

Rocky Mountain

Bear Lake Area

Hiking in the Bear Lake area of Rocky Mountain National Park is the highlight of many vacationers' trips. Like driving Trail Ridge Road, the views of craggy peaks reflecting in glassy lakes is a reward for many who come to this natural place. Short trails from Bear Lake connect to high destination points -- Nymph, Dream, or Emerald Lakes. The higher you ascend, the air thins and the sun's radiation intensifies. The following information will help prepare you for trail conditions, weather & climate, elevation rigors, and your responsibilities in the Bear Lake area.

TEN ESSENTIALS

If you have a concern about carrying and using these items, seek out the expertise of a skilled outdoor user.

- Waterproof matches
- Map and compass
- Pocket knife
- Space blanket
- First aid kit
- Nylon cord
- Water
- Extra food
- Dark glasses
- Flashlight, with spare bulb and batteries



SAFETY AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

Carry the "Ten Essentials," but using common sense will add to a safe outdoor trip.

- Stay together as a hiking party. Don't separate. Watch your kids!
- Stay on the trail. If you shortcut, you can cause erosion.
- Wear sturdy foot gear. A short hike in these environs, requires good ankle support and a treaded sole.
- Pack extra water and snacks. This is an arid climate requiring lots of energy.
- Changeable weather makes rain or wind gear a must in your pack.
- Take the shuttle bus to lessen traffic congestion.

BEAR LAKE TRAILS

Rocky Mountain National Park



Please help protect park resources by learning and practicing Leave No Trace skills and ethics.

LEGEND

- Roads
- Horse/Hiker trail
- Hikers Only Trails
- Trail Mileage
- Shuttle Bus Stop (summers only)

Miles to kilometers
Multiply by 1.61

Feet to Meters
Multiply by .3

National Park Colorado

National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

This subjective method of rating trail difficulty is offered with the utmost consideration given to first-time visitors. Your physical conditioning has little to do with how your body reacts at high elevations.

Our advice to first-time visitors or those coming from sea-level elevations is to rest, drink lots of fluids (avoiding alcohol), and begin with short hikes, under 2 miles long, that gain not more than 500 feet elevation.

Easy

Trail	Length	Elevation Gain
Bear Lake (Around Lake) 9,475 feet 2,888 meters	0.5 miles .8 kilometers	20 feet 6.1 meters
Nymph Lake	0.5 mi. .8 km	225 ft. 68.6 m
Alberta Falls 9400 ft 3083 m	0.6 mi. .97 km	160 ft. 48.8 m
Sprague Lake 8710 ft 2,655 m	0.5 mi. .8 km	20 ft. 6.1 m

Moderate

Mills Lake 9940 ft 3260 m	2.5 mi. 4.0 km	700 ft. 213 m
Bierstadt Lake 9416 ft 2870 m	1.4 mi. 2.3 km	566 ft. 172 m
Emerald Lake 10,080 ft 3306 m	1.8 mi. 2.9 km	605 ft. 184 m
The Loch 10,180 ft 3339 m	2.7 mi. 4.3 km	940 ft. 286 m

Bear Lake Elevations

Bear Lake	9475*	2888
Nymph Lake	9700*	2957
Dream Lake	9900	3018
Lake Haiyaha	10220	3115
Glacier Gorge Junction	9240	2816
Cub Lake	8625	2629
Sky Pond	10900	3322
Black Lake	10620	3237

* feet given first, then meters.