



Hiking at Cypress, Andy Mons photo

HIKING AT CYPRESS

There are many hiking trails in Cypress Provincial Park, ranging from the Yew Lake wheelchair-accessible trail in Cypress Bowl to the 30 km Howe Sound Crest Trail connecting the park's southern and northern sections. Following are brief descriptions of some of the trails in the southern section and a list of useful hiking guides for both sections.

CAUTION: Although it's close to the city, Cypress Park is a mountain wilderness with rugged terrain. Snow can linger at higher elevations until mid-summer, especially in shaded areas, creating hazardous conditions. Don't hike alone and always leave word with others on where you're going and when you expect to return. Weather can change rapidly. Consult hiking books on essential clothing and first-aid equipment. Carry a map or trail guide.

HIKING GUIDES mentioned in hike descriptions below

- Best Hikes and Walks of Southwestern British Columbia*
Dawn Hanna, 1997
- Easy Hikes and Walks of Southwestern British Columbia*
Dawn Hanna, 2002
- Easy Hiking around Vancouver* – Jean Cousins, 2001
- Hiking the Ancient Forests of British Columbia and Washington* – Randy Stoltmann, 1996
- Nature Walks around Vancouver* – Jean Cousins, 1997
- One-Day Getaways from Vancouver* – Jack Christie, 1999
- 103 Hikes in Southwestern British Columbia*
Jack Bryceland; Mary and David Macaree, 2001
- 109 Walks in British Columbia's Lower Mainland*
Mary and David Macaree, 1997

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OTHER HIKING GUIDES with Cypress hikes

Classic Hikes in the Lower Left-Hand Corner of British Columbia – Anita Cancian, 1998

Don't Waste Your Time in the BC Coast Mountains – Kathy and Craig Copeland, 1997

Exploring Vancouver's North Shore Mountains Ethel and Roger Freeman, 1985

This out-of-print, invaluable book contains detailed trail information and separate, fold-out maps, and is available at public libraries.

Hiking Guide to the Big Trees of Southwestern British Columbia – Randy Stoltmann, 1991

50 Best Day Trips from Vancouver Jack Christie, 2002



Eagle Bluff - Black Mountain



Yew Lake

EASY HIKES in the Southern Section

YEW LAKE TRAIL

DESCRIPTION: Graveled, wheelchair-accessible, 2 km (1.2 mi) loop trail following Cypress Creek to Yew Lake and adjacent meadows, with additional short loop trail in small old-growth forest stand.

TRAILHEAD: From Cypress Bowl downhill ski area.

SEE: Nature Walks, pp. 156-159; 109 Walks, pp. 78-79; Easy Hikes & Walks, p. 86-89

Historic Hollyburn – First Lake Area

DESCRIPTION: Follows old-cross-country ski trails through old-growth forest to historic Hollyburn Lodge, First Lake and beyond. Gentle terrain with some uphill walking. 3.5 km (2.2 mi) round-trip with several options for exploration of adjacent areas.

TRAILHEAD: From Hollyburn Ridge parking lot.

SEE: Nature Walks, pp. 147-150; Easy Hikes & Walks, pp. 90-93

MODERATE TIME/TERRAIN in Southern Section

FIRST LAKE (HOLLYBURN) TO WEST LAKE AND BLUE GENTIAN LAKE

DESCRIPTION: Continuation of Historic Hollyburn hike to West Lake on wide cross-country ski trails. 3.5 km (2.2 mi) round trip. The hiking trail from West Lake to Blue Gentian Lake continues rather steeply downhill on often slippery terrain and adds 1.3 km (.8 mi) round-trip. Those not familiar with this area are advised to return from Blue Gentian Lake by the same route due to this area's many and confusing trails.

TRAILHEAD: From Hollyburn Ridge nordic ski area.

SEE: Easy Hiking, pp. 70-71 for area map. 109 Walks, pp. 82-83 describes some longer routes to this area.

Howe Sound Crest Trail to Bowen/ Lions Lookouts

DESCRIPTION: Pleasant hike along the start of the Howe Sound Crest Trail through old-growth forest to viewpoints. 3.5 km (2.2 mi) round-trip. Mostly uphill with some level stretches along old-logging road. Caution: Beyond these viewpoints, the 30 km Howe Sound Crest Trail becomes increasingly rugged and is recommended for experienced hikers only.

TRAILHEAD: From Cypress Bowl downhill ski area near Sunrise Quad Chair

SEE: Easy Hiking, pp. 76-77; 103 Hikes, pp. 104-105; Best Hikes & Walks, pp. 150-154 for directions. Note: Howe Sound Crest Trail hikes described in these books are considerably longer.

MODERATE TIME – DIFFICULT TERRAIN in Southern Section

HOLLYBURN MOUNTAIN OLD-GROWTH LOOP

DESCRIPTION: Trail leads through especially important ancient forest with large yellow-cedars, western and mountain hemlocks and

waterfalls. Some difficult creek crossings and poor trail conditions. 4 km (2.5 mi) round-trip.

TRAILHEAD: From Cypress Bowl downhill ski area, a few metres up behind BC Parks Information Kiosk.

SEE: Hiking the Ancient Forests, pp. 24-27

MOUNTAIN PEAK HIKES in the Southern Section

The following longer and more strenuous hikes all lead up through old-growth forest and heather meadows to mountaintop plateaus with superb views.

HOLLYBURN PEAK

DESCRIPTION: Second highest peak in Southern Section (1325 m; 4346 ft.). Trail passes several lakes. 8 km (5 mi) round-trip. 4 hours.

TRAILHEAD: Hollyburn Ridge parking lot.

SEE: Best Hikes & Walks, pp. 126-129, or One-Day Getaways, pp. 40-42 for standard route. Easy Hiking, pp. 72-73, shows alternate route from Cypress Bowl ski area. 103 Hikes, pp. 106-107, describes lower, more complex route on historic trails from Lower Hollyburn.

Black Mountain Plateau to Eagle Bluff

DESCRIPTION: Lowest mountain in Southern Section (1217 m; 3992 ft.). Once above the ski slopes, the trail leads across the Plateau, through old-growth forest and past many small lakes, descending gradually to Eagle Bluff at 1050 m (3440 ft.). 11 km (6.8 mi) round-trip. 5-6 hours.

TRAILHEAD: From Cypress Bowl downhill ski area. Note: The start of this trail will be re-routed when construction begins on the new Black Mt. terrain pod.

SEE: Best Hikes & Walks, pp. 118-121; Easy Hiking, pp. 74-75.

Mount Strachan

DESCRIPTION: Highest mountain in Southern Section (1454 m; 4769 ft.) with two summits. Steep trail, slippery in places, not well marked. 10 km (6.2 m) round-trip. 6 hours.

TRAILHEAD: From Cypress Bowl downhill ski area.

SEE: Best Hikes & Walks, pp. 122-125 for route following Hollyburn Mountain Old-Growth Loop Trail to connect with Mt. Strachan Trail. 103 Hikes, pp. 108-109, describes a different, more challenging route down from Strachan Peak. Because the Strachan trails are poorly marked and in steep terrain, inexperienced hikers should attempt these hikes only in company of experienced hikers familiar with the routes.