

The Trail head

A Publication of GLAAC HAT

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From the Editor

We continue our warm year into spring. The March heat wave broke several records and made hiking a bit more dangerous, as will be discussed in this issue.

Upcoming HAT training for the first quarter include:

- Rock Climbing rope and rescue, April 11
- Level 1 Climbing Instructor class, April 17-19
- Wilderness Woman class, May 16
- National Trails Day, June 6

Additional information on these programs may be found at:

<https://greaterlascouting.org/training/>

Summer camp registration for Cherry Valley and Hubert Eaton is now open.

Information at <https://greaterlascouting.org/camps/>

Note that the new Safeguarding Youth program, which replaces YPT, must be completed annually.

Our next edition will come out at the end of June 2026.

Suggestions and input are more than welcome. Contact us at trailhead@glaac-hat.org

HAT Team News

The HAT team meets the first Tuesday of each month except July and August at 7:30pm at Cushman Watt Scout Center or through Zoom.. All registered scouts are welcome to attend.

The January meeting was a live meeting at Cushman Watt Center. There was a general discussion of HAT activities for the upcoming year. The safety minute discussed dealing with cold weather, using the acronym COLD: Clean insulating layers, avoid Overheating by adjusting layers, Layers should be loose and layers should be Dry, working to avoid sweating and dampness.

There appears to be few options anymore about renting equipment. Currently one of the few stores still doing so is Sports Basement <https://www.sportsbasement.com/blogs/stores>. They have stores in Fountain Valley and in Hawthorne. They rent a wide variety of equipment including complete packages.

February saw the ALBT training held at Camp Trask in Monrovia. 15 students completed the training, and the field experiences are set for this month and in May.

Congratulations to John Sandhagen and Steve Chow for being the 2026 Grand HAM award winners. Well deserved and a great job.

STEM-Nova News

The STEM Nova team completed their events at Caltech in January, and the program is now on hiatus until a new site can be located.

Forest Reports

Angeles National Forest: The Angeles Crest Highway remains closed from Islip Saddle to Big Pines Highway. There is no estimated reopening time.

The following campgrounds are currently closed: Upper Shake, Table Mountain, Spring Camp, Sage Picnic Area, Mountain Oak, Guffy, Horse Flat, Jackson Flat,

Lake, Lightning Point, Lupine, Manker Flat, Bandido, Blue Ridge, Buckhorn and Deer Flat

San Bernardino National Forest : The prescribed burns scheduled in November 2025 have begun. Currently, Big Bear, Black Mountain, Clark's Ranch, Coon Creek, Joe Elliot, South Ridge and Thomas Hunting Grounds campsites are closed due to the line fire and are scheduled to reopen in October 2026. Applewhite Picnic Area is closed to March 2027, due to storm damage.

Cleveland National Forest: Ataxam Mamtaash, Blue Jay, Fry Creek, and Observatory Campgrounds are closed. Multiple forest roads remain closed, and it is best to call the Rangers for additional information. The Airport Fire Burn area remains closed until May 26.

Desert Report

Joshua Tree National Park – 49 Palms Trail has reopened. The Cholla Cactus Garden trail is closed until late spring.

Anzo Borrego State Park - Coyote Canyon Road remains closed 5 miles before the third crossing. Guided walks begin this month at various locations.

Death Valley National Park Southern Badwater Road, Bonnie Clare Road (Scotty's Castle) and the North Highway remain closed. Emigrant Day Use Area and Restrooms are closed for the foreseeable future for water system repairs. All other campgrounds remain open.

High Sierra Report

Mammoth Mountain is reporting 107" inches of snow with the last snow on April 1. Reds Meadow road is closed for construction with no completion estimate in the Inyo National Forest. Reds Meadow Campground is not expected to open until July 1.

Points East

Grand Canyon: The entire north rim area is closed until May 15, 2026. In a recent podcast, park official disclosed that the Dragon Bravo fire seriously damaged the North Kaibob trail tread was seriously damaged by debris flows and the trail is closed indefinitely, and repair work could take several years.

Be Careful Out there!

It has been unusually warm, which means the critters are out earlier than usual. Ventura county has logged six rattlesnake bites in just under a month, one of them fatal. Orange County suffered a fatal bite in March as well. Statewide, we are at 80 snake bite reports and counting. Because of the large number of attacks, some snake safety tips are in order:

- Stay on well-marked trails.
- Wear long pants and heavy boots.
- Be cautious around rocks and logs.
- Avoid tall grass and brush.
- Watch where you place your hands.
- Be aware of you surroundings and listen for rattles.
- Avoid hiking alone.

If you are wondering “why did it have to be snakes” there was a fatal mountain lion attack in January in Larimer County Colorado (Central north of the state on the Wyoming Border). This is the first fatal cat attack since 1999.

Finally, there was a fatality in the Bridge to Nowhere hike in early March. As discussed in the prior edition of the Trailhead, the current trail conditions make this hike sketchy to begin with, but there is extremely high water flow in the San Gabriel river and this hiker drowned in the river after falling in during the hike.

The point of this message is not to be a “Debbie downer” it’s to remind you to be safe and careful out in the field. Take the precautions, listen to the voice in your head, and come back safe.

Trail Food

For you coffee aficionados, there are some ways to improve your backcountry instant coffee. The first and most popular is to mix hot cocoa mix with your coffee to create a tasty concoction. Those of you who find that too sweet can substitute powdered milk for the hot cocoa. For a caramel tinge to your coffee, as the water boils and you add the coffee, drop in a couple of Werther’s original soft caramels into the mix. For those of you with extra room in your backpacks, bring along a thermos of your special coffee, made at home just as you like .

An alternative to coffee is Russian tea with tang. Mix 2 cups sugar, 1 cup Tang orange drink (available at Amazon or Walmart) ½ cup instant tea, ½ tsp of cinnamon, ½ tsp of cloves and one package of lemonade mix.

Mix the dry ingredients and store in a zip lock bag. Mix 2-3 tablespoons of the mixture with a cup of hot water.

You can also prepare latte mixes and bring them with you:

Spiced Chai Latte:

Mix at home:

2 cups instant dry milk powder

¼ cup powdered sugar

1 cup white sugar

2 teaspoons cinnamon

1 ½ teaspoons ginger

1 teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon ground clove

½ teaspoon ground cardamom.

To avoid sediment in your finished tea, grind all the ingredients to a fine powder in a food processor. Pack some black tea bags to use when you get to camp.

At camp:

Add two tablespoons of your chai mix, a teabag, and a cup of boiling water to your favorite camping mug. If you've got your [spice kit](#), add a tiny bit of vanilla.

Go Take a Hike

This month's hike is to Sulphur Springs Trail Camp. This is a 4 mile one way trek along the Pacific Crest Trail from the trail head at Three Points to the trail camp, which is located in a valley north of the Angeles Crest Highway. This is a little used trail camp and spots are generally available.

Early in the year, ground water from local creeks is generally available but must be filtered or boiled prior to use. Later in the year, there is a small spring at the far end of the campground that feeds from a drinking fountain type fitting. When this was hiked in mid-March, water flow at the spring was very low, so be prepared to spend several minutes gathering water. The creek water was ample, with a backup source about ½ mile above the campground along the trail.

To hike the trail, park at Three Points and go towards the woods. The trail head is marked by a brown plastic marker. Start on the trail; the initial portion of the trail

has little shade and can get quite warm. On your right, you can see buildings from various youth camps across the gulley.

You wind your way along a fairly flat portion for some distance working around gulleys and into tree cover. The tree cover will be with you for most of the hike. The trail is marked intermittently with brown posts as shown in the photographs.

There are 3 deadfalls across the trail. Two may be easily climbed over, the third but be crawled under and that may be difficult with a backpack on. Photos attached.

At about the 3-3/4 mile mark, the trail will fork, with the trail itself continuing up a ridge to your left. To reach the camp, continue on the same trail. In about a 1/4 mile, you will reach a large flat area which serves as the rest point for pack horses. Work your way through this area and the brush north of the rest point, and you will reach the access road to the trail camp. Turn right and follow the road to the end, where the trail camp pit toilets are located. There are 3-4 spots on this side of the creek. The creek itself is easily crossed and there are an additional 3-4 spots on the far side of the creek.

The spots on the far side of the creek are larger and more shaded than on the pit toilet side, but the spots are very buggy, especially in summer. Make sure to bring bug spray.

The total elevation loss is about 1000' from the Angeles Crest Highway to the campsite. The return trip gains all of this elevation back. Take your time and keep a slow steady pace.

It's a beautiful hike and well worth the extra mileage. It is also lightly used, so if you are into solitude, this is your spot.

Starting Point at 3 Points



Start of the Trail across from the parking lot

Typical Trail Marker as found on trail



Alternative Water Source about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the trail camp. Dry in summer



Split. PCT vers left. Stay to the right



You made it!

Water source at far end of camp. Flow was very low at time of visit



Photos of the deadfalls discussed in the report.



You Need a Patch for That!



Continuing the showing of patches which don't require a week in the Sierras, this month is the National Park Award. To earn this award, the requirements are:

National Park Award

1. Campsite and at least half of the scheduled hours hiked must be in a National Park or National Monument.
2. Backpack time of seven or more scheduled hours.
3. Minimum of one night of camping.
4. Award recipient to have previously earned two Training Hike awards.

There you go! Listen! Joshua Tree is calling you!

For more information on the HAT awards program, see Hike Aid 6, located here:

<https://glaac-hat.org/HikeAids.html>

All patches can be purchased here: <https://glaac-hat.org/store/>

Useful Links

Campfire Permit: <https://permit.preventwildfiresca.org/>

Campfire permits are valid January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year. For repeat offenders, the training video was last updated this year.

Bob808knight cooking playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKJRQgIAG8Sqo0rdbYStcCzyZMpQDAHQj>

Bob hikes along the Missouri River where fire restrictions are not an issue. When we eventually reach that state here in California, see what you can do with a little extra gear. Be sure to watch the aluminum dog bowl Dutch oven baking.

Angeles National Forest Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/angeles>

San Bernardino National Forest Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sbnf>

Cleveland National Forest Website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/cleveland>

Glendora Natural History: <http://glendoranaturalhistory.com/>

Dick Swinney of Glendora has spent a lifetime in the mountains, and this page is the go to reference for anything that grows, crawls, walks or exists within the local mountains. What bird did you see? You will find it here.

Dan's Hiking Pages: <https://www.simpsoncity.com/hiking/>

The editor was overjoyed at seeing this site still up and running. Covers any hike worth doing in the local mountains.

SGM – The Waterfalls: <https://tchester.org/sgm/lists/waterfalls.html>

A comprehensive list of waterfalls within the San Gabriels. Getting to some of this is quite difficult and is attempted at your own risk.

Windfinder: https://www.windfinder.com/forecast/los_angeles_california_usa

A website with comprehensive wind information that will help keep you safe from being hit by widow makers or deadfall.

The Hiking Guy: <https://hikingguy.com/>

An amazingly comprehensive guide to hikes in Southern California. Thinking of going? Check this site for tips and tricks. Regularly updated and a true treasure.

Merit Badge pamphlets as PDF documents:

<https://www.scouting.org/skills/merit-badges/all/>

Orange County Council HAT Team:

<https://www.occhat.org/>

San Diego County Council HAT Team:

<https://www.sdicscouting.org/programs/high-adventure>

Inland Empire Council HAT Team:

<https://iescouts.org/hat-high-adventure/>

Have any ideas on useful websites, pass them along!