

Cornwall Hills Park & Lookout

SITE #090301

GC1TY1Z

Written & Researched by Dominique Robillard

SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Ashcroft, V0K 1A0
 Geocache Location: N 50°41.592'
 W 121°26.878'
 Accuracy: 5 meters
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page
 UTM: East 0609620;
 North 5616857 10U
 Geocache altitude: 1,974 m./6,477 ft.
 Overall difficulty: 2
 Terrain difficulty: 4
(1=easiest; 5=hardest)
 Date Established: c 1890
 Ownership: BC Provincial Park
 Access:

- Gravel Road
- Seasonal
- 4x4 vehicle recommended
- Please note: ATV use is prohibited within the Park boundaries.
- *Detailed access information on next page.*

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:
 Gold Country Communities Society
 P.O. Box 933 Cache Creek, B.C. V0K 1H0
 Tel: 1-877-453-9467
 email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com or
www.GeoTourismCanada.com

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Cornwall Hills Provincial Park was named after Clement and Henry Cornwall, English gentlemen ranchers, who came to the area in 1862. The park covers 1,188 hectares of protected ecosystems, ranging from Engelmann Spruce-Sub-Alpine-Fir to parklands, grasslands and alpine meadows. On April 30, 1996 the Cornwall Hills attained provincial park status.

The history of Cornwall Hills is an ancient one, dating back to the late prehistoric and early historic periods. Research conducted in 1987-88 revealed eleven lithic scatter sites, most of which were located on prominent knolls, ridges or above gullies where game could easily be observed. Lithic scatter is surface scatter of cultural artifacts and debris that consists of tools and chipped stone debris. Prior to these studies, while hiking on the

summit, professional geoscientist Pierre Friele discovered half of an unusual basalt projectile point which later turned out to be at least 6,000 years old. Such discoveries indicate the Cornwall Hills summit served as an important location for human activities such as hunting and gathering. The presence of water at the summit permitted people to live in these hills during warmer months. A fenced pond remains there to this day.

If tiptoeing through 'wildflowers' is your cup of tea, tread carefully through these fragile alpine



Forestry Lookout building



Indian Paintbrush is just one of the wildflowers you will find in the surrounding grasslands.

meadows. There can be found an array of blossoms including balsam-root, columbine, indian paintbrush, larkspur, lupine, shooting star, soopollalie and the wild rose, just to name a few!

Habitat for mule deer, cougar, blue grouse and a variety of upland mammal and bird species is also protected by the park. Be aware that wildlife may be encountered at any time and act appropriately.

The park is also home to a provincial hang-gliding site. What a wonderful opportunity to soar high above the Thompson River valley and marvel at the incredible views! The summit offers a 360-degree vista which includes the Venables Valley to the southeast; Mount Baker can be seen on a clear day to the south and the

Coast Range to the west. Pavilion Mountain and Marble Canyon can be seen to the northwest, Cariboo Country to the north and Kamloops Lake to the northeast. To the east lies the Ashcroft Ranch in the Thompson River valley below and above is a limited view of the Highland Valley Copper Mine.

Since the summit provided such an extensive view of the surrounding area, a fire lookout was established in the late 1800s and manned until the mid-1990s. You will see evidence of a wildfire that raged through the park on August 19, 2003 burning nearly 500 hectares of land. In some areas, a very hot burn killed all the vegetation, while other areas were only lightly burned or not burned at all.

The appearance of the pine forests on Cornwall Mountain has also been significantly altered by the mountain pine beetle infestation, which hit the area in the early 2000s. Mountain pine beetle naturally occurs in B.C. forests, however, is usually kept in check by cold temperatures. Mild winters of the past several years have contributed to the current epidemic.

Detailed access information:

- Off Hwy #1, Trans Canada, 28.5 km north of Spences Bridge turn on Hat Creek Road (Look for grey feed building as turn off landmark).
- OR -
- From Hwy #97N, take Hwy #99 west to Hat Creek Road – this route is more back country.
- If following the Hwy#97N route, please use current maps.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Nelson, E. (2009). Personal Interview.

Rousseau, M.K., Breffitt, J., Guthrie, G., & Howe, G. (1989). *1988 Results of Archaeological Investigations in Upper Oregon Jack Creek Valley and on Cornwall Hills Summit near Ashcroft, BC.*

Shewchuk, M (1985). *Backroads Explorer, Volume 1-Thompson Cariboo.* Surrey, BC: Hancock House Publishers Ltd.

Wright, R.T. (1986). *Backroads-The Junction Country, Boston Bar to Lytton.*