

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a valley with a lake in the foreground. The lake is surrounded by large, grey boulders. In the background, there are steep, rocky mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is a high-altitude mountain environment.

2011

Yosemite & Rocky Mountain National Parks

It's easy to not realize how high mountains in Rocky Mountain National Park are, because you are viewing them from such a high elevation to start with. Mills Lake here is at an elevation of 9,940 feet, and the peaks in the distance are over 13,000 feet.

8/27/2010, Rocky Mountain National Park





Gem Lake

Although small (0.2 acres) and shallow (average depth is only about 1 foot), Gem Lake provides spectacular beauty and is worth the hike. It is relatively low by Rocky Mountain standards (only 8,830 feet).

8/31/2010, Rocky Mountain National Park

February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	March S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		Groundhog Day			
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	Lincoln's Birthday
13	Valentine's Day	14	15	16	17	18
20	President's Day	21	22	23	24	25
27	28					



Pika

Pikas look like large rodents or small rabbits (with small ears). They do not hibernate during the winter, and have very thick fur coats to keep them warm--so warm in fact that they can die from heat if the temperatures get above the mid 70s. As a result, Pikas are only found at very high elevations, typically in the 8,000-13,000 foot elevation range. We found this Pika at about 9800 feet.

8/20/2010, Green Mountain Loop Trail, Rocky Mountain National Park

March 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	April S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Daylight Savings Starts (+1 hour)				Saint Patrick's Day		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Spring (4:21 pm PDT)						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



Meadow Flowers

Flowers bloom late in the high country, so you still get nice displays well into the summer.
 (I believe these flowers are Jeffrey Shooting Star, so I am rather partial to them.)
 7/9/2010, Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park

April 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	May S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	Tax Day	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Easter Day						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



Bullock's Oriole

Coming home one evening I got a glimpse of a brilliant yellow bird in my front yard. Camping out in my driveway for a couple of hours on a morning after that gave me some good views of them, and let me identify them as Bullock's Orioles. The female (left) is fairly colorful as far as female birds go, but the male (right) is absolutely brilliant.

5/29/2010, Shingle Springs, CA

May 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mother's Day 8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	Memorial Day 30	31			April S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	June S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



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Fern Spring

Despite that fact that Yosemite has many huge, impressive water falls, one of my favorites has always been the very small falls at Fern Spring. (You can argue that a fall of less than a foot really isn't a water fall, but I call it one anyway.)

7/7/2010, Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park

June 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		Flag Day				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Father's Day		Summer (10:16 am PDT)				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



Fly Agaric Mushrooms

One of the things that quickly jumped out at us at Rocky Mountain National Park was the tremendous number of large mushrooms (ones you measure in inches across), especially on the west side of the park. One of the most colorful mushrooms there is the Fly Agaric, which can measure up to 8 inches across. They are also quite poisonous.

8/24/2010, Colorado River Trail, Rocky Mountain National Park

July 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
	Independence Day					
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24						
31	25	26	27	28	29	30



Mountain Reflection

This pool next to the Dana Fork of the Tuolumne River gave a nice reflection of the mountain behind it.
7/10/2010, Tioga Road, Yosemite National Park

August 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



Female Mallard

Normally the female Mallard Duck looks fairly drab in its brown colors. However, they have a patch of feathers on each wing that change color, showing either brilliant blue or deep purple if you catch the light right on them.

8/29/2010, Bierstadt Lake, Rocky Mountain National Park

September 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	October S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
	Labor Day					
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	Fall (2:05 am PDT)	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



Weathered Pine

The harsh winters at high elevations make for very hardy trees that grow very slowly, and often look very weathered. This tree is at about 9,900 feet.

8/26/2010, Dream Lake, Rocky Mountain National Park

October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	November S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
2	3	4	5	6	7	1 8
9	Columbus Day	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24					
30	Halloween	25	26	27	28	29



Bridalveil Fall and Leaning Tower

Bridalveil Fall is a beautiful fall by itself, but I have always loved the way the late-day light brings out the rock colors between the fall and the Leaning Tower to its right.

5/15/2010, Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park

November 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	December S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
		1	2	3	4	5
Daylight Savings Ends (-1 hour)		Election Day			Veteran's Day	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	Thanksgiving Day	25	26
27	28	29	30			



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Longs Peak over Bierstadt Lake

The highest mountain in Colorado is Longs Peak at 14,255 feet (the tallest peak on the left side of this photo). Bierstadt Lake (at 9,416 feet) provides a beautiful foreground to this and many other peaks in the area.
8/29/2010, Rocky Mountain National Park

December 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	January S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
					1	2
						3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	Winter (9:30 pm PST)	21	22	23
						Christmas Eve
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas Day						New Year's Eve



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Unicorn Peak (left) and Cockscomb Peak (more distant right) from the top of Pothole Dome

7/9/2010, Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park