

# Dew Drop Trail

## Hike Summary

Location - Dew Drop Range Road (Frederick Road) up to Red Plateau

Elevation – Start at 620m; end at 1280m

Distance – 2.5 km to the first viewpoint; 6 km to the best viewpoint

Time – 2-5 hours depending on fitness and conditions

Type – out (up a ridge) and back

Season – April through October

## Highlights

- Unobstructed views of Kamloops Lake east to Savona, west to Kamloops, and south to the Thompson Plateau (Greenstone Mountain, Chuwhels Mountain, Mount Savona, and Rose Hill)
- Lava-flow rock formations and a cinder-like hiking surface
- Wildflowers in all seasons
- Junipers and plateau forest ecology
- Wildlife areas
- A hike that will challenge and enhance your fitness

## To Get There:

Drive west on Tranquille Road, and at the entrance to Tranquille, turn right, cross the tracks, and proceed past Tranquille Creek and climb up the Red Lake Road until the first switchback. Turn left onto the Dew Drop Range Road (Frederick Road). Proceed along for about one kilometre and look for a parking area on your right. Park at the cleared area with the signs and concrete barriers.

## The Trail:

- Travel north following a double track which parallels the fence line.
- After about 0.6 km, cross a stile and follow a single track along a different fence line into a gully.
- Go through a “man-gate” in the fence and follow the trail up the gully. There are two steep sections here.
- At the upper end of the gully, the trail veers west and traverses over onto the ridge.
- A minor trail leads left to a viewpoint. This could be your endpoint, but if not, proceed up the trail where there are better views.
- The trail winds its way up the ridge. There is a good viewpoint at about 2.5 km.
- After this viewpoint, the trail dips into a saddle and then winds up onto Red Plateau.
- The trail changes dramatically once you are off the south slopes and the forest is cooler, damper, and much more varied. Cross a small seasonal stream as the trail veers west along the slope break of the upper plateau.
- A second ridge slanting southwards is passed and then the trail climbs again up to a higher viewpoint. This is the best part of the trail. There are many lava rock outcrops here interspersed among the junipers and douglas fir.
- There are 3 trail junctions in this section. In each case, staying close to the slope break is the right choice rather than traveling inland on the plateau.
- The trail comes across a fine viewpoint after about 5.5 km. This is a good place to have lunch, to rest, or to turn around.
- More intrepid hikers may wish to hike to the west and down a bit to the ridge which takes you out onto Castle Butte. This formation is a hill at the end of the next south sloping ridge and it

requires some scrambling. From the viewpoint, follow the trail west until it reaches the top of the ridge (at a trail junction). Head down the ridge for 600 m following the ridge line (not much of a trail). When you come to a saddle, overhanging cliffs block your progress. Contour around the left (east) side until you can see a scramble route up onto the top. It looks difficult at first, but it's reasonable for anyone with experience. It may not be a good choice for novices or young children.

- Return by the same route.
- The trail does go on to the west and it is possible to head down by a different trail but it takes you 4 km from your parking area.

### Flora and Fauna

In our last trip up in June, we saw many wildflowers - brown-eyed susans, peavine, oxeye daisy, vetch, tansy, and yarrow on the lower slopes; prairie rose, Jacobs Ladder, larkspur, Indian paintbrush, arnica, strawberries, penstemon, pussytoes, starflower, and red sedum on the upper slopes.

Deer tracks were evident, bear and small mammal scats were spotted, soaring birds flew above the ridges, a bald eagle sat on the snag on Castle Butte, and a rattlesnake sounded its warning not far from the parking area. South slopes tend to be dry, hot, and barren. The upper slopes have a variety of forest plants and animals.

### If You Go There:

- Wear good shoes. The surface can be slippery, especially coming down.
- Bring lots of water and a good hat. The south-facing exposure is hot and dry.
- Bring your camera. The local geology and the views are superb.

### Notes:

This area starts in the Tranquille Ecological Reserve and ascends up the fringes of Lac du Bois Grasslands Provincial Park. The area at the viewpoint and near Castle Butte is sometimes referred to as the Red Plateau Trail area.

### GPSr Coordinates

|                                |             |                                      |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| Parking                        | N 50 44.720 | W120 33.432 (approx)                 |
| Fence Crossing                 | N 50 45.113 | W120 33.212                          |
| First Lookout Junction         | N50 45.408  | W120 33.356                          |
| Second Lookout (same ridge)    | N 50 45.905 | W120 34.208                          |
| Viewpoint                      | N50 46.165  | W120 34.643                          |
| Ridge junction to Castle Butte | N50 46.348  | W120 35.149 (6km)                    |
| Castle Butte                   | N50 46.100  | W120 35.104 (6.67 km from the start) |

### Resources:

- Topo map/route
- Photos
- Detail map for the trail on top