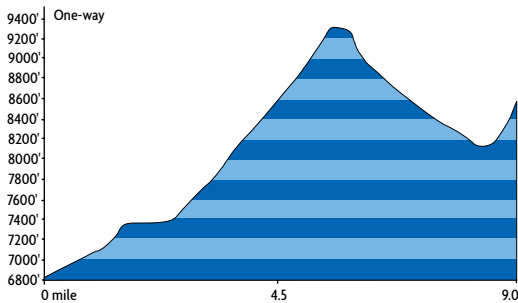


## 45

## BLACK BUTTE

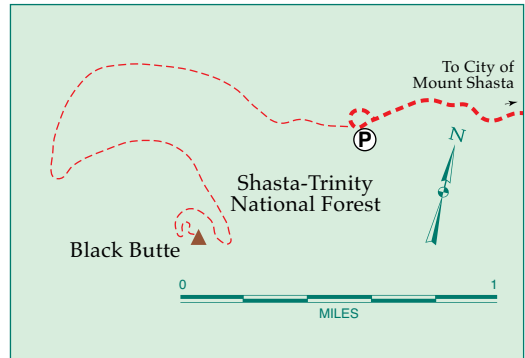
**Length:** 5.2 miles round-trip**Hiking time:** 4 hours**High point:** 6,325 feet**Total elevation gain:** 1,850 feet**Difficulty:** moderate**Season:** mid-May through mid-November**Water:** none; bring plenty**Map:** USGS 7.5' City of Mount Shasta**Information:** Mount Shasta Ranger Station, Shasta-Trinity National Forest

To those traveling Interstate 5 in far Northern California, Black Butte looms as a dark, impossibly steep visage rising 2,400 feet right beside the freeway. Surprisingly, a moderately graded trail can take you to the summit of this young volcano, where spectacular views await.

Take the Central Mount Shasta exit off I-5, head east through town for 0.7 mile on Lake Street, and curve left onto Everitt Memorial Highway. Drive 2.2 miles and turn left opposite the sign for Spring Hill Plantation onto Forest Road 41N18, an improved road surfaced with recycled asphalt grindings.

Turn right after 0.1 mile, drive 1 mile, and swing 90 degrees to head straight for Black Butte. Go right (north) at a road fork 0.3 mile farther. After another 1.2 miles, turn left at a powerline undercrossing and continue the final 0.7 mile on a

**Black Butte, a relatively young volcano at a mere ten thousand years old, formed from four successive eruptions.**



gravel and dirt road (41N18A) to the trailhead, which is a small turnaround in the road.

The path initially travels through a forest of Douglas fir, white fir, incense cedar, and ponderosa pine. Common trailside shrubs include bush chinquapin, huckleberry oak, and tobacco brush. As you continue the steady climb across talus slopes, the first of several sweeping vistas opens up to the north, where you'll see Shasta Valley and the town of Weed directly below and southern Oregon's Mount McLoughlin, a Cascade sibling of Mount Shasta. At 1.1 miles the path swings southwest, allowing views of Mount Eddy (Hike 52: Mount Eddy and the Deadfall Lakes) and the Klamath Mountains to the west and Castle Dome (Hike 49) and the rest of Castle Crags to the south.

At 1.6 miles the trail heads east, offering you the entrancing image of Mount Shasta, and eventually swings southeast past western white pine, mountain hemlock, and red fir. This is a good spot to search the far southeast horizon for



*Black Butte (Photo by John R. Soares)*

Magee Peak and Lassen Peak, which lie near the Cascades' southern boundary.

Climb northwest and then southeast again before switchbacking up the last stretch to Black Butte's summit at 2.6 miles, where all the previously encountered views come together in a 360-degree panorama. Mount Shasta will certainly

demand most of your attention. This majestic peak, elevation 14,162 feet, is a stratovolcano formed by massive eruptions that began about one million years ago. Black Butte, a plug dome, formed from thick pasty lava extruded in four different eruptions about ten thousand years ago, making it quite young by geological standards.

For more information:

Mount Shasta Ranger Station  
Shasta -Trinity National Forest  
204 West Alma  
Mount Shasta, CA 96067  
530-926-4511  
[www.r5.fs.fed.us/shastatrinity](http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/shastatrinity)