

drainage into full view of Shasta and the Bolam Glacier, and to the north you see across Shasta Valley to the northern Siskiyou.

You continue south along the west rim of Bolam Creek's dry ravine for a way, then bend east to climb a couple of switchbacks. These take you south back across the drainage to a steady climb to another switchback. At this switchback a worn-in use trail heads off west into a ravine shaded by a grove of Jeffrey pines and white firs. This path will take you to the Whitney Falls overlook.

From the shaded ravine your use trail climbs steeply around a small ridge, then turns south a short distance to the brink of the impressively eroded canyon of Whitney Creek. The falls plunge off an overhanging cliff at the head of the canyon, and if you listen carefully you'll hear rocks, gravel and mud clattering over the falls; Whitney Falls is anything but a clear stream, for glacial silt and Shasta's unstable ashy debris readily dissolve into the flow. During recent hot summers the Whitney Glacier has released outburst floods (see the "Geology" Chapter) that have poured over the falls and continued downstream to damage property beyond Hwy. 97. The loose canyon walls below you show ample evidence of undercutting by these and previous floods.

Circum-Shasta Hike

25-35 miles, difficult

Hiking around Mt. Shasta is arguably the best way to get to know the mountain. In fact, John Muir wrote:

... far better than climbing [Mt. Shasta] is going around its warm fertile base, enjoying its bounties like a bee circling around a bank of flowers.... As you sweep around so grand a centre the mountain itself seems to turn.... One glacier after another comes into view, and the outlines of the mountain are ever changing.

The first Shasta circumnavigation was completed in the summer of 1898 by Dr. C. Hart Merriam and other members of the U.S. Biological Survey. Merriam, a central figure in American natural history, named Diller Canyon for geologist Joseph Diller, and finalized his "life-zone" theory of plant and animal distribution during this trip.

Relatively few people take this ultimate Shasta backpack, partly because it's a fairly committing endeavor, with no trail to follow. In route finding, strenuousness and terrain, it should be considered

North and Northeast Sides, Hotlum and Wintun Glaciers



ROUTE 11 HOTLUM GLACIER

DIFFICULTY: 3 (AD)

ACCESS: Brewer Creek Trailhead

CAMPSITES: Brewer Creek, Gravel Creek, moraine lakes and meadows

TIME: 2 days

From an impressive rock headwall beginning at nearly 13,000 feet, the Hotlum Glacier descends in a gentle S-turn past 3 spectacular icefalls. At the lowest icefall—a huge broken and convoluted formation just right (N) of a prominent rock prow—the glacier levels out and ends in several acres of fascinating ice ribs. Spread out below this terminus are rugged morainal hummocks and small, hidden lakes. Finally, the headwaters of Gravel Creek and other smaller streams emerge into the red-fir and hemlock forests below.

Several fine base camp areas are found in the Brewer and Gravel Creek drainages, from which the glacier may be climbed to one of the summit variations. You can also establish a high camp on a prominent rock prow at 11,700 feet below and north of the middle icefall. In spring and early summer the glacier is predominantly smooth from accumulated snow. In late summer and fall, the curved path of the Hotlum Glacier becomes a maze of crevasses, and careful route finding is necessary. At this time the icefalls also come into their best condition for serac climbing.

An Alpine Climbing Primer for Mt. Shasta

Any climb of Shasta is a strenuous endeavor into high alpine terrain, where the dynamics of snow, ice, rock and sky determine how—or if—one should climb. Mt. Shasta is many people's first foray into such elemental heights. Unfortunately, accidents and even fatalities continue, most of which could have been avoided with a bit more alpine savviness. Here are some basic rules of thumb to bear in mind when attempting a Shasta climb:

Anyone climbing any route on Mt. Shasta needs to be competent with an ice ax and crampons on moderately steep slopes. These tools and skills open up Shasta's best surface for going up—snow, frozen and firm.

The mountain is in prime shape in early summer, and it is best climbed with a pre-dawn start and a commitment to be back down no later than early afternoon. In the heat later in the day, snow can get swampy and slow for travel, and snowbridges over crevasses, moats and bergschrunds are more likely to collapse underfoot. Worse, melting temperatures make rockfall more likely. In addition to timing your climb to the conditions, minimize your exposure to rockfall by adjusting your route to avoid ravines that funnel tumbling stones.

As the summer progresses and the snow retreats, conditions become more difficult because more rock is exposed, which takes more effort to climb and opens up more possible rockfall. In addition, late summer snow often consolidates into glassy ice, an especially common problem on the north-side routes. If you are unfamiliar with the techniques to handle hard ice, the high slopes on Shasta are not the place to experiment.

Whatever the season, you need good weather to climb Mt. Shasta. Rest assured that any foul weather will be amplified dramatically high on the peak, so check the forecast before you decide to climb.

Shasta's great vertical relief demands a substantial level of fitness, including an awareness of pacing, refueling, and an understanding of how the thin air of high altitude affects your

Deadfall Lakes and Mt. Eddy Climb, on the Sisson-Callahan Trail

12.2 miles one way, difficult

Running from subalpine lakes and meadows to lowland transition forest and chaparral, this historical trail is an introduction to the botanically rich Trinity Mountains. It also offers a side trip to the top of Mt. Eddy, where perhaps the most overwhelming view of Mt. Shasta awaits. The hike to here, or just to the Deadfall Lakes and back, is the most popular segment of this trail.

As a route, the Sisson-Callahan dates back probably to Indians, and certainly to trappers, prospectors and cattlemen of the mid-1800s. The Forest Service constructed it in 1911, to link Forest Headquarters in Sisson (Mount Shasta) with Callahan. The west half of the trail, beyond the Trinity-Sacramento divide, is traceable but largely masked by logging and mining roads. However, the east half, described here, passes through nearly uninterrupted backcountry, and has been designated a National Recreation Trail.

As described here, the hike starts from Parks Creek Summit on the Pacific Crest Trail, and then takes the relocated Sisson-Callahan route over Deadfall Summit and down the north fork of the Sacramento River to the eastern trailhead near Lake Siskiyou. To hike its entirety you either need to arrange a car shuttle or to plan a long round trip—too long for most hikers in one day. For the full hike, most people prefer to start at higher Parks Creek Summit, for a net descent of 3200 feet to the eastern trailhead.

TRAILHEADS

To reach Parks Creek Summit, drive north on I-5 3.4 miles past the Weed turnoff and take the Edgewood-Gazelle exit. Turn southwest under the freeway to a T, and take the right (NW) fork. After 0.4 mile turn left (SW) onto Stewart Springs Road—Forest Road 17. Keep right on this road after 3.9 miles; as it gets steeper, stay on paved Road 17 to the summit, 12.9 miles from the Stewart Springs turnoff.

To get to the eastern trailhead, from downtown Mount Shasta cross 1-5 at the main Mount Shasta exit and continue southwest to a T at Old Stage Road. Turn left (NW) and soon veer right onto W.A. Barr Road, toward Lake Siskiyou. A mile from the Old Stage turnoff, turn right onto North Shore Road 40N27. Drive along the north shore of Lake Siskiyou, keeping left at the only minor fork,