





JOHNS MEADOW

- Hike Length:** 5.5 miles round trip; 600' elevation gain
Difficulty: Easy
Season: May–November
Topo map: *Big Bear Lake (7.5')*,
San Gorgonio Wilderness (Tom Harrison)
Permit: San Gorgonio Wilderness Permit required

Features

Johns Meadow is a popular family destination for a picnic lunch or easy backpack. It offers a taste of the San Gorgonio Wilderness without the steep climbs required to reach the high mountains. The hike visits lush forest with several small creeks. Quiet hikers will come across squirrels, lizards, and birds. In midsummer, it features wonderful wildflowers and berries, especially where it crosses the creeks. The berries include blue currants (resembling small blueberries with crunchy seeds and a tart taste), small red currants, spikey red gooseberries (tasty if you can get around the thorns), and



Gooseberries

thimbleberries (red and delicious when ripe, related to raspberries and blackberries). Keep your eyes out for lupine, Indian paintbrush, ferns, and penstemon.

Description

From Redlands drive east on State Highway 38 to the Jenks Lake turn-off, just before mile marker 038 SBD 25.51. Turn right (southeast). After 0.3 mile turn right again onto a fair dirt road where a sign reads FORSEE CREEK TRAIL. Drive 0.5 mile to the large parking area at the trailhead (**GPS SB46**).

The trail starts steeply up the hillside. Pass the Wilderness boundary marker in 0.3 mile. After another 0.1 mile, reach a signed junction. Turn right, toward Johns Meadow. The other path leads to Jackstraw Springs and up to the crest of the mountains (see Hike 48).

The trail now contours westward around the mountainside. It crosses Stetson Creek and another small creek, then climbs gently to a small saddle, 1.8 miles from the junction. Switchback steeply down to Forsee Creek for 0.5 mile. The slope beyond Forsee Creek was scoured by a snow avalanche in 2005, leaving a jumble of twisted tree trunks and debris. 0.1 mile later, arrive at Johns Meadow on a small bench (**GPS SB46A**).

Numerous tent sites are scattered across the bench. The trail becomes ill-defined as it wanders through the sites, but becomes clear again on the southwest side where it crosses another creek. Retrace your steps from Johns Meadow. Or continue up the unmaintained and partially overgrown trail beyond the creek 1.5 miles to Manzanita Springs and on down the San Bernardino Peak Trail to Angelus Oaks (see Hike 48). This requires a car shuttle.