

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT: SUMMER HIKES/CAMPING SCHEDULE

During the summer months the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of CNPS will suspend monthly meetings. Regular meetings will resume on September 17th. However, our hike leader for the summer, Horace Birgh, has put together a schedule of hikes designed to explore some interesting areas of the higher and cooler San Gabriels. Please come prepared! Ultraviolet light is much stronger on the higher trails, so carry sunblock (no. 8 or stronger) and use it! The trails are frequently rocky and/or crumbly, so wear sturdy lug-soled boots (not tennis shoes, not sandals). Bring lunch. And, most important of all, carry 2 to 3 quarts of water, minimum, for each adult. This last point cannot be stressed enough: mountain air is deceptively dry. Low humidity, combined with the relentless rays of the sun, makes dehydration a threat to all hikers. If you started your day with coffee or tea (both dehydrating), load up on plenty of water before starting your hike.

If you need more information on any of the hikes listed, please call Horace Birgh at (213) 667-1726 (evenings & weekends) or at (213) 955-1651 (M-F days, 9-5:30).

SATURDAY, JULY 11, 9AM: Dawson Saddle - Mt. Baden-Powell - Vincent Gap

Dawson Saddle, the highest point on the Angeles Crest Highway, is the starting point for this 9-mile, one-way hike to the summit of Mt. Baden-Powell, then down to Vincent Gap. Meandering through forests of Jeffrey Pine and White Fir punctuated by clumps of penstemons, the trail, newly rebuilt in parts, climbs up to the high-altitude Lodgepole Pines atop the peak named for the founder of Cal Tech, Amos G. Throop. After taking in the breath-taking vistas, both north and south, we continue on the Pacific Crest Trail towards Mt. Burnham, savoring the cool, fresh mountain air. Keep a look out for those rare saprophytes, Ground Cones, as the trail begins its ascent past venerable, gnarled Limber Pines, carrying us to the top of Baden-Powell at a height of 9,399 feet. After lunch and a well-earned rest, we will walk the 41 switchbacks down the north face of Baden-Powell to Vincent Gap, where a car shuttle will be waiting to return us to our starting point at Dawson Saddle. **Difficulty: moderately strenuous.**

Meeting place: Drive 49 miles from La Cañada to Dawson Saddle (5 1/2 miles east of the intersection with Route 39). Park in the clearing on the north side of the road.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 9AM: Eagles Roost to Burkhart Saddle

This approximately 13-mile hike will take us down Rattlesnake Trail and over the rugged terrain of the northern desert slopes of the San Gabriels, where we can look down into the Mojave Desert and, if weather permits, even see the southernmost tip of the Sierra Nevadas. Starting at Eagles Roost Picnic Area, we descend Rattlesnake Trail to the upper end of Little Rock Creek, which begins its life in granite seeps high up on Mt. Williamson. The canyon soon becomes as primitive and wild as any in the range. Along the narrow ledges of the north slope of the canyon we follow the creek below us until we arrive at the junction of Burkhart Trail. Here, the going gets a bit more challenging as we climb around a ridge, perhaps still finding running water on our way, and wend our way up to Burkhart Saddle. Our hard work is rewarded by a beautiful view of the desert and the San Andreas Fault Zone. Those with energy to spare may wish to trek onward another mile to the top of Pleasant View Ridge, where the vistas are truly dramatic. **Difficulty: moderately strenuous.**

Meeting place: Drive 39 miles from La Cañada to Eagles Roost Picnic Area. Park in the clearing on the right side of the road. (There is a brown highway maintenance shed just up ahead.)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 9AM: Mt. Williamson to the Desert

Be prepared to exercise your "downhill" muscles on this one! This hike will take us 5 miles, and 2,100 feet in elevation, down the South Fork of Big Rock Creek--one of the most impressive gorges to cut the north face of the San Gabriels. Starting out from the yarrow-lined parking lot at the bottom of the Mt. Williamson trail, our path will descend through Jeffrey Pines to Reed Spring, about a mile down the trail. As we continue down the gorge, the vegetation becomes a curious mix of alpine and desert plants--gradually changing from open Yellow Pine forest, Sugar Pine and Big-Cone Spruce to oaks, maples, alder trees, pinyon pines and finally the cactus of the desert. A car shuttle will take us back up to the parking lot where we started. **Difficulty: moderate.**

Meeting place: Parking lot on the left side of Angeles Crest Highway about 45 miles from La Cañada (at the junction of Route 39, 1 mile beyond the tunnels).

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SEPTEMBER 18-20: Joshua Tree Weekend: Cottonwood Springs Campground

The desert is well-known for its spectacular spring bloom. But not many people know that the desert blooms a second time, in a much quieter way. We will enjoy this end-of-summer flowering with daily hikes out of Cottonwood Springs Campground to such possible destinations as Mastodon Peak, or the Palms Oasis. Daytime temperatures should be still quite warm. Evenings may cool to jacket weather. Because the size of the group campsite is limited, reservations are necessary. Please call Horace Birgh at (213) 955-1651, days, or (213) 667-1726, evenings & weekends, to reserve your bit of the desert. **Difficulty: mixed (your choice.)**

Meeting place: On Interstate 10 drive 25 miles beyond (east) the Indio exit. Look for a sign that reads "Joshua Tree National Monument/Mecca." Exit the freeway and go north (left) about 8 miles to Cottonwood Springs Ranger Station. Turn right, go a 1/4 mile to Cottonwood Springs Group Campsites. Look for the CNPS sign.

SPECIAL EVENT: TOUR OF SEQUOIA GROVES IN SOUTHERN SIERRA, JULY 24-26

The Pasadena Sierra Club is sponsoring two days of hiking and camping, based at Quaking Aspen Campground in Sequoia National Forest. (A four-hour drive from L.A., Quaking Aspen is close to the Black Mountain Grove described in the May issue of FREMONTIA.) The weekend is designed to show us examples of both clearcut and pristine old-growth groves, but we should also see wildflowers of the Sierran meadows and high trails. For directions and details, please send name, address and phone no. to Bonnie Strand, 339 South Avenue 52, L.A. 90042.

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