

Twin Lakes – a journey along a water-filled trail



A waterfall descends from the far side of Twin Lakes.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

We almost didn't make it to the lake. There were so many pretty places along the stream that called out it was hard not to stop and just take it all in.

It was one of those hikes where the journey truly surpassed the destination. And the destination was stunning, especially with the multi-legged waterfall in the distance cascading down the granite wall.

While there were some wildflowers along the route, this excursion is more about the water.

The end point was Twin Lakes in Desolation Wilderness.

Round-trip is it six miles, though we did a little loop at the

end that took us closer to Wrights Lake to make it more like a seven-mile day.

Starting out the terrain is lush. The tree canopy provides a shady route. This is where the bulk of the flowers are.



Wildflowers sprout from the granite. Photo/Kathryn Reed

The climb is gradual, though there are some granite steps that might make those with knee issues want poles.

Dirt gives way to granite. In some ways this is reminiscent of hiking to Horsetail Falls. But there isn't so much rock that AJ needs her booties.

What's better about this trail compared to Horsetail is that people have outlined with rocks where to go or built cairns. The markers are definitely needed at various locations.



An abundance of water is throughout this trail.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

While Twin Lakes looks inviting, the temperature is icy. The wind makes it necessary to put the layer back on that was removed on the way up.

Coming down, Wrights Lake, essentially the starting point, looks so tiny and far away. With starting at about 7,000 feet and going up nearly 1,300 feet, the expanse below is vast.



Pyramid Peak is a constant landmark during the hike.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

Getting there:

From the Y in South Lake Tahoe, take Highway 50 west for 20.7 miles to Wrights Lake Road. Turn right. Follow signs for Twin and Grouse lakes. After 8.8 miles there is a big parking lot. The trailhead begins just below the parking lot.

Notes:

- There will be a free wildflower and natural history hike on Aug. 13 at 10am starting at the Twin Lakes trailhead. It will last about an hour.
- This is rated a moderate hike.