



The Creeks are Rising

story by John Smith

The month of June will see the local creeks rising and reaching their peak flow, and this is an excellent time to visit some of them. Some of our creeks are quite spectacular, and three of those are north of Riondel, namely Tam O'Shanter, Loki and Powder Creeks. All of these creeks have waterfalls within easy reach, and beautiful mossy banks.

Starting in Riondel, drive north on Eastman Avenue for 4 Km, and you will reach Tam O'Shanter Creek. Walk up the creek on the left side, and you will soon come to a small building that was once a private hydro-electric powerhouse for the Dutch Harbour Property on the other side of the road. Not far past this is a fairly short but volumous waterfall, definitely worth a visit.

The road is not paved beyond Tam O'Shanter Creek, as it turns into a forest service road, and apart from being a bit bumpy and pot-holey, it's in good enough shape for any vehicle. Set your trip odometer to zero, and head north. At 2.5 Km you will come to the signed trailhead of the Pebble Beach trail. This trail does not take you to any creeks, but is a popular and easy hike down to a beautiful south-facing beach of (you guessed it!) pebbles, and a nice rock to walk out onto. A great place for a picnic. Unlike most hikes around here, the trail goes downhill, so you have the hard part last instead of first. Allow about 30 minutes to get down and 45 minutes to get back.

The next creek going north is Loki Creek, at 5 Km. This has an interesting 90° small waterfall visible from the road, and is worth exploring further.

Keep going north and at 9 Km you will reach Bernard Creek and the Forestry Campsite at Garland Bay. At this point the road goes three ways, up into the bush, down to Garland Bay, and straight ahead. After a visit to Garland Bay go straight on, and at 12.5 Km you will reach Powder Creek. There are some lovely falls on this creek, and time to get a bit of exercise visiting them. 100 m past the bridge on the left you will see an old road that leads towards the lake. Park here and walk down to the lake, (about 20 minutes down, 30 minutes back up). Just before the road ends at the lake, there is a fork that heads south down to the lake. Take this fork, and arrive at a beautiful little bay, another great place for a picnic. Follow the shore south for a few minutes, over some big rocks and another bay or two, and lo and behold you are at the mouth of Powder Creek.

A few metres before the creek there is a trail going into the trees, and this will take you up the creek to the falls (about 5 minutes). After admiring the falls, follow the trail up the rocks a little further to the top of the falls, and you will see an interesting dish-shaped rock, and the water pouring over the rocks and down the falls.



A word of caution when exploring these, and other, creeks. The rocks are often covered with moss, and can be quite slippery, especially when there is spray from the creek. The waters are flowing **Lockhart Creek, high with spring melt waters** swiftly, and dangerously, and are very cold. Keep a close eye on youngsters and dogs!

There are many other creeks on the East Shore, all beautiful in their own ways, but these three major creeks are so accessible and interesting they are definitely worth a visit, and this is the best time of year to do. Get out, get a bit of fresh air and exercise, and appreciate the beauty that is so easy to take for granted. Afterwards, treat yourself to an ice-cream at the Riondel Market!