

June 24, 1998

Hike Leader: Vicky Ritter

Starting Time: 9:30 AM sharp

**Directions:**

You enter the state park the back way, from Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa park. To get there, exit Highway 101 at Wendy Drive in Newbury Park, just west of Thousand Oaks. Drive south to where Wendy ends at Potrero Road. Turn right and proceed 0.5 mile to Reino Road, then go left (staying on Potrero Road) another 0.4 mile to Rancho Sierra Vista's entrance on the south side of Potrero Road.

Park inside and head south on foot up the main road, passing a locked vehicle gate. You'll soon enter state park property and reach an 872' summit with a water tank on the right (0.6 mile). You can now look down on Big Sycamore Canyon and the ribbon of pavement you'll be following for the next 2.5 miles.

Just before the road's end at a ranger residence (3.1 miles), turn left into the Danielson Ranch. There are restrooms and you will be able to top off your water bottles here with enough to last the rest of the trip.

Now the harder part begins. Head east on the Blue Canyon Trail, under an oak and sycamore-canopy, until you reach an intersection with the Old Boney Trail, (4.1 miles). Make a sharp left there and trudge uphill through hot, dry chaparral to an open ridge. You'll follow the undulating ridge for a while, under the gaze of Boney Mountain's crags, then climb in earnest to another, higher ridge (5.8 miles).

You're going against the grain of the land now, and it feels like it. There's a steep descent of about 200 feet and then another climb of about 550 feet to an 1820' summit (6.8 miles). En route you pass two trails leading down to Big Sycamore Canyon; stay right at both junctions. On a clear day all this labor is offset by the tremendous view of the Oxnard Plain, the Channel Islands, the far-off ridges of the Los Padres National Forest, and the discontinuous urban sprawl of Ventura County before you.

Two trails split at the 1820' summit. Take the right branch and descend beneath huge outcrops on Boney Mountain's north flank. You may spot a side path worn in by rock climbers on the right. Presently you'll pass a trickling spring down in a ravine and arrive at a little oak-shaded flat (7.3 miles) where the foundation and rock chimney of an old cabin stand. Nearby is a beautiful monument of Richard E. Danielson made of rock and wrought-iron. Danielson and his family donated a part interest in the lands, which were acquired to expand the state park and create the Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa park.

From the cabin site, contour over to a junction with trail coming down from the 1820' summit, and then descend a twisting 0.8 mile to a hairpin turn (8.3 miles) that wraps around upper Big Sycamore Canyon's stream. At the turn a side path goes east a short distance to some beautiful cascades in a tributary ravine. You won't want to miss this short detour if the water's flowing decently.

Back on the Old Boney Trail, continue west 0.2 mile to a Y-junction and go right. You'll climb to a ridge with Big Sycamore Canyon on the Left and the meadows of Rancho Sierra Vista ahead and right. Several paths lace the grassland below choose the shortest way back to your starting point, less than a mile away.

\*Part of the trail is overgrown with high chaparral; I suggest that you wear long pants and long sleeve shirts. I saw poison oak by the trail side. Take plenty of water.

**Area S-5, Trip 3  
Old Boney Loop**

Distance	10.0 miles
Total Elevation Gain/Loss	2000'/2000'
Hiking Time	5 hours
Optional Maps	USGS 7.5-min <i>Newbury Park Triunfo Pass</i>
Best Times	November through June
Agency	PMSF
Difficulty	★★★

