

# Timpanogos 11,749'

Mount Timpanogos Wilderness Area  
American Fork Canyon / Provo Canyon

Mount Timpanogos is the most popular mountain-hiking destination in Utah. Timpanogos has everything that a hiker could wish for including an alpine lake, a small glacier, waterfalls, high alpine meadows, wildflowers, a herd of Rocky Mountain Goats and an easily accessible summit. There is also the wreckage of an Air Force B-25 for the really adventurous.

## **General Information:**

The summit of Mount Timpanogos is 11,749', second highest in the Wasatch Mountains. I consider the hike from the Timpooneke Trailhead to be the best hike in Utah. Reaching the summit will require 4 1/2 hours. The summit is 7.5 miles one-way with an elevation gain of 4580' on a well-maintained trail. For the less adventurous, Emerald Lake is 6.5 miles one-way with an elevation gain of 3210' and will require 3 1/2 hours. The Timpooneke trail is accessible to hikers of all abilities from mid-July until the first snow of the year. The only real difficulty with the hike is that it requires a very long day for the average hiker. Water is accessible from several locations along the trail; all water should be filtered. This hike is very crowded with BYU students on Saturday. Hiking on Sunday or mid-week will provide a more pleasant experience.

## **Timpooneke Trailhead:**

Drive up American Fork Canyon until the road forks. Take the right fork, which is part of the Alpine Loop. Continue driving until you reach a sign on the right side of the road that points to the Timpooneke campground. Take this paved side road 1/4 mile through the campground. Just past the campground the road reaches the trailhead, which is identified by a large paved parking lot with a vault toilet on the left side of the road.

## **Timpooneke Route:**

The trail begins near a small forest service shelter with information and map boards (N40° 25' 52", W111° 38' 21"). The trail heads up a glacier valley known as the Giant Staircase. After about 1 mile you will pass a sign pointing to Scout Falls. Just above the Scout Falls trail there are several switchbacks. Above the switchbacks you enter Middle Basin which is littered with avalanche debris. The trail makes big loops and switchbacks through Middle Basin to gain altitude. After climbing the headwall the trail enters Timpanogos Basin. You should now have your first views of the summit and Timpanogos Glacier. The glacier is really a perpetual snowfield and not a true glacier.

From the lip of Timpanogos Basin you will encounter a trail which is signed toilet and leads to the right (N40° 24' 11", W111° 38' 39"), this is also the trail to the B-25 Crash Site. To reach the summit continue hiking on the main trail (trail to the left). Several 100 yards further up the trail you will encounter a second junction (N40° 24' 6", W111° 38' 41"). The trail on the left leads to Emerald Lake, the trail on the right leads to the summit. Take the summit trail and walk through lush meadows that are often referred to as the Flower Garden. The first part of August is the best time to see the flowers. Continue following the trail as it climbs to the Timp Saddle (N40° 23' 46", W111° 39' 17").

From Timp Saddle with it's views of the valley continue south along the well-defined trail. You will soon arrive at The Stairs, which is where the trail zigzags up a steep canyon. From here continue to the Glass House which marks the summit (N40° 23' 27", W111° 38' 44"). Surveyors who, before the days of aerial mapping, used the peak as a triangulation point originally constructed the steel and glass shelter. The Glass was blown out years ago.

From the summit continue 1/2 mile south along the ridge trail until you arrive at the Glacier Saddle (N40° 23' 2", W111° 38' 19"). Slide and hike down the glacier to Emerald Lake (N40° 23' 37", W111° 38' 25"). Use caution and common sense while on the glacier. Most Timpanogos accidents happen on the

glacier. From Emerald Lake take the trail which leads to the Timpooneke trailhead and the junction we passed when entering Timpanogos Basin.

**B-25 Crash Site:**

The trail to the B-25 Crash site leaves the main Timpooneke trail at the lip of Timpanogos Basin. From the lip of Timpanogos Basin you will encounter a trail which is signed toilet and leads to the right, this is also the trail to the B-25 Crash Site. Follow the trail north 1/2 mile as it contours around a hill and then follows a small stream to two ponds. The trail disappears as it approaches the ponds. From the ponds the B-25 wreckage is located 1/2 mile west-northwest at the base of the scree field at an elevation of 10,800'. The easiest way to locate the wreckage is to climb west up two terraces to the base of the scree. Follow the base of the scree north and you will walk into the middle of the wreckage. Debris from the wreckage is scattered from the base of the scree, across the first terrace and down to the second terrace. The large radial motors are very easy to locate, one motor is located on the upper terrace (N40° 24' 25", W111° 39' 23") and one is located on the lower terrace (N40° 24' 26", W111° 39' 19"). The wreckage remains buried under snow until early to mid August.

It is possible to contour south along the terrace, which the crash site is on, and intersect the Timpooneke trail as it approaches the Timp Saddle. If you are heading to the summit the detour to the crash site will add one hour to your trek.