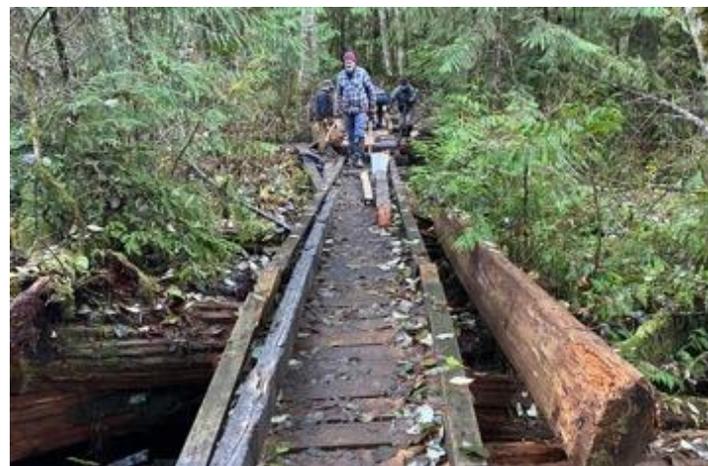
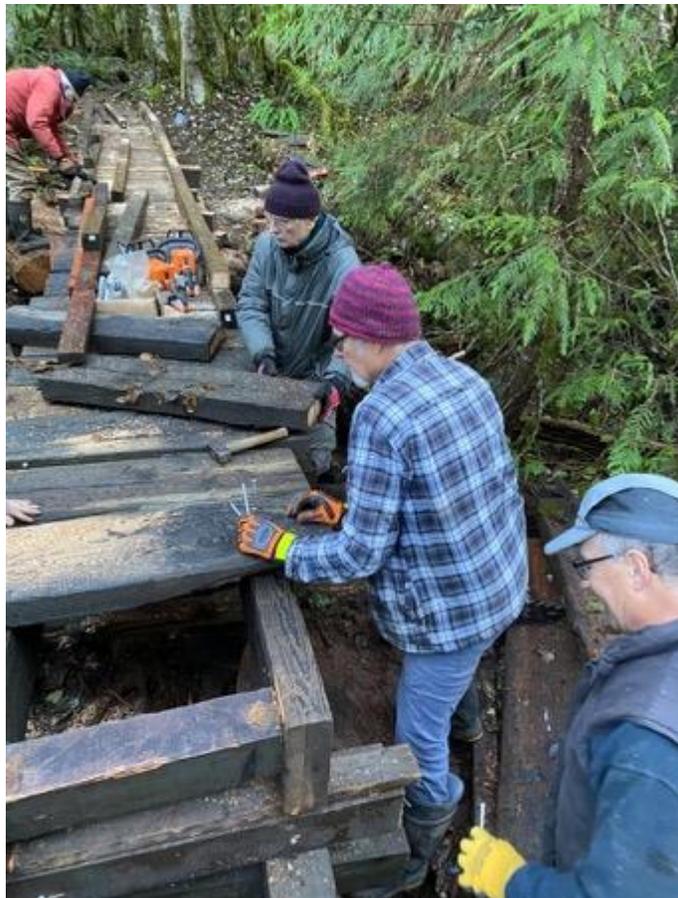




COC TRAIL MAINTENANCE – NOVEMBER



TCT Riverside boardwalk replacement.

LOOKOUT MT. – Nov. 9

This was a good shoulder-season hike and a close neighbor to the more popular Oyster Dome & Chuckanut Ridge hikes south of Bellingham. Truth be told, I wasn't expecting much, as most of the hike is on a gated gravel road in the forest and the forecast did not look very promising. But rain it did not, and although there was no view at the top, we did find a spot where there were good views (when the clouds parted).



By 9:15am we were on the way, sticking to the LM-2000 FSR till we got to the Waterfall trail. There we branched off to the right to see the first and biggest of three waterfalls. We never did find the second one, and the third wasn't much to see through the trees. We did make our way up a creek a bit past #3 falls, to a smooth slab of rock down which flowed a veil of water into a small pool. Back on the road, low mist accented the forest

and a few bright big yellow maple leaves hung from shrubs. At a clearing on the road there was a thick blanket of orange, bronz & yellow leaves. We were surprised to see a single lingering purple bloom of a Foxglove laying limp on the ground.



As we gained height, the air became colder. At the top we did not find a view, but then the weather was pretty soaked in. Although I couldn't imagine seeing much there regardless, because the trees are overgrown and three tall



communication towers with two buildings claim most of the summit space. We tried out a mountain-biker's trail close-by, but it didn't lead anywhere. The wind was strong and cold so we found shelter for lunch at the base of the knoll. Needless to say, we did not linger long.

Two separate groups of two mountain bikers appeared and told us to go back down to the junction (about 10 minutes), then turn right. So after lunch we did, even though a big sign read a warning of "surveillance cameras". It wasn't far from there to a wide-open viewpoint where we got glimpses through breaks in the clouds of Lake Salish, Chuckanut Ridge and the Salish Sea.

We stuck to the FSR for the descent, but Sonia & Sheri took the mountain-biker trail down which was steeper and muddier but featured large moss-covered boulders and a soft needle-strewn path. They got to the parking lot 20 minutes before we did.

Stats: 21 km / 960m gain / 849m high / 5 hours moving time
Die-hards along for this new hike were: Ingrid F, Sonia J, Sheri K, Patrick R, David S + **Joce T**

ALL SAPPERS MEMORIAL ON REMEMBRANCE DAY – NOV. 11



A walk from the Vedder Dog Park.

by **Heather B**

DRAGON'S BACK – NOV. 12



Up over around down and back over the Dragon's Back with 8 COC'ers enjoying a dry fall day out in the fresh air.

8 kms 430 elev gain.

by **Christine C**

ELK MT. – NOV. 17



Beautiful sunny day on Elk for COC group.



by **Heather B**

CHILLIWACK RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE – NOV. 18

On Saturday November 18, 16 COCers had an amazing adventure making trail through the old growth rain forest of the Chilliwack River Ecological Reserve. Our objective was to see the “Chilliwack Giant” (and other huge trees) and to reach the USA border. But we were reminded that life is about the “journey”, not the “destination”.

We were welcomed to Chilliwack Lake by the sun glowing off the massive snow-covered peaks to the west. These patriarchs of the valley would watch us for the whole day.



In my trip announcement, I alluded to windfall crossings, and other challenges. The trail (or lack thereof) did not disappoint. The start of the trail was gated by 2 windfalls – too low to get under, too high to get over. Before the hike even began, all adventurers lost their dignity trying to get across these logs. These windfalls were just a warm-up.

The Chilliwack River Ecological Reserve was primarily created for the protection of the old growth conifers thriving on the floodplain along the Chilliwack River. Here is home to the largest grove of large trees in the lower mainland. The Douglas Firs grow to over 70 metres high and 3 metres across at the butt. Many large Cedars grow to 70 metres high. Grand Firs grow to similar heights.

Grand Firs were named “Grand Fir” – because (you guessed it) – they are “grand”. Tall and slender as an arrow, BC’s largest Grand Fir, known as the “Chilliwack Giant”, was measured to be 71 metres high. We were planning to find this monarch of the valley.

We slowly moved south climbing over and under 2 metre logs – ancestors of those trees still standing. The trail near the river was washed away – forcing us to take a more inland route through stands of massive Cedars and Douglas Firs. The further south we went, the more mossy logs we crossed while the trail got harder to follow. The trail eventually ended



Lindeman. With the sun down, we cheerfully walked 2 km back to the cars – realizing that life's joy is found in the journey.

As we were getting ready to drive home, Jim's party appeared just in time for rides.

CtoC – 6 hours.

Logs crossed – 89 climbed over, 51 climbed under ☺
 COCers: Al L, Lonja, B, Johnny G, Joan S, Lorenz B, Lori B, Denise D, Sue A, Susan V, Ed W, Jim A, Danny G, Cathy U, Jocelyn T, Slade B, and Owen W.
 Owen W

P.S. After the adventure, I learned that the Chilliwack Giant fell about 10 years ago. All that is left is a 15-metre-high stump broken at the top. Beside it is a very straight 50 metre log covered in beautiful deep green moss and huckleberry bushes.

by Owen W

CYCLE TO SUMAS PRAIRIE – NOV. 23

From Vedder Dog Park at 10 am and rode out to the Birchwood Dairy and back. Distance approximately 55 km round trip. The weather was good but a bit cool. By Dave B

SAVARY ISLAND + MT. ELPHINSTONE – NOV. 23-25

Four of us ventured out to the Sunshine Coast with a forecast of pure sun. I wasn't sure about doing Mt. Elphinstone this late in the season but thanks to our micro-spikes, we made the summit. We saw the spouts of whales from the ferry and watched the sunset while an almost full moon shone in the sky.

in a large marsh. We retraced our route back to the river to have lunch and regroup. The Chilliwack Giant was elusive.

During lunch Jim, Lonja, Joan, and Slade decided to make a new trail to the US border. After a long lunch for the rest of the group, the trail makers did not reappear. We assumed that they successfully made a trail to the US border, were arrested, and hauled away as suspected smugglers. (I was afraid about having to explain this to Christine C ☺)



With the day getting late, we realized that we would have to find the Chilliwack Giant another time. And knowing that we could offer no assistance to Jim's party, we returned to enjoy a walk along the broad sandy beach at the end of Chilliwack Lake. The golden winter sun set early behind snowy Mount



DAY 1: We caught two ferries to Powell River, arriving there by mid-afternoon and then driving to Duck Lake to hike the Blackwater Creek Loop Trail. It felt good to stretch our legs after travelling most of the day. This cute trail had three



waterfalls, and four significant bridges. The arched bridge was surrounded by gnomes tucked into nooks & crannies in hollow stumps, on fallen logs and behind moss-covered mounds. As we turned the bend to the last section of the loop, we hiked on a ridge above a big gulley with hanging ferns on its black rock walls.

Stats: 5 km / 220m gain

DAY 2, SAVARY ISLAND:



We were all excited to go explore the island, it being the first time there for all four of us. A 10-minute water-taxi ride from Lund got us to the tiny crescent shaped island. About 100 residents live there year-round. But in the summer months it explodes to over 2000. It was nice to be there and avoid the crowds, even though the only thing open was a small grocery store.

The white sand beaches and turquoise water were reminiscent of the Carribeans. We hiked a loop round the center part of the island and then along the north shore where the docks are. While beachcombing we saw two sea lions basking on a rock in the ocean and a few seals popping their heads above water to give us curious looks.



Once back in Lund, we just had to stop in at Nancy's bakery/café and try out their blackberry cinnamon buns. So yummy. Then we drove almost to Gibsons to a backpacker's lodge for the night.

Stats: 11 km / 240m gain / 84m high point

DAY 3, MT. ELPHINSTONE: No sleeping in. This hike would take most of the daylight hours. It wound upwards, past many junctions to mountain-bikers trails, through a section with huge old-growth charred stumps and finally the steepest parts, through gnarly old-growth Douglas Firs and Western Red Cedars followed by an even steeper rocky climb with the aid of a rope to the summit, covered mostly in snow. We'd put our micro-spikes on at 1000m. The frost covered lichens and leaves sparkled in the soft winter sun.



We had a "wow!" moment when we got our first views of the Gulf Islands, Gibsons, Bowen Island and Mt. Baker on the horizon. But the yellow markers and trail didn't stop there. Another 10 minutes got us to a survey monument, radio repeater and heli pad. The views went on and on. Vancouver Island with Strathcona's high peaks to our west, the Tantalus Mtns to our north and Garibaldi Mt + Howe Sound to our east.



Wood planks under the radio tower made for a lovely sitting area. Only the sound of our own voices infringed on the peaceful quiet and tranquility on the summit.

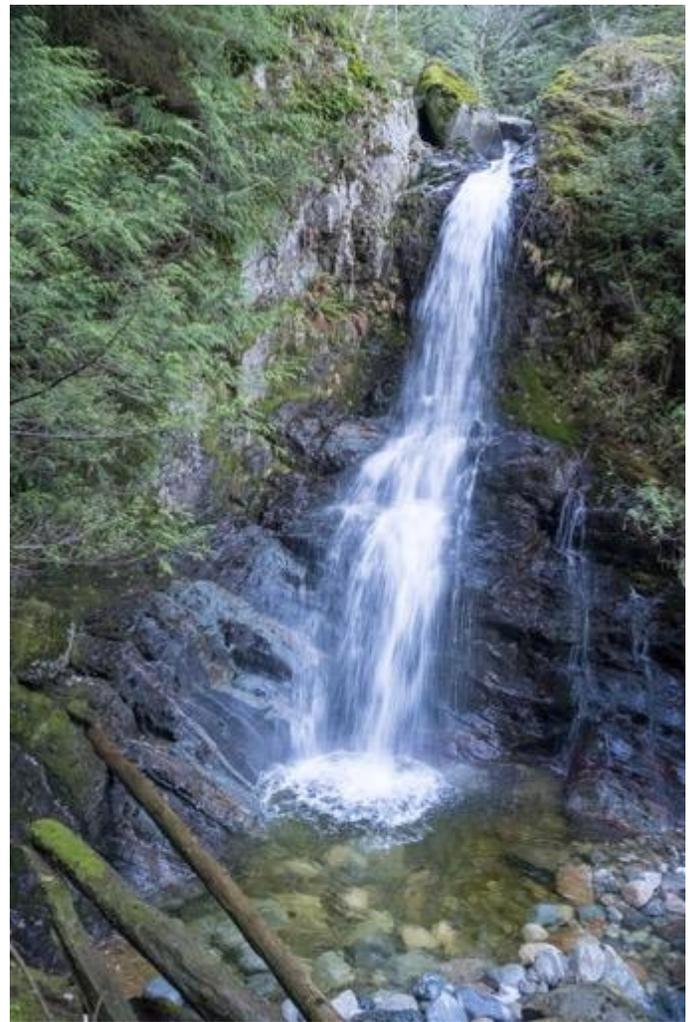


We were in no rush to leave our lofty perch. It wasn't till our toes started getting cold 45 minutes later, that we finally packed up to go.



As agreed, we'd check out the two waterfalls on the way down. The highest one was just a hop & a skip off of the summit trail. For the larger Langdale Falls, we branched off and did a loop. As we got close to the falls, we came to a very steep dirt slope with not much in the way of hand or footholds on the lower half. So we had to rely solely on the knotted rope and rappel down and up. Denise said one piece of it had the knots too far apart for her shorter arms. Thankfully we all made it, none worse for wear (just a bit dirtier). By 4:00pm we were back at my car with not much time to spare before sundown.

Stats: 18 km / 1285m gain / 1266m high / 7 hours MT



Thanks to Denise D, Ingrid F + Peter F for joining me on this grand adventure and making it what it was.

by **Joce T**

AGASSIZ CYCLE – NOV. 28

We rode the dykes and back roads around Agassiz. Started at Whelpton Road and had lunch in Agassiz during ride. Approx. 45K by **Peter E**

VEDDER MT. – NOV. 29

This is a traditional hike that we host bi-annually. It starts from our very own backyard. The first half of the ascent was on private property mostly on the Lucky trail which was created by our neighbor, Lucky.

17 hikers had much to catch up on and conversation kept up a steady flow. It took about 45 minutes to climb up the sometimes-steep Lucky trail to the FSR. This section of FSR is blocked at the beginning on Majuba Hill. No repairs have been done on the damage from the atmospheric rivers two years prior. We turned right and soon came to a junction

where the maintained road from the left comes from Cultus Lake. The second FSR junction was by the farm where a family of five cows cast curious glances our way. Again we turned right. Nearing what we call, "Old Baldy", the slope got quite steep, and alders leaned over it.



An easy to miss viewpoint on a mossy knoll to our left offered full views of Columbia Valley with the Cheam Range to the far left and International Ridge & Mt. Amadis & Mt. Baker on the opposite side of the valley. A straight line or cleared vegetation marked the border.



A few minutes from there and we were at our destination overlooking Sumas Prairie. You could see the ocean to the



west and a low blanket of fog tucked behind Sumas Mt, hanging over Matsqui & Mission. Robie Reid, Judy Howay and Golden Ears peaks dominated the northern horizon.

On the way back we turned right by the farm and briefly checked out the two frozen ponds. In the old barn we paid two pigs a visit which they very much liked, poking their snouts through the wires. We branched off to the left by the old wagon road and stopped at the tree-fort, shelter and swings that our son built about 15 years ago. The latter



had to be dismantled when our neighbor found out it was on his land. But a much more mellow lower swing was made for the grandbabies. A few of our group tried it out. And they liked it, even though it swung way out into the forest, and you needed help with the landing.

Of course we had to show off the "Big One". Our son thinks it's the largest Douglas Fir in the Fraser Valley, being 8.3m in diameter and 245' tall. A sketchy climb to get up & down the bank and some bushwhacking got us there.

That was it for the day. Now it was time for complimentary coffee & tea and desserts at our house. And the quickest way to get there was via the train tracks. As we walked them, three times I was asked, "When does the train come???" And three times I reassured them, "At 5:00pm and at 11:00pm." Most of the group stayed for goodies.

Stats: 17.75 km / 847m gain / 620m high point / 6 hours moving time

Our guests were: Gary B, Terry B, Denise D, Brigitte G, Susan Hay, Irene H, Ingrid F, Peter F, Paul L, Bote M, Leora P, Cathy U, Susan V, Annette Weber (newbie), Ziff + Case & **Joce T**

Masthead of Gulf Islands by Joce T

CLUB INFORMATION

Notice to Trip Participants

It is understood that risk is inherent to some degree in all outdoor activities. Please ensure that you understand the risks involved and are prepared to accept them. As a participant, you are responsible for your own safety and equipment at all times. Trip organizers are not professional guides—they are simply club members who have volunteered their time for your enjoyment.

Inform the trip organizer of any medical conditions that he or she should be aware of in an emergency, for example: diabetes, asthma, and bee sting reactions. Ensure that your previous experience, ability and fitness level are adequate for the trip. Be sure that your equipment and clothing are adequate for the trip. Stay with the group. Wait for other group members frequently and at all route junctions. Tell the trip organizer if you must turn back. **Be safe and enjoy!**

Required Equipment

Trip organizers will be pleased to answer any questions regarding the required equipment for any outing. For more information, it is recommended that you visit one of the many websites that provide such information. Some recommended sites are: www.valhallapure.com (club sponsor), www.backpacker.com and www.mec.ca.

Safety first, last, and always! It is the responsibility of trip participants to be equipped appropriately. Plan for the **worst!**

The Ten Essentials

Before you hit any trail, no matter how easy, no matter how short, no matter how close to home, make sure your backpack is loaded with the ten essentials. When in the backcountry you are responsible for your own safety, and any one of these ten items may help to save your life. Carry them all and know how to use them.

1. Map
2. Compass
3. Extra clothing
4. Sunglasses and sunscreen
5. Headlamp/flashlight
6. First-aid supplies
7. Fire starter
8. Matches
9. Knife
10. Extra food and water

Equipment for Club Members' Use

2 Shovels	2 ice axes
2 pairs of crampons	2 avalanche probes
2 avalanche transceivers	
2 pairs of snowshoes	
contact Cal Francis to use: calfrancis@gmail.com	

Note: All equipment must be returned in the same condition as borrowed or repaired appropriately. The equipment is being examined to determine its state of repair and will be reviewed by the Board of Directors as to what should be retained, scrapped or sold.

Hike Grading System

Duration (hrs.)	Elevation Gain (m)	Difficulty
A 0-4	1 10-500	a Easy
B 4-7	2 500-1000	b Moderate
C 7-10	3 1000-1500	c Difficult
D 10+	4 1500+	d Advanced

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