

January 20
9am-2 pm

We will meet at the Hope Mountain Recreation Centre. From there we will convoy to the Zopkias Rest Area (directions below).

Snowshoeing and Winter Ecology

Join us for a snowshoe tour of the Mount Ottomite Trail. Enjoy the deep snowpack on this gorgeous route that passes through old-growth forests of mountain hemlock, amabilis fir, and yellow cedar. A deep snowpack, summit views, and frozen waterfalls make this an Explorer Day you'll never forget.



Kelly Pearce (pictured above) is the Program Director for the Hope Mountain Centre, a local non-profit society that works to connect people with nature. Kelly previously worked as a park naturalist in Manning Park for 14 years, leading outdoor trips for all ages in all seasons. He is an exceptional educator and historian inspiring people of all ages to get outdoors and learn what is right in their own back yard.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Snowshoe rental is \$10 per pair through Hope Mountain Centre. Smaller children, who may lack stamina, or attendees under the age of 4, are best in a sled or baby backpack.
- Please carefully dress for the weather. Sturdy winter boots that are warm and moisture resistant, a warm coat and waterproof coat (if it is raining), mittens and/or gloves, a hat that covers your ears, a scarf or neck warmer, long underwear, an extra pair of mittens and socks. You will need a daypack to carry your gear.
- Bring a hearty lunch and drink, along with a mug for hot cocoa and snow ice cream. You will need to pack out all trash from this pristine environment.
- Road conditions on the Coquihalla are wildly variable. BC law requires “snowflake” rated tires in winter. We will provide a final weather update the day before. Carpooling, either from Chilliwack, or from the Hope Mountain Centre, may be a good option if you don’t have a vehicle which does well in snow. It is always a nice idea to offer to share the cost of fuel.
- **Waivers:** along with the NatureKids sign-in form, Hope Mountain Centre requires a waiver to be completed (attached).
- **Schedule:**
 - 9-9:15 Meet at Hope Mountain Centre: (meet and greet Kelly Pearce, waivers completed, bathroom break, carpool organizing, and, if you are able, a much appreciated voluntary donation to support the important work of the Hope Mountain Centre and especially as gratitude for Kelly volunteering to take us snowshoeing).
 - 9:15 - 10:00 Leave as a group convoy to staging area: (~45 minutes).
 - 10:00 Arrive at staging area: (put on gear, receive instructions on basic snowshoeing).
 - 10:30-1:00: Snowshoe, winter ecology, organized activities at site, and lunch).
 - 1:00-2:00: Journey back to vehicles.
 - 2:00 Arrive back at staging area: (removal and return of snowshoes, debriefing, return to vehicles, homeward bound).



A highlight of our day is Mairi's snow table decked with hot cocoa and snow ice cream. Yum! Please bring your own mug.

Directions to Hope Mountain Centre

Our initial meeting point, [1005 6 Avenue](#), Hope (on 6th Avenue between Hudson's Bay Street and Kawkawa Lake Road. From here we will convoy to the Zopkias Rest Area Parking Lot.

Directions to Zopkias Rest Area Parking Lot:

Drive northeast out of Hope on Highway-5 for approximately 50 km. After driving through the Great Bear Snow Shed, start looking on your right for the highway exit into the Zopkias Rest Area - NOTE - THE EXIT SIGN IS MISSING DURING WINTER MONTHS, so the exit will be unmarked by any sign! Be sure to take the FIRST EXIT you see on your RIGHT after driving through the Great Bear Snow Shed. Washrooms are available at the Zopkias Rest Area.