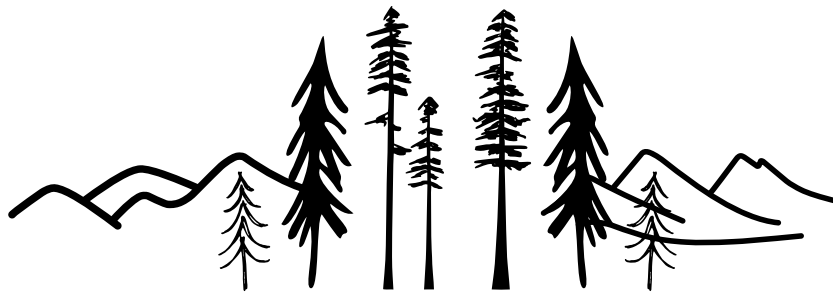


Black Rock Trails

Guided Sensory Walk

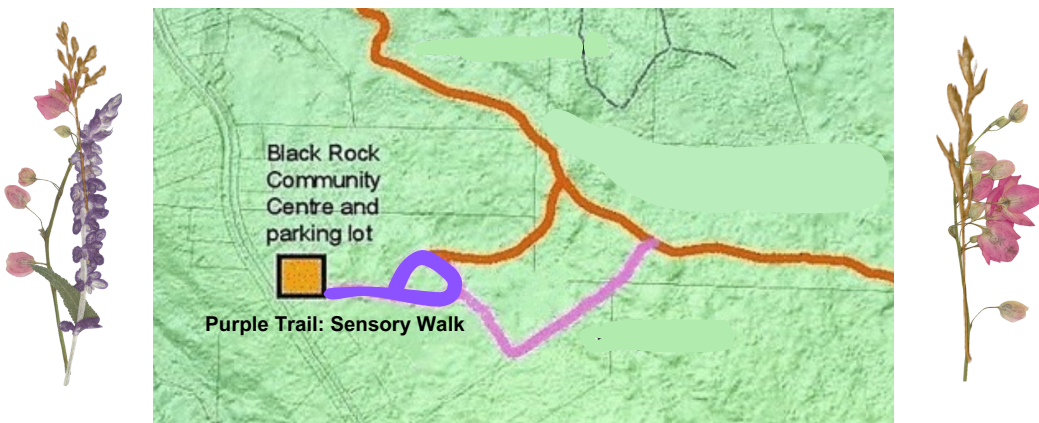
4404 Black Rock Rd, Kings Co, NS





Start

Welcome to the Black Rock Trails Sensory Walk. This activity is designed to give you time to connect with yourself and your surroundings. It takes place mainly on the Purple Trail, as highlighted on the map below.



You will be guided through this activity by small icons on wooden discs that are posted along the trail. Each icon corresponds with an activity invitation described in this guidebook, so you can follow along as you walk.

This activity is designed to be completed at your own pace, so take your time. When questions are posed during this activity, you don't need to write your answers down. The questions are for your mental consideration as you explore.



Smell

Once ready, you can begin walking on the trail.

As you enter the forest, take a moment to check in with yourself. How does it feel to enter this new space?

As you walk, take some deep breaths of the fresh air. Notice the space around you.

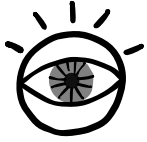
What scents do you notice? Can you smell the earth or the trees?



Take some earth or leaves and rub them between your hands. Breathe in and see if you taste anything on the wind.

Continue walking with deep inhalations until you reach the next marker.





Look

Begin to look at your surroundings more deeply.
What details can you notice in the forest around you?
What colors do you see?

Now that you've begun to notice the colors in your surroundings, see if you can collect items of forest material to match as many colors as you can from the wheel below. Continue walking as you collect.



If you want, you can leave your rainbow collection on a rock or log, for the next person to find.





Listen

Begin to listen to your surroundings more deeply. Can you hear the wind in the trees, or birds singing?

If you'd like, take a moment to pause and close your eyes. What is the quietest sound you can hear around you? What is the loudest?



When ready, keep walking. But this time, see how quiet you can make your footsteps. Can you walk without being able to hear yourself?

Try walking as quietly as you can to the next trail marker. (Hint: stepping with the foot pad down first and rolling into your heel is one way to dampen your step!)



Notice

In this forest, the lives of hundreds of plants are going on around you.

As you walk, notice a plant that catches your eye. It could be as small as a flower, as large as a tree.



Take a moment to pause with this plant. What small details do you notice about it? How does it feel in your hands (touch gently if you're exploring a small plant)? Does it have a particular smell? Why were you drawn to this plant, and why do you like it?

What do you think it would feel like to live as this plant?

Continued...



Notice

Meet a Tree Activity (requires 2+ people)

In pairs, have one partner wear a blindfold (or hat pulled over eyes). Have the seeing partner secretly choose a tree that they find 'unique', and carefully lead the blindfolded person to it.

Next, have the seeing partner 'introduce' the blindfolded person to this tree by letting them feel the texture of the tree's bark, see how big it is by putting their arms around it, and explore the tree's branches and leaves. The guide can silently lead the player's hands to interesting parts of the tree to help them explore.

After the blindfolded partner has gotten to know the tree, the guide can bring them back to the starting point, where they can remove the blindfold. Lastly, the previously blindfolded partner can now try to find the tree they met!

Adapted from Joseph Cornell, Sharing Nature



Build

There are many shapes in the forest around you. Some are made by the movement of natural forces, like the wind and water, and others by the growth of plants, or the lives of animals. And there are even a few crafted by local fairies!

It's your turn to create a small structure within the forest!



Pause somewhere by the trailside, and take a moment to create a simple structure from non-living forest materials. You could simply balance a fallen leaf on a branch, or stack some small stones on top of one another. Or you could make a small hut of twigs!

Did anything in your surroundings inspire the structure you created?



Roots

When you reach the exposed root system on the right hand side of the trail, take a moment to pause.

This fallen tree has given us the opportunity to explore a world we rarely get to see; the world of roots! And these roots may be hiding something special.



See if you can find the collection of items hidden within this root system.



Once finished, please place them back where you found them!



Balance

Beside the resting bench at the trailside, you'll find another fallen tree. This one has a long, straight trunk – perfect for walking or balancing on!



If the log is dry (and not slippery!) and you are able, take a moment to try walking along it.

As you do, become aware of how your body is moving. Do you have to make any changes to how you move to keep your balance?



Walk back and forth a few times or try striking a pose on the log for a few seconds.





On the left hand side of the trail, you'll find an archway between two trees. Step through this archway, and you'll find a bench in the forest beyond. This bench is a spot for you to rest, and connect with your creativity through the following poetry activity. There is a notepad and pencil stored at the bench for you to use.

When you're ready, choose a word that comes to mind when you look at your surroundings. Write this word on the notepad, vertically. Now, write down some thoughts that come to mind on each line of the poem, using the letters of your chosen word (an example is shown on the next page). This is called an acrostic poem.

Continued...



Example poem: (using the word 'Fall')

Fresh apple picking
All the birds are calling
Leaves are slowly falling
Letting go of Summer

Take your time writing your poem, and have fun with it!

Once you feel finished, you may either keep your poem, or leave it within the notepad for others to enjoy.





Life

On the trail so far, you've explored your various senses. Now, it's time to put your senses to the test. As you walk, do you notice signs of animals in the forest around you?



Perhaps you can find a paw-print in some mud, a hole in the dirt, or a feather on a branch? Maybe you can see an animal, or hear one?



Take your time becoming aware of the animals around you, and continue engaging with your senses on the way back to the trailhead!



Thank You

You've reached the end of this discovery walk! As you return to the trailhead or continue on a new trail, take a moment to check in with yourself once more.



How are you feeling? Did you learn anything new about your surroundings, or yourself, during this activity? If you enjoyed this activity, how could you incorporate more of this into your life?

Give a little thanks to yourself for slowing down for this activity, and thanks to the beings that make up the forest for holding you gently.

Continued...




Thank You

Before you leave the trails, please take a moment to return this guidebook to the trail box, and if you'd like to spend another intentional moment in nature, visit the Pollinator Garden next to the Black Rock Privy!

Thank you for taking a walk in nature. Have a lovely day!



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