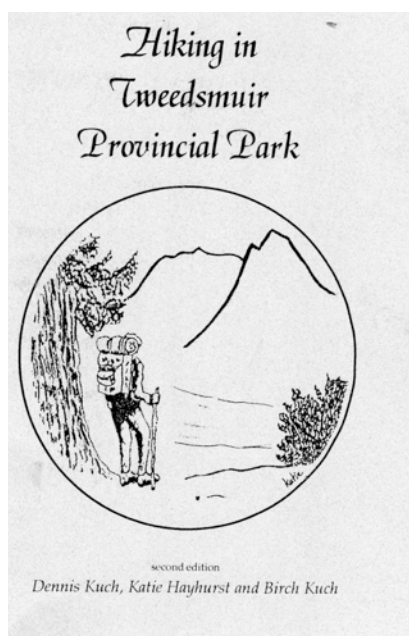


Hiking in Tweedsmuir Park 1992



After 14 years of exploring and guiding in Tweedsmuir Park, we decided in 1992 to move on to other things, in the Canadian Arctic and Yukon. Before leaving,, we wanted to leave a record of the places we visited and the trails we worked on. Here it is, 30 years later, unedited and unadorned. While the first edition was cranked out on a Gestetner in our backyard; this newer one presented here was also handmade.

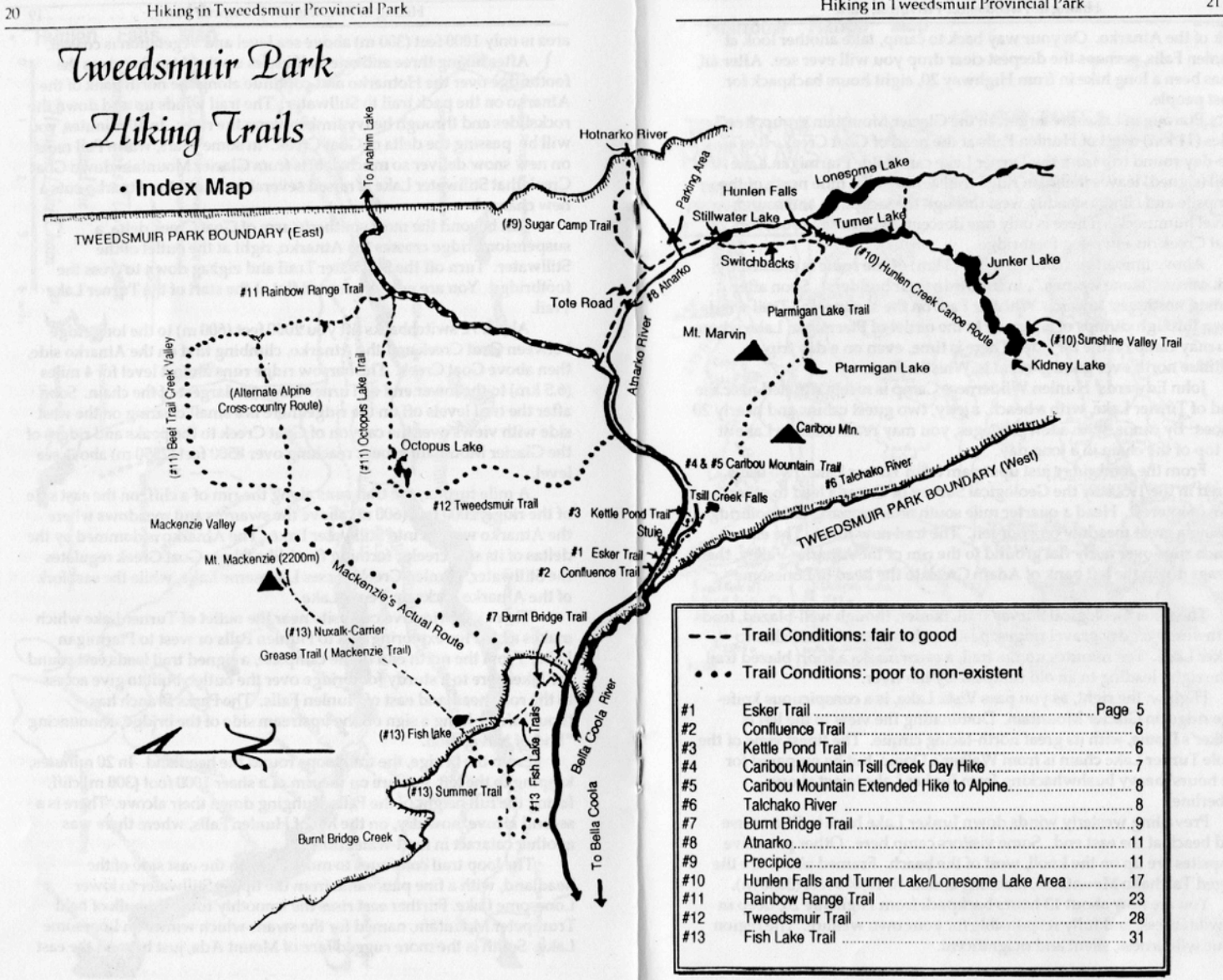


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Isabel Edwards wrote of the Atnarko Valley and her life here in the 1930s and 1940s. One of her stories is in the Atnarko chapter. In the 1980s, **Bob Harris** stayed with us and followed many of our routes while searching out other abandoned trails of the park. He gave us his detailed articles, with encouragement to create a guide to the trails of Tweedsmuir.

Overview Map



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Hiking in Tweedsmuir Provincial Park

Hiking in Tweedsmuir Provincial Park

Tweedsmuir is British Columbia's largest park, encompassing nearly a million hectares of mountains, lakes, rivers, forests, and meadowlands four hundred kilometres north of Vancouver. Straddling the Pacific Coast Range, the park includes a wide variety of environments from river bottom forest at 100 metres elevation to alpine meadows and mountain summits over 2500 metres above sea level. This variety of environments provides refuge for a large variety of plant and animal life, including bald eagles, grizzly bears, and a profusion of orchids in season.

The Park's **climate** is moderated by its proximity to the ocean and yet is protected from heavy coastal rains by the mountainous wall of the Coast Range. Temperatures at Stuie in summer vary from 10 to 25 degrees Celsius with lows down to freezing in the spring and fall. A hiker in the high mountain meadows can expect hail and sleet as well as hot sunny weather at any time during the summer. Snow is usually off the alpine meadows by mid-July and earlier in some years. Hikes to 1500 metres elevation are usually possible by mid to late May while hiking in the Atnarko Valley is enjoyable year-round.

Trails described in this guide provide the reader with a brief history of the park area. Some trails date back centuries to a time when foot travel was the only means of communication between the coast and the interior, while others were developed in the 1860s to provide access to the goldfields inland. Still others were built in the 1930s by Tommy Walker as tourist trails for his guests at Stuie Lodge. A few trails have been built or resurrected by Provincial Parks Branch in the recent past.

This trail guide will give you the basic trail information needed to find your way around in the park, spanning a variety of hikes from short day trips to extended backpacking trips. The index map in the centrefold provides a quick reference to the trail descriptions. Topographic maps (listed with each trail) give a better sense of location than the sketch maps included here and, along with a compass, are necessary for cross-country, off-trail travel.

Wilderness survival has become more a matter of survival of the wilderness than survival in the wilderness. We ask that you take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but the odd footprint so that others may enjoy our wilderness as much as you without the added embellishments of tin cans, plastic wrappers, aluminum-sprinkled fire pits (metal foil *does not* burn), and butchered trees. Some basic rules include:

1. Carry all garbage out with you.
2. Bury your feces and toilet paper far from any water source.
3. Wash your dishes away from lakes and rivers, not in them.
4. Be extremely careful with fires, preferably use existing fire pits, don't burn at all in alpine areas where the stunted trees take 50 years to grow a centimetre of wood (take a cook stove or eat cold food.)
5. Do not short-cut switchbacks, as this erodes the trail and makes it harder for others.
6. Do not pick flowers or other plants (make a picture or sketch instead.)

For more information on backpacking in wild areas, we recommend John Hart's *Walking Softly in the Wilderness*.

The wilderness of Tweedsmuir Park adds a dimension to the wilderness experience no longer available on most of our continent. Overgrown trails can be easily lost and backtracking may be necessary. Grizzly and black bears do not like to be surprised and can act aggressively at other times as well. Rockslides can give way at any time and must be approached with caution. The alert hiker will appreciate the reality of our wilderness. You are on your own.