

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Death Valley National Monument
Death Valley, California 92328

HIKING TELESCOPE PEAK AND WILDROSE PEAK

TELESCOPE PEAK, at 11,049, is the highest point in Death Valley National Monument. From its immediate base on the valley floor to its summit, the elevation difference is over 11,300 feet. (This is exceeded in the U.S. by Mt. Rainier, 11,649'; Mt. Fairweather in Glacier Bay National Monument, 15,300'; and Mt. McKinley's north slope, 17,000').

A seven-mile trail leads to the top of Telescope Peak from Mahogany Flat Campground which lies at the head of Wildrose Canyon, elevation 8,133 feet. There is no water at the campground. Most hikers start from Mahogany Flat in the morning and take 6 to 8 hours to reach the summit, sign the register, and return to their cars. The views along the trail are spectacular and varied; Mt. Whitney and the High Sierras, the White Mountains and Panamint Valley are visible to the west. Death Valley and Charleston Peak can be seen to the east. Much of the trail passes through pinyon and limber pine forests, with the ancient bristlecone pines predominating near the summit of Telescope Peak.

Hikers should carry their own water, as none is available along the main trail. The trail is usually snow-free from early May until mid-November; and during this time, the hike may be made by anyone in reasonably good condition. No special equipment is needed, although hiking boots are recommended. The most pleasant months for making the trip are May, June, September, and October. July and August may be too warm for comfortable hiking.

Snow and ice make Telescope Peak too hazardous for all but well-equipped climbers during the winter months. From late November until mid-April, climbers should be experienced and equipped with ice axes, crampons, boots and ropes and prepared for sub-freezing weather. Winter climbers are asked for their own safety to check in at Wildrose Ranger Station before and after climbing. During the winter, the road is often closed above the Charcoal Kilns by snow, adding about 3 miles of walking to the road-trip distance.

Another high summit well worth visiting is 9,064 foot WILDROSE PEAK. A primitive four-mile trail to the top of Wildrose Peak starts at the west end of the Charcoal Kilns at 6,800 feet elevation. Most hikers take four hours to complete the round trip.

The hike up Wildrose Peak is particularly recommended for those whose time is limited, and for those who are prevented climbing Telescope Peak by winter storms.

Good luck - and good hiking!