

Trails

Ruidoso Trip Report—Barbara Cherry

Bonito Lake trip report
It was one of those trips here the participants say to others, “You should have been there.” This was a fun trip and the weather was comfortable.

Eight people camped at South Fork Campground just above Bonito Lake in New Mexico from Friday, leaving Sunday. When we said goodbye, most of us commented that we weren’t ready to stop camping just yet.

Afternoon rains kept the area cool, but they stopped after an hour or so. Campers took cover in a pop-up trailer and visited while waiting out the weather. The men kept a fire pit busy during the evening with a pine blaze, so everyone was warm enough.

Hummingbirds and groesbeakes ate from feeders that Valarie and Sammy Hunnicutt put out. Seven to ten hummers would share a feeder at once and they would fly in the face of observers, even landing on their fingers to feed. There were also stellar jays, crows, juncos, ravens, yellow-headed blackbirds, and woodpeckers.

On Saturday most everyone hiked up the mountains to bird watch and to just see what they could see. Others went to check out Lincoln, of Billy the Kid fame, and Capitan. Both are small towns with charm. The lake was close by, and none of our group used it, but the locals populated it, having fun with kids and

fishing.

The campsite was great with picnic tables, fire pits, and a well-kept road. The restrooms were clean, the other campers were polite – or were after we asked them to pipe down – but it filled quickly. They don’t take reservations, so get there on a Thursday or early Friday if you really want a spot.



Hiding from the rain!
- photo by Barbara Cherry

Growing interest in 2011 Trip

I just threw it out there for fun but there seems to be a genuine interest in setting up a backpacking/camping trip to northern New Mexico next year. If you’ll remember, I proposed that we catch the Silverton/Durango

railroad next summer/fall, ride half way into the wilderness, get the train to let us off, and spend a week in the national forest next to the Animas River. We would then flag the train down and get a ride back to

Silverton, N.M. (they do that, by the way). It’s a beautiful ride....the scenery is incredible, and you can get a ride back any day that you want. As you might imagine, this will take some coordination so think

The Newsletter
of the Permian
Basin Outing
Club

July 2010

Special points of interest:

- *July trip to Bonito Canyon in Ruidoso, New Mexico*
- *A week-long trip in our future?*
- *A camping perspective from a new camper!*

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August 20th Trip to Caprock Canyons State Park

We are planning our August trip to Caprock Canyons State Park now! Caprock Canyons State Park is near Quitique, Texas...in the Texas Panhandle. This trip will take a little coordination so we need to know fairly soon (by Friday, August 13th) if you plan to go. I will make the camping arrangements so I'll need the numbers. The current plan is to go down Friday the 20th of August, camp (probably at the Red Tent camping area) and then tour the park on Saturday/Sunday. Caprock Canyons State Park has the official State Bison Herd so you'll get to see a lot of buffalo if that floats your boat and the canyons of the park are very scenic. I lived up there for 10 years (plus my college years at Tech)

and I personally think that the canyons are much more colorful with deeper and richer colors. There is a fishing pond at the park if you're a bass angler and we've planned the highlight of the trip to be the mountain bike trip on the "Rails for Trails" bike trail from South Plains to Monk's Crossing which is about 17.5 miles or to Los Lingos (a little further). I used to do a round trip which sounds like a long way but it's a 3 percent grade downhill from South Plains and I haven't taken anyone on that trip that didn't have an easy trip. You will need a mountain bike and David Ham here at Peyton's Bikes can arrange for a few bikes if you don't own one. You can ride the trail any time that you want but my plan is to take off

in the late afternoon and reach Clarity Tunnel (the old railroad tunnel) by an hour or so before sunset. There are picnic facilities there so we'll eat supper and then wait for the bat flight out of the tunnel. It's neat to get into the tunnel and photograph the bat flight from inside the tunnel. You'll need to carry water and food for supper though there are several areas to access potable water and they've even placed "facilities" along the trail if nature calls. This is a great trip and I hope that a lot of you plan to attend! Even if you don't bike, there is plenty to do. Check it out at:

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/caprock_canyons/

August meeting

We will meet at Murray's Deli on Tuesday, August 17th, at 6:00 p.m. Murray's is located at 3211 W. Wadley here in Midland. I will hand out information on the park and maps both to get to the park and bike and hiking trail maps...also suggestions as to what to bring if you plan to make the biking trip. As always, you certainly don't have to be going on the August trip to attend the meeting and, chances are, if you don't make the meeting...we'll

"Very funny Scotty....now beam down my clothes!"

(You've got to be a Star Trek fan to get this one.)

probably end up talking about you....so

I'd be there if I were you. We'll also talk about the upcoming September trip to the Buffalo Trail Boy Scout trip (September 24th-26th). This has become one of our favorite trips in that it's in the Davis Mountains, in a beautiful canyon with breathtaking scenery, and it's cheap and close (about two hours from Midland. So don't miss this meeting! (I'm gathering gossip about each of you to utter if you're not there.)



Campground Road—photo by Barbara Cherry



South Fork Campground—photo by Barbara Cherry

Inside Story Headline—by Stephanie Harper

The trip to White Mountain Wilderness this weekend was my first time camping. I'd been on day hikes before, but this was my first outing where I would actually be sleeping on the ground in a tent. Luckily for me, my camping companions were knowledgeable, experienced, and more than gracious. My heartfelt thanks go to Chris and Barbara Cherry, Sammy and Valerie Hunnicutt, Bill and Kathy Lupardus, and especially my road-trip partner and camping mentor, Bob Templeton. Besides the stunning beauty of the outdoors, they made this a memorable outing for me by making me feel welcomed and instantly a part of the group.

Friday night was exciting for me to be able to actually pitch my tent on the ground, instead of just practicing in my living room. The one item I'd forgotten was a ground cloth, but Bob was gracious enough to share his with me. Honestly, I was more than happy to have his tent next to mine after listening to talk about bears! I was thrilled to be able to operate my Jet Boil stove right out of the package, and even some of the seasoned campers admired it. It was a handy item to have (thank you Brandon Hawkins for the recommendation).

Both evenings were spent around the campfire with great company, interesting stories, and terrific weather. Saturday morning six of us headed out for a day hike, with the Hunnicutts and the Lupardus going up the Argentina trail, while Bob and I initially followed, but then took the trail to the south and had our lunch at the top off Cut Across trail with an incredible view.

Back at camp, Valerie and Sammy had several birdfeeders at their campsite and the hummingbirds were unbelievable. I have never seen so many hummingbirds at one time, much less been able to stand a mere foot away from the feeders so that I could actually hear the beating of their wings. Both Valerie and Barbara held their fingers under the feeders and the hummingbirds literally perched on their fingers while feeding. Incredible!

Later, while planning a communal dinner back at camp, we had an afternoon shower that sent all eight of us into the Cherry's pop-up camper for more stories and laughter. But thanks to some master fire-building skills, the campfire continued to burn throughout the rainstorm and once the storm passed, we enjoyed a feast of steak, venison, corn on the cob, potatoes, and "dead lady" zucchini bread, as well as another evening of engaging conversation well into the night.

My thanks go to all of those at camp for a splendid weekend, and to the Permian Basin Outing Club for being inclusive and welcoming to such a novice as myself. I have discovered what obviously others have known for some time – we are blessed to live in such a beautiful country and fortunate to have the freedom and ability to explore it to our heart's desire.

The Newsletter of the Permian Basin Outing

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