

D. L. Anderson

P h o t o g r a p h y

National Creek Falls

Located just outside the western boarder of Crater Lake National Park, this lightly used trail offers a short walk through Douglas fir and western hemlock and provides a little relief from Crater Lake's summer crowds.

Directions

From the Crater Lake Lodge follow the Rim Drive south towards the Mazama Village and the junction with State Route 62 located just past the Annie Spring entrance station. Turn right and follow SR 62 west 14 miles to SR 230. Turn right again and follow SR 230 north 6 miles where you come to a sign for National Creek Falls. Turn right onto county road 6530 and follow the signs $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles to the gravel road that leads a few hundred yards to the trailhead.

The Trail

The trail begins by gradually descending through a forest of large Douglas fir, hemlock, and white pine. After a short $\frac{1}{4}$ mile the trail makes a switchback near the top of the falls, which is obscured by a dense growth of vine maple. From here the trail continues another $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, through another lazy switchback and down to the base of the broad 80 foot high cascade. Here the waters of National Creek tumble over an old basalt lava flow from ancient Mt. Mazama. Near the top a rock outcropping splits the cascade in two before it combines again at the large splash pool.

Just down stream is an old log jam that allows you to cross to the other side of the creek and a better view of the falls from beneath several tall western red cedar trees.

On you return trip look for fawn lilies, Oregon iris, and vanilla leaf. The under story is primarily composed of vine maple, rhododendron, Oregon grape and the rhododendron like chinkapin with its spiny seed pod.

Nation Creek was a popular stop to early travelers. Many of whom were on there way to test their luck in the gold fields of John Day.

Photographing the Natural Pacific Northwest

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