

Killarney Provincial Park Lake and Portage Descriptions

THREENARROWS LAKE, Killarney Provincial Park

PORTAGE FROM THREENARROWS LAKE TO MCGREGOR BAY VIA KIRK CREEK

Threenarrows flows into Kirk Creek by way of the old dam, located at the far end of the southern shore. Kirk Creek is a more tranquil area of the park, its flowing current and twist and turns makes it a unique area to paddle. Once on Kirk Creek there are several small portages and lift overs accompanying this route; get into a rhythm and the paddle down the creek will go by in no time. The portages will present themselves as follows; the first 50m can be found to the right of the dam, the next 20m portages to the left, and a 75m to the right. There are two more lift overs of 50m, the first one being to the left and the next to the right. Finally, almost there! Paddle into the unnamed pond through the water lilies and lily pads and head to the small inlet on the southern shores; here you will find the next portage (40m). Follow down the narrow creek to the final portage before entering Georgian Bay 75m.

PORTAGE FROM THREENARROWS LAKE TO BAIE FINE

Affectionately dubbed "The Pig", the first 1320m portion of this route is the steepest portage in the park. The route crosses over Blue Ridge (a section of the La Cloche Mountains), and is very steep on both sides. The trail itself is very rocky so pay attention to footing. Also be sure to have a map close at hand, as the route to Baie Fine (approximately 1550m in total) crosses two junctions. The first is the La Cloche Silhouette Trail which joins the portage to the right near the beginning of the trail. The second junction is a fork in the trail at the 1320m point; here the portage to Artist Lake splits off to the east. Take the western fork to the last 230m accessing Baie Fine. Due to the strenuousness of this portage, we recommend attempting it in two portions with a rest at the top of Blue Ridge. At this point the trail levels out for a short time before its descent down the mountain. Stop here, have a snack, and regain strength before move on.

PORTAGE FROM THREENARROWS TO MURIEL LAKE VIA ARTIST LAKE

Affectionately dubbed "The Pig", the first 1320m portion of this route is the steepest portage in the park. The route crosses over Blue Ridge (a section of the La Cloche Mountains), and is very steep on both sides. The trail itself is very rocky so pay attention to footing. Also be sure to have a map close at hand, as the route to Artist Lake intersects with two other trails at three different points. The first is the La Cloche Silhouette Trail which joins the portage to the right near the beginning of the trail. The second junction is a fork in the trail; this is where the portage to Baie Fine splits off to the west. Bear east for the last 700m to Artist Lake. Due to the strenuousness of this portage, we recommend attempting it in two portions with a rest at the top of Blue Ridge. Upon reaching Artist, paddle east to find the Artist Creek Falls landing for the next 185m portage. This landing has a steep incline and can be very slippery in wet weather. This route leads into a small unnamed marshy area teeming with small wildlife such as birds, frogs, and even otters. Put in at the smooth sloping granite landing and paddle east for approximately 500m. On the other side there is the final 110m portage to Muriel Lake, this area can be quite wet at times and proper footwear is a must.

PORTAGE FROM THREENARROWS LAKE TO KILLARNEY LAKE

This two-part portage route covers approximately 3285m in total. The first short 335m portage can be a bit damp at times, so watch footing. At the end of this portion is a small unnamed pond. Paddle south to the entrance to the second leg, which can be seen from the first landing. This second part is the longest portage in the park at 2950m. However, despite its length this portage is not otherwise difficult as it covers mostly flat ground, except for a steep decline at the end. There are a few sections of the trail that have been eroded by streams so be careful with your footing.

PORTAGE FROM THREENARROWS LAKE TO GREAT MOUNTAIN LAKE

There are two points from which you may begin this multi-portage route; either from the eastern shore of the large northern portion of Threenarrows, or, from the very easternmost point on the southern bays. We

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recommend the former route from the north. This route begins with a 785m portage through a forest of pine and birch to York Lake. Paddle east across York Lake to find the next 530m portage which leads to Kirk Creek. If the southern route is taken instead, paddle south down the eastern shore of Threenarrows into its southern portions. Turn eastwards and follow the northern shoreline until you reach the most north-eastern tip of Threenarrows (approximately 10km from the large northern section). From here, it's just a short 130m portage north to Kirk Creek. Although Kirk Creek is impassable at other points, this portion leads towards Great Mountain via a series of liftovers and short portages of varying difficulty (approximately 285m in total). Bear in mind that some of these portages have tricky sections of sloping rock or clay that are slippery when wet. Begin by paddling north on the creek, and then west. Be sure to check the map frequently as this is a tricky route which changes its appearance with heavy rainfall or beaver activity; both of which may shift the location of portages or liftovers from year to year. The next big portage can be found where Kirk Creek becomes no longer navigable. This fairly easy 835m portage covers gently rolling terrain and ends at a marshy tributary of Kirk Creek. From here, the next 770m leg is also not difficult as it is very flat, save for a moderate slope at either end. This ends at Little Mountain Lake. A quick paddle across Little Mountain lakes you to the last 55m portage to Great Mountain Lake.

THREENARROWS LAKE

Vast Threenarrows Lake is the product of bygone logging activity in the Killarney area. Originally named Long Lake, the body of water we see today was created in 1900 when a wooden dam was constructed across Kirk Creek (on the western end of the lake). This caused the water levels in three pre-existing lakes to rise by five meters and overflow into each other. This massive new lake allowed logging companies to float their logs a great distance, and enabled them to expand further east than was previously possible. In exchange for the lease of Doris Island, the dam was rebuilt in 1934 by Mr. F.D. Coppock. Rumor has it that it was Mr. Coppock's great love of fishing which prompted his interest in the project. Further evidence of this area's logging past is the steep portage to Baie Fine known as "The Pig", which used to be a logging tote road. Tales have been told that Coppock had also built the cabin owned by William Hale Thompson, one of Chicago's most flamboyant mayors. Thompson had been associated with the Chicago gangster Al Capone. A silencer from a 22-calibre gun was discovered in the wall of the cabin when it was dismantled; said to belong to the gangster. Remnants of the foundation of this old cabin can still be found nestled in the forest across from "The Pig" portage.

There are great views from the ridges surrounding Threenarrows if off-trail hiking is planned. The split geography of marsh and mountains makes for some great photos on this lake.

Be sure to leave ample time to find a campsite on Threenarrows, as the size of this lake can sometimes make this a lengthy process. When choosing a campsite for the night, we suggest #50 located on Doris Island. Island sites are always a fun camping option, however keep in mind that large animals such as bears can (and will) swim. Make sure to still take all of the same precautions as on mainland, including hanging food in a tree for the night.

YORK LAKE

York Lake shares the same reservation as Threenarrows. This small lake is a lovely alternative to camping on Threenarrows with its clear green waters that are smooth as glass. York Lake has only one campsite on it, and is very peaceful because it doesn't get many visitors (unless they are passing through on their way to/from Threenarrows).