



## SOUTH COAST CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Protecting and Restoring at Risk Species and Ecological Communities on BC's South Coast

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### Marshes

Marshes are probably one of the most commonly recognized wetland communities. This ecological community has a range of freshwater and marine forms, influenced by the fluctuations in local water tables and the tides. Soils may be mineral in nature or well-humified peat. Plant communities are typically emergent species tolerant of protracted shallow flooding.



Cheam Wetlands P. Zevit



West Creek Wetlands P. Liley



Typha Marsh H. Rudd



Yellow Pond Liley Marsh P. Zevit



Katzie Marsh P. Zevit

## Characteristics

Marshes tend to have permanent open water, which can vary in depth and temperature. Unlike swamps, they are not typically forested and have a range of submerged, emergent and semi-aquatic vegetation, usually herbaceous such as grass, sedges, rush and cattail species. Water tolerant shrubs such as sweet gale and hardhack often form part of the perimeter vegetation. Marshes may be fed and sustained by groundwater and or surface water and levels can fluctuate seasonally or for tidal marshes - daily. On the South Coast, marshes occur in a range of sizes, often supporting extensive cattail, bulrush and pond lily communities. A number of extensive marsh complexes are the result of sloughs - such as disconnected Fraser River floodplain channels, having reduced flow velocity allowing for marsh characteristics to form. Marshes support species of conservation concern such as **Oregon Spotted Frog**, **Northern Red-legged Frog** and **Western Painted Turtle**. On the South Coast a number of blue-listed marsh communities (Sitka sedge - Pacific water-parsley, common spike-rush Herbaceous Vegetation, common cattail Marsh) and one red-listed type - three-way sedge, can be found.

## Resources

[Biodiversity in Greater Vancouver: Wetland Ecosystems Marshes/Swamps Bogs and Vernal Pools](#)

[Biodiversity in Greater Vancouver: Stillwater Ecosystems](#)

## For further information see

[Wetland Stewardship Partnership](#)

[BC Wildlife Federation - Wetlandkeepers](#)

[BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer: Species and Ecosystems Search](#)

A source for authoritative conservation information on thousands of plants and animals and hundreds of ecological communities in BC. From here connect to all provincial and federal recovery plans (including the SARA Registry), COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada), Identified Wildlife guidance and conservation requirements for specific species and ecological communities of conservation concern impacted by forestry activities) and links to E-Flora and E-Fauna (the Electronic Atlas of the Plants and Wildlife of British Columbia).

[British Columbia's Coast Region Species & Ecosystems of Conservation Concern](#)

A joint venture resource providing comprehensive information on a range of species and ecological communities specific to the Coast Region of BC (including the South, Central and North Coast, Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii).

**Develop With Care Guidelines (see Lower Mainland Region section)**

Environmental guidelines for urban and rural land development in BC.

**Species at Risk & Local Governments a Primer for BC**

Learn what species are at risk in your area, search by name, habitat type, regional district and forest district.

**E-Flora the electronic atlas of the Flora of BC**

A volunteer-driven GIS-based biogeoclimatic atlas of the vascular plants, fungi, algae, bryophytes and lichens of BC.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.sccp.ca/species-habitat/marshes>

**Links**

[1] <http://bcwetlands.ca/>

[2] [http://www.bcwf.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=136&Itemid=520](http://www.bcwf.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=136&Itemid=520)

[3] <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/conservation-data-centre/explore-cdc-data/species-and-ecosystems-explorer>

[4] <http://www.geog.ubc.ca/biodiversity/factsheets/>

[5] [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop\\_with\\_care\\_intro.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/devwithcare2006/develop_with_care_intro.html)

[6] <http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/>