

Water Wheel & Ellison Creek Cascades  
Weekday Hike  
August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017

Ellison Creek is a wonderful swimming hole tucked back between Payson and the Mogollon Rim. It is the crown jewel of the Water Wheel area. It takes a short drive, a mile hike down a dirt road. If you want to take the scenic route, an incredible hike through a prehistoric looking landscape of slate and dense foliage, a jump over the creek and several ponds that you have to navigate over and around to reach this inviting, cold clear swimming hole that is most definitely worth the trip. Make sure you have some slip proof water shoes as any of the rock that gets wet is very slippery.

There is a lot to explore in the area and if you park just past second crossing. Literally a few feet past the creek on the left and cross the road you can head up a trail that will lead down to a nice pool where you can do a bit of cliff jumping. The trail is pretty steep as you head down to the creek. There is a nice small waterfall that you can swim up to.

Meet at 7:30 AM at 10240 N 90th St in the parking lot between Dunkin Donuts and Einstein's Bagels SE/C Shea Blvd and Hwy 101. We will leave at 8:00 AM sharp for Payson so don't be late.

- \*1<sup>st</sup> parking lot with restrooms  
34.350754, -111.285511
  - \*\*2<sup>nd</sup> crossing camp site  
34.356534, -111.283019
- Travel time 1hr 30 min.

Getting There: From Payson, head north about 1 mile from the intersection of the SR260 and SR87 (the corner with the McDonalds on it) and turn right on Houston Mesa Road. Stay on Houston Mesa road for 8.2 miles just after you cross the creek for the second time and head up the road a couple hundred yards to the next turnoff to the right and head back near the closed gate and park. Hike up the dirt road up and to the left until you reach a low point in the road approximately 0.5 miles. Head down the path to the river that you will hear off to your right. Once at the river, go upstream a few hundred yards until you see the pool.



\*\*Alternate Route: (a bit more difficult)

Start at the [large parking area at Water Wheel](#). Hike upstream and boulder hop up to the confluence of Ellison Creek and the East Verde River. Ellison Creek will be coming from the right (south-east). Follow the creek upstream until you reach the pool. Altogether it will take about 30 minutes to reach the pool.

\*Additional Alternate Route: (even a bit more difficult)

Park at [Second Crossing parking area](#) and cross the road. There will be a trail leading down to the East Verde River. Follow the trail and scramble down the rocks to the river and follow the river downstream to the confluence of the East Verde River and Ellison Creek. There you will need to jump across the river and follow Ellison Creek to the waterfall.

**For any questions call Monte 602 818-1388**

After the hike we will meet at a fabulous restaurant for adult beverages and food before heading back to Scottsdale arriving at approximately 5:00 PM.