

UPPER VICTORIA GLACIER VIEWPOINT FROM PLAIN OF THE SIX GLACIERS TRAIL

This hike was completed in August of 2009; however, I neglected to take photos of where the unofficial use trail to the toe of Victoria Glacier takes off from the main Plain of the Six Glaciers trail on that trip. Therefore, these first two photos were taken in July of 2013 and show the beginning of this use trail:



Looking up at where we are going from just past the Plain of the Six Glaciers Teahouse, near the start of the use trail:



View over towards the rock pile which can be ascended to get to the same elevation as we will get to, but is probably a much more difficult route:



Zooming in on the very nice waterfall at the top of the boulder field; I think there is a (small) lake below the peaks in the background and behind the gravel ridge seen in the center of the photo, which would be a great hike to do someday:



Looking out of the trees and across at some of the peaks which are clearly visible from the Plain of the Six Glaciers trail, although right now we are a bit higher than that trail:



The trail switchbacks steeply through the trees for quite a while. Then, finally, the trees become shorter and we are able to get a view looking back down towards the teahouse:



We soon leave the trees and enter a meadow, where we are able to see back down towards Lake Louise:



This is an amazing meadow and reminded me at the time of scenes from The Sound of Music movie:



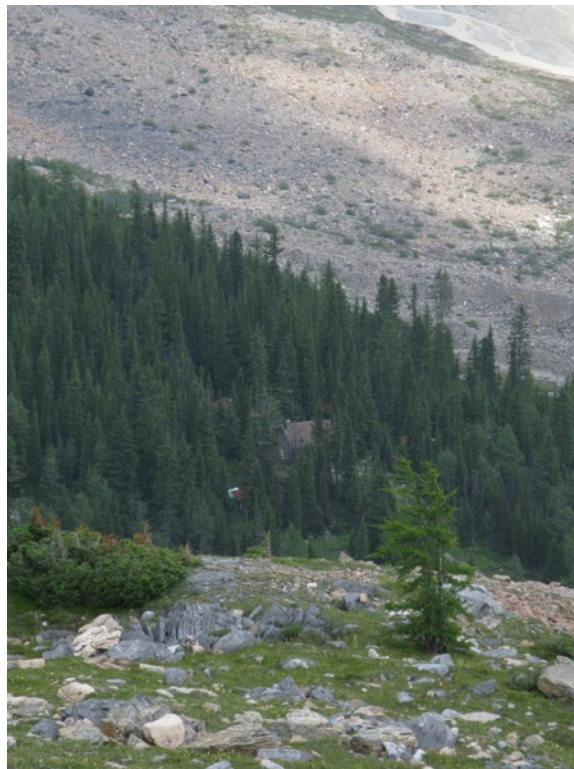
We hike up through this very nice meadow towards the cliffs above:



Walking through here was, for me, the best part of the hike, because of the stunning views of the surrounding mountains and the green meadow:



Zooming in on the Plain of the Six Glaciers teahouse far below us:



Finally the terrain levels out somewhat:



There were a lot of rock wall wind shelters through here (these are common along trails in the Canadian Rockies); we were lucky to have a relatively clear day with minimal wind on this hike:



Looking over towards the Whyte-Niblock saddle. It would be an interesting hike someday to cross the boulder field seen in the center of this photo and check out the area below the peaks; and, I think one can get some great views down towards Lake Louise by continuing along the ledge which is just out of sight and to the right in this photo:



While crossing the meadow here we encountered a very friendly and photogenic group of ptarmigans. They seemed curious about us and didn't mind being photographed:





Looking over at Mt. Fairview from here:



I was amazed at how much elevation we'd gained on this unofficial trail to the toe of the Upper Victoria Glacier:



Looking across at the peaks we'd been viewing earlier, and noticing how much higher up we are now:



This is essentially the view that hikers to the Plain of the Six Glaciers lookout see, except we are way above the lookout—and we are about to gain even more elevation:



The toe of the glacier is just ahead. Notice the waterfall in the center of the photo; it's some distance above the one usually seen at the Plain of the Six Glaciers lookout. We attempted to hike up to it a few years before doing this hike, and observed that it takes some rock climbing skills to get to it—and we also encountered a mountain goat:



This would probably not be a good way to hike up from the Plain of the Six Glaciers lookout... The gravel ridge seen below and to the left is where the lookout trail is:



Luckily there is a well-worn trail up the gravel embankment here:



Looking down at the upper reaches of the meadow we'd just been hiking through:



At the top of the gravel embankment, we see that the toe of the glacier is just ahead:



Zooming in on the alpine hut which can be seen from the Plain of the Six Glaciers lookout. It's easier to access from the Lake O'Hara side of the ridge:



Looking down towards some of the amazing peaks in this area:



The glacier is much more impressive when seen up close than it is from the "official" viewpoint far below:



Looking back up at where we were from near the Plain of the Six Glaciers teahouse. The use trail really makes this incredible hike a lot easier:



Generally on a hike to the Plain of the Six Glaciers one sees (and hears) many chunks of ice fall off a glacier and tumble down the cliff.

