

Capitol Reef National Park, Utah, "Rim Overlook." April 19, 2003.

My hiking got off to a good start this year, but was then curtailed. The combination of the War in Iraq plus the publication of EMRFD seemed to detract me. But Shon and I decided to get away in April for a long planned and much needed road trip to the southwest. This was the only "serious" hike I did during our trip, although we did several walks on paved paths in the many National Parks that we visited.

This hike covered 4.5 miles round trip with an 800 ft elevation gain. Starting elevation was around 5000 ft. The hike starts on the Hickman Natural Bridge trail, but splits off after part of a mile. I saw the top of the bridge from the trek I took. The trail started like any trail would, a track in the dirt. But as it moved to higher elevations, the dirt became sparse, if not completely absent, leaving nothing but bed rock. The trail was then replaced by a series of cairns on smooth rock slabs, requiring some concentration. This hike was named the "rim overlook" and offered super views as well as glimpses, both up and down, into side canyons. If there had been additional time, I would have continued the hike to its end at "Navajo Knob."



 This shows the early parts of the trail as a path in the dirt, but with bed-rock showing through.



Note the cairn in the lower left part of the photo. Also note the fractal nature of the landscape. It is very hard, at least for me, to put a scale on what I am seeing.



Here we find a cairn on a ledge beside the trail.

It's interesting to look back from the top.



Here's a view showing the valley with the Fremont River, 800 feet below. The valley continues to hook around toward the right side of the photo. The geology is dominated by water and wind erosion. There is a great mixture of rock quality, providing challenge to both the geologist and the rock climber.



The landscape of south central Utah was delightful, although much different than the hikes I usually enjoy in the relatively wet and treed lands of the Pacific West. I definitely hope to return to Arizona and Utah for additional hikes as well as other general exploration.