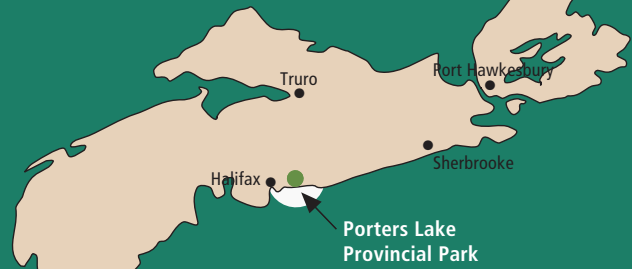


To Reach the Park

Porters Lake Provincial Park is 4.4 kilometres (2.8 miles) south of Highway 107, Exit 19, on West Porters Lake Road. The park is located 23 kilometres (14 miles) east of Dartmouth.



RESERVATIONS

1-888-544-3434

9:00 am to 11:00 pm AT (7 days a week)

www.novascotiaparks.ca (24 hours)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parks and Recreation Division
Department of Natural Resources

RR # 1, Belmont,
Colchester County,
Nova Scotia, B0M 1C0
(902) 662-3030
www.novascotiaparks.ca

Department of
Natural Resources

PO Box 112
Middle Musquodoboit,
Nova Scotia, B0N 1X0
(902) 384-2290

Porters Lake Provincial Park
(902) 827-2250
(mid-May to mid-October)



Photos courtesy Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

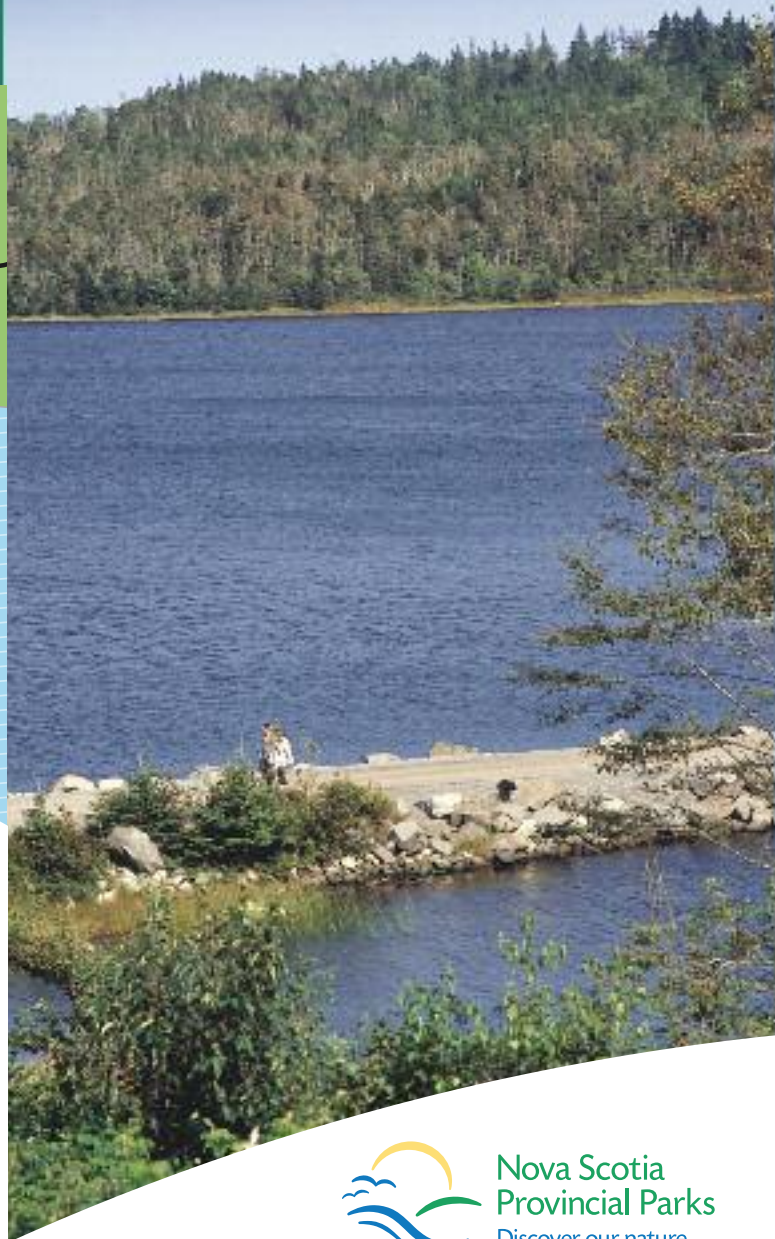
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Porters Lake

Provincial Park



Porters Lake Provincial Park invites you to escape into a natural oasis. Located on Nova Scotia's quietly beautiful Marine Drive, you'll enjoy boating, fishing or swimming on this spectacular 24-km long freshwater lake. Discover this peaceful, yet central, location to explore the recreational and cultural attractions of the Eastern Shore, all within moments of the urban excitement of the Halifax-Dartmouth area.

Natural History and Landscape If you were to tour the entire coastline of Nova Scotia, you'd notice how it changes from place to place. Some coastlines feature granite barrens, others have towering sandstone cliffs, while still others have gentle sandy shores. To date, 80 distinct landscapes have been identified in the province. Porters Lake Provincial Park is found within the *Eastern Shore Coastal Beaches Landscape*.

This unique coastal landscape starts at Halifax Harbour, reaches up as far as Ship Harbour, and extends up to 12 kilometres inland. It features a low coastline of resistant rocks covered by varying thicknesses of glacial deposits. A post-glacial rise in sea levels has produced what is called a 'drowned coastline' along which you'll find a complex shoreline of major inlets, islands, offshore reefs, embayments and major beach-dune systems.

If you could peel back the layers of the park you'd eventually reveal its foundation: a bedrock of 500-million-year-old slate formed from sand and mud eroded from an ancient African continent and dominated by greywacke (a type of sandstone).

Up on the surface, you'll find a more recent, yet still ancient, clue to the park's age in the numerous *drumlins* that dot the coast. Drumlins are whale-shaped hills of clay and stones formed by retreating glaciers 15,000 years ago. (In Gaelic *druim* means the crest of a hill.) Today, many of these coastal drumlins are either entirely or partially eroded. Take a walk along the shore and examine their exposed sides – year after year, wave and tidal action removes more and more of the drumlin's rich contents and reworks it into a new coastline of spits and barrier beaches connecting headlands and islands. The shore here was once inside that drumlin! These natural barriers protect large shallow estuaries, allowing salt marshes to develop. So as the drumlins slowly disappear, yet another new landscape is formed.

Most of the inlets along this coast are drowned river estuaries caused by the rising sea level, not fault-zone action. Porters Lake, however, is an exception: it occupies a geological fault zone.

What's your favourite water sport? The 24-kilometre long lake provides excellent opportunities for boating, fishing and swimming.

Plants and Animals Your wanderings may take you through scattered maple and birch, as well as past some white spruce and balsam fir individuals that survived Hurricane Juan. An area where white spruce is, or was, dominant indicates you're either on a drumlin or abandoned farmland. (Or both, the rich drumlin contents made for good farming.)

Around the salt marsh and sand dune plant communities, large beds of eel grass are common. Further inland, spruce, fir and pine are more abundant.

Birds love the park and surrounding area as much as people do! The many inlets and estuaries along the Eastern Shore provide migration and over-wintering habitat for a variety of waterfowl, including common goldeneye and an occasional scaup. Did you know more numbers of black ducks and Canada geese stop in Cole Harbour, Chezzetcook Inlet, Petpeswick Inlet and Musquodoboit Harbour than anywhere else in the province? This is also an excellent area to catch sight of the majestic bald eagle and maybe even the endangered piping plover.



Facilities Ten pull-through RV sites are available with water and electrical hook-ups. Those with trailers, campers or tents can choose between lakeside sites just steps from the water, or more elevated sites offering an unobstructed panoramic view of the lake. If you really want to get back to nature, choose a canoe- or kayak-in site. And, a number of provincial park facilities just down the road offer a variety of recreational opportunities. Bring your bike or slip on your hiking shoes and explore expansive trail networks, or grab your gear for some of the best surfing in the Maritimes.

Area Attractions

Numerous local festivals and events are held throughout the summer months, including:

June Rhubarb Round-Up
Fisherman's Life Museum, Oyster Pond

Aug Halifax County Exhibition
Middle Musquodoboit

Clam Harbour Sand Castle Competition
Clam Harbour Beach Provincial Park

- The Cole Harbour – Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park System, a historic rail bed that is now part of the Trans Canada Trail, lets you hike over sandy beaches, past coastal salt marches, over eroding headlands and through important wildlife habitat.
- The variety of coastal ecosystems found at Conrads Island make it a birders paradise. Remember to tread gently – this is prime nesting habitat for the endangered piping plover.
- Old Hall Wilderness Heritage Centre, just 5 kms from here, explores the connection between community, history, industry and the wilderness.
- For information on these and other attractions please consult the Nova Scotia Doers and Dreamers Guide, visit a Visitor Information Centre or the website at www.novascotia.com

Hurricane Juan

On the night of September 29, 2003, Hurricane Juan swept across Nova Scotia changing parts of the province for decades to come. Here in Porters Lake, most of the mature softwoods that used to embrace each campsite succumbed to the storm's fury and had to be removed. But while many may think of the storm as damaging and devastating, in nature's terms it was simply a means to a fresh start. Today, thanks to Juan, we usher in a "new" era for Porters Lake Provincial Park. One that offers more spacious, less crowded campsites with an enhanced view of the lake. . . . a must to experience especially at sunrise or sunset.

Both Lawrencetown and Rainbow Haven beach parks provide supervised swimming. The often heavy surf that rolls ashore at Lawrencetown Beach makes this a year-round favourite with surfers.



The scenic villages of the Eastern Shore

