



Become a Park Steward!

Vancouver has some of the world's most beautiful urban parks because of community members, like you, who value and steward our parks and natural areas. Vancouver's urban forest canopy covers about 18% of the city. With our goal to increase the canopy coverage to 22% by 2050, the Park Steward program plays an integral role. Trees not only mark the changing of the seasons, but also enhance our physical and mental health, provide food in our gardens, absorb rainwater, and support biodiversity. There are many ways to care for our urban forests including: planting, watering, education, monitoring and other community stewardship opportunities.

What is the Park Steward program?

The volunteer Park Stewards program, established by the Vancouver Park Board, support community members who want to preserve and maintain our parks' ecological health, particularly at key biodiversity and urban forest restoration sites throughout Vancouver.

Who is a steward?

A steward is a person who takes on the responsible care of something. With this definition, a park steward is an individual who enhances the biodiversity and urban forest health in the City. With the variety of parks within the City of Vancouver, each park offers unique opportunities. Some parks are suitable for a classroom of children or youth, while other parks are more suitable for an individual or small group.

Why become a Park Steward?

- Research has proven that green spaces provide mental and physical benefits for individuals. This volunteer program allows you to adopt and visit your park on a timeline that is fluid and flexible to accommodate each individual's schedule. You can bring friends, family or your dog, come in the rain or sun, come on a Sunday, Monday or any day of the week.
- Meet like-minded individuals who share your passion for the environment! The Park Board hosts an annual Park Stewards celebration where volunteers and Park Board partners will be invited to share stories and experiences, hear what's happening in other parks and enjoy some good food and drinks.
- Park Stewards also receive training, exclusive access to workshops, a high-visibility vest, tools and other supplies needed to ensure your success.

What is expected of me?

Each Park Steward will adopt a site and tend to it throughout the year. The Park Steward will be expected to contribute regularly throughout the year in order to care for their site. As each site is unique, the role, responsibilities, frequency and amount of time the Park Steward contributes will vary. The role of a Park Steward will also change and evolve with the seasons.

FALL - TREE & SHRUB PLANTING

- As the leaves change colour, go for a forest walk and learn about why our trees change from green to orange to red. Fall is also a perfect time to plant trees. Planting trees before the wet winter gives trees the best chance of surviving our dry summers.
- **Park Board Support:** We will donate trees and shrubs to plant in your stewardship site.

WINTER - REMOVAL OF HARDY INVASIVE PLANTS

- Many invasive plants, such as English holly, Himalayan blackberry, and English Ivy, are hardy enough to stay green all winter, making them easy to identify and remove. Spend the day ensuring that our trees stay healthy by participating in a work party to manage invasive plants.
- **Park Board Support:** We can supply tools, plant information sheets and workshops to help you learn about invasive plants and how to manage them.

SPRING - POLLINATORS AND MIGRATING BIRDS

- Trees and understory forest shrubs are important for pollinator and migrating bird habitat. You can help by building and maintaining mason bee homes and cutting invasive plants back to allow the local plants to flourish. You can also participate in community bird counts and photograph or record birds and their behaviour.
- **Park Board Support:** We provide stewards with mason bee cocoons and supplies to get pollination projects started.

SUMMER - MONITOR AND MAINTAIN

- Our annual summer droughts can be tough on trees - be on the lookout for water bags or “water me” tags on neighbourhood trees and become a tree guardian by giving those trees a drink. It is also a great time to remove morning glory that smothers the newly planted trees. Become a citizen scientist by tracking the survival and health of the trees.
- **Park Board Support:** We can work together to identify monitoring projects in your local park.

Where can I pitch in?

- Captain Cook Park
- Everett Crowley Park
- Fifth and Pine Pop-Up Park
- Jericho Beach Park
- John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park
- Memorial West Park
- Oak Meadows Park
- Queen Elizabeth Park
- Ravine Park
- Renfrew Community Park
- Renfrew Ravine Park
- Trout Lake Park

If you have an idea for stewardship in your local park, please email parkstewards@vancouver.ca to talk about it or sign up!