

C LEVEL HIKING GROUPS - WEDNESDAYS

Meet at the Eagles Nest clubhouse at 7:00 am, depart at 7:15.

January 1 - Fat Man's Pass from the West (South Mountain). Rating D+/C. A 4.5 to 6.8 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of about 600-1080 ft. It follows the National Trail starting at the Buena Vista lookout, looping at Hidden Valley through boulders and rock tunnels, and returning on National Trail. Interesting, fun hike, with a few large boulders to climb over and slide down. An optional extra half-mile hike with an elevation change of 130 ft can be added by taking a side trail to the right at marker #18. This trail goes to the top of the ridge giving hikers a 360-degree view of the surrounding area. A second optional addition is a .8 mile out and back hike (150 ft elevation change) going west from the parking lot to the China Wall, a natural rock formation that looks like a manmade wall from a distance. A third option is to go to an overlook to the left of the parking area, adding another .8 miles and 50 ft EG. Trail condition - mostly an uneven surface of rock so you need to keep your eyes on the trail. Restrooms are at the park office. No park fee. Driving distance is 60 miles RT. [SCG=5.0/750/2.6].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Other-4/Fat-Mans-Pass-West>

Directions to South Mountain Park (North) Main Entrance

Take I-10 east to I-17 south (exit 143B).

Exit I-17 at 7th Ave.

Turn right on 7th Ave to Baseline.

Turn left on Baseline to Central Ave.

Turn right onto Central Ave.

Follow Central into South Mountain Park.

Meet at park office / restrooms.

Caravan to trailhead (trailhead is at the Buena Vista Parking area).

January 8 - Baseline/Rainbow/Dysart/Toothaker Loop (Estrella Mtn Regional Park). Rating C. This is a 7.7 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 900 ft. The trail wanders through the front portion of EMRP with distant views to the north. It then goes south into more typical desert areas. Trail condition - a very good hiking trail. There's a Porta-John at trailhead. Park fee is \$7.00 per car. Driving distance is 20 miles RT.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/EstrellaMountainRegionalPark/Baseline-Rainbow-Dysart>

Directions to Estrella Mountain Regional Park - Baseline Loop TH

Turn left onto Pebble Creek Pkw/Estrella Pkw and go to the other side of I-10.

Turn left onto Vineyard Ave. just across the Gila River.

Turn right just past the golf course entrance into Estrella Mountain Park.

Pay park fee of \$7.00 per vehicle...continue straight on Casey Abbott

Dr **North**. Turn right on Casey Abbott Dr **South** (first turn past turn-in to Nature Center).

Baseline Spur trailhead is just past the amphitheater.

There is a porta-john near the trailhead.

January 15 - Walking Jim Trail (Hells Canyon Wilderness). Rating C.

This is a 7 mile in-and-out hike with an elevation gain of 900 ft. The trail parallels a mostly dry creek and offers a wide variety of vegetation (from cottonwood trees to Saguaro cactus) and wildlife (wild burros, etc). The break occurs at an interesting red rock outcropping covered with lichen. Trail condition – an average hiking trail. There are no restrooms and no park Fee. Driving distance is 80 miles RT.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/LakePleasantArea/Walking-Jim>

Directions to Walking Jim Trailhead

Take Loop 303 North to Lake Pleasant Road.

Turn left on Lake Pleasant Rd and follow until it ends at AZ 74.

Turn left on AZ 74 (Carefree Highway).

Go west to Castle Hot Springs Road (the Lake Pleasant turn off).

Turn right onto Castle Hot Springs Road and follow 5.0 miles to a pullout/parking area on the left (This is about .2 miles before you come to a "T" intersection).

The trail goes off the left end of the parking area.

No restrooms at the trailhead.

January 22 - Estrella Foothills Park Cairn Canyon Loop - SR/PA/RR/GR/UT/PC/JL Loop (Estrella Mountains). Rating C.

This is a 6.4 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 600 ft. The hike starts at the parking lot of the Estrella Foothills High School and goes through several washes and up over a couple of saddles. The hike is in typical desert terrain. Trail condition - average hiking trail. No park fee. Restrooms are t the trailhead. Driving distance is 27 miles RT.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Estrella-Foothills>

Directions to Estrella Foothills Park - High School Trailhead

Turn left out the main gate onto Pebble Creek Pkwy (south), which becomes Estrella Pkwy on the other side of I-10.

Continue into and through the Estrella Mountain development.

Turn left into the parking lot just before the Estrella Foothills High School building.

Park at the far end of the parking Lot.

Restrooms are on the left by the ballpark. No park fee.

January 29 - Tom's Thumb trail from the North trailhead (McDowell Sonoran Preserve Scottsdale). Rating C+.

This is a 6.5 mile hike with an elevation gain of 1100 ft. 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 ft high granite rock sticking up on the top of the mountain. The top of the mountain has a small valley with many interesting boulder formations. A side 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, but fairly steep going up the initial climb. Restrooms are at the trailhead. No park fee. Driving distance is 108 miles RT. [SCG=5.7/2300/4.4].

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

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Tom's Thumb Trailhead (108 mi. RT)

Take Loop 303 North to I-17.

Turn left (North) on I-17.

But stay right and immediately exit onto Dove Valley Road.

Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 miles (becomes Sonoran Desert Dr.)

Take Cave Creek Road North (left).

Turn right on Dynamite Blvd (becomes Rio Verde).

Turn right on Alma School Road.

Turn left on Jomax Road.

Turn right on 118th St.

Turn left on Ranch Gate Road.

Turn right on 128th St.

Stay left as the road runs into the trailhead.

There are restrooms but no water at the trailhead.