

Dig Deeper

# GET TO KNOW YOUR PARK



## What can you learn about your local park?

With over 200 parks in Surrey, there's a lot to explore, and each is special in its own way. Visit a local park and investigate what makes it unique. Think about the plants and animals that live there, how people use the space, the park's amenities, and its history.

### Guiding Questions

- + What do you already know about the park?
- + What are you interested in learning about this park?
- + What kind of park is it (i.e. city park, neighbourhood park, etc.)?
- + Are there any stories (e.g. family, historical) connected to this park?
- + What plants and animals can you see here? What else might be living here that you can't see?
- + Which parts of the park do you think are set aside for plant and animal habitats?
- + Which parts of the park do you think were built for people?
- + What might this park have looked like 100 years ago? What about 100 years into the future?
- + What are some threats to/concerns/issues with this park?
- + How can you help protect this park?
- + Can you map the park's natural areas, open lawn, trails, amenities and special places?
- + What do you think park visitors should know about this park?

# Background

Surrey's parks vary widely and are classified based on their size, use, nature and management, ranging from large city parks to walkable neighbourhood spaces. Each type of park plays a key role within an integrated network, supporting the healthy and active lifestyle of Surrey residents while protecting habitat and providing green infrastructure services.

## Park Classifications:

**City level park:** parks that are recognizable as places for city-wide celebrations and activity, or of unique natural significance. City parks may have large natural areas.

**Community level park:** parks that provide a variety of amenities (including water parks, gardens, bike parks, sports fields and large natural areas) that attract residents from outside their immediate neighbourhood.

**Neighbourhood level park:** typically smaller, local parks that serve the open space needs of local residents and include amenities such as open lawn, playgrounds and natural areas. Many are located adjacent to elementary schools.

**Mini-park:** parks intended for urban areas where it is difficult to build larger parks due to population density or geographic constraints.

**Biodiversity preserve:** parks with large areas of protected wildlife habitat and ecologically sensitive ecosystems. These parks often include wetlands, creeks and old field meadows. Public access is limited to trails, boardwalks and viewing platforms in less sensitive areas.

## Additional Resources

City of Surrey *Parks, Recreation & Culture Strategic Plan*

City of Surrey's Mapping Online System (COSMOS) at [cosmos.surrey.ca](https://cosmos.surrey.ca)

Nature Trails brochure & park kiosks

## Other helpful terms to know:

**natural area:** parks, or those areas of parks, that are relatively undisturbed, contain a high percentage of native plant species and provide for considerable indigenous wildlife habitat. They are natural or near-natural in character, or are in the process of recovery from human disturbance.

**environmentally sensitive area:** a protected area that is home to a species at risk. This can include a variety of different features, such as ravines, watercourses, wetlands, treed slopes, bird nesting grounds, or waterfront areas.

# Curricular Connections

## Content for students to explore:

**Grade 1:** local plants and animals, care for the local environment

**Grade 2:** relationship between people and the environment, water cycle (park dependent)

**Grade 3:** the pursuit of natural resources and its role in changing the land/communities

**Grade 4:** biomes

**Grade 5:** regional and municipal diversity (park management at different levels of government)

**Grade 6:** connections to community

## Curricular competencies for students to develop:

- Experience and interpret the local environment
- Identify questions to answer or problems to solve through scientific inquiry
- Make observations aimed at identifying their own questions about the natural world



**Surrey Parks works together with the community to celebrate nature and protect the environment.**

Visit us online to plan your park visits, connect with nearby nature and help your students become stewards of our urban forest.