

# BMN HIKE REPORT

**“City in the Park” to Westminster Quay Urban Walk (May 18, 2019)**

**by Chris Wright**



**View from sandy beach at Port Royal, looking toward Poplar Island. *Terry Puls photo.***

Overlooking the Edmonds SkyTrain Station in south Burnaby, we assembled for our “City in the Park” to New Westminster urban walk. There were ten of us attending this outing, all enjoying the landscaped area between the station and the BC Hydro Edmonds Campus. The weather was perfect with mostly sun and not too hot, with a light breeze.

We headed off along Station Hill Drive to the “City in the Park” formal garden where we admired the flowers and large fountain. This small park nestled between condo towers has numerous hedge-lined paths and a curving staircase. Our next stop was the small Taylor Park where we rejoined the BC Parkway, though we first had a few runs on the short zip line!

**Zip-lining at Taylor Park.  
*Terry Puls photo.***



We continued off south, then southeast, following the Expo SkyTrain Line and crossing into New Westminster, where we had our first distant views of Richmond, south Vancouver, and beyond to the Gulf Islands. Another sight we enjoyed looking at was the Alex Fraser Bridge rising from the Fraser River delta.

Arriving at the 22nd Street SkyTrain Station, we followed the BC Parkway along some busy stretches of roadway before descending down a gravel cutoff onto River Drive, which follows the Fraser River.

**Industrial area along the Fraser River near Queensborough Bridge.**  
*Terry Puls photo.*



We found lots of interesting flowers along here, including California poppy and dame's rocket.

**A yellow-faced bumblebee in a California poppy.**  
*June Lussier photo.*

Near the Kruger Products paper mill, we spotted several birds including a red-tailed hawk perched on a branch and an osprey and a bald eagle soaring high above. It was interesting to see some of the Expo 86 buildings being used as warehouses for the mill.

A few more jogs through businesses and we arrived at the start of the riverfront esplanade. This multi-use path follows the Fraser River alongside the condos. As we walked the pathway, we enjoyed views of Lulu Island (our after-lunch destination), Annacis Island, and north Surrey. We elected to have some free time during the lunch hour to head off for food. A few took off to Columbia Street for a Big Star sandwich, and most went to the Westminster Quay food court.

After lunch, some forty-five minutes later, we assembled for the five-minute boat ride over to Port Royal using the Q to Q passenger ferry. The current was swift in the river (the pilot said it was flowing at 18 knots) as we cruised downriver to Port Royal, all of us enjoying the sights from this unique vantage point. Arriving at Port Royal on the eastern end of Lulu Island, we walked the path northwesterly and quickly discovered that the air was full of the smell of roses. The views were very interesting looking upriver at New Westminster, the Pattullo Bridge, and the SkyBridge (SkyTrain line). Port Royal is such a tranquil setting, with an eclectic assortment of condos and small houses, all surrounded by lush greenery and the ever present river. We enjoyed the sandy beach present with the



low tide. We even spotted a beaver swimming downriver. We returned to the Westminster Quay on the Q to Q Ferry for ice cream and to reflect on the wonderful outing.



**The Q to Q Ferry, plying across the Fraser River between New West Quay and Queensborough. *Terry Puls photo.***



*Other birds seen and/or heard: great blue heron, Canada goose, mallard, glaucous-winged gull, rock pigeon, rufous hummingbird, northern flicker, violet-green swallow, northwestern crow, American robin, European starling, orange-crowned warbler, yellow warbler, spotted towhee, fox sparrow, song sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, brown-headed cowbird, house finch, house sparrow; in all, 23 species*

**Northern flicker in tree at Port Royal.  
*June Lussier photo.***