

Mount Bierstadt trail reports

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Mountain in Colorado, United States For other uses, see Mount Evans (disambiguation). Mount EvansMount Evans with Summit LakeHighest pointElevation14,267 ft (4350 m)[1]NAVD88Prominence2770 ft (844 m)[2]Isolation9.79 mi (15.76 km)[2]ListingNorth America highest peaks 41stUS highest major peaks 27thColorado highest major peaks 12thColorado fourteeners 14thCoordinates39°35′18″N 105°38′38″W﻿ / ﻿39.5883155°N 105.6438064°W﻿ / 39.5883155; -105.6438064Coordinates: 39°35′18″N 105°38′38″W﻿ / ﻿39.5883155°N 105.6438064°W﻿ / 39.5883155; -105.6438064

RangeTopo mapUSGS 7.5' topographic mapMount Evans, Colorado[] ClimbingFirst ascentDisputed:1863 by Albert Bierstadt1872 by Judge LuntEastest routeSummit Lake TrailMount Evans Scenic BywayMount Evans is the highest peak in the Mount Evans Wilderness in the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains of North America. The prominent 14,271-foot (4,350 m) fourteenner is located 13.4 miles (21.6 km) southwest by south (bearing 214°) of Idaho Springs in Clear Creek County, Colorado, United States, on the drainage divide between Arapaho National Forest and Pike National Forest.[1][2][3] The peak is one of the characteristic Front Range peaks, dominating the western skyline of the Great Plains along with Pikes Peak, Longs Peak, and nearby Mount Bierstadt. Mount Evans can be seen from over 100 miles (160 km) to the east, and many miles in other directions. Mount Evans dominates the Denver metropolitan area skyline, rising over 9,000 feet (2,700 m) above the area. Mount Evans can be seen from points south of Castle Rock, up to (65 miles (105 km) south) and as far north as Fort Collins (95 miles (153 km) north), and from areas near Limon (105 miles (169 km) east). In March 2022, Clear Creek County approved a proposal to rename the peak to Mount Blue Sky, pending state and federal review, due to the negative associations of Territorial Governor John Evans with the Sand Creek Massacre.[4] The new name was proposed by the Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes. Geography Mount Evans is the highest peak in a massif. The peak is 35 miles (56 km) west of Denver, "as the crow flies", and approximately 51 miles (82 km) by road, via Idaho Springs. Other peaks in the massif are: Mount Spalding (13,842 ft or 4,219 m), 1.1 mi (1.8 km) northwest[5] Gray Wolf Mountain (13,602 ft or 4,146 m), 2.2 mi (3.5 km) north-northwest[6] The Sawtooth (13,780 ft or 4,200 m), 1.2 mi (1.9 km) west[7] Mount Bierstadt (14,060 ft or 4,290 m), 1.5 mi (2.4 km) west-southwest[8] Mount Warren (13,307 ft or 4,056 m), 1.2 mi (1.9 km) north-northeast[9] Rogers Peak (13,391 ft or 4,082 m), 2.33 mi (3.75 km) northeast[10] At least 7 deep glacial cirques cut into the massif. The cirques around Mount Evans are the deepest cirques in the Colorado Rockies.[11] The bottoms of many of these contain tarns, the most notable being: Summit Lake at the head of Bear Creek, 0.5 miles north the Chicago Lakes at the head of Chicago Creek, 2 miles north Abyss Lake at the head of Lake Fork, 1 mile west-southwest The Mount Evans Scenic Byway consists of State Highway 103 from Idaho Springs, Colorado on 1-70 about 13 miles (21 km) to Echo Lake, and Colorado 5 from Echo Lake 15 miles (24 km), ending at a parking area and turnaround just below the summit. The latter has long been the highest paved road in North America (5th highest in the world) and is only open in the summer. Colorado 103 continues east from Echo Lake to Squaw Pass, from which it connects, via Clear Creek County Road 103 and Jefferson County Road 66, to Bergen Park from which Colorado 74 leads to Evergreen Colorado.[12] The Guanella Pass Scenic Byway passes within 4 miles (6.4 km) west of Mount Evans, linking Georgetown and 1-70 with Grant and US 285, 22 miles (35 km) to the south.[13] A marked hiking trail roughly parallels the highway from Echo Lake to the summit, and a second marked trail links Guanella Pass to Mount Bierstadt. A difficult side route of the wilderness.[14] Summit Lake Park and Echo Lake Park, are part of the historic Denver Mountain Parks system. History Looking west along ridge from summit Mount Evans was originally known as Mount Rosa or Mount Rosalie. Albert Bierstadt named it for the wife of Fitz Hugh Ludlow, whom he later married. The name is also a reference to Monte Rosa, the highest peak in Switzerland. Bierstadt and his guide, William Newton Byers, approached the mountain along Chicago Creek from Idaho Springs in 1863, and spent several days painting sketches of the mountain from the Chicago Lakes before climbing to Summit Lake and onward to the summit.[15] Bierstadt's sketch, Mountain Lake, accurately portrays the view of Mount Spalding over the Chicago Lakes.[16] His painting, A Storm in the Rocky Mountains, Mt. Rosalie, is based on that and other sketches.[17] A second claim to be the first to ascend is attributed to Judge Lunt and a friend in 1872.[citation needed] William Henry Jackson, attached to the Hayden Survey, visited the Chicago Lakes in 1873, where he took numerous photographs, the summit of Mount Evans is barely visible in several of these, peering over the col between upper Chicago Lake and Summit Lake.[18] The Hayden survey reported that Mount Rosalie was 14,330 feet above sea level, measured by triangulation.[19][20] The United States Forest Service sign at the summit of Mount Evans. In 1895, 30 years after he was forced to resign as governor because of his part in the infamous Sand Creek Massacre and its subsequent cover-up, Colorado's legislature officially renamed the peak in honor of John Evans, second governor of the Colorado Territory from 1862 to 1865.[21] The history of the Mount Evans Scenic Byway is part of a larger story of the Denver Mountain Parks system. It ultimately began when the City and County of Denver initiated the construction of a series of automobile "scenic loops" to allow Denverites to explore the mountains.[22] One road circuit, Circle G, was to traverse the ridge to Squaw Pass on to Echo Lake, culminate in a climb up Mt. Evans, and loop down to Idaho Springs. In order to achieve this goal, Denver Mountain Parks acquired a series of land parcels, including the acquisition of Bergen Park in 1915. The Bear Creek segment from the Genesee saddle to Bergen Park was finished in 1915, while the Denver Mountain Parks committee worked to make Mt. Evans a National Park, going as far as getting support in Congress for the construction of a "cement road" to the mountain. The first mile was paid for by Denver with the understanding that the State Highway Commission would do the rest.[23] The Denver Mountain Parks committee was not without disagreement and setbacks, however. \$30,000 was acquired early in 1916 to construct the Bergen Park to Squaw Pass segment and all seemed to be flowing towards the goal of Mount Evans when the mayor of Denver, Robert W. Speer, appointed W.F.R. Mills as the Commissioner of Improvements, who summarily stopped the construction of the road, stating that "It is a road that starts nowhere, ends nowhere, and never gets there".[23] After studying the issue, Mills later recanted and became a supporter of the park system, and the segment between Bergen Park and Squaw Pass was constructed beginning in the spring of 1918. The next act was to get Mount Evans classified as a National Park, but 1916 was a tumultuous time between the National Park system and the U.S. Forest Service, who currently held claim to the mountain. Already in bitter struggle to prevent the formation of a National Park Service, Chief Forester Graves adamantly blocked the relinquishment of this area of National Forest, in exchange for Forest Service development of the area including the immediate construction of a road between Squaw Pass and Echo Lake (Colorado).[23] This joint exercise between the City and County of Denver, the U.S. Congress, the State Highway System, and now the Forest Service would be completed with help of a newly formed Federal Agency, the Bureau of Public Roads. In 1918, the Bureau of Public Roads provided the plan to construct 9.41 miles of road from Soda Pass (now called Squaw Pass) to Echo Lake beginning in 1919. By 1920, the road had only managed to be constructed to Chief Mountain.[24] By October 1 of 1921, the Bureau of Public Roads had completed construction to Echo Lake.[25] The first survey for the road from Echo Lake to the peak of Mount Evans was made in 1923, finishing the layout by January 1924 despite a flu outbreak in the camp, damaging windstorms, and nearly insurmountable environmental hardships.[26] Battling the unusual problems that come with high-altitude construction (steam shovels performing only half as effective at high altitude, difficulty of hauling coal and water, horse suicide,[26] etc.) the last 600 feet were finally built by hand, being completed in 1930.[27] The ruins of the Crest House (1941–1942) sit nearby. Once containing both a restaurant and a gift shop, it burned down on September 1, 1979, and was not rebuilt, but remains as a place of contemplation today. The rock foundation and walls remain as a windbreak for mountain travelers, and the viewing platform is one of Colorado's premier scenic overlooks. Evans, along with Echo Lake, was designated as a historic site by the American Physical Society in 2017, commemorating the many cosmic-ray physics experiments conducted on the mountain between 1935 and 1960.[28] Mt. Evans also hosts the annual Mt. Evans Hill Climb, a 27.4 miles (44.1 km) bicycle race with a total of 6,915 feet (2,108 m) of climbing. Mt Evans highway above Summit Lake, highest paved road in North America Environment Summer crowds on Mount Evans summit, July 3, 2011. Climate The atmospheric pressure on the summit is around 460 Torr (610 mbar), while a standard atmosphere (sea level) is 760 Torr (1013 mbar). At this pressure, many people suffer from altitude sickness.[29] Summit Lake Park on Mount Evans The climate on the summit of Mount Evans can be extreme. The mean annual temperature on the summit is 18 °F (−8 °C).[30] Temperatures often fall below 0 °F (−18 °C), and occasionally fall as low as 40 °F (−40 °C). The highest temperature recorded on the summit was 65 °F (18 °C), and below freezing temperatures may occur at any time of year. The maximum wind speed measured was 107 knots (123 mph or 198 km/h), the average is from 25 to 30 knots (28 to 35 mph or 46 to 56 km/h). When the wind speed is over 15 knots (17 mph or 28 km/h), the wind is almost always from the west-southwest.[31] 2012 Tornado At 2:51 pm on July 28, 2012, a weak, short-lived tornado touched down northeast of Mount Evans' summit at an elevation estimated by the National Weather Service of 11,900 feet (3,600 m) above sea level. The tornado was the second highest recorded in the United States but did not cause any damage because it was above tree line.[32][33][34] Flora The slopes of Mount Evans include several distinct environments. Below Echo Lake, the montane forest is dominated by lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and in some areas, blue spruce (*Picea pungens*), with patches of quaking aspen. Echo Lake is high enough to be in the subalpine forest, where Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) and bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*) dominate. At tree line, the trees are reduced to krummholz, battered and twisted by wind and frost. The bristlecone pine grove on the east slope of Mount Goliath (39°38′24.95″N 105°35′56.24″W / 39.6402639°N 105.5989556°W / 39.6402639; -105.5989556) contains at least one tree that sprouted in the year 403 AD. For many years, these were the oldest known trees in Colorado, but in 1992, trees dating to 442 BC were found in the southern Front Range and South Park.[35] The Mount Goliath Natural Area, jointly managed by the United States Forest Service and the Denver Botanic Gardens protects this grove of old trees.[36] Above tree line, the landscape is mostly alpine tundra. In the lower tundra, dwarf willow (*Salix herbacea*) is common, along with a wide variety of flowering plants such as Rocky Mountain Columbine (*Aquilegia saximontana*) and various species of dwarf alpine sunflowers. Toward the summit, the vegetation shrinks until the largest plants are little more than compact green cushions in the cracks between the rocks. Here, Alpine Forget-me-not (*Myosotis alpestris*) plants with hundreds of blossoms occupy areas of only a few square centimeters and rise only centimeters above the soil surface. The tundra around Summit Lake, particularly in Summit Lake Flats, the gently sloping area east of the lake, is frequently described as the southernmost area of arctic tundra in the world because it is water saturated and underlain by an extensive area of permafrost. Fauna Mt Evans - mountain goats The top predators found in the area are mountain lions (*Puma concolor*), anywhere on the mountain, and black bears (*Ursus americanus*), generally below tree line. These prey on bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) and mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*).[37] as well as one of the highest densities of yellow-bellied marmot (*Marmota flaviventris*) in the region. Above tree-line, pikas (*Ochotona princeps*) are common. Below tree line, elk (*Cervus canadensis*) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) are common. Among birds, the white-tailed ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucurus*) are present on the mountain, but so well camouflaged that they are difficult to see even when underfoot.[38] Brown-capped rosy finches (*Leucosticte australis*), pipits and rock wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) are also seen near the summit.[39] Geology Mount Evans was carved from the rock of the Mount Evans Batholith, formed by an intrusion of magma into the earth's crust about 1.4 billion years ago (in the Mesoproterozoic Era of the Precambrian Eon). This experiment verified the reality of time dilation, one of the key predictions of Einstein's theory of relativity.[46][47] In the summer of 1948, MIT, Cornell, Princeton, NYU and the universities of Michigan and Chicago and Denver conducted an intensive experimental program on the mountain and at Echo Lake. Bruno Rossi and Giuseppe Cocconi were among those involved.[48] In 1965, the Midwestern Universities Research Association began doing high-energy physics experiments on the summit using cosmic rays to explore energies above those accessible with the most powerful particle accelerators of the day. The first experiments were conducted in a semi-trailer, and then in 1966, a temporary laboratory building was erected near the summit. This building was moved to Echo Lake that fall, where research continued until 1972.[49] The University of Denver erected the 0.6m (24 inch) Ritchey-Christien telescope in its summit laboratory in 1972. This was used to observe comets Kohoutek and Halley in 1972 and 1986. In 1996, the university finished construction on the Meyer-Womble Observatory, near the site of the A-frame laboratory buildings. At 14,148 feet (4,312 m) this was, from 1972 to 1999, the world's highest optical observatory.[31] It is now the third-highest. Mount Evans has also been the site of significant research in the life sciences. In 1940, for example, it was the site of a significant study of high-altitude physiology.[29] Pioneering studies on the effects of altitude training on track athletes were conducted on Mount Evans in 1966.[50] Mount Evans Road is also noteworthy as a high-altitude vehicle testing venue for auto manufacturers.[51] With full visibility on a public road, most manufacturers' road test teams tend to conceal their designs with various creative styles of camouflage, e.g. wild zebra paint motif, possibly paired with other temporary body coverings.[52] Naming controversy Mount Evans is named after territorial Governor John Evans, instigator of the Sand Creek Massacre, which resulted in the death of between 150 and 500 Cheyenne and Arapaho Native Americans. Attempts have been made to change the name in Colorado due to the history and actions of Governor Evans.[53] In 2020, Governor Polis established The Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board, which includes Mount Evans for a possible renaming.[54] See also North America portal United States portal Colorado portal Mountains portal List of mountain peaks of North America List of mountain peaks of the United States List of mountain peaks of Colorado List of Colorado fourteeners Mount Evans Scenic Byway — Colorado State Highway 5 Mount Evans Hill Climb References ^ a b c d "Blue Sky". NGS data sheet. U.S. National Geographic Survey. Retrieved January 2, 2016. Note: The summit of Mount Blue Sky is +1.80 m (+5.9 ft) higher than NGS station EVANS. ^ a b c "Mount Evans, Colorado". Peakbagger.com. Archived from the original on March 3, 2016. Retrieved January 2, 2016. ^ a b "Mount Evans". Geographic Names Information System. United States Geological Survey. Retrieved October 29, 2014. ^ "Mount Evans may be renamed 'Mount Blue Sky' under state proposal". Colorado Public Radio. 16 March 2022. Retrieved 26 March 2022. ^ "Mt.

