



## Cultural History

Our traditional Coast Salish Big House is the focus of North Vancouver Outdoor School's environmental studies through cultural history. Since 1986 *Skw'une-was* has been teaching the historical practices of first nations people in a direct living experience: students, teachers, parent volunteers and Squamish cultural interpreters re-enact daily life in and around the Big House.

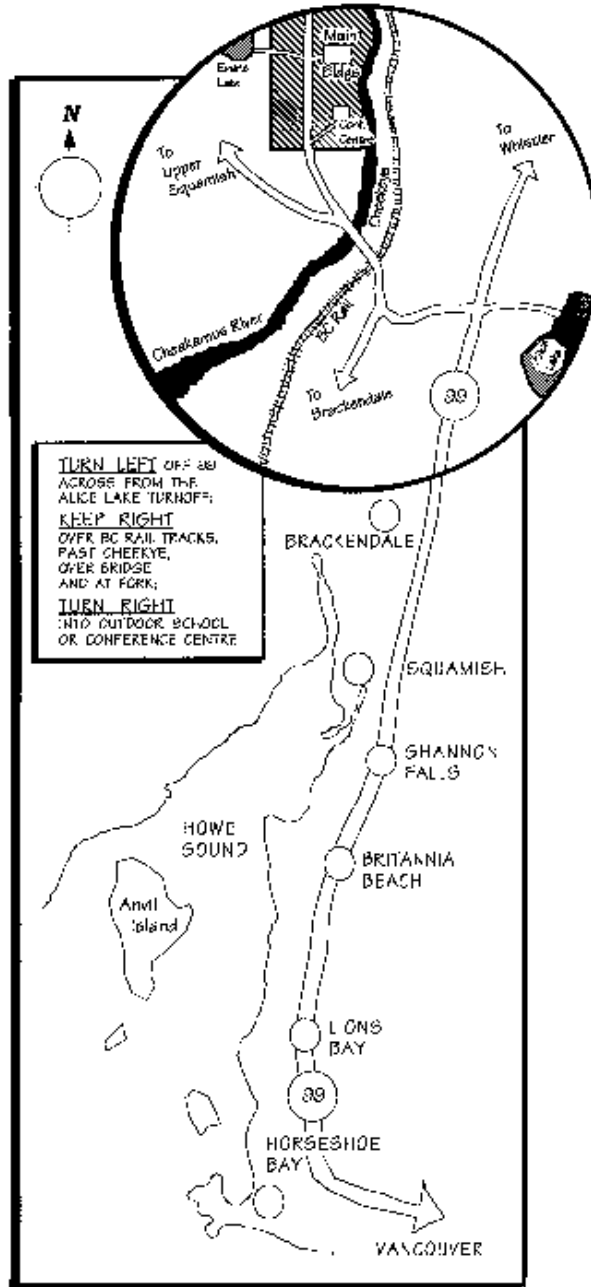
*Skw'une-was* provides a contextual experience demonstrating the influence of human society on the natural balance throughout the seasons, over time, and across cultures.

### Program Booking or Information

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## Finding Paradise Valley NORTH VANCOUVER OUTDOOR SCHOOL

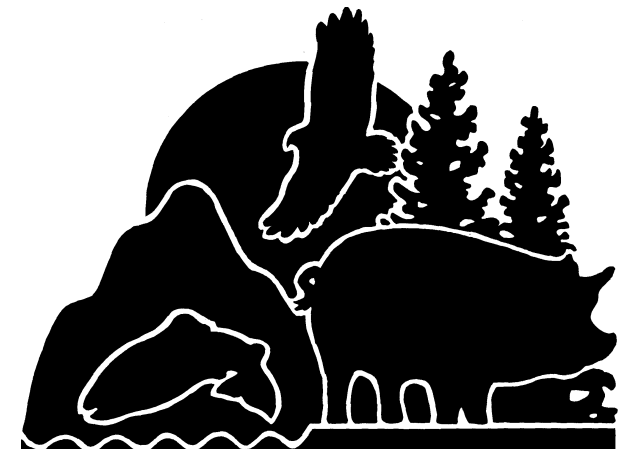


## NORTH VANCOUVER OUTDOOR SCHOOL PROGRAMS

learning in Nature's classrooms



Foundations  
 for learning  
 that lasts  
 a lifetime  
 through  
 Participation  
 in Education



## Natural History

Involved in environmental studies through natural history since 1969, North Vancouver Outdoor School provides the opportunity to work in the outdoor classroom of Paradise Valley near Squamish.

Visitors work together with expert resident staff to develop programs: 165 hectares (420 acres) of Outdoor School's forests, streams, ponds and special resource classrooms are learning centres. On-site staff also means food service, first aid and 24-hour supervision concerns are covered. Cabins are electrically heated, with two indoor bathrooms each, allowing comfortable year-round living.

Wander under 1,000-year-old cedars; gaze at hundreds of wintering bald eagles; watch a lamb being born or marvel at thousands of spawning salmon: at Outdoor School, these unique experiences lay the foundation for life-long learning.

## NORTH VANCOUVER OUTDOOR SCHOOL

Box 250 (2170 Paradise Valley Rd.)  
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# Natural History Programs


All Outdoor School's environmental programs are based on a common teaching strategy.

- 1) Create an emotional tie between students and some natural thing, like a newly born chick or ancient massive cedar.
- 2) Teach lessons in a real setting, an environment where all senses can collect information, such as our salmon hatchery or farm.
- 3) Have students work with enthusiastic teachers: role models with special skills in fields such as fisheries technology or cultural interpretation.
- 4) Equip students for exploration and inquiry with real tools, like binoculars, magnifying glasses or bentwood boxes.

While our approach continues to evolve, we have consistently found a long-lasting impact from NVOS learning. Learners gain understanding of the ways in which human demands influence the natural balance. This gives them a means to anticipate where our future endeavours could lead us and to make more environmentally sustainable decisions.

## AQUATIC SYSTEMS


### SALMON HATCHERY



Explore the life cycle of the coho and chum salmon which use NVOS as a spawning ground. In the working hatchery, become a fisheries' biologist: discover the intricacies of the aquatic habitat adjacent to the hatchery; monitor survival of millions of wild fry in the spawning channels. Perform vital tasks: fertilize eggs; feed; raise and release over 100,000 fry annually to join in the migratory odyssey of all salmon.

## FOREST SYSTEMS


### FOREST LAB



Gain a reason to understand forest processes and the human role in influencing them by becoming a foster parent to tree seedlings at NVOS. As a forester, use microscopes and hands-on exhibits. Investigate interactions in a complex environment of virgin and successional forests. Meet the challenge to create resource management plans. Understand the need for wise forest use as imperative for a continued healthy way of life. Cherish tomorrow's inheritance in today's forests.

## FOOD SYSTEMS


### FARM LAB



Discover the source of food: a central theme on the NVOS farm. As a student farmer, discover how pigs, sheep, goats, ducks, chickens and bees are all part of the human food web. Help in birthing or hatching; husbandry, identifying useful animal traits, farm economics and management. Through direct experiences, examine land use and humane care of animals, focusing attention on agricultural issues and alternatives.

## ECO SYSTEMS

### MULTI-PURPOSE LAB



As a student zoologist, observe winter Bald Eagles. Since eagles, other birds and wildlife at NVOS are often seasonal and migratory, consider environmental influences far beyond Paradise Valley. In this proposed centre, take part in a variety of activities to enhance understanding of habitats, physical adaptations, and physiology. Focusing attention on the diversity just outside our centre; build a concern that is global.

# Cultural History Program

## Skw'une-was "TOGETHER"

Step off the train at Cheakamus station. Somewhere between today and yesterday, it is a fitting beginning for a cultural adventure and environmental exploration. An Outdoor School guide leads the way through a forest of cedars and alders, pausing to interpret nature's messages through stories and legends.

Beside a salmon spawning river, a Salish drum sounds a compelling invitation. A *Skw'une-was* Salish elder hands out cedar branchlets, welcoming all into the timelessness of the Big House.

Inside the house, a cultural interpreter from the Squamish nation speaks of co-operation; of sharing in a large extended family. As part of a smaller family, together with a volunteer family 'elder', prepare to learn a traditional skill. Fisher and hunter; wood worker; weaver; cedar bark worker, food gatherer: each has a role in providing for the whole.

Investigate the family living area: here is a basket with the tools and materials for skilled workers; here are the utensils for food preparation, and the bentwood box for cooking. Slip into the daily routine of working together; caring for one another. Fetch water. Split wood with bone wedges and wooden mauls. Light the fire. Carefully lower red-hot rocks into water for steaming food.

The modern world fades as this 'old' world is rekindled to live on in memory.

