



## AAC Publications

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### **Stranded - Climbing Alone, Failure to Follow Directions (Off Route), Exceeding Abilities**

Alberta, Banff National Park, Mt. Whyte

On the morning of July 20, a stranded climber called Banff Dispatch for a rescue. The climber had spent the night on a small ledge immediately below the summit of Mt. Whyte. After numerous attempts to downclimb to the Whyte-Niblock Col, the climber abandoned his descent, feeling too dehydrated and exhausted to continue.

Rescue personnel were contacted at 6:30 that morning and informed of the stranded climber. They flew from Banff and located the climber near the summit, along the north ridge. After setting up the long-line under the helicopter, one rescuer was slung in to the subject. The subject had a harness put on him, and then rescuer and subject were slung back down to the staging area below the peak.

#### **Analysis**

The climber made a smart decision to stop when he could not recognize the correct gully to descend. Although he had ascended it earlier in the day, he had not looked back to landmark key features for his return. This is a very important thing to do, as things look much different on the way down compared to when you are climbing up. Also, the subject was dehydrated and exhausted, while carrying a heavy pack. Be sure to carry appropriate amounts of food and water to get you up and down the mountain, as well as the equipment that will assist you to survive in the mountains. Leave behind the heavy, nonessential items if they weigh you down.

## Images

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