

# Black Rock Community Trails... A Hike to the Bay of Fundy for Everyone

BY PETER WALLACE

Looking for a beautiful set of trails that will lead you to the Bay of Fundy for a lunch break? Look no further, the Black Rock Community Trails fit this bill and then some. They are some of the best trails for family outings, as well as for experienced hikers looking for a challenge. Their length varies from less than a kilometre to over 10 km, and the degree of difficulty varies from easy to difficult (some parts are only for masochists!). They are well-marked, but you still have to pay attention to avoid getting lost. Some are true walking trails through the woods, others are roads and ATV trails. The trails are on private land, but community supported, so respect the forest and the owners by leaving only your footsteps and sticking to the marked trails. The trails are open year-round, except during deer hunting season.

The terrain varies from open hardwoods to mossy spruces and hemlocks, and from cobble beach to steep cliffs, with streams and brooks along the way. Some trails are level and high and dry, others have small hills, while some have brooks to cross and small

swampy areas to traverse. This variability gives rise to a multitude of plant species, fungi, and lichen, and the animals and birds feeding off them. This area has been settled for centuries, so expect to see feral and alien plants such as columbine (genus *Aquilegia*) and hawkweed (genus *Hieracium*) bordering the trails. They provide a bit of colour along with the native plants. You can spend hours just looking around and enjoying the variety. The beach portion of the blue trail is the most difficult. It is over 2 km long, almost entirely covered by cobbles and boulders, and is entirely tidal. Do not attempt this part unless you are following the tide out (about 2 hours before low tide), and have very good ankles with proper foot wear for wet rocks.

*Trail Directions:* There are 4 trails: pink, orange, blue and yellow, and they are all accessed from behind the Community and Recreation Centre on Black Rock Road, heading to Canada Creek. There is ample parking, a trail map, toilet, and covered picnic tables here. The map of the trails is current, and some trails

have been recently added to and other parts dropped, so older maps are in error. This is especially true for the yellow trail, where there is an ongoing logging operation in the southeast portion as of spring 2023. All trails are well traveled and well-marked with colour blazes.

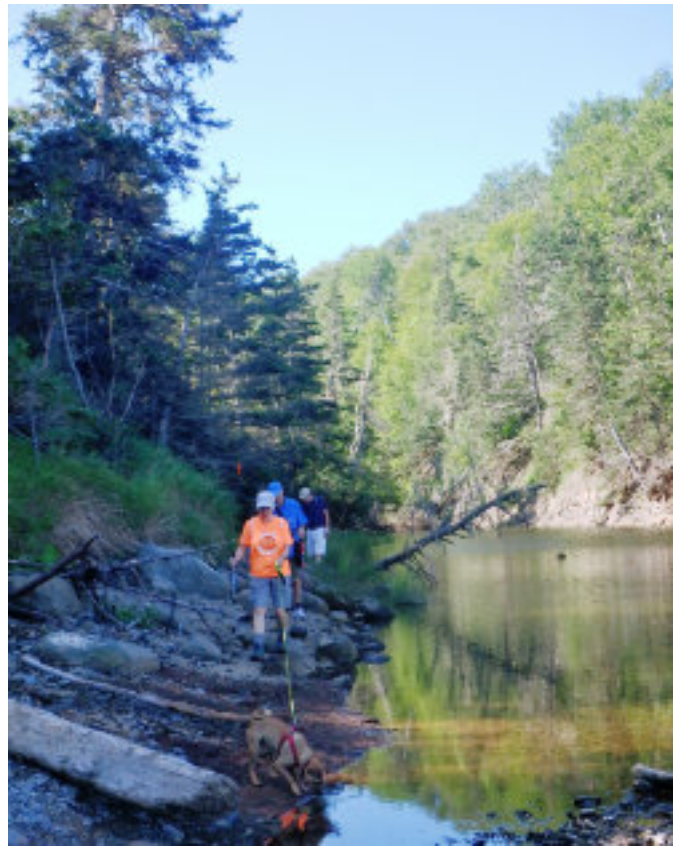
The pink trails follow small loops and are the easiest and shortest. They include lots of interesting plants, as well as things for children to see. The orange trail loops back before reaching Murray Brook and the shore. It has some junctions that are not on the map, since they lead to private property that is off limits to hikers. Take care here. There are a couple of wet areas to cross, which are interesting for the



plants growing in these wet spots. A part of this trail is Wall Street, a road with houses, and the trail continues between two of the houses.

Access to the Fundy Shore follows the blue and yellow trails to Murray Brook, and then across the bridge to the east side. These are the most difficult and longest trails. The portion that goes down Murray Brook and crosses the bridge contains a hemlock forest where once I saw a bobcat. Keep an eye out for these exotic animals. At high tide, the brook's estuary is flooded, making the shore inaccessible. From mid to low tide, you can walk along the east bank and have a lunch sitting on the flotsam or rocks at the shore. Be sure to have a look at the cliffs of basalt at the shore, but don't continue on the blue trail along the shore unless you have a burning desire to cobble-hop for over two kilometres. The yellow trail continues up the brook's bank as an ATV trail. At the top, there is a junction where you can either turn east along the top of the cliffs for great views over the water, or go due south along Balsor Road. The eastern trail is now a loop and the part that heads south is a dead end. These parts of the yellow trail are wet and muddy at times, and the forest is heavily wooded with conifers, maple, elm, and poplar trees. To return, retrace your track out, or take a different part of the orange trail loop once you are out of the brook area.

Overall, these trails offer something for everyone. Enjoy!



**Peter Wallace is a retired geologist who lives on the South Mountain and leads a weekly hiking group of retirees to areas of natural beauty and interest in the region. Peter contributed the photos and map specifications.**

