

846

La Jolla Canyon

March 28, 2007

Hike Leader: Ron Piekunka

The Drive:

From Pacific Coast Highway going north, La Jolla parking lot is 21 miles north of Malibu Canyon Road, and 1 1/2 miles north of Sycamore Canyon. There is a \$3.00 parking fee, so make sure that you have a senior hiker in your car pool.

The Hike: 9.1 Miles

There are lots of ticks here. I would suggest you wear gaiters and pull your socks around your pant legs, and wear light colors. Also, wear boots with good tread. There are a couple of steep and slippery spots.

From the parking lot, take the La Jolla Canyon Trail. When you reach a fork, make a left onto the La Jolla Valley Loop Trail. Along the trail on the left there is a rusty water tank. You will want to cut across the grass on the left, cross the stream, and continue onto the Mugu Peak Trail either up or around the peak. For the short-hikers, turtles, or those who don't like to climb peaks, when you reach the water tank, make a right. This cuts out a large portion of grassy plains, but I'm not sure it cuts out any tick hazards.

At the peak stands a flagpole, at the base of which is a capsule, and inside that a notebook. Feel free to add something. Also feel free to check for ticks (I found 2 by this time). This is a good place for cookie break if you haven't had yours already.

The hike continues on the other side of the peak. There is a very steep trail that connects with the Chumash Trail. When you reach it, make a right. (Here is where the ticks get really heavy; you can literally see them on the blades of grass). A short distance down the trail there is another fork. You will want to continue on the left, maintaining the Chumash Trail until you reach the Backbone Trail, which is the trail to the right on yet another fork. The BBT steadily proceeds NWW until just short of La Jolla Valley Camp. There are plenty of confusing side trails that lead to picnic areas. You can eat lunch at whichever you find, but don't forget to mark your trail. Take a left at a sign prohibiting fires and make a right onto a trail marked "5". From the picnic area, turn onto "Highway 1" and veer left toward the cattail pond. This trail connects with the Valley Loop Trail, which will reunite you with the La Jolla Valley Trail. Follow this until you reach the parking lot and all those happy hikers. Since you can't go much further than this,