

### “COTTONBALL MARSH” CANYON SIDE CANYON

This trip report continues the trip report on “Cottonball Marsh” Canyon; we hiked back out here later in the trip to check out the side canyon, as well as to look for a way into the upper part of the main canyon. This photo shows the side canyon after where we stopped on our last trip, where it enters a series of small dryfalls:



There are quite a few of these small dryfalls, most of them between 6 and 8 feet in height, all of them easily climbable; however, there is one which is more difficult. This one has a vertical lower part of about 8 feet (the large rock shown at the bottom of the fall is about 2 feet tall and was likely put there by an earlier hiker to assist in the climb), and a slanted (about 45 degree) upper part also of about 8 feet. The difficulty in this climb is the slickness of the rock and the lack of handholds. As we are not very experienced climbers in this kind of dryfall, we had some difficulty, but we all managed to climb it:



Continuing up-canyon, the canyon widens out a bit; as you can see from the photo, the left (southeast) side of the canyon wall is quite steep and would be difficult to ascend, though not impossible:



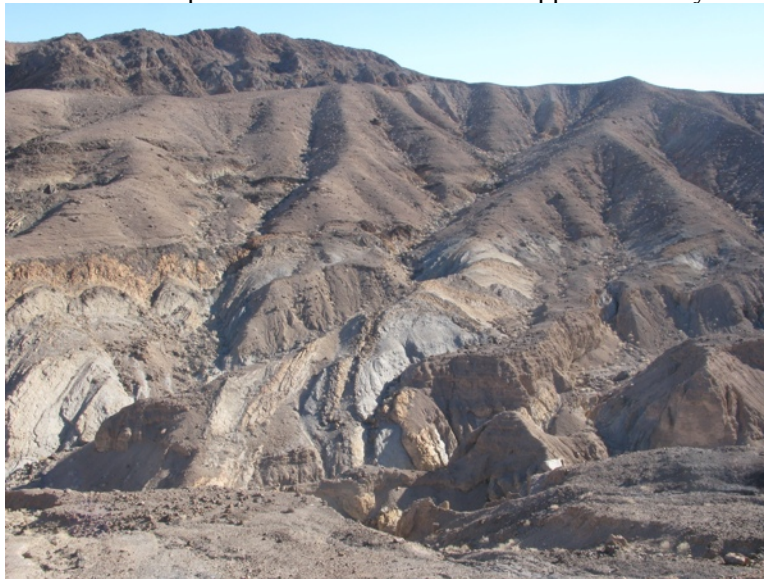
We soon encounter a dryfall, of over 40 feet in height, which stops progress. This dryfall is located at the junction between the side canyon and a side canyon of this side canyon, which is also blocked by a dryfall of similar height:



Heading back down-canyon, we climb a wash on the northwest side of the canyon and follow it to a small ridge overlooking the canyon. This photo shows the entrance to this side wash; it is just above where the canyon drops down the series of small dryfalls:



Looking back down into the side canyon from this ridge, it appeared that the washes draining into the side canyon would cliff out before the bottom. This photo shows a view into the upper side canyon:



From here, we ascended the ridge between the side canyon, which we were exploring today, and the main canyon, which we had explored previously; the wash that I would recommend following down to the upper side canyon is just on the other side of the knoll in the center of the picture:



On the way up the ridge, we found some rocks which had what appeared to be fossilized millipedes in them:



Panoramic view from the top of the ridge into the main canyon, the side canyon, and out into Death Valley:



Looking down into the main Cottonball Marsh Canyon; this canyon appears to have some very amazing narrows, as well as many dryfalls; however, it also appears very difficult to bypass these dryfalls and therefore difficult for hikers to explore the entire canyon. This photo was pieced together from multiple photos:



One hiker in our group continued up the ridge and took these panoramic photos; the first one is looking into the upper part of the side canyon, and the second one is looking into a possible, but difficult, route down into the upper part of the main canyon:





On our way down from this ridge, we found a wash one ridge over from where we had been looking for a way down into the upper side canyon that looked like it would be by far the easiest way down into the canyon; however, as we were running out of daylight, we decided not to explore the upper part of the side canyon. This photo shows the upper part of this wash.

