



## PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN HIKING GROUP

May 14, 2025

**Subject: Lace Up Your Boots! Welcome to the PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN Hiking Group!**

Dear PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN Members,

A hiking group is a wonderful way for PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN members to connect with nature and each other.

Get ready to explore the beautiful trails around Collingwood and beyond! We are thrilled to announce the formation of our new **PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN Hiking Group**, and we warmly invite you to join us on our upcoming adventures.

Whether you're a seasoned trekker or just looking to enjoy a leisurely stroll in nature, this group is for you. Our aim is to create a friendly and supportive environment where we can discover the scenic wonders of our region together, enjoy some fresh air and exercise, and build camaraderie amongst our PROBUS members. **Join Our First Hike!**

We are planning our first hike for *FRANKS KILN and the BIG HOLE* near Duntroon. We will meet to carpool behind Tim Horton's at 8:45 for a 9am departure, Wednesday May 28, 2025. Lunch to follow at Montanas.

### **How to Get Involved:**

If you are interested in joining the PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN Hiking Group

\* please reply to this email, or

\* sign up at the next PROBUS meeting, or

\* or contact Bill Brennan, [brennan22@gmail.com](mailto:brennan22@gmail.com) 705-607-0729

We are excited to embark on this new adventure together and look forward to seeing you on the trails!

Happy Trails,

Bill Brennan,

The Organizing Committee,

PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN Hiking Group

\*\*\*ATTACHMENT: *PROBUS Blue Mountain Hiking Group proposed Schedule.*\*\*\*

>>>>> **PLEASE READ ON**>>>>>>>>>

## Introducing the Joys of Hiking: What You Need to Know

To ensure everyone has an enjoyable and safe experience, here's a little introduction to hiking *with our group or separately with friends*.

### 1. Essential Equipment:

Having the right gear can make a big difference in your comfort and safety on the trail. Here are some recommended items:

- **Footwear:** Sturdy, comfortable hiking boots or trail shoes with good ankle support are crucial. Make sure they are broken in before your first hike to avoid blisters.
- **Backpack:** A comfortable daypack to carry your essentials.
- **Water Bottles or Hydration Pack:** Staying hydrated is paramount. Bring enough water for the duration of the hike.
- **Snacks:** High-energy snacks like trail mix, energy bars, fruit, or nuts will keep you fueled.
- **Navigation:** *Follow the Probus Hike Leader*, or map and compass (and the knowledge to use them!) or a reliable GPS device or phone with a hiking app.
- **Sun Protection:** Sunglasses, a hat, and sunscreen are essential, even on cloudy days.
- **First-Aid Kit:** A basic kit for minor injuries. Consider including blister treatment, pain relievers, antiseptic wipes, and any personal medications.
- **Layers of Clothing:** Dress in layers that you can easily add or remove as the weather changes. Moisture-wicking fabrics are a good choice.
- **Rain Gear:** A lightweight, waterproof jacket and pants are always a good idea, as weather in Ontario can be unpredictable.
- **Headlamp or Flashlight:** Useful even for daytime hikes in case of unexpected delays.
- **Whistle:** For signaling in emergencies.

### 2. Hiking Safety:

Your safety is our top priority. Please keep the following in mind:

- **Know Your Limits:** Choose hikes that are appropriate for your fitness level. Start with shorter, easier trails and gradually increase the difficulty.
- **Hike with Others:** It's always safer and more enjoyable to hike with a buddy or in a group.

- **Tell Someone Your Plans:** Before you go, inform someone (a family member or friend) about your hiking destination, route, and expected return time.
- **Check the Weather Forecast:** Be aware of the weather conditions before heading out and be prepared for changes. Avoid hiking during severe weather.
- **Leave No Trace:** Pack out everything you pack in. Stay on marked trails to protect the environment.
- **Be Aware of Wildlife:** Be respectful of wildlife and maintain a safe distance. Know what to do if you encounter potentially dangerous animals.
- **Stay Hydrated and Fueled:** Drink water and eat snacks regularly throughout the hike.
- **Carry Identification and Emergency Contact Information:** In case of an emergency.
- **Learn Basic First Aid:** Consider taking a basic first aid course.

### 3. Hiking Protocols and Procedures:

To ensure smooth and enjoyable hikes for everyone, we'll follow some basic protocols:

- **Communication:** Information about upcoming hikes (dates, times, locations, difficulty levels) will be communicated via PROBUS Newsletter, and our dedicated PROBUS HIKING GROUP email list.
- **RSVP:** We will likely ask for an RSVP for each hike to get an idea of the number of participants.
- **Meeting Point:** The specific meeting point for each hike will be clearly communicated in advance. *Please see the attached Schedule of proposed PROBUS BLUE MOUNTAIN hikes.*
- **Pace:** We will aim for a comfortable pace that accommodates all participants. The hike leader will help ensure the group stays together.
- **Breaks:** We will take regular breaks for water, snacks, and to enjoy the scenery.
- **Flexibility:** Hike plans may need to be adjusted due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. The hike leader will make decisions in the best interest of the group's safety and enjoyment.
- **Respectful Conduct:** We encourage a friendly and respectful atmosphere among all participants.



## Probus Blue Mountain Hikes:

Note: For all hikes, participants are asked to meet behind Tim Horton's on First Street by 8:45 am to organize car pools, sign waivers, and depart by 9:00 am. Hikes will be on Wednesdays. Hikes will be followed by lunch at a location agreed upon by hikers.

### #1: FRANKS KILN and the BIG HOLE

We will drive to the start near Duntroon and walk to Frank's Kiln, an archeological treasure where we will see how settlers in the 1800's converted escarpment limestone into cement. After viewing the restored kiln, we will walk through a pretty hardwood forest past interesting crevices to a viewpoint over a gigantic quarry where limestone is actively being mined. Most of the hike is on land conserved by the Bruce Trail Association, some is on land generously made available by Walker Aggregates.

Easy pace, 4 kms, moderate terrain.

## #2: Trout Hollow and John Muir

We will carpool and drive to Meaford (approx. 30 minutes) and park at Beautiful Joe Park on the south side of town. From there, Probus member Michael Coward will lead us along the banks of the Bighead River past the ruins of a power dam that once energized Meaford. Continuing along the river, we will reach the site of Trout Hollow Mill, where John Muir lived and worked in 1865 during the U.S. civil war. Michael has studied Muir's life and will provide interesting commentary while we stroll through history.

Easy pace, 4 kms. Moderate terrain.

## #3: Nottawasaga Bluffs and the Key Hole

We will carpool to the Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area near Singhampton and follow the Bruce Trail through shady forest to a limestone outcrop where an optional side trail leads to a unique hole in a limestone wall known as the Key Hole. It does require being on hands and knees...just for a few feet! You will want to return with your grandkids! The trail then winds past a scenic overlook before returning to the carpark.

Easy pace, 5 kms, moderate terrain, some steep sections.

## #4: Dunedin Valley Nature Reserve.

We will carpool to a roadside parking area near Dunedin and follow the Bruce Trail through a BTC Nature Preserve. The pathway wanders through a variety of habitats: a secondary mixed forest, an open meadow, a cedar bush and a crystal-clear babbling brook. The trail

loops back to the road and then climbs a good-sized hill to a farm field, a natural meadow and a scenic lookout with a bench that invites a sit-down. We then retrace our steps back to our cars.

Easy pace, 5 kms, moderate terrain, some steep sections.

#### #5: Highest point on Bruce Trail

We will carpool to a Bruce Trail access point on the 6<sup>th</sup> sideroad near Gibraltar. The “highest point” is covered with huge maples which hide the expected view. Further along the trail there are commanding views over the Pretty River Valley that compensate nicely for the non-view at the highest point and offer a photo op. Most of the terrain is through mature hardwood forest with typical escarpment outcrops and crevices appearing at regular intervals.

Easy pace, 5 kms, moderate terrain, a few gradual hills.

#### #6: Pretty River Valley

We will carpool to a Bruce Trail parking lot on the West Church 33/34 sideroad a few kilometres west of Nottawa and begin a loop hike through the popular Pretty River Provincial Park. Our trek will range from 5 to 8 kilometres depending upon the options chosen by the group. Two big hills are included that we will ascend slowly. On one we will be climbing uphill right beside a stream taking the easy downhill route. Much of the trail is through maple forest that should be dropping colourful leaves.

Easy pace, 5 to 8 kms, moderate to steep terrain.