

SQUAMISH HIKING – Updates posted May 19th, 2019

Hike 6 – Unnecessary Mountain

There is a new trailhead sign on the road that is very obvious. You no longer have to worry about an “inconspicuous” entrance. Also, there is a well-traveled trail that breaks right off *Unnecessary Mountain Trail* at about 360 m elevation. This is *Erin Moore Trail/Lone Tree Creek Trail*. Stay left at this junction to ascend toward Unnecessary Mountain.

Hike 13 – Deeks Lake

For those with a high-clearance four-wheel-drive, it’s been possible for many years to drive to kilometre three on the approach road (if you don’t mind scratching your paint), but this road is slowly deteriorating. It’s still drivable, but water erosion is affecting the road bed around kilometre two, and it may not last for many more winters. If you venture up by truck, be ready for a rough ride.

Hike 20 – Petgill Lake

The map on page 107 shows a “brushy spur” coming off Skyline Ridge hike on Sea to Sky Gondola. This goes all the way to Petgill Lake and saw a bit of love by members of the Squamish Trails Society in 2016. The trail is now easy to follow, but remains somewhat brushy since it follows an alder-choked logging road. It is, however, an interesting way to reach Petgill Lake that requires little to no ascending. If you choose this option, it’s best to leave a vehicle at Murrin Park and descend via *Petgill Lake Trail*.

Hike 22 – The Papoose

Some have commented that the trail is steeper than described. It may not be appropriate for young children.

Hike 24 – Sea to Summit Trail

The language around dog use on the gondola trails is inaccurate in the guidebook. The following text is taken directly from Sea to Sky Gondola’s website: “Dog owners can hike to the summit via the Sea to Summit Trail network and then download with their dog on the gondola. Dogs are required to be on a leash at all times. Dogs are not allowed on any other Sea to Sky Gondola trails, bridges or viewing platforms. However, they can visit the backcountry trails.” These backcountry trails include hikes 26-31 as described in Squamish Hiking.

Hike 25 – Evac Trail

This entire trail is on BC Parks land. BC Parks and Sea to Sky Gondola ask that hikers refrain from using this trail. It is officially **closed** and hiking traffic is not allowed.

Hike 28 – Sky Pilot to Mt Habrich Loop

When following the route described in the guidebook, I’ve been told that some hikers are missing the handline descent into the gully just prior to reaching the “Brain”. Instead, they are following a well-defined trail which leads directly to the base of the Brain and a very steep rock wall with a rope fixed in place. Ascending this fixed rope leads to very dangerous and exposed

fifth-class rock climbing terrain, which gains the top of the Brain. This is *not* the route described in the book. Look for the descent into the wide gully right (east) of the base of the Brain to stay on route.

Hike 32 – Malamute Loop

The north end of this loop, which returns you to Highway 99, has become completely overgrown in the last couple of years. Currently, the recommended version of this hike is to travel as far as the rock slab on the map, which provides a nice view of Squamish, and then return the way you came.

Hike 39 – Watersprite Lake

Dogs are being discouraged on this hike. Please keep in mind that the lake and streams are everyone's drinking water. Also, the BCMC cabin is locked and is for the exclusive use of paying guests only. Bookings may be made at the BCMC Web site.

Hike 40 – Seed Peak

An update to the road approach as of August 2nd, 2018: The driving along S-Main and onward to the Seed Peak trailhead has changed dramatically since the publication of the guidebook. S-Main now has serious creek washouts at 3.75 km, 4.4 km and 5.2 km (a road fork that no longer exists). We made it through all the washouts with a high-clearance 4x4 truck, but suffered damage to both our suspension and paint. Beyond the 3.75 km washout, the alder is really closing in so scratching your paint is unavoidable. We parked at the junction of E-Main and E-100 due to severe washouts in the next, steep kilometer. It looks as though a jeep may have made it up, but be warned – there's no turning back once you commit and the roadbed is deeply trenched in places. Hiking from the junction of E-Main and E-100 will add about 4.5 km of uphill road walking to the trip and hiking from the first washout on S-Main will add 1.5 km (6 km total). I recommend parking at the first washout and hiking from there. If you do, your vehicle will live to see another day and you'll almost certainly have Pinecone Burke Provincial Park all to yourself...

Hike 45 – Estuary Trails

The final sentences in paragraph one for *Swan Walk* indicate the trail reaches a road and a "No Trespassing" sign. This road has been decommissioned and is now trail-like, and the sign is gone. To find *Forest Loop Trail*, watch carefully for a trail that goes into the trees on the left once on the decommissioned road.

Hike 46 – Echo Lake

A debris slide sometime during the winter of 2018-2019 has changed the course of Monmouth Creek significantly. The creek now empties *north* of the log pilings at the take-out described in the book and behind the island mentioned in the description. For now, assume you can take out in the same location, but you'll need to head back into the trees and then cut right to the creek and find a large cedar, which lies across the creek allowing passage to the other side. Once on the north side of the creek, follow it uphill until you bump into the original hiking trail. From there, you can follow it as usual up to the lake. Note that this trail has become slightly

braided just uphill of the floodplain. You'll have to pay attention (watch for the tree markers) to stay on the best path. Also, it's best to time your hike so you are crossing the river at **high tide** when you return. A high tide reduces the strength of the downstream current and helps cover the numerous gravel bars that are now exposed due to the channel changes.

Hike 58 – Cheakamus Canyon

The trailhead at the Cheakamus River is now properly signed and the walking surface all the way up to Highway 99 is now mostly packed gravel. So, the condition of the first half of this hike is much better than described in the guidebook.

Hike 59 – Lake Lovely Water

The most recent attempts to contact Patrick Lewis for a river crossing have failed. At this time, Squamish River Jet seems to be the most reliable option for reaching the trailhead. Also, some large groups planning on staying overnight are opting to have their gear flown in to the Tantalus Hut by helicopter so they can hike the steep trail to the lake with minimal gear. To book a night in the hut, go to accvancouver.ca and click on Huts. Then click on bookings, scroll down to bottom and click on make a reservation. For questions, contact the new custodian, Anna Milino, at mountainhutsbc@gmail.com. Ron Royston is no longer the hut custodian and calling him won't get you a reservation. The Tantalus Hut and adjacent campground is often full on weekends and holidays so it's best to plan ahead.

Hike 63 – High Falls Creek

There is a new trail that breaks left off the main trail around 500 m elevation. This leads up to the first cut block and a new, early exit up to Branch 200 FSR. If you take this new trail, you'll miss the final viewpoint off the slabs above High Falls Creek, which is a pity. Keep your eyes peeled for this junction since it's easy to stray left onto the new trail, which is already well worn.

Hike 64 – Tricouni Meadows

The road access for this hike has deteriorated since the publication of the book. A rather significant washout just past km 8.0 (1.0 km from the Branch 200 turn-off) is threatening to close driving access for good. For now, a serious, high-clearance 4x4 truck can get through, but all others will have to stop at km 8.0 and walk the remainder of the road. If you do make it through the washout, the last 0.5 km to the upper parking landing is even rockier than described in the book. Make sure you've got a spare tire and good jack if you attempt this section, but I recommend parking on one of the lower corners and walking. The only good news for road access to this hike is Branch 200 is in excellent shape as of summer 2018, so you'll have no problem making it to km 8.0.

For hiking, the alternate route shown on the map has received some chainsaw work recently and it is now easier to follow through the blowdown section. It's a viable option over the normal, muddy trail, but the initial bridge is gone so you'll have to wade the creek to start, which isn't bad if water levels are low. A nice loop hike can be created by hiking in this way and out via the normal, muddy trail.

Hike 72 – Tricouni East

I've been informed that the 4x4 road beyond the two-wheel-drive parking spot described in the guidebook has become increasingly difficult to drive and overgrown with alder. It's best to come prepared to walk this section of road, unless you want a seriously rugged 4x4 adventure. I've also been told that a nice loop can be hiked by following a winter cat track off the final switchback on the approach road (around 1,380 m elevation) and into alpine meadows above, which can be followed to the lake and the trail described in the guidebook. I've not hiked this route so take this description with a grain of salt.

Hikes 80-82 – Callaghan Area

I've been informed that the dirt road that accesses these hikes from the paved Callaghan Road gets gated at some point in October. If you plan to do a late season hike, it would be best to check with Callaghan Country (www.callaghancountry.com) to see if it's open.

Hikes 81 – Conflict Lake – Ring Lake

The wooden walkway over the creek that's mentioned in the final paragraph of the hiking text has been washed away. The creek is still crossable in low water by jumping from rock to rock, but expect difficulties in medium water, which could occur late on a summer day as the snow above melts. Early in the season the creek will likely be too high for a straightforward crossing due to run-off. If this walkway gets replaced, we'll post an update.