

MOONLIGHT BRIDGE

Moonlight Bridge is one of less than ten natural bridges currently known of in the park. It is located in one of the southern side canyons of Moonlight Canyon; its location is marked on the Google Earth map below. When we reported our seeing this bridge to the park service, we were informed that it had not been previously reported, so we are likely one of the first groups in recent history, if not the first, to see this bridge!

On this day of our trip, we first hiked one of the side canyons on Moonlight Canyon, then attained the ridge from the canyon's head and dropped into a canyon south of Moonlight Canyon (this part of the hike is shown in the first set of photos). Then, we did a little more exploring in the Moonlight Canyon area and came across the bridge (scroll down to the second portion of this report if you want to see these photos first).

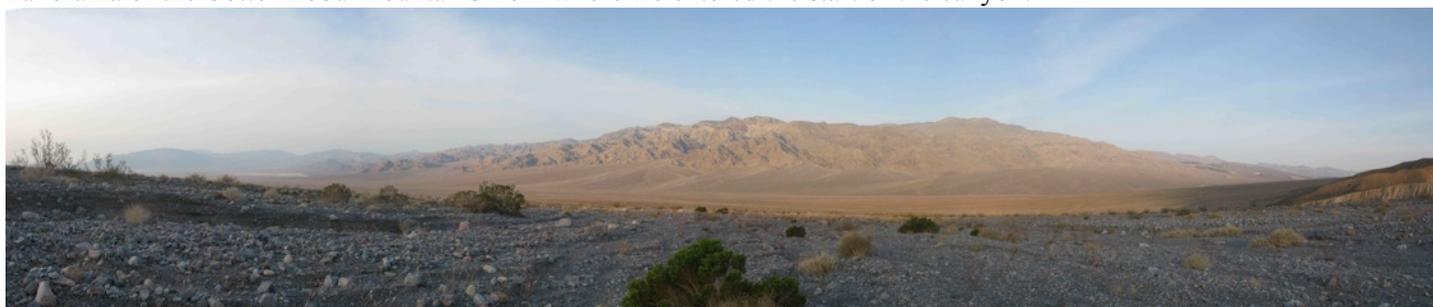
Google Earth map of the Moonlight Side Canyons area:



Looking up at the mouth of Moonlight Canyon from where we parked:



Panorama of the Cottonwood Mountains from where we entered the start of the canyon:



Upon entering a side canyon of Moonlight Canyon, we quickly encountered this short slot-like section:



Easy dry-fall in the middle of this section:



Nice overhang:



Continuing up-canyon, the canyon stays pretty much the same for quite a while, being narrow but not quite a slot:



However, there is one section of the canyon, just past these boulders, that is very slot-like:



The next three photos show this slot-like section:





After exiting the slot, the canyon opens up for a little ways, then returns to its previous moderately-narrow-and-steep character:



After a while, we exit the narrows and reach the upper part of the canyon:



After climbing a few easy dry-falls, we found a good location to attain the ridge. We climbed up the ridge a ways to get a good view. The next two panoramas show the view looking towards the Grapevine Mountains near Moonlight Canyon and the view looking into the valley:



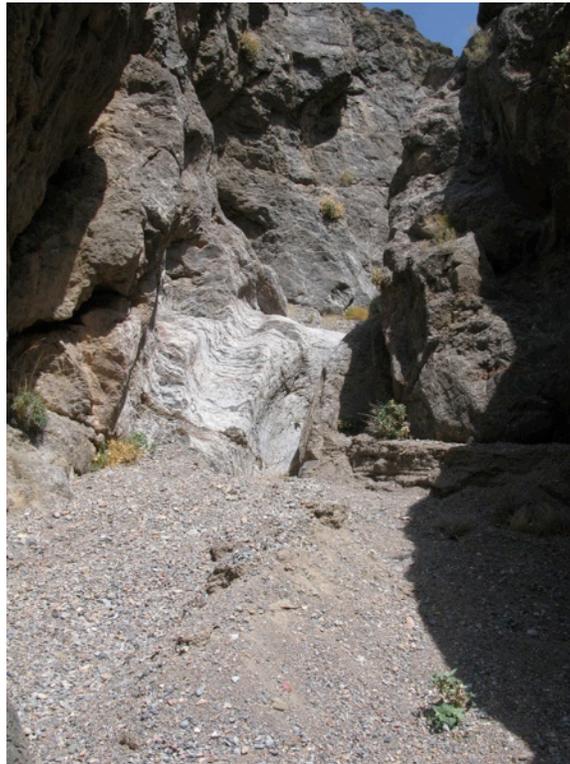
From here, we continued along the ridge until we could see into the nearby canyon. The next two photos show the view into this canyon; notice the large dropoff seen in the second photo:



Nice flower:



Small impasse in the upper part of the canyon, which looked easy to climb, but we were getting tired and decided not to continue:



Colorful route out of the canyon:



Zooming in on the upper area of this canyon from back at the ridge:



From here, we headed back towards Moonlight Canyon. However, as we still had some daylight, there was another area accessible from Moonlight Canyon which we wanted to check out, despite being tired from this long hike (for our first day) so far. After some more hiking, we turned a corner and spotted what looked like it could be a bridge:



Turning another corner, we discovered that we had come across a previously unreported bridge:



HDR panorama of the bridge:



Looking up at the bridge from underneath:



One last HDR panorama of the bridge:

