

## **D LEVEL HIKING GROUP - Thursdays**

**Meet at the Eagles Nest Clubhouse at 7:15AM, depart at 7:30AM.**

### **December 7 – Rainbow Valley/Dysart/Toothaker Loop (Estrella Mountains). Rating D.**

This is a 4 mile loop with a 400 ft elevation gain. Beginning on the west side of the rodeo. The Rainbow Valley trail is wide and relatively flat. It intersects the Dysart Trail. Turn left onto the Dysart Trail to the Toothaker Trail. Turn left on the Toothaker Trail and head back to the rodeo. Trail condition - good hiking trail. A restroom is at the trailhead. Park entrance fee is \$6.00 per car. Driving distance is 20 miles RT.

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

### **December 14 – 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 470 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>

### **December 21 – Beardsley Trail (Lake Pleasant Regional Park). Rating**

**D.** This is 4 mile in and out hike with an elevation gain of 300 ft. The hike starts out crossing a road and then travels through a Saguaro forest. About a mile in is a very odd crested Saguaro on the right. Near the turn around point is a very tall Saguaro (30') with no arms. The hike ends at a dry waterfall area with some interesting rock formations. There is a good chance to see wild burros on this trail. Restrooms with water are at the trailhead. Park fee is \$6.00. Driving distance is 80 miles. <http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Other-12/Beardsley-Trail>

**December 28 – Go John, Quartz . Slate Trails Loop (Cave Creek Rec. Area). Rating D.** This is a 4 mile loop hike on a combined trail with an elevation gain of about 400 ft. The trail is marked, and is in good condition. On the Lime Kiln trail (on the right as you hike from the trailhead) about .3 miles from the Quartz trail intersection is a strange looking saguaro named the Michelin Man saguaro. The Quartz trail has quite a bit of quartz rock along it. About .5 miles from the trailhead on the Go John trail (on the left as you hike away from the trailhead, near the junction of the Jasper trail) there is a group of 3 saguaros that look very much like the hiking club logo. Restrooms are located at the trailhead. There is a park entrance fee of \$6.00 per car. Driving distance is 93 miles RT. [SCG=3.5/600/2.2]. <http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/organize/CaveCreekRegionalPark/Cave-Creek-Regional-Park/GoJohnOvertonQuartz-and-Variat>