



## **THE DOGWOOD HIKING CLUBS** **(revised October 2021)**

### **Background:**

The Dogwood Cliffhuggers Hiking Club was formed in 1977, the year the Dogwood Pavilion was opened and now consists of three main groups, Cliffhuggers (hiking 15 to 20 km), Trekkers (hiking 12 to 18 km) and Striders (hiking 10 to 15 km). There is also a Biking sub-group which is open to all interested members of the hiking Club. The Club encourages carpooling to take participants to the trailheads, which can be located anywhere in the Lower Mainland. The Club collects an annual activity fee.

**Cliffhugger group:** The Cliffhuggers hike every Monday, come rain or shine, except for statutory holidays, when they hike on the Tuesday afterwards. Normally, the Cliffhuggers meet at **the Poirier Sports and Leisure Centre** for 7:50 am and depart promptly at 8:00 am. Some hikes require an earlier start, because of ferry schedule, driving distance or hike duration, but these will be advised beforehand. Summer hikes tend to be more distant, of longer duration and involve more elevation than winter ones.

**Trekker group:** The Trekkers hike every Monday, except for statutory holidays when they hike on the Tuesday afterwards and except for the main ones - Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year. Normally, the Trekkers meet at the Dogwood Pavilion parking lot for 8:15 am and depart at 8:30 am. However, Covid protocols have changed this at least temporarily so that hikers should find their own way to the trailhead or carpool with hikers with whom they are familiar and know their vaccination status. Hikes that require an earlier departure time will be advised.

**Strider group:** The Striders hike every Monday including statutory holidays. Normally, the Striders meet at the Dogwood Pavilion parking lot for 8:40 am and depart at 9:00 am. Hikes that require an earlier departure time will be advised. Generally, arrangements are made for 2 or 3 different hikes. The numbers on some hikes may be limited at the Leader's discretion.

**Biker group:** The Bikers usually ride, weather permitting, on Wednesdays from March to November at 15 to 20 km/h for a few hours. Routes range from 25 to 60 km on gravel paths, bikeways, quiet residential streets and country roads. Departure times may vary due to weather and rush hour traffic.

### **Hike schedules:**

Cliffhugger, Trekker, Strider and biking schedules are circulated by the coordinators. Distances and elevation change (where applicable) are given but, it should be noted, these are only estimates and may change during the trip. Please ensure you are comfortable with the physical effort involved as some hikes (particularly those in the summer) can be challenging.

### **Joint activities:**

Although Cliffhugger, Trekker, Strider and Biker schedules are planned separately, there are some combined activities which include the Club picnic (June), annual administration meeting (November) and Christmas luncheon (December).

### **Additional activities:**

During the summer, individual members may arrange some extra mid-week hikes, which are generally longer, more distant or more demanding than the regular Monday hikes. There may also be overnight trips further afield such as Vancouver Island, Manning Park, Whistler or the Rocky Mountains. During the winter, individual members may arrange some mid-week snowshoeing or cross country skiing trips.

### **Hike Leadership:**

- All hikes have a designated Leader, who will determine the route to be hiked, organise the sign-up sheet, arrange the car-pooling from Dogwood or Poirier and carry (or delegate to be carried) a First Aid kit.
- For larger groups, the Leader will designate Sweepers at the back of the group to ensure no hikers go astray. Two Sweepers are preferred as this ensures no distressed hiker is left on their own. A co-leader may also be designated to assist the Leader as and when required.
- All participants are expected to fully co-operate with the Leader to ensure hiking risks are minimized and that the group stays reasonably together which makes the hike more enjoyable for everyone.
- **Do not hike in front of the Leader.** Any hikers doing so are responsible for maintaining contact with the rest of the group as sometimes a Leader may take a different trail from the “normal” route.
- The Club expects all members to take turns at leading hikes as they become familiar with them. New leaders can “buddy up” with an experienced Leader to understand what is required. New Leaders can also seek assistance from others in the group – it is very rare that no-one has done the same hike before.

### **Clothing and equipment:**

**Hiking boots:** All hikers should have proper footwear (hiking boots) when hiking. Even when the hike is mostly on paved surfaces, we may divert onto trails which can be wet and muddy. Runners are unsuitable.

**Denim jeans:** When wet, denim shrinks and wearers can get very cold. Denim is not a suitable material for hiking.

**Food and water:** Please bring lunch, snacks and an adequate supply of water for the hike. The amount of each will depend on the duration of the hike and the ambient temperature.

**Waterproofs:** Hikers should always be prepared for unexpected changes in the weather (this is Vancouver, after all). Waterproof outerwear should be carried and often, an umbrella, hat and gloves do not come amiss. Most hikers also carry a bum-pad, so that they can sit on damp surfaces for eating lunch in more comfort.

**Day packs:** Hikers should have a backpack to carry their lunch, water, waterproofs, spare clothing and other items. Although Hikers should always aim to be self-sufficient, the occasion may arise when others need our assistance.

**Whistles:** All hikers should carry a whistle which is a much more efficient and effective means of communication than shouting. Duration of the whistle blasts should be at least 3 seconds and the generally accepted protocol is:

- 1 blast – Where are you?
- 2 blasts - I’m here
- 3 blasts - Please help, I require assistance

**Hiking poles:** Poles are beneficial for easing the strain on joints – especially knees. The use of two, one or no poles is a personal preference. Two poles are good for wide, more level trails, but may become a

hindrance on steep narrow ones - so some hikers use one pole as a compromise. Telescopic poles can always be attached to backpacks when not needed.

Other items: A head lamp (with spare batteries) and a space blanket are very light in weight and take up almost no space. In emergency situations, they literally can be lifesavers.

### **Hiking etiquette:**

- As a courtesy to carpool drivers, hiking boots should be carried separately in a plastic bag and worn only when hiking. Street shoes can be left in the cars at the trailhead.
- It is recognised that cell phones can be a useful means of communication/information on hikes, especially between Leaders and Sweepers and in an emergency. As a courtesy to other hikers, cell phones should be set to either silence or vibrate while hiking. Often, however, there is no cell-phone coverage in the areas we hike – especially during the summer when we tend to go to more remote areas.
- Dogs are not allowed on hikes.

### **Contribution to gas costs:**

When carpooling, there is a suggested contribution towards gas costs which is reviewed annually. For insurance reasons, this contribution is voluntary (currently 12 cents/km with a \$3 minimum). Also, any ferry or parking costs associated with a hike are shared equally between the vehicle occupants.

### **Annual administrative meeting:**

Dogwood requires us to hold a meeting annually, which takes place in November. We review membership fees, gas contribution rates, and deal with any other matters that may arise. Although the Club has no defined constitution or elected officers, our administrative and financial affairs are managed internally.

### **Membership fees:**

Currently, renewing members pay an annual activity fee of \$10 and new members pay \$25. Contributions are reviewed annually to ensure that Club funds have an adequate balance. Members must belong to the Dogwood Pavilion Seniors' Society (currently \$10). Guests are always welcome on our hikes, but after two hikes, participants must become members of both the Hiking Club and Dogwood Pavilion Seniors' Society if they wish to continue.

### **Liability Insurance and Waiver forms:**

- As a result of our activities, we are open to possible suit from third parties and may need to be defended in court. Liability insurance pays for this defence as well as any costs awarded against us. The Club carries a \$2m policy for hiking, cycling and snow-shoeing activities, only within BC. Members entering the USA should ensure that they are covered by their own medical insurance.
- All participants should complete the liability waiver on the sign-up sheet before leaving Dogwood or Poirier. Members must also complete an individual liability waiver annually, at the same time as paying the membership fee.

### **ALL PARTICIPANTS HIKE, CYCLE, OR SNOW-SHOE AT THEIR OWN RISK**

If you have any questions, please contact the Club's co-ordinators listed under Sports and Athletics at: [www.dogwoodseniors50plus.com](http://www.dogwoodseniors50plus.com)

