

# Ape Lake Trail



Photo courtesy Michel Bazille

Beginning with an exploratory trip to Odegaard falls in the Nusatsum Valley, the more adventurous may want to push deeper into the wilderness, discovering alpine views, meadows and lakes, and glaciers. Experienced hikers can reach Ape Lake and the icefields but you will need a compass, map, proper hiking gear and be prepared to take a couple days. It takes approximately 12 hours to hike one way to Ape Lake depending on the hikers' abilities and environmental conditions. Only 3.7 miles/6km of the planned 13.6 mile/22km trail has been developed to date. Local guides can be hired to hike in safely, or visitors may wish to fly in and hike out.

## Trailhead location

The Ape Lake trailhead is deep in the back country of the Nusatsum Valley. To reach it, follow the highway 14.5 miles/23.3 km east of Bella Coola to the Nusatsum River bridge perched on a hairpin turn of the highway. A gravel road leads off the pavement on the west side of the bridge. This 15 mi/24.6 km road has a few rough sections, and while it is usually accessible with a two-wheel drive, a 4x4 vehicle is recommended.



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From the Odegaard Falls trail parking lot drive an additional 1.8 miles or 2.9 km. Seasonal slides may make this part of the road impassable and you may need to park and walk to the Hammer Lakes trailhead. A sign marking the trailhead leads to a marked, easy to follow trail. Because of the wet weather during

much of the year, the trail can become extremely wet in certain spots. Some boardwalks ease the access across the wetlands near the lakes.

## Worth the Trip

The trail leads into the heart of the coastal mountains through dense forest, along the shores of small lakes, alpine meadows and views of imposing jagged peaks. Pearl Peak range can be seen with its glacier clinging to its sides and further along the trail is a view of Iroquois Ridge, glacier icefalls over the Noick River. For the adventurous, a more challenging trail continues on to Ape Lake and the Monarch Icefields.



Photo courtesy Michel Bazille

Contact the Bella Coola Valley Tourism Center for more information on hiking in the area, flight drops and guides.

## The Ape Lake Trail is sponsored by:



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