

Roar of Cascade Falls lures hikers in

By Kathryn Reed

Songbirds sing a tune that seems to say, “Welcome to our little piece of paradise.”

We smile as we enter their world.

Soon the roar of Cascade Falls fills our ears.

In the distance we see it cascading into its namesake.

A lone fishing boat is on the glass-like water of Cascade Lake.



Hiking to Cascade Falls provides stunning views of Cascade Lake with Lake Tahoe behind it. Photos/Kathryn Reed

It's only April and the trail to Cascade Falls is clear. We start at a reasonable hour on April 20 and nearly have the path to our ourselves – except for the birds flitting about. Coming back, well, the route was a bit more crowded.

One guy in a party of two couples was carrying a mini music

device. How annoying. Why pollute the outdoors with “unnatural” sounds? Why hinder communication with friends?

Glad he was not where we chose to soak up the sun on sprawling slabs of granite. The cadence of the water on the rocks was music to our ears.

Not a cloud in the sky.

Summer in Tahoe in April? We smiled again. The views of Cascade Lake and Lake Tahoe are fabulous on this jaunt.

With the lack of snow this winter it will mean waterfall season will come early and be bit short-lived. Driving down Highway 50 the previous weekend gave us a glimpse of the always-mesmerizing Horsetail Falls. It made us realize we better start getting in our waterfall hikes now.

It’s a relatively short hike to Cascade Falls. Beauty is everywhere. What can be challenging is having a dog on a leash who wants to go faster than you over the rocks because it tests your balance. It’s the up and down over the rocks that can provide some difficulty.

Many people on the trail who were a decade or two older than us had poles. I would recommend using them to anyone who likes a bit more stability.

This is definitely a hike to do this time of year, early on a weekend day and take water – it’s exposed.

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Getting there:

From South Lake Tahoe, go north on Highway 89 through all the hairpin turns. Before Emerald Bay, park to the left at the Bayview Trailhead. The campground is not open yet, so parking is near the gate.

The trailhead is at the far end of the campground. A sign points left to Cascade Falls and right to Desolation Wilderness.

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