

ABOVE TITUS SIDE CANYON

This report continues the hike we attempted in April 2012, to get to the top of the ridge above this side canyon of Titus and then descend into the upper reaches of "Fall 2" canyon.

Parking for this hike along the Titus Canyon road:



Looking up this side canyon; note that there is a wider wash leading up to this major ridge that can be seen in the center of the photo. There are three ridges which can be ascended that occur before reaching this wash, and the middle one seems to be the most straightforward (relatively). The one closest to the beginning of the side canyon appeared to have a cairn on it that we saw when ascending the middle ridge; however, it appears difficult to ascend higher once the ridge ends (as can be seen in later photos):



View back down the ridge we ascended after having passed the steep section that I stopped at on our last trip; note that hiking poles are very helpful in ascending this ridge:



The terrain is a little easier after passing this steep section:



Panorama looking towards where we were going:



This is the worst section of scree that does not appear to be at all avoidable; surprisingly, an ice axe is a very helpful tool to have in ascending this section:



Part-way up the scree, just where it starts to get almost unbearably steep, we encounter a bighorn trail (which appears to have human footprints on it too):



Looking down at what we have just ascended; in the photograph it does not look nearly as steep as it actually was:



The bighorn trail continues all the way to the top of the ridge, clearly passing above the red section seen in the photo but then becoming less distinct:



Looking back at the clearer portion of the trail; beyond here, it is difficult to find the rest of the trail to the ridge on the way up. On the way up to the ridge, I missed the trail and instead ascended the scree, which was a big mistake—I was able to haul myself up the scree only by use of the ice axe I had brought (just in case) for that specific purpose; without it, I would have slid down further than I ascended with each step as the terrain was so steep and unstable:



Finally reaching the ridge and looking back down into the side canyon of Titus from a higher point on the ridge:



Panorama looking towards where a hiker (or canyoneer) might drop into Upper Fall 2; as it was a hot day (it reached 103 degrees in Furnace Creek), I decided not to hike over to the top of Fall 2, though one member of the group did and reported that it would be more difficult to drop into the canyon than it appeared from looking at TOPO and Google Earth maps:



Looking towards Thimble Peak and Corkscrew Peak (just barely visible):



The route over towards Upper Fall 2:



Looking down towards the Titus Canyon Road on the way back down the ridge; note the bighorn trail reaches the ridge at its lowest point, at the saddle seen in the far left in the photo:



Looking into another side canyon of Titus from where the bighorn trail leaves the ridge:



The trail is much easier to see on the way down than on the way up:



Looking back up the trail to the ridge from a little ways beyond where I lost the trail on the way up; it is not obvious that there is a trail unless you are on it:



The next two photos show more of this bighorn trail:



Finally back down at the floor of the side canyon and looking back at where we had been hiking:

