

Cornell Peak 27G- Star Emblem Peak

Lat/lon 33.8133519,-116.6619609
UTM 11S 531285E 3741512N

Elevation: 9750'

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Cornell Peak on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: Riverside County, about 8 miles west of Palm Springs, 112 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: San Jacinto Peak, Folly Peak, Jean Peak, Marion Mountain, Drury Peak

Land Manager: San Bernardino National Forest, San Jacinto Ranger District (909) 382-2921

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

About the peak

Cornell and its dramatic rocky summit, though not visible from all directions, calls out to the adventurer when it peeks out on the way from the tram, or from San Jacinto and the other peaks in the area.

The base of the peak can be reached from the tram via Round Valley as Route 1, from Idyllwild as Route 2, and from the tram and Tamarack Valley as Route 3. These routes converge in a rocky second class scramble to the summit block which requires good route finding skills. If you reach the register, you have reached the point where official HPS outings end and you can claim your peak; climbing further up the third class summit block is not required.

Special conditions: There is moderate class 2 climbing on good rock with some exposure to reach the register, which is at the base of the third class summit block. Inexperienced climbers should not attempt the summit block. This section can be quite hazardous in high wind conditions.

Temperatures are 30 to 40 degrees cooler on the peak than on the valley floor. Hikers should dress accordingly.

Wilderness permits are required under all circumstances. Permits for day hikes can be obtained from the Long Valley ranger station (near the tram) for Route 1. For Route 2, they may be obtained at Idyllwild Ranger Station, as can permits for backpacking. Permits are limited to 12 hikers. The Idyllwild Ranger Station is just off SR 243 at 54270 Pine Crest Road. There is a self-issue permit stand outside of the ranger station. Permits may be obtained in advance from:

San Jacinto Ranger District

54270 Pinecrest

P.O. Box 518

Idyllwild, CA 92549

Voice: (909) 382-2921

Fax: (951) 659-2107

Historical note: The peak lies within the Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness, which encompasses most of Mount San Jacinto State Park. In addition, the peak lies within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument created in 2000.

Cornell Peak has 3 official HPS routes:

Cornell Peak Route 1- From Palm Springs Tramway

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

Difficulty rating: Class 2, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Gain: 1800

Time: 3-5 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take I-10 east past Banning to the junction with SR 111.
- Take SR 111 southeast 8.5 miles to the Palm Springs Tramway Road. Turn right.
- Go up this road 3.7 miles to its end and park in the tramway parking lot.

Hiking directions:

- Take the tram (fee required) to the upper station at 8560'. Go downstairs and exit the building. Follow the concrete sidewalk as it descends to the valley below.
- Continue straight ahead 200 yards to a ranger station. Pick up a day hike permit here (remember to sign out here on the return).
- Continue about 1/4 mile to a trail junction with a sign "Round Valley - 2".
- Keep right and continue 2 miles to the water station spigot at the main trail junction in Round Valley Campground.
- Continue north past this trail junction for 1/2 mile to Tamarack Valley.
- Upon reaching a trail junction at the Tamarack Valley sign, follow the trail on the left and hike north through the campsites onto the steep slopes of the peak visible straight ahead.
- Aim slightly to the right of the apparent summit area, passing rock barriers generally on their east side until you discern the main ridgeline ahead.
- When you reach the ridge, turn left (west) toward the summit and scramble to the base of the summit block on its east side. Here is a foot wide chimney with a chock stone wedged in it about 10' up. The register should be located at the base of the chimney. It is not necessary to climb the remaining third class segment to claim the peak.

Additional Route notes:

Note: Trailhead is at top of Palm Springs Tramway; fee required.

Cornell Peak Route 2- Devils Slide Trail

Distance: 16 miles round trip on trail and cross-country with class 2 climbing

Difficulty rating: Class 2, strenuous

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 4600

Time: 8-10 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Drive to Idyllwild.
- From the Chevron Station in Idyllwild, go northeast on North Circle Drive for 0.8 mile to South Circle Drive. Turn right.
- Go 0.1 mile to Fern Valley Road. Turn left.
- Go 1.8 miles to the loop at the end of the road in Humber Park. Park here.

Hiking directions:

- From Humber Park (6480'), hike up the Devils Slide Trail to Saddle Junction at 8080'. This is a multiple trail junction.
- Take the far left trail and continue up to Wellman Divide.
- Take trail downhill to the right (east) to Round Valley.
- Keep right and continue 2 miles to the water station spigot at the main trail junction in Round Valley Campground.
- Continue north past this trail junction for 1/2 mile to Tamarack Valley.
- Upon reaching a trail junction at the Tamarack Valley sign, follow the trail on the left and hike north through the campsites onto the steep slopes of the peak visible straight ahead.
- Aim slightly to the right of the apparent summit area, passing rock barriers generally on their east side until you discern the main ridgeline ahead.
- When you reach the ridge, turn left (west) toward the summit and scramble to the base of the summit block on its east side. Here is a foot wide chimney with a chock stone wedged in it about 10' up. The register should be located at the base of the chimney. It is not necessary to climb the remaining third class segment to claim the peak.

Additional Route notes:

Cornell Peak Route 3

Distance: 4 miles round trip on trail and cross-country with class 2 rock

Difficulty rating: Class 2, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Gain: 1600

Time: 2-4 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take I-10 east past Banning to the junction with SR 111.
- Take SR 111 southeast 8.5 miles to the Palm Springs Tramway Road. Turn right.
- Go up this road 3.7 miles to its end and park in the tramway parking lot.

Hiking directions:

- Take the tram (fee required) to the upper station at 8560'. Go downstairs and exit the building. Follow the concrete sidewalk as it descends to the valley below.
- Continue straight ahead 200 yards to a ranger station. Pick up a day hike permit here (remember to sign out here on the return).
- Continue about 1/4 mile to a trail junction with a sign "Round Valley - 2".
- Take the Round Valley turnoff and continue another 1/4 mile to where the trail crosses the stream. There is usually a sign here telling hikers they must have a permit. Prior to crossing the stream there is a use trail on your right (west).
- Turn right (west) and follow the use trail to Tamarack Valley.
- Upon reaching a trail junction at the Tamarack Valley sign, follow the trail on the left and hike north through the campsites onto the steep slopes of the peak visible straight ahead.
- Aim slightly to the right of the apparent summit area, passing rock barriers generally on their east side until you discern the main ridgeline ahead.
- When you reach the ridge, turn left (west) toward the summit and scramble to the base of the summit block on its east side. Here is a foot wide chimney with a chock stone wedged in it about 10' up. The register should be located at the base of the chimney. It is not necessary to climb the remaining third class segment to claim the peak.

Additional Route notes:

Note: Trailhead is at top of Palm Springs Tramway; fee required.

