

1048

STUNT ROAD TO TOPANGA LOOKOUT VIA COLD CREEK CANYON
PRESERVE

Date: 8/10/2011

Leader: Vicky Ritter

Directions: 101 Freeway to Valley Circle/Mulholland exit.

Go south and continue past commercial area to traffic light, VALMAR
Turn right and continue past one stop sign, and right on Mulholland Hwy.
Go 3.6 miles, turn left on Stunt Road and go 1 mile, park heading in.

PRIMARY HIKE: 7.4 miles, 1335' elevation, hike goes up Stunt High Trail, to Topanga Look Out, then back and thru Cold Creek Canyon Preserve. Bring your walking sticks.

DESCRIPTION: From the parking spot, a trail drops down to stream level. This is the Stunt High/Cold Creek Trail. An "Andy Gump" provides the only restroom facilities.

Continue straight along the trail. After coming out into the open, a large trail turns sharply to the left and works its way uphill. The trail forks a short distance up the hill amidst the rose patch. The trail to the right leads to Stunt Ranch and is closed to the public

The Lower Stunt High Trail branches to the left and ends at the parking area for Stunt Ranch. We walk 50 yards up Stunt Road to the Upper Stunt High Trail on our left, paddle 1.94. We hike .9 miles up the trail to Stunt Road. The upper gate to the Cold Creek Canyon Preserve is 0.5 mile further up the road. Some hikers might want to start down into the Preserve while others may want to complete the hike up to the Topanga Lookout. It was once used by the Fire Department to spot fires. The road outlines the top of the Cold Creek Watershed. The views are spectacular. A road circles around the lookout and leads out to an area purchased by the Mountains Restoration Trust to protect the ridge and the Cold Creek Canyon Preserve. We return to the upper gate to the Cold Creek Canyon Preserve. The trail is 1.7 miles long and ends at a locked gate. The lock combination is 8058. Refreshments will be served in the parking lot, 0.2 miles down the road from the bottom gate.

The canyon was once part of a ranch homesteaded in the early years of the 20th century. It later served as a ranch/retreat for the Murphy family. In 1970, the Murphy's donated their family ranch to the Nature Conservancy with the stipulation that Cold Creek be forever preserved in its natural state.

Winter rains swell the creek creating small waterfalls. A hundred species of birds have been sighted within the preserve. Springtime provides lots of wildflowers.

The day of the hike I will open the bottom gate, some hikers may want to hike through the preserve and end at the upper gate and hike back to the bottom gate.

Note: The Mountains Restoration Trust accepts donations and volunteers. (818)591-1701