

Birch Mountain 25B

Lat/Lon 34.0761233,-116.9475278
UTM 11S 504841E 3770598N

Elevation: 7826'

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

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Birch Mountain on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: San Bernardino County, about 6 miles northeast of Yucaipa, 81 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Allen Peak, Cedar Mountain, Wilshire Peak, Wilshire Mountain, Little San Gorgonio Peak

Land Manager: San Bernardino National Forest, Front Country Ranger District (909) 382-2851

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

About the peak

Birch is one stop along the Yucaipa Ridge for those who are doing the demanding “Yucaipa Ridge Traverse” from Little San Gorgonio to Allen, but it is a pretty and worthy hike by itself or combined with Allen Peak.

Route 1 is a moderate route that starts from the west from the Bearpaw Preserve on excellent trail to the Yucaipa Ridge, then east to the peak. A side trip to Allen Peak is typical. Route 2 comes from Cedar Mountain in the east, as part of the Yucaipa Ridge Traverse that starts at Little San Gorgonio and ends at Bearpaw with a car shuttle.

Special conditions: The Yucaipa Ridge Traverse continues west down the Yucaipa Ridge to the Allen-Birch saddle and to the west shuttle parking area. This route crosses private property and permission must be obtained well in advance of the day of the hike.

Alternate routes: It is possible to descend north from the Birch Mountain-Cedar Mountain saddle to Forest Falls. The descent starts in the easternmost part of the saddle and descends on an eastern diagonal to the gully. Stay high on the ridge until it runs out, and then descend into the gully to take advantage of the scree slope. If you encounter brush you are too far to the west. There is no brush if the proper descent route is used. This route should be used by experienced hikers only. The route goes across and down steep rocky slopes where rock fall can be very dangerous. This route can be used without permission from private landowners. The driving instructions for where the route ends in Forest Falls are as follows:

Turn right (east) on The Valley of Falls Drive. (See Route 1). This is 6.5 miles past Mill Creek Ranger Station on SR 38.

Drive 1.4 miles east on The Valley of the Falls Drive and turn right onto Prospect Drive.

Drive southwest on Prospect Drive about 0.1 mile to near the intersection of Mountain View Road. Park here. You will exit the gully near this spot.

The USGS topo shows a trail starting at Pilgrim Pines Camp in Oak Glen and going up to a point near Cedar Mountain. This trail crosses private property and must be used only with permission. Call Pilgrim Pines at (562) 335-7697 for permission.

Special permissions:

Both routes pass through land owned by the Wildlands Conservancy, which manages the Oak Glen Preserve and Bear Paw Preserve. You must request permission to hike here at least five days in advance. You can submit a request online at wildlandsconservancy.org/preserves/bearpaw. You may also reach the manager by calling (909) 790-3698 or emailing the Bearpaw Preserve at MountainPreserves@twc-ca.org. The manager will send you a liability waiver form for all leaders and participants to fill out, sign, and leave at the trailhead when they start their hike, and the current gate code to enter the preserve. There are bathrooms at the parking area.

Birch Mountain has 2 official HPS routes:

Birch Mountain Route 1

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: 3300

Time: 6 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take I-10 east past San Bernardino to the Orange Street exit in Redlands (SR 38).
- Go one block east, then go north (left) 0.5 mile to Lugonia Avenue. Turn right on SR 38 (east).
- Continue on SR 38 14.2 miles to Valley of the Falls Road junction (Forest Falls Road). Park here. If you have permission and the gate code from the Bearpaw Preserve you may continue on rough dirt road to the Preserve parking area where there is a bathroom.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area hike across Mill Creek to the south on 1S08.
- Hike up 1S08 through privately owned land 2.6 miles to 1S09 (Yucaipa Ridge Truck Trail) at the Allen-Birch saddle (5160'+).
- Turn left and hike east on 1S09 approximately 1.8 miles to a saddle at 6160'+. At the saddle there is a trail on the left called the Oak Glen Divide Trail.
- Turn left and hike up this trail 1.4 miles. At this point the summit of Birch Mountain will be on your right to the southeast and about 200' above the trail.
- Turn right and hike up the southeast trending ridge to the summit. Use care when descending this route, as you want to go down the trail on the west trending ridge and not down the trailless northwest trending ridge.

Additional Route notes:

Birch route 1 and much of the Yucaipa Ridge is within the Bearpaw Preserve, owned and operated by the Wildlands Conservancy. You can find more information about the preserve at wildlandsconservancy.org/preserves/bearpaw.

The Preserve encourages hiking on its land but you must make arrangements in advance.

Email the Preserve at sbmountains@wildlandsconservancy.org or call the manager of the Oak Glen Preserve and Bear Paw Preserve Evan Welsh at (909) 790-3698. You will receive an e-mail that contains a liability waiver form, which private hikers or leaders fill out individually and return at the trailhead. Call him back on the Friday before the hike to get the current gate code, if one wishes to park next to the bathrooms.

The usual Yucaipa Ridge Traverse car shuttle route starts at Vivian Creek Trailhead and finishes at Bear Paw Preserve.

Birch Mountain Route 2- from Cedar Mountain

Distance: 1.8 miles one way on trail and cross-country from Cedar Mountain, 12 miles round trip from Little San Gorgonio
Gain: 300
Time: 1 hour one way
Difficulty rating: Class 1, very strenuous when combined with other peaks in the area
Navigation difficulty: Moderate
Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)
Road type: Dirt
Adventure Pass may be required

Driving directions:

- See the driving instructions for Route 1 above and Little San Gorgonio Peak Route 1. This route assumes that you are hiking each peak along this section of Yucaipa Ridge (5 peaks) from east to west.

Hiking directions:

- From Cedar Mountain, hike west and then northwest down the ridge following the route of the trail shown on the topo map until you reach the saddle just east of Birch Mountain.
- Leave the trail here and hike up the ridge to the summit.

Additional Route notes:

From Cedar Mountain, part of the Yucaipa Ridge Traverse.