

These small purple flowers appear to be Mojave Asters:



Our first view into the colorful area which was our goal for the day:



This was by far the most surreal landscape which I had ever seen in this park:



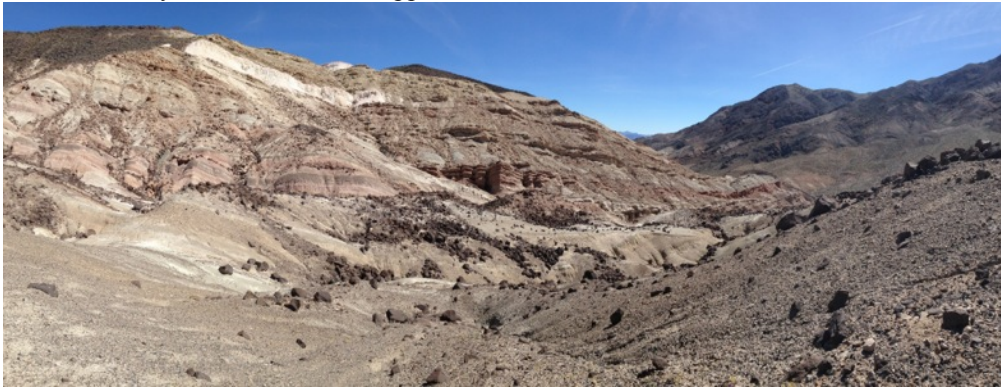
In the center of this photo, and in the far back, is the point which we had been at on our trip to this area back in January 2016; it would have been a much farther loop hike than it appeared from the TOPO and Google Earth maps to combine this hike with that one, reminding us of how important it is to reassess plans as one sees the terrain:



Panorama of the upper reaches of this incredible colorful area :



We decided to descend into the canyon which has as its uppermost reaches this colorful area :



Looking back across the head of this canyon towards where we had ascended to the ridge from the other side :



There were numerous false natural bridge formations in this area:



I hope to return to this area again to explore it more fully, since there is so much to see here; unfortunately, maps make it appear easier to access than it really is. Here is another false natural bridge:



Looking across the canyon at some cathedral-like formations:



Notice how the terrain on the other side of this small valley is so much different from the terrain we are in here:



Yet another false natural bridge formation:



The formations of this area are quite incredible, and it would be nice to be able to spend some time just photographing this area:



Looking across at a mud-moundy area which probably has many false natural bridge formations but appears to be too unstable to safely walk on:



There were many large rocks spread out across the colorful mud-moundy formations:



It would have been absolutely incredible to stand below the cliffs seen in the center of this photo, but unfortunately we did not have time to hike further down into the canyon below:



Looking down-canyon at the lower end of this colorful area; it would be interesting, although much, much longer, to hike in to this area from the other side of the mountains:



Looking down at still another false natural bridge, far below us:



Panorama of this amazing area :



Notice the white peak just barely visible to the right of center in this photo; we weren't able to see any more of that part of the colorful formation, but from Google Earth images it appears that there is an even more colorful area just over this ridge:



Looking across at the ridge which I had planned to come down when mapping out our hike to this area for January 2016:



One last panorama of this area, with our route back on the left, the colorful area on the right, the western end of the 4120 high point in the center, and the highest point we got to in January 2016 to the right and in the back:



From here we decided to head back down-canyon, not knowing how long it would take to get back to the road (we actually made a much faster trip back from here than we'd expected, given how long it took to get to this point—in retrospect, the extra time spent on the way out was probably mostly due to stopping to take lots of wildflower photos). Notice the abundance of small flowers on the ridge through here:



Broad-Flowered Gilia were everywhere on the ground through here, and there seemed to be only a few other kinds of flowers in this area:



The views of the surrounding area from this saddle are excellent:



This is part of the canyon which we'd missed by doing the bypass; there is actually a crumbly 8-foot dryfall with an overhang which must immediately be downclimbed (and which I don't seem to have gotten a photo of):



Looking down from the top of another impasse; there were a few more minor impasses to be down-climbed if one is to follow the canyon down. This last one proved to be too tall and crumbly to descend, but luckily we were able to easily bypass it on the right (north). Notice how colorful the canyon is through here, even on this side of the ridge:



Globemallow flowers:



Colorful rock on the way back down through the canyon:



Interesting rocks imbedded in the canyon walls:



This is a nice section of narrows just above where the canyon forks:



Panorama from where the canyon opens up:





I think this is called Desert Prince's Plume; it's yet another plant which I don't recall seeing blooming here before (although I've probably seen it many times when it isn't blooming and just didn't know what it was):



I'm not sure what this plant is called:



Looking back at the canyon mouth from the road; the colorful area is just below and to the right of the dark peak seen to the far right in this photo:



From here, we drove to Ubehebe Crater and did the loop hike around the crater with visiting family:



I didn't recall these deep furrows in the mud from our last hike near Ubehebe Crater; perhaps they were more recently created from the big rainstorm last year:



Walking along a ridge near Ubehebe Crater; in the center of this photo is Crater Benchmark, which I hope to hike to someday soon:



Purplemat seemed to be everywhere in this part of the park:



Looking north, up towards Crankshaft Crossing:



Looking back at Little Hebe Crater :



The black rock made for great contrast with the flowers (here, in this photo, mostly Golden Evening Primrose and Notch-Leaf Phacelia), although I think the lighting probably would have been much better for photography in the early morning:



Panorama of Ubehebe Crater, with the northern Mountains to the left and the northern Grapevine Mountains to the right :



There were so many plants covering the ground here; in this photo are Brown-Eyed Evening Primroses, which weren't fully open yet:



The Purplemat gave the black gravel a pretty purple tinge when seen from a distance :



Some of the remaining Desert Gold along the side of the road by the Kit Fox Hills; unfortunately, we didn't get a chance to check out the main Desert Gold flower fields south of Badwater as we had heard they weren't as good as they had been earlier in the year due to windstorms (just like the ones near Furnace Creek), and only found out later that some patches had still survived quite well:

