

C17 Pumpkin Ridge - Bon Tempe Trails

Distance: 3.3 miles Shaded: 50%

Elevation Change: 400' Trail can be crowded with grasses.

Rating: Hiking - 9 Difficulty - 4 Some stairs.

When to Go: Best around mid-April for spectacular iris.

This hike explores the rolling hills north of Bon Tempe Lake. Good views, oaks and wildflowers along the wooded ridges and lake.

0.0 Start at the Lagunitas parking lot and head west to the edge of Bon Tempe Lake. Follow the dirt road past the large valves out to Sky Oaks Rd. In spring, look for yellow sun cups, buttercups and a pale purple lily, *Calochortus*, in the meadow along the road.

0.2 Junction ❶ with Sky Oaks Rd. Cross the paved road and head up the open hillside dotted with lichen-covered oaks. This is classic oak-woodland country with occasional madrones and firs mixed in. However, now there is evidence of sudden oak death, both in the oaks and madrones.

The Pumpkin Ridge trail follows the ridgetop providing fine vistas of Mt. Tam. In April, the ridgetop displays a nice selection of iris with delicate hues of cream, gold, violet and blue.

0.9 Junction ❷. Just before the Sky Oaks Rd., take the Sky Oaks-Lagunitas trail right as it parallels the road heading north.

1.2 Junction with Shaver Grade and Sky Oaks Rd. Continue on the trail directly across the paved road.

1.3 Junction ❸ with the road to Bon Tempe dam. Go down the road a few feet, then take the trail that parallels the road for a while.

1.6 Parking area. Go through the gate and then bear left 200' ahead to climb up to the lake. Continue around the "Sunnyside" of the lake.

2.6 Junction with Sky Oaks Rd. Cross the road and take the trail right.

2.9 Junction ❹ with Sky Oaks Rd. Cross the road and take the left trail uphill. The lakes area has recently been cleared of non-native Coulter pines, which were planted in the 1930s. More than 600 pines have been removed; some trunks can be seen lying along this trail.

3.2 Junction with Bon Tempe lake trail. Go left around the valves and back towards the parking area.

3.3 Parking area with water, tables, barbecue and restrooms.



Douglas Iris

