

Deer Mountain 20E

Lat/lon 34.2936162,-117.1114284
UTM 11S 489745E 3794718N

Elevation: 5536'

View Caltopo [map](#) or download [GPX](#)

Download this [pdf guide](#) or visit its official [page](#)

Deer Mountain on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: San Bernardino County, about 10 miles northwest of Fawnskin, 110 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Shay Mountain, Little Shay Mountain, Ingham Peak

Land Manager: San Bernardino National Forest, Mountaintop Ranger District (909) 382-2790

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

About the peak

Generically named Deer, another HPS nickname that stuck, overlooks beautiful Holcomb Valley and Deep Creek, with Big Bear Lake beyond.

Route 1 starts with a drive from Fawnskin on high clearance road. After crossing the PCT and Deep Creek it ascends the northwest ridge. It is affected by a closure around the creek that can be bypassed by using Route 3, which crosses further north and follows a motorcycle trail most of the way. Deep Creek can be difficult to cross in heavy rain years. Route 2 comes from the east, allowing combinations with nearby Shay Mountain, Little Shay Mountain, and Ingham Peak. Route 3 can be difficult to cross in heavy rain years.

Special conditions: The entire area is currently infested with a forest of Poodle Dog bush, to which some people are allergic.

The area is popular with deer hunters. The season begins the 2nd Saturday in October and runs for 30 days.

Peak 5805 is sometimes mistaken for Deer Mountain. It was the original HPS summit until 1958.

Peak combinations: Deer Mountain (Route 2), Shay Mountain, Little Shay Mountain, and Ingham Peak are often combined into a single hike. The key is the saddle at 6240'+, the common point for each peak when climbed from 3N41.

Deer Mountain has 3 official HPS routes:

Deer Mountain Route 1

Distance: 4 miles round trip on road, trail,
and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 1, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 1800

Time: 3-5 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: High-clearance

Driving directions:

- Head east on CA-210 E to San Bernardino
- Take exit 76 for CA-18/Waterman Ave
- At the bottom of the ramp turn left onto CA-18/N Waterman Ave
- Drive 18.2 miles on CA-18 then
- Use the left turn pocket to turn left onto CA-173
- Drive 4.3 miles on CA-173 then
- Turn right onto Torrey Rd
- Take note of odometer:
- At 0.15 mile go straight as Torrey Rd becomes Rouse Ranch Rd
- At 0.45 mile go straight and off pavement
- At 0.52 mile turn right onto Forest Rte. 2N25
- At 1.9 miles 3 way junction, make a slight left to take middle road
- At 3 miles junction with Forest Rte. 3N34D, take the hard left turn
- At 4.3 miles junction with Forest Rte. 3N38, go right to stay on 3N34D
- At 5.3 miles park at turn out before the particularly steep road section.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (4720'), hike east down the road about 1/2 mile to where a trail leaves the road on the right side.
- Go down this trail to a junction with the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) at 4240'+.
- Turn right and follow this trail about 100 yards to where another trail descends on the left into a gully.
- Descend this gully down to Deep Creek and cross the creek (wet crossing, possible high water) to the base of a ridge at UTM 887950. This point is between the words "Deep" and "Creek" on the Butler Peak topo map. This ridge is the narrow ridge just south of the gully leading to Devils Hole. Do not go too far south, as the walls of Deep Creek gorge become very steep.
- Start up the ridge (steep for the first 300'). There are prominent deer trails through the brush.
- Continue up the ridge to the summit.

Additional Route notes:

Special conditions: The edges of Deep Creek where Route 1 crosses it have been subject to closures in the past. Please check status; route 3 avoids the closure, if in effect.

Alternate route: It is possible to take the ridge to the north of Devils Hole. This ridge is not so steep initially, but the use trail is not as well defined.

Notes: A good time to climb via Route 1 is in the fall, after the weather cools, and before the rains. Deep Creek can be a major obstacle in the spring, and has significant flow even in dry periods.

Dirt roads are seasonal. Call Arrowhead Ranger District at (909) 337-2444 for information.

Deer Mountain Route 2

Distance: 12 miles round trip on road, trail,
and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 1, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 2700

Time: 6-9 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Difficult

Road type: High-clearance

Driving directions:

- From the south:
- Drive to the town of Fawnskin (east on I-10 to I-215, then north to SR 210, then east to SR 330, then north to SR 18, then east to the dam at Big Bear Lake, then north on SR 38).
- Turn left (northwest) on Rim of the World Drive 3N14 in Fawnskin (paved for first 1/2 mile). Note your odometer and go as follows:
- At 1.3 miles, fork with 2N13 to the left and 3N14 to the right. Keep right.
- At 1.8 miles, fork with Holcomb Valley Road (3N12) to the right. Keep left.
- At 2.0 miles, Hanna Flat with 2N68 to the left. Go right.
- At 4.4 miles, stream crossing and a junction with 3N93 to the left and 3N08 to the right. Go straight.
- At 6.0 miles, fork with 3N97 to the left. Go right.
- At 6.9 miles, junction with 3N16 at Big Pine Flat. Keep straight.
- At 7.0 miles, entrance to Big Pine Flat Campground. Keep straight.
- At 10.5 miles, junction with 3N41 on the left. Go left if the gate is open, otherwise park here..
- At 10.9 miles, parking area just short of a locked gate. Park here.
- From the north:
- Drive east on I-10 and north on I-15 to the Hesperia turnoff.
- Go east on Main Street in Hesperia for 7.2 miles to the "Y" junction of Rock Springs Road (on the left) and Arrowhead Lake Road (the main road continuing on the right). Turn left (east) on Rock Springs Road. Note your odometer and go as follows:
- At 2.9 miles, Kiowa Way on the left. Continue straight as Rock Springs Road becomes Roundup Way.
- At 5.9 miles, pavement ends. Continue east.
- At 7.3 miles, intersection with the Bowen Ranch Road. Turn right (south).
- At 8.2 miles, fork. Keep left.
- At 9.4 miles, junction with Coxe Truck Trail (3N14), turn left. This is the turnoff for Round Mountain and one of the Luna Mountain routes. Note your odometer again and go as follows:
- Drive 4.4 miles, pass through a gate.

- At 7.3 miles at the juncture with 4N16 continue south on 3N14 for another two miles to parking area.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (5860'), hike south past the gate, following the old roadbed about 1.2 miles to a wide flat area beyond the site of Hawes Ranch, signed "Muddy Springs - 3".
- Follow the Muddy Springs Trail west for 1 1/2 miles to saddle 6240'+. Note that the trail has been re-routed from the track shown on the topo. It now swings north to the saddle west of bump 6212', then traverses gently south to the saddle.
- Continue west on trail, downhill at first and then through a series of ups and downs as the trail contours along the south slopes of Shay Mountain, for about 1 1/2 miles to where the trail reaches the final saddle north of peak 5805'. (This saddle has the first close, expansive view of Deep Creek canyon to the west.)
- Leave the trail here and go south along the ridge, up and over "Old Deer Mountain" (5805'). There is usually a register here. Drop down to the saddle just north of Deer Mountain, then up to the summit.

Additional Route notes:

Deer Mountain Route 3

Distance: 6 miles round trip on road, trail,
and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 1, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass maAdventure Pass may be
required be requiredes

Gain: 2100

Time: 5-7 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: Dirt

Driving directions:

- Head east on CA-210 E to San Bernardino
- Take exit 76 for CA-18/Waterman Ave
- At the bottom of the ramp turn left onto CA-18/N Waterman Ave
- Drive 18.2 miles on CA-18 then
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- At 5.3 miles park at turn out before the particularly steep road section.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (4620'), continue to follow 3N34D for 1.1 miles as the road goes down to Deep Creek.
- Find a way to cross Deep Creek and then look for the motorcycle trail and an old fence opening.
- Hike about 300 feet take the abandoned motorcycle trail ascending up to the north east.
- Follow the abandoned motorcycle trail for 1 mile to the 5200' contour.
- Follow the 5200' contour to the southeast as it descends into a major gully.
- Cross the gully and climb the ridge, keep the large interesting rock pile to the left.
- Near the top of the ridge drop down into the drainage on the south side of the ridge.
- In the drainage hike south to the saddle point of the saddle on east side of Deer Mountain.
- From the saddle hike up the ridge to the west southwest to summit Deer Mountain.

Additional Route notes:

Note: Dirt roads are seasonal. Call Big Bear Ranger District at (909) 866-3437 for information.