

Gabriola coastal placenames

If you enjoyed Captain John T. Walbran's *British Columbia Coast Names*, first published in 1909, you will love the new update, *The Encyclopedia of Raincoast Place Names*, by Andrew Scott, 2009. This is an excellent, entertaining, and informative reference book. In spite of its 650+ pages however, some of the smaller islands and islets have been omitted.

The following is a cumulative list of coastal placenames that have been published in *SHALE* at one time or another. Details available in the new encyclopedia (*S*), or in the book by Aula Bell and Neil Aitken, *Gabriola Island Place Names*, published in 1996 (*BA*), or in Walbran (*W*) are not included. Snunéymux^w names are also not included—this requires the help of someone who knows the language.

Gabriola & nearby islets

ACORN ISLAND (*BA*)

In the Flat Tops. Formerly Southeast Island and Goodalls Island.

ARBUTUS POINT

Name for Malaspina Point in an 1853 Admiralty plan of Nanaimo Harbour based, in part, on Hudson's Bay Company surveys.

BANYAN POINT

Name for Law Point in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

BARE ISLAND

Former name for Carlos Island.

BATH ISLAND (*BA*)

In the Flat Tops. Probably so named because of the large potholes in the sandstone on the island. Bath Island was possibly named by Royal Vancouver Yacht Club member R.W. Purves in the early 1930s. Also one of the Twin Islands.

BELL'S LANDING (*BA*)

BERRY POINT (*BA*)

Also Lighthouse Point.

BILL'S REEF

Shipyard Reef between Vance and Tugboat Islands. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s.

BRANT REEF (*BA*)

BREAKWATER ISLAND (*BA*)

Formerly Long Island.

BRICKYARD BEACH

Frequently used name locally for the site of the old brickyard on Gabriola at the western entrance to False Narrows. It closed in 1950. The park there was created when a large pile of culls was bulldozed flat in 1974.

BROWN'S BAY (*BA*)

Now Leboeuf Bay.

BURIAL ISLAND

Indian Reserve #6 in Degnen Bay. The reserve is off-limits to visitors.

CALA DESCANSO ISLAND

See Descanso Island. Name sometimes used in the 1860s by pre-emptors. Often spelled "Calla Descanso" in old documents.

CALA DEL DESCANSO

Pilot Bay. Walbran was wrong.

CARLOS ISLAND (*S*)

In the Flat Tops. Formerly Bare Island.

CHANNEL ROCK

Southeast of Tugboat Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s.

CLAM BEACH

Southwest side of Vance Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s.

CLARK BAY (*BA*)

COHO POINT

Local name for the north point of Gaviola Island. A good fishing spot. The name was changed to Rowboat Point in 1944.

CORDERO POINT (S)**COX'S BAY (BA)**

Bay with no official name but known at various times as Hoggan Bay, Paradise Bay, and Peacock Bay.

COX'S POINT

See Howes Point.

DARLING'S POINT

At the end of Seagirt Road. Once owned by the Darling family. Also Preacher's Point. See Patricia Park Wharf.

DEGNEN BAY (S BA)**DESCANSO BAY (S BA)**

Formerly Knight Bay.

DESCANSO BAY PARK

Regional District of Nanaimo name for a bay that is actually over two kilometres to the west.

DESCANSO ISLAND

The names Descanso Island and Cala Descanso Island [*Cala del Descanso, Puerto Descanso*] were adaptations from the Spanish Charts of 1792 indicating Pilot Bay. They were sometimes used for all of Gabriola Island by the Hudson's Bay Company before it acquired its present name in the late 1850s.

DRAGON'S BAY

See Peterson Bay.

DRIFT POINT

Northwest entrance to Taylor Bay across from Malaspina Point. A local resident's name.

EAGLE ISLAND

Name for Saturnina Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

EASTHOM BAY (BA)**EASTHOM POINT**

A name for the former Whitbread Point, south side of Descanso Bay, not much used these days.

EGERIA ROCK (BA)

The inscription is FOE 11.1621, a reference to the times of the tides on the day of a full or new moon.

ENTRANCE ISLAND (BA)

Sometimes called Lighthouse Island although this is a former name of Snake Island.

FALSE NARROWS (BA)

Named by Captain George H. Richards, HMS *Plumper*, 1859.

FALSE NARROWS CLAM BEDS

Area at the southeast entrance of False Narrows in the Pylades Channel. Below high tide but nevertheless marked on the Regional District of Nanaimo Legal Base Map. Used by the Snunéymux^w for thousands of years and now leased to them.

FLAT TOP ISLANDS

Named as such by Captain George H. Richards, HMS *Plumper*, 1859.

FLEA ISLAND

Name for Vance Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

FOSTER'S BAY

Bounded on the north side by Malaspina Point and on the south side by Schooner Point. After John Foster and family who lived at the head of the bay.

GABRIOLA ISLAND (S)**GABRIOLA PASSAGE (S)**

Also known as Gabriola Pass.

GABRIOLA REEFS**GALIANO GALLERY (S BA)**

Official name for the largest of the Malaspina Galleries, a name given by Captain John F. Parry, HMS *Egeria*, in 1904, but rejected by the Geographic Board of Canada. The gallery is said to have been "noted" by Galiano, but there is no evidence for this in the Museo Naval Archives in Madrid. It is however, possible that Galiano visited it.

GAVIOLA ISLAND (*S BA*)

Formerly Hen Island.

GOODALL'S ISLAND (*BA*)

Former name for Acorn Island.

GREENGAGE BEACH

East-facing beach on Gabriola, south of the east end of Sears Island, north of the islet. Named for the trees of an abandoned orchard originally planted by John Silva.

GREEN'S LANDING (*BA*)GREEN WHARF (*BA*)

The origin of the name is not known (no, no—it used to be painted red). Sometimes called the Middle Wharf.

HEN ISLAND

Name for Gaviola Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

HIJOSA INLET

Narváez in 1791 used this name [*Bocas de Hijosa*] for all of Nanaimo Harbour. It was in honour of Francisco Hijosa, the *comisario* at San Blas. The name was never adopted, most likely because Hijosa had already been honoured in the 1791 chart of southern Vancouver Island.

HOGGAN BAY

Earliest known name for Cox's Bay.

HOWES POINT (*BA*)

INDIAN ISLAND

Name for Lily Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

INDIAN POINT (*BA*)JAMIESONS BEACH (*BA*)

Now Whalebone Beach.

JOINT POINT

Not surprisingly, an unofficial name. The point in Drumbeg Park overlooking Gabriola Passage. There's a park bench there.

JOSEF POINT (*S BA*)

KNIGHT BAY

Name for Descanso Bay given by Captain John F. Parry, HMS *Egeria*, in 1904 to honour Lieutenant John Harry Knight, but changed to Descanso Bay in 1906. Formerly Rocky Bay.

LAW POINT (*S BA*)

Formerly Banyan Point.

LAVENDER BAY

According to a BC Archaeology Branch document, a local name for the bay along Berry Point Road, just before you get to the junction with Seagirt Lane.

LEBOEUF BAY (*BA*)

Formerly Brown's Bay.

LIGHTHOUSE ISLAND

Early name for Snake Island. Sometimes used locally now for Entrance Island.

LIGHTHOUSE POINT (*BA*)

Another local name for Berry Point.

LILY ISLAND (*BA*)

In the Flat Tops. Formerly Indian Island.

LOCK BAY (*S BA*)

LOGAN BAY

Bay at the west end of Drumbeg Park (end of Stalker). Now unnamed.

LONG ISLAND (*BA*)

Now Breakwater Island.

LOCK BAY (*S BA*)LOW PASS (*BA*)MALASPINA GALLERIES (*S, BA*)

See Galiano Gallery.

MALASPINA POINT (*S, BA*)

Previously known as Miles Point and before that Arbutus Point. Possibly also once known as Taylor's Point. See Taylor Bay.

MAPLES WHARF (*BA*)McANDOO'S POINT (*BA*)

Likely a mis-naming of McIndoo's Point.

McDOUGALL'S BAY (*BA*)

McINDOO'S POINT

See McAndoo's Point.

MIDDLE WHARF

See Green Wharf.

MIKE'S POINT (*BA*)

MILES POINT

Name for Malaspina Point given by Captain John F. Parry, HMS *Egeria*, in 1904 to honour Lieutenant Irving Brock Miles, but changed soon after to Malaspina Point. Formerly Arbutus Point.

MOON ROCK (BA)**NANAIMO HARBOUR (S, W)**

Previously known as Winthuysen Inlet (1791).

NORTHUMBERLAND CHANNEL (S BA W)

Previously known as Winthuysen Inlet (1792).

ORLEBAR POINT (S BA)

It is very unlikely that the name *Punta de Casatilli* (various spellings) was given by Narváez. It was probably named by Bodega y Quadra in San Blas.

PARADISE BAY

Hoggan family name for Cox's Bay.

PASSAGE ISLAND

In the Flat Tops. Name for Sear Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

PEACOCK BAY

Name for Cox's Bay on account of the peacock farm there.

PERCY ANCHORAGE (BA)**PETERSON BAY**

The bay overlooked by the former Grande Hotel (pronounced by the locals *Grandee*). A later owner of the property called it Dragon's Bay because it is at the end of Dragon's Lane, but that name was never widely used.

PILOT BAY (BA)

This is Alcalá Galiano's *Cala del Descanso*.

PILOT POINT (BA)**PREACHER'S POINT (BA)****PUERTO DESCANSO**

A less commonly used name for *Cala del Descanso*, Pilot Bay.

PUNTA DE CASATILLI

See Orlebar Point.

PUNTA DE GAVIOLA

Either Law Point or a combination of Law Point and the Flat Top Islands as seen from Whalebone Beach in 1791.

ROCKY BAY

Name used in 1860s to 1904 for Descanso Bay. Formerly Yacht Harbour.

ROCKY POINT (BA)

Name for Tinson Point prior to 1904.

ROGERS REEF (BA)**ROWBOAT POINT**

Formerly Coho Point. Name suggested by the Canadian Hydrographic Service and adopted in 1944. Small fishing boats used to congregate here in large numbers to fish for coho using live herring as bait.

SALMON ROCK

Directly northwest of Vance Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s.

SANTA BAY

At the boat ramp on El Verano Drive. Developer's name in keeping with the "El Verano" Spanish theme. The road down to the boat ramp is officially "Narrows Road" but that name is not used by locals.

SATURNINA ISLAND

In the Flat Tops (S BA). Formerly Eagle Island and one of the Twin Islands.

SCHOONER POINT

At the end of McConvey Road across from Malaspina Point. Named in an 1859 chart by George Henry Richards, HMS *Plumper*.

SCHOONER REEF

Directly north of Lily Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s.

SEAR ISLAND

In the Flat Tops (BA). Formerly Passage Island.

SHELTER ISLAND

Name for Tugboat Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

SHIPYARD REEF

Formerly Bill's Reef.

SILVA BAY (S BA)

SNAKE ISLAND (S)**SOUTHEAST ISLAND**

Name for Acorn Island in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Changed in 1944.

SPRING BEACH (BA)

At the end of Spring Beach Drive. Within living memory there was a spring pooling near here in the sandstone rocks. Destroyed by a developer.

SQUALICUM COVE

Between Lily Island and Law Point. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s. Lily Island was known as Indian Island at that time. There is a substantial midden at the head of the cove and the Spanish chart of 1791 indicates an Indian settlement in the vicinity.

STAR BOAT COVE

On the south end of Vance Island looking across to Tugboat Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s. There is another Star Boat Cove on the BC Mainland.

TAYLOR BAY (S BA)

Said to be named after the Rev. G.W. Taylor, but there was an extended not-related Taylor family living along the south side of the bay earlier (June Harrison's book, p.155).

THOMPSON POINT

At the south end of Thompson Road.

THRASHER ROCK (S)**TINSON POINT (S BA)**

Formerly Rocky Point.

TUGBOAT ISLAND in the Flat Tops

Formerly Shelter Island. In the 1940s, tugs stopped here to refuel. Standard Oil barged in oil to Page's Marina. The service stopped after tugs were fitted with large enough tanks for them to be able to complete their journeys back to the Fraser River. Also used by log-salvagers and the Gulf of Georgia towing company before it was sold to the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club.

TWIN ISLANDS (BA)

Old name for Bath and Saturnina Islands.

VANCE ISLAND

In the Flat Tops (BA). Formerly Flea Island.

WHALEBACK ROCK

Name used by kayakers for the rock on the east side of the south end of Mudge. A glacial erosion feature called "rouchee moutonee" or "whaleback". This may be the rock known as *q^wunus* (whale, but not an orca) by the Snunéymux^w.

WHALEBONE BEACH (BA)

Formerly Jamieson's Beach.

WHITBREAD POINT (BA)

See also Easthom Point.

WINTHUYSEN INLET (various spellings)

Name [*Bocas de Winthuysen*] originally given in 1791 to all of the Nanaimo harbour area in honour of Francisco Javier de Winthuysen, a lieutenant-general in the Spanish navy. Often said to have been given by Narváez, but it was more probably given by Bodega y Quadra. Narváez's name for it was Hijosa Inlet. The name [*Boca de Winthuysen*] was used by Alcalá Galiano in 1792 more specifically for the Northumberland Channel.

WOODWARD POINT

The southern end of Sear Island. Name in use in the 1920s and 1930s when Sear Island was known as Passage Island.

YACHT HARBOUR

Hudson's Bay Company name for Rocky Bay, now Descanso Bay.

Mudge Island

DAVIDSON BAY (S)**DODDS**

A commonly used local name for Dodd Narrows. The possessive 's often presents problems as the use of punctuation in names was forbidden on naval charts. This is likely why "Vancouver's Island" became Vancouver Island.

GRASSY ISLET

Between Link and Mudge Islands. The name Grassy Island first appeared in British Admiralty Chart No. 3618, 1907. Adjusted to Grassy Islet

at some later date. Rescinded altogether in 1965 because it was considered by the Canadian Hydrographic Service to be a feature of Link Island.

MUDGE ISLAND (*S, BA*)
Formerly Portland Island.

PORTLAND ISLAND
Name for Mudge Island appearing on an unpublished chart in the 1850s used by HMS *Virago*. Also used as a Hudson's Bay Company name for Eliza Island.

PURVIS POINT (*S*)
See Zachariah Point.

WHALEBACK ROCK
Kayakers name for the rock off the southeast end of Mudge Island. Rocks like this are a common glacial erosion feature called "rouchee moutonee" or "whalebacks". This may also be the rock known as *q^wunus* (whale) or *tlutsa* (rock) by the Snunéymux^w. If it is, it is where they used to steam clams.

ZACHARIAH POINT
Proposed name for Purvis Point by Captain John F. Parry, HMS *Egeria*, in 1904 possibly in the mistaken belief that Mudge Island was named after Zachary Mudge who sailed with Capt. George Vancouver. It was in fact named after William Mudge who sailed with Capt. Michael de Courcy.

Valdes Island

COAL MINE BAY
On Valdes Island. Formerly known as West Bay. An exploratory shaft was driven down here about 50 feet in 1936, but no coal was ever found. Work was discontinued in October of that year due to lack of finances. [*information thanks to Gwyneth Cathyl-Bickford*].

There are in fact no substantial coal deposits on Valdes Island although tiny patches of coalified vegetation are sometimes seen in the shale and sandstone.

DOGFISH BAY (*BA*)
Between Kendrick Island and Valdes Island.

DOGFISH ISLAND (*BA*)
See Kendrick Island.

FENWICK ISLAND (*BA*)
See Kendrick Island.

KENDRICK ISLAND
Formerly Fenwick Island. Known locally as Dogfish Island.

TRINCOMALEE ISLAND
Hudson's Bay Company name for Valdes Island.

WAKE'S COVE (*BA*)

WEST BAY
See Coal Mine Bay.

Link Island

CENTRE ISLAND
Name for Link Island on 1873 pre-emption map.

LINK ISLAND
Named by Commander John F. Parry, HMS *Egeria*, 1904.

Other Gulf Islands

CATHERINE ISLAND
Hudson's Bay Company name for Sidney Island.

EAST POINT on Saturna Island
See Point Stuart and Santa Saturnina Point.

ELIZA ISLAND
See Portland Island (Mudge).

FORTESCUE ISLAND
Hudson's Bay Company name for Stuart Island.

GALIANO ISLAND (*S*)
See Kilmorey Island.

GON ISLAND
Japanese fishermen's name for Mayne Island after the settler Gontaro Kadonaga.

HALLIDAY ISLAND
Hudson's Bay Company name for Pender and Mayne Islands.

HAYSTACK ISLAND
Hudson's Bay Company name for Skipjack Island.

HILLS ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for Prevost Island.

JAMES ISLAND

See Mary Island.

KILMOREY ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for Galiano Island.

KUPER ISLAND (S)

See Selworthy Island. Now called Penelakut Island.

MALASPINA ISLAND

On March 30, 1931, the CPR announced they had purchased Newcastle Island and that it was to be renamed Malaspina Island. Nothing more is known.

MARY ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for James Island.

MAYNE ISLAND (S)

See Halliday Island, Saturna Island, and Gon Island.

MORESBY ISLAND in the Gulf Islands (S)

See White Island.

NEWCASTLE ISLAND (S, W)

See Malaspina Island.

PENDER ISLAND (S)

See Halliday Island and Stevenson Island.

PENELAKUT ISLAND

Formerly Kuper Island.

POINT STUART

Hudson's Bay Company name for East Point on Saturna Island. This name [*M. Cmioapm*] also appears on a Russian chart dated 1849.

PREVOST ISLAND (S)

See Hills Island.

RANFURLEY ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for Saltspring Island.

SALTSPRING ISLAND (S)

See Ranfurley Island.

SAMUEL ISLAND (S)

See Saturna Island and Saturna Islands.

SANSUM CHANNEL

Hudson's Bay Company name for the Stuart Channel.

SANTA SATURNINA Point and Bay

East Point on Saturna Island was annotated *Punta y Bajo de Santa Saturnina* in a 1791 chart. Although it is commonly asserted that this was the work of Narváez, there is no evidence for this. The officer in charge of the expedition at the time was Juan Pantoja, not Narváez, and even then there is no evidence that the name was given by that expedition. It was more likely given by Bodega y Quadra in San Blas. The copy of the chart that Galiano had with him in 1792 did not have this annotation.

SATURNA ISLAND (S)

The island was so named [*Isla Saturna*] by Alcalá Galiano in 1792. Galiano was familiar with the role of the vessel *Santa Saturnina* in coastal explorations, so the name is not a corruption but a deliberate choice. Three speculations for the change are that Galiano (a) did not care for saints, (b) the diminutive form may have seemed inappropriate for such a large island, and (c) "saturnino" has a secondary meaning of "sad" in old Spanish. The name Saturna Island was initially applied by the British to the combination of Mayne, Samuel, and Saturna Islands. See Tombo Shima.

SATURNA ISLANDS

Hudson's Bay Company name for Saturna and Samuel Islands.

SELWORTHY ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for Thetis and Kuper Islands.

SIDNEY ISLAND (W S)

See Catherine Island.

SKIPJACK ISLAND

See Haystack Island.

STEVENSON ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for part of N. Pender Island.

STUART CHANNEL (S)

See Sansum Channel.

STUART ISLAND (*S*)

See Fortescue Island.

THETIS ISLAND (*S*)

See Selworthy Island.

TOMBO SHIMA (Dragonfly Island)

Japanese fishermen's name for Saturna Island.

WHITE ISLAND

Hudson's Bay Company name for Moresby

Island. ◇