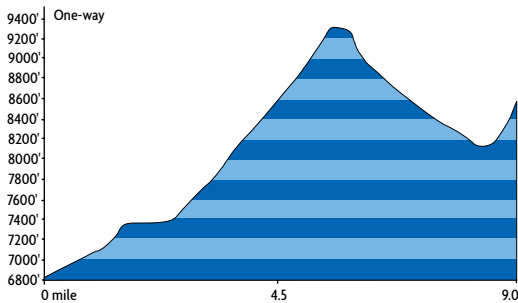


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BLACK BUTTE

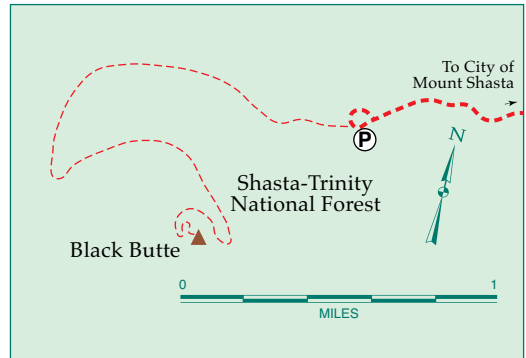
Length: 5.2 miles round-trip**Hiking time:** 4 hours**High point:** 6,325 feet**Total elevation gain:** 1,850 feet**Difficulty:** moderate**Season:** mid-May through mid-November**Water:** none; bring plenty**Map:** USGS 7.5' City of Mount Shasta**Information:** Mount Shasta Ranger Station, Shasta-Trinity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

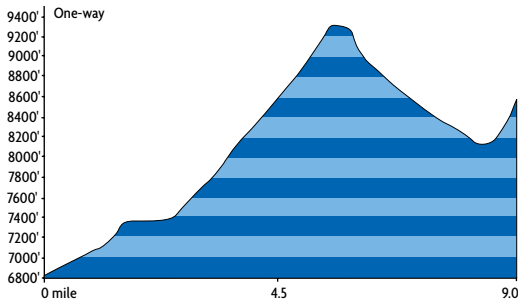
Magee Peak and Lassen Peak, which lie near the Cascades' southern boundary.

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.

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PATTERSON LAKE AND SQUAW PEAK

Length: 18 miles round-trip**Hiking time:** 3 to 4 days**High point:** 9,350 feet**Total elevation gain:** 3,350 feet**Difficulty:** moderate**Season:** mid-June through late October**Water:** generally available from lakes and streams (purify first) but none for the last 2.6 miles**Maps:** USGS 7.5' Soup Creek, USGS 7.5' Eagle Peak, USGS 7.5' Warren Peak, USFS South Warner Wilderness**Information:** Warner Mountain Ranger District, Modoc National Forest

This hike takes you through dense fir forest to lush meadows and eventually to high sagebrush desert country. Along the way you'll visit beautiful Patterson Lake and enjoy expansive views of the mountainous landscape of northeastern California, southern Oregon, and northwestern Nevada.

From the junction of Highways 395 and 299 in Alturas, head south on Highway 395 for 1.1 miles, and then turn left onto County Road 56. Drive another 13.8 miles. Bear right at a major junction 0.3 mile past the point where the paved road changes to dirt. Follow this main dirt road another 10.4 miles and turn left where a sign directs you the final 1.5 miles to the Pine Creek Trail, your trailhead. Avoid other signed roads taking off from the main dirt road that have destinations with the word "pine" in them.

The trail begins its steady uphill climb, usually within earshot of tributaries of the South Fork of Pine Creek, under the shade of white fir, Jeffrey

pine, and quaking aspen. However, by the time you pass a small, shallow pond on the left side of the trail at 0.6 mile, the latter two trees have been replaced by whitebark pine, a hardy species you'll encounter frequently from here on.

Reach a trail fork at 1.3 miles. The left-hand trail leads 50 yards downhill to a small but deep lake with campsites at the west and east ends. At 2.3 miles you'll pass another trail-side pond on the right, also with campsites at the east and west ends. If other hikers have already claimed these, continue 100 yards due north of the pond to a lake with two sites on the east side.

Just past these two bodies of water, the trail leaves the white fir and whitebark pine forest. You now have the first open view of the Pine Creek Basin: a huge glacial bowl with 1,800-foot rock walls overlooking sagebrush-covered slopes and lush, verdant meadows.

About a hundred feet from the forest, the trail makes a 90-degree turn to cross the creek and then a 50-foot stretch of meadow. Look carefully for two rock cairns on the other side of the meadow, just in case the trail is obscured.

A 360-degree view of northeastern California, southern Oregon, and northwestern Nevada stretches out from Squaw Peak's summit.