



Schaffer Lake

Lake McArthur via Schaffer Lake

Lake McArthur is one of the few destinations in the Lake O'Hara area that is not accessed from the Lakeshore Trail. There are two routes to the lake, although both share the same trail for the first 200 metres. Start behind the Day Shelter, climb a short hill, then descend to a creek. Here you will find the junction that marks your two options:

Route 1: Lake McArthur via Alpine Meadow Trail to Schaffer Lake

Hiking time: 45 minutes to 1 hour to Schaffer Lake, plus 45 minutes to one hour more to Lake McArthur

Length: 1.5 km to Schaffer Lake, 1.5 km from Schaffer Lake to Lake McArthur

Elevation Gain: 135 m to Schaffer Lake, 290 m to Lake McArthur

This route takes hikers through the Alpine Meadow and past Elizabeth Parker Hut, an Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) building named after a legendary figure in the history of the ACC. The smaller of the two buildings, which dates from 1911, is the oldest building in the Lake O'Hara area. Continue past (and behind) this smaller building, where you will cross a small stream before starting to switchback up through the forest. The trail eventually levels off, bringing you to a small bridge that crosses the stream flowing from Schaffer Lake.

Route 2: Lake McArthur via Big Larches Trail to Schaffer Lake

Hiking time: 45 minutes to 1 hour to Schaffer Lake, plus 45 minutes to one hour more to Lake McArthur

Length: 1.7 km to Schaffer Lake, 1.7 km from Schaffer Lake to Lake McArthur

Elevation Gain: 135 m to Schaffer Lake, 290 m to Lake McArthur

This trail is aptly named for the huge Lyall's larch trees along its length. In autumn the golden glow from the trees makes you feel as if you are walking inside a yellow tent.

As with the first route, start behind the Day Shelter and hike on the shared trail for 200 metres. Rather than turning right (west) at the trail sign (which will take you via Alpine Meadow Trail), continue straight for 300 metres to another trail junction. Turn right (southwest) here for Big Larches Trail.

Big Larches Trail winds its way around the base of a large rockfall before beginning to climb. After hiking up beside the rockfall, the trail finally levels off and enters the forest. The trail meanders up and down and passes the junction to All Souls' Prospect Route. A short distance later you leave the forest and arrive at the shore of Schaffer Lake.



Lake McArthur

Schaffer Lake to Lake McArthur

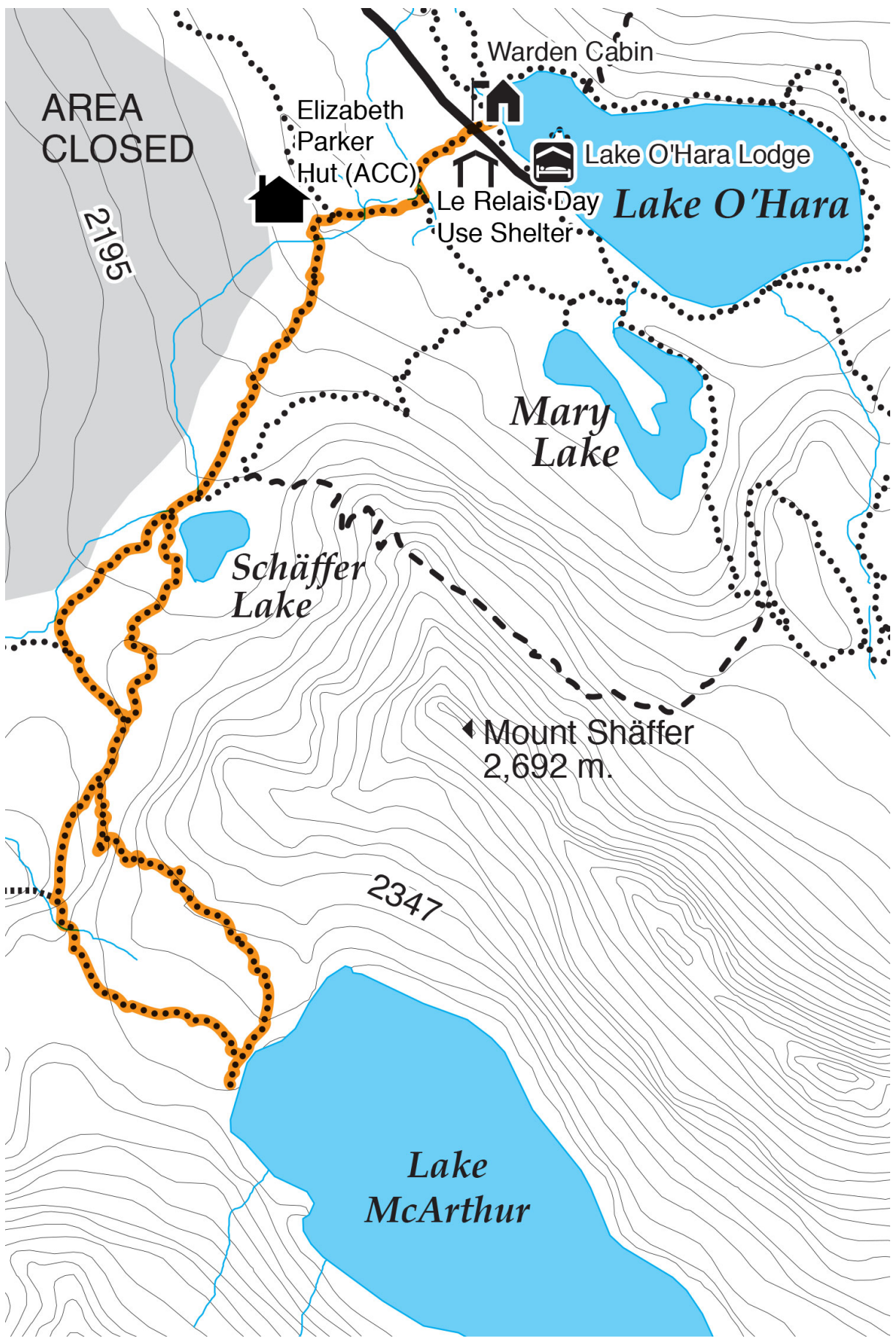
To continue from Schaffer Lake to Lake McArthur, cross the bridge. You will soon encounter another trail junction. Both options will take you to Lake McArthur. One goes straight (southeast). The other, to the right (southwest), reaches Lake McArthur via McArthur Pass. (This second option also leads to Odaray Highline and Odaray Grandview – see the description in the Lake O’Hara Alpine Circuit section).

The trail that continues straight (southeast) follows the shore of Schaffer Lake before heading up a small gully. At the top of this gully you pass the trail that joins from McArthur Pass. Further along, you come to yet another branch on your journey: the left (southeast) fork takes you to Lake McArthur on the High-Level Circuit Trail, while the right (southwest) fork descends a draw and reaches the lake via the Low-Level Circuit Trail. You can make a nice loop by going out one way and returning the other.

The High-Level Circuit Trail to Lake McArthur traverses a short grassy slope before climbing along a ledge and leveling off in the small meadow at the top. Beyond the meadow, a short uphill climb brings you to a knoll that offers stunning views of Mt. Biddle and Lake McArthur. Continue down to the lake and return the way you came, or complete the circuit by joining up with the Low-Level Circuit Trail.



High-Level Circuit Trail Arriving at Lake McArthur



AREA
CLOSED

2195

Elizabeth
Parker
Hut (ACC)

Warden Cabin

Le Relais Day
Use Shelter

Lake O'Hara Lodge

Lake O'Hara

*Mary
Lake*

*Schaffer
Lake*

Mount Shaffer
2,692 m.

2347

*Lake
McArthur*