

ADVENTURE TRIP 2012 PLANNED HIKES

Location: Glacier National Park, Montana
Arrival Dates: Staff & Camper Arrival – Tuesday, July 10, 2012 (*not later than 5:00pm*)
Adventure Camp Dates: Wednesday, July 11, 2012 – Wednesday, July 18, 2012
Departure Date: Thursday, July 19, 2012 (*am departure*)
Airport (if flying): Glacier International Airport
Accepting Applications: February 1, 2012
Tuition Cost: \$375.00 – Campers \$275.00 – Staff

General Description:

Old growth forests, wind-swept prairies, ancient glaciers, towering mountains, and deep lakes can all be found in Glacier National Park. No protected area of like size in the Rocky Mountains has as much ecological diversity as this park, which has been named the “Crown of the Continent.” Here the plants and animals of the humid Pacific Northwest meet and mingle with those of the Great Plains and northern forests. In the space of a few miles, you can travel from lush cedar/hemlock forest through alpine meadows and to the edge of western prairies. The abrupt transition from prairie to sheltering mountain forests is one reason this park supports large herds of elk, deer, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats. Black and grizzly bears, mountain lions, and wolves also live here. Cutthroat trout and grayling are among the 25 species of native fish found in these crystal clear mountain lakes and streams.

This Adventure Trip 5 days of backpacking, and a Sabbath in this spectacular park! We will also travel the entire 50-mile length of the “Going to the Sun” road stopping along the way to take in several of the featured sights. The adventure will conclude with a whitewater trip down the untamed and unpredictable sections of the Middle Fork River in your choice of a sport raft or inflatable one or two person kayak. This is a trip of a lifetime – one you will not want to miss!

Main Backpacking Trip:

Mokowanis Lake, Cosley Lake & Glens Lake Area (*Northeast section of the park*)

This hike has it all: wide glacier-carved valleys, high mountain lakes, wildflowers, meadows, formidable mountains, glaciers, rivers, waterfalls, vistas, and deer, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep. It is no wonder that this exceptional area is an extremely popular destination for backpackers.

Day Hikes planned for Tuesday, July 17:

Morning Hike – St. Mary Falls & Virginia Falls

This forested hike to these two waterfalls is a great hike. Enter the St. Mary Falls Trailhead at the Going-to-the-Sun Road and hike to up to the falls (*approximately 1 mile*). The thundering roar of water will signal your arrival at St. Mary Falls.

The trail continues to wind through the forest, climbing steadily along cascading Virginia Creek for another 0.5 miles to Virginia Falls. The falls is visible from the trail;

however, if you want to bath your feet in the clear pool at its base, scramble up the rough path along the right-hand side of the creek.

Distance: 3 miles round trip

Difficulty: Easy

Hiking Time: 3 hours

Afternoon Hike – Logan Pass – Hidden Lake Hike

This Pass is the highest point on the Going-to-the-Sun Road, and for many people it is the high point of a visit to Glacier National Park. The pass lies at timberline and has an ideal mixture of subalpine and alpine environments: dwarf trees and verdant meadows. Beautiful fields of flowers, dramatic mountain backdrops, and wildlife watching make this hike a must.

Weather at the pass is unpredictable. In the high alpine environment there is no shelter from the wind and rain. It may even snow in July or August. Your best bet is to bring warm clothing and sunscreen on every hike.

No visit to Glacier National Park is complete without a hike on the Hidden Lake Trail. On this short (*6 mile*) trail hikers explore the elements that are the very essence of the park; the flower-laden meadows, the glaciers, the jagged peaks that form the Garden Wall, the wildlife, and a lake carved by ancient glaciers. The meadows begin at the trailhead, and so do the views.

This hike has two distinct parts. The first half of the hike follows the wide pavement and boardwalk up the hill behind the visitor center. As a result of the trail's and the popularity and the fragile nature of the meadows it crosses, an intricate boardwalk has been built to keep feet off the delicate hillside.

The boardwalk ends at the base of Clements Mountain by the edge of an old moraine. The glacier has receded to just a patch of dirty ice; however the moraine remains in excellent shape, outlining former boundaries of the ice.

A wide path continues on from the boardwalk, passing several streams and a couple of flower-festooned waterfalls. At 1.2 miles the trail enters Hidden Lake Pass. Turn your binoculars on the lower slopes of Clements Mountain and search for mountain goats, which spend their mornings sunbathing on the ledges above the trail.

At the far end of the pass is the Hidden Lake Overlook. Mountain goat are a common sight at Hidden Lake Lookout. From the viewing platform, it is possible to look down on Hidden Lake and a couple of adjacent tarns, 755 feet below, boxed in by Bearhat Mountain to the west, glacier-covered Gunsight Mountain to the south, and Cannon and Clements Mountains to the north.

The second half of the hike is more peaceful than the first. The trail traverses through meadows below Clements Mountain and Mount Cannon, then switchbacks steeply down to the lakeshore. The clear water tempts many hikers to try a cooling dip. Few swimmers stay in long.

Distance: 6 miles round trip

Difficulty: Moderate

Hiking Time: 4 hours

Evening Hike – Trail of the Cedars:

This is a 0.8 mile loop trip, through a grove of 500-700-year-old western red cedars. The trail passes through a garden of ferns and near weeping rocks. The high point of the loop is a view into the swirling waters of Avalanche Creek as it exits a deeply carved gorge. Due to the dampness of the area, nearly half the pass is on a boardwalk.

Distance: 0.8 miles

Difficulty: Easy

Hiking Time: Less than 1 hour