



“I SPENT THE SUMMER HIKING NUDE ALONG CALIFORNIA’S JOHN MUIR TRAIL”

By Peter Connolly

In July I fulfilled one of my "bucket list" items, hiking the entire California John Muir Trail. For those unfamiliar with the JMT, it is a 220 mile long high Sierra trail going from Yosemite Valley to the summit of Mt. Whitney at 14,505' elevation. The JMT is widely considered the most beautiful trail in the country. Times to complete the entire trail vary considerably, most people take around 21 days. I was on the trail 24 days which included 2 days of no hiking.

Hiking the JMT has become very popular, so much so that not everyone is able to obtain a permit. I was able to secure a permit by starting out on an alternate trail for the first 2 days, still starting in Yosemite, then continuing on the JMT until Mt. Whitney.

With this increase in popularity comes plenty of opportunities to meet other backpackers every day. The many hikers I met were all very friendly, and it was not uncommon to stop and visit during these encounters and exchange personal contact information.

In addition to completing the JMT, I was also hopeful of having a high Sierra naturist experience nearly every day. With the increased number of other hikers, my campsite on many days was not far from others. At other times, my camp was too near the trail for enough privacy, or the weather was too cool by the time my camp was set up.

I was able to find many secluded camp spots not far from the trail. With that privacy and good weather, I was able to spend 6 of the 24 days I had along the JMT au-natural. If I had more time, there were many more camp options further from the trail. Twice while nude, I did notice other backpackers hiking not far from me, clearly seeing me nude, but they passed by granting me my privacy. Too bad, as I would have welcomed them to approach me and visit for a while.

As it was, these secluded camping spots were among the best I had on the trip, located alongside pristine mountain lakes or rivers. These idyllic campsites afforded me the opportunity to be nude all day, often relaxing in the sun, and were hard to leave. But after a good night's sleep, and with many miles to go, I knew it was time to hit the trail again in the morning.

Peter Connolly is a longtime nudist who lives in Ventura County, California. For more information on completing a JMT through hike, or joining future naturist hiking and backpacking trips, email to: NaturistAdventures@yahoo.com



Map source: <http://www.hikejmt.com/>