

## Cheakamus Canyon & Starvation Lake – August 23, 2020

With the limitations imposed on us by COVID-19 we met at the turnoff from hwy 99 to Squamish & Paradise Valleys. At the trail-head we were surprised to see quite a number of vehicles and mountain bikers. This turned out to be a preview of how busy the trail was going to be on this day – we probably saw well over 50 hikers and bikers on what is normally a very quiet trail.

Even though the statistics are modest, this trail always delights the senses. The transition from the Cheakamus Valley with its river rushing past to the higher reaches of the rocky canyon is quite dramatic. With steep rocky drop-offs into the deep canyon where the Cheakamus churned and foamed through narrow rocky gaps and snow covered mountains in the Tantalus range loomed high above us to the west it felt like a different hike than at the start.

After reaching our turn-around spot on a rocky bluff we retreated some distance back down the trail and ate our lunches. Patches of ground-hugging kinnickinnick (Bearberry) were growing profusely in this area, with their bright red berries in stark contrast to the rich green of their leathery leaves.

We had passed Starvation Lake on the way up the trail. On our way back down we diverted to the far side of the lake. Some good swimming opportunities were available here and two of us were soon in the warm clear water to enjoy a refreshing swim before continuing on the trail back to the cars.

*Photo credits: Gerard Laman, David Cater*