



ALABAMA HILLS RECREATION AND SCENIC AREA

Arch Loop

LONE PINE, CALIFORNIA

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



"A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust and a hearty 'Hi Yo Silver!'" Anyone who has seen the opening to the classic television series *The Lone Ranger* knows the Alabama Hills, a jumble of rounded, weathered granite boulders piled across a desert flatlands that form a vibrant contrast with the sharply sculptured ridges of the nearby Sierra mountains. These majestic backdrops and rugged rock formations began attracting the attention of Hollywood in the 1920s.

You can hike with your dog along dusty Movie Road, where pert near every major Western star galloped on horseback at one time or another. More than 400 films have been shot here including such recent fare as *Ironman*, *Gladiator* and *Django In Chains*.

There is only one hiking trailhead in the 30,000-acre Alabama Hills. The stone-lined *Arch Loop* here leads to the twisted Mobius Arch that provides a literal window to Mount Whitney, the tallest peak in the Lower 48. Stone steps tame the small arroyos along the way. Further along is the low, flat Lathe Arch with more photo-ops. A branch trail leads to the whimsical Eye of Alabama Arch and, yes, another frame of Mount Whitney.

There is plenty more for Seaman to explore. Grab a Movie Road film site locator brochure that leads you to side roads and lets you see how the Alabama Hills looked on the silver screen. You can also let Seaman romp into Lone Ranger Canyon - is that the *William Tell* Overture you hear playing?



ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE FOREST

Methuselah Trail

BISHOP, CALIFORNIA

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours



When it comes to trees California has it all: the tallest trees, the biggest trees, and, here in Inyo National Forest, the oldest trees. Growing at altitudes of more than 10,000 feet, bristlecone pines have been surviving for more than 4,000 years on the harsh slopes of the White Mountains, east of Yosemite National Park and north of Death Valley. The cold temperatures, dry soil and short growing season cause the trees, whose dense wood is resistant to invasion by insects, to grow very slowly. *Very slowly.*

The *Methuselah Trail* leads to the very tree identified as the planet's oldest living specimen. Core samples taken in 1957 have led researchers to estimate the age of Methuselah to be 4,850 years old. Seaman will have to guess which one is Methuselah since the exact location is kept a secret to prevent vandalism - not that anyone should be messing with even the 2,000-year old youngsters and their fascinating twisting and colorful trunks. In 2013 researchers discovered an even older bristlecone but it remains unnamed as well as a secret.

This is also a sporty alpine hike for Seaman in the Schulman Grove with over 900 feet of elevation gain in 4.5 miles. The bristlecone pine forest is sparse, offering wonderful views above 10,000 feet. Take the balloon trail in a clockwise direction and latch onto the *Bristlecone Cabin Trail* to check out old cabins and mine entrances from the Mexican Mine where silver was uncovered in 1862.