



# A Rare Rainforest

The Forest of  
Lynn Canyon Park

## A Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre Information Sheet

### What is a Temperate Rainforest?

The temperate rainforest of Lynn Canyon Park represents one of the earth's most biologically productive ecosystems. The moderate temperature, mild climate and abundant rainfall create an environment that is ideal for growing big coniferous trees. The average rainfall in Lynn Canyon Park is more than 200 cm per year. The air in the forest is cool and moist. Fallen logs and nurse stumps provide a nutrient-rich habitat for growing plants and young trees. Fungi help to decompose the old wood of fallen trees and stumps, returning the nutrients to the soil.

### Where Do Temperate Rainforests Grow?

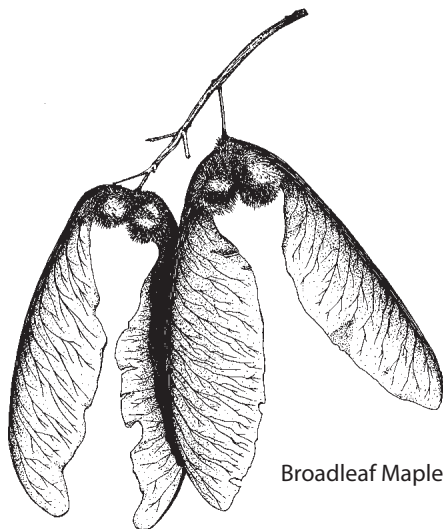
Temperate rainforests are found along the coast of North America, Chile, New Zealand, Norway and Tasmania. Temperate rainforest grow in narrow bands on valley floors and low mountainous slopes. Originally, these forests grew on nearly every continent, but approximately half of them have now been logged. British Columbia is home to 25% of the earth's remaining coastal temperate rainforest. In British Columbia, temperate rainforests grow in the coastal mountain range. Clouds form on the slopes that face the ocean, and the resulting rainfall can produce massive trees. Other areas of temperate rainforest in BC include Haida Gwaii and the west coast of Vancouver Island.

### What Grows in the Rainforest?

Temperate rainforests contain some of the world's oldest trees. Among the common coniferous trees in Lynn Canyon Park are the Douglas-fir, western redcedar, western hemlock and sitka spruce. Deciduous trees such as the vine maple, broadleaf maple, red alder and black cottonwood grow beside streams and in recently disturbed areas. They help stabilize and condition the soil in the forest and provide cover for conifer seedlings. Many smaller plants also grow here, including various species of ferns and moss, and shrubs such as salmonberry, thimbleberry, Oregon grape and salal.

### Who lives in the rainforest?

Lynn Canyon Park is home to many species of birds, mammals, invertebrates and amphibians. Countless insects live here, like the mayfly, stonefly and caddisfly. These forests are also an important habitat for squirrels, salamanders, raccoons, mice, deer, coyotes and bears. Many species of birds live in Lynn Canyon Park, including red-breasted sapsuckers, northern flickers, pacific wrens, chickadees, crows and owls. The banana slug is one of Lynn Canyon Park's most common residents. The banana slug is an important forest recycler who feasts on dead leaves and debris from the forest floor.



Broadleaf Maple Seeds

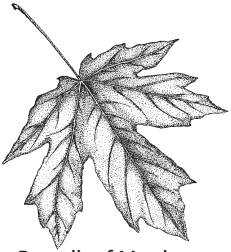


Douglas-fir Cone

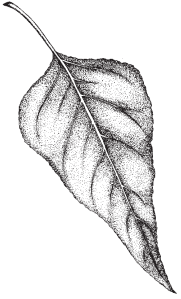
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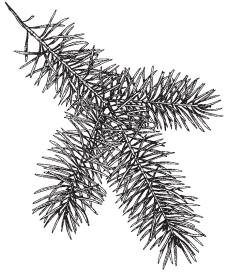
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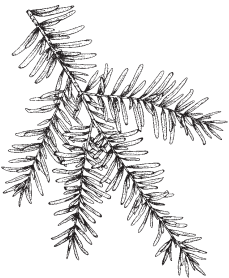
Broadleaf Maple



Cottonwood



Douglas-fir



Western Hemlock



Western Redcedar

### **What is the History of the Local forest?**

The original temperate rainforest in the Lynn valley area was awe-inspiring. Ancient coniferous trees towered above the canyon. The trees were so huge that the base lived in one set of climatic conditions, the trunk in another, and the crown in a third. The straight and knot-free trees drew lumbermen and settlers to the North Shore. The first lumber mill began operating in 1863. Giant stumps are reminders of the ancient forest that once grew in Lynn Valley. After the canyon had been logged, land developers donated 5 hectares of the canyon to the District of North Vancouver. They hoped that the incredible scenery would entice people to buy real estate in Lynn Valley. The District accepted the land and added another 4 hectares. Lynn Canyon Park and the Suspension Bridge officially opened in 1912. In 1991, the District of North Vancouver added 241 hectares of land to the park, making Lynn Canyon Park the largest municipal park in North Vancouver.

### **What to Look For on Your Hike.**

#### **Nurse Logs**

Look on the ground for fallen trees. These logs act as nurseries to grow a new generation of trees and smaller plants. Many animals use nurse logs for shelter and food. Nurse logs are full of nutrients and retain moisture in the heat of summer.

#### **Giant Stumps**

Big, hollow stumps are all that remain of some of Lynn Valley's largest trees. Look for the rectangular notches in the sides of stumps. Loggers stood on boards placed in the notches. This raised them off the ground and made the sawing easier. It took several days to hand-cut one of the giant conifers.

#### **Bracket Fungi**

Look on the sides of older trees for white semi-circles that are brown on top. These "bracket" or "shelf" fungi are the fruit of a much larger fungus. The mycelia of the fungi grow inside the tree, slowly breaking it down until one day, the tree falls to the ground.

#### **The Understory**

At the top of a hill, look down at the dense shrubs and ground cover that make up the understory of the coastal temperate rainforest. As trees fall, smaller plants grow in the sunny spots that are left behind. Many of these plants have berries that are popular with local birds and mammals.

#### **Wetlands and Riparian Areas**

As you walk from the upper canyon to the creek, you will see that the trees and plants change. Broad-leaved trees like red alder and black cottonwood are more common beside streams. Red alder have bacteria in their roots that take nitrogen from the air and put it into the soil. These forest at the edge of the water are important homes for animals like frogs, salamanders, mayflies, and dippers - animals who need both land and water to survive.



Douglas Squirrel