

TRINITY ALPS WILDERNESS DAY HIKES



Swift Creek - Trail descends briefly from the trailhead and then levels out. The trail passes through mixed conifer along Swift Creek Gorge surrounded by towering mountains. 1.2 miles from the trailhead the trail forks. Taking the left fork takes you down to the bridge over the creek, where you can picnic and rest your feet in the water. Access the trailhead from Hwy 3 just north of Trinity Center, past Swift Creek bridge, take Swift Creek Trail turn off going west (signed). Drive 6 miles to the trailhead. The size of the parking lot and an outhouse indicates the popularity of this trail. (R8W-T37N-S21) **Easy Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Granite Lake - Use Swift Creek trailhead. Total hiking distance to the lake is 5.3 miles. Granite Lake trail splits off Swift Creek Trail at 1.2 miles. Take the left fork to cross the bridge over Swift Creek. The trail is fairly steep with sections of rock steps and snaking switchbacks, levels out as it goes through mature forest of fir trees, through alders and willows, open meadows with azaleas and ferns, crosses a couple small tributaries and passes near two lily ponds. The trail scrambles over rock slides and comes close to Granite Creek twice, with cascades worth visiting. Gibson Peak (8400 ft) is visible from the trail. Granite Lake is a deep 18 acre lake. Impressive cliffs and huge blocks of granite around half of the lake lead up to magnificent Gibson Peak and reflect in the water. Fishing for brook trout is reported to be good, though it is difficult getting around the entire shoreline. Swimming and camping are popular at the lake. (R9W-T36M-S26) **More Difficult Hike for people in good hiking condition**

Lake Eleanor and Shimmy Lake - Lake Eleanor is reached easily within ½ mile of the trailhead. It is a beautiful meadow lake, perfect for a picnic outing. The trip is easy and can be enjoyed by less experienced hikers or anglers who don't want to waste time hiking. On past Lake Eleanor you could continue until you finally reach Shimmey Lake. The trail goes around the east side of Lake Eleanor then north/northwest. From there you will observe Trinity Lake and towering Ycatapom Peak. This pretty little lake is not well known, so there is good chance of finding solitude. Shimmey Lake is 3.6 miles from the trailhead. Access the trailhead from Hwy 3 just north of Trinity Center, past Swift Creek bridge, take Swift Creek Trail turnoff west (signed). Watch for the sign directing you to turn right (north) at 1.4 miles. The trailhead is 7.6 miles from the highway. (R7W-T37N-S9) **Easy Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Tangle Blue Lake - An easy to moderate 4-mile hike into this lake you can walk around, with granite peaks overlooking and a small beach. It lives up to its name. The trail features meadows and forests. The trail follows an old road, past a metal gate to a bridge across Tangle Blue Creek. Stay right as the road climbs westward along the creek. The road to the left leads to Horse Creek. Watch for signs. 1.5 miles in is a Forest Service gate. At 2 miles, on left is a spur trail to the historic Grand National Mine. Back on the lake trail, it now becomes a path. Cross the outlet from Little Marshy Lake, where the trail becomes a road again. At 2.7 miles is a sign, Tangle Blue Lake to the left (south). Cross Tangle Blue Creek one more time going left, pass the ruins of old Messner Cabin, then climb the last ½ mile to the lake. Access the trailhead take Hwy. 3 13.3 miles north of Coffee Creek to the signed left/west turn in the middle of a sharp right-hand curve. 3.8 miles dirt road. Stay left at the fork 2 miles in. Go straight at 3 miles. (R7W - T39N - S20) **Easy Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Dead Fall Lake - This hike in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, not the Trinity Alps. But it is popular for hiking in our area. Take Hwy. 3 north of Coffee Creek about 14 miles, to the base of Scott Mountain. Turn right on Parks Creek Road, also called the IP Road and Forest Road #17. It is paved. Drive all the way to the Park Creek Pass summit. The trailhead can also be accessed from I-5 on the east by taking the Edgewood/Gazelle exit, Stewarts Spring Rd to Parks Creek Road.

The special features of this hike are an abundance of wildflowers, deep clear lakes for swimming with camping sites, outstanding views of Mt. Shasta and the Trinity Alps.

There are two trailheads for the Deadfall Lakes Trail. The more popular trailhead is located at the Pacific Crest Trail crossing at Parks Creek Summit. A large trailhead is at the summit. Find the trail sign to the far right of the lot. The trail travels in a gentle long traverse of the mountain's northwest shoulder through forest that clears to open grassy slopes for excellent views of the Trinity Alps. There are spring fed creeks along the trail. About 2.5 miles from the trailhead, the PCT intersects the Sisson-Callahan Trail and the trail climbing up from Deadfall Meadow. Shortly afterwards, a trail sign is mounted on a huge pine tree. If you turn right, a trail will take you to Lower Deadfall Lake, which has a few campsites but loses a lot of water by late summer.

Take a left and continue uphill on the Sisson-Callahan Trail to find the prettier Middle Deadfall Lake. It has big boulders on the shoreline, great for sunbathing, and several campsites. There is a marsh covered with marigolds on the north side of the lake where you can rejoin the Sisson-Callahan Trail, if you want to go further. At just over 3 miles there are campsites at the first of 3 ponds. There is a meadow with brook and flowers at 3.6 miles. The trail climbs to the southwest, where there are many views of the Deadfall Lakes and Trinity Alps. Deadfall Summit is reached at 4.2 miles. Turn left at a fork in the trail and climb a steep 0.8 mile to the southeast to reach the summit of Mt. Eddy. Views will include Mt. Shasta, Castle Crags, the Sacramento River, and Black Butte.

The other trailhead is found at Deadfall Meadow, located below the summit as you approach on

Parks Creek Rd. from Hwy. 3. This trail is only 1.4 miles to the junction with the PCT, but it climbs 750 feet. The PCT from Parks Creek rises only 400 feet. While both are good options, some hikers prefer the Deadfall Meadows route, because it is shorter by nearly a mile, though the incline is steeper. Also, it follows Deadfall Creek through a large beautiful meadow all the way to the junction with the PCT. The Parks Creek route takes you through woods where there are no views and exposed grassy slopes, while it does pass through some attractive spring-fed meadows, none are nearly as large as Deadfall Meadow. **Parks Creek Trailhead day hike to Middle Deadfall Lake- Easy Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Big Boulder Lake and Little Boulder Lake - It's an easy 2-mile hike into these lakes, which sit 1 mile apart. This day hike is popular for those who want the most scenery for minimal effort. You can hike one or both lakes. Little Boulder has steep granite walls and deep water. Big Boulder is a large shallow lake with lily pads and is surrounded by forest and back dropped by granite ridges. At a signed junction, choose the left (southwest) turn to Little Boulder Lake, go right (south) to Big Boulder Lake. Plan on driving 11 miles on packed dirt Carr Rd., turn west off Hwy 3 between Carrville Loop Road and Coffee Creek. (R8W-T38N-S16) **Easy Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Hodges Cabin - A moderate hike of 4 miles from the trailhead off the north side of Coffee Creek Rd. and follows the North Fork of Coffee Creek. There is a small parking area and information sign. Look for the trail to start back up the road a bit where it climbs to follow a ridge above the North Fork. About 1 ¼ miles in, there is a bridge you will cross. From the bridge, the trail follows the west side of the creek. It climbs up and down until you reach a low ridge directly across the canyon from Little Lick Creek. From there it drops to creek level for the remainder until you cross the water at the cabin. The cabin and outbuildings on a long flat come into view well before you reach the creek crossing. Crossing the creek to the cabin can be tricky when it is high with spring runoff. Look for logs to assist in crossing. The trail offers fine views of forested ridges, distant peaks, and the North Fork of Coffee Creek, with fragrant azaleas in midsummer. This cabin and other buildings on the property were built in 1923 by Walter Hodges for a vacation home and a place to raise horses. The cabin is built of cedar logs in a unique blockade style. In 1984, the area was incorporated into the Trinity Alps Wilderness. **Moderate Hike for people in good hiking condition**

Adams Lake - A small lake reached after a stiff 2.5-mile hike through steep forest. Good chances for solitude. Much of the trail follows the old jeep trail along a ridgeline, after a brief downhill, more moderate climbing then easy walk along Adams creek. After crossing, there is a small meadow and large rock outcroppings before you come to the 1 acre lake. Cattails are at the outlet, granite walls on one side and grassy shores on the other. To access the trailhead, turn west on Coffee Creek Road at Hwy 3. The pavement ends after 5 miles. Drive a total of 16 miles to the signed trailhead on the right. The trailhead is small and easy to miss. If the sign is missing, look for the old jeep track on the right, a bit higher than the road bed. (R9W - T38N - S30) **Moderate Hike for people in good hiking condition**

Stoddard and McDonald Lakes - A comfortable 3.5-mile hike through meadows and thick forest and exquisite views leads you to these large, deep blue lakes surrounded by conifer forest.

Billy's Peak towers over both. Stoddard is very popular for swimming, fishing and camping and as a destination for horseback riders. Both the lakes are deep and blue, surrounded by forest. The hike is a gentle hike. There is an old unmaintained trail that is steeper. The trail passes through flower filled meadows and past the site of the frontier Stoddard family cabin. McDonald Lake is just south of Stoddard, separated by narrow stretch of forest. It is a smaller version of the first. Trailhead is accessible from Hwy 3 via the Eagle Creek Loop, 3 miles north of Coffee Creek. Turn left on Eagle Creek Loop, go 1.5 miles to a Stoddard Trailhead sign turn left onto a dirt road that climbs the ridge above Ripple Creek and Eagle Creek for about 9 miles. The last half mile of the road is too steep for horse trailers. (R7W-T39N-S18) **Moderate Hike for people in fair hiking condition**

Stuarts Fork Trail

The Stuarts Fork hike starts by traveling by car though the Trinity Alps Resort to Bridge Camp Campground. The road is dirt after leaving the resort, but easily passable. This trail does not vary much in elevation, is heavily forested, continuing on for 15 miles leading into the heart of the Trinity Alps, ending at Sapphire Lake. Good fishing is found along the creek on this trip. There are rushing streams and beautiful views of the Trinity Mountains along the way. A particularly popular trailhead, don't be put off by the number of parked cars. This drainage can handle many visitors, with numerous secluded campsites. The trail is well marked, turn around at any point for an easy trip to take in a day. The hiker is treated to views of high mountain ridges and rushing mountain waters. (R9W-T36N-S20) **Moderate Hike for people in good hiking condition**

Bowerman Meadow/Long Canyon Trail

This steep trail forks two miles in. The left-hand fork crosses the creek and leads to Bowerman Meadows. The north, or right-hand fork, leads up Long Canyon. Both trails go through high country meadows, surrounded by rugged peaks and ridges. The wildflowers in these meadows are spectacular. Both trails are for the strong hiker, though Bowerman offers more gentle grades. (R9W-T36N-S6) **More Difficult Hike for people in good hiking condition**

Granite Peak Trail

This trip starts with a drive up the Granite Peak Rd., off of Highway 3, just before the Mule Creek guard station. At the end of the road the trail starts and climbs quickly. This is an extremely steep hike and only those in good physical condition should attempt this climb. At the end of the trail you will find yourself on the top of a mountain with magnificent views. It is 4.6 miles from the trailhead to the top of Granite Peak. (R8W-T36N-S14) **Difficult Hike for people in excellent hiking condition**

Map: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/forestvisitorsmaps/shastatrinity/>

For more complete information, refer to:

"Hiking California's Trinity Alps Wilderness" a Falcon Guide by Dennis Lewman

"The Trinity Alps a hiking and backpacking guide" by Luther Linkhart with Michael White

"The Trinity Alps Companion" by Wayne F. Moss

"100 Classic Hikes in Northern California, third edition" by John Soares
