

sides of the trail are crowned with beach strawberry. Wind through the alders to ford Boat Creek where it emerges from its heavily wooded canyon at  $7\frac{1}{8}$  miles. Continue south through grasslands, then into alder forest. You meet the Irvine Trail at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles to complete the loop. Ford Home Creek and continue south to the trailhead before  $7\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

## 21. TRILLIUM FALLS LOOP PAST A WATERFALL TO VIRGIN GIANTS

*Elk Meadow Trailhead sits in a large grassy clearing surrounded by forest. The National Park Service restored this area more than ten years ago, tearing down a defunct sawmill and restoring its surroundings to a more natural state, a great example of natural restoration of an industrial area. The plan was to create an area off the busy highway where people could stop to observe the magnificent Roosevelt elk that inhabit the park. Unfortunately the elk usually congregate elsewhere, often near the highway where they often slow or stop traffic, creating a traffic hazard and endangering the elk. But it has proved fruitless to argue with these half ton grazers. They may sometimes be seen across Davison Road just east of Elk Meadow, closer to the highway where the elk seem to consider the grass tastier, if not greener. Trillium Falls Loop explores a remnant swath of virgin forest, with prime trees that wondrously survived despite being within hearing distance of the once screaming saw blades.*

Follow the paved trail near the restroom that heads west, then southwest through grasslands. In 250 feet at a double junction, veer left then right on the paved Davison Trail. In another 200 feet veer right on the signed, narrow dirt Trillium Falls Trail. You soon leave the grassland to ascend through virgin forest, quickly passing 12-foot-diameter virgin redwoods.

By  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile you can hear the creek burbling below. Switchback right and climb by three more switchbacks. Climb past a large Sitka spruce on your left and a fallen redwood's roots on your right. Pass the first of many memorial groves around  $\frac{3}{8}$  mile. Your trail descends, passing beneath a fallen redwood. Redwood sorrel and ferns grow nearly everywhere.

Cross a small wooden bridge and descend by two switchbacks to Trillium Falls at  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, where a long metal bridge overlooks the small falls. Large bigleaf maples tower above the creek surrounded by virgin forest of redwoods and spruce, with many giant snags confirming the ancient origins of this forest.

Climb briefly past monkeyflowers to a small ridge with a

## TRILLIUM FALLS LOOP:

**DISTANCE:** 2¾ mile loop.

**TIME:** One or 2 hours.

**TERRAIN:** Descends through grasslands, then ascends and descends through virgin forest to a dirt road along the edge of forest, creek and meadow. After the road turns paved you return to grasslands.

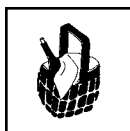
**ELEVATION GAIN/LOSS:** 450 feet-/450 feet -.

**BEST TIME:** Spring, early summer for wildflowers. Late summer, early autumn for berries. Nice anytime.

**WARNINGS:** Keep your eyes and ears open for elk.

**HOW TO GET THERE:** Turn west off Highway 101 north of Orick at M.123.9 onto Davison Road. Go 0.6 miles, then left for trailhead parking. Trail starts near restrooms.

**FURTHER INFO:** Redwood National Park (707)465-7335.



few giant redwoods, then contour through forest of smaller trees, crossing another small wooden bridge around 5/8 mile. Your trail undulates, with views down to grassy meadows beyond this small enclave of forest.

From ¾ mile you ascend moderately through forest, switchbacking right. Climb by three short switchbacks, then ascend to a bench in a memorial grove around 7/8 mile. A short climb soon leads to fire-scarred old redwood giants.

Your trail contours through more giant forest, then climbs to its high point beyond one mile. Descend through a jungle of huckleberry, salal and fern. Skunk cabbage grows beside the two small wooden bridges around 1 1/8 miles. Descend gradually then steeply to cross an old dirt logging road at 1 ¼ miles.

Beyond the road, your trail passes the largest and most impressive redwoods on the loop. Contour past two memorial groves. You pass a bench in a peaceful spot around 1 3/8 miles. Contour through grand forest, passing two more rest benches beyond 1 ½ miles as you start to descend. Tunnel beneath a grand huckleberry bush and come to another bench near a fine goose pen redwood.

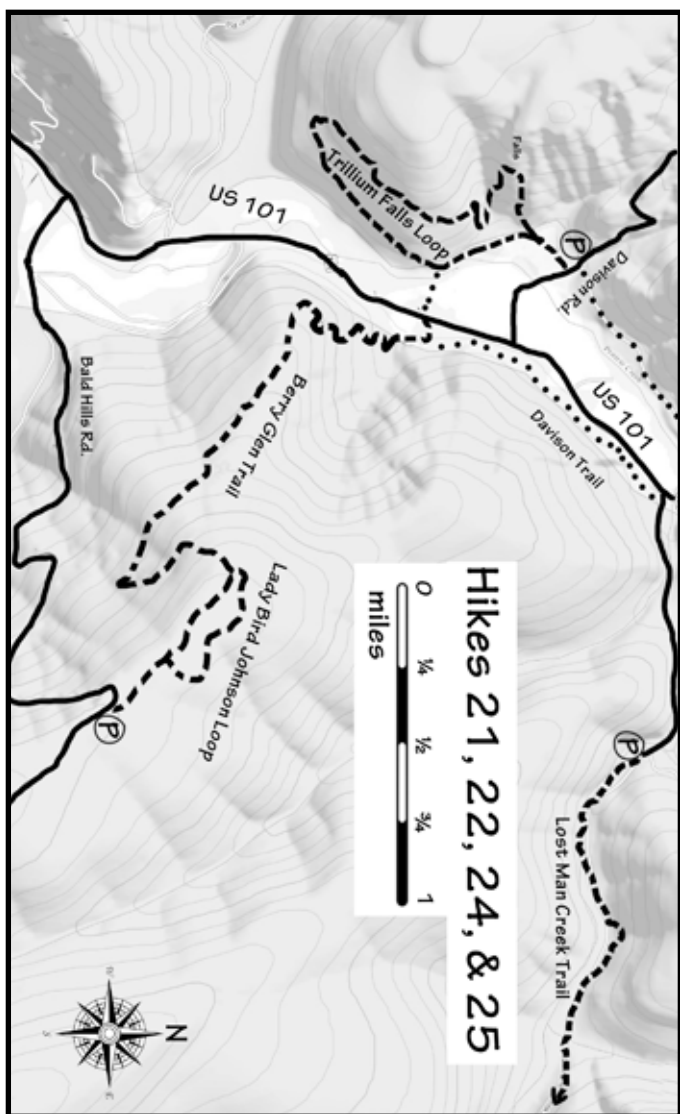
Descend to a big bend left, the westernmost and southernmost limit of this loop. Your trail descends east, then switchbacks right as rhododendrons join the understory. A rest bench offers a break in gorgeous grove of giants.

At 1 7/8 miles your trail dips into a steep, small canyon and crosses a railed bridge. Descend by two switchbacks past abundant starflowers to cross a similar bridge around 2 miles. The highway noise is more noticeable on this lower part of the loop.

Soon the forest parts for views of the alder-lined flood plain on your right, with more tall forest rising beyond. Your

trail climbs briefly up a rocky slope in the forest. Pass under a fallen giant, then rise past maple and hazel. Descend from 2¼ miles to trail's end. Turn right and follow the dirt road, descending back to Davison Trail. On the right Davison Trail crosses a long wooden bridge to cross Highway 101 and meet the bottom of the Berry Glen Trail (see Trail #25).

You want to turn left on Davison Trail. Follow it on a gradual climb, with forest on your left and alder-lined Prairie Creek on your right, with grasslands beyond where elk sometimes graze. Follow Davison Trail past elk clover, elderberry, piggyback plant and young redwoods for ¼ mile to meet the north end of Trillium Falls Trail just beyond where Davison Trail turns paved. Complete the loop by continu-



ing on Davison Trail to cross a small creek, then go left on the paved path to return to the trailhead.

## 22.

### LOST MAN CREEK

#### OLD ROAD THROUGH VIRGIN FOREST TO VIEWS

*One of the least used trails in Redwood National Park, Lost Man Creek Trail lies one mile east of Highway 101 on a gravel road. It provides easy access to a beautiful redwood grove beside the pristine pools and rapids of the creek. Photographers love its combination of forest clearings and creek. People in wheelchairs can reach the picnic area, restrooms and first portion of trail.*

*In 1982 a special dedication ceremony took place here. Redwood National Park was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. About 960 international sites have been chosen as World Heritage Sites because of natural and cultural properties of outstanding universal value to the human race.*

*The short, easy trail becomes arduous if you continue beyond the third bridge. The trail steepens and soon enters lands that were logged.*

*Lost Man Creek Trail offers mountain bikers a rugged but thrilling 20½-mile loop: 11 miles of motor-vehicle-free riding on Lost Man Creek/Holter Ridge Trail followed by a 6-mile descent on paved Bald Hills Road, then returning on Highway 101 (for 1.3 miles, the most hazardous part) and Lost Man Creek's gravel access road. The safer choice is the 22-mile out and back ride free of motor vehicles.*

The parking area is a clearing beside Lost Man Creek. Pass through a stile (broad enough for wheelchairs) and immediately come to several picnic tables beneath immense redwoods in a pleasantly shady spot above the creek. Head southeast on the graveled Lost Man Creek Trail, climbing gradually through the forest. At ¼ mile you cross a bridge over Lost Man Creek. From the bridge you have fine views of the rocky pools upstream.

Your climb steepens after the bridge. The trail recrosses the creek in 200 feet and continues climbing moderately, the creek again on your right. After a level stretch around ½ mile, the path climbs gently, offering views of the creek tumbling around boulders below. Young hemlock and Sitka spruce struggle for light beneath towering redwoods. The understory includes sword, lady, five-finger and deer ferns, iris, salal, redwood sorrel, wild ginger and inside-out flower. In spring trilliums grow beneath salmon-, thimble- and huckleberry.

At  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile your trail levels again, drawing alongside the creek. Then climb gradually again as the path angles away from the stream. Pass a logged area on the left at one mile. You cross a creek (your third bridge) that enters Lost Man Creek from the north.

Then the old road begins to climb a long, steep hill, with views of the cascading creek on your right. You re-enter virgin forest as you begin to climb high above the creek. Those preferring an easy hike should turn back before climbing far up the hill. By  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles you are 100 feet above Lost Man Creek. Below to the south the creek splits. The main fork flows down from far to the south. Geneva Road climbs steeply up a side drainage coming from the east.

The road steepens at  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Beyond  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles the forest starts to thin as the habitat becomes drier. Your path turns briefly north before 2 miles, where the road almost levels, providing relief from the steady climb. The climb steepens again as you turn east, then northeast. Beyond  $2\frac{1}{4}$  miles the forest has been logged. You have occasional views down to the virgin forest of Lost Man Creek.

By  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles you have climbed 1000 feet from the trailhead.

#### LOST MAN CREEK:

**DISTANCE:** 2 miles, round trip; 11 miles, one way to Bald Hills Road, up to 22 miles round trip; or  $20\frac{1}{2}$ -mile mountain bike loop.

**TIME:** One hour or all day.

**TERRAIN:** Climbs gradually through picturesque virgin forest alongside creek, then steeply through logged area up and along a high ridge; bikers can descend on paved road to complete loop.

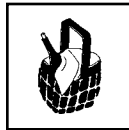
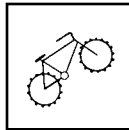
**ELEVATION GAIN/LOSS:** First mile: 160 feet+/-, round trip. To Holter Ridge: 1600 feet+/1600 feet-, round trip. To Bald Hills Road: 3740 feet+/1100 feet-. Bike Loop: 4040 feet+/4040 feet-.

**BEST TIME:** Spring for wildflowers, but nice anytime.

**WARNINGS:** Very steep after the first  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Bikers use caution returning on roads with traffic.

**HOW TO GET THERE:** Turn east off Highway 101 at M.124.4 and follow gravel road .9 miles to picnic area at its end.

**FURTHER INFO:** Redwood National Park (707)465-7335.



The road continues to climb without relief until you level at 3¾ miles and come to a fork in the road. You are on the eastern park boundary at 1500-foot elevation. To continue, turn right onto Holter Ridge, where Lost Man Creek Trail continues. It generally follows the ridge and the park boundary south to meet Bald Hills Road in about 6 more miles, climbing to an elevation of 2300 feet. You meet Bald Hills Road in its sixth mile, about a mile north of Tall Trees Access Road.

While hikers do best to return on the designated trail they ascended, mountain bikers can complete the 20½-mile loop on paved Bald Hills Road, Highway 101 and the gravel Lost Man Creek access road. Watch for traffic!

## 23.

# SKUNK CABBAGE CREEK SECTION COASTAL TRAIL

### SPECTACULAR APPROACH TO COAST

*This trail was built in 1987 as a segment of the Coastal Trail. We describe the trail from south to north, the most dramatic approach to the wilderness beach. You may also hike it from the north end starting at the Gold Bluffs Beach entrance kiosk. The Coastal Trail is still not marked where it leaves Davison Road. From there you must climb over driftwood to head south on the beach to reach the west end of the Skunk Cabbage Creek Trail.*

Your trail starts at the parking area near Johnson Creek, about ½ mile west of the old southern trailhead. The trail heads west beneath young alders, descending briefly to cross Johnson Creek. Climb past several ancient redwoods, remnants of the the virgin forest that once covered most of these canyons. The understory has plentiful salmonberry, lady, deer and sword ferns, Siberian miner's lettuce, giant skunk cabbage and tiny club moss. Contour north past huckleberry and evergreen violet.

By ¼ mile you climb gradually northwest, leaving the redwoods for a dense second-growth forest of young alder and Sitka spruce with scattered Port Orford cedar, western redcedar and hemlock. Descend to a bridge over a tiny side stream where red elderberry thrives. Your path then descends through lush growth, crossing a boardwalk over another stream.

At ½ mile you pass through spruce forest with a luxuriant understory of skunk cabbage, fairy bells, twisted stalk and false lily of the valley. Mushrooms and other fungi thrive in this damp environment. Contour along an old road, crossing several boardwalks over tiny creeks and seeps. You soon pass spruce two feet in diameter growing in the road bed.

The broad bed of Skunk Cabbage Creek on your right supports an abundance of its namesake plant beneath spruce forest. The boggy soil there is too wet for redwoods.

Your easy path crosses a feeder creek at  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile, then two more around  $\frac{7}{8}$  mile, where a few large redwoods mix with the spruce forest. Continue contouring to  $1\frac{1}{8}$  miles, beyond which only a few redwoods grow. Your trail climbs gradually, winding to cross a small creek.

Around  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles the path turns northeast to cross a bridge over Skunk Cabbage Creek. The creek splits into two forks just above the crossing. Ascend past healthy young spruce and redwoods with bleeding heart in the understory. As your trail turns northwest you can hear the surf roaring to the west.

At  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles you climb past young redwoods with their bark scraped off by elk. An immense snag is nearby. Standing dead trees provide habitat for birds and other animals of the forest. Ascend along the North Fork of Skunk Cabbage Creek, soon crossing it twice by bridges. Red huckleberry mingles with its evergreen kin. Salal, yerba de selva and bedstraw join the understory.

Beyond  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles you descend briefly to level ground beside the creek. Spruce and alder dominate the forest, punctuated by the rotting remnants of immense redwood stumps. Your trail contours, then climbs along the creek.

You soon cross one more bridge over the headwaters of

#### SKUNK CABBAGE CREEK:

**DISTANCE:** 8-mile round trip to beach. One way to Davison Road:  $5\frac{3}{8}$  miles.

**TIME:** Three to 5 hours.

**TERRAIN:** Climbs gently along wooded canyon, then up to and along coastal ridge before descending to beach.

**ELEVATION GAIN/LOSS:** One way to beach: 600 feet+/640 feet-, round trip: 1240 feet+/1240 feet-.

**BEST TIME:** Spring or summer, but nice anytime.

**WARNINGS:** Watch for rogue waves at the beach.

**HOW TO GET THERE: SOUTH END:** Turn west off Highway 101 at M.122.7 onto side road. Where road bends left at 0.1 mile, take the gravel road on the right for 0.65 mile to trailhead parking.

**NORTH END:** Turn west off Highway 101 at M.123.9 onto unpaved, steep Davison Road (no trailers). Go 5 miles and park opposite entrance kiosk.

**FEES:** Day use/parking at Gold Bluffs Beach: \$8/vehicle (\$4 for seniors). No fee at eastern trailhead.

**FURTHER INFO:** Redwood National Park (707)465-7335.

