

NORTON LAKES

Date	Late August	Time	All Day
Location	Norton Lakes near Ketchum, ID	Weather	Clear
Fish Species	Rainbow Trout	Size Range	10"
Fish Caught	Many		
Flies Used	Elk Hair Caddis		
Techniques	Dry fly fishing & spinners on a spin cast rod		
Comments	A great place to take the kids on an overnighter		

My friend Jeff and I took some of our daughters on an overnight backpacking trip in the Smoky Mountains north of Ketchum, ID. We coach soccer together for two of our daughters that are the same ages. This was Jeff's and his daughters first backpacking trip so it was a lot of fun and a great place to take a first trip. His daughters even got to see their first Mountain Goat up on the ledges. Not only that but we had some great fishing.

Norton Lakes is a popular day hike destination for people living and visiting the Sun Valley area. We saw many day hikers but only a few people that spent the night at the lake. I'm sure there is a lot less traffic in the middle of the week.



The hike was about a five mile loop. We hiked 2 miles to lower Norton Lake the first night and all the girls caught several Rainbows each at Upper and Lower Norton Lakes which are close to each other. The scenery was beautiful and some of the girls tried eating fish for the first time. Let's just say that there was plenty for Jeff and I to eat.





Brynn being a little unsure about her catch





Cami and Jacie joining in on the action





Julia and Jen enjoying the trip





The view from our campsite at Lower Norton Lake and enjoying time around the campfire



After tucking the girls to bed and while zipping up their tent, I noticed a set of eyes out of the corner of my eye. I focused in with my headlamp but the light was only bright enough to see the eyes and not the body. My heart started pounding as the eyes started moving closer. I only knew a few animals that would approach so close and I was hoping it wasn't one of them I had in mind. I told Brynn to run and grab the flashlight while I stood my ground. Where did I put the Bear spray, where did I put the Bear spray raced through my mind. Oh yeah, it's in the doorway of my tent. I finally got the flashlight after what seemed like an eternity. I raised the flashlight and a great sigh of relief followed as I saw that it was a deer approaching.

The next morning we woke up to finish the three miles back to the trailhead. We stopped and fished Big Lost Lake and Smoky Lake on the way but didn't have any success. I thought from the planting records that we might get into some Grayling and Cutthroat. I couldn't see any fish in Smoky Lake. It was at Smoky Lake that we spotted some Mountain Goats.



Hiking over the pass between Lower Norton and Big Lost Lake

The hike was a short but moderate uphill climb to Norton Lakes on the first day but mostly downhill on the way back except for two passes. It was very scenic and a great place for a first backpacking adventure. It's a tradition that I take my daughters on a backpacking trip each summer. We've been to Shirts Lake with cousins near Cascade,

Sawtooth Lake near Stanley and Jennie Lake near Idaho City. This was another great Idaho outdoor adventure with friends. I guess we'll see where we end up next year.



Hiking on the way back

