

# BALLINGALL ISLETS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

September 2003

Approved by:



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Regional Manager  
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Date: Sept. 6/03



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Nancy Wilkin  
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Date: Jan. 15/04

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## BALLINGALL ISLETS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited.

**Landing on Ballingall Islets Ecological Reserve is restricted by permit to protect the sensitive ecosystem.** Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

### Primary Role

The **primary** role of Ballingall Islets Ecological Reserve is to protect seabird nesting habitat. Established in 1963, this small rocky archipelago in Trincomali Channel, off the west coast of Galiano Island, totals less than one hectare of land. It was originally designated as a nature park to protect colonies of double-crested and pelagic cormorants as well as seagulls, but now it has become a historic nesting site for both these species. At the time of designation, 28 nests of double-crested cormorants and 11 nests of pelagic cormorants were observed. Nesting failures, due in part to human disturbance, have caused a severe decline in cormorant populations in the Strait of Georgia and both species of cormorants were last observed at Ballingall Islets in 1987. Double-crested cormorants traditionally nested in the dead gnarled juniper trees that cling to the islets. It is hoped that by preserving and possibly enhancing this habitat, they will nest here once again.

Ballingall Islets Ecological Reserve is also important for actively nesting gulls and pigeon guillemots.

### Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Disruption of birds by increased visitation by kayakers and boaters for wildlife viewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Replace signs in adjacent Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park to reflect the change in designation of Ballingall Islets Ecological Reserve, describe the sensitivity of the area and include landing restrictions.</li> <li>➤ Install signs in key locations in the ecological reserve.</li> </ul>
Lack of protection of foreshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Add foreshore to the ecological reserve to enhance protection of upland values and the marine environment. Consult with First Nations.</li> </ul>
Removal of nesting trees from ecological reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Work with the local community to increase the appreciation of the island as a seabird nesting area.</li> <li>➤ Investigate the replacement of nesting (dead) trees with artificial structures to encourage nesting.</li> <li>➤ Develop a monitor program with assistance from the ecological reserve warden.</li> </ul>

### Conservation

- |                                   |                                     |   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Representation<br>- ecosection    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Upland area too small to be representative  |
| - biogeoclimatic subzone/variant  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Upland area too small to be representative  |
| Special Features                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Historic cormorant nesting site and habitat for other breeding seabirds   |
| Rare/Endangered Values            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Historic nesting site for the blue-listed double-crested cormorant (25 nests last observed in 1987). Historic nesting site for the yellow-listed (S3-S4 conservation concern category) pelagic cormorant (2 nests last observed in 1987). |
| Scientific/Research Opportunities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Seabird research opportunities, recovery strategies for cormorants  |

### Recreation

- |   |                                     |   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Representation<br>backcountry destination | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not Applicable  |
| travel corridor                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not Applicable  |
| local recreation                          | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not Applicable  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Ecological reserves are not meant for outdoor recreation; however, some kayaking, boating and wildlife viewing occurs. Management will work with groups to address potential impacts. |
| Special Opportunities                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | None known at this time   |
| Education/Interpretation Opportunities    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Offsite education potential   |

### Cultural Heritage

- |                 |                          |                         |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Representation  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Values unknown          |
| Special Feature | <input type="checkbox"/> | None known at this time |

### Other Management Considerations

- |                                      |                                     |  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Other Designations                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not Applicable   |
| Relationship to other PAs            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Part of a system of protected areas focused on bird breeding areas in coastal BC. One of 152 ecological reserves in BC. Adjacent to Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park. |
| Co-operative Management Arrangements | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not Applicable   |
| Partnerships                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ecological reserve warden  |

Vulnerability



Human visitation, including from adjacent provincial marine park (Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park), marine contamination, lack of options for nesting sites when roosting trees blow down in storms

Relationship to other Strategies



Not Applicable

**Area:** 0.2 hectares

**Date of establishment:**

November 28, 1963

Status changed to an ecological reserve as part of *the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act, 2000*.