San Gabriel Wilderness

Angeles National Forest

In 1964, Congress established the National Wilderness Preservation System. It defined Wilderness as public lands “where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain....which is protected and managed to maintain its natural conditions.”

In less official terms, Wilderness means -- a place to escape from the noise of civilization, to experience solitude and the beauty of the outdoors.

THE SAN GABRIEL WILDERNESS

Over 36,000 acres within the Angeles National Forest are designated as the San Gabriel Wilderness Area and have been set aside to preserve their wilderness character. The area encompasses some extremely rugged terrain, ranging in elevation from 1,600 to 8,200 feet. The lower elevations are covered with dense chaparral which rapidly changes to pine and fir-covered slopes, majestic peaks, wildflowers and glimpses of a variety of wildlife as you enter the upper elevations.

Wilderness Permits are not required for the San Gabriel Wilderness Area. National Forest Adventure Pass or Golden Passport is required for vehicles parked at trailheads.

You can enter the San Gabriel Wilderness on the following trails:

- Bear Creek Trail - An eleven mile trail with trailheads near Rincon and Coldbrook, both on Highway 39.
- Mt. Waterman Trail - A ten mile trail from Three Points to Buckhorn, with a one mile side trail to Twin Peaks Saddle.
- Devil's Canyon Trail - A three and a half mile trail down into rugged Devil's Canyon.

Remember - you are a temporary visitor in the Wilderness. You can help preserve the wilderness character of the area by following a few simple rules:

- Please keep noise to a minimum. Loud noises startle wildlife and are disruptive to others.
- The use of motors or motorized vehicles of any kind is forbidden.
- Please carry out all trash. Do not dispose of trash or garbage in the Wilderness.
- Dispose of human waste by digging a hole 5-6 inches deep. After use, fill the hole with soil. Locate hole at least 200 feet from the nearest water or trail.
- Mountain Bikes are not permitted in Wilderness Areas
- Locate camps at least 200 feet from other camps and 100 feet from trails, springs or streams. Pick a place where you won't have to clear vegetation or level a tent site.
- Construction of rock walls, lean-to's and other "improvements" detract from the landscape and is prohibited.
- Cutting across trail switchbacks is dangerous and increases trail erosion. For your safety and to protect the resources, please stay on the trail.
- Keep all soaps and detergents out of streams. Wash dishes, etc. in a pot and dis pose of water at least 100 feet from stream.
- Respect the wildlife living here. Getting an opportunity to see them is just one of the many things that will make your experience even more eventful.

Remember, though, they are “wild,” so watch and enjoy from a distance!

United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region

Angeles National Forest
http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles
Issued 7/10

TRAVEL TIPS

Wilderness areas usually include rugged terrain and are not for beginning hikers. Never travel alone. Tell friends or family where you are going and when you plan to return.

Be sure to take these essential items along:

1. Sturdy boots, warm jacket and extra clothing. Layer clothing so that you can adjust to changing temperatures.
2. Canteen, water purification tablets and extra food
3. Whistle - Three blasts is a distress signal. Please use whistle only in an emergency
4. Sunglasses and sunburn protection
5. Pocket knife
6. Waterproof matches
7. Insect repellent
8. First aid and snake bite kit
9. Flashlight
10. Map and compass
11. Trowel for sanitation

Water sources such as lakes and streams may look clean and pure, but are easily contaminated. Water from these sources should be properly treated before drinking, washing hands or dishes. One recommended method is to bring clear water to a rolling boil for five minutes.

FIRES AND CAMPFIRE PERMITS

Open wood fires and barbecues are not permitted outside developed Forest Service campgrounds and picnic areas. Only portable stoves using gas, jellied petroleum or pressurized liquid fuel may be used outside developed sites, and a California Campfire permit is required for their use. Fire restrictions may be imposed during high fire danger, and no type of fire may be allowed in Wilderness areas. Free Campfire Permits and current fire restriction information may be obtained at any Forest Service office.

It is recommended that those interested in the San Gabriel Wilderness Area, contact a Forest Service Office to be sure a rec area or hiking trail is open. For other questions as well, please contact any of the following offices:

Los Angeles River Ranger District
12371 N. Little Tujunga Canyon Rd.
San Fernando, CA 91342
(818) 899-1900

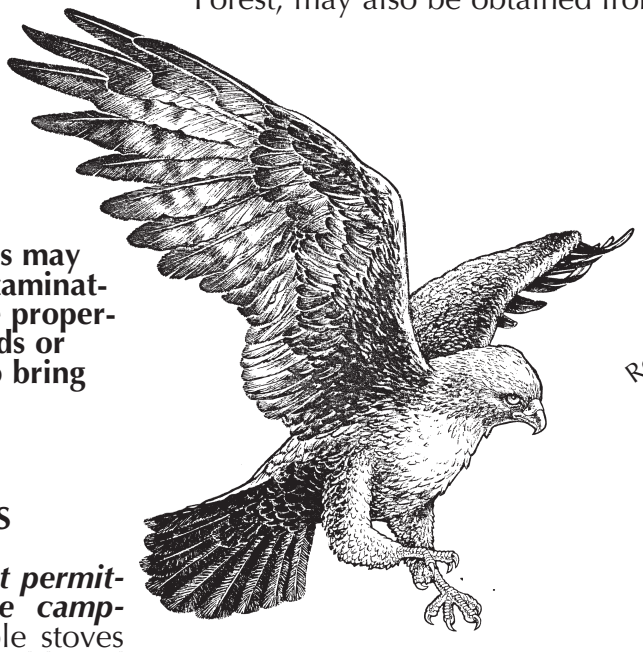
San Gabriel River Ranger District
110 N. Wabash
Glendora, CA 91740 (626) 335-1251

Chilao Visitor Center
Star Route
La Canada, CA (626) 796-5541

Angeles National Forest
701 N. Santa Anita Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91006 (626) 574-5201

Angeles National Forest website:
http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles

(Information concerning the Sheep Mountain Wilderness Area, also within Angeles National Forest, may also be obtained from these offices.)



Red-tailed hawk

Three additional Wilderness Areas are located on the San Bernardino National Forest to the east. These are the San Gorgonio, San Jacinto and Cucamonga Wilderness Areas. You may obtain more information concerning these Wilderness Areas by calling:

(909) 794-1123: San Gorgonio
(909) 659-2117: San Jacinto
(909) 887-2576: Cucamonga

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