

at Joshua Tree National Park

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Summit Monument Peak

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, December 7, 8 am – Late Afternoon
Meet at: Cottonwood Visitor Center
Cottonwood exit off of Highway 10
Instructor: Kevin Powell, Guidebook Author, Photographer

Overview

This strenuous, cross country hike takes you to the top of the seldom visited high point of the Hexie Mountains, Monument Mountain (elev. 4814'). The Hexie Mountains are a small range of west to east running mountains within the Park. They begin at the southern end of the sprawling Queen Valley along the Geology Tour Road and end near the Cottonwood Visitors Center. They are rugged and seldom visited. This 6.4 mile round trip hike follows the southeast ridge of the mountain up to the base of the rocky, cone shaped summit, where an easy rock scramble leads to the top. Along the route of ascent you may see bighorn sheep, a non-native game bird known as a chukar (similar to a quail) and a unique geologic feature in the form of a white quartz dike that has fragmented into a million little pieces. Once on top there is a commanding 360 degree view that includes the Cottonwood, Eagle and Pinto Mountains, and portions of the vast Pinto Basin. Total elevation gain is 1700'. **Participants will need a high clearance vehicle for the 5 mile drive to the trail head. Carpooling will be necessary due to the very small parking area. Closed toe hiking shoes required**

Itinerary

Saturday, December 7, 8 am – Late Afternoon
Cottonwood Visitor Center

- Introduction
- Caravan to the trailhead
- Field class
- Lunch/snack break, **bring your own food**
- Field class

What to Bring to the Course

Optional Class Materials

- 7.5" USGS Washington Wash quad
- Compass
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Field guides

The 10 Essentials: Every day in the Desert

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Closed toe hiking shoes
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Strenuous/Extreme - 6.4 miles round trip

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Only you know your limits, please let the instructor or Desert Institute Representative know if you do not want to continue. This is a long hike; only go if you are confident in your balance and scrambling skills.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

KEVIN POWELL, Local Author and Photographer was intrigued at an early age by the quiet complexity of this unique desert playground. As a result of this intrigue, he has spent forty-six years hiking, rock climbing, photographing and exploring within Joshua Tree National Park. His first book, 40 Classic Day Hikes of Joshua Tree National Park, is available at Park Visitor Centers and through local retailers.

* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant's needs, however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.