

# BMN HIKE REPORT

## Halvor Lunden and Full Pull Trails

Sunday July 20 2014

by Mark Johnston

With the prospect of a rainy day before us, for the second year in a row we turned aside from our scheduled destination, Bear Mountain, and as we did last year, chose instead the Buntzen Lake area and a hike up the Halvor Lunden Trail. But whereas last year we continued on to Lindsay Lake, this time we turned in the opposite direction to Vancouver Lookout and the start of the Full Pull mountain bike trail.

### **Beginning of the Full Pull Trail.** *Chloe Tu photo.*

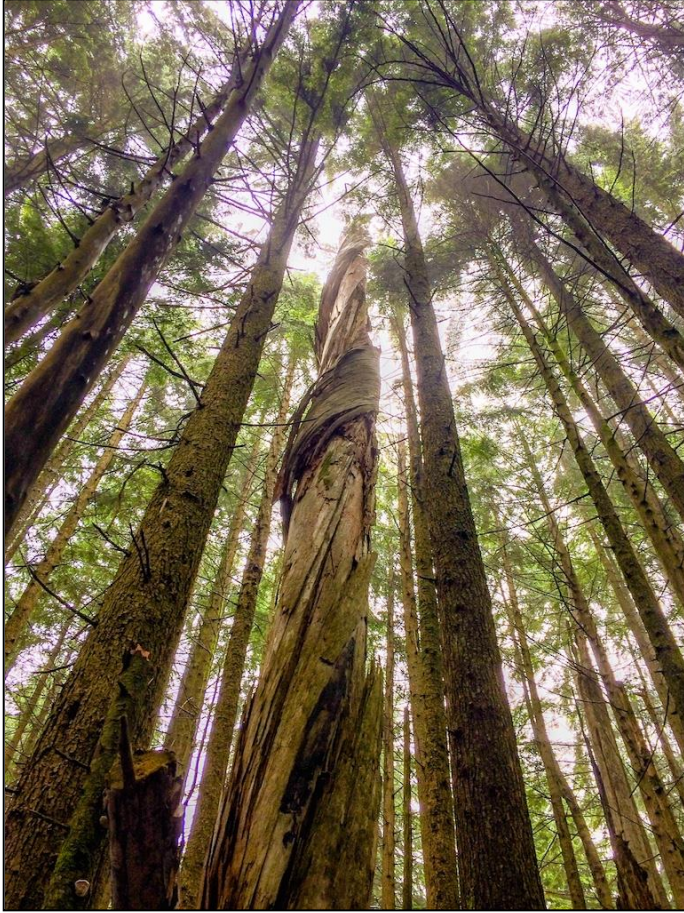
Same as last year, there were just five of us prepared to brave the elements. Although when we began to hike the early morning rain had eased, we weren't far up the trail before a light rain was falling again. We reached Polytrichum Lookout and were able to look across to Buntzen Ridge, but only for a short while before the clouds prevailed and obscured any further view.

After a few moments' respite at the lookout, we resumed our climb, perspiring heavily. While the forest provided some cover from the rain, our clothing was soon damp anyway—from the inside out. Fortunately, the air wasn't cold, so we had no trouble staying warm. At a point where the path begins to level off, we departed the Halvor Lunden Trail and, by means of a rough connecting route, were able to access the Cypress Lake plateau logging roads which we followed out to Vancouver Lookout. Alas, as at Polytrichum, our gaze was met by a wall of grey cloud. On a clear day one can see much of Greater Vancouver from here, but not today.



Having reached our high point for the day, we turned our attention to getting back down. Just to the right of the lookout, we picked our way down the steep, loamy route that is the “hike-a-bike” beginning of the Full Pull Trail. Apparently the steep beginning is to discourage dirt bike use of the trail. Below the lookout is an assortment of debris, presumably cast off the precipitous edge in times past. We found a few tires lining both sides of the trail; a number of skis, with their tails jammed into the ground; even a compact-pickup-truck bed, red as a fire engine, sitting beside the path (not sure what happened to the cab and chassis). As we approached the smartly signed start of the trail proper, we were only a few metres away from the Halvor Lunden Trail, but given the tangle of vegetation that intervenes, one would never know.

### **Clambering up a particularly steep section of Halvor Lunden Trail.** *Chloe Tu photo.*



**A cedar snag with a remarkable whorl.  
*Chloe Tu photo.***

After admiring the well-crafted sign and taking a photo or two, we started down the initially gentle trail. A long gradual descent brought us to a large cedar snag, the bark of which had sloughed off to reveal a remarkable whorl beneath. We took some time to look at the tree and photograph it. Then, resuming our descent, we continued more or less in the direction from which we had come, passing a few more large cedar snags. After the last of these we began to zigzag down the mountain in tighter turns, sometimes dropping quite steeply. Part way down we paused at a level spot and had a bite to eat. Then it was back to the switchbacks.

Where the switchbacks begin to ease in grade, we came to a four-way intersection. While it seemed probable that Full Pull continued straight ahead, it was tempting to turn right, onto the intersecting route. The latter route looked well-travelled, was marked with a black triangle, and seemed to promise a quicker descent. After some deliberation we decided to go right. This new trail continues down, but takes its time doing so. We meandered back and forth and up and down and, finally, upon achieving a low point, began to climb back up rather unrelievedly. We consulted Chloe's smartphone GPS and discovered that our new trail would never take us where we wanted to go but, happily, at its low point was only a few tens of metres above the Full Pull's final switchback.

Retracing our steps to the low point, we set off through light bush and in a couple of minutes came out onto the Full Pull Trail, which we followed a very short distance to the power line right-of-way and a five-minute walk to Eagle Bluff. From the bluff viewpoint one may see Buntzen Lake, but on this day only the south arm of the lake was visible, the rest hidden beneath cloud. Nevertheless, there were other rewards: goldenrod and St. John's-wort were in bloom, their yellow flowers complementing the pinks of fireweed and spirea. Pearly everlasting (white) was also flowering.

We used a relatively new connecting trail to return to the Halvor Lunden Trail. There was some question about the start of the trail, but after remembering that it was marked with green spray paint, we soon located the correct route. We passed along a fine sidehill of fir and sword fern and then descended to meet the Lunden Trail several switchbacks above the trailhead. Despite the wet weather, we'd had a good walk, a bit of route-finding adventure, and our eyes opened to new paths to explore on a future trip.