

Hike number 588 November 14, 2001

La Jolla Valley - Mugu Peak

This hike will complete the last 2.7 miles of the 70 mile Backbone Trail from Will Rogers Park to Mugu which our OTP Group has completed since hike 380 on July 2, 1997.

	Primary	Alternate
Distance	10.3 miles	7.3 miles
Elevation gain	1950 ft.	950 ft.

Trailhead: Ray Miller trailhead on PCH opposite Thornhill Broome Beach campground about 21.8 miles north of Malibu Canyon Rd. N1.

Starting time: 9:30 AM

Hike leader: Dick Battin

Two trails start from the Ray Miller Trailhead at the mouth of La Jolla Canyon. The wide one going up along the dry canyon floor ahead is the La Jolla Canyon Trail – our return route. We will take the narrow, inconspicuous La Jolla Ridge Trail to our right. It starts by curling up along the toe of a ridge, where it meets a short spur trail going down to an equestrian staging area. It then doggedly climbs 2.4 miles to a junction with the Overlook Trail, a wide fire road. Keep going north on the Overlook Trail, wind your way around several bumps on the undulating ridge, and arrive at a saddle 4.5 miles from the start, from where roads descend east into Wood Canyon and west into La Jolla Valley. We go left and descend moderately into the floor of the valley where we will find only California native grasses.

La Jolla Valley Walk-in Camp at 5.0 miles has piped water, restrooms, and oak shaded picnic tables.

Alternate hike: Just beyond the camp there is a trail to the left going south 2.3 miles to the trailhead.

Primary hike: Continue west in the direction of a military radar installation on Laguna Peak. Ignore trails going left, right and left; we'll want to gradually circle to the southwest and south, heading for a saddle on the right, northwest, shoulder of rounded Mugu Peak. Attaining that saddle at 6.8 miles, we'll have a great view of the Pacific Ocean.

From the saddle, the trail contours south and then east around the south flank of Mugu Peak. We arrive, 7.7 miles at another saddle just east of Mugu's 1266 ft. summit. Five minutes of climbing on a steep path puts you on the barren top, where hikers have fashioned a large rock cairn and planted pine saplings.

Return to the saddle east of the peak and continue descending to a junction, 9 miles, in a wooded recess of La Jolla Canyon. Turn right, proceed east along a hillside, and then hook up with the La Jolla Canyon Trail, where you turn right. Nearing the canyon's mouth, we'll pass a little grove of walnut trees and a small, seasonal waterfall. We'll descend to join a dirt road built to haul stone out of the area for construction of the coast highway and arrive about 15 minutes later at the Ray Miller Trailhead.

- Most of this came from "Afoot and Afield in Los Angeles County" by Jerry Schad

We Will Then Celebrate!!

