

## Chilao to Horse Flats and Mt. Hillyer

Date: 8/20/14

Leader: Sam Prum

Trailhead Directions: Drive north on SR-2 (Angeles Crest Hwy.) to mileage paddle 50.60 (25.2 miles from the I 210 turn-off), and turn left toward the Chilao Visitor Center. This is about a mile past the Chilao Campground turn-off. Continue straight 0.4 miles, passing the Visitor Center, to the "Upper Chilao Picnic Area" sign (post marker 3N21D). Park in the picnic area spaces (holds four cars), or neighboring areas. There are restrooms at the Picnic Area.

General Description: Rising to just over 6,200 feet, Mount Hillyer is actually one of the easier summits to reach in the high country of the San Gabriel Mountains. Beyond its boulder piles and pine forests, the stretched-out summit offers several sweeping views of nearby peaks and canyons. You can also hike a mile along the summit to pursue all the views.

The Hike: Coming out of the Picnic Area we walk 0.3 miles further along the road we arrived, to reach the Silver Moccasin Trail. We start hiking north on the Silver Moccasin Trail using switchbacks to gain a slope covered with pines and chaparral. At 1.1 mi. and the edge of Horse Flats Campground we turn left and follow a path about 0.1 miles to the Mount Hillyer trailhead and a sign indicating 2 miles to the summit (the summit is actually 1.7 miles away!). Proceed up the trail past clusters of Manzanita, scrub oak and Jeffrey pine to a complex of very large boulders. The trail breaks out of the forest onto a firebreak, and before you realize it, you've reached the 6,215-foot summit. It is hard to tell when you've arrived because the highpoint does not distinguish itself by rising far above the rest of the mountain. Instead, there is a long ridge running across Mount Hillyer that crowns the long summit.

The guides recommend a side hike of about 0.3 miles southwest onto a firebreak for a better viewpoint, or a complete hike along the summit ridge (1 mile). After enjoying the views you can return the way you came.

The Numbers: Total distance to the summit is about 6.4 miles. Total elevation gain is approximately 1000 ft. (400 ft. to Horse Flats Campground; an additional 600 ft. to the summit).

Other Information: Refreshments will be served at the Picnic Area. Adventure Pass or Golden Age pass required.

<http://www.hikespeak.com/trails/mount-hillyer-hike/>