

Trapper Creek #598

DIRECTIONS: From Triple Creek Ranch driveway, turn left and go just over a mile down the road to the Trapper-Chaffin Road. Turn left and drive .6 mile to Little Trapper junction; keep left, continuing 1.2 miles more to a bridge over Trapper Creek. Cross the bridge. The trailhead is 1.4 miles beyond the bridge, a total of 3.2 miles from the outset of the Trapper-Chaffin Road. The Wilderness map shows the old access, which is on the north side of the stream. This new access has an excellent road and starts the trail nearly a mile further up the drainage.

ELEVATIONS: Trailhead 4560 ft.; Falls 5200 ft.

HIGHLIGHTS: Rock cliffs; Small falls - 2+ miles; Wilderness boundary - 4 miles; End of trail - 6.5 miles.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The first mile or so is new with smooth surface on soft duff and little grade variation. Beyond that, the trail is a little rougher underfoot with occasional steep stretches.

Trapper Peak looms over the parking lot for the Trapper Creek trail. That sets the tone for the whole day's hike, as North Trapper on one side of the drainage and a line of cliffs and needle-like peaks on the other dominate this trail. The stream is not visible from the trailhead and seldom flows right beside the trail in the first few miles. However, it is never far away either, appearing every now and then--and necessitating crossing four times in as many miles. These crossings are made on single logs or log jams which are not official bridges but are more stable than many of those. There is an attractive, though not large, falls about 2 miles from the trailhead.

Three members of the lily family grow in damp areas of this drainage. The largest and most distinctive is the Twisted Stalk which grows 2-4 feet tall. Its oval leaves grow singly along the stalk, alternately on one side then the other. Hanging below each leaf is a single, white, bell-shaped flower with a crimp in the stalk holding it to the main stem. The crimp in the flower stalk and the alternating leaves give the plant its twisted look. The second plant, the False Solomon seal, is a slightly smaller plant which also has large oval leaves but has a flower cluster at the top of each stem that looks like a small fuzzy Beargrass bloom. Finally, the smallest of the three is the wild Lily-of-the-Valley, which has narrower leaves and a single stem that ends in a cluster of 5 to 10 individual white flowers.

Have Fun & ENJOY!