

2/22/95

ZUMA & NEWTON CANYONS

(From Kanan Dume Road - Loop)

(NOTE: New hike to OTP Group)

Maps: Point Dume, Topo Santa Monica Mountains
Distance: 6 miles
Elevation: 1200' Gain & Loss
Terrain: Road, Trail, Streambed, Boulder bounding, etc.
Classification: Carlin type hike, "moderate"

Trailhead: Kanan Dume Road (LA Co. N 9), Paddle 9.50 just north of the southern-most tunnel on Kanan Road. Park in large dirt area on of road.

Hike Plan: Start by walking up long ridge south of the parking lot eventually reaching the descending trail (via numerous switchbacks) into Zuma Canyon. Upon reaching the stream bed we turn north walking along Zuma creek. Eventually we reach Newton canyon, which generally runs east-west, and detour north-west a 1/4 mile to see the "Big Zuma" falls. Returning to the trail, we head east up Newton Canyon viewing the last 2 of many waterfalls along the way.

Hike Description: Zuma canyon is a spectacular combination of stark volcanic cliffs, rugged boulder-filled stream and sheltered recesses besides plunging waterfalls. The only way into the canyon is by foot.

Zuma Creek is an amazing stream that rages in the Spring and trickles in the Fall. It plunges and tumbles through a rugged, boulder-filled canyon deep in the shade of Sycamore trees. There are a number of waterfalls, moss and fern covered grottos, and large sandstone areas containing pools of water. Large angular volcanic boulders have tumbled down from the steep canyon walls which in some cases must be hopped, in other cases must be crawled between.

After negotiating several waterfalls, a major stream comes in from the right (this is Newton Canyon) and we follow this stream west to the "Big Zuma" waterfall. Big Zuma drops 25 feet over a massive ledge and definitely provides a barrier to further travel up-canyon. We turn around here and retrace our steps, following Newton Canyon up and out to the parking lot.

There are two more waterfalls to see in Newton Canyon, one of them is also 25 feet high. Climbing around them may present a challenge, but the small flowers, ferns and lush plantlife on the way out makes the effort worthwhile.

