

MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE 2-22-22

Trail maps for various segments in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Trail-Maps/McDowell-Sonoran-Preserve/i-Cq8tZfz>

Bell Pass, (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating B. This is an 8.4 mile out and back hike with an elevation change of 1470 feet. The hike starts on the Gateway Trail and passes through a large saguaro forest. Just past the saddle you can see the fountain at Fountain Hills (on the hour for 15 minutes). The fountain will show up between you and Weavers Needle. Distant views include Four Peaks, Weavers Needle, Fountain Hills, and Scottsdale. Restrooms and water are at the trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 88 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Gateway-Loop-Windgate-Pass>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Gateway Trailhead –Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then take Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 miles up the road.

Big Loop, (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating A and A-. The A- version is a 13.2-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 2900 feet. A long, strenuous hike on excellent trails with sweeping views. From the Gateway Trailhead, take the Gateway Loop Trail south, then climb the Bell Pass Trail to its highpoint. Continuing the Bell Trail, connect to the East End Trail, climbing up to Toms Thumb. Cross over to the Lookout before returning to the parking lot via the Toms Thumb, and Windgate, and Gateway North Loop Trails. The A version is a 15-mile loop with an elevation gain of 3400 feet. At East End Saddle we will scramble to the top of East End Peak. After returning to the saddle, we will climb up to the Tom Thumb monolith. Continuing as the A- version back to the parking lot. Restrooms and water at trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 88 miles roundtrip.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Gateway Trailhead -- Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then take Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 mi. up the road.

Bootlegger, Coyote Canyon Trails (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating C. This is a 7.6 mile in-and-out hike with an elevation gain of 630 feet. It passes through a large forest of saguaro. There are 2 crested saguaro cacti along the trail - one has a very rare double crest. There are excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as numerous granite rock formations. This is one of the most scenic trails within an hour of PebbleCreek. No restrooms at the trailhead, (but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Granite-Mt-North>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) onto I-17 and immediately take exit 222 onto Dove Valley Road going right. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines. For Hawknest Loop, drive about 5.1 miles and park just beyond the National Forest kiosk (last mile or so can be rough so recommend high clearance).

Bootlegger, Coyote Canyon, Granite Mountain Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating B, C Challenge. This is a 9-mile lollipop loop hike with an elevation gain of

800 feet. It passes through a large forest of saguaro. There are 2 crested saguaro cacti along the trail - one has a very rare double crest. The hike then goes around Granite Mountain to Balanced Rock, a large, pointed boulder that sits on its point. It finishes by going through a small area of yuccas and large saguaros. There are 3 rock formations that look like camels along the final section of the trail. There are excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as numerous granite rock formations. This is one of the most scenic trails within an hour of PebbleCreek. No restrooms at the trailhead (but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Granite-Mt-North>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17...stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines. For Hawknest Loop, drive about 5.1 miles and park just beyond the National Forest kiosk (last mile or so can be rough so recommend high clearance).

Bootlegger, Granite Mountain, Turpentine Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating D. This is a 4.5-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of approximately 500 feet. It passes through a large boulder field of interesting shapes. It finishes by going through a small area of turpentine bushes. There are 3 rock formations that look like camels along the final section of the trail. There are excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as numerous granite rock formations. This is one of the most scenic trails within an hour of PebbleCreek. No restrooms at the trailhead (but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Granite-Mt-North>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17...stay right and immediately take exit 222 going Right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines. For Hawknest Loop, drive about 5.1 miles and park just beyond the National Forest kiosk (last mile or so can be rough so recommend high clearance).

Brown Ranch (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) - Cathedral Rock Amphitheater - Rating D Challenge. The Brown Saddle portion is a loop hike of about 5.7 miles with an elevation gain of 500 feet. The Cathedral Rock/Amphitheater portion is a 5.7 loop with an elevation gain of about 500 feet. There are great views of the surrounding mountains Four Peaks, the Boulders and Tom's Thumb, etc.) as well as great rock formations along the trail with many different cacti species. Trail condition - very good hiking trail. There is a nice restroom at the trailhead and no park fee. Driving distance is 100 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Brown-Mountain>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately exit onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead.

Brown Mountain (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C, B. The Brown Saddle portion is a loop hike of about 6 miles with an elevation gain of 1000 feet. The B version adds the Cathedral Rock creating a 9.2-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 1400 feet. There are great views of the surrounding mountains (Weaver's Needle, Four Peaks, Tom's Thumb, etc.) as well as great rock formations along the trail. There are many different cacti species here and late spring could be very colorful after good winter rains.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Brown-Mountain>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going Right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles. (Name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead. Restrooms at the trailhead. Driving distance about 100 miles roundtrip.

Brown's Ranch (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C. A 7.4-mile hike with approximately 500 feet of elevation. Take Upper Ranch Trail to Cone Mountain and then follow Cloudburst Trail to West Express. Left onto the Hackamore Trail and then right onto Tarantula Trail Left onto Latigo.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going Right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead. There are restrooms at the trailhead. Driving distance about 100 miles roundtrip.

Brown Mt-Cathedral Rock-Balanced Rock Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating

B. This scenic hike is approximately 12.5 miles with elevation gain of 1,000 feet. The hike proceeds in a clockwise direction from Brown's Ranch Trailhead, visiting the summit of Brown's Mountain, followed by lunch on the patio at Cathedral Rock and finishing with a stop for a group photo at impressive Balanced Rock. There are great views of the surrounding mountains (Weaver's Needle, Four Peaks, Tom's Thumb, etc.) as well as great rock formations along the trail. There are many different cacti species here and late spring can be very colorful after good winter rains.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Brown-Mountain>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles. (Name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road north (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead. There are restrooms at the trailhead. Driving distance about 100 miles roundtrip.

Cathedral Rock, Balanced Rock Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C, C

Challenge This is a 6.5-to-8.4-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 600-800 feet. There are great views of the surrounding mountains (Weaver's Needle, Four Peaks, Tom's Thumb, etc.) as well as great rock formations along the trail. There are many different cacti species here and late spring could be very colorful after good winter rains. The optional side trip is to the Balanced Rock formation to the east. There is a nice restroom at the trailhead and no park fee. Trail condition - great hiking trail. Driving distance is 100 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Cathedral-Rock>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead.

Cholla Mountain from East (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating C Challenge. This is an 8.8 mile in-and-out hike with an elevation gain of 870 feet. It passes through three different "forests" - saguaro, jumping cholla, and yucca. There are excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as numerous granite rock formations. No restrooms at the trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Cholla-Trail>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Gateway Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 miles up the road.

Desert Park, Horseshoe, Gateway, Saguaro Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve South) D Challenge This is a 5.0-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of approximately 600 feet. This is a loop hike beginning from the Gateway Trailhead through typical desert scenery with many very nice saguaro cacti. The trail climbs to the Gateway Saddle with views of the north edge of Scottsdale before returning to the trailhead. There are restrooms at the trailhead with no park fee. Driving distance is 88 miles roundtrip.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Gateway Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 miles up the road.

East End Mountain Big Loop: Trails: Gateway Loop, Bell Pass, Prospector Point, East End, East End Mountain scramble, Tom's Thumb, Tom's Thumb Trail, The Lookout, Toms Thumb Trail, Gateway Loop Trail (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating: A. A 16-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of approximately 3800 feet. Long and strenuous hike through the McDowell Sonoran Preserve on good trails with sweeping views. From the Gateway parking facility, we'll take the Gateway loop trail south then climb the Bell Pass trail over the saddle to the Prospector Trail. At this point we will take a right turn on the Prospector Trail and climb to Prospector Point. After returning to the Bell Trail, we'll connect to the East End trail and at East End Saddle we will scramble to the top of East End Peak for lunch. After returning to the saddle, we will climb up to the Tom Thumb monolith and then cross over to the Lookout before returning downhill to the parking lot via the Tom Thumb and Gateway loop north trails. What you need to know: high mileage and good park trails (Long rocky downhill on Tom's Thumb Trail) Two extended uphill sections (Bell Pass and East End trails). Long rocky downhill on Tom's Thumb Trail Scramble to top of the trailless East End Peak Beautiful vistas all day – especially from Prospector Point, The Lookout and East End Peak. Restrooms and water are at the trailhead.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Gateway Trailhead Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 miles up the road.

Gooseneck, Saguaro Nest, Pemberton Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating B.

This is a loop hike of 10.7 miles with an elevation gain of 900 feet. The route goes past a double crested saguaro and a second crested saguaro, around Granite Mountain, and over to Balanced Rock. It passes through a forest of very large and old saguaros. And there are many banana yuccas and crucifixion thorn trees along the trail. No restrooms (but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch TH by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end) and no park fee. Driving distance is 108 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Gooseneck-Meander>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) then take Loop 303 North following it until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17...stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines. For Hawknest Loop, drive about 5.1 miles and park just beyond the National Forest kiosk (last mile or so can be rough so recommend high clearance).

Gordon Wagner Trail (McDowell Regional Park). Rating C. A 3-mile hike in a scenic area of McDowell Mountain Park. The trail is accessible off McDowell Mountain Park Drive, which is reachable by driving through Fountain Hills. A \$7.00 park entrance fee. Driving distance is 120 miles roundtrip.

Directions to McDowell Mountain Regional Park - Scenic Trail – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, then take I-10 East (left) to Route 202 East, exit onto Gilbert Road. Turn left onto Gilbert Road to Route 87. Turn right onto Route 87 to Shea Boulevard. Turn left onto Shea Boulevard to Saguaro Boulevard. Turn right onto Saguaro Boulevard to Fountain Hills Boulevard (which McDowell Mountain Road). Turn right onto Fountain Hills Boulevard, the road heads north away from Fountain Hills. Turn left at the entrance to McDowell Mountain Park. Pay park entrance fee. Take the park drive past the family and group campgrounds to Shalimo Drive. Turn right and follow road to the Pemberton Trailhead

Granite Mountain North (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating D. This is a 4.2 mile in-and-out hike with an elevation gain of 300 feet. There are lots of interesting saguaro cacti, granite rock formations, and distant views of the surrounding mountains. This is one of the best trail surfaces of any hike we do - Scottsdale has done an excellent job with their McDowell Sonoran Preserve trails. No restrooms at this trailhead, but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end. No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Granite-Mt-North>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17...stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 mi as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines. For Hawknest Loop, drive about 5.1 miles and park just beyond the National Forest kiosk (last mile or so can be rough so recommend high clearance).

Granite Mountain Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve), Rating B. This is a 10.3 mile loop hike with only 680 feet of ascent starting at the Granite Mountain parking lot. The hike circles both Granite Mountain and Cholla Mountain going past both Balanced Rock and Cathedral Rock. There are a lot of intersecting trails so suggest taking a map on this hike. A lot of nice scenery and easy trails to walk on. Restrooms at the trailhead. Distance to the trailhead is 60 miles one way.

Directions to Granite Mountain Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway, turn west (left) on Indian School Road, then take Loop 303 North and follow until it ends at I-17. Go north on I-17. Turn right on Dove Valley Road. Turn left on Cave Creek Road. Turn right of Dynamite Road. Turn left on 136th Street and then left into the parking lot.

Granite Mountain Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating C. This is a 7.3-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 500 feet. It passes through three different “forests” - saguaro, jumping cholla, and two types of yuccas. There are excellent views of the surrounding mountains as well as numerous granite rock formations. You get nice views from the Balanced Rock formation on the second half of the hike. Balanced Rock is a gigantic granite boulder balancing on its pointy end. This is one of the most scenic trails within an hour of PebbleCreek. Trail condition – Great hiking trail. Nice restrooms at the trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Granite-Mt-North>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - 136th Street Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17...stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left) and turn right at next light on Dynamite Boulevard. Follow Dynamite (name changes to Rio Verde) and turn left on 136th Street. For Granite Mountain Loop, drive about 2 miles and park on the left under the power lines.

Hawknest, Divide, Branding Iron, Coyote Canyon, Soapberry, Dove, Barb, 136th Express (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating B. This is an 11.7-mile hike with an elevation gain of 700 feet. The highlights of this hike include a double crested saguaro, Michelin Man II Saguaro, many rock formations, and distant views of Four Peaks, the Superstitions, and other mountains. Trail condition - a very good hiking trail. No restrooms at the trailhead (but you can stop off at the Brown’s Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No parking fees. Driving distance is 130 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Northwest-Loop-Trails>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tonto National Forest Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (changes name to Rio Verde). Turn left on 136th Street. Drive about 5 miles to entrance to Tonto National Forest - the last 2 miles are on a well-maintained dirt road.

Hawknest, Divide, High Desert, Renegade, Soapberry, Desperado, Coyote Canyon, Dove, Barb, 36th Express (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C. This is an 8-mile hike with an elevation gain of 500 feet. The highlights of this hike include a double crested saguaro, Michelin Man II Saguaro, many rock formations, and distant views of Four Peaks, the Superstitions and other mountains. Trail condition - a very good hiking trail. No restrooms at the trailhead (but you can stop off at the Brown’s Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No parking fees. Driving distance is 130 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Northwest-Loop-Trails>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tonto National Forest Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (North) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles as it changes name to Sonoran Desert Drive. Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (changes name

to Rio Verde). Turn left on 136th Street. Drive about 5 miles to entrance to Tonto National Forest - the last 2 miles are on a well-maintained dirt road.

Latigo, Whiskey Bottle, Vanguard, Wrangler, Hackamore Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C. This is an 8-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 800 feet. There are great views of the surrounding area, as well as many large saguaros and great rock formations along the trail. There is a nice restroom at the trailhead and no park fee. Trail condition - great hiking trail. Driving distance is 100 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Laigo-Loop>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard (later changes to Rio Verde). Turn left on Alma School Parkway. The road dead ends at the trailhead.

Latigo, Dare A Sarah, Scorpion. (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating D Challenge, C-. This is a 6-mile, 400 feet elevation gain hike. The hike originates at the Pima-Dynamite Trailhead and has excellent trails. The trail passes an excellent example of a crested saguaro early in the hike. This newly opened trailhead offers hikes through a boulder studded desert environment with many interesting rock formations. A new Visitor Center is under construction, but until it is complete there are port-s-potties. 102 miles roundtrip

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Pima-Dynamite Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road. Turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard. Cross Pima Road, trailhead driveway a short distance on the left.

McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Latigo, Dare A Sarah, Snake Eyes. (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C. This is a 7.7-mile hike of 680 feet elevation gain. The hike originates at the Pima-Dynamite Trailhead and has excellent trails. The trail passes an excellent example of a crested saguaro early in the hike. This newly opened trailhead offers hikes through a boulder studded desert environment with many interesting rock formations. A new Visitor Center is under construction, but until it is complete there are port-a-potties. 102 miles roundtrip.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Pima-Dynamite Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road. Turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard. Cross Pima Road, trailhead driveway a short distance on the left.

McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Latigo, Dare A Sarah, Hawknest (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C. This is a 6.4-mile hike with elevation gain of,400 feet. The hike originates at the Pima-Dynamite Trailhead and has excellent trails. The trail passes an excellent example of a crested saguaro early in the hike. This newly opened trailhead offers hikes through a boulder studded desert environment with many interesting rock formations. A new Visitor Center is under construction, but until it is complete there are port-a-potties. 102 miles roundtrip.

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Pima-Dynamite Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road. Turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. Stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek

Road North (left). Turn right at first light on Dynamite Boulevard. Cross Pima Road, trailhead driveway a short distance on the left.

Lost Dog Wash Trail, Quartz Trail Lollipop Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C, C Challenge. This is a 7.2-7.6-mile hike with an elevation gain of 1000-1300 feet gain. It starts as a good trail at the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead but there are long stretches of rocky trail but with competent footing. It leads up to the Talisen Overlook and then onto the Quartz Trail to a spot where some will choose to scramble up a steep, rocky trail 300' and 0.2 miles to an outcropping of milk white quartz. This scramble is what turns the hike into a C Challenge, but it is worth the climb. We return to the Outlook for our break before completing the lollipop loop on an old Jeep trail and then following the Ringtail Trail back to the trailhead. Highlights of this hike are beautiful views in new territory for most of us. There is a restroom at the trailhead. Driving distance 102 miles roundtrip
[Directions to Lost Dog Wash Trailhead in McDowell Sonoran Preserve](#) – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then take Hwy 101 North all the way around to Exit 38 for Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard. Take a slight left onto N Pima Road after 0.5 miles. Turn a slight left onto East Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard and go 4.4 miles. Turn left on Via Linda and go 1.3 miles to North 124th Street. Turn left and follow it to the trailhead parking.

Marcus Landslide, East End, Tom's Thumb Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating B. This hike combines multiple trails into a "B" level loop of approximately 10.6 miles with 2,100 feet elevation gain. It first climbs from the north to Tom's Thumb on a short but steep trail and then proceeds south on East End (very steep)-Windmill, Coachwhip, Pemberton, Boulder, Marcus Landslide in a CCW loop, eventually passing in front of the Marcus Landslide area. There are great views to the east and north including the Superstitions and Four Peaks areas, plus views of impressive granite boulders. No park fees. Restrooms are at the trailhead (no water). Driving distance is 108 miles roundtrip

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Marcus-LandslideRock-Knob-Loop>
[Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tom's Thumb Trailhead](#) -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (becomes Sonoran Desert Drive) Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (becomes Rio Verde). Turn right on Alma School Parkway. Turn left on Jomax Road. Turn right on 118th Street. Turn left on Ranch Gate Road. Turn right on 128th Street. Stay left as the road runs into the new trailhead.

Marcus Landslide (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating D. The D version is an in-and-out hike to the Marcus Landslide area of 4.2-4.7 miles with an elevation gain of 700 ft (depending on the side trips you take). The D hike has much of the elevation gain on the return trip. There are lots of great views to the east and north including the Superstitions and Four Peaks areas. Plus, there are views of great granite boulders. Trail condition - very good hiking trail. No Park fees. Restrooms are at the trailhead. Driving distance is 108 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Marcus-LandslideRock-Knob-Loop>
[Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tom's Thumb Trailhead](#) -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (becomes Sonoran Desert Drive) Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (becomes Rio Verde). Turn right on Alma School Parkway. Turn left on Jomax Road. Turn right on 118th Street. Turn left on Ranch Gate Road. Turn right on 128th Street. Stay left as the road runs into the new trailhead.

Marcus Landslide, Rock Knob Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating C. The C version is a 7.5-mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 740 feet. There are lots of great views to the

east and north including the Superstitions and Four Peaks areas. Plus, there are views of great granite boulders. Trail condition - very good hiking trail. No park fees. Restrooms are at the trailhead.

Driving distance is 108 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Marcus-LandslideRock-Knob-Loop>
Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tom's Thumb Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (becomes Sonoran Desert Drive) Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (becomes Rio Verde). Turn right on Alma School Parkway. Turn left on Jomax Road. Turn right on 118th Street. Turn left on Ranch Gate Road. Turn right on 128th Street. Stay left as the road runs into the new trailhead.

Quartz Trail (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C, B. This is a 7-8.5 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of 1100-1500 feet. You start out hiking through a neighborhood of nice houses, before starting to climb the mountain. The C version goes up to a quartz outcropping while the B version continues further up the mountain. There are lots of great views of Scottsdale and Phoenix. Trail condition - overall an average hiking trail, but steady uphill going and downhill coming back. No restrooms at the trailhead. There is no park entrance fee. Driving distance is 101 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Quartz-Trail>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Quartz Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn south (right) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn left on McDowell Ranch Road. Turn right into Quartz Trailhead parking.

Sunrise Trail (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C Challenge. This is a 7 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of 1400 feet in Southeastern Scottsdale. You start at the Lost Dog Wash trailhead. The first 2.75 miles of the trail go up gradually but very steadily about 800 feet to a saddle through typical desert flora. There is an optional peak that goes up .25 and another 100+ feet. If your timing is right, you get great views of the Fountain Hills Fountain from the saddle and top. You get 360-degree views from the top including Camelback Mountain to the west, and Four Peaks and Weavers Needle to the east. Restrooms and water are at the trailhead. Trail condition - overall an average hiking trail, but steady uphill going and downhill coming back. There is no park entrance fee. Driving distance is 102 miles roundtrip. [SCG=6.0/2000/3.8].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Sunrise-Trail>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Lost Dog Wash Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North. Exit onto Shea Boulevard East (turn left). Turn north (left) onto 124th Street. Trailhead parking is at the end of 124th Street (about 1 mile)

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Lost Dog Wash Trailhead – Alternate – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left). Exit onto 202 East. Exit onto 101 North. Exit onto Shea Boulevard East (turn right). Turn north (left) onto 124th Street. Trailhead parking is at the end of 124th Street (about 1 mile)

Taliesin Overlook (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating D. This is a 4 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of 300 feet in Southeastern Scottsdale. You start at the Lost Dog Wash trailhead. There is a crested saguaro on the left about 100 yards from the trailhead. The trail goes up very steadily but gradually about 400 ft to a saddle through typical desert flora. From there you can see the top of the Frank Lloyd Wright House in Scottsdale. Restrooms and water are at the trailhead. There is no park entrance fee. Driving distance is 102 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Taliesin-West-Overlook>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Lost Dog Wash Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, then take I-10 East (left) then Highway 101 North. Exit onto Shea Boulevard East (turn left).

Turn north (left) onto 124th Street. Trailhead parking is at the end of 124th Street (about 1 mile)
Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve – Lost Dog Wash Trailhead – Alternate –Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left). Exit onto 202 East. Exit onto 101 North. Exit onto Shea Boulevard East (turn right). Turn north (left) onto 124th Street. Trailhead parking is at the end of 124th Street (about 1 mile)

Tom’s Thumb trail from the North trailhead (McDowell Sonoran Preserve Scottsdale).

Rating C Challenge due to steep climb. This is a 6.3 mile in-and-out hike with an elevation gain of 1400 feet. It has a steep, steady climb for the first 1.5 miles. The uphill portion of the trail is decomposed granite, making for a somewhat slippery surface to hike upon so the hike will go at a slower than normal pace. Tom’s Thumb is a 140-foot-high granite rock sticking up on the top of the mountain. We hike to the base of it. A side trail called Lookout Trail takes us up to a viewpoint with 360-degree views. There are excellent views of Scottsdale and areas to the west as well as Fountain Hills and the Superstition Mountains to the east. Trail condition - overall a good hiking trail. Restrooms are at the trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 110 miles roundtrip.

[SCG=5.7/2300/4.4].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Toms-Thumb>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tom’s Thumb Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (becomes Sonoran Desert Drive.) Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (becomes Rio Verde). Turn right on Alma School Parkway. Turn left on Jomax Road. Turn right on 118th Street. Turn left on Ranch Gate Road. Turn right on 128th Street. Stay left as the road runs into the trailhead.

Tom’s Thumb Peak via Windgate Pass & Gateway trails (McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Scottsdale). Rating B Challenge.

This is a 12-mile hike with an elevation change of 2100 feet. The hike starts at the Gateway Trailhead area and passes through a typical saguaro forest. The Gateway Trail is flat, the Windgate Trail is moderate, and the Tom’s Thumb Trail is rather steep. At the top you get nearly 360-degree views of the Phoenix area (on a clear day you can see University of Phoenix stadium to the West and Bartlett Reservoir to the East). Restrooms and water are at the trailhead. No Park fees. Driving distance is 88 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Toms-Thumb>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Gateway Trailhead – Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then take Highway 101 North all the way around to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 mi. up the road.

McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale, Windgate Pass & Gateway Trails to Inspiration Point. Rating C Challenge.

This is a 6.8-mile hike with an elevation change of 1200 feet. The hike starts at the Gateway Trailhead area and passes through a typical saguaro forest. The hike goes from the Gateway Loop Trail to the Windgate Trail to Inspiration Point and slightly beyond. The top of Tom’s Thumb can be seen near the far point of the hike. Restrooms and water are at the trailhead. There is no park fee. Driving distance is 88 miles roundtrip.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Windgate-Pass>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Gateway Trailhead—Head south on PebbleCreek Parkway, take I-10 East (left), then Highway 101 North to Scottsdale. Exit at Princess/Pima-Bell Road (exit #36). Continue straight through the light to get to Bell Road. Turn east (left) on Bell Road and go

approximately 1.4 miles. Turn north (left) onto Thompson Peak Parkway. Turn right into trailhead parking 0.5 miles up the road.

Whiskey Bottle, Turpentine, Black Hill Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C.

Is an easy loop hike of 7.4 miles with an elevation gain of 500 feet. It goes through a typical Scottsdale desert with nice views of the distant mountains. A highlight is a pair of saguaros, one a perfect specimen and one with lots of curved arms - A Felix & Oscar pair. Trail Condition – good hiking trail. No restrooms at the trailhead. No park fees. Driving distance is 105 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Fraesfield-Trailhead-Loop>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Fraesfield Trailhead – Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (name changes to Rio Verde). Trailhead is on the left just before 136th Street.

Whiskey Bottle, Turpentine, Black Hill Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Fraesfield Trailhead). Rating D.

It is an easy loop hike of 4.7 miles with an elevation gain of 500 feet. It goes through typical Scottsdale desert with nice views of the distant mountains. A highlight is a pair of saguaros, one a perfect specimen and one with lots of curved arms - A Felix & Oscar pair. No restrooms at the trailhead (but you can stop off at the Brown's Ranch Trailhead by turning left on Alma School Parkway and going about a mile to the end). No park fees. Driving distance is 105 miles roundtrip.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Fraesfield-Trailhead-Loop>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Fraesfield Trailhead -- Head north on PebbleCreek Parkway to Indian School Road, turn west (left) and take Loop 303 North following until it ends at I-17. Turn left (north) on I-17. But stay right and immediately take exit 222 going right onto Dove Valley Road. Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive). Take Cave Creek Road North (left). Turn right on Dynamite Boulevard (name changes to Rio Verde). Trailhead is on the left just before 136th Street.