

Yamuna (Jumna) River

By Harold Grueber (Ophryisia)

Rating: Moderate

Best time to go: Monsoon

Length: 3 to 4 days

Distance: 35km

Description:

An interesting spot to the west of Mussoorie is the sacred Yamuna River. Near where it finally comes out onto the plains makes a spectacular curving sweep through the mountains and at this point the Aglar River joins it from the east.

Walking past Library Bazaar and to the entrance of the Tibetan Homes School brings you to a small path going down just to the right of the entrance. This path follows down to a motor road, and just before the Polo Grounds, you should take a small path which turns down to the right (ask the locals if you cannot find it). This descends through oak forest, crosses the motor road three times, and then drops down to Kempton village (18 km at an altitude of 1370m). On the ridge is a Forest Rest House, and in the valley below is Kempton Falls, a popular tourist attraction, to be avoided in the high season if you hate crowds.

From the bungalow, the way to the Yamuna is mainly along the motor road. The village of Sainji is 7 km down this road, at about 914 m. This is a very enjoyable village with its temple to Kali, unique architectural forms, a dilapidated Forest Rest House, and Poppy fields. 5 to 8 km past Sainji on the first switchback is a good path which descends down the ridge to Yamuna Bridge.

The Yamuna River area is generally sparse in vegetation. However, it is a very good place for butterflies, birds, and fish. There is a village near bridge, and excellent swimming right below it. Across the river a motor road goes to Dehradun and Chakarta, a military outpost north of Mussoorie. It is always rather warm in these protected valleys, especially during the summer.