

Book Review

Lillooet Hiking Guide

Canyon to Alpine Second Edition

Lillooet Naturalist Society

112 pp. \$20:00

Reviewed by Lynette Grants

The Lillooet Naturalist Society has certainly scored a hit with their Lillooet Hiking Guide aptly titled Canyon to Alpine (Second Edition). The book, beautifully printed and bound by Fiesens of Manitoba, is on glossy hardwearing paper, paper quality that does justice to the many superb photographs of birds, flowers, animals and scenery. Canyon to Alpine not only serves as a great hiking guide to the area but is a pleasure to hold in the hand, look at and read through.

The book is divided into 7 sections, each colour coded. The first section, called the Preamble, (colour coded pale grey green), provides clear How to Use the Guide information, excellent natural history background for the Lillooet area, acknowledgement of the St'at'imc First Nations, and an overview map with trailhead locations.

The other 6 sections lists trails by area and by the access roads into Lillooet. Each of those sections contains an introductory page with significant but brief natural and social history overviews. The first grouping is of Trails around Town; the second Trails accessed from Highway 99 South; then from Highway 99 North; from West Pavilion; from Highway 40; and from Highway 12. Within each of those sections hikes are graded, again by colour, as Easy, Moderate, Difficult and Most Difficult. Each hike is discussed in 2 pages with access and drive time, an accompanying topo map and a stunning photograph (or two).

With a group of hikers from Vancouver and using the Canyon to Alpine hiking guide we accessed and hiked some of the trails, most of us unfamiliar with hiking in the area. The directions to the trail heads and for the trails themselves were clear and accurate. Some of us queried the times estimated for hikes, finding that the estimated time was too generous, but concluded that it is better to err on the hike taking a longer rather than shorter time, particularly in unfamiliar areas.

It should be noted as well that some of the hikes are a considerable driving distance from Lillooet and that for many of the most picturesque and alpine a 4X4 with good clearance is recommended. A good caution for lower mainlanders who are more likely than our fellow hikers in the interior to drive regular sedans. And of course the higher trails cannot be accessed until later into the spring or in the early summer.

A useful recommendation would be to buy the book before you drive into Lillooet from Vancouver or from one of the other access points such as Kamloops as some stunning hikes can be accessed as you approach Lillooet.

Another recommendation is to make contact with the Lillooet naturalists who are rightly proud of their excellent hiking guide and who love their "territory".

All in all an excellent hiking guide to a wonderful area.