

Secret Falls and Fishing Hole



At the main stop light in downtown Highlands, take the turn for Main Street. If you are coming from Cashiers heading west on Hwy 64, turn left at the light. If you are on Hwy 64 east, go straight at the light. And if you are approaching the light from Hwy 28 you will turn right. After it leaves town in a couple of blocks, Main Street turns into Horse Cove Rd. Continue down this curvy road downhill for 3.7 miles and turn right on Walking Stick Rd (SR1608). At 0.6 miles down this road on the right is Walking Stick Falls. Its right next to the road. Continue down this gravel road for a total of 2.5 miles to a fork. Turn right and drive 1/4 mile to FR4567. Drive another 1/4 mile and pull into the small grassy parking area on the left. At the time of my last visit there was a brown plastic sign labeled Big Shoals Trail. There's a chance that FR 4567 might be gated. In that case you will have to park in that area and walk the additional 1/4 mile to the trail head. The trail begins at the old gated old road off of the grassy parking area. It starts out level as it passes through an area of new growth. That will turn to older growth as the trail descends and eventually comes to a fairly easy creek crossing on some rocks. A few minutes later the trail crosses another small creek on a log, and then heads up hill. A few minutes later, the trail turns to the left and down towards the top of the falls.

A small side trail heads to the top of the falls and comes out on a very safe flat rock area with a great view of the creek below. Please use common sense! More adults fall off of waterfalls than children. Just up Big Creek are 2 smaller drops and a shallow pool.

To get to the base, head back up to the trail and take the trail down to the base. This part has been greatly improved since my first visit. There are now landscape timbered steps so it's no longer a chore to get to the good stuff. Once near the base, the trail splits with one part going to a sandy area next to the waterfall.

Heading down the other part of the trail will bring you out to the view in the first image on this page. This is just above a small shelf where the creek spills over forming a smaller falls.

Bring lots of food and water!