

## Vetter Mountain (Lookout) 11F

Lat/Lon 34.2972232,-118.0286788  
UTM 11S 405334E 3795591N

Elevation: 5908'

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Vetter Mountain (Lookout) on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: Los Angeles County, about 10 miles north of Monrovia, 40 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks:

Land Manager: Angeles National Forest, San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (626) 335-1251

**USE AT YOUR OWN RISK. CONDITIONS MAY CHANGE, AND UNEXPECTED HAZARDS MAY BE PRESENT.**

### About the peak

Vetter Mountain and its iconic lookout, a drawing of which graces the cover of the HPS newsletter of the same name, is a much-loved structure with a long and interesting history that is recounted in the historical notes below. The lookout is worth a visit, especially when it is staffed by members of the Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association | ([anffla.org](#)), and there is a covered picnic area on its grounds. As expected for a fire lookout, it has excellent views of the surrounding Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains range.

Route 1 starts from Angeles Crest Highway and follows Vetter Mountain Road to the summit. Route 2 is on the more interesting Vetter Mountain Trail which starts a short distance beyond the trailhead for Route 1 (or can be walked from there if the gate is closed). There are various alternative routes and route variations. The area was badly burnt in the Station Fire and is only beginning to recover at the time of this writing (2024).

Historical Notes:

The USFS built a fire lookout here consisting of a 14' by 14' wood cab (1937). It was taken out of service in 1981 and declared an historic site, then lovingly and expensively restored plank for plank with original materials by a group of dedicated volunteers in collaboration with the Forest Service. It was then returned to service in 1998 and operated by the Angeles National Forest Fire Lookout Association in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. With the demise of the last lookouts, this structural form is now viewed with nostalgia as representing the romantic aspects of the early foresters. Mike McIntyre, Forest Archaeologist, noted "when you think of the Forest Service you think of Smokey the Bear, and the Ranger in his lookout searching for fires".

Therefore it was heartbreaking when this beloved lookout was destroyed in the 2009 Station Fire. After many fits and starts it was rebuilt in 2020 with funding from Southern California Edison in a style similar to the original and again returned to active service.

The Lookout, the HPS newsletter, is named for the Vetter lookout, with a drawing of the original lookout on the its cover.

Vetter Mountain (Lookout) has 2 official HPS routes:

## Vetter Mountain (Lookout) Route 1- Vetter Mountain Road

Distance: 3.6 miles round trip on road

Gain: 700

Time: 1 1/2 hours round trip

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Road type: Paved

Adventure Pass may be required

### Driving directions:

- From the intersection of I-210 and Angeles Crest Highway (SR 2), drive north on Angeles Crest Highway 9.5 miles to Angeles Forest Highway. Keep straight.
- Continue about 4.5 miles to the junction with the Mount Wilson Road at the Red Box Ranger Station.
- Continue on Angeles Crest Highway about 9 miles farther to the signed Charlton Flats Picnic Area on the left. Turn left (west) on 3N16.
- Drive 0.1 mile on 3N16 to a paved fork. Keep left and park in the adjacent paved parking area.

### Hiking directions:

- Follow 3N16 1.3 miles, keeping left at forks, to a dirt road barred by a gate, while the paved road goes off to the right.
- Go around the gate and hike up the dirt road to the old lookout on the summit.

### Additional Route notes:

## Vetter Mountain (Lookout) Route 2- Vetter Mountain Trail

Distance: 2.5 miles round trip on trail

Gain: 700

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Time: 2 hours round trip

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Adventure Pass may be required

Road type: Paved

### Driving directions:

- Follow the driving instructions for Route 1 to where you have turned left (west) on 3N16.
- Drive 0.1 mile to a paved fork. Turn right.
- Drive 0.6 mile farther to a picnic area on the left just before a gate. A sign on the left reads "Vetter Mountain Trail". Park here.

### Hiking directions:

- From the picnic area (5240'), cross the stream bed and follow the Silver Moccasin Trail (SMT) for about 200 yards to a fork where the SMT goes to the left.
- Go straight ahead and go through a picnic area, across a paved road, then across another paved road at a sign "Vetter Mountain Trail 11W08".
- Continue on the trail to the summit.

### Additional Route notes: