

Victoria Palaeontology Society Field Trip

When: Sunday, July 19, 2020

Where: Muir Creek, Sooke, BC Low tide, 0.2m

Directions: Meet at the Helmcken Road Park and Ride at 9:00am to arrange carpooling.

COVID-19 Instructions: Phase 3 guidelines allow for groups of up to 6, 'outside your bubble' socially distanced. Carpooling allowed for those who are comfortable, facemask required in vehicles. Hand sanitizer also required.

Dues and Waiver: Annual dues must be paid in full (\$30) to attend field trips. Dues will be accepted at the field trip. It's a new season, so the usual insurance waiver will be made available to sign before leaving the park and ride.

Fossils: Tertiary marine fauna. The cross-stratified sandstone cliffs show layers of abundant mollusks. The sandstone and conglomerate rocks in the intertidal area also contain numerous fossils. While mollusks are most abundant, the area has produced a diverse inshore fauna including gastropods, bivalves, barnacles, tubeworms, brachiopods, echinoderms, coral and the bones and teeth of marine mammals. Plants fossils (carbonaceous woody layers, isolated leaved and limbs) are less common and generally are not well preserved. A comprehensive study of the Sooke Formation fossils (collected mostly in the Muir Creek area) was by Clark and Arnold (1923).

Geology: The Sooke Formation is the youngest component of the Tertiary sediments along southwestern British Columbia called the Carmanah Group (Muller et al. 1981). The exact age of the Formation is unknown and estimated to be approximately 25M years (late Oligocene) based largely on the abundant mulluscan fauna.

Collecting: Collect conservatively. This is a popular beach for outdoor recreation and should be respected as such; defacing the cliff walls should be avoided as it is both unsightly and contributes to hazards such as erosion and instability. Abundant material can be collected from the beach and from large blocks which have fallen from the cliffs. Do not leave piles of rock debris after collecting. Scatter any rock debris from collecting and try to leave the beach looking as natural as possible. A rock hammer and chisel are fine, although a jackknife comes in handy on the soft sandstone.

Preparation: This is a beach setting; footwear should be appropriate for wet and sandy shores. Dress in layers as it can get windy; sunglasses, hats and sunscreen are healthy choices. Bring water and snacks or a bag lunch.

Contact: Please confirm in advance if you plan to join the field trip. Message Jerri Wilkins via the VicPS Facebook page or via email at jlwilkins2@hotmail.com. See you July 19th!