

D. L. Anderson

P h o t o g r a p h y

Toketee Falls

Directions

From Roseburg travel east 58 miles on US Highway 138 to the Toketee Lake / Toketee Falls sign located just past milepost 58. Turn left onto Toketee-Rigdon road and follow it approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile where another sign directs you to turn left onto a short gravel road along a wooden diversion pipeline and into the parking lot and picnic area. From Diamond Lake follow US Highway 138 west to Toketee-Rigdon road, turn right and follow the signs to the parking lot.

The Trail

"Toketee" is the Native American word for pretty or beautiful and it is an apt name for this secluded treasure of the cascades which ranks as one of the most beautiful and unique

waterfalls in the Northwest. Here the legendary steelhead waters of the North Umpqua River cascades 90 feet over a columnar basalt cliff formed during an early eruption of Mount Mazama which was later transformed into nearby Crater Lake during a cataclysmic eruption.

The short trail to the falls begins at the small picnic area next to the parking lot which is also next to the wooden twelve foot diameter Toketee pipeline. The leaky old pipeline diverts much of the North Umpqua River to the Toketee powerhouse located approximately one mile downstream. One can only imagine how the falls once appeared before the river was diverted. The trail starts with a footbridge crossing a small seasonal stream and then winds it's way through 200 foot tall Douglas fir, hemlock, and western red cedar. In the fall vine maple adds splashes of yellow and red that is offset by the green of the conifers.

At the halfway point the trail meets the North Umpqua river which makes its way through a jumble of large boulders before entering the gorge that leads to the falls. From here a few stone and wood stairs climb a small rock outcropping along the gorge just before the trail begins its decent to the observation platform.

The platform, which is built around two Douglas firs and a yew tree, overhangs the gorge and offers a beautiful view of the falls looking down through cedar and fir.

On the return trip take some time to look for American Dippers that frequent the water above the gorge. They are easily recognized by their upturned tail and constant "dipping" motion. In search of the aquatic insects on which they feed, these remarkable little brown birds either dive or walk directly into the swift current and precariously walk along the bottom by grabbing onto stones.

Photographing the Natural Pacific Northwest

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