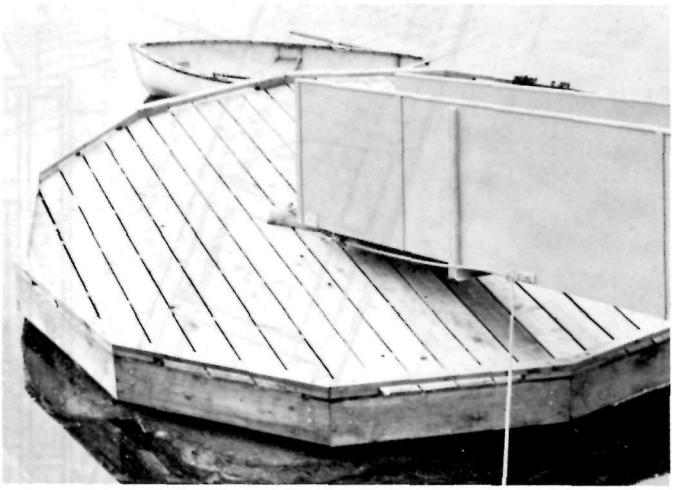
In British Columbia, protecting and enhancing the beauty of their spectacular outdoors is doing what comes naturally. The folks in the Provincial Marine Parks system, for example, do their utmost to keep sheltered anchorages in their natural state. In order to prevent these havens from looking like commercial marinas, they provide only a *minimum* of floats, which permit waterborne visitors access to upland areas by way of dinghys.

But unfortunately a problem arose. Park officials found that, without constant supervision, it was difficult to prevent larger boats from laying alongside the standard floats then in use, and thus limiting space available to one or two boats. Such space-hogging by large boats obviously denied use of the float to many visitors.

Alvin Fairhurst, Engineer with the Planning Division of B. C.'s Department of Recreation and Conservation (Parks Branch) came up with a 12-sided float which solved the problem. Because each of the 12 faces is only 5 feet long, it is virtually impossible for a large boat to tie broadside to the float. A dinghy, however, can easily unload against any of the 12 faces and then, once unloaded, it is tied to the float, bow end to.

Although only 18 feet across at its widest, the 12-sided float can handle many more visitors than a conventional square or rectangular float, chiefly because its short sides prevent space-hogging. In non-tidal water, the novel float can accommodate even the larger boats, provided they moor Mediterranean style—anchor off the stern, bow line tied to the float. Their passengers, of course, must go ashore via dinghy.

The 12-sided floats offer *another* convenience to visitors, too—some serve as floating litter and garbage collection points for boaters. Visitors merely come alongside the float and transfer refuse from



their boats to receptacles on the float. A Parks Branch boat periodically comes by to empty the receptacles. Because on-shore disposal places are sometimes necessarily at a distance from the floats and other landing sites, provision of this waterborne litter service contributes positively to cleaner grounds and water.

The float itself is relatively simple in concept and construction. It consists essentially of a 2 x 8-inch framing and floor joist system to which are secured on the underside 5 rows of 9 x 18-inch styrofoam logs for flotation. The framing is decked by 1 x 8's, laid at a 45 degree angle to the joists. A 2 x 4 tie rail runs completely around the float for securing bow lines. A hinged gangway or ramp leads from the float to shore. The float itself may be anchored by lines to shore, or, in exposed locations, may be secured to piles.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service
THE PARK PRACTICE PROGRAM
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12-SIDED DINGHY FLOAT

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