



Diamond Peak is visible across the meandering creek in this extensive wetland.



*Gold Lake Bog is probably best known botanically for having several rare species of carnivorous bladderworts, including this flat-leaved bladderwort (*Utricularia intermedia*).*

Gold Lake Bog

If you are interested in the fascinating plants that have adapted to boggy habitats, the large bog north of Gold Lake is one of the best places to study these. Carnivorous plants abound. Extensive spreads of great sundew cast a reddish tinge on the soggy areas near a small shallow pond. Several species of bladderworts can also be found here. These are aquatic plants with attractive yellow flowers that belie their predatory nature. Specialized bladders capture insects and other small aquatic invertebrates, helping the plants survive their nutrient poor habitat.

The trail begins in the forest at the west end of the campground but can also be accessed from Rd. 5897 just a little farther. The lake isn't visible as you pass by above its shore. The trail descends a little as it reaches the edge of the bog. As the ground becomes damper, more plants appear. A small open patch of wetland on the left side of the a small bog displays the first of many stands of the shrubby bog birch, a real standout when arrayed in its flame-colored fall foliage. Englemann spruce is common, and monkshood, marsh marigold, and western water hemlock can be seen here as well. Farther on there is a small boggy area on the left where you can get your first look at the carnivorous sundews and bladderworts, as well as alpine laurel and Gorman's buttercup. This is a good place to head out into the main open bog, if you are prepared with rubber boots and are very careful of the delicate ecosystem. Head right off the trail and you can soon follow the beautiful meandering creek back into the open wetland. Look for the tiny white stars of longstalk starwort in the masses of sedges. As you near the shallow pond you can find grapeferns and early blue violet and soon you will see acres of sundews in the heart of the bog. Here also are bladderworts and pondweeds in the open water and more bladderworts, hooded ladies'-tresses and the rare *Scheuchzeria palustris* nearby. If you continue past the pond, you'll soon reach the northern edge of the lake and a terrific view of Diamond Peak. It is possible to bushwhack about 500 feet back up to the trail near the inlet creek at the northeast corner of the lake. Brook saxifrage, pink willowherbs, marsh marigolds and much more decorate this sparkling, springfed watercourse. If you have time, you can return to the campground and take a short trail south to pretty Upper and Lower Marilyn Lakes.

Location & USGS Map

T23S.R5E.S15; Diamond Peak

Difficulty

Easy (buggy early in the season however)

Distance &

~3 miles RT

Elevation Gain

level, ~4800–4900'

Bloom Period

June to late August

Highlights

sphagnum bog, rare plants

Directions

Head east on Hwy. 58 (approximately 23 miles past Oakridge). Turn left (north) at Rd. 5897 toward Waldo Lake and drive 2 miles until you see a pulloff and trailhead sign on the right. This intersects the main trail in a few hundred feet. Turn left at the intersection for the bog, right for the lake. There is another trailhead 1.9 miles farther up the road. To get directly to Gold Lake, continue east on Hwy 58 for another 2.5 miles. Turn left onto Rd 500. This deadends at a campground on the south end of the lake after about 2 miles.