

SPUR CROSS RANCH CONSERVATION AREA

Dragonfly Trail + Metate Trails, Spur Cross Rec Area (Cave Creek). Rating D. This is about a 4.8 mile lollipop loop with an elevation gain of 540 ft. The hike starts out going back up the road for a quarter mile, then turns right on a slant. At the bottom of the hill, turn right. You will cross the creek and travel through a Saguaro forest with very tall Saguaro cactus. The whole area along the creek is a riparian area, which contains permanent pools of water and lots of vegetation. The trail makes a loop around the Jewel of the Creek Preserve, which contains many different bird species and up to 20 different dragonfly species. We then go in the other direction on the Spur Cross trail to the Metate trail. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile on the trail is a forest of very large saguaros. This is our turn-around point. Porta-johns are just past the parking area in the park, but there is a park fee is \$3.00 per person. The Dragonfly trail is free, but the other trails in the park are not. Driving distance is 110 miles RT. [SCG=5.5/600/2.5].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/SpurCrossRanchConservationArea/Metate-Dragonfly-Trails>

Directions to Cave Creek - Spur Cross Trailhead

Take Loop 303 to I-17.

Go North on I-17.

Turn right on Hwy 74 (Carefree Highway).

Turn left (North) on Cave Creek Road.

Turn left (North) on Spur Cross Road.

Go 4.5 miles (1.5 is gravel) to the parking area on the right.

Walk down the road .1 miles and pay \$3.00 per person (free with MC pass).

Porta-johns are at the trailhead another .1 miles down the road.

Elephant Mountain trail, Spur Cross Rec Area (Cave Creek). Rating C+. This is a 7 mile hike with an elevation gain of 1600ft. The hike starts out on the Spur Cross and Tortuga trails. Most of the early trail is very rocky. Besides the view of Elephant Mtn, there is a rock formation that looks like a Buffalo. There are many Saguaro cactus along the trail. Park fee is \$3.) per person. Porta-john at the trailhead. Driving Distance is 110 miles RT.

[SCG=7.2/1600/4.0].<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/SpurCrossRanchConservationArea/Elephant-Mountain-Trail>

Directions to Cave Creek - Spur Cross Trailhead

Take Loop 303 to I-17.

Go North on I-17.

Turn right on Hwy 74 (Carefree Highway).

Turn left (North) on Cave Creek Road.

Turn left (North) on Spur Cross Road.

Go 4.5 miles (1.5 is gravel) to the parking area on the right.

Walk down the road .1 miles and pay \$3.00 per person (free with MC pass).

Porta-johns are at the trailhead another .1 miles down the road.

Spur Cross to Maricopa Trail, Spur Cross Rec Area (Cave Creek). Rating C-B. This is a 6-10 mile hike with an elevation change of 500 ft. . The hike starts out heading West on the Spur Cross trail and travels through typical desert terrain. On the return, turn right on the Dragonfly trail. On the Dragonfly trail you pass through a Saguaro forest with very tall Saguaro cactus. You then descend into a riparian area, which contains permanent pools of water and lots of vegetation. The trail then makes a loop around the Jewel of the Creek Preserve, which contains many different bird species and up to 20 different dragonfly species. Porta-johns are at the trailhead. Park fee is \$3.00 per person. Driving distance is 110 miles RT. [in February 2010, heavy rains wiped out the trail and many of the smaller cottonwood trees in the Preserve].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/SpurCrossRanchConservationArea/Spur-Cross-Loop>

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/SpurCrossRanchConservationArea/Metate-Dragonfly-Trails>

Directions to Cave Creek - Spur Cross Trailhead

Take Loop 303 to I-17.

Go North on I-17.

Turn right on Hwy 74 (Carefree Highway).

Turn left (North) on Cave Creek Road.

Turn left (North) on Spur Cross Road.

Go 4.5 miles (1.5 is gravel) to the parking area on the right.

Walk down the road .1 miles and pay \$3.00 per person (free with MC pass).

Porta-johns are at the trailhead another .1 miles down the road.