

This was an interesting flowering plant that was common along this part of the hike:



After crossing the rocky area seen previously, the trail briefly enters the trees again; the trail is narrow through here with low visibility:



After exiting the forested section of trail, we entered this incredible meadow. The density of wildflowers isn't showing up well in this photo, but the meadow through here was completely carpeted with white and red flowers:



The valley with Sparkle Lake (center of photo) is still some distance away:



This photo should help give a better idea of just how many flowers were blooming in this meadow at this time. In addition to the white flowers, there were also the red paintbrush and the fuzzy green flowers called western anemone that look like something out of a Dr. Seuss book:



There were some little round objects on some of the plants that could be western anemone that haven't yet bloomed, or some other flower:



Here is another one of the odd plants that I'd photographed earlier:



There were flowers everywhere throughout this meadow, and from what I've read the flowers elsewhere in the park (in particular, at the Alpine Meadows to the west) would probably have been even more spectacular at this time since the flowers there are generally better than the flowers at this meadow:



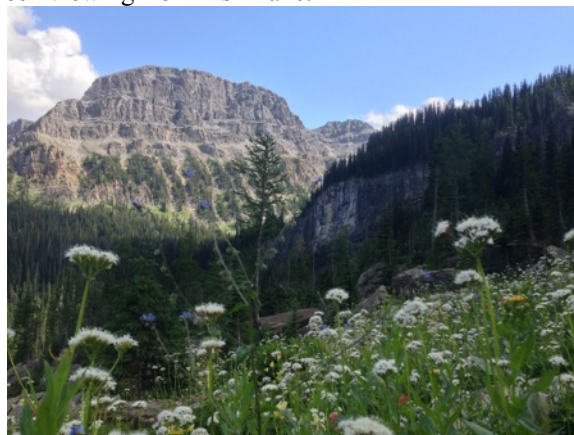
We are finally starting to get a better view of the peaks behind Sparkle Lake:



Photographing the flowers from their height seemed to be the best way to show just how densely packed they were:



Looking across at the prominent peak we'd been viewing from Fish Lake:



There were some dense patches of these yellow flowers, but they generally did not appear outside these patches:



After crossing the meadow, the trail begins to get steep again, and is less well defined:



The trail heads straight up towards the forested ridge seen to the top in the photo; I think this is actually a "false summit" and the real ridge above the lake is further ahead:



There were still bunches of flowers along the main creek through here, but they were not nearly as dense as they had been in the meadow:



Looking ahead through the flowers; the trail became more of a small creek through here:



Along with flowers, there were also lots of mosquitoes. Surprisingly, on this hike the mosquitoes were not particularly bad at Fish Lake (though this may have been because of all the campfires), but they certainly were very prevalent on this part of the hike:



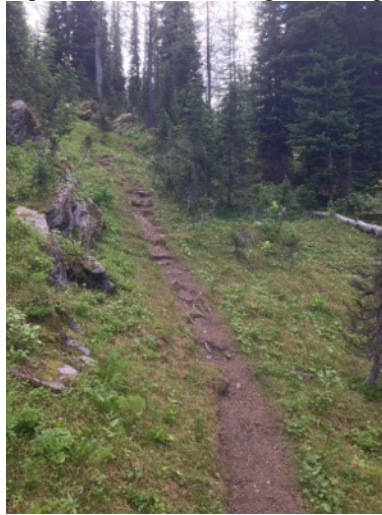
The trail gets even steeper, and stopping to catch your breath is difficult both because there aren't many flat places to stand and because as soon as you stop you will be descended upon by hordes of mosquitoes:



Looking back out at the ridge we had been photographing from the hike up to Fish Lake; we have come a long distance up this valley from the parking area:



As we approach the ridge above the lake (visible in this photo), the flowers begin to disappear:



This is our first view of the lake, from an overlook. The 1997 park map indicates that one can hike all the way around the lake, and also that there is a route to the Summer Pass trail to the southeast from the lake (probably behind the trees and to the left in this photo). It appeared to me that a hiker could attain the ridge to the far right in this photo from here, but I haven't found any info that says if this is indeed possible (and the other side of the ridge is probably not within the park boundary):



The mosquitoes were not nearly as thick near the shore of the lake, so I climbed down to the lake to get some photos:



Please be very careful climbing down to the lake, as the terrain is loose and slippery, and it appears that the lake gets deep very quickly. On our hike up to the lake we had encountered a group which had gone swimming in the lake and reported it to be very cold:



Looking across at the western end of the lake; unfortunately, we did not have time to hike around the lake, but the trail did continue to the right (west). The trail also appeared to continue to the left around the lake, but it looked more overgrown with trees, and from the above panorama the route around the lake is probably loose and slippery:



Looking back out at the ridge across from Fish Lake from here:



Heading back down the steep trail to the meadow:



This photo helps to show how steep the trail is here; note the trail continuing in the lower center of this photo:



Reaching the upper part of the meadow with flowers; note the rock pile to the far left in the photo:



Looking up at the cliffs above the meadow; from further up the trail, it appears that one should be able walk up to the top of this ridge from the trail around Sparkle Lake (that shows how much elevation must be gained past the meadow to get to the lake!):



This photo shows how dense the flowers were all throughout the meadow:





There were numerous paintbrush flowers along the trail past the meadow; unfortunately, they didn't show up particularly well in my photos:



Another view of the prominent ridge above the Fish Lake trail:



Looking back at the Sparkle Lake area with the interesting ridge above the big rock-slab to the right:



Here is where the trail re-enters the trees and begins the steep descent down the switchbacks:



Looking down at Fish Lake from the switchbacks; note how different the colors of the lake look from above than from at the lakeshore:



Here is another one of the yellow flowers we had been seeing earlier:



Finally reaching the stream just before the Sparkle Lake/Wildhorse Ridge fork:



Another view of the wildflowers in this smaller meadow; there seemed to be different flowers in this meadow than those closer to Sparkle Lake, in particular more purple flowers:



Panorama looking down at Fish Lake, and the avalanche chute which the Alpine Viewpoint trail follows (center of photo); I think the smaller peak to the left of the prominent big peak (which is the tallest point in this photo) is called the Sugarloaf:



Looking towards Fish Lake from its outlet once back at the Lakeshore Trail; the trail to Summer Pass should go up the ridge in the center of this photo:



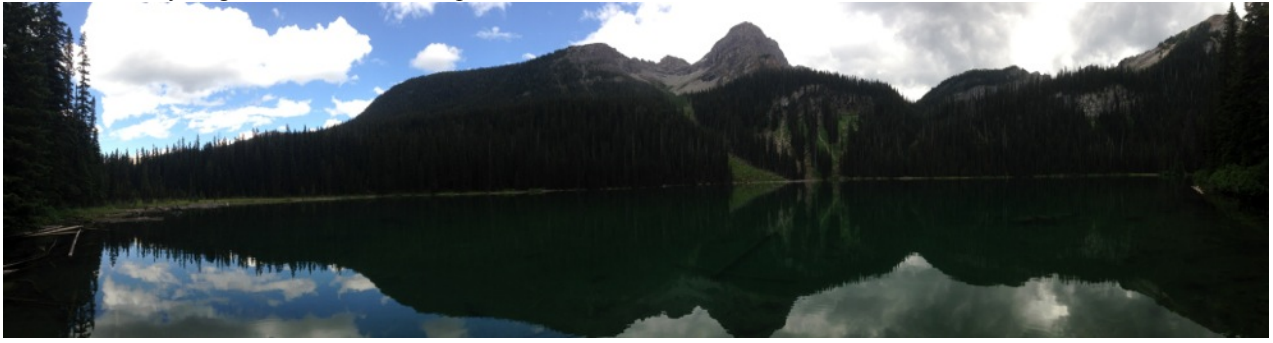
This bird was standing near the logjam at the outlet of the lake, and seemed to be posing for photos:



Here is the Fish Lake Cabin, which I believe campers can rent; it was occupied while we were there, and it has a very nice view of the lake:



There is a small dock near the cabin; we walked out onto it to get some photos of the surrounding mountains. The rock slab above the route to Sparkle Lake is just barely visible to the far right in this photo. I think Summer Pass is the notch right of center in the photo, and the Alpine Viewpoint is below the rocky ridge in the center of the photo:



From here, we headed back to the parking area. Note the green moss alongside the trail that was more visible in the afternoon lighting than it had been in the morning:



Looking up Coyote Creek on the drive back to Fairmont Hot Springs:

