

Layritz Park

PARK FEATURES

Layritz Park, with an area of 29.1 ha, is within the Rural Saanich Local Area. This community park is highly valued for its sports and recreation interests, combined with a focus on environmental protection within the park and its surrounding natural areas.

Trails

The many trails in the park are enjoyed by hikers, dog walkers, horseback riders, commuters and other park users. The main trails travel through various habitats providing opportunities for wildlife viewing. They include:

- the 1140 m Loop Trail to walk or run
- the 315 m Summit Trail up an elevation of 52 m to the viewpoint



Viewpoint

The Hill provides views of the Olympic Mountains and surrounding areas, the northern valley, wetlands and Glendale Gardens, and north to Vancouver Island Technology Park.

Natural Areas

Garry oak forests and stands of Douglas-fir provide a spring display of wildflowers in the park, including camas, fawn lily, buttercup, and shooting stars.

The addition of the ponds and plantings have increased habitat for common wildlife such as garter snakes, mice, raccoons, and mule deer. There are also close to 100 species of birds and 20 species of butterflies within Layritz Park.



PARK HISTORY

The original park was established in 1953 by a donation of 4.25 ha from Richard Emil Layritz, shortly before he died in 1954. A second donation of 2.02 ha followed in 1963 from Mrs. Layritz.

Layritz developed a plant nursery business that achieved international renown. He supplied thousands of varieties of trees and shrubs throughout Victoria and the Pacific Northwest.

Mr. Layritz's donation of this land included the stipulation that it be fenced and used as a park for children to play in. Saanich Council was approached by the Colquitz Athletic Association in 1956 to help develop softball facilities, and in 1957 Council approved the development of Layritz Park for Little League. Mrs. Layritz was present for the official opening of Little League Baseball in Layritz Park that year.

The most recent acquisitions resulted from the re-development of the Glendale Lands in 1997. Saanich purchased 11.66 ha and the Province gave 10.9 ha as a Free Crown Grant. The artificial turf soccer field and the BC Minor Ball Diamond were officially opened in 2008 and there remains ample space and interest for future expansion.

The main pedestrian circulation route from Mann Avenue to Vancouver Island Technology Park and Camosun College was developed in 2002. This route was recently improved and became part of the Centennial Trail Network in 2006, to celebrate the District of Saanich's 100th year.



Mrs. Layritz with baseball team, opening of Layritz Ball Park, 1958. Saanich Archives



PARK INFORMATION

Parking is available in two locations:

- in the Layritz Park parking lot off Layritz Avenue
- in the Vancouver Island Technology Park main parking lot. Parking charges are in effect daily until 5:30pm

Trail and Park Etiquette

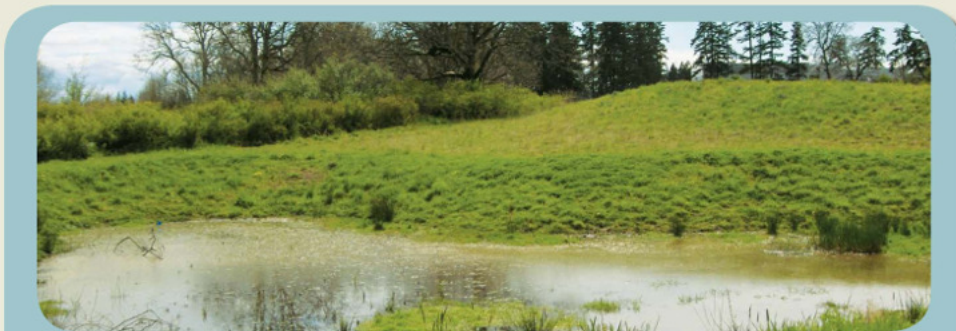
- Cycling is permitted throughout the park.
- Share the trail and keep right except to pass.
- Cyclists please yield to pedestrians, control your speed and warn others before you pass.
- Respect the environment and neighbours by staying on the trail.
- Dogs are allowed in the park, except on sports fields, and they must be under control. Please pick up after your pet.
- Dogs must be on a leash within 10 metres of a playground.
- Horses are allowed on the trails unless otherwise posted. Please respect horseback riders as horses may startle easily.

Please treat the park with respect and preserve the Garry oak ecosystem and other sensitive natural areas.

Do your part to keep our parks clean. Put litter in waste containers.

Sports Organizations

Layritz Little League
Layritz Intermediate BC Minor Baseball
Prospect Lake Soccer Association



Storm Water Management System

The Layritz Park natural areas link other habitats and wildlife corridors such as Viaduct Flats, including Glendale Gardens, Quick's Bottom wetland and Rithet's Bog.

To minimize impact on waterways, wetlands and habitats in the surrounding Colquitz watershed, measures including a detention pond, grassed road shoulders, swales, open channels and erosion control were included with the new park development.

The drainage ditch in the middle of the park runs south through to Layritz Place and eventually runs into Durrell Creek. The water courses in the Vancouver Island Technology Park, adjacent to Layritz Park, are tributaries of the Colquitz River, which contains coho salmon and cutthroat trout.

