

HIKING TRAILS IN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT

Many rewarding hours of hiking await those who wish to explore Joshua Tree National Monument on foot. We suggest the following trails for hikes of various durations.

(IMPORTANT SAFETY MESSAGE: These trails contain rough and rocky terrain, and prove strenuous for many visitors. Choose a trail according to your ability, and be sure to bring water, appropriate clothing and hiking shoes. Enjoy yourself, but be careful too!)

TRAIL	STARTING POINT	ROUND TRIP DISTANCE	ESTIMATED HIKING TIME	TRAIL DESCRIPTION
49 Palms Oasis-	Parking area on Canyon Road, 4 miles west of 29 Palms off Highway 62	2.8 miles	2-3 hours	Several stands of fan palms, evidence of past fires, and pools of water are found at the Oasis. Moderately strenuous.
Ryan Mountain-	Ryan Mountain Parking Area or Sheep Pass Campground	3.0 miles	2-3 hours	Elev. 5470 feet. View of Lost Horse, Queen and Pleasant Valleys. Strenuous.
Lost Horse Mine/Mountain-	Parking area 1.2 miles east of Keys View Rd.	3.5 miles	3-4 hours	Elev. 5178 feet. Ten-stamp mill and foundations. Moderately strenuous.
Lost Palms-	Cottonwood Spring - or Campground -	7.5 miles 8.5 miles	4-6 hours	A canyon with many groups of palms. A side trip to Victory Palms and Munsen Canyon involves boulder scrambling. Strenuous.
Mastodon Peak-	Cottonwood Spring - or Campground -	3.0 miles 4.0 miles	2 hours	Elev. 3371 feet. Fine views of Hexie Mts., Pinto Basin, and Salton Sea. Moderately strenuous.
Scout Trail-	Indian Cove area or ½ mi. east of Quail Springs Picnic Area.	13 miles	1-2 days	Scenic trail through the western-most edge of the Wonderland of Rocks. Strenuous.

Thirty-five miles of the California Riding and Hiking Trail pass through the Monument. Access to the trail is available at its junction with Covington Flat, Keys View, and Squaw Tank (Geology Tour) Road, at two places along Park Route #1, and at Ryan Campground. This allows for shorter hikes of 4, 6, 7, or 11 miles. Two to three days are required to hike the entire length of the trail.

SHORT HIKING AND NATURE TRAILS

Two trails, each 1 mile round trip, lead from Cottonwood Spring to Morton's and Winona Mill Sites. These mills were used for the crude refinement of gold ore from nearby mines. Evidence of past habitation at the Winona Site includes building foundations and exotic plants.

A dirt road north of the entrance to the Geology Tour Road leads to a trail-head parking area. From there, a 1.5 mi. trail (round trip) leads to the Desert Queen Mine. Caution is advised in the vicinity of numerous open mine shafts in the area.

The Barker Dam Trail (1.1 mi.) starts from the parking area 2 miles northeast of Hidden Valley Campground Loop C. Evidence of human habitation includes Indian campsites, petroglyphs, and water tanks built by cattlemen. A longer trail to Barker Dam (4.0 mi. round trip) may be followed from the bulletin board in Loop C in Hidden Valley Campground.

There are nine self-guiding interpretive trails in the Monument. Signs or pamphlets explain the plant and animal life, geology, and history of the area.

The Cap Rock (¼ mi.), Indian Cove (1.7 mi.), Skull Rock (1.7 mi.), and Hi-View (1.3 mi.) Nature Trails introduce plant life of the Mojave Desert. Skull Rock Trail begins near Loop E in Jumbo Rocks Campground; Hi-View Nature Trail is located ½ mi. west of Black Rock Canyon Campground. Plants typical of the Colorado Desert are identified along the Cholla Cactus Garden (0.1 mi.) and Cottonwood (0.5 mi.) Nature Trails. Cap Rock is paved for handicapped access.

Signs along the Arch Rock Nature Trail (0.3 mi.) in White Tank Campground explain the geology of the area as the trail winds through interesting rock formations.

Hidden Valley Picnic Area (west of the campground) provides access to a trail system of 1.4 miles. Signs along a short loop (0.3 mi.) and a long loop (0.9 mi.) of the trail interpret both plant life and history of the area.

A short trail (0.5 mi.) at Park Headquarters in Twentynine Palms interprets the unique blend of plant and animal life found in the historical Oasis of Mara.