



From the summit rim of South Sister, scramblers have a wonderful view of Middle and North Sister

Descend the way you came, scrambling down carefully on the loose cinders and scree. Please use care and stay on the path—the whole upper mountain is heavily eroded from overuse.

11 THE WIFE

Elevation: 7054 feet

Difficulty: S2/T3

Round trip: 8.8 miles

Elevation gain: 1600 feet

Trip time: 5–7 hours

Time to summit: 3 hours

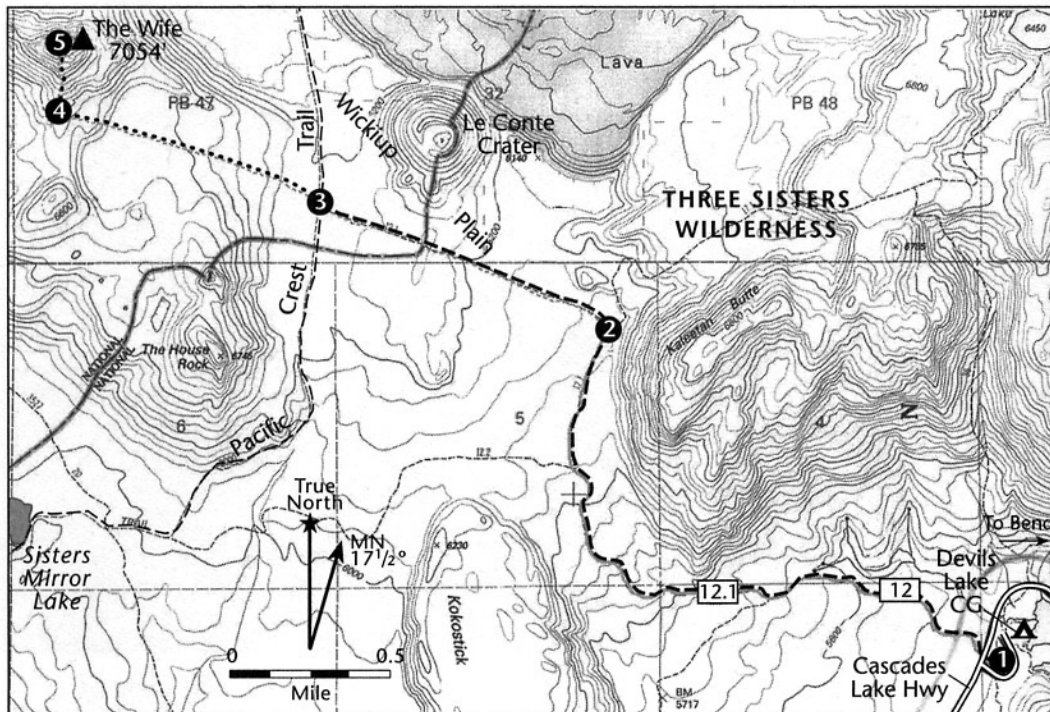
Best time of year: July to October

Map: USGS South Sister

Contact: Deschutes National Forest, Bend–Fort Rock Ranger District

WAYPOINT ROUTE

1. Elk–Devils Lake Trailhead: 5480 feet (10T 598951mE 4876159mN)
2. Northwest turn: 2.2 miles, 6100 feet (10T 596973mE 4877773mN)
3. PCT crossing: 3.3 miles, 6200 feet (10T 595503mE 4878435mN)
4. South ridge: 4.1 miles, 6538 feet (10T 594328mE 4878825mN)
5. Summit ridge: 4.3 miles, 7000 feet (10T 594206mE 4879176mN)
6. The Wife: 4.4 miles, 7054 feet (10T 594287mE 4879215mN)



The Three Sisters Wilderness is famous for its namesake peaks but also contains many other mountains. The Wife is part of the Three Sisters group and is on the west side of the Three Sisters across the Wickiup Plain. This small, rugged peak is a wonderful scramble with remarkable views of the surrounding peaks. Scramblers on the summit may look across Separation Creek Meadow to the north and see the crumbly summit of The Husband, another little-known peak in the wilderness.

Trailhead directions: From Bend drive west on the Cascade Lakes Highway (Century Drive) 6.5 miles past Mount Bachelor Resort to the Devils Lake Campground on the south side of the road. You may park in the outer parking lot. The trailhead is northwest from the first lot; walk into the lot for the campground and turn left to the sign and register. A Northwest Forest Pass is required.

Route description: The approach to The Wife begins on a section of pack trail. Elk-Devils Lake Trail 12 is dusty and dry as it ascends gently to a trail junction in about 0.9 mile. The forest is a rich mix of conifers including Douglas fir, mountain hemlock, and western white pine. Bear right at the junction, heading toward the Pacific Crest Trail and Sisters Mirror Lake on Wickiup Plains Trail 12.1. Although animals are scarce due to the popularity of the trails, deer, elk, pika, or black bear may roam the area. Different bird species abound, including birds of prey.

Continue northward on the Wickiup Plains Trail as it passes a trail to Sister Mirror Lake at around 1.8 miles. In another 0.4 mile, turn northwest at the junction with the Moraine Lake Trail and head toward the PCT across the Wickiup Plain. The Wickiup Plain is a vast open area covered with bunch grass, which thrives in the ashy soil. While crossing the plain notice the Le



The Wife from across the Wickiup Plain

Conte Crater on the right. Evidence of volcanism is all around on this scramble approach.

The trail ends at 3.3 miles, but continue past the PCT junction northwest to and up through a small but visible drainage. In a short distance you will enter the trees and scramble through them, while maintaining a northwest heading toward the sandy plain ahead.

Cross the sandy plain and turn west to reach the south ridge. Ascend to the south ridge at 4.1 miles. Climb the steep slope northerly until you reach the summit ridge at 4.3 miles and a nice viewpoint. Turn right slightly (north-east) to ascend about 50 yards to the false summit, and scramble up some rocks to a chute. Traverse the upper part of the chute just below the ridge top and ascend to the summit. The summit is small and has cliffs on the east side.

The views are impressive down the vertical east face of The Wife. Surrounding peaks include the Middle and South Sisters. To the north is the North Sister remnant called The Husband, and in the distance are Mounts Washington and Jefferson. Mount Bachelor and Broken Top round out the views east.