



**Irving Nature Park, Saint John, New Brunswick
Permanent Trail #170**

Atlantic Director's Walk

5/7/8/9/13/15 Km Rating 2B/3B

**Seasonal. Trails are generally open May 1 to October 16, 8a.m. to 8p.m.
Check with park for actual opening/closing dates and times. 506-653-7367**

This walk begins at the Irving Nature Park, 1790 Sand Cove Road. Washrooms and parking are available. **Directions:** From Highway 1, take exit 119 south to Sand Cove Road, turn right and continue to the end. Park at the “Flags” Parking lot at the beginning of the causeway. **Please note:** the Start Point is a map reference only. There is no “Walk Box” at this establishment. Please refer to Irving Nature Park map/info brochure for trails and amenities mentioned in these directions.

Just minutes from the city of Saint John is an oasis of forest and marsh, beaches and trails. This attraction contains no less than six different ecosystems within the 243-ha (600- acre) site with a diversity of flora and fauna. There are 11 km of rugged Bay of Fundy coastline. The park was created to protect this fragile area, yet allow the public to come and learn about it.

There are eight different walking trails of varying lengths, as well as a roadway that encircles the park. A boardwalk that extends into the salt marsh is ideal for birdwatching. You can watch the harbour seals diving for food or sunning on the rocks from the Seal Observation deck. The park’s highest point is the Lookout Tower. Using binoculars mounted on-site, admire the breathtaking 360° view of the land and sea above the treetops!

FOR YOUR SAFETY AND ENJOYMENT:

- 1. WALK ON LEFT FACING TRAFFIC** as much as possible. When walking on auto trail and roads walk single file when there is oncoming traffic.
- 2. OBSERVE ALL SIGNS AND POSTED WARNINGS.** Stay off ‘No Trail’ paths and stay behind fences and barricades.
- 3. WATCH ROUTE CONDITIONS.** Fallen leaves obscure paths and hide slippery surfaces. Watch for exposed roots and rocks. Wet wooden surfaces can be slippery. Mud and loose gravel are slippery. Use hand rails wherever offered.
- 4. USE LITTER RECEPTACLES.** Leave only footprints.

WALKS: The following options are available for single or combined trails covering distances of five to fifteen kilometers. See **Start Point** and **directions** on reverse.

1. **5 km Sheldon Point Trail** (beach/trail/road). Rating: 3B.
If you wish credit for the lighthouse program you must do this trail.
2. **7 km Irving Nature Park auto road.** Rating 2B
3. **7 km Irving Nature Park perimeter trail** without the marsh boardwalk and observation tower. Rating: 2B
4. **8 km Saints Rest Beach Causeway and Irving Nature Park auto road.** Rating 2B
5. **9 km Saints Rest Beach Causeway and Irving Nature Park perimeter trails.**
Rating 2B
6. **13 km Sheldon Point Trail, Saints Rest Beach Causeway, Irving Nature Park auto road**
7. **15 km Sheldon Point Trail, Saints Rest Beach Causeway, Irving Nature Park perimeter trails**

Here are descriptions of 3 of the walks.

1. Sheldon Point Trail 5 km

NOTE: Extreme high tides limit access to the beach several times per year.

From "The Flags" parking area turn left onto the beach. Follow the coast past clay banks, then gravel banks and old gravel pit directly opposite Mahogany Island. Continue until you see "Extreme Tides" sign on left where Sheldon Point trail continues off-beach (.85 km). Note: sign's message faces walkers coming off trail and onto beach. Trail continues with a 150 m climb along edge of coast and entering alders. Watch for trail markers and direction signs once in the woods - these tell you are still on the trail. At 1.65 km from the start the trail splits — straight ahead, or to the right along the fence to picnic shelter and Sheldon Point look-off (toilet facilities here). Turn right to the point and go around it, uphill and reconnect to the main trail (turn right). Shortly afterward a stair/bridge crosses a small ravine/stream.

Continue trail, generally upward from this point, and near its end you will notice a fairly quick descent (watch for stony surface on steep parts - can be slippery!) At the bottom you soon arrive at a picnic area to the left and an open view of MacLaren's Beach and toward right (on a clear day) Partridge Island lighthouse. Maintain the trail until you arrive at a large barn. Turn left before the barn and cross grassy rise to Sheldon Point parking area, trailhead sign, picnic shelters and toilet facilities (3.6 km). Return to the start by exiting the Sheldon Point trail parking area at Sand Cove Road. Turn left and for safety, please walk on the left side of the road facing traffic. The road goes up; crests just after the old CFBC radio building on left and then a long rewarding descent to arrive back at "The Flags".

4. Saints Rest Beach Causeway and Irving Nature Park Auto trail 8 km

From "The Flags" parking area, cross Saints Rest Beach causeway. Enter park at gates, begin auto road taking road on left (facing traffic, starts with steep hill up). Maintain auto trail, always keeping left.

WALKING HAZARD: Narrow road, no shoulder, blind turns and hills. Keep left, always watch and listen for oncoming traffic.

5. Saints Rest Beach causeway and Irving Nature Park perimeter trails (Squirrel/Seal/ Heron) 9 km

From "The Flags" parking area, cross Saints Rest Beach causeway. Enter park at gates and enter Squirrel Trail (red) on right at trail head. A short distance along the trail there is a sign on the right for the Marsh Boardwalk. Turn right and follow the boardwalk to the end. It is possible to see several species of birds here. Retrace your steps to Squirrel Trail. Turn right. At the junction of Squirrel (red) and Seal (yellow) trails, continue on Squirrel Trail by turning left, go up the stairs and cross the auto road (information kiosk is in view to the right).

Midway up the hill and to the left is the trail to the Observation Tower (57 step stairway to the observation deck). Take this trail for a magnificent view of the salt marsh. Then retrace your steps to the junction of Squirrel and Seal trails. Turn left, water will be on your right. Follow Seal Trail (yellow) to the junction of Seal and Heron Trails (orange). Follow Heron Trail (orange) in its entirety... it will reconnect with Seal Trail (yellow). At Seal Trail, continue with the auto trail always to your left, Bay of Fundy always to your right. Follow Seal Trail until you pass the parking area which overlooks the welcome centre to left, arriving at Squirrel Trail head sign. Turn right on Squirrel Trail (picnic shelters to right as you enter), and return to where you started Squirrel Trail after crossing auto trail 2 more times. Turn right, exit park gates and return across the beach causeway to parking area.

We hope you enjoyed your walk.

IRVING NATURE PARK MAP

