

# D. L. Anderson

Photography

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## Salt Creek Falls

*At Two very different waterfalls are highlighted in this pleasant family hike. Salt Creek Falls is an awe-inspiring show of nature's brute force, while Diamond Creek Falls displays a more delicate side. This is a very popular trail, which can become quite busy during the summer months. A Northwest Forest Pass is required to park at the trailhead and is available at ranger stations and many private vendors.*

### Directions

From Eugene, travel east on US Highway 58. Approximately one mile past the tunnel, near mile post 66, look for the US Forest Service sign for Salt Creek Falls on your right.

### The Trail

At the turnaround you'll find a restroom, and an information booth, which tells the story of the falls creation and history. Begin the hike by stretching your legs with a little walk downstream to the overlook, which offers an impressive view of the falls from the basalt rim. At 286 feet, Salt Creek Falls is the second highest in the state behind the 542 foot Multnomah Falls. However, what it lacks in height, it makes up for in volume, making it nearly as impressive as Multnomah.

The trail to the base of Salt Creek falls begins at the far end of the overlook. From here, the trail switchbacks down, just below the highway, through Douglas fir and vine maple. Along the way you will have several glimpses of the falls through the trees before you come to the trails end, a  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile later, opposite the falls and 50 feet above the large plunge pool.

If you plan to photograph from down here, bring some protection for your camera and be prepared to get wet. Although you are still 100 yards from the base of the falls, the wind generated by the falling water swirls against the cliff walls and heads directly to the viewpoint.

The trail to Diamond Creek Falls begins upstream from the parking area where you cross Salt Creek on a small foot bridge. Follow the trail to the junction and turn right. After a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile you'll pass a short trail on the left, that leads to Too Much Bear Lake. From here, the trail soon joins the canyon rim where you will encounter several viewpoints with great photographic opportunities of both the canyon and falls. Rhododendrons are abundant along trail and they begin to bloom in May and June.

At the  $1\frac{3}{4}$  mile point take the steep trail that leads down  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to a foot bridge crossing Diamond Creek, through a narrow canyon, and ends at the 100 foot Diamond Creek Falls. In contrast to the dramatic plunge of Salt Creek Falls, Diamond Creek Falls fans out over a stepped basalt face. Bluebells, salmonberry, monkey flower, and bleeding heart all can be found along the trail.

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Photographing the Natural Pacific Northwest

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P h o t o g r a p h y

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Returning to the main trail, turn right and follow the steep switchbacks to another view of Diamond Creek Falls, and the trail junction to Vivian Lake. From here, you can either return the same route you came or turn left and follow the path  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles to complete the loop keeping an eye out for jays and chipmunks.

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