

OTP Hike #263

YE OLDE OTP AND OTHERS HIKING AND DEBATING SOCIETY

Shady John's Hike, The THE PALO CAMADO CANYON, CHINA FLAT and SIMI PEAK, The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area,

8 FEBRUARY 1995

6.5 Mile/5 Hour Round Trip. 1000 Foot Altitude Gain

ABOUT THE PLACE:

About one year ago I led a hike through Cheeseboro Canyon onto the controversial Ahmanson Ranch development property. Part of the deal made by Ahmanson to put 3000 homes onto the Ahmanson Ranch property was the acquisition of Bob Hope's 7000 acre Jordan Ranch by the National Park Service. This was accomplished and the land was turned over to the Park Service in the Fall of 1994.

This land includes Palo Comado Canyon, which lies west of and runs parallel to Cheeseboro Canyon, and terminates, at its northwestern end, in China Flat and the 2403 foot Simi Peak.

This hike will not do the Palo Comado Canyon; we'll do it next time. Instead we will go straight up the face of the mountain to China Flat and Simi Peak! The first part of the trail, an old ranch road, is quite steep but no worse than Jim Spotts' trip up the Mt. Wilson Trail and it's 3.5 miles shorter! After reaching the top, about one mile, the trail descends into China Flat. Be prepared for breathtaking views of this part of California as it was when the Chumash Indians lived here. This has been, until last Fall, a working cattle ranch. No trash, no graffiti, just beautiful live oak trees and meadows. The hike up also affords spectacular views of the Simi and Conejo valleys, and if the day is clear the ocean to the West and snow capped mountains to the North. The area is home to deer, bobcats, coyotes and rabbits. We saw rabbits, a coyote, and cat and deer footprints on our exploration hike. So bring your field glasses and cameras. The park also has the locally uncommon plant species: Brickelbush, Rabbitbrush, Wright's Buckwheat, Deer Grass and Valley Oak/Scrub Oak Hybrid. It also has the following threatened and endangered species: Santa Susana Tarweed and Braunton's Milk Vetch.

HOW TO GET THERE:

From the 101 Freeway in the vicinity of Westlake, exit North on Lindero Canyon Road. (This exit is about 7 miles West of Las Virgenes/Malibu Canyon Road). Drive North approximately 3 miles from 101 when you will cross Kanan Road, a major intersection. Continue past Kanan Road observing streets entering Lindero Canyon from the left until you see King James Court (4th on left from Kanan Road). Continue past King James Court until you can make a u-turn around boulevard divider and return toward King James Court. Park on the North side of Lindero Canyon Rd, East of King James Court, by the trail head marker.

ARRIVE IN TIME FOR A 9:30 AM DEPARTURE UP THE TRAIL!