

Access to the Trailhead: Take Jinglepot Road to Kilpatrick Road, then turn left up the hill and right along Benson View Road. Near the end is a reverse angle-in parking lot. There is an interpretive kiosk at the trailhead.

Trail Description: You are now at the trailhead to the Witchcraft Lake Regional Trail. This route is the result of an agreement between the Regional District of Nanaimo and the Forestry Department of Vancouver Island University with the approval of the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources. The trail is well marked with bright orange trail markers. This trail is moderately difficult, it is quite steep but there are no technical or exposed portions of the trail. Trails #1, #2 and #3 are included on the map for reference and are not sanctioned for access to the park.

As you climb the trail look for a sign indicating a "Viewpoint". This corresponds with the route to the ruins of an old cabin indicated on this map. Look for a side trail that leads down and to the left beyond the cabin, about 20m across a rocky outcrop and you will come to the first real view looking back at Nanaimo.

Return to the junction of the trail. The route dips slightly for about 60m, then it heads up along variable terrain until it meets the Old Logging Road trail (west of logged area). This is the boundary of Mount Benson Regional Park; and from here you can follow well-marked signs at each junction, and watch for coloured markers (yellow, orange or red) that denote the degree of difficulty of each main trail in the park.

At this point, there are several options for reaching the summit and returning via a different trail. Choose your route and follow the markers. Assuming you have picked a clear day, once you reach the top you can relax and enjoy the incredible panoramic views while you recuperate.



Upkeep to main trails and the signage within the park are the result of a working partnership between NALT and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), Funding from Service Canada's JCP Program has provided for much of this work in the past. Please enjoy a safe hike.

Environmental Considerations: As more people use the Mount Benson trails system, there are bound to be more impacts on the environment. Please remain on the marked trails to reduce the erosion impact of foot-traffic on sensitive ecosystems on the mountain, and respect any wildlife that you encounter. In an effort to reduce the interface between humans and wild animals, we urge you to take home everything (including food remnants) that you brought with you. *Take home memories and photos; leave only (minimal) footprints.*

Disclaimer and Limitation of Liability

The information given in this map has been provided in good faith and is intended only as a general guide. While all reasonable efforts have been made to ensure that details were correct at the time of publication, the author (NALT), and the distributors of this map are not responsible for any inaccuracies or incompleteness. Hike at your own risk. Trail conditions can change due to weather and other hazards, and can become slippery and dangerous. Hikers should be aware that black bears and cougars live in this area. NALT and representatives are released from all responsibility for property damage, bodily injury, liability, cost and expenses claims of every nature and kind howsoever that may arise from use of the information provided in this publication.

MOUNT BENSON TRAILS MAP & GUIDE



Climbing to the summit of Mount Benson is the ultimate Nanaimo hike. It is also a very strenuous climb. The recommended route from Witchcraft Lake takes approximately 3.5 hours up and 2.5 hours down. Allow extra time for viewpoints en route and the stunning 360° views from the top.

Caution: *Hiking to the summit of Mount Benson is more demanding than most first-timers expect. It is most suitable for those who hike regularly and are used to rough and steep terrain. Always inform someone of your planned route and when you expect to return. Many people have had to be rescued from Mount Benson as a result of lack of preparedness or injury. Listen to the weather forecast before setting out, start at least six hours before dusk, wear good hiking boots and take plenty of food, water and wear clothing suitable for sudden weather changes. Cell phones work in most areas on the trails.*



This trail map was originally prepared for NALT by John Butterworth. Text was added by NALT staff. For more information, contact the NALT Stewardship Centre at 250-714-1990 or admin@nalt.bc.ca (revised, February 2014)