



Summer Day Hike Itineraries & Scavenger Hunt

Gear to Bring: Hiking shoes, backpack, weather appropriate clothing (think moisture-wicking and layers), food, water, map, first aid supplies, multi-tool/utility knife, headlamp, sunscreen, sunglasses and lighter.

Example of an Ascend Lunch: PB&J sandwich, apple, stick of string cheese and two granola bars. Plus snacks for the rest of the day: hardboiled eggs, trail mix and dried fruit.

Nature Activities: What plants did you see? Birds identified? Wildlife?

Need Gear? If lack of gear is your obstacle to getting into the wilderness, get in touch with Ascend to make an appointment to check out gear from our gear library. Email information.ascend@gmail.com or call 530-739-1177

Take Note: As always, Ascend Wilderness Experience would like to emphasize LEAVE NO TRACE ethics. The discoveries we hope you make on these scavenger hunts are fun and interesting, but we want to make sure they remain unharmed for visitors for years to come. Please be mindful and do no harm.

SCAVENGER HUNT & SUMMER STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

Scavenger Hunt: For each hike, check out the scavenger hunt challenge. When you find the "treasure", indicated by the clues, take a picture of it and email it to:

information.ascend@gmail.com to receive an Ascend Wilderness Experience water bottle.

Stewardship Challenge: Take a picture of the trash you picked up along the way! Post it to our Facebook Page to enter into a drawing for one of Ascend's Trinity Alps bandanas with artwork by Susan Alexander.



LAKE ELEANOR

DIFFICULTY: EASY

ROUNDTrip DISTANCE: 0.6 MILES

ELEVATION GAIN: 110 FEET

DESTINATION HIGHLIGHT: Lake Eleanor is perfect for really young children and people new to hiking in the Trinity Alps Wilderness. It offers opportunities for swimming and picnicking and contains quintessential qualities of wilderness found throughout the Alps.

GETTING TO THE TRAILHEAD: From Weaverville, drive 30 miles north on Highway 3, past Trinity Center, to the signed Swift Creek Trail turnoff on Forest Road 36N25 (just after crossing the Swift Creek bridge, and just prior to Wyntoon Resort). Turn left (west) and proceed 1.4 miles to the signed turn (north) for the Lake Eleanor-Poison Canyon Trails. Continue on Forest Road 36N24, following the main route (stay straight at 1.9 miles, left at 3.4 miles, right at 4.6 miles, left at 6.3 miles, and right at 7.6 miles). The trailhead is 7.8 miles from the highway.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The trail moderately rises through mixed conifer forests with views east over Trinity Lake. Once at Lake Eleanor, the trail skirts the marshy, lily pad covered lake.

EXTENDING YOUR TRIP: If you are up for a longer hike, you can continue on the trail past Lake Eleanor to Shimmy Lake, a lightly used pond at the base of a rocky ridge. Round trip to Shimmy Lake from Lake Eleanor is 6 miles. The trail is marked with red ribbons and/or cairns (rock piles) where it crosses old logging roads in the first mile after Lake Eleanor.

SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE:

CLUES: This plant attracts bugs, invites them into its inner workings and then slowly eats them. It's been said to look like a Cobra snake. They love to grow in peat lands fed by groundwater. There is a patch of them along the trail, as well as near the lake.

WEAVER BASIN TRAIL

EAST WEAVER CREEK TRAIL TO DAY RANCH TRAIL LOOP

DIFFICULTY: EASY

ROUNDTrip DISTANCE: 2.5 MILES

ELEVATION GAIN: 276 FEET

GETTING TO THE TRAILHEAD: From Weaverville, follow Hwy 3 north for 2 miles. Turn left onto East Weaver Creek Rd. Be sure to stay left at the Fork with East Branch Rd. A kiosk marks the trailhead on the left 1.5 miles from the Hwy 3 turnoff, just past the East Weaver Creek Campground.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: This is a shaded loop trail beginning at the East Weaver Campground. The trail follows the course of East Weaver Creek, upstream, and gradually uphill, for approximately one mile and then crosses over the creek to travel a meandering downstream trail. In the last .25 miles of the route stay left at two trail forks to head downhill toward the creek. You'll reach a return footbridge over the creek that leads directly to the Campground and trailhead parking area.

HISTORY: This route is a part of the Weaver Basin Trail System, which is a network of recreational trails around Weaverville developed from historic old trails that had been used for generations to access mining, hunting and wood gathering. The effort to develop the trails for recreational use began in 1989. The Trinity County Resource Conservation District is currently the lead agency overseeing the trail system. Artifacts from early mining history can be found in many places along many of the trails. Notice some mining artifacts in the final .1 mile of the hike as you approach the footbridge at the end.

SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE:

CHALLENGE: Near the top end of the loop you'll arrive at a fork in the trail. The left fork leads to a human made footbridge that crosses East Weaver Creek. The right fork leads past some large boulders and continues upstream. Continue along the path to the right for a tenth of a mile and look left to find a more adventurous, nature made footbridge across the creek. Send us a photo of the alternative bridge. Once on the other side of the creek, turn left to join up with the Day Ranch Trail and head downstream.



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EAST WEAVER LAKE

DIFFICULTY: EASY TO MODERATE

ROUNDRIP DISTANCE: 2 MILES

ELEVATION GAIN: 560 FEET

DESTINATION HIGHLIGHT: East Weaver Lake is a surprise gem so near to Weaverville. It's great for all ages and levels of experience.

GETTING TO THE TRAILHEAD: From Weaverville, drive west on Hwy 299 to the west edge of town. Turn right (north) onto Memorial Drive, just past the Trinity County Office of Education, and proceed a few blocks to the beginning of unpaved Weaver Bally Road (Forest Road 33N38). Go straight (north) and gain 5,000 feet over the next 9 miles. **The road is rough and an AWD with good clearance or 4WD is highly recommended.** The main road is obvious, but go uphill if there's any confusion. The trailhead is on the right, just before the fire lookout at the end of the road.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: From the trailhead walk east on the signed East Weaver Lake Trail (10W11) across slopes of ceanothus and Manzanita. When you reach the ridge, the trail turns sharply left to contour around the basin above the north side of the lake and drop down on steep, rocky switchbacks. The ridge is a good place to pause and survey the route ahead. It also provides a great view of the lake.

EXTENDING YOUR TRIP: If you want to go past the lake, the saddle southwest of Monument Peak (north of the lake) rewards with views into Bear Gulch towards Canyon Creek. First, you must descend into (and out of) the drainage below East Weaver Lake. Follow the trail downhill to its junction with the Bear Gulch Scramble, eyeing that ridge next to Monument Peak, don't be discouraged by the descent. This is where people get into trouble by cutting across the brush-covered slope too early. Stay on the trail until you see a distinct left turn up Bear Gulch Scramble, head uphill through shady forest cover and small meadows. The path wanders up a dry creek bed for a short way (usually marked by a cairn) then continues up steep, rocky switchbacks for the final push to the ridge between Bear Gulch and East Weaver Creek drainages. Round trip from East Weaver Lake to the Bear Gulch Scramble saddle adds 2 more miles to your hike.

SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE:

CHALLENGE: Take a picture of an animal on your hike. You'll probably see some with two legs; you might not see one with four legs, but extra kudos to you if you find one with six legs!

SWIFT CREEK TRAILHEAD

DIFFICULTY: MODERATE TO CHALLENGING

ROUNDRIP DISTANCE: 9.8 MILES

DESTINATION HIGHLIGHT: Swift Creek Trail is a popular trail in the Trinity Alps Wilderness featuring all the highlights of the Trinity Alps: Cold creeks, mixed conifer forests, spectacular biodiverse meadows, and stunning granite formations.

GETTING TO THE TRAILHEAD: Take highway 3 from Weaverville and continue past Trinity Center about a ¼ mile. Swift Creek Trail will be marked by a sign. Turn left and follow this road about 6.7 miles to the trailhead. There are pit toilets and ample parking.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: You will start your hike on the north side of the Swift Creek Trailhead parking lot. The first mile follows along the rumbling waters of Swift Creek. At about 1.1 miles, the trail forks. Take the fork to the RIGHT for your scavenger hunt destination.

EXTENDING YOUR TRIP: There are a few ways to extend your day hike if desired. Backpacking instead of a day hike to this spot is an option. Once in Parker Meadows, to the left of the trail, there are designated camping areas for families. Do consider continuing up the trail for another mile or so to Mumford Meadows. The meadows along Swift Creek Trail are quite breathtaking. Another option would be to continue on to Horseshoe and Ward Lakes another five miles along the trail, past the meadows and up granite switch backs. Be sure to stop and take in the beauty of the Alps. As a general rule, weather is unpredictable in the Alps. Be prepared for any type of weather and let someone know where and how long you are hiking.

SCAVENGER HUNT CHALLENGE:

Once you reach Parker Meadows, continue along the meadow trail and look to the right to locate a surprising man made construction. Normally, we don't encounter these types of structures in the wilderness, which is why this place is unique and special. Take a picture for our Facebook page and win a prize!

CLUES: This man made structure was originally built in the 1800's by the family it is named after and was used for cattle grazing in the meadows nearby. Rebuilt in 1946, it is now used during the snowy season as a place for survey teams to camp.

BONUS: See if you can spot any old license plates in the trees along the trail to your destination. These funny trail markers were hammered into trees for travelers to locate the trail in winter months when snow covered the path. If you don't make it all the way to the scavenger hunt goal in Parker Meadow, send us a picture of a license plate to win a prize.