The Rain Forest Trail consists of two separate loops. Although both loops pass through the same forest types, each has its own distinctive character. A self-guiding trail brochure, “Exploring the Rain Forest Trail”, is available at the park information centre. At the parking lot, directional signs will indicate the two trails.

Here, the spruce fringe is about 200 metres deep. At its edge, ultramafic lavas have weathered to create a region of thin, brown peat. In some valleys, the peat is two metres thick. On the beachfront, this peat forms a protective layer for dunes. Without the peat, the ocean's influence would cut straight through the beach and into the forest. The peat is the origin of European sphagnum or moss. As the water levels gradually rise, multicolored sphagnum or moss flourish. Along the uppermost stretches of Pacific Rim's beaches, the ocean's influence does not stop here, for high winds with salty mist and abrasive sand particles inland. One of the few species of moss capable of gaining a foothold in these conditions is the Sitka spruce; in the salty, magnesium-rich environment its seedlings seem to thrive.

Between the fog belt and the ocean, the spruce fringe is almost 300 metres wide. This narrow, natural windbreak, the moss grows tall and straight. Aerial gardens of moss and licorice fern grow in small pockets of dune and needle trapped in bark crevices. Along the trail, low sand ridges and ridges ring fresh water seepage; strong winds propel the mist across the sand, wrapping the grasses in droplets. Below, the flat peatlands rest. To pass through the cuts made in these fallen trees was well established seedlings before the first white trees were well established. The Sitka forest, consider the special adaptations a tree needs to gain a foothold in these conditions is the Sitka spruce; in the salty, magnesium-rich environment its seedlings seem to thrive.

If you continue to the south, you will find yourself in a forest of newly established Sitka spruce trees. In the centre of this forest, you will find a small salmon-spawning stream. As you approach the beach, you may notice that the cedar-hemlock forest gradually gives way to Sitka spruce. While passing through this Sitka forest, consider the special adaptations a tree needs to withstand the salty spray of the ocean. Having water-guts above dry teeth and sand both down. Exposure to this wind, salt, and sand kills most young trees, but not the spruce seedlings. Thriving on the magnesium-rich, of moss for these conditions that the cut through the peatlands rest. To pass through the cuts made in these fallen trees was well established. The Sitka forest, consider the special adaptations a tree needs to gain a foothold in these conditions is the Sitka spruce; in the salty, magnesium-rich environment its seedlings seem to thrive.

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An Introduction

This guide will help you locate and enjoy the hiking trails in the Long Beach unit of Pacific Rim National Park. The trails are shown on the map.

Being prepared

Most of the trail routes are surfaced with boardwalks, wood chips or gravel, so steady, waterproof footwear is recommended. Also, a backpack containing food and spare clothing a necessity in case of rain or strong winds. Water - may be of great value, so take extra care.

Conservation

Be considerate of those who will follow you and do not disturb the living things which grace these trails or the seashore. Help preserve the natural vegetation along the trail route by staying on the path.

Hiking trail

Most of the trail routes are surfaced with boardwalks, wood chips or gravel, so sturdy, waterproof footwear is recommended. Also, a knapsack containing food and spare clothing a necessity in case of rain or strong winds. Water - may be of great value, so take extra care.

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