

## JADE PASS, MOUNT REVELSTOKE NATIONAL PARK, BRITISH COLUMBIA

The trail to Jade Pass is about 7.5 kilometers one-way, with an optional 0.5 kilometer route on a use trail to the north along the ridge towards Mt. Williamson. An additional 1 kilometer must be hiked if departing before the shuttle bus leaves from the lower Meadows in the Sky parking area, and the same additional distance will be hiked back if returning after the last shuttle bus trip. Thus the total round-trip distance we did on this hike was about 18 kilometers.

The wildflowers at the Meadows in the Sky Parkway were incredible this year (August 2016), and much better than on any of the other times I had been to Mount Revelstoke National Park (ten times, in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011). Unfortunately, my iPhone camera wasn't able to quite capture the amazing density and vibrant colors of these flowers, although it did a surprisingly excellent job for a phone camera (better than my GoPro, and probably better than my Canon Powershot would have if I'd brought it on the hike). [Note to self: Try to find a camera that takes better photos of multitudes of wildflowers!]

The trailhead for Jade Pass is located at the top of the Meadows in the Sky Parkway, in Mount Revelstoke National Park. Other nearby hikes are Miller Lake (turnoff 5.1 km from the start of the Jade Pass trail, then a further 0.4 km to the lake), Eva Lake (turnoff 5.1 km from the start of the Jade Pass trail, then a further 0.9 km to the lake), and the Jade Lakes (approximately 1.5 kilometers beyond Jade Pass, on a steep trail that leads downhill from the pass).

Upon reaching Jade Pass, there are two directions that one can proceed, in addition to the route down to the Jade Lakes. To the northwest, the hike along the ridge towards the route up to Mt. Williamson gives some incredible views and is not to be missed. The climbers route to Mt. Williamson along this ridge looks tricky and dangerous for a hiker to attempt, but it may be possible to hike down into the nearby valley (above Eva Lake), then re-gain the ridge on the other side of Mt. Williamson (if the talus isn't too steep), where the route to the summit is less steep. I do not know if this is possible, nor do I know how dangerous it may be. However, it certainly looks to be worth further exploration. To the south along the ridge from Jade Pass, there is also a use trail, which may eventually lead to the nearby peak on that side of the ridge. We did not hike this route, but we could see it from the high point which we attained on the other side of the ridge. It appears to be possible to progress some distance along the southern ridge, but there may be some very narrow sections of "knife-edge" ridge that could certainly be dangerous, so more research would be necessary before attempting this route.

As we began switchbacking up the Meadows in the Sky Parkway, we wondered when we would start to see wildflowers alongside the road. We didn't see them as soon as we thought we would; it was just before the last switchback that the flowers began to appear:



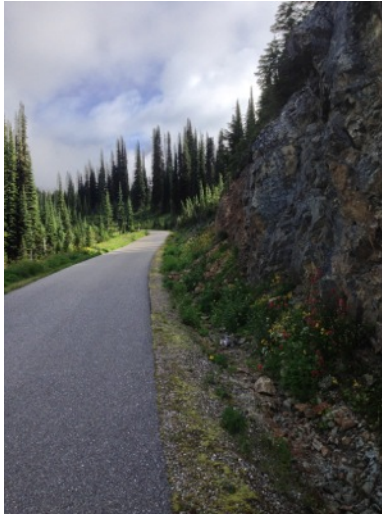
The flowers began to get surprisingly thick along the side of the road as we approached the lower parking area:



There was some greenish moss covering the gravel near the parking area, and some random flowers (here a paintbrush) were growing out of the gravel:



As we began hiking up the road towards the upper parking area, there began to be increasing amounts of wildflowers along the road:



This was already more wildflowers than we'd previously seen here:



The next five photos show the incredible expanses of wildflowers we saw as we were hiking up the road:



This sign discusses the "spectacular August wildflower meadows of Mount Revelstoke National Park", and the photo shown on this sign is of a very dense patch of wildflowers, similar to some of the ones we would see today:



This was a particularly colorful patch of flowers alongside the road. The most prevalent colors we were seeing are purple, red, yellow, and pink (as seen here), but there were also some white and maroon flowers that we'd see later:



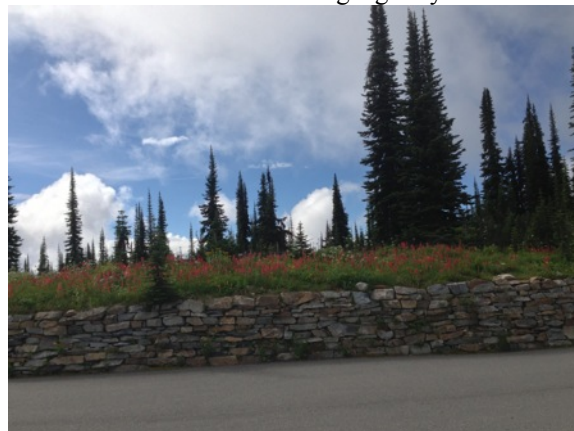
This is the trail map for the Miller, Eva, and Jade Lakes. One of the TOPO maps I have for this area shows that the trail used to continue beyond the Jade Lakes, through the nearby valley along Clachnacudainn Creek, and down to the main Trans-Canada Highway; I'm not sure how long ago this trail was put in or what traces of it are left, but I do know that it is no longer maintained. One online reference suggests that parts of it may still be passable, and it would be about 8 km to the Lower Jade Lake from the Mount Revelstoke National Park entrance, but I could not find any definitive information:



This is the highest point on the Meadows in the Sky Parkway; after 26 km from the entrance station, you reach an altitude of 1935 meters:



Looking across the upper parking area at all the wildflowers which are lining a grassy knoll:



The trail starts descending at a moderate pace from Heather Lake (near the upper parking area and not pictured—there were too many mosquitoes near it to stay long enough to get a photo!):



The flowers were less dense along the beginning of the trail than they had been by the road, but there would be big flower meadows coming up:



This photo actually doesn't accurately show the incredible density of flowers in this meadow; in previous years I think this was the last big flower spot, but this year (August 2016) we would see many more flowers on the hike:



Three photos that give a better idea of just how dense the wildflowers were in this meadow:





Close-up photo of one of the white flowers that were prevalent in this meadow:



Looking back along the wildflower-lined trail:



Another photo showing the red, white, pink, and yellow flowers that were growing here:



The paintbrush flowers were quite large in this part of the meadow; what surprised me was not just the density of flowers but also that they were gigantic (similar to the Spring 2016 wildflower bloom in Death Valley):



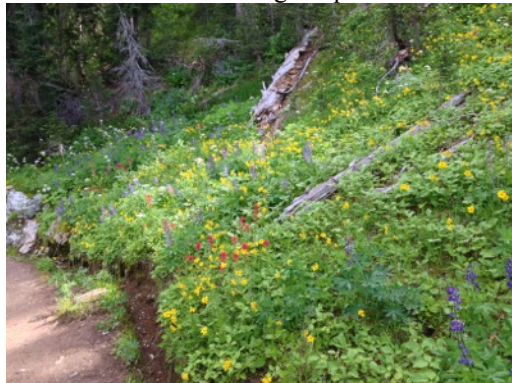
One last photo of this wildflower meadow before we continue along the trail:



I wasn't expecting to go around the corner and see more flowers, but there was another thick patch of wildflowers shortly beyond the previous one:



Continuing along the trail, with astonishing numbers of wildflowers lining the path:



Looking down the valley that I think contains Hamilton Creek; in looking at old maps, it appears that the mountain range seen in the background of this photo is called the Clachnacudainn Range, and it is just south of the Jade Lakes area:



The patches of flowers continued, and although they were not as dense as they had been previously the actual flowers themselves were much larger:





There were some other reddish flowers that looked different from the red paintbrush flowers; I'm not sure what the name of these other red flowers is:



These were particularly large paintbrush flowers (unfortunately I don't have anything in this picture for perspective):



These purple-ish colored flowers began to appear along the trail:



We soon entered another nice meadow of flowers, as the trail continued to descend:



Looking across a patch of wildflowers at one of the peaks south of Jade Pass:



There were more wildflowers on the hillside than appeared in this photo:



This was the last big wildflower meadow along the trail; I think it is the best of the trip because the flowers were so dense (better photos from our hike back are near the end of this report), even though it wasn't quite as large as the other wildflower meadows we'd seen earlier on the hike:



These big purple flowering plants may be arctic lupine, but I'm not sure:

