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Trip Report

[Home](#)
[Future trips](#)
[Past trips](#)
[Trip guidelines](#)
[Conditions](#)
[Routes >](#)
[Forum](#)
[Membership](#)
[Reference >](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Photo contest](#)
[What's new](#)
Member
[Login](#)
Changes
 today

 yesterday

 < 7 days

 < 30 days

Little Yoho (hiking) [return to Reports list](#)

Fri Aug 24 to Fri Aug 31, 2012

 Leader: **Bob St.John**

Co-Leader:

30 Second Summary

Four members experienced some of the best scenery BC and Alberta has to offer... if you are into mountains and glaciers! We visited four areas:

1. **Manning Provincial Park:** Carol and Bob are dazzled by the alpine flowers; then summit all Three Brothers under blue skies.
2. **Glacier National Park (BC, not Montana!):** Susan, William, Carol, and Bob (SWCB) hike the Glacier Crest Trail which rises between the Illecillewaet and Asulkan Glaciers. Stunning mountains, especially Sir Donald, blue skies again!
3. **Yoho National Park:** (SWCB) visit Takakkaw Falls, hike the Iceline Trail, climb Mt Kerr. The weather changed with the views from Kerr clipped over 3100 meters.
4. **Lake Louise in Banff National Park:** Susan, Carol, and Bob hike the touristy but very worthwhile trail up to the Plain of the Six Glaciers Lookout. Witnessed a chunk of the Victoria Glacier crash off cliffs... sunny weather again.

(Bob)

Much, Much Longer Version

This trip had a bit of logistics to contend with... two of us (Carol and Bob) did the whole trip, while Susan and William missed Manning Park but did Glacier and Yoho, then William headed east to visit family in Alberta, while the remaining three hiked in Lake Louise then headed home together. Not a big deal, but not having campsite reservations (except backcountry Yoho) added some extra excitement to the trip. Everything worked better than expected... great campsites were found, weather overall cooperated nicely, and unexpected pleasant surprises visited us from time to time. We also had an unpleasant surprise in the backcountry campground (see Yoho)(Bob).

Manning Provincial Park

Manning Park straddles Highway 3 between Hope and Princeton along the US border. Big peaks including Mt. Frosty and Mt. Hozomeen of the Cascade Mountains to the south grade into rounded peaks and cattle country to the north. Three Brothers Mountain is one of the rounded summits in the middle with great views to the south and north. As logic would have it, there are four brothers (summits), but no one likes to talk about the 4th brother.

One gets to the trailhead by driving up into the alpine to Cascade Lookout. This is cheating at its best, perhaps on par with heli-hiking... but it did allow for a great day in the alpine. The trail was well placed and maintained... you hardly noticed the few ups and downs, and was very popular this particular day. We thought we would be too late for the alpine flowers, but the photos show we hit their peak, especially higher up. The trail takes you up the First Brother where there was quite a crowd having lunch, mainly from the Chilliwack Outdoor Club. To escape, we went cross

country to the 2nd and 3rd summits... the 4th summit being too far away to get to in one day.

We cooked dinner at the lookout with the sun setting over the mountains, with the company of Cascade Golden Mantle Ground Squirrels, Clark's Nutcrackers, and a raven. This was a far superior location than the Coldspring Campground where we stayed for two nights. Not only was it cold enough to wear down jackets at night, it had a group of partiers carrying on late into the evening. (Bob)



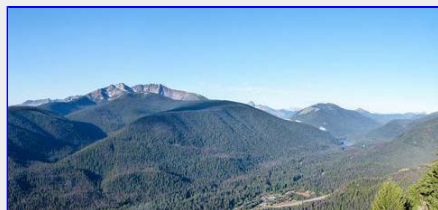
*The start of the trail with the
Three Brothers in the distance*
[Carol Hunter photo]



Beautiful alpine meadow
[Carol Hunter photo]



*Looking to the south west from Mt Hozomeen to Mt
Silvertip*
[Carol Hunter photo]



*Mt Frosty and the Skyline Ridge
behind Lightning Lake (future
hikes)*
[Carol Hunter photo]



*On the summit of the
First Brother*
[Carol Hunter photo]



Heading to the Third Brother
[Carol Hunter photo]



Anemones gone to seed
[Carol Hunter photo]



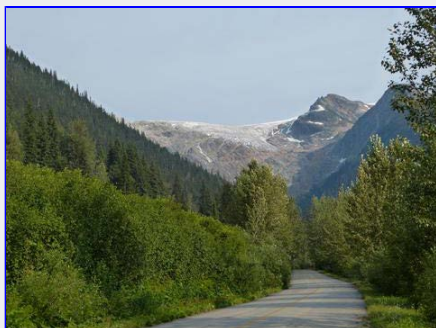
Lovely lupines
[Carol Hunter photo]

Glacier National Park

Glacier National Park lies between Revelstoke and Golden in the heart of the rugged Selkirk Mountains. We were somewhat worried about meeting William and Susan who had left Courtenay this day at 4am... but to our surprise we arrived at the Illecillewaet campground within a minute of each other! That evening we strolled through the historic ruins of the old CPR Glacier House Lodge, and watched the sunset colours on the towering peaks.

The Glacier Crest Trail is one of several steep hikes offered in the Park. It rises 1000 meters to the crest of a ridge separating the Illecillewaet Glacier to the east, and the Asulkan Glacier to the west. We were on the trail quite early, a result of hitting the hay at 8pm, and were soon doing the switchback thing for a couple of hours. The forested slope the trail climbed was incredibly steep, making us wonder at the early trailbuilders' skills.

Once out of the trees the views of Mts Avalanche, Eagle, Uto, and Sir Donald were awesome. Unfortunately the glaciers are continuing their retreat... their current mass is estimated to be only 40% of what there was 100 years ago. (Bob)



The goal is the ridge on the right
[Carol Hunter photo]



Historic ruins
[Carol Hunter photo]



Looking back towards Rogers Pass
[Carol Hunter photo]



The meeting of the waters (the Illecillewaet and the Asulkan)
[Carol Hunter photo]



Enjoying the Illecillewaet Glacier and Mt Sir Donald
[Carol Hunter photo]

Asulkan Glacier
[Carol Hunter photo]



270 degree panorama
[Carol Hunter photo]



Summit of Glacier Crest
[Bob St.John photo]

Nap time
[Carol Hunter photo]



*Golden Mantle Ground squirrel
gathering for winter*
[Carol Hunter photo]



Pika posing
[Carol Hunter photo]

Yoho National Park

Yoho is one of four national parks bunched together between Banff and Jasper, and our backpack there was to be the highlight of the trip. After picking up our Wilderness Passes from the Visitor Centre in Field, we made our way to Takakkaw Falls... takakkaw meaning 'magnificent' in Cree. They did not disappoint, and judging by the number of tourists, they are a major attraction.

Our backpack destination was the Little Yoho campground. There are two trails to choose from... the Yoho Valley Trail (somewhat pedestrian) and the Iceline Trail (very takakkaw). I am afraid I am running out of adjectives here... suffice to say we walked by two pocket glaciers in close proximity to us with the Waputik Icefield across the valley.

Little Yoho Valley sports a wilderness campground, an ACC hut (Stanley Mitchell), and a Warden's cabin all within a couple of hundred meters. The campground seemed to be in fine shape until the outhouse horror was discovered. This composting nightmare would give Stephen King pause... the seat and well of the toilet was crawling with fly maggots... there were hundreds of them, with an army of backups coming up from below. The building structure had been badly damaged from winter snowloads with half the roof on the ground and a solar cell powered fan crumpled next to it. There was also no composting agent that was supposed to be added with each use. This disgusting situation led to campers using the hillside above the outhouse as their preferred site for relief. I will stop here as I will be posting my letter to Parks on the forum... stay tuned.

Apart from the campground sanitation problem, Little Yoho is a gem. Two glaciated peaks (the President, and the Vice-President) lorded over us from across the valley. These climbs require mountaineering gear to ascend the glacier between them and to get over the 'shrund... not for us this trip. There are however some really nice scrambling summits (Kerr, Pollinger, McAuthur) to keep us busy. (Scrambling is low grade climbing where the use of hands is generally required, and perhaps a rope on harder routes, but not technical in nature... CDSC anyone?).

That night we were treated to a really good lighting storm with a bit of hail. I say 'treated' genuinely, as some of us enjoy them. The following morning we set out with mixed sun and cloud for Mt Kerr at the head of the valley, a cocktail of alpine meadows and glacial moraines making for a very pleasant walk. The top 200 meters or so of the President and VP were decked in the first snow of the season... summer's end is near! Kiwetinok Pass and Lake were reached in a couple of hours, both of which were framed by Mt. Kerr and Kiwetinok Peak. Kerr is a typical Rockies

scramble... limestone scree skirting a summit block. We all made it to the top while keeping a watchful eye on the weather. We could only see the lower 3000 meters of surrounding peaks due to the cloud cover... a bit disappointing... but only a little.

Showers and more cloud cover the next day convinced us to head out a day early via the Yoho Valley route. Laughing Falls became the highlight of our exit... nothing compared to the Iceline Trail but worth noting. This early exit did allow us to snag a good campsite at Kicking Horse Campground near Field... which filled up fast with the long weekend approaching. We ended the day with a surprisingly excellent dinner at [Truffle Pigs](#) in Field, then a quick tour of Emerald Lake. William made his exit for Alberta later in the evening. (Bob)



Takakkaw Falls
[Carol Hunter photo]



Iceline Trail
[Carol Hunter photo]



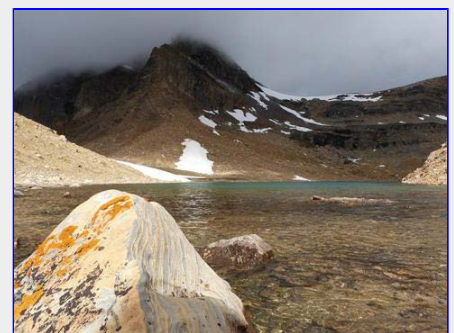
Enjoying the view
[Carol Hunter photo]



Iceline Trail
[Carol Hunter photo]



Yahoo in Little Yoho
[Carol Hunter photo]



Kiwetinok Lake
[Carol Hunter photo]



*Fresh snow near the summit of
Mt Kerr*
[Carol Hunter photo]



*A rare and beautiful flower
(Bladder Campion)*
[Carol Hunter photo]



Laughing Falls
[Carol Hunter photo]



Emerald Lake
[Carol Hunter photo]

Lake Louise and the Road Trip Home

With one day to spare from the Yoho backpack, we decided to wade into the thick of tourists at Lake Louise, and hike up to the Plain of Six Glaciers lookout... a couple of kms past the teahouse. There is a reason the trail is popular... it climbs with an easy grade to a breathtaking viewpoint of... six glaciers hanging off Mts Aberdeen, Lefroy, Victoria, etc. While we were gawking at the scenery, a chunk of the upper Victoria Glacier crashed down from the cliffs... a reminder that these sheets of ice are dwindling in our warming climate. Later in the afternoon we took in Moraine Lake, and climbed the rockpile where the scene on the old \$10 bill was taken of the Valley of the Ten Peaks.

The 2 day drive home was not part of the trip, but it had some interesting moments never-the-less. We picked up some cases of peaches and pears on the Okanagan for canning, then headed over to Merritt. We found out that Merritt can be noted as being devoid of coffee cafes, at least in the old town, so we left for Spences Bridge along the secondary highway which follows the Nicola River. It is a beautiful drive through lush farms when there is irrigation, else bone-dry sage country. About 8 km east of Spences Bridge we stumbled upon a real gem of a cafe, [Monkey in the Garden](#), an organic farm which serves REALLY good food (and coffee!) on the weekends. Highly recommended if in the area. We continued north to Cache Creek, then over to Lillooet. We had hoped for a campsite at Marble Canyon, but it was over-booked. Luckily, just before dark, we found a secluded, unofficial site down at the Old Bridge over the Fraser River.

The next morning we strolled around the Old Bridge area, reading up on its history and admiring the native fishery on the river. Later we took the scenic, but hilly drive over the Duffy Lake road to Pemberton, where we stopped for a short walk to Nairn

Falls. Finally, we caught an extra ferry sailing from Horseshoe Bay with only about a 15 minute wait... rather remarkable for a long weekend, and made our way home... (Bob)

THE END!

LL and other photos here



Iceline Water Crossing
[William Wright photo]



Mt Kerr
[William Wright photo]



*Summit Scramble on Mt
Kerr from Kiwetinok
Pass*
[William Wright photo]



Summit Ridge of Mt Kerr
[William Wright photo]



*Yoho President Range from Mt
Kerr Summit*



Descending Mt Kerr
[William Wright photo]

[William Wright photo]



*Descent from Kiwetinok
Pass into Little Yoho
Base Camp
[William Wright photo]*



*Base Camp view of President
Range with Mt Kerr on right
[William Wright photo]*

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Participant list (4 of 4): Susan H, Carol H, Bob S, William W,

[return to Reports](#)