

Labrador Castle Hike

The walk starts from Exit 7 off Highway #103. This is the exit to East River. Park in the carpool parking lot which is on the corner of the exit road and the old #3 highway.

Walk back towards #103 and turn left going up the 'Off' ramp against the normal traffic direction. On reaching the highway, cross over and continue West for 100m or so until you can see a way across to the

other ramp (the 'On' ramp towards Bridgewater). Cross this ramp and turn left onto the gravel road which runs close by.

Continue on this road, under a gate and up a hill, until you come to a fork in the road.(1.3km) Take the left, more or less straight on, road. A short distance on you will see some large boulders placed along the right hand side. If you pass between them you will find a large sand pit. The old worked-over areas have become home to a surprising collection of tiny trees and little mounds of heather and other plants, giving it the appearance of a plant nursery.

Back to the trail, and down a very steep hill with a loose stony surface. You may notice some heavy chains buried in the center of the road which must have been used to winch wagons up the hill to the sand pit. Further on you cross Barrys Brook and come to the railway right-of-way.(2.5km)

For the Short Walk

Turn right onto the railway bed. Description continues below.

For the Long Walk

Go straight across the railway and around a gate. Bear to the left where the road divides, up a hill for about 400m where the dirt road divides again. Go right this time and continue a further 400m or so and looping around to the right, then look for a small trail off to the left. Follow this often muddy path that zig zags through the woods, then a steep climb up the granite rocks till suddenly you are at the top.

On a clear day the view from the top is magnificent and includes all of Mahone Bay, from Blandford to Heckman's Island.

The easiest way down is to head East along the "spine" of the rock down into the woods. Now turn right in a South-West direction through the woods and keeping the Castle rock on your right. You should pick up a trail marked with tape in the trees and small piles of stones on the rounded granite rocks you will cross. In a couple of places you have to scramble over the rocks. Now follow a marked footpath down through the woods. This footpath is not very obvious in many places but is marked by tape in the trees. At the bottom, turn right onto a woods road, down a steep hill and soon back to the gate near the rail trail. Turn left onto the rail trail.

Please note that the description above may be hard to follow if you haven't been there before. There are several confusing trails and you really need a guide to show you the way.

Both Walks

Follow the railway bed past Labrador Lake and along by Barrys Brook. You pass under #103, then over a stillwater of the East River, finally coming out at the old #3 highway.(7.5km)

Turn right on #3, down over the East River bridge. A short distance on turn into the pretty Provincial picnic park for a rest stop. Continue through the park and along #3 highway, back to the parking lot. Total distance is about 8.6km, or 6.4km for the short walk.

