm, non-native frog, likes to hide among the pondweeds awaiting its next meal. Though undesirable it is probably (and unfortunately), here to stay.

18. Midges: These tiny flies gather and hover in small "clouds" along trails in summer. They can be an annoyance to walkers. Blighters, Yes! But biters, No!

19. Mink: Weasel-like in appearance, these dark predators are often seen crossing the trail. They feed largely on small rodents, fish and frogs.

20. Towhees & Song Sparrows: These two seed-eating members of the sparrow family like to skulk in thick shrubbery along Buttertub's trails. The Spotted Towhee is our largest native sparrow!

21. Beaver: To see this iconic Canadian mammal you must come at dusk, be patient, and wait quietly to be rewarded. Their gnawing marks are more noticeable.

Buttertubs is first and foremost a Conservation Area where the quiet appreciation of nature and passive recreation pursuits are appropriate.

Visitors are asked to abide by the regulations in place and leave the Marsh area better than they found it!

Cats, Dogs and Bicycles are not permitted.

Management Partners:
The Nature Trust of British Columbia
City of Nanaimo
Friends of Buttertubs
Province of British Columbia
Ducks Unlimited Canada

For further information Contact:
Vancouver Island Conservation Land
Management Program @ 250 - 751 - 3100

22. Bladderwort: Like the Sundew, Bladderwort traps tiny aquatic animals swimming in the water. Air filled bladders allow this plant to float. It has a bright yellow flowers that project above the surface.

23. Floating Islands: Many large mats of cattail are not anchored to the bottom by their roots. These islands of vegetation drift about, pushed by the wind.

24. Hardhack: This common marsh shrub, with a stiff upright stem crowned by fuzzy pink flowers (in mid-summer) is **NOT** the invasive Purple Loose-strife!

25. Great Blue Heron: The GBH is a common year round predator of frogs, fish and small rodents. It plays an important role in controlling Bull Frogs.

26. Willow: There are a number of willow species, both as trees & shrubs, frequenting Buttertubs. They are an important winter food for beavers.

27. English Oak: A century ago oaks were planted here. Flooding drowned the roots of some, which died leaving their magnificent bleached trunks and branches as important perches for birds.

28. Barred Owl: Introduced rabbits, both wild and released are now a food that sustains a population of large owls. The Barred Owl is occasionally seen perched on the limbs overhead and along the trail.

29. Cascara: This oval-leaved tree with smooth gray bark, has shiny black berries favoured by birds. The laxative "*cascara sangrada*" once came from its bark.

30. Black Cottonwood: This tall tree favours damp riparian habitats. The cotton "fluff" produced by the cottonwood, gave this tree its name - and - allows the wind to carry its seeds great distances.

31. Old Dairy Barn: This foundation is all that is left of a dairy farm that operated here, circa 1950.

32. Osprey: See the sign beside the viewing platform. Ospreys attempted nesting here in 2010.

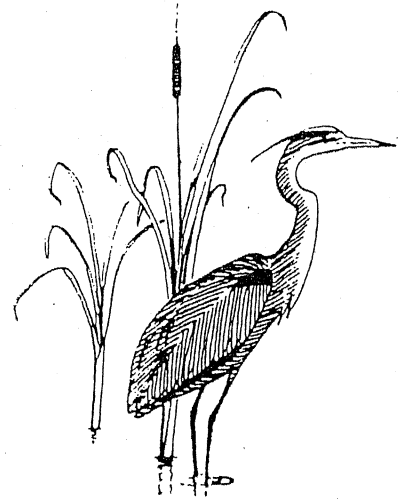
33. Purple Martin & Swallows: Attached to the Osprey nesting platform are nest boxes for these aerial insect feeders. Nest boxes for Martins have greatly assisted their population increase.

34. Mergansers: The bills of these diving ducks are serrated; hence a vernacular name "sawbill". This is also an ideal adaption for grasping fish.

35. Ring-necked Duck: Unlike the Mallard which "tips up" to feed, the Ring-necked dives for its food, primarily pondweed seeds and snails.

36. River Otter: This large aquatic weasel is wide-ranging, but occasionally is seen here. Primarily a fish eater, here frogs are also on its menu.

Nature Guide to Buttertubs Marsh



Prepared by: The Friends of Buttertubs
2017

37. Sycamore Maple: How this exotic maple arrived here is unknown. Often the underside of its leaves have a purple "blush".

38. Himalayan Blackberry: Long looping stems with stout thorns can form impenetrable thickets that choke out other vegetation. Eradication is difficult.

39. Red-osier Dogwood: The bright red young twigs are the best identification clue for this shrub that prefers living close to water.

40. Pacific Crab Apple: This tree also likes living close to water. Fingernail sized fruits, and leaves with a lobe on one side are characteristic.

41. Nootka Rose: There are four species of rose growing at Buttertubs; three are native. This one is the most common. Can you find the others - Baldhip and Swamp are native; Dog Rose is exotic.

42. Thatching Ants: Large, untidy mounds of grass and needles, a metre + across, is the home of this industrious colonial insect. **Beware** - they bite!

43. Anna's Hummingbird: The very tops of the nearby Hawthorn trees are favoured territorial perches for brilliant, green bodied, magenta throated males.

44. Non-Native Species: Buttertubs is "loaded" with non-native animal species: rabbits, Gray Squirrels, House Sparrows, California Quail, Rock Doves and Collared Doves as examples.

45. Common Hawthorn: Bird droppings likely transported the first seeds here and, when farming ceased, a spiny forest of hawthorn took over.

46. Cattail vs Yellow Iris: A 'turf war' between two species is playing out here. Once a mass of exotic Yellow Iris is now being slowly dominated by Cattail.

47. Digger Wasps: Look closely; digger wasps at work! Burrows are being dug and provisioned with insects - food for the next wasp generation.

48. Scotch Broom & Spurge-laurel: Introduced invasive species are a problem at Buttertubs, where on-going removal is being practised.

49. Saskatoon: The near round leaves, toothed at their tips, tell you it is a Saskatoon shrub. The berries though edible, are not highly regarded here in B.C. They are more important to birds.

50. Dragonflies and Damselflies: Both are prominent marsh insects. Here at Buttertubs, dragonflies are food for Purple Martins.