



QOQOLEM LOOP TRAIL – OCT. 1

I was planning to do my regular jaunt up the Q trail on this cloudy day but when I saw Heather's post, I found it more appealing. It's not often the conversation flows through a whole hike, but this was one of those days. And I got to try out a new local trail which as the years go by, happens less often.



We started out by the Qoqolem trailhead, then once past the highest point where the gravel path turns to dirt, we descended on a new trail, stopping briefly at a viewpoint of Columbia Valley. After crossing Parmenter Road, we passed a memorial post and bench that was slightly off trail to the left.

Past the houses lining Cultus Lake and over the bridge and we were at Main beach. We took advantage of the sheltered picnic tables for lunch and even played a bit in the playground there while getting set up for the group shot.

Next we took the trail that runs parallel to Columbia Valley Hwy, on the right side before crossing over the road and continuing on the Railway trail. Shortly before connecting with the Qoqolem trail, we branched off onto the "Derailed" trail. At the bottom of the trail it read, "Caution Mountain bikers". It being wet, muddy and slippery, there were no bikers on the trail. Soon we were back at the parking lot.



Stats: 10.5 km / 450m gain

Participants: Renee, Beatrice, Ken A, Christine C, Danny G, Johnny G, Ziff, Paul L, John Mc, Jan S, Joce T (report + pics) + **Heather Burles**

NICOMEN MOUNTAIN - OCT. 06



For the first phase we hiked to Raven's Bluff, then followed a generally flat surface trail; ancient roadbed and onto a more recent logging road, then followed that through a boulevard of Alder shading us from the sun, and then up the steep slope through a logged area and then into the steep old growth forest to the ridge and followed to the summit.

From there we headed east, flagging tape not clear, and ended up on supposedly the lookout facing south. This was not as wide and open to where we hiked on a trip in May 2021.



21 km return with 1260 meters net elevation gain: approximate from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm car to car, including lunch and all breaks. Thanks to Ingrid F for organizing this event!

It was a great day for the five of us: Heather B, Johnny G, Paul L, Karl V (report & photo) + **Ingrid Fischer**

LET'S PRETEND IT'S STILL SUMMER – OCT. 7



Today, 10 of us COC members headed out from Hougén Park on Cole Road for a 56 km bike ride. Although nice and sunny it was a pretty brisk morning, so everyone was dressed in lots of layers of assorted bike wear. At this point it was difficult to pretend it was still summer, so I didn't bother.



It was really pleasant riding through the Sumas and Yarrow quiet country roads and the fabulous Rotary trail with awesome views of the Vedder River.

We rode at a nice casual pace, so everyone had a chance to chat. The day was filled with jocular and camaraderie. Lunch stop was at the Waves in Garrison, more time for chatting. After lunch it felt much warmer out so that layers were shed, and it was now much easier to pretend it was still Summer.

Thanks to Cal, Lorenz, Maureen, Janice, Leora, Monica, Patrick, Ted and Sonia for joining me on this ride and to Paul who joined us for part of the ride.

Photo credit for all these photos goes to Maureen and her Meta AI sunglasses.

By **Herb Chlebek**

ILLAL MT – OCT. 7

Coquihalla Summit Recreation area



This was a first time for most of us on the Gardner trail. Thanks, John Mc for guiding us! It was so nice that Cammy &

Al drove all the way out from Vernon to join us. They were also on the recent Kananaskis trip.

Colder temperatures warned us that winter in the mountains was not far off. It was a great time to get out (with 17 of us) and enjoy those vibrant autumn colors before they disappeared under layers of snow.

The first km or so was on a broad FSR. Where several dead trees were cut about 5' up, we turned onto the Gardner trail. There were three downhill drops along the way, but the trail was not as steep as the original trail which took you to the Illal Meadows on the opposite side of Illal Mt. As the trail wound to the southeast, Spiral Peak came into view. Not far past it, John led us off trail for a few minutes, to the John Gardner memorial. He built the Gardner trail also known as the horse trail.



From there we had a constant close-up view of Illal and the more prominent peaks of Jim Kelly & Coquihalla Mt. It was cold and windy at the summit so we stayed just long enough to eat lunch and then headed back to regroup.



Thanks to our Rocky Talkies, we knew the last group decided to stop at the tarn. We then were able to recline and relax where it was warmer and sheltered from the wind.

As we carried on, I couldn't stop looking back. The sun dramatically changed the colors from pastels to bright, bold back-lit reds, oranges and golds.

Stats: 20.7 km / 1080m gain / 2046m high / 5:30 hours MT



Participants: Carol A, Sue A, Terry B, Denise D, Al D, Kevin D, Laura F, Iraj F, Brigitte G, Charlotte H, Simon & Irene H, Sari K, John Mc, Cammy P, Allana W, + **Joce T**

MT. FROSTY - OCT. 9

Manning Prov. Park



We found GOLD: the larches were fabulous this year. Not a puff of wind, blue skies, warm with the sun out and larches that had fully changed to fiery gold. This hike included those who wanted to summit (nice 360 views) and those who were content to make it to the meadows (also gorgeous views).





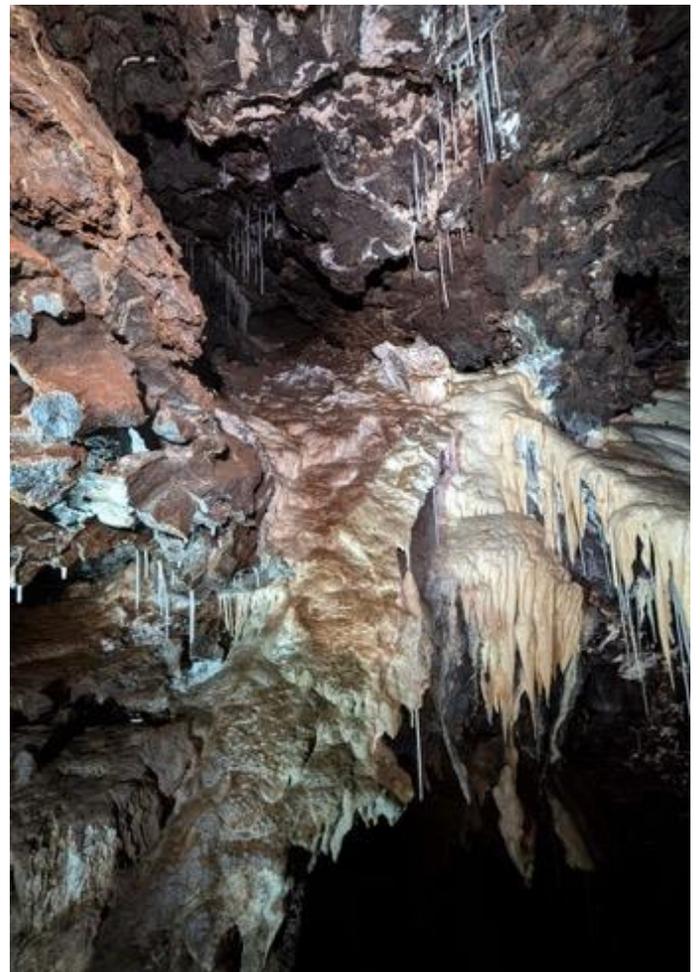
Even though it was relatively late in the month there was still no snow, and the summit rocks were ice free.

18.7 kms for the meadow trekkers and 22 kms for the peak baggers.

COC Trekkers that pocketed gold: Heather R, Al Smith, Caroline H, Anna Marie W, Allana W, Kevin D, Carolyn M, John McL, Lucy S, Fred H, Karl V, Ling S, Denise, Lynn M, Simon H, Irene H and organizer Christine Camilleri.

by Christine Camilleri

IRON CURTAIN CAVES – OCT. 11



Daring COC spellunkers explored the Iron Curtain Cave in the Chilliwack River Valley. We crawled, descended, ascended, squeezed and wormed our way into exotic underground caverns. We saw many fascinating speleothems such as stalactites and stalagmites, soda straws, and flowstone (looks like a small glacier flowing across surfaces).



By Owen Williams

COUGAR DIVIDE TRAIL – OCT. 14



Winter descended overnight. We were just able to drive 20 km on FSR 33 to the trailhead (1485m) and that's where sparkling fresh snow started to cover the ground. One more snowfall and driving up there won't be possible anymore this year. None of us knew about this trail till Owen did it the week prior. It runs parallel to the more popular Skyline Divide trail which is not accessible by vehicle since the 2021 flood. This hike was a beauty and definitely one we'll revisit.

We put our micro-spikes on before we left the parking lot. It didn't take long before we had views of Mt. Baker, Skyline Divide to our nearby right and all the many surrounding peaks.



Once at the end of the Cougar Divide ridge, we dropped down a bit before we began the ascent on a wide open slope. Not too much higher is where AllTrails showed that the Cougar Divide trail stopped. Then it angled left towards Chowder Ridge. We agreed to stop in the cluster of trees to the left, according to plans.

As we were enjoying our snack at the cluster of trees, our eyes were lured to the footprints that led higher up the slope. Once regrouped, I asked if anyone wanted to continue? The majority did which turned this from a moderate to a more challenging hike.

The previous day's strong winds had shaped artistic patterns in the snow. Thankfully when we were up there, there was barely any wind. Pockets of knee-deep snow were here and there but it was ankle deep for the most part.

Just below Chowder Ridge there was an extremely steep icy section. If we weren't so close to our destination, I would've turned around. John & Karl, who were ahead of me, made it look easy. But we all made it up and the views of Mt. Baker were stunning! Again, our curiosity got the better of us, and we carried on east a little way to our highest point for the day.



Stats: 14.4 km / 934m gain / 2103m high point / 5:40 hours MT

Participants: Patrick R, Denise D, Janet (guest), John Mc, Kevin D, Sari K, Karl V, me
Front row: Cindy W, Sonja J, Sue A + Teresa K + **Joce T**

THE HIGH DIVIDE TRAIL – OCT. 15

In the Mt. Baker area.
19 km / 1400-meter elevation gain.



We started our hike at the Excelsior pass trailhead and did the High Divide Trail, coming down the Welcome Pass Trail. One car parked at each trailhead. It was a fabulous hike, with breath taking views, and a truly wonderful bunch of people to make for the perfect day. Participants: Sue A, David G, Brigitte G, Brian H, Dawn L (photos + report) + **Cindy Waslewski**

ARCHERY SESSION – OCT.16



A group of 12 members met us at the Ridgedale Archery Range for a morning of archery instruction and practice. Dave S, who is a volunteer trainer, took us through some archery history, equipment, safety, and the 11 steps to success! Then it was time to give it a go.



Some people had previous experience, others had none. It was great fun to see the archers' concentration and steady improvement. After a morning break we started some friendly competition, complete with score cards. The cheers and laughter were a great complement to the crisp fall day.

Thanks to a great group of COC friends who made this morning so enjoyable!



Caroline M, Lori B, Brian T, Danielle G, Stelian A, Sheri K, Heather B, Peter E, Carolyn H, Tricia T, Iraj F, Kevin D. ~ By **Dave Sawatzky+ Carol Ault**

LINDEMANN LAKE AND CHILLIWACK RIVER ECO RESERVE – OCT. 17

Total km: 11.4, 530ft elevation gain

Participants: Lucy Stad, Ingrid Fischer, Christine Faulconbridge

It is always a treat to head up the Chilliwack Valley at this time of year, and this outing did not disappoint. We met at the Vedder Dog Park at 8:00am and drove 45 minutes to the trail head for Lindemann Lake. The weather was overcast but we hoped to see glimpses of sunshine. The trail to Lindemann Lake was easy to find and clearly marked. There were some challenging rocks and roots to navigate but no major obstacles. There were lots of golden tree stands on the route up to the lake which took about an hour. The lake seemed unusually low this year, but it is still a stunning turquoise blue.



We ventured along the side of the lake to where a spectacular gold and orange landscape emerges on the far side of the lake. When we arrived it was overcast and drizzly but we waited for the weather to clear for the full fall showing.



Down the end of the lake, Lucy and Ingrid spotted a woodpecker on a nearby tree and got this award-winning picture.

After lunch, we returned to the trailhead and took a drive to the far end of Chilliwack Lake to the Eco Reserve. There is a 3-4km walk into the reserve from the parking lot. We walked the length of the beach down to the mouth of the Chilliwack River. In the sand, we saw dog and human prints, but no bear prints this time. We decided that the river was between salmon

runs. It still was a nice walk and a great place to have our second lunch. We headed back to the car around 3ish and were back in Chilliwack before 5:00pm. A very rewarding excursion on this easy hike day.



By **Christine Faulconbrige**

VEDDER DYKE LOOP CYCLE – OCT. 21

Twelve COC members took to the dyke for a 45km bike ride on a warm and sunny fall day. We headed north on the north side of the dyke, under the freeway, in front of Chilliwack Mtn, past Lickman, through the new 1st Nation development called Cedarbrook (this is a real nice development along the river go check it out) on Wolfe Road, then south on Evans Rd, over the freeway, then through subdivisions, back alleys, school yards, Garrison and then finally back to the Dog Park, it was a very good ride.



After the ride 9 of the 12 went to Farmhouse Brewery on Lickman Rd for some excellent beer and even better pizza. Thanks to Patrick for organizing the trip and Fred for showing us the way, another great day with the COC.



By **Patrick Ramsden** + John McLellan (report + pics)

NICOMEN MT – OCT. 21

This was quite a challenging hike. It was very steep, going almost straight up with very little to offer in the way of switchbacks. Add to that the fact that it was wet and slippery. But it was nice to see the trail was more trampled and defined. Last time I did it was in April 2021 when it was brand new. This was the first time I made it to the lookout just beyond the treed summit. Last time there was too much snow.

I was surprised to see a whopping group of 18 signed on for this hike. Six did not make it to the lookout while the rest of us were pushing our limits as we trudged on, ever upwards.

This was the only day this week that offered some sunshine. We parked on Hawkins Pickle Road, on the south side of the train tracks, then crossed the tracks, following alongside Norrish Creek before beginning the steep ascent on Little Nicomen Mt.

At the Ravens Bluff view point we were only 1/8th of the distance to our destination. This is where most hikers stop. Sheri and her friends built the bench (hauling the material up there themselves) there in memory of their friend who used to do this hike weekly with them.



Beyond the Ravens Bluff view point the trail became less distinct. It leveled off for about 20-minutes, on a deactivated FSR. Then we began a gradual ascent on a more open FSR. It became rather overgrown before we got to the turnoff, marked by a beer tin over-turned on a branch. That's where the hard part began on a slope with an average grade of 30%.

We maintained a steady uphill. Stopping more than a few minutes on the higher parts of this slope would've made it very hard to start up again. Then down on a faint trail but marked with orange flagging tapes. We were deep in the dark dense forest, before popping out in the open and doing a bit of bushwhacking.



We had just arrived and the sun came out! It stayed that way till four others arrived half an hour later and it closed it again. From there we could see the tips of Slesse, the Border Peaks and McGuire Mountain peeking out from above the blanket of cloud. Several hikers strapped on their micro-spikes for the knee-grinding descent.



Stelian A, Carol A, Ken A, Lorenz B, Denise D, Kevin D, Johnny, G, David G, Brigitte G, Brian H, Simon H, Sheri K, Dawn L, Sonja L, Mary R, Owen W, Cindy W + **Joce T**



Stats: 17 km / 1348m gain / 1243m high / 6:15 hours MT

By **Joce T**

ELK - GLORIA CROSSOVER – OCT. 30

This hike was a true test of endurance. Therefore, I opted to go with the more relaxed paced group of 5 that started at the Elk Mt. trailhead. The other group of 7 started at the Gloria Mt trailhead which is 255m lower than Elk's trailhead. We ended up meeting each other in the middle of the Thurston - Gloria connector trail which is where we swapped keys. Brigitte's stats for their group were: 18.5 km / 1795m gain. Throughout the day we got bits and pieces of views which in total came to a 360-degree view that stretched all the way to the Pacific Ocean, the mountains in Whistler and even in the Coquihalla.

We started hiking at 7:15 am. For the first half an hour we had to use our headlights. The early morning sky was so clear that we could see the skyscrapers of Vancouver!



I strapped my micro-spikes on at the Elk Mt summit and kept them on for the remainder of the hike. We'd then done half of our elevation gain (835m). Slesse, the Border Peaks, Tomyhoi, McGuire and Mt. Baker stood out white against a blue winter sky. As we progressed along the ridge towards Thurston summit, the views to the east became more visible. We found a nice viewpoint slightly off trail just below the treed Thurston summit which was the highest point on the route.



It was a pretty steep 240m drop to the low point of the Gloria-Thurston connector trail. This north-facing slope had about 1' of snow. Later I heard the other group was pretty glad that we broke trail for them.



Then it was 210m back up again, after meeting the other group at the lowest point of the Gloria-Thurston trail. Once on Gloria Ridge we did some downhill to the Gloria lookout which is 150m lower than the junction to the Gloria trail. We then had full views of the from the opposite side of the mountain, on Chilliwack & Agassiz side. After doing our final 150m climb, we braced ourselves for a long 1035m steep descent. The spine of land that follows alongside Ford Creek, was the steepest part of the descent.

We got to the parking lot at 4:25pm and all met once again at the old Canadian Tire store. The other group had arrived there 20 minutes earlier. Not bad timing for such a long day. Thanks David G for organizing this day!

Stats: 19.9 km / 1607m gain / 1875m loss / 1590m highest point / 8 hours MT



Elk Mt trailhead group: Lorenz B, Denise D, Iraj F, Joce T (report + pics) Cindy W. Gloria trailhead group: Stelian A, Heather F, Brigitte G, Fred H, Sheri K, Mary R + **David G**

GLORIA CROSSOVER EAST GROUP

This post is a small supplement to Jocelyn's well documented post on the same trip – done in reverse.

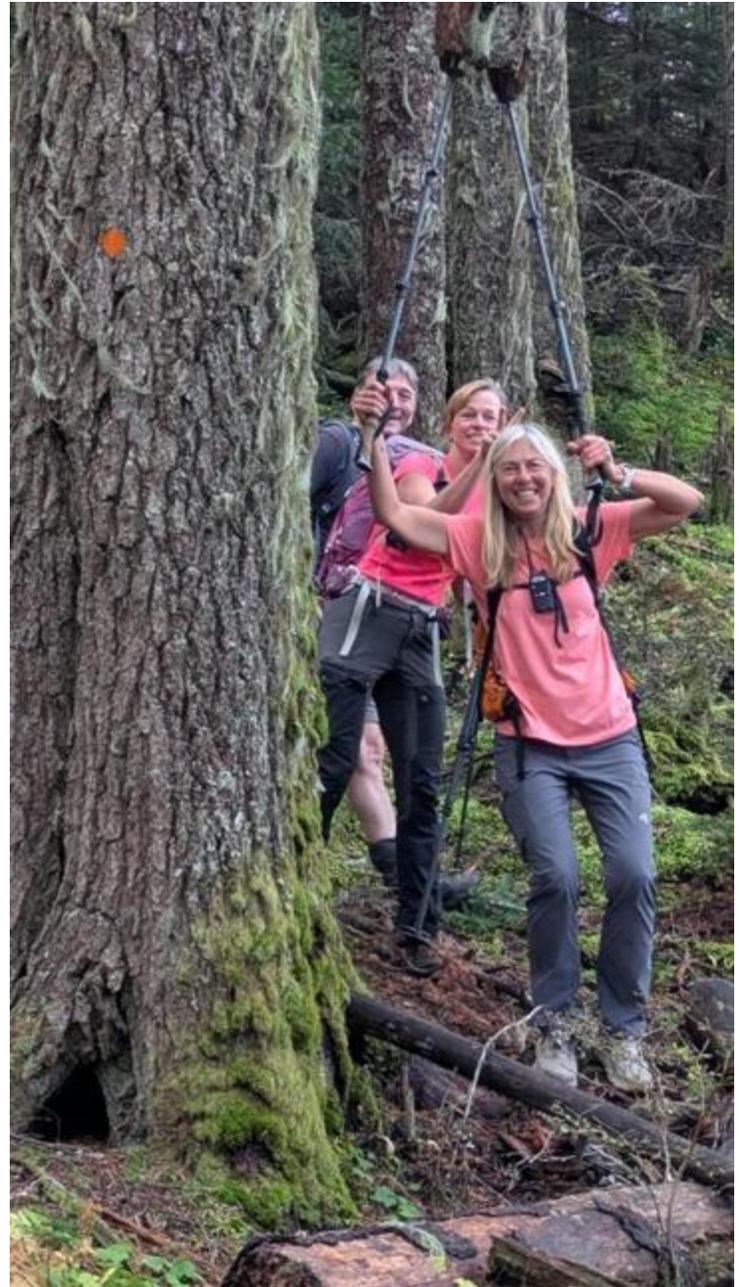


Seven of us donned headlights and started out on the Gloria trail at 7:30am, making our way upwards in an unrelenting grade wondering at what elevation we would hit snow. After 2 hours we broke out onto the shoulder above Gloria Lookout where we were enthralled by the view. 30 minutes later we were at the cross on Gloria summit and to our delight, the snow was negligible. Radio contact with the other group (west group) revealed they were at Thurston summit, so we were on schedule for a rendezvous along the shoulder above Chipmunk Creek.



We sauntered down 210m and made contact. Spending 15-minutes or so exchanging car keys and taking photos, both parties bid adieu to continue to our respective destinations. We appreciated the tracks left by the West Group on the snowy leeward slope of Thurston Mt. It made our task a lot easier.

Amazingly, the pace and timing of both groups was so good that we all returned to our cars (18 minutes apart) with a few minutes of each other. This was a delightful trek, 18 km / 1560m elevation gain in the best of company. I will remember this one!



By **David Graham**

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 Gary Baker to use: gb@shaw.ca	

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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