



The small Emerald Lake near the trail.

Fishing:

Emerald Lakes - (Inyo County)

4/10

Hiking:

4/10

Scenery:

8/10

Solitude:

8/10

Distance:

5.65 mi 1-way

Map:



Elevation Profile 1:



Gallery:



John Muir Wilderness

August 2, 2014



Getting There

The trailhead for this journey is located outside of [Bishop, California](#). The town of Bishop offers many dining and lodging opportunities so staying at a hotel one night before you begin might be a good idea. Pick up your wilderness permits at the [White Mountain Ranger Station](#) on the corner of North Main and East Yaney Street. Take route 168 that heads west and out of town to find the [Lake Sabrina trailhead](#). Parking is located about 1/2 mile from the trailhead so expect to park on the side of the road and hike some asphalt for a while.

The Hike

The hike to the Emerald Lakes starts at the Lake Sabrina Trailhead and winds its way past Blue Lake before reaching the Emerald Lakes. When you reach Blue Lake, follow the trail until you reach the fork, at which point you will want to go right, westward. Decidedly, the hike to Blue Lake at the beginning is the most strenuous leg of this journey with many switchbacks foretelling the arrival to Blue Lake. I recommend staying at Blue Lake on your first night to acclimate to the altitude and get some rest before continuing on to the other lakes. Staying at Blue Lake and then day hiking to the Emerald Lakes is a great option if you do not plan on going farther than the Emerald Lakes. I recommend staying at [Sailor Lake](#) on your second night. Once at Sailor Lake, you will notice that nearby Moonlight Lake is encompassed on all sides by large boulders and Hungry Packer Lake only has a few suitable campsites so Sailor Lake is the best spot to pitch your tent in this area. Aesthetically, Sailor Lake will be the better choice for setting up a camp site that will give you access to not only [Moonlight Lake](#), but also Hungry Packer Lake, and ultimately Echo Lake. I would surmise at this point that those who are familiar with this watershed know this as well, so try and get there early on a weekday to get a good spot.

The Fishing

The High Sierra fishing is good at the Emerald Lakes for small Kamploops Rainbows and

Eastern Brook Trout. Upon arrival you will likely notice fish activity in the water so locating fish is no problem. They are everywhere. We fished the lower of the Emeralds and found excellent action using dry flies while sight casting to small trout. The lower lakes are small and shallow with the upper bodies of water having more depth and acreage. The lakes are closely bunched together so it only takes a few minutes to traverse the fishing trail from one lake to the next.

Take a few minutes to scope out the tarns on the west side of the Emerald Lake that is closest to the trail. We spotted a few Brook Trout that looked to be 12 inches long swimming in a small tarn that had an inlet and outlet flow. Look for camp sites at the upper lakes. You will probably find yourself alone if you choose to camp at these lakes. I have never seen anyone fishing or camping at the Emerald Lakes.

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This site was created to provide information on fishing the lakes and streams in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains.

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