

Balancing Rock

SITE #100303

GC1VCMD

Written & Researched by Dominique Robillard

SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Savona, V0K 2J0
 Parking: N 50°45.577'
 W 120°44.660'
 Geocache Location: N 50°45.599'
 W 120°44.444'
 Accuracy: 5 meters
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page
 UTM: East 0659340;
 North 5625568 10U
 Geocache altitude: 541 m./1,774 ft.
 Overall difficulty: 1.5
 Terrain difficulty: 1.5
(1=easiest; 5=hardest)
 Date Established: n/a
 Ownership: Leased Crown Land
 Access: • Highway Road
 • Year-round
 • Vehicle accessible
 • *Detailed access information on next page.*



Set against the beautiful backdrop of Kamloops Lake, Savona's magnificent balancing rock is truly a marvel of nature. Weighing in at many tonnes, this large boulder perches precariously atop a huge pyramid shaped pillar of sedimentary rock, silt and sand. Sedimentary rock is composed of mineral and organic fragments deposited and consolidated by the forces of water, wind or ice.

sion caused by the forces of the elements.

To the local Shuswap people, the balancing rock is considered a boundary marker for Shuswap territory and is known as "Coyote Rock". The "Old One", who was the main creator, sent down transformers who were his helpers and had the ability to alter their physical forms. They would complete

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Twelve thousand years ago, the glacial waters of the Thompson basin drained, creating many lakes and rivers, including Kamloops Lake. The process of freezing and thawing and the focus of wind and rain carved the landscape into steep cliffs and deep canyons. Hoodoos, which are rock capped pinnacles, were formed along the canyon edges and cliff-sides as the softer sedimentary rock surrounding the pinnacle eroded away. The cap rock, which is composed of harder materials, serves to protect its supportive column from ero-





A close-up reveals how precariously the rock is balanced on the pillar below.

the “Old One’s” work on the earth by improving the land and giving shape to it in the forms of mountains, valleys, lakes and so on.

The foremost of these transformers was the old coyote and “Coyote Rock” is where he stepped down from the heavens to perform his duties. Once Coyote finished his work, he transformed himself into “Coyote Rock”, standing as a sentry, keeping watch over the land. When the natural balance was disrupted, Coyote would transform himself into whichever form he deemed necessary to correct the problem and restore balance to the land.

There is one such related story of two female healers who stretched a net across the river. This upset Coyote for they were catching too many fish. He then transformed himself into a stick and floated down river where he got himself caught up in the women’s net. They emptied their net and found the stick and tossed it onto the bank to be burned in their fire. There, coyote transformed himself into a baby and the women cared for him. He later changed himself into a man and married both women. He then asked them to remove the net and, being his wives, they obeyed his order. Thus Coyote was satisfied.

The “Coyote” had a multifaceted personality, as a creator, as a hero and as a humorous, clever and cunning trickster who could, at times be quite greedy, jealous, impulsive and reckless.

The Balancing Rock can be viewed from the Trans Canada Highway one half kilometer west of the Savona hill rest stop. Pedestrian access is available to the site. Please keep your footprint at a distance for not only is the column fragile, but the site is of special significance to the local Shuswap people.

Detailed access information:

- From Hwy #1 pull off at parking coordinates near gate.
- Foot access ONLY, please be careful in this fragile ecosystem.
- Do NOT walk to Balancing Rock, access allowed for viewing only.
- Access beyond the cache box is forbidden, watch for cactus.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Jules, E. (2009). Personal Interview.

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Teit, J.A. (1900). *The Jesup North Pacific Expeditions: the Thompson Indians of British Columbia Vol.1 Part 4*. Kamloops BC: Secwepemc Museum.