



# Sturtevant Falls Trail Guide

DISTANCE: 3.4 Miles Roundtrip

ELEVATION: 2200'

ELEVATION GAIN: 440'

TYPE: Out-and-Back

HIKING TIME: 1.5 Hours

RATING: Mostly easy except for a steep .6 mile climb back to the parking lot, several benches provide resting spots

## Directions to Trailhead

Exit the 210 at Santa Anita Ave and head north for 1.7 miles. N Santa Anita Ave will become Chantry Flats Road as you enter the national forest. Make sure you have an Adventure Pass for parking. Passes may be bought at the pack store at Chantry Flats.

Continue on Chantry Flats Road for 3.3 miles until you reach the Chantry Flats Recreation Area.

Parking at Chantry Flats requires an Adventure Pass. Passes are \$5/day or \$30/yearly and can be purchased at the Adam's Pack Station in Chantry Flats or the National Forest Office at 701 N Santa Anita Ave in Arcadia on the south side of the 210.



Park in the Chantry Flats Recreation Area Parking Lot. Parking requires an Adventure Pass and may be purchased at the Adam's Pack Station.



Rest Rooms and a water fountain are located at the trailhead at the south end of the parking area.



## Adam's Pack Station

The Adam's Pack Station, built in 1936, is the base of operations for moving freight and supplies to the cabins along the Santa Anita Wash by pack animal as motorized vehicles are prohibited on the footpath through the canyon. The Adam's Pack Station is believed to be the last of its kind in the US. Drinks and ice cream are available for purchase, as are Adventure Passes for parking.



The trail begins on the steps by the rest rooms and descends steeply for about .6 mile on a paved road. Benches are located roughly every .25 mile along this paved section, which come in handy on

the return trip. There is little shade along this first section of the trail, but that will change drastically once the pavement ends.



#### Trail Junction 1 - Hermit Falls Trail

At just over .1 into the hike you will pass the trailhead for Hermit Falls. There is a great swimming hole on this trail and may be a place to visit on a return to trip to Big Santa Anita Canyon. Continue downhill on the paved road toward Robert's Camp.



#### Trail Junction 2 - Roberts Camp

At .6 mile you will cross a bridge and arrive at Robert's Camp. Here you will find the first of the many cabins along the wash as well as pit toilets. Continue along the dirt road following signs for the Gabrielino Trail and Sturtevant Falls. The trail meanders through this heavily forested canyon of Alder, Oak and Pine and begins an easy uphill climb as it follows the Santa Anita Wash. There are a few water crossings along this section that are mostly dry throughout the year, but may have heavy water flows during the late winter and spring months. There are numerous dams built along the wash which make for nice cascading man-made waterfalls during the rainy season.



#### Pit Toilets

Pit toilets are available at Robert's Camp.



#### Trail Junction - Fiddler's Crossing

At 1.4 miles you will reach Fiddler's Crossing and the last of the cabins on the wash. Here you will find the trailhead for the Gabrielino Trail, both upper and lower sections, on your left. Stay on the main trail angling to your right, keeping the cabins on your left and cross the Santa Anita Wash. This is the only point during my fall hike that I had to cross water of any quantity and some easy rock hopping kept my feet dry.

After crossing the wash at Fiddler's Crossing the trail becomes a single-track. This last section is about .3 mile according to my GPS, which felt about right, but a sign at Fiddler's Crossing indicated a length of .5 mile.



#### Pit Toilet

About .2 mile past Fiddler's Crossing you will reach a backcountry pit toilet. Use this only in an emergency as it was quite foul.



### End of Trail - Lower Falls

A short distance past the pit toilet you will cross a boulder field and the falls will come into sight on your left. Continue in a slight counter-clockwise direction and you will reach the base of the falls.

After you have spent some time enjoying the falls and the wading pool at their base, you may notice some people peering down at you from the top of the falls. If you would like to take in the view from above, backtrack to Fiddler's Crossing and the junction for the Gabrielino Trail. Take the Lower Gabrielino trail on your right and continue for about .25 mile to reach the upper falls.



### Abandoned Cabin

As you make your way to the upper falls, you will pass the chimney and rock foundation for an abandoned cabin on a knoll up to your left. This is a great spot to have a picnic or enjoy the solitude of the woods.



### End of Trail - Upper Falls

The approach to the falls is on a single-track trail, which hugs the slope of the canyon with steep drop-offs, particularly at the falls, so caution is urged. The falls are seen from a higher vantage point along the trail, and the pond below the falls can be seen from almost directly above the falls. You may be inclined to climb down into the wash for direct view of the falls from above, but this is discouraged. A slip here leaves little room for recovery, especially during heavy water flows.

When you are ready to return to the parking lot, make your way back down the trail to Fiddler's Crossing and turn right. It's an easy downhill grade all the way to Robert's Camp where you rejoin the paved road. From here it's a steep .6 mile climb back to the parking lot. This is where you'll be thankful for those benches!

The Big Santa Anita Canyon has a multitude of trails that will keep you coming back, including the Hermit's Trail, the Winter Trail and both sections of the Gabrielino Trail, with the lower portion being particularly scenic. Sturtevant Falls will get your feet wet with this small bit of urban wilderness, but it's up to you to discover more. All you have to do is start walking.