

Hiking In the Shadow of Quail Mountain

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, December 11, 7:00 am – Late Afternoon

Meet at: [6573 Park Blvd, Joshua Tree, CA](#) (click on link for a map of the meeting site)

Instructor: Travis Puglisi, Hike Leader

Overview

Joshua Tree National Park's highest peak, Quail Mountain (5,816'), is a feature that dominates much of the landscape in the Park's western reaches. Connecting no less than four distinct zones of JTNP (Covington Flats, East Deception Canyon, Lost Horse Valley, and the Quail Wash corridor, the areas surrounding the peak also connect the present to the past by containing several observable signs of early settlers. Examples include Lost Horse Ranger Station, formerly a private residence, Johnny Lang Canyon, and other notable homesteads.

Apart from the structural remains of history, participants will also encounter dumping left by park homesteaders which provide a window into their day to day and craft of the era, areas of thriving cryptobiotic soil crusts, and fascinating alcoves that serve as ideal zones for animal inhabitation (coyote and fox). The heart of the outing will bring hikers to the south end of Johnny Lang Canyon and then up to a ridgeline that provides commanding views of Juniper Flats, Lost Horse Valley to the East, and the topographical variance as the terrain descends to the south towards Desert Hot Springs. Both Mt. San Jacinto and Mt. San Gorgonio will dominate the western horizon.

This hike will be mostly cross country, with occasional use made of roads, both existing and abandoned.

Itinerary

Saturday, December 11, 7:00 am – Early Afternoon

Across the street from the Joshua Tree Visitor Center

- Introductions
- Safety Check
- Field Class
- Snack Break
- Field Class

- Lunch (bring your own lunch)
- Field Class

What to Bring to the Course

Optional Class Materials

- 7.5" USGS Indian Cove & Keys View quads
- Compass/GPS device
- Camera
- Binoculars
- Field guides
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Suggested Reading/Listening

- In the Shadow of the Palms Vol. 1 by Art Kidwell
- [Geology of Joshua Tree National Park with Tor Lacy](#)

The 10 Essentials: **Every day in the Desert**

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Closed toe hiking shoes-**No sandals or equivalent**
- 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

Moderate, 9.5 miles round trip. 1005' Elevation Gain/Loss. Very limited rock scrambling, with most elevation gain happening in a very gradual fashion. *Please call if you have questions concerning your rock scrambling/hiking abilities.*

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. 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

TRAVIS PUGLISI, Owner/Operator and Lead Guide for Wandering Mojave Hiking Services, is a 20 year resident of the Mojave Desert and logs nearly 200 miles annually on foot within the boundaries of Joshua Tree National Park. Over the years and miles, Travis has cultivated an awareness of landscape, ecological systems, and local culture that when contextualized by the trail becomes a story he is committed to sharing with new and returning park visitors.

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