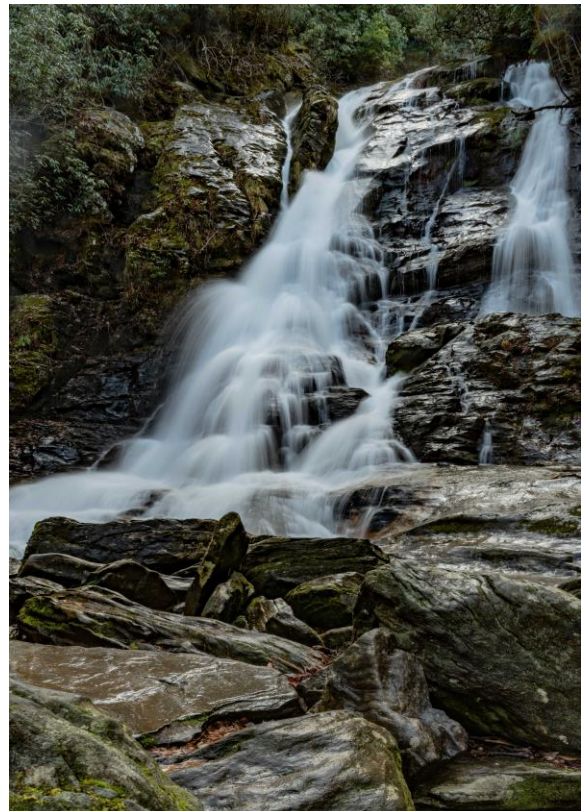


Falls on High Shoals Creek



There are two waterfalls here – each one of which is worth the walk. The upper falls (Blue Hole Falls) has a nice swimming pool while the falls a little further downstream (High Shoals Falls) is higher and more impressive. Possibly because of their remoteness both have remained idyllic in their settings. On occasion there are signs at Blue Hole on the viewing platform restricting swimming but...well...if you do, be cautioned that the water is always COLD.

Notes for the photographer: Blue Hole is probably photographed best from the far side of the creek. Careful – those rocks are slick. High Shoals Falls is different. If you shoot up from close to the bottom, the falls will appear large at the bottom and small at the top (like photographing a tall building from the sidewalk in front). In this case shooting from the viewing platform is better than from down below it.



Directions: Getting there is half the fun. From Helen travel north about 11 ½ miles on 17/75 to a sharp right-hand turn onto the graveled Forest Road 283 (Indian Grave Gap Road). The turn onto Indian Grave Gap Road is 2.0 miles down from Unicoi Gap and is easy to miss. In about a thousand feet you will cross the Hiawassee River without benefit of a bridge. It's quite safe unless recent rains have swollen the river. Be advised. From the highway it is about 1.4 miles to a small parking area on the left. My advice is to go early in the day – the parking area fills around mid-day. The easy trail down to the first falls is 1.2 miles. You will descend about 550 feet through one of the prettiest hardwood forests in Georgia. After crossing High Shoals Creek on a newly re-built foot bridge, the trail turns left and parallels High Shoals Creek down to the side trail which accesses Blue Hole. The side trail down to High Shoals Falls is another 400 feet. GPS Coordinates of the parking area: 34°48'58.1"N 83°43'37.2"W

Interesting Fact: As a kid (I'm now much, much older) we did irresponsible things here. That would be jumping into the pool from the top of Blue Hole falls and climbing the rocks up High Shoals Falls. Don't do this. Don't let anyone in your party do this. At least one young man has died here.