

BOOT 'N BLISTER REUNION TRIP OCTOBER 8-10, 2004

KING RANGE, MATTOLE RIVER TO COOSKIE CREEK VIA PUNTA GORDA

Last year, on the Pear Lake hike, folks thought it was time for something farther north and somethign lower down. We keep not doing the Kings Range because the drive is a bit much, but it ins't getting any closer and Janet said she'd go if we waited until after her anniversary; we have do wait until after mine too, now (which just past).

Last year, the Boot 'n Blister hike was led by Ralph Holsinger and we went to Kings Canyon National Park. This was one of the more well-attended BnB trips we've had in years. There were about 20 of us on it. The group consisted of Rick and Jeanine Robinson, Mike Diggles, Deanna Clayton-Diggles, Maurie Hamilton, Mali Nuno, Chris and Carol Rush, Roger, Katie, and Ken Willmarth and Katie's husband, Alan Green, Michael Altabet, Jeannie McGurk and her sister Mary Conway, Jay Stuart, Ralph and Rusty Holsinger, Marvin Goss and Dancine Disilverie. See <http://diggles.50megs.com/bnb/2003/BnB2003b.html> for a photo essay.



Group shot before the Pear Lake hike, 2003

This year we'll go on a beach hike. I'm not providing an elevation profile or beginning-ending elevations. We start at zero, stay and zero, and end at zero! The trip as planned is six miles down Saturday and the same six back Sunday. You can stop anywhere there is (fresh) water, of course (shorter or farther). It is 33 miles to Shelter Cove. Spanish Bottom is 11 miles down; Ron and I did that a few decades ago.

We'll meet at Mattole River Recreation Site, the beach trailhead west of Petrolia Friday night, October 8 and hike south a few miles the next day. This roadhead has a chemical toilet, campground, and a picnic area.

DRIVING:

From the south, leave Highway 101 at South Fork/Honeydew exit, Milepost 36.1 from north, Milepost 35.5 from south. Take Mattole Road west 23 miles to Honeydew, then turn right and follow Mattole Road 14 more miles to Lighthouse Road just before Petrolia. Go left on Lighthouse Road about 5 miles to its end at the beach. From the north, go to Ferndale and over the Wildcat to Petrolia.

HIKING:



Maralyn, Georgia, Chuck, and Jay at the roadhead, 1966

We'll have to check the tides; it is a lot easier to walk on wet sand on low tide. There are places where you have to go up on the hill to get around rocks at high tide also. Remember when you pitch your tent at the mouth of a canyon to put your door towards the ocean; the wind comes down at night and will fill up your tent like a balloon if you aim it the other way. I know; Wes Johnson and I found out the hard way 35 years ago.

The following is excerpted from http://gorp.away.com/gorp/location/ca/lost_co2.htm

From the trailhead at the end of Lighthouse Road, you can pick up the California Coastal Trail (CCT) by either walking due west to the sideline and following the dark sand beach south, or heading south-southwest along an old jeep track near the base of the bluffs. The latter choice

shortens the distance by about 1/8 mile, but offers less firm footing, important if you're carrying a backpack.

Pass a seasonal creek dropping from the steep bluffs at 3/4 mile. Beyond 1-1/8 miles you pass the more reliable creek of Smith Gulch usually jammed with wildflowers. Round a sandy point rimmed by tidepools at 1-1/4 miles. The bluffs protrude at Windy Point just beyond. The beach narrows and gets rockier as more seasonal streams drop to the beach.

At 2 miles you round the westernmost point of Punta Gorda where Conical Rock lies offshore. As you pass an old road descending from the bluffs at 2-1/2 miles, the Punta Gorda lighthouse ruins come into view. For a break from beach walking you can follow a firm roadbed along the base of the bluffs.



Gerry, Chuck, and Georgia, 1966

Pass two cabins on the first of several private inholdings before Fourmile Creek at 2-5/8 miles. Beyond the ford the Cooskie Creek Trail forks left, climbing east along a ridge. This Alternate Route is a CCT high route, the first of three CCT high routes on the trail. (The other two are in Big Sur and the Santa Monica Mountains. CCT continues down the coast on a firm track across grassy bluffs, passing crumbling ranch buildings. Gorda Rock lies offshore.

At 3 miles a path forks left to the lighthouse ruins. The light station, built after the wreck of the Columbia claimed 87 lives here in 1907, guided ships along this windswept, fogbound coast for 40 years. Today only the squat concrete tower remains. BLM razed the other buildings in 1970.

Continue down the coast on the old jeep road, crossing several more creeks Beyond Willow Creek at 3-1/2 miles you can return to the beach or climb a hill to stay on the road. The road

provides one more chance to return to the beach at 3-3/4 miles. Either route comes to steep Sea Lion Gulch at 4 miles. Its gully offers a water source and shelter from the wind. Sea lions, cormorants and pelicans inhabit Sea Lion Rocks offshore.



Wayne and Cynthia, 1976

The beach narrows after the gulch. Around 4-1/2 miles the beach may be impassable at high tide. When you pass through the narrow spot, slippery rocks of uneven sizes slow your progress. After you pass a barn and cabin above the beach at 4-3/4 miles, the walking becomes easier at the base of steep bluffs and cliffs.

At 6 miles you reach the broad deep canyon of Cooskie Creek. Sheltered camps lie within 1/4 mile up the canyon. [I thought we would camp on the north side of the creek so we wouldn't have to cross it. it may be so low that it doesn't matter (Mike D.)] The Cooskie Creek Trail crosses the creek about 3/4 mile upstream with private property not far beyond.

If you're game for some steep hiking, you might return on the Cooskie Creek Trail which offers rewarding views.

GEOLOGY

Bob McLaughlin and others (<http://geopubs.wr.usgs.gov/map-mf/mf2336/> USGS MF-2366, 2000) assign the rocks as melange of the Coast Ranges Province, Franciscan Complex, Coastal Belt, Coastal terrane (Pliocene to Late Cretaceous)). From road it consists of subequal amounts of shattered sandstone and argillite with much clayey, penetratively sheared rock. At Cooskie Creek we get into thin-bedded, highly folded, predominantly argillitic sequences.



Sunset at the mouth of the Mattole River, 1976

NEXT YEAR

Perhaps it is time to go back to the Klamath Mountains again for 2005. Perhaps the Marble Mountains instead of the Trinities this trip? Let me know your thoughts.



Pear Lake camp, 2003

--Mike and Deanna

<mailto:mike@diggles.com> <http://www.diggles.com/bnb/>

124°21.000' W

124°20.000' W

124°19.000' W

124°18.000' W

WGS84 124°17.000' W

40°18.000' N

40°18.000' N

40°17.000' N

40°17.000' N

40°16.000' N

40°16.000' N

40°15.000' N

40°15.000' N

40°14.000' N

40°14.000' N

40°13.000' N

40°13.000' N

124°21.000' W

124°20.000' W

124°19.000' W

124°18.000' W

WGS84 124°17.000' W

1/8" = 1 MI
1/32" = 100 METERS

0 1000 FEET 0 500 1000 METERS

Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

TOPO! map printed on 09/09/04 from "Untitled.tpo"

