

Seton Ridge Trail

Site Identification

Nearest Community:
Lillooet, B.C.

Geocache Location:
N 50°38.913'
W 122°07.020'

Ownership:
Crown Land

Accuracy:
5 meters

Overall Difficulty: 3
Overall Terrain: 4.5

Access Information and Restrictions:

From the Mile 0 cairn on Main Street follow Hwy 99 South on the Duffey Lake Road for 19.5 km and turn right on Seton Ridge Forstery Service Road. Cross the bridge over Cayoosh Creek, and continue on about 6 km to flat area on the left. Trail is adequately marked with flagging tape. 4x4 with high clearance.

Parking Advice:

Park in pull out. Trail starts to your left.

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:

Gold Country Communities Society
PO. Box 933
Cache Creek, BC.,
VOK 1H0

Tel: 1-877-453-9467
email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com

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Photo: Wayne Robinson

Seton Ridge follows the height of the land with dizzyingly steep drops of nearly 1600 meters to either side. Seton Ridge is the eastern terminus of the Cayoosh Ranges of the Coast Mountains of British Columbia. To the north of the trail is Seton Lake and to the south, the Cayoosh Creek valley. Cayoosh Creek originates just west of Duffy Lake in Cayoosh Pass, close to Lillooet Lake. Seton Lake is classified as a freshwater fjord that drains to the east into Cayoosh Creek which is referred to as the Seton River in the *BC Freshwater Fishing Regulations*. Seton Lake's actual depth is not entirely known but is known to exceed 500 meters. Although it is called a lake, Seton is a reservoir; the eastern end was dammed as a part of the Bridge River Power complex that was completed in 1960. Where the Seton Lake gorge joins the Cayoosh Canyon, it creates an area known by the local St'at'imic people as *Nkoopmtch* (meaning: water crossing over); this large gap punches a hole into the Fraser Canyon wall, easily visible from Seton Ridge.

As you ascend the trail take the time to pause for a breath and to take in the view. This is the sub-alpine forest, rich in plant life not found in the dry valleys below. In fact, the vegetation you find here will be similar to what you can expect to find on the eastern ranges of the Coast Mountains, along the Cayoosh Creek, up to Duffy Lake; beyond the lake the plant life changes significantly as you enter the temperate rainforest of the Pacific Coast. Expect to see: the yellow Round-Leaved Violet (*Viola orbiculata*), Prince's- Pine (*Chimaphila umbellata*) and Falsebox (*Pachistima mirsinites*).

In June you may spot an exception of the above statement, the delicate orchid named the Fairy Slipper (*Calypso*

bulbosa). If you are familiar with this flower, you will notice that the local population found on Seton Ridge displays numerous magenta spots over its lower petal or 'lip' with white hairs; these characteristics are found in populations located within the Coastal Temperate Rainforest. This is very different from the populations found east of the Fraser River and Carpenter Lake which are usually a softer pink, are missing any spots on the 'lip' and displays a cluster of yellow hairs. Please resist the urge to pick this flower. It is disappearing at an alarming rate; once picked, the Fairy Slipper will die and not return the following year. The presence of this 'costal' variation of this orchid is a testament to the transitional climate that Seton Ridge is located in.

Seton Ridge was named by A.C. Anderson, a Hudson Bay Company explorer and surveyor that was commissioned in 1858 by Governor Douglas to find a route from Harrison Lake through Lillooet to the Upper Fraser River. The route he proposed included navigating Seton Lake which lies directly north, adjacent to Seton Ridge. Colonel Alexander Seton was a relative and childhood friend of A.C. Anderson. Seton served the British Empire during the Kaffir War and was killed on February 26, 1852 while commanding the *HMS Birkenhead* which sank, destined for the Cape of Good Hope. Colonel Seton was killed during the tragedy, 445 of the 634 passengers perished.

Detailed Access Information:

The forestry road leading to the trailhead is rough, has loose gravel, rocks and many switch backs. It is possible to continue along the ridge an additional 3 km past the Geocache and reach an alpine summit. The trail to the summit is vague at times and requires additional elevation gain. This should only be attempted by strong hikers with good mountain sense and the ability to navigate with a map.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Akrigg, G.P.V. & Helen. (1973). *1001 British Columbia Place Names*. Vancouver: Discovery Press
Parish, Coupe, Lloyd. (1996). *Plants of Southern Interior British Columbia and the Inland Northwest*. Vancouver, BC: Lone Pine Publishing

“Shalath & Seton Lake” (2012). <http://www.cayoosh.net/seton.html>

“Wikipedia: Seton Lake” (2012). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seton_Lake

Letterboxing Clues:

From trail head hike up trail for 2.3 km to the first look out of Seton Lake where the trail is not as steep. Hidden just off the trail.