

## USE AT YOUR OWN RISK

### Mastodon Peak

3,371'

Location: Joshua Tree National Monument, Riverside County, 6 m N of I-10  
Maps: AAA Riverside County  
Topo: Cottonwood Spring 7.5 or 15

**Primary Route:** 3 miles R/T loop, 400' gain

#### **Driving Instruction:**

Take I-10 east about 23 miles past the turn-off to Indio to the southern entrance to Joshua Tree National Park, the Cottonwoods Spring Road. Turn left (North) and continue 7 miles to the Cottonwood Springs Visitor Center and pay entrance fee. From here drive SE on a paved road to the Cottonwood Springs day use area (elev. 2975').

#### **Hiking Instructions:**

The signed trail passes immediately Cottonwood Springs, a small Cottonwood Oasis. After about ½ miles the Lost Palms Trail leads right, but use the left fork to climb Mastodon Peak. A short spur leads to the summit. Splendid views of the southern Joshua Tree Area! Continue on the trail past the old mine shafts to Winona, the site of an old village; then take the left fork to the parking area.

#### **Alternate Route:**

The hike is easier and more scenic starting on the Nature Trail. From the Parking lot walk back up the road to the Nature Trail, turn right over a small hill into a wash. About ½ miles up the trail the Nature Trail starts uphill, stay in the wash and pass the Winona Mill site. Approx. 1/8 miles farther the trail turns right (West), leaving the wash going uphill. Shortly the 'whole Mastodon' will be in sight. Follow the trail up and over the Mastodon Mine, quickly coming to a T-intersection, turn left (North) onto the short spur to climb the peak.

#### **Notes:**

No water on route. Mastodon Mine was a gold mine and was worked intermittently from 1919 to 1932. The gold was of high quality, but the main body was cut off by a fault. The Winona Mill side was still active in the 1920's. Another historical place is Mortons's Mill, to the south of the parking area, reached via the Chilcoot Pass named after the famous Goldrush Pass in the Yukon. In rainy years the wildflowers are spectacular in the area.

**Near-by Peaks:** Keys Peak, Mt. Mel

**References:** John McKinney: LA Times Article

Original: Bob Sumner 1988

Alternate Route: Charlotte Gulsby 1993