

Public Access Restrictions at the W̱MÍYEFEN Nature Sanctuary (*wh-my-eh-then*)



The W̱MÍYEFEN Nature Sanctuary (WNS) is designated as a conservation area and monitored by the Province of BC. It is managed by the W̱MÍYEFEN Nature Sanctuary Society in alliance with W̱SÁNEĆ Elders.

Public access is restricted to trail access on the 2nd Sunday of each month though numerous community-benefiting organizations will have gentle and respectful use for retreats and workshops that encourage connection to the natural world. There are also opportunities for community participation in volunteer activities.

Continuing to protect the undisturbed atmosphere of nature at the sanctuary carries forward the priorities of the last owners of the property the Peter and Hazel Brotherston (1963-2016) as well as Gertrude Snider (1947-1963). Allowing nature to unfold naturally with little human interference also respects the First Nations traditional relationship to nature. The biodiversity values of these forested ecosystems will continue to increase with age, as stand structure becomes more complex, giving rise to an increasing number of microhabitats for species.

Ecological reasons for protection:

- The WNS lies within the Coastal Douglas-fir moist maritime (CDFmm) Biogeoclimatic Zone, an ecoregion with a semi-Mediterranean climate that supports the highest density of species at risk in the province of British Columbia (BC CDC, 2021a). In this densely populated region, habitat loss and fragmentation continue to pose the greatest threats to ecological communities.
- Freshwater and wetland communities are considered as sensitive ecosystems under Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) protocols. Other sensitive ecosystems represented at the WNS include woodlands, rock outcrops (Ro) and associated terrestrial herbaceous communities
- The WNS property contains 10 ecological communities of which five are listed by the BC Conservation Data Centre as at-risk ecosystems (BC CDC, 2021a), including three red-listed communities and two blue-listed communities (Table 4)
- The WNS provides habitat for eleven reported species or subspecies at risk, including six birds, two mammals (bats), one invertebrate (butterfly), one moss species, and one plant species (Table 5). Two of these are red-listed in British Columbia, while the remainder are blue-listed (BC CDC, 2021a). Species or subspecies assessed by the Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC) or listed under the Species at Risk Act (2002) include the western screech-owl - *kennicottii subspecies* (SPEPELÍŪE), great blue heron - *fannini subspecies* (SNEKE), peregrine falcon - *anatum subspecies*, band-tailed pigeon (HEM,EU), olive-sided flycatcher, barn swallow, little brown bat (SĪEL,BEL,AXEN), yuma myotis (SĪEL,BEL,AXEN), and western branded skipper, *oregonia subspecies*.