



Earl's Diary - Wednesday - April 30, 2014

To all my Loyal Readers, greetings!

Today is another exploration day of Pinnacles National Park. One of the easier hikes recommended is the Moses Spring - Rim Trail Loop. The park guide says it is a 2.2 mile loop that should take 1 1/2 hours. The guide also says this is a moderate hike and a good choice for rock formations, talus caves, and the Bear Creek Reservoir.

Just as I was ready to leave the campground, I found my neighbor, Bill from Fort Bragg, was also ready to leave.

We became instant hiking buddies! The days have been very warm - up to and above the 90 degree mark. We decided to hit the trail early in the morning (Well, it was early for me - 9:00am!) The upward climb followed tree shaded Bear Gulch for most of the distance.



We were not in a hurry and stopped frequently for a photo op.



Off in the distance we found some rock climbers on this outcropping.

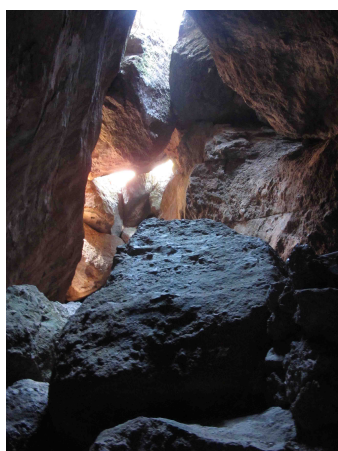
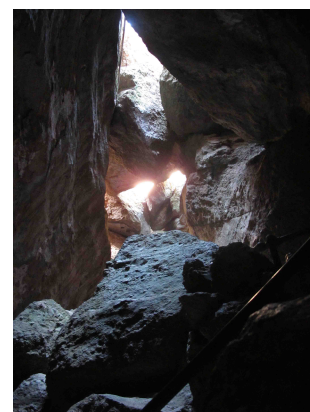
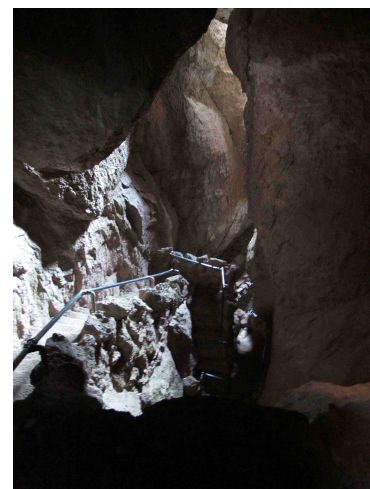






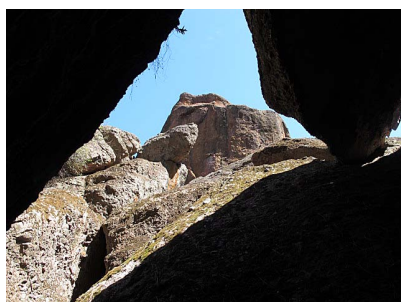
Bill loaned me his trekking poles. Those are something I need to get!

From the parking lot to the entrance of Bear Gulch Cave, it was .7 mile. Flashlights were necessary in parts of the cave. The cave is divided into a lower cave and an upper cave. The upper cave is closed at this time of year to protect a sensitive species of bats. We thoroughly enjoyed our trip through the lower cave - AND a flashlight WAS necessary! We did have to squeeze through several places AND crawl on our hands and knees in another.

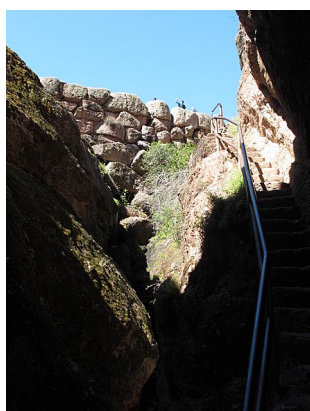
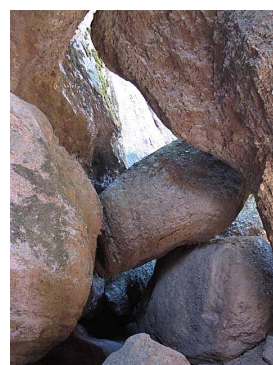


Water from the reservoir was running through the cave

What's a *talus* cave you ask? Talus caves are formed when falling boulders formed a roof over a narrow canyon.



More photo ops!



We approached the Bear Gulch Reservoir



Yes, there were stairs to climb



Our first look at Bear Gulch Reservoir - -





- - and there's water in it!



More photo ops



As we climbed the Rim Trail on our downward trek towards the truck, we had one last look at Bear Gulch Reservoir.



An inquisitive onlooker insisted on having his/her picture taken.



I couldn't resist the flower with its interesting part hanging out.



Let me introduce you to Bill, my hiking partner for the day. Bill is part of our "cult" family. We had a grand time today. They said the hike would take 1 1/2 hours. However we stopped for so many photo ops that we ended up taking about 3 hours!

This has been a most interesting visit to our newest national park. Tomorrow I will be heading for King City, which is only about 30 miles from here. That will be another completely different adventure as I gather with the "cult". I will certainly have my camera ready to document the activities.

Thanks for coming along with me today. - - Earl





This afternoon, after eating lunch, and taking the requisite nap, I drove around the campground to see what the non-electric sites looked like. There is a site for everyone - either in complete sun, or complete shade. Some are even secluded for those who want to be off by themselves. Each site has a fire ring, table, and food storage locker.



At this time of year there are plenty of sites available. Whether you are a tent camper or a Scamper, this is a neat campground. The National Park Service does take reservations. It looks like the electric sites fill up fast during the spring and fall season. They have a swimming pool! I tried it out this afternoon. The water was a little cool, but it sure was invigorating!