

## USE AT YOUR OWN RISK

### Little Pine Mountain 4,459'

Location: North of Santa Barbara  
Maps: Los Padres National Forest  
Topo: San Marcos Pass and Little Pine Mountain 7.5

**Primary Route:** 6 miles o/w, 3,400' gain

#### **Driving Instruction:**

In Santa Barbara, exit Fwy.101 on Hwy. 154, leading to San Marcos Pass, and drive 11 miles to Paradise Road on your right. Turn right and continue for 6 mi on Paradise Road past several campgrounds and a Ranger Station to a stream crossing. Continue another mile to Upper Oso Campground. Park at the end of the campground, in front of the locked gate and trail board.

#### **Hiking Instructions:**

The trailhead here is signed. Start hiking on the road which is a popular ORV route. After hiking 0.6 miles turn off the road at the sign 'Santa Cruz Trail' to your left. Parallel Oso Creek for a mile through the canyon passing a junction with a side trail to Nineteen Oaks Camp. Keep to the left, cross the stream and take switch-backs up the brush covered slope. Soon the trail passes a grassy area and follows a ridge line, then goes along the side of a rocky overhanging wall. Now the switchbacks start again. One of the little side canyons has a sign: 'Stock Water' (usually dry). Continue through another open area to the saddle where there is one more sign. To the left (west) a ½ mile use trail leads to Alexander Peak. The Santa Cruz trail continues downhill. Take the trail to the right (east). Follow the 'Trail' sign and hike uphill a few switchbacks. Keep right at an old wire gate/fence. Continue on this trail to the open grassy summit. The register, in addition to a geocache box, is in the center of an old oak tree. Either return the same way, or take the same trail you came, but downhill the opposite side. Soon you reach a large dirt turn around with a picnic table and a road. This is the Happy Hollow Guard Station. Continue on the road for 1/8 mile to another sign on your left (west) 'Santa Cruz Trail'. Take this trail to the wire gate/fence mentioned above. This area is wooded and very pretty.

#### **Notes:**

This summit is NOT the highest point at 4,506', but the highest reachable point at 4,459' and (what is left of) the USGS marker is located here. The highest point lies ½ mile to the east and is inaccessible because of extreme heavy brush.

National Forest Adventure Pass required.

Water available at the campground and at Oso Creek, the stock water is unreliable.

In spring the road to Upper Oso Campground is flooded at times and closed. Call the Los Prietos Ranger Station (805) 967-3481 for info.

Little Pine Mountain is the first Peak in a long chain of higher peaks: West Big Pine and Big Pine, both on the HPS List. The Santa Cruz Trail leads into the San Rafael Wilderness and is well maintained. It offers incredible views and a display of wildflowers during spring.

**Reference:** Raymond Ford, Jr.: Santa Barbara Day Hikes

Write-up: Gabriele Rau May 2001, rev. 2004, 2006