

**07/24/10: Wade Mountain Preserve,
Huntsville, AL**

Well what started as a scouting mission of sorts to see the design and implementation of a trail detour for ideas on how to keep people out of the now private property wildflower glade at Rainbow Mountain Preserve evolved into some fun running around taking photos of every wildflower I came across. I've never been to Wade Mountain in the summer, but I plan on making at least one more trip there before summer is over to see what else blooms out. I unfortunately don't know the names of anything I came across, but the very tiny pink orchid like flower was beautiful, if hard to focus and photograph with a point and shoot camera. It was one of about a half dozen plants in bloom between the parking area and the start of the Devil's Racetrack. I was a bit sad to see that a section of trail I was rather fond of is now closed, rerouted a bit. You miss quite a few of the rock formations, though the terrain here is less rocky and easier to traverse.

Once at the Devil's Racetrack area, I missed the turn to go to the racetrack itself initially, and wandered through the smaller of the two glades atop the mountain. Here you can look out and see taller Daisy-like flowers shooting above the grasses in yellows and whites, as well as white sprites of another plant that seems orchid-like in nature. Backtracking, I took the other trail to the racetrack itself, finding the brilliant orange butterfly weed, a taller bright purple wildflower of some kind, as well as a bell shaped lavender flowering plant that hugged close to the ground itself. I stopped for a moment at the unofficial 'overlook', an area you can see far to the north. Ignoring the power lines, it was a sea of green, despite the oppressive heat we've had recently. With my 'work' here done, I decided to have some fun and jog the mile or so back down to the car, influenced, of course, by perhaps the worst of all insects who enjoy flight: horseflies.