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Trip Report

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Menzies Lookout (hiking)

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Sun Aug 01, 2010

 Leader: **Bob St.John**

Co-Leader:

Fifteen members joined me on the hike up Mt Menzies, which offered relatively easy access to some great views of the Straight of Georgia with it's many islands and the still snowy peaks of Strathcona Park. Bushwhacking, which was mentioned in the trip schedule, was non-existent, save for a short bit up to the optional highest point. Some details:

Twelve met at the Courthouse at 8 AM, with four more to join us across the bridge in Campbell River. I had guesstimated 45 minutes to an hour to get to the bridge, but we must have had the wind in our favour as we only took 30 minutes or so. (When you drive a breadbox like mine, wind is a consideration!) After a bit of searching, we had all hooked up and were on our way by 9. We discussed future meeting sites, and came up with a couple: the new Shell on the main Island Hwy 19 at Willis Road just south of Campbell River, and the grassy lot at the intersection of the main Island Hwy and the Gold River Hwy (28) just south of the bridge.

We managed to park 5 cars at the 'trail' head on the old logging road just off the highway, but just..., without blocking the road. We discovered a much better spot for cars about 200 meters up the road (for future reference). We started out at 9:30 after a brief meeting to review the route and for introductions... a warm welcome to new member Maggie! The way to the summit plateau is straightforward... just follow the logging road... no brush or other impediments... no route-finding decisions to make. We made the journey in 2 hours, with several stops in shady spots along the way.

About a third the way up we spent 20 minutes or so at a very nice viewpoint looking west over the expanse of forest and lakes stretching up to the main island peaks. Of interest was the [Sayward Forest Canoe Route](#), a 50 km circular route of lakes, streams and portages taking 3 to 4 days to complete. Do we have interest in this within the club? While there Murray and Len discovered a geo-cache. For those like myself who are ignorant of this sport, you seek out caches (usually like summit registers) using a GPS. It is all coordinated by online sites, and is apparently a worldwide affliction. Believe it or not, Mt Menzies had 3 caches, all found and noted by said members.

We came onto the broad summit plateau by 11:30. It had been logged naked, but did offer good views. It was also adorned with the usual weather and/or communication buildings and towers. We surprised a mother black bear with her 2 cubs... they posed for us on a stump before disappearing into the bush. A year ago I saw a bear family as well... the plateau makes good bear habitat with lots of berries, and the two lily covered ponds probably offer tasty frogs and plants.

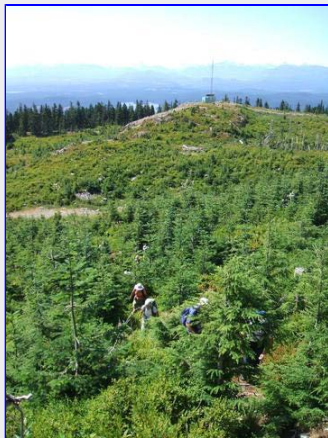
Two of us sensibly decided the views from the plateau were sufficient to enjoy lunch by (and they sure were!). The rest of us just had to get in that last few meters of elevation, and made for the main summit bump. The two groups were in visual as

well as radio contact for the noon hour of separation. The summit block looks a bit intimidating with its bluffy south facade, but we found a rudimentary trail up the rather bushy side hill to a stand of old growth, where a now better trail led us around the backside and up to the summit. The views here expanded to included more of the islands to the north. Distant peaks were hidden in the haze of forest fire smoke, what with over 300 fires currently burning in the province. Our lunch break was interrupted by wildlife more vicious than bears could ever be... red ants! More than once a blood-curdling 'YEOWW' startled the group from its summit slumbering.

By 1 PM we started off back down the road, and with a leisurely pace made the cars by 2:30. A few of us entertained ourselves by picking up an assortment of garbage and cast-offs on the road. What, we wondered, was the story behind one lost running shoe? Who lost one glove, then it's mate further on down the trail? But most of all why do people going out into in the great outdoors feel its OK to toss pop cans, food wrappers, and other flotsam... perhaps it makes them feel right at home?

Most of us replenished burnt calories at an ice-cream shop in Campbell River, before journeying back to the Courthouse, arriving at 4:30. Thanks everyone for a very enjoyable trip. Good conversation.. great participants to be out with!

On a technical note, my camera is toying with me. Of the many photos I thought I took, I only recovered four..., time to do some shopping! For those in the group who took photos please feel free to put them up, or email them to me to do same. Thanks, Bob.



*Following faint trail to
summit block.
[Bob St.John photo]*



*Summit group shot
[Maggie Jacula photo]*



*Kids with their ice-cream.
[Bob St.John photo]*



[Len Wells photo]



[Len Wells photo]



Ron
[Len Wells photo]

Report contributors: Bob S, Len W,

Participant list (16 of 16): Stella B, Geoff B, Bill B, Linda C, Sue D, Sue D, Kerry F, Maggie J, Frank J, Marjorie J, Stephanie M, Murray M, Bob S, Len W, Kathryn W, Dirk Z,

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