



7/2/97 9:30 BACKBONE TRAIL ONE WAY FROM

Eagle Rock Trail

37 TOPANGA CANYON S.P. TO WILL ROGERS S.P.  
DICK BATTIN

## Eagle Rock Trail

TOPANGA CANYON  
EAGLE SPRING  
8 10 1/2 miles one way; 1,800-foot loss 800 FT GAIN

To Will Rogers SHP via Eagle Rock Fire Road 30, Rogers Rd.

Season: All year

From Topanga State Park to Will Rogers State Historic Park, the Backbone Trail has been finished for quite some time and has proved very popular. The lower reaches of the trail offer a fine tour of the wild side of Topanga Canyon while the ridgetop sections offer far-reaching inland and ocean views.

The name Topanga is from the Shoshonean Indian dialect. These Indians and their ancestors occupied the canyon on and off for several thousand years B.C. until the Spanish evicted them and forced them to settle at the San Fernando Mission.

Until the 1880s, there was little permanent habitation in the Topanga area. Early settlers tended vineyards, orchards and cattle ranches. In the 1920s, the canyon became a popular weekend destination for Los Angeles residents. Summer cabins were built along Topanga Creek and in subdivisions in the surrounding hills. For \$1 round trip fare, tourists could board a Packard Auto Stage in Santa Monica and be driven up Pacific Coast Highway and Topanga Canyon Road to the Topanga Post Office and other, more scenic, spots.

This hike departs from quiet and imperturbable Topanga Canyon, surrounded by L.A. sprawl but retaining its rural character. Most of the trail is on good fire road. A longer one-way option takes you along brushy ridges to Will Rogers State Park. On a blustery winter day, city and canyon views are superb.

**Directions to trailhead:** From Topanga Canyon Boulevard, turn east on Entrada Road; that's to the right if you're coming from Pacific Coast Highway. Follow Entrada Road by turning left at every opportunity until you arrive at Topanga State Park. The trailhead is at the end of the parking lot. There is a park day use fee.

**To Will Rogers State Historic Park trailhead:** If you're taking the longer hike and want to be met (or leave your car) at Will Rogers State Historic Park, here are the directions to that destination: From Sunset Boulevard in Pacific Palisades, turn north at the park entrance. The road

leads up to Rogers' estate, now a state historic park that interprets the cowboy/comedian/philosopher's life. Near Will Rogers' home, a signed trail climbs to Inspiration Point. Rogers Trail intersects it 1/10 mile past the Inspiration Point Junction.

**The Hike:** From the Topanga State Park parking lot, follow the distinct trail eastward to a signed junction, where you'll begin hiking on Eagle Springs Road. You'll pass through an oak woodland and through chaparral country. The trail slowly and steadily gains about 800 feet in elevation on the way to Eagle Rock. When you reach a junction, bear left on the north loop <sup>BACK AT 3:00 PM</sup> of Eagle Springs Road ~~to Eagle Rock~~. A short detour will bring you to the top of the rock.

Three-mile long Musch Ranch Trail, which passes from hot chaparral to shady oak woodland, crosses a bridge and passes the park pond, is another fine way to return to the trailhead. Those hikers bound for Will Rogers State Historic Park will follow the loop trip directions to the northeast end of Eagle Rock/Eagle Spring Loop, then bear right on Fire Road 30. In 1/2 mile you reach the intersection with Rogers Road. Turn left and follow the dirt road (really a trail) for 3 1/2 miles, where the road ends and meets Rogers Trail. Here a level area and solitary oak suggest a lunch stop. On clear days enjoy the spectacular views in every direction: To the left is Rustic Canyon and the crest of the mountains near Mulholland Drive. To the right, Rivas Canyon descends toward the sea.

Stay on Rogers Trail, which marches up and down several steep hills, for about two more miles, until it enters Will Rogers Park near Inspiration Point.

FROM 101 - SOUTH ON TOPANGA CANYON BLVD  
7.6 MILES TO ENTRATA RD. TURN LEFT  
AND FOLLOW LEFT ROADS TO STATE PK.  
(1.4 MILES) \$4 PARKING FEE FOR SENIORS

FROM P.C.H. - NORTH ON TO TOPANGA CANYON BLVD  
4.6 MILES TO ENTRATA, TURN RIGHT.

GENERAL PLAN ON SHUTTLE: TOM KENT &  
DICK BATTIN WILL LEAVE CARS AT  
WILL ROGERS S.P. TO SHUTTLE DRIVERS  
TO TOPANGA AFTER HIKE (10.5 MILES 25 MIN)  
TOM FRYE 818 341-1403 AND MIKE GESSNER  
310-370-5063 WILL COORDINATE  
SHUTTLE

