

High Sierra Camp Loop

Distance: 49 miles.

Type of trip: Loop.

Difficulty: Moderate to very strenuous.

Elevation: +8272, -8272.

Hiking Time: 3 – 6 days.

Begin at: The trip starts and ends at the Tuolumne Meadow Wilderness permit center.

Seasonality: Typically from mid-May until early November.

Trail Notes:

- Tuolumne Meadow Lodge to Glen Aulin, Moderate, 8.0 miles, 4 hours.
- Glen Aulin to May Lake, strenuous, 8.5 miles, 5 hours
- May Lake to Sunrise, strenuous, 8.25 miles, 4.5 hours.
- Sunrise to Merced Lake, moderate, 9.5 miles, 5 hours.
- Merced Lake to Vogelsang, very strenuous, 7.8 miles, 6 hours.
- Vogelsang to Tuolumne Meadows Lodge, moderate, 6.8 miles, 3.5 hours.

Hike north on the John Muir Trail/Pacific Crest Trail from the trailhead near Tuolumne Meadows' Wilderness Permit Center. Cross the highway and skirt the western base of Lembert Dome on Old Tuolumne Road. At the Parsons Memorial Lodge, just beyond Soda Springs continue northward along the PCT, following signs for Glen Aulin High Sierra Camp (HSC). The next five miles follow the Tuolumne River. Pass Tuolumne and White Falls to a 3-way junction and turn (Glen Aulin is north across the river) southwest off of the PCT, following signs toward May Lake. Four miles along, fork right (west) at a junction, then left (south) at another junction a half-mile farther. Hike south over a shallow saddle. The trail winds north, making a short ascent, before turning south again to May Lake HSC. Continue south 1.2 miles to a junction for Snow Flat. Turn right (southeast) for a steady descent to a highway crossing; pick up the trail on the other side, and turn eastward to Tenaya Lake. The trail continues southward for the next 2.5 miles. Fork left (east) at the next junction, making a short northeastern descent to the Sunrise Lakes before turning southward and climbing again. Make a short, quick descent and turn left (north) on the JMT to Sunrise HSC on the western edge of wide Sunrise Meadow. Hike through Sunrise and Long Meadows, after a mile, turn right (east) off of the JMT, following signs for Merced Lake. The next six miles winds southward, descending gradually to a junction northeast of Bunnell Point. Fork left (southeast) for 0.7 mile to another junction, now entering Echo Valley. Turn left (east) following the Merced River 1.25 miles to the outlet of Merced Lake. Skirt the northern lakeshore another mile to Merced Lake HSC. Proceed eastward to the next junction and the Merced Ranger Station; fork left (northeast), and begin a steady climb for the next mile, following signs for Vogelsang. At the next junction, fork left (northeast) again, crossing Lewis Creek and beginning another steady climb. 2.5 miles from the ranger station a side trail leads 0.3 mile to Babcock Lake. Continuing upward, the trail turns northeastward, following Fletcher Creek through a meadow lined valley. At a 4-way junction, the trail left leads 0.5 mile to Emeric Lake and straight ahead 3 miles to Booth Lake. Veer right 2.2 miles to Vogelsang HSC at the

base of Vogelsang and Fletcher Peaks. From Vogelsang, continue eastward past Fletcher Lake into a wide, meadow dominated basin with Evelyn Lake glistening beneath the north flank of Fletcher Peak. Mount a shallow saddle and start descending to a junction with the trail to Ireland Lake. Continuing on making a steady descent into Lyell Canyon. Turn left, once again on the JMT/PCT, and follow the Lyell Fork for 5 miles. Pass the Fletcher Creek trail, then turn right and cross the Lyell Fork on several bridges, following signs to the Tuolumne Meadows Lodge and the completion of the loop.

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