

NATURE GUIDE – SITE INFORMATION SHEET

Great Blue Heron Nature Reserve

Name of Club submitting this form	Nature Chilliwack
Name of club members completing this form	Janet Pollock
Region	Lower Mainland
Area	Floodplain along Vedder River
Location Name	Great Blue Heron Nature Reserve (GBHNR)
Key Photos	North Lagoon & Rotary Interpretive Building – Janet Pollock – https://flic.kr/p/2pmu8NW Vedder Trail – Janet Pollock – https://flic.kr/p/2pmnM2R Heron Colony – Janet Pollack – https://flic.kr/p/2pmnM2v
Description	130-hectare wetlands site, home to 75 Great Blue Heron nests and a wide variety of wildlife.
Photo Gallery	https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAT5AS
Geographical Description	Undyked floodplains of Vedder River
Area/Trail Length	<p>7 Trails:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heron Loop Trail 0.7 km. Circles the South Lagoon. Part of the path is closed from March to July to protect heron nesting site. 2. Salwein Creek Trail 0.5 km. Follows along North Lagoon, to East blind loops back through wetland to main trail. 3. Centre Trail 0.7 km. Connects to Vedder Dyke trails east and west. There are benches overlooking South Lagoon. Connects with Tower Trail, the bird blind, viewing tower and Heron Loop Trail. 4. Vedder Rotary Trail West 3.6 km. Heads south on Centre Trail, turns right parallel to river through forest, loops at gravel pit to the dyke past heronry to the Rotary Interpretive Centre. 5. Vedder Rotary Trail East 3.6 km. Goes south on Centre Trail turns left through forest along the river, under the railway bridge. At end of forest trail a yellow gate leads to the dyke and finally to the Rotary Interpretive Centre. 6. Discovery Trail 0.5 km. Trail goes through woods and along a stream and pond. 7. Tower Trail 0.7 km Trail goes through forest then across the marsh on boardwalks. Signs naming trees and forest ecosystems <p>Terrain relatively flat ground except for Tower Trail which has boardwalks. Trails are wheelchair accessible but may be muddy after rain.</p>
Seasons to Visit	All year for walking, biking. Spring, winter and fall best for birding.
Habitat, Eco system	Wetlands, willows, mixed riparian shrubs, black cottonwood, and river.
Viewing Highlights	<p>Heron Colony: Active from March to July / one of largest in BC. List of birds seen in Reserve is available in Interpretive Centre. 166 species have been observed and reported to eBird hotspot. Beavers, River Otters, Muskrat, Mink, Raccoon, Coyote, Bobcat, Bear, Cottontail Rabbits, Squirrels, Turtle, Snake, and Frogs have been seen.</p> <p>Lookout Tower: Views of heron colony, Mt Cheam, cattail marsh, lagoons.</p> <p>Tower Trail: Interpretive signs identifying trees and forest ecosystem</p> <p>Trails are well maintained but can be muddy in spots during wet season. The Vedder Trail which runs from Vedder bridge 13.5 km west to Keith Wilson bridge is accessed at GBHNR from Centre Trail.</p>

Other Features			
Main Access	South on Sumas Prairie Rd at Sinclair Rd.		
LAT, LONG	49.096523, -122.045500		
Secondary Accesses	Walking, biking from Vedder Trail		
Cautions	Land on west side of west dyke is private property. Gates open 8 am to dusk. Interpretive Centre open daily: Feb 1 – Oct 31 10 am – 4 pm Nov 1 – Jan 31 10 am – 3 pm		
Jurisdiction	City of Chilliwack and Great Blue Heron Nature Reserve Society		
Regulations	Leashed dogs, bicycles, and horses are permitted on Center and Vedder Trails. All other trails are pedestrian only. No camping or fires No motorized vehicles		
Facilities	Parking, toilets, boardwalks, viewing blinds, lookout tower, benches, interpretive signs and maps of area,		
Other Recreational Activities	School Programs offered throughout the year. Birding Photography		
Other Connections			
History	In the 40's and 50's the military engineers shored up the existing sloughs to create lagoons for bridging exercises and training. Known as the Wet Gap it was an annex of CFB Chilliwack. After the army moved out the Rotary Club of Chilliwack constructed the Rotary Interpretive Centre which is managed by the GBHNR Society and the City of Chilliwack Parks Department.		
For More Info			
Links	GBHNR website – www.chilliwackblueheron.com eBird hotspot list – https://ebird.org/hotspot/L305037		
Status of Area	The Great Blue Heron is considered at risk and requires significant conservation efforts to ensure the long-term viability of its population.		
Should this Nature Site be preserved as a protected site			
Yes			
	File #	Caption for Photograph	Name of Photographer
#1		North Lagoon and Rotary Interpretive Building	J Pollock
#2		Vedder Trail	J Pollock
#3		Heron Colony	J Pollock