

664

Hike for June 4

Leader: Bob De Wolf

Location: Crystal Cove State Park, El Moro Canyon/Moro Ridge Road (7.6 miles, 900 ft gain). Crystal Cove is between Newport Beach and Laguna Beach on Pacific Coast Highway (PCH).

Driving Directions: Take the 55 Freeway South toward Newport Beach. Take the 73 Toll road SE to Macarthur Blvd. No toll is charged if you get off at Macarthur. Follow Macarthur 2.1 miles SW to Pacific Coast Highway (PCH). Take PCH SE to Crystal Cove. When you turn onto PCH you will see the signs to Crystal Cove (3 miles). Crystal Cove has a number of beachside parking lots on the right that come first, and the El Moro Canyon parking lot on the left. The El Moro Canyon entrance is 1.8 miles beyond Newport Coast Drive. Continue beyond the school to get to the ranger station. If someone is there, there will be a \$5 parking fee, otherwise parking is free.

You can pay the toll (\$1) to continue on 73 if you prefer. Exit on Newport Coast Drive. You can use a FasTrak transponder or pay cash (exact change).

Hike: There are maps available at the Ranger Station and map signs at most trail intersections in the park with 'you are here' dots on them. Most trail signs in the park are correct. The trailhead is at the 'Yellow Gate' on the park entrance road about 100 yards before you enter the parking lot. The trail leads SE down into El Moro Cyn, losing about 120 ft to the creek bed. At this point the trail turns NE up El Moro Cyn. It passes several side trails. 'Poles' is 1.5 miles. 'Slow and Easy' is 2.9 miles. At about 3 miles there are oak trees and some shade. So far, there has been little elevation gain. The last tree is at 3.3 miles at the base of a very steep looking section of trail. This is a good place for the cookie break.

The short hike can turn back here and return to the ranger station, either the way we came or over the 'Poles' trail to 'No Dogs' and back to the ranger station. The rest of us will proceed up the grade known as the 'Elevator' trail. At the top of the hill there is an intersection with a map sign. Continue to the right toward Moro Ridge Road.

After a short distance you reach a locked gate with a sign that says 'No Trespassing'. On the right side of the gate there is an uprooted post sign laying against the hillside. On the post there is an arrow pointing left to 'West Loop Trail'. The right arrow says 'El Moro Canyon'. Strange as it seems, we need to take the right trail to reach Moro Ridge Road. After a bit we reach Moro Ridge Road, which parallels El Moro Canyon and leads back to the coast. There are picnic tables (and outhouses) at several points along the road on the right. We will stop at the first group of tables for lunch. There is no shade, but usually a sea breeze. The elevation here is about 950 feet.

After lunch we continue down Moro Ridge Road, passing 'I think I can' side trail. The grade is mostly gentle until we reach the bluff overlooking PCH and the ocean. At this point, the trail drops steeply, losing about 500 feet to the creek in El Moro Canyon. Continue back to the parking lot.

Refreshments in the parking lot.



OTP Hike #664



Crystal Cove State Park

Please protect your park.
Enjoy only these designated trails.

Approximate distances.
Map not to scale.
Camping reservations required.
Dogs are prohibited in the back country.



Park Trail	
Single Track	
Camp Site	
Portable Toilet	
Gate	
Distance Marker	
Access Trail	

Trail Distances in Miles

El Morro Elementary trail head to B.F.I.	0.5
B.F.I.	0.3
Moro Ridge starting at B.F.I. to I Think I Can/E. Cut Across	1.6
Moro Ridge from I Think I Can/E. Cut Across	1.8
Missing Link to Slow 'N Easy	0.4
Fence Line	0.4
Bommer Ridge Road from Moro Ridge to Deer Canyon	1.1
Ridge Park entrance to Deer Canyon	0.4
No Name Ridge from Bommer Ridge Road to Ticketron	1.3
No Name Ridge from Ticketron to Muddy Canyon Entrance	0.6
No Name Ridge from Muddy Canyon Entrance to W. Cut Across	0.2
No Name Ridge from W. Cut Across to Poles	0.5
No Dogs trail head to No Name Ridge	0.6
El Morro Canyon from B.F.I. to E. Cut Across	1.0
E. Cut Across / I Think I Can	1.1
Poles	0.4
W. Cut Across/Mach One	0.6
Rattlesnake access from W. Cut Across to Rattlesnake	0.7
Rattlesnake/Redtail Ridge	1.3
Ticketron and Deer Canyon to Redtail Ridge	0.8
Deer Canyon to Bommer Ridge Road	0.3
El Morro Canyon from I Think I Can/E. Cut Across to Elevator	1.5
Slow 'N Easy	1.25
Elevator to road split	0.6
Elevator to road split via left spur	0.4
Elevator to road split via right spur	0.3

CRYSTAL COVE - OC