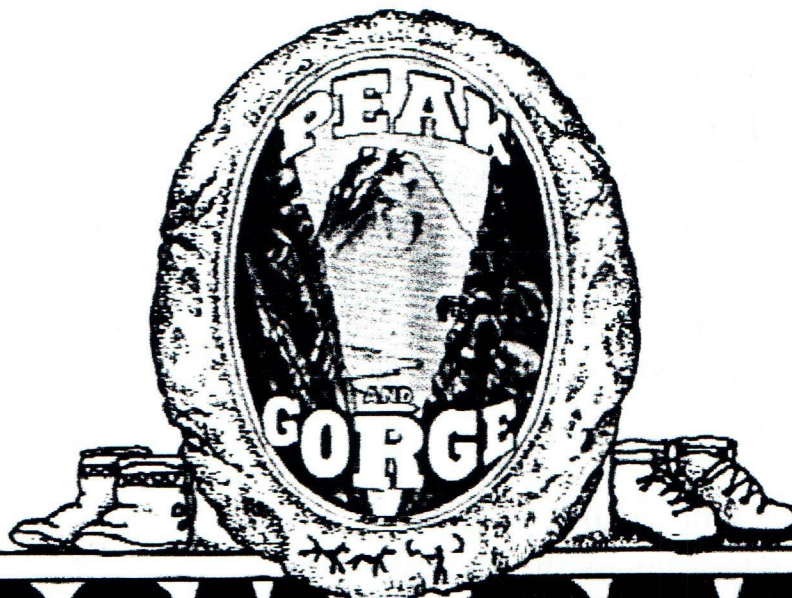


THE



BOULDER

motherlode chapter · sierra club

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Chair's Corner

On October 7, a small group of us met to discuss the future of the Peak and Gorge Section. We also had the benefit of input from some interested members who could not make the meeting. Unfortunately, our bottomline conclusion is that there is not enough current interest in the Section to create the critical mass needed to keep it active. The small group present at the meeting is reflective of that declining interest. That's not good or bad, it just is.

John Watters, the Outings chairman, has suggested that we let the Peak and Gorge Section go dormant, but not officially disband it. Apparently, there have been periods in the past when interest waned and something has always changed to resurrect that interest. Perhaps, a few folks new to the area or to climbing will get active and bring the energy needed to keep the section vital.

Climb leaders can continue to lead non-technical peaks, but will have to do so under the auspices of another section.

John Besbekos has volunteered to keep the Boulder going, as long as he gets articles submitted for publication. Articles can come from anyone; you don't have to be a leader. Why not share some of your interesting hikes and climbs with the rest of us?

By the time you read this, I will have started a new job in Seattle. I want to thank all of you for your past interest and support, especially those of you who have led climbs or joined me on some of mine. I intend to stay in touch by submitting articles about climbs from the Pacific Northwest.

Take care of the Sierra! They need help from all of us so our children and grandchildren can enjoy the same beauty we've been privileged to experience.

Jim Bily

I can remember being awed by the sight of big mountains since I was a child. BIG VERTICAL, LONG SNOWY RIDGELINES, MASSIVE SCALE. Those images appealed to a side of me all along but, I looked from a distance. I had not done any BIG VERTICAL except on a ski lift. I had not even considered putting myself hours, miles, and thousands of vertical feet "out there" in pursuit of a destination. I had not measured the scale of mountains with my own foot steps. A year ago July this changed and this changed me. One day hike traveling along the peaks with strong companions made the change take place. By doing (hiking, climbing, camping in the mountains you are an observer but are part of the action also. As commitment and risk increase, so does the involvement and intensity. You are changed by each thing that takes place because anything can be important. I want to thank the outing leaders for leading the hikes, peak climbs and camp outs that gave the new people, "like myself", a opportunity to go to the mountains, and get a real mountain experience. For myself Jim Bily played a major role in introducing me to the mountain experience. I feel fortunate to have shared some experiences with Jim and the others on some of his trips. I am sure I caused him some concern on more than one occasion but he handled it well (lots of practice I bet). Well, thanks for sharing part of your life with me and I'm, sure many others. Thanks for chairing the peak and gorge section. And best wishes for the new chapter of yours and Linda's life.

Larry Cetti

An Adirondack Mushroom Week, Or A Peak Bagger Survives The East

Later we report on the bagging of two state high points. But first the news.

The week started Friday night when Pam and I drove the requisite seven hours to base camp in Hankins, New York. Unlike PGS base camps, this one was equipped with 20 canoes of various sizes. Pam and I rented a 17-foot tandem from the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) for the trip.

We paddled two Class 1 to 2 stretches of the upper Delaware River: Callicoon to Skinner Falls, and Eckharts Eddy to the Southern Terminus. For those who don't know, canoeing has an international rating system akin to the Yosemite System for rating climbs. Class 1 and 2 correspond nicely between the systems. Class 1 is decidedly easy as is Class 2 – if you have a clue what you are doing. As Pam and I took the AMC's basic canoeing class we a clue but we are beginners. The trips were the right level. I thought briefly anyone could paddle these stretches until I sat at Skinner Falls watching the true beginners who had rented canoes locally. Most of them ended up swimming whereas Pam and I went through without a scrape.

Class 2 canoeing offers interesting physics lessons as well as nifty maneuvers. Eddy turns, for example, use the force of the current as it whips past still waters – eddies – to spin the boat around and park it in the still water. To do an eddy turn you must hit the line dividing fast and still water at the right angle, have the person in the bow stick their paddle in the water at the right spot and at the right blade angle, and lean your weight into the turn. Done properly eddy turns are effortless. The other nifty physics lesson is "surfing." Water spilling over ledges or rocks often form multiple waves separated by troughs. Two waves are all you need. If you paddle up to the downstream wave then paddle sideways across the wave you can situate your boat with the bow of the boat in the trough and the stern on the wave. Gravity attempts to pull the bow into the trough while the current attempts to push it out. If you find equilibrium you can surf the wave indefinitely by simply using a paddle as a rudder to keep straight.

(Surfing is fun and a useful survival trick. Earlier, on a training expedition following the AMC beginners class, I paddled a 6-mile stretch of true Class 2 water with a very strong and experienced paddler. We missed an eddy turn and wound up going backwards down the river. No problem. We paddled sideways across a wave, surfed, then did a peel out – sort of an eddy turn in reverse. But I digress.)

The AMC canoeing group has much in common with the PGS. They have many tall tails, true stories that sound like tall tales, and stories reminiscent of the PGS. One guy talked of a trip where they drove to West Virginia and canoed one river. Then, that evening, they drove to a second river which they canoed the next day; then to a third; then they skipped a fourth river because of high water but went to a fifth; then finally a sixth river. In the process he put 2,000 miles on his car. Sound familiar Desert Peak baggers?

Onto the peak bagging. We nailed the high points of Vermont – Mt. Mansfield – and New York – Mt. Marcy.

Mt. Mansfield (4,393) is in the Green Mountains just east of Burlington, Vermont. Pam and I approached from the west from Underhill State Park (reached from Burlington via state route 15). This route is not the shortest route as reported in Zumwalt's *Fifty State Summits*, but it minimized our driving time. A cold front was coming from the north and mixing with a moisture-laden warm front from the south, so we minimized driving time of get up and down before the fronts clashed over us.

Underhill State Park, on the day after Labor Day, was deserted. We saw 9 other hikers in 5 ½ hours. The campsites and clean rest rooms were vacant. I recommend Underhill for a post-Labor Day trip!

We took the CCC Road to the Laura Cowles Trail, then took the latter to the ridge just below a high point on the ridge named "The West Chin." To reach the summit -- called "The Chin" -- we hiked another tenth of a mile to "The Long Trail" and head northed for ¼ mile. Total statistics for the out-bound leg were 2.7

miles and 2,600 feet of elevation gain. The Laura Cowles Trail is about a mile long and 2,000 feet of gain. As you can imagine, it goes straight up! It also doubles as a creek in wet weather. Hence the trail sports little topsoil and lots of rocks, boulders, ledges, and minor waterfalls. It's Class 1, barely. The scenery along the Laura Cowles Trail resembles a temperate rain forest. The brush is as thick and tangled as that found on the Mendocino Coast. Moss, rotting logs, and mushrooms cover the ground throughout.

The Long Trail along the ridge to The Chin crosses flat rock faces to avoid the sparse vegetation. The ridge itself is covered with ground-hugging, wind blasted trees, some sedges, and large granitic boulders covered with lichens. The summit is treeless. On the summit we found a "Summit Guardian," an employee of a local hiking club who hangs out on the summit educating people about the fragile "Arctic Alpine" ecosystem, and about the protection efforts being mounted. The Guardian asked us to stay on the trail and/or to walk only on rocks and not on plants. He also told us the fog enshrouding us occurred about 80 percent of the time, i.e., the total lack of any kind of view was normal. He also said that on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, 1,000 people topped the summit and a normal day has 500 to 600 people hitting the summit. We really timed that right!

To return we took the Sunset Ridge Trail back to the CCC Road. The SR Trail is ½ mile longer than the LC Trail, and not as steep. The SR Trail's uppermost ¾ mile crosses an open granite ridge. You walk across bare granite faces and foliage consists of sedges, lichens, mosses, and wind blasted trees. Below the ridge the foliage again looks like rain forest. As with the Laura Cowles Trail, due to erosion, you have to "lower" yourself over a couple of ledges / minor waterfalls. Total round-trip statistics are 6 miles and 2,600 feet of elevation gain. Any up-and-down travel is incidental – the trip goes straight up and straight down.

The next day we waited out the storm shopping in Burlington, Vermont and in Lake Placid, New York. We rented a hotel in Lake Placid with an in-room kitchen to cook and eat something found while traveling from the upper Delaware to Vermont – King Boletes. Whatever the name – Porcini, Ceps, Boletus Edulis, Steinpiltz – they get my vote for the choicest wild mushroom. We also found, cooked and ate several *Leccinum aurantiacum*s. Two nights in a hotel allowed us to catch up on chowing down!

The next day, Sept. 4, we bagged Mt. Marcy (5,344). We started at the information building near the Adirondack Loj – a facility operated by the Adirondack Mountain Club and located a few miles from downtown Lake Placid. (We parked along the access road and walked ½ mile to the trailhead rather than paying the \$7.00 parking fee.) From the information building we found the trailhead at the east end of the parking lot, signed into the trailhead register, and followed the "Blue Trail" to the summit. The trail goes through at least six trail junctions over the course of the seven-mile trip to the summit. The Mt. Marcy trail is marked throughout with small, circular blue signs. Even without a map it would be difficult to lose the trail.

As with Mt. Mansfield the foliage resembled temperate rain forest and the summit was ringed with Arctic Alpine foliage. Mt. Marcy's summit trail winds a sinuous route among and over boulders and rock faces to avoid crossing the foliage. This is a Class 1 1/2 trail that will involve the use of an occasional toe-jam or finger-jam if you are uncomfortable just using the friction of your boots to walk across rock faces. To my sensibilities the summit featured interesting foliage. The trees mostly stood upright, were stunted, and were festooned with large streamers of mosses and/or lichens. Just below the summit I saw several large mushrooms, one of which was a *Russula emetica* about the size of a portobello. It's interesting what you find growing in Arctic Alpine areas!

Thanks to the previous storm we had tremendous views. We could see Lake Champlain to the east, Lake Placid and ski resort-scarred White Face to the north, and mountains stretching as far as the eye could see in all directions. Thanks to the storm, and the date, we only encountered a dozen people. A normal day would have had hundreds of people on the trail. Also thanks to the storm we encountered small pockets of snow and ice on the summit and endured biting, cold winds. We took several pictures and got out. I noted a plaque embedded in the side of the final summit block but it was cold enough I didn't stick around to read it. Hopefully our pictures will show sufficient detail to allow a reading of the plaque.

On the return trip we received a wildlife treat. About two miles from the trailhead the trail passes Marcy Dam – a popular backpacking destination. At the reservoir behind the dam we spent 10 minutes watching a beaver swim around in circles.

The trail is as eroded as the Mt. Mansfield trail so sections are rocky. Some group(s) performed considerable trail maintenance, laying logs across many stretches of trail keeping hikers out of the mud. The Mt. Marcy trail has a couple of up-and-down stretches, but in total these stretches can't add much more than 200 feet of elevation gain to the unadjusted trailhead to summit elevation gain. Total round trip statistics were 14.5 miles and 3,360 feet of elevation gain.

We took one additional hike near Lake George in the southern section of the Adirondacks Park. Again the mushrooms abounded. We didn't find anything we ate, but I added significantly to my lifetime list of identified mushrooms. For the record, on our Adirondacks Mushroom Week we identified the following 15 species that were new to my lifetime list:

- *Austroboletus gracilis*
- *Boletus auripes*
- *Boletus bicolor*
- *Boletus frostii*
- *Boletus ornatipes*
- *Boletus variipes*
- *Cortinarius alboviolaceus*
- *Cortinarius violaceus*
- *Gyroporus cyanescens*
- *Hericium coralloides*
- *Hypomyces lactifluorum*
(the Lobster Mushroom)
- *Leccinum insigne*
- *Pycnoporus cinnabarinus*
- *Suillus granulatus*
- *Suillus pictus*
- *Tylopilus pseudoscaber*

FYI: The mushroom reference book I carry in my pack is Gary Lincoff's *The Audobon Society Field Guide To North American Mushrooms*. Many of the mushrooms listed above are covered therein.

Alan Cooke

Nov. 22 Sat. 2B Peak Climb(private) Elephants Back from Carson Pass. The plan is to climb the northern end of Elephants Back by way of a class 3 / 4 route ,then walk up to the top. Then descend the southern end class 2 / 3 and return to Carson Pass. Participants should have experience on class 3 rock and moderate snow. Optional car camp Sat. night if there is interest. If interested call Larry Cetti by 11-18 after 7:30 PM. 677-5257

Wheeler Peak, New Mexico State High Point

While traveling earlier this year I got the chance to bag Wheeler Peak (13,161), New Mexico's high point. Due to airline ticket costs it was cheaper to spend the weekend in Albuquerque rather than take two round-trip flights – even after including added hotel, rental car, and food expenses. So I spent a weekend in Albuquerque. Or rather, I spent July 13th in Albuquerque, and July 12th bagging Wheeler Peak.

Wheeler Peak is in the Sangre de Cristo mountains just north of Taos. The trip from Albuquerque to Taos takes three hours. If you want a topo map of the Wheeler Peak area (the 7 ½ minute *Wheeler Peak, New Mexico* quadrangle) I suggest you buy it ahead of time. I only found two stores in Taos that sold topographic maps – the Taos Mountain Outfitters and The Brodsky Bookstore. TMO opened at 9:30 and the bookstore at 10:00. (I took off early enough from Albuquerque that I had to wait ¾ of an hour to buy a map – clearly a waste of valuable time during thunderstorm season!) From Taos I drove west on U.S. Highway 64, and north on state highway 522. Not long (about 4 miles) after leaving Taos I came to the intersection with State Highway 150. I then turned east onto 150 and drove the 15 miles to the end of the pavement at the Taos Ski Valley recreation area. The trailhead is about 3/10 mile from the end of the pavement. The dirt road / parking lot loops to the left at this point and at the end of the loop is a U.S. Forest Service trailhead sign. I parked by the sign. The trailhead elevation is roughly 9,400 feet.

From my car, I continued just a few yards farther around the parking loop (to the left) until reaching a road heading uphill and away from the loop. There really weren't any indicators that this was the correct direction. Rather, I was following my memory of Zumwalt's directions in his book *Fifty State Summits*. Maybe 100 yards – maybe not quite that far – uphill I encountered a sign telling me the trail to Bull of the Woods Pasture and Wheeler Peak branched off the road to the left. I took that trail.

I consider Wheeler Peak to be one of the nicer peak climbs I can remember. The smell of evergreens – a smell I have not encountered for a year – pleased me immensely and brought back memories. Flower season was in full swing throughout the entire hike. In the lower elevations I was particularly impressed with the Rocky Mountain Columbine, it being about three times the size of the columbines found in the Sierras. Countless flower varieties kept me busy taking pictures.

The trail had very few junctions to note. Lower down a junction with a signed trail to Long Canyon branches off to the left. I followed the other trail, the trail to Bull of the Woods Pasture. Also in the lower elevations I saw one unsigned trail branching off to the right. The Forest Service – or someone – had blocked the unsigned trail with brush, so ignoring it was a no-brainer. After that, the only other junction came when the Wheeler Peak Trail departed from the Bull of the Woods Pasture Trail, with the former heading south and the latter heading north. I reached this last junction when the trail hit the main ridge, and after I started getting views to the west

(Watch also for the 'yellow arrows' that lead to the summit. The arrows are small, brown, rectangular pieces of wood with arrows carved into the wood and painted yellow. I noticed these somewhat intermittently. The only time they gave me any route-finding assistance was as I passed Bull-of-the-Woods Mountain (11,640+). On the west slope of the mountain I saw another road branching sharply to the left. An arrow situated at that intersection gave me a clear indication as to the correct direction.)

From the last junction the trail heads south along the ridge, at first through an area that appears to be a recovering clearcut, then up and around the talus-covered west face of Bull-of-the-Woods Mountain. Even as the trail ascended higher the flower display remained as impressive as in the lower elevation. The only change was that, since the ridge is above 10,000 feet, the flowers were much diminished in size and tended to be flowering cushion plants. I continued snapping pictures at a furious pace until I finally forced myself to conserve film for the required hero shots on the summit.

After traversing the west face of Bull-of-the-Woods Mountain another road branched off heading up the mountain. I decided to bag it while in the area since it only added ¼ mile onto my trip. From here the trail

passed through a 'gate,' marking the transition from a dirt road to an actual trail. (There, at 10,800 feet, I found a prized *Boletus edulis* which I sadly photographed and left behind.) The trail then continued through alternating stretches of high meadows, rocky hillsides, and sparsely forested areas. In the treeless areas the ground was covered with sedges, flowering cushion plants, phlox, and other small flowers. Most of the area reminded me very much of the high country in Carson-Iceberg Wilderness.

About a mile from Bull-of-the-Woods Mountain I started getting spectacular views to both the east and the west. The dark colored high peaks of the Sangre de Cristo set off nicely the blue sky and the ever-more-threatening clouds! The trail passed the east side of Frazer Mountain (12,163) then took a mile-long dip downhill – its only downhill dip – to skirt around La Cal Basin. A mile later the trail topped the ridge just north of Mount Walter (13,141 according to the sign on top of the mountain, or 13,133 according to the map), climbed up and over the latter, then headed south another 1/3 mile to Wheeler Peak.

At 1:00 p.m. I joined eight other climbers on the summit. Several others came and went while I was there, and I must have encountered 20 additional hikers on the trail. Not exactly Yosemite-class crowds, but enough. One climber was, on that day, sitting on the summit of his 37th state high point. It's a fair bet he'll beat me to list completion as Wheeler was only my 5th. One couple was familiar with Longwood Gardens, an attraction located a mile from my house in Kennett Square, PA. Small country!

The summit offered the same splendid views seen from the ridge. On the summit was a plaque explaining a bit about the naming of the peak. I used the timer on my camera to photograph myself standing behind the plaque. (Under the heading of Duh) I focused my camera on the plaque and pushed the shutter button, but did not re-aim the camera high enough to get my face in the photo. Anyone want a picture of the summit plaque with my Appalachian Mountain Club polypro shirt in the background?

To return I headed back down the trail a hundred yards, then found a usage trail heading straight downhill to the west to Williams Lake. The usage trail was very obvious and not as eroded as I expected given the usage it receives. While on the way down I saw a half dozen young marmots playing on the hillside. It's funny to watch them playing as youngsters knowing what fat, lazy looking critters they are as adults.

From the lake I followed the trail back to the ski area and located my car. At the lake, the trail was just that, a trail. About two miles downhill it turned into a two-lane rut (road); then a better, much more recently graded road; then into a logging road. Another mile downhill the road reached a creek and an even more thoroughly tended dirt road which actually presents a directional choice. Heading to the right seemed obvious enough and, of course, was correct. Immediately thereafter though the road emerged into the ski area with some type of lodge and ski lift terminal. I chose to go around it on the right, then switched back to the left immediately behind the lodge and in front of a charming mess of rusting machinery and another building of some sort. Walking along the road to the west (left) I encountered people backpacking into the lake. Shortly thereafter, I encountered the official Williams Lake Trailhead parking area (not the one I used), a gate, and a much better maintained road. I followed this road another mile to the ski area where I was parked. The ski area was maze-like but the Phoenix Switchback Road took to the end of the line.

The total round-trip statistics were roughly 12 miles and 4,000 feet of elevation gain. I also found hiking at a relatively high elevation took a toll on me, giving me a powerful headache. It pays to acclimate!

Alan Cooke



Hiking in Great Smokey Mountains National Park 20 – 24 October, 1997 By John Besbekos

Flying in to Greensboro, NC I met up with Hamlin Andrews. The 2 of us then drove up to Banner Elk, NC near the ski resort of Sugar Mountain to meet up with John Sams. Our trio then hauled a pop-up camper to a campground just outside Gatlinburg, Tennessee. This was to be our base camp for a week of hiking and enjoying the fall colors of the Smokies.

On Monday we set out for our first hike. We were eager to start out with something that would offer a panoramic view of the mountains with their newly changing leaves. Mt. Cammerer was our destination. Starting from the Cosby campground we hiked 2.5 miles on a trail climbing up through poplar, hemlock, buckeye and rhododendron. At the crest we intersected the Appalachian Trail (AT). After a couple miles on the AT we took a half-mile spur trail that went to the Mt. Cammerer Fire Lookout. The views were stupendous! The fire lookout had recently been remodeled into a hiker visitor stop. You could sit inside out of the wind on the wooden floor and enjoy a 360° panorama through the large windows, or you could stroll around the outside on a viewing deck that circumnavigated the tower.

Tuesday the weather was little cloudy with an occasional sprinkle. Therefore we decided since mountaintop views would be hazy at best, we would do a trail in the deep woods. We began our loop at the Elkmont campground hiking up an old gravel road past some old abandoned cabins and cottages that have reverted to the Park Service. They must have been some wonderful vacation homes at one time, situated along the rocky Little River Creek. We soon turned onto the Cucumber Gap trail for a gentle 320' elevation gain through a deep forest then back down to the campground.

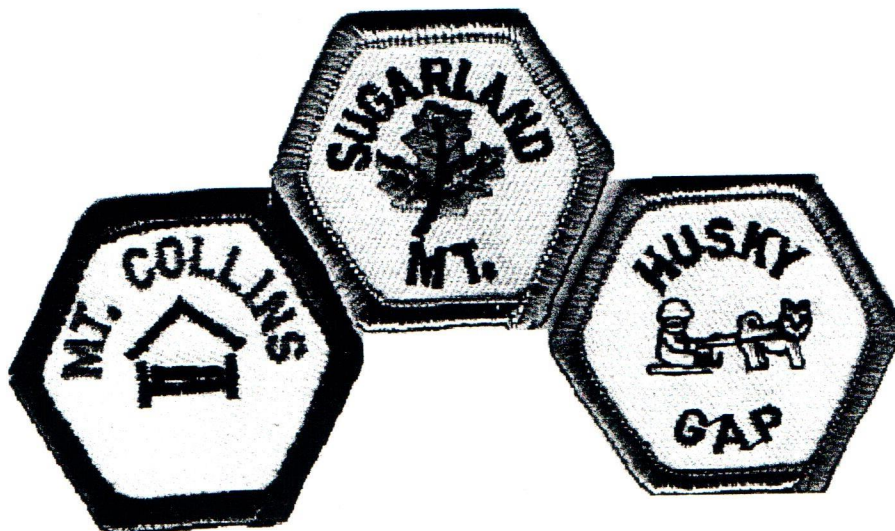
Wednesday we decided to make the Albright Grove our destination. Guidebooks tell us that this was the finest grove of virgin forest in the park, consisting mainly of poplar and hemlock. The most difficult part of this trip was finding the trailhead. The original route to the trailhead, described in all maps and books has been washed out. After we had put our old pickup truck in 4 wheel drive in an attempt to negotiate a creek bed/unimproved road, the friendly owner of the "Jellystone Campground" gave us instructions of a back roads route. Soon we were hiking up an old leaf covered road to the now vacant site of an old CCC camp used in the 1930's. After this point we were on a real trail (Maddron Bald) that included a large log crossing and nice views down into Indian Camp Creek ravine. After a total of almost 5 miles of hiking we found the turn off for the .7 mile Albright Grove Loop. This was surely the "Big Trees"

area of the Smokies. Due to some trail intersections that were not shown on the map, I believe our .7 mile loop turned out to be a bit more. We eventually found our way back to the Maddron Bald trail and a pleasant descent to the trailhead.

Thursday found us in Gatlinburg, TN at a famous local hiking store, The Happy Hiker. It had a wall covered in pictures of AT through hikers with their trail-names annotated on the photos, (e.g. Skunk Man", "Dumb" and "Dumber", etc.). The store personnel are all experienced hikers, guides, and provide a shuttle service. We arranged for a Friday shuttle to take us near the top of Mt LeConte (the parks highest peak), from where we would do a 12-mile descent along mostly ridge spines in order to get outstanding photo opportunities.

We awoke Friday morning to the sounds of a fierce rainstorm! Oh no. However as we got closer to 9 am (our rendezvous time with the Happy Hiker shuttle) the rain began to abate. We met up with the shuttle driver and he followed us to where we dropped off the truck at our coming out trail. We piled into the shuttle and began the winding road climb up into the clouds. When the old gentleman announced that we had arrived at our starting trailhead I had a sinking feeling. We were standing in the drizzle in the blackest, darkest fog I had ever experienced. The driver announced, "Boy, I wouldn't drop my own father off in a place like this!", then drove away laughing. The 3 of us were now alone in a cold light rain in what seemed to be the middle of the night, in the middle of no-where. Oh well, nothing to do but start heading down, so we entered the woods. After about a half-mile the wind and rain intensified, so we ran into the Mt. Collins AT backpacker shelter. We put on our full rain gear and headed back out. At first we were somewhat sheltered on the narrow trail by the thick foliage. Soon the wind got even worse, the rain got harder, and we were treated to a combination of freezing rain, hail, snow, sleet, and gale winds.

The worse was yet to come. We eventually came out onto our "scenic open ridge trail"(the Sugarland Mountain trail). No more shelter, Hamlin's poncho was ripped to shreds by the wind, mine was blown open, all our trousers were soon soaked, our boots filled up with water and the trail covered with fallen branches. The wind was so strong we were struggling to stand up, it had to be as bad as it could get. Not quite. We heard SNAP, CRASH! Trees were starting to blow over and tops and limbs break off. We ran for our lives. Finally a trail sign! Only 8 more miles to go! Stopping only for the briefest moment for water, we hurried on to avoid hypothermia. Finally another sigh, only 4 miles to go. Now the wind was fading and the rain was easing up. At the Husky Gap intersection (2 miles to go), sun began to break through and we could see the neighboring ridges. By the time we came out onto the road, the storm had passed, we were muddy, totally soaked, and exhilarated to be none the worse for wear! We drove back to the Happy Hiker to get our well earned trail patches for the 3 trails we covered. We caused quite an amusing stir when we walked in all disheveled and wet. The shuttle driver remarking that he hadn't expected to see us alive again. Ha- Ha. It had been a great adventure and that night as we sat around the campfire, it got even greater with each re-telling. -----JB



Castle Dome, Black Butte

This past summer I had the opportunity to ascend a couple of very nice “nonlisted” peaks in Northern California. Both are easy dayhikes, though Castle Dome has a manly class 3 summit.

Castle Dome is located in **Castle Crags State Park**, which is about 25 miles north of Lake Shasta near Dunsmuir. Take the Castella exit and then follow signs a short distance to the entrance station. There is an entrance fee of \$5.00 for day use. Then head up the main paved road, through the campground, and up to the Vista Point parking lot/trailhead. This is a one lane paved road but is in good shape. There is space for about 20 cars and an outhouse at the trailhead.

Begin the hike not by heading up the Castle Dome trail, but by going 0.1 up a hill to the east to the “vista”. By peering through the trees, you can see the Dome and the other higher crags. To the north you can also see Mt. Shasta. Drop back down to the parking lot and walk west along the paved road for a minute and you will be at the trail.

The trail ascends through a mixed pine, cedar, and fir forest while heading generally westward. Several junctions are encountered – just stay on the main “Crags” trail and after 2 miles you will emerge from the forest into an increasingly rocky area. You’ll really appreciate those trees – the upper trail can be quite warm and sunny, even early in the morning. As you get close to Castle Dome, the trail will begin to splinter into many paths heading for the various crags. Just pick whatever looks best and head directly for the southern base of the Dome.

This is where the fun begins. Start by switchbacking up large slabs with little ramps following the line of least resistance. Soon you’ll be on a broad brushy ledge about 1/3 of the way up the Dome. Next, hike to the right and up a little ways to find a wide cleft with several small trees in it. Climb up this using the solid tree limbs for “handholds” as needed. Continue a short distance and soon you’ll encounter some interesting moves just before getting to the top of a large dike. This dike cleaves a wide gap directly across the south side of the rock. Move left along an airy knife-edge to drop down to a little notch. The next few moves up the steeper slabs are friction moves (where I found myself wishing for rock shoes). Soon the slope eases and you just go straight up, encountering one more small dike before topping out. No register was present, but the views of the nearby crags were incredible. Descend the way you came. Round trip stats are about 6 miles and 2500’ gain.

Black Butte (6,325’) is the conical peak overlooking the town of Mt. Shasta. Take Alma Street to the Everitt Memorial Highway, just as you would for access to the Mt. Shasta south side trailheads. Go north 2 miles to a dirt road on the left, just before the Everitt makes a sweeping right turn. Stay on this main dirt road for 2.5 miles, then where it crosses an overhead power line, go left for another half mile to the trailhead/turnaround. There is limited parking here. Carefully driven 2WDs should be able to get here with no problem.

The trail is 2.5 miles and 1900’ gain to the top. It circles half the Butte enroute to the top, crossing many old lava flows and going through occasional patches of forest. Up higher the brush diminishes and it becomes quite rocky. At the top is the foundation of an old lookout that was relocated in the mid-70’s. As trivial as this hike is, it’s worth every penny for the views of Mt Shasta. The only other nearby peak with as good a view is Mt. Eddy.

These peaks are perfect add-ons after a climb of Shasta, assuming you’ve got a bit left in you. If not, save them for another time, you won’t be disappointed.

Bob Sumner

HAYCOCK PEAK (2029)

By Bighorn Broeckel

You won't find this peak on a list, but anybody driving north on Interstate 5 needs a leg stretcher. Haycock Peak is close to the freeway and will only take an hour or so of your time. It is located near Lake Shasta, just south of Lakehead. This is low elevation, three season territory, and the season to avoid is summer. The peak sits on public land, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, so feel free to exercise your freedom to hike!

Take the Gilman Road exit, and get on the frontage road on the west side of the freeway. Drive a couple miles north on the frontage road, going by an RV park. Just before the frontage road crosses the freeway on a bridge, turn left onto a gravel road. After 0.2 miles of gravel, stop and park. Start walking up the road that goes left off of the good gravel road. You could drive further, but the idea is to do some walking.

The road climbs some ridges, crosses a fiber-optic cable, and eventually swings around to the west side of the peak. The freeway noises fade away, and views open up over the Sacramento River Arm of Lake Shasta. The road ends high on the peak, and a foot path continues a short distance to the top. Antennae and solar panels occupy the first position. Look for benchmarks and a low profile summit register in the bushes just beyond. The first benchmark is a satellite and says "VOLTAGE NO.2 1952". The main benchmark is curled over the edge of a rock.

Haycock? That is "a dome-shaped pile of hay in the field." I suppose this peak looks like a haycock from some angles. The term crops up in some mountaineering literature. For example, Hudson Stuck's *The Ascent of Denali* published in 1914. P.99 says "This, then, is the actual summit," (Note: Hudson discredits the earlier sourdough expedition.) "a little crater-like snow basin, sixty or sixty-five feet long and twenty to twenty-five feet wide, with a haycock of snow at either end - the south one a little higher than the north." (Emphasis mine).

Of course, some haycocks might be more difficult to reach than others, but it is always haying time in Shasta County. All car bound climbers take notice. Where else can you stretch your legs and have a hay day at the same time?

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