

China Flat Trail

The Trail: The trail has two entry points off of Lindero Canyon Road. One is at the northern end of King James Court. There is only room for a few cars at that trailhead. The other entrance is at the eastern side of the wash on the northern side of Lindero Canyon Road immediately east of King James Court.

The trail uses an old ranch road to and from China Flat. It begins at an elevation of approximately 1400'. After about the first quarter of a mile up the remainder of the hike to China Flat is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. The trail also extends east and connects with the Rock Ridge East Trail. At its high point (2179') of the trail is the remnant of an old ranch gate. From that point the trail descends to China Flat. The trail from Lindero Canyon Road is roughly 1.3 miles.

The Geology: The entire area is underlain by the Chatsworth Formation, which is of marine sandstone of late Cretaceous age. The sand, which was consolidated over the last 66 million years, is made up of light gray to light brown sandstone, hard, coherent, akosic, micaceous and mostly medium grained.

Plant Life: The Simi Hills suffered a catastrophic wildfire during 2018. The entire area involving the China Flat Trail was burned. My walkover was conducted on April 30 and May 8, 2020. So more than a year and a half had passed since the fire. So, the vegetation along the trails was experiencing very rapid plant succession. What I describe herein is not what will be seen one, two or ten years from now. From the tract homes, some of which has been destroyed by the fire, for less than a quarter of a mile up the slopes, it appears that the land will revert to a coastal sage scrub plant association. From there to the top of the ridge it appeared that the climax plant association will be chaparral. Time will tell. In any case vegetation was a magnificent bloom of flowers and scents.

The plant types encountered as I walked up the trailhead on Lindero Canyon Road included bush sunflower, telegraph weed, chaparral yucca, laurel sumac, morning glory (which were in perfusion), arroyo willow, California everlasting, popcorn flower, prickly lettuce, purple nightshade, yellow monkey flower, cliff aster, coast live oak, Spanish clover, Mediterranean and black mustards, California buckwheat, California sagebrush, chamise, tree tobacco (from Brazil and very toxic), golden yarrow, horehound, yerba santa, prickly poppy, red-stem and long-beaked filaree, purple owl's clover, arroyo, stinging and bicolored lupines, blue dicks, yellow star thistle, scarlet pimpernel, rose snapdragon, prickly plox, Braunton's milk vetch (state and federal endangered species), chaparral nolina, bush monkey flower, wild oats, giant rye, and yellow sweet clover.

Animal Life: Animals that may be seen or the tracks thereof along the trail include mainly birds, such as turkey vulture, red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, great horned and barn owls, northern harriers, poor-will, California quail, mourning dove, road runner, Anna's hummingbird, common flicker, common raven, common crow, mockingbird, scrub jay, California towhee, American kestrel, white-crowned and English sparrows and many others; reptiles, such as southern Pacific rattlesnake, two striped garter snake, San Diego gopher snake, California king snake, striped racer and many other snakes, San Diego alligator and western fence lizards; and mammals, such as brush and desert cottontail rabbits, California ground squirrel, Botta's pocket gopher, many types of bats, kangaroo rat, deer mouse, dusky woodrat, gray fox, coyote, ringtail cat, raccoon, southern California weasel, striped skunk, bobcat, mountain lion and mule deer.

While mountain lions are present in the hills around Simi Valley, encounters are unlikely, but you should always be alert. It is best that you do not hike alone and that you keep small children close at hand. Rattlesnakes may be encountered — Stay on the trail and avoid them when they are encountered — Be observant and never try to handle them. Do not handle any wildlife, including bats, even if they appear to be injured or sick. Remember, you are visitors to their homes.

**Mike Kuhn,
Executive Chair,
Rancho Simi Trail Blazers**

Please see **Trail Safety Tips** at this trail's main page for more info.

- Trail Rules**
1. Stay on trails
 2. Fires not permitted
 3. Motorized vehicles not permitted
 4. No picking of plants or flowers
 5. No hunting or shooting allowed
 6. Carry out all refuse
 7. In Emergency call: 911
 8. Anyone caught doing malicious damage to park property will be prosecuted under Section 594 of the Penal Code, State of California.

Violation of the above rules is an infraction and is punishable by fine or imprisonment per Title 10 S.V.M.C., 5782.21 C.P.R.C.

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District