

1ST SIDE CANYON (TO THE NORTH) OF FUNERAL SLOT CANYON

We decided to return to Crown Bridge later in our trip after discovering it, to see if it is possible to explore the narrow section located between the impasse shortly below the side wash which contains the bridge and where the left fork drops into the main Funeral Slot (i.e. where it drops into the northern fork of Funeral Slot Canyon). The walls of this middle narrows section appear to be about 25 feet tall and too sheer to safely descend, thus it appears that this narrow section is inaccessible to hikers. We looked at multiple routes in from the ridge and none of them were successful. On our way to the Crown Bridge area, we decided to also check out a short narrow section which I had spotted on Google Earth and is located in the first side canyon to the north of Funeral Slot Canyon. Due to the number of footprints which we saw in this nice but short narrows, many visitors to Funeral Slot Canyon have also checked out this narrow section.

Hiking up the horse trail towards the entrance to Funeral Slot Canyon:



Leaving the horse trail and sighting on the canyon mouth; there are two small hills which one can aim for to pick up the canyon wash:



This is the mouth of Funeral Slot Canyon:



Looking up the valley; note all the large rocks of different kinds which have washed down the main canyon:



Panorama once in the main Funeral Slot Canyon, with the first southern side canyon coming in on the right:



Up ahead is where the first northern side canyon enters the main wash, and just up the main canyon is where the narrow section begins:



This first northern side canyon has an interesting and narrow entrance, which likely lures visitors going to the main slot to check it out:



The side canyon soon widens and goes around a bend up ahead:



Around that bend, we can see the entrance to a slot through what appears to be the same type of rock as that in the main Funeral Slot:



This is the tight entrance to the slot in the first northern side canyon of Funeral Slot Canyon:



Just past this impressive entrance the canyon widens briefly:

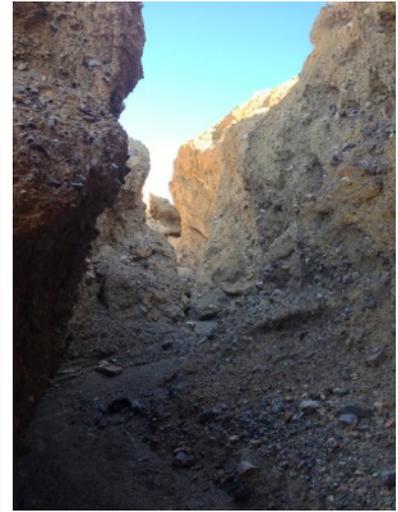


Looking back out the tight entrance to this section of narrows:



Up ahead, we see a very nice slot, which, although overshadowed by the nearby spectacular Funeral Slot, is still impressive in its own right (and would probably be considered more interesting were it in a different location and not compared with the much taller and narrower Funeral Slot):





Near the end of this slot is this collection of conglomerate boulders:



Although this narrow section appeared from Google Earth to have a major impasse at its end, it actually turned out to only have this short dryfall (probably because the slot itself was rather steep), which was easy to climb:



Another view of this impasse, which is probably only about 8 feet tall:



The canyon opens up substantially just beyond this impasse:



Looking back down the slot and out at the Panamint Mountains from the top of this dryfall; Telescope Peak can just barely be seen at the far left of the mountain range in this HDR photo:



Continuing up-canyon, we see this side canyon take off to the right, which is marked by this interesting hoodoo-like formation:



As the main canyon appeared from Google Earth to continue without any more narrows, we chose to follow this side canyon towards the ridge:



Just around the corner, we spotted this weird formation:



From here, it appeared that the water coming down this side wash must somehow come out the dark strip seen in the center of this photo; note also the interesting formation below center in this photo, which appears to have been created by water draining off of the cliffs to the left of the cliff:



We continued up this wash, and on the other side we found a similar formation:



This appears to be a natural bridge in formation, as the water clearly can get through from one side to the other, but the passage is not big enough to be able to see light coming through from the other side:



This is what it looks like from the upper side of this formation:



An interesting spot near the entrance to this formation where water can come off the nearby ridge and drop through this hole (where light can be seen shining through in the center of this photo):



One last look at this strange formation before we head up the wash towards the ridge; perhaps in many, many years this will become another natural bridge:



Finally, we reach the ridge; panorama looking into the Funeral Slot Canyon:



Looking at where the main Funeral Slot Canyon first forks:



Looking back down the wash we had just come up:



This is one of the most impressive rock formations in this slot area:



Looking down towards the Funeral Slot:



The ridge quickly became too steep and slippery to progress safely, so we had to drop back down into the main wash (which had swung around closer to the ridge at this point). Note the formation in the center of this photo which looks like a rabbit head (the ears can be seen sticking up against the sky just right of center):



We regained the ridge as soon as we could see that we would be able to continue along it with no further issues; looking back down the side canyon at the valley from here:



Panorama looking into the two forks of the northern fork of Funeral Slot Canyon:



It is interesting that these two forks appear so similar:



Looking down into the fork where Crown Bridge is located (but cannot be seen from this angle):



There appears to be an interesting formation, perhaps an arch, which can be seen in the center of this photo of (I think) Nevares Peak:



Looking down at where this side canyon forks:



Looking up at the colorful hillsides in these two forks of Funeral Slot, with Crown Bridge just coming into view at this point; none of the routes down into the canyon seemed to work here except for the one which we used when we first found Crown Bridge:



Another panorama of this incredible canyon:



We then dropped into the canyon, using the same route as before, and stopped to get some more photos of Crown Bridge:



Looking out at the canyon wash from behind the bridge:



Looking down on the bridge from above on the other side of the canyon; this small side-wash draining into the main canyon certainly appears interesting, but getting into more of it does not appear possible as there is a dryfall just past the bridge:



From here, we continued up-canyon to try to see the rest of the canyon, which we had missed on our previous trip:



It did not appear possible to climb up to see this interesting feature which we had spotted on our previous trip to this area:



Continuing up the canyon, it seemed to keep pretty much the same character as it had down by the bridge:



There was an interesting overhang in one bend of the canyon:



Looking back, we were surprised by the colorful red rock in this canyon, which we did not recall seeing this much of when we had hiked the main Funeral Slot:



The canyon forks, and we checked out the left fork first (which is the one that we had crossed the very uppermost part of in our bypass of the major dryfall in the canyon just to the north):



This fork soon became steep and rocky:



Interesting formation where a drainage from the ridge drops into the main canyon:



We then headed back to check out the right fork:



This more major fork split, and the left fork only went a short distance:



It encountered this sheer wall:



We then tried the right fork, which had this dryfall where it looks like the dirt was hollowed out beneath the rock and then the thin rock broke, forming this hole (note there did not appear to be any signs of habitation in this hole):



This fork soon became steep:



Then, it encountered this sheer rock wall, which seems to be of the same kind of rock as the impasse was in the previous left fork, as well as where the impasse is in the main Funeral Slot just to the south; it did not appear to be possible to climb out of this part of the canyon and gain the ridge:



A big panel of mud drips on the canyon wall here:



This cracked mud on the canyon floor had a top layer that seemed to be peeling off:



Heading back down-canyon, we spotted this hoodoo on the ridge:



One last photo of the top of Crown Bridge before attaining the ridge and heading back down towards Funeral Slot Canyon:



Looking down into where the two forks of the northern part of Funeral Slot Canyon join:



Panorama in an impressive bend of the narrow section of the first northern side canyon of Funeral Slot Canyon, on our way back down:



The sun setting behind the Panamint Mountains; unfortunately, we didn't have as much time as we would have liked to explore the area around Crown Bridge both times we visited it, since we were hiking out to it on short January days:



Looking back towards the mouth of Funeral Slot Canyon:

