

Area A-7, Trip 4 Mount Hillyer

Hike #467



Distance	5.8 miles
Total Elevation Gain/Loss	1100'/1100'
Hiking Time	3 hours
Optional Map	USGS 7.5-min <i>Chilao Flat</i>
Best Times	All year
Agency	ANF/ASD
Difficulty	★★★

Lovers of the high Sierra Nevada may get some sense of déjà vu atop the rounded ridge known as Mt. Hillyer. The breeze sings in the branches of sugar pines, Jeffrey pines, Coulter pines and bigcone Douglas-firs. Angular outcrops and large boulder piles lie on the slopes. The granite here is not so fractured and pulverized as it is in other parts of the San Gabriels. The view is only fair; the main attractions are the peace and quiet, and the pine-scented air.

For small kids the complete loop route described here is long, steep in parts, and challenging, but you can customize the hike to suit your needs. Horse Flats Campground can be reached by car in the warmer part of the year from Three Points. You could start the Hillyer climb from the campground, or end a trip there by making use of a car shuttle.

Our loop route starts near Upper Chilao Picnic Area, at a small parking lot for users of the Silver Moccasin Trail. To reach it, drive 0.7 mile up the side road that passes Chilao Visitor Center.

Start hiking north on the Silver Moccasin Trail, using switchbacks to gain a slope covered by scattered pines and dense, sweet-smelling chaparral. From just south of Horse Flats Campground (1.1 mile), the Silver Moccasin Trail continues over a low ridge to the east, but you veer left (west) toward Mt. Hillyer's south ridge. Well-beaten, sometimes steep switchbacks take you to a rounded summit area, where two high points (6200+ feet) lie. Continue down the ridge to the northeast, passing a 6162' knoll labelled Mt. Hillyer on the topo map.

Due north of the 6162' knoll, an old road bed goes sharply downhill. Follow it to paved Santa Clara Divide Road (3.5 miles), which carries no traffic during the off-season, and light traffic otherwise. Turn right, walk south on the road 0.5 mile to the Horse Flats Campground turnoff, then go 0.7 mile to the south end of the campground. There you can pick up the Silver Moccasin Trail and retrace your steps back to Chilao.

OTP HIKE

May 19, 1999

Meet at 9:30AM in the parking lot labeled 4 on the Map

Thos. Kent

