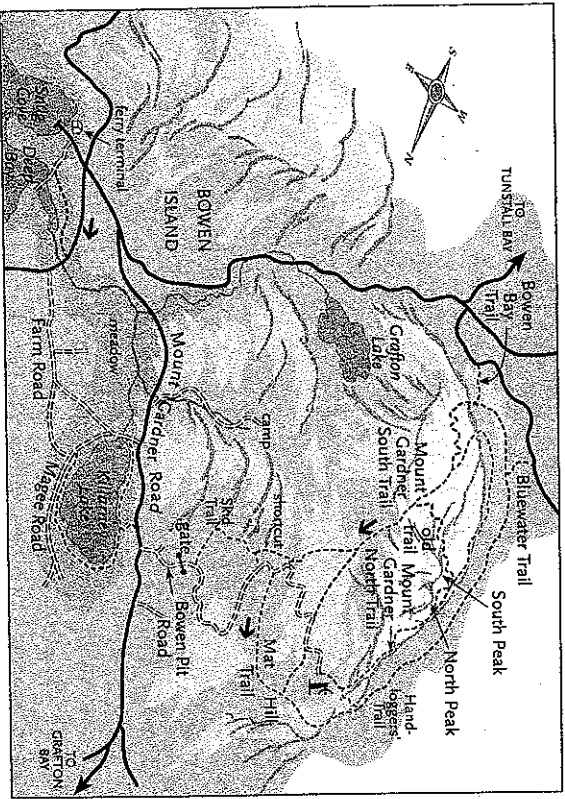


Howe Sound: Islands

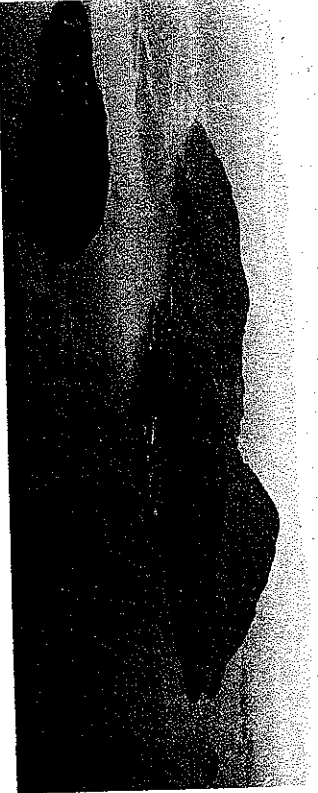
MOUNT GARDNER (Bowen Island)

Round trip 17 km (10.6 mi) Allow 7 hours
 Elevation gain 719 m (2360 ft) High point 719 m (2360 ft)
 Average grade 8.5% Trailhead grid reference 760 698
 Driving distance from Vancouver: Map 092G06 North Vancouver
 25 km (15 mi) or Bus 250



MOUNT GARDNER ON Bowen Island offers a variety of outings to and around the summits of the little mountain with, for reward, unsurpassed views of Howe Sound and its encircling peaks. The trip described here uses some of the trails available, but is only one of many possibilities. The hike leads you to the north summit with its communication devices and helpads. There are, however, spectacular views on a fine day, which are well worth your effort. By contrast, the south summit, though higher, is treed and viewless; it is not described here. Access is as a foot passenger from Horseshoe Bay to Snug Cove. Check your sailing times, especially for the return.

From Snug Cove, take the more attractive route through Crippen Regional Park. Turn right onto Cardena Road, left onto the Killarney



Vancouver Island on the skyline, Mount Gardner in the middle ground and Bowen Island left foreground; seen from Mount Brunswick.

Lake Trail, briefly right onto Miller's Landing Road and left again onto the park trail. Finally, ignoring a wide trail going left into the meadows, go left at the next fork to the lake. There, follow the trail along its south-west shore until, just after a creek crossing, you turn onto a path leading up to Mount Gardner Road. Go right, and at pole 491 head left uphill onto a service road, then right onto Bowen Pit Road to a gate.

Pass the gate and shortly go left onto the Skid Trail, winding uphill and keeping right at a junction before rejoining the road. Go upward around a bend then, leaving the road, go right on Mat Hill Trail, heading around the north side of the hill before working west to a junction. Stay right, descending a little on what is now Handloggers' Trail. Next comes a fine viewpoint overlooking the islands of Howe Sound with, just beyond, a steep trail on the left signed "Alan Garton Memorial Trail." Follow this up to a junction where the road connector arrives from the left. Now on the Mount Gardner North Trail, you turn south along the ridge, rising first to a bluff with magnificent views before re-entering the forest and continuing to a fork. Take the left branch, which is the steeper route to the top of the north peak. Although it is littered with technological debris, the views are spectacular. To return, drop south from the north peak into the hollow where you rejoin Mount Gardner North Trail. Turn left, and about 5 minutes later, ignore the vague trail going left to the south peak. Continuing south you descend gently through forest to yet another fork, where you go left, heading northeast on Mount Gardner South Trail towards the service road, on which you emerge a little above the Mat Hill Trail. All that remains is for you to retrace your steps to Snug Cove and your ferry.