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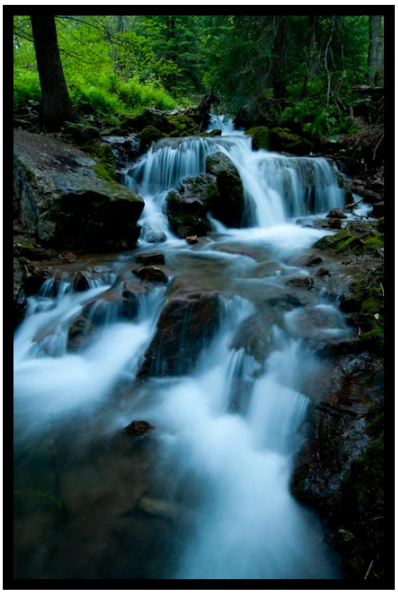
Hanging Lake

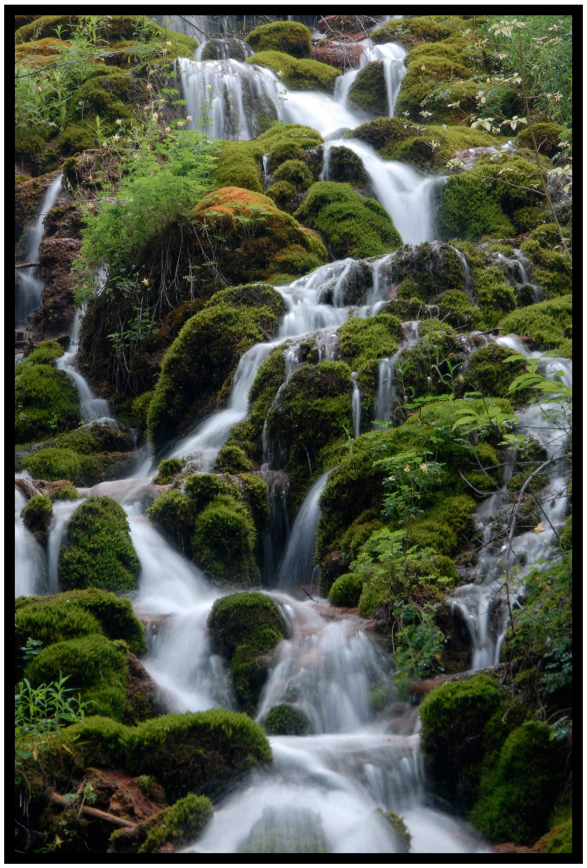


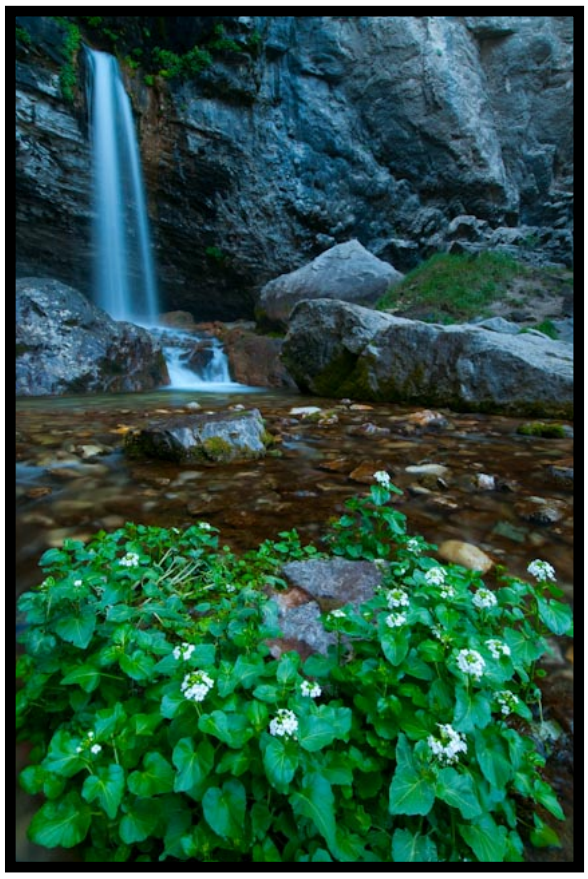
As a resource for quality landscape and nature photography, backcountryimages.com is proud to launch this series of Photo and Travel Guides to help fellow photographers discover new and classic locations. These guides will provide accurate and up to date information, and a sampling of my favorite images.

hanging lake & spouting rock

Hanging Lake Trail is located 10 miles East of Glenwood Springs, Colorado. The trail winds up from the Glenwood Canyon floor parking area for about 1.25 miles to Hanging Lake, and then a short hike above the lake to Spouting Rock. Along the trail are numerous waterfalls and creek beds for photographic adventures along the way to the top. The soft light of the early morning hours is the perfect time to capture these cascades. Around the lake and along the short trail up to Spouting Rock you will find beautiful wildflowers during late July. Oil Shale Columbines can be found around the lake and make beautiful summer portraits.

Near the top of the trail, there are beautiful moss covered cascades that glow in the early morning light. Use a polarizing filter to intensify the colors and remove the glare from the water.



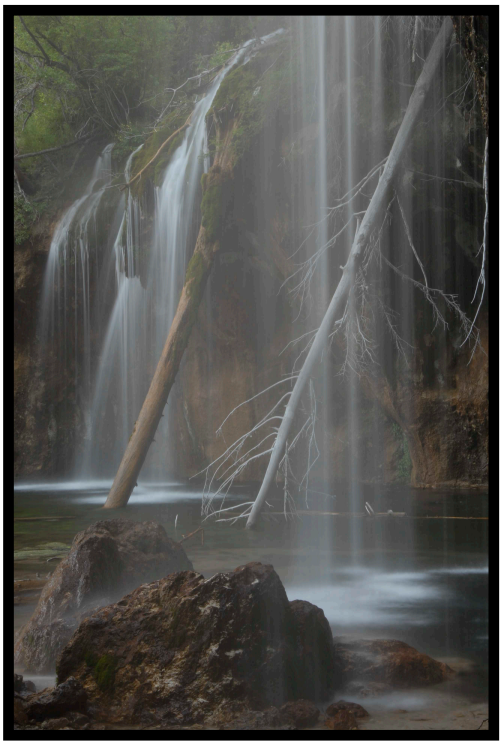


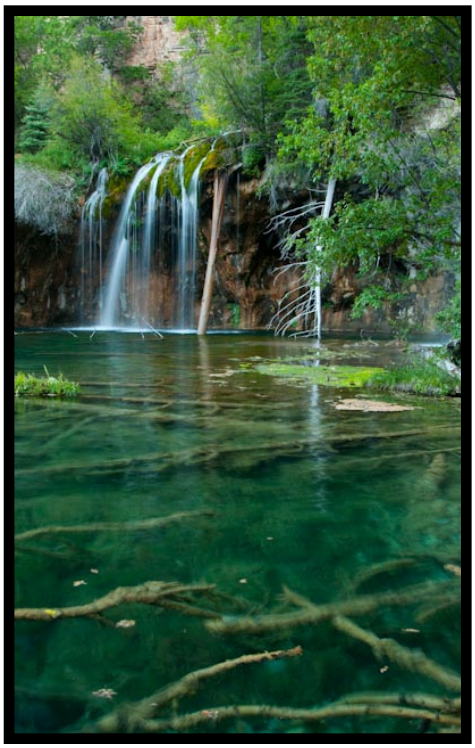
Hiking and Trailhead Information

The parking area for Hanging Lake is located approximately 9 miles east of Glenwood Springs on Interstate 70 in the heart of Glenwood Canyon. There is plenty of parking if you get there early. By mid-morning the lot is often full during the summer

months. Sturdy hiking shoes, plenty of water and a light snack are important to remember. The worst thing you can do a higher altitudes is get dehydrated, so keep drinking water throughout the hike.

Being on the trail by 5:30 AM in the summer months guarantees you time to capture the cascades and waterfalls without direct sunlight. The lake itself and spouting rock do not receive direct sun until late morning. Take your time going up the steep trail in order to conserve your energy and get some great shots along the trail. Remember, your hike begins above 5,000 feet above sea level, and gains about 1,200 feet during the hike.





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Photography Tips & Information

I prefer to use a wide angle lens (14-30mm) for shots around the lake and my 24-120mm to capture more intimate landscapes. This is a good place for for flower portraits in the summer months so I usually also bring a 105mm macro lens.