

C LEVEL HIKING GROUP - WEDNESDAYS

Meet at the Eagles Nest clubhouse at 7:15 am, depart at 7:30.

December 6 - Black Canyon Trail – Skyline Segment (Rock Springs Trailhead - I-17 Exit 242) Rating C. This is a 6-8 mile out and back hike with an elevation gain of about 1000 feet. Starting out on the Horseshoe segment you cross the Agua Fria river at about the 1.5 mile point. The trail then becomes the Skyline segment. As you climb up the hillside, you will have several views of the river and Black Canyon City from above. For a 6 mile hike stop and turn around when you see the river view after passing behind a hill. For a 7 mile hike go .5 miles further for a view of Black Canyon City. The 8 mile version goes up to a quartz field. There is usually some water in the river, but is crossable. During the wet seasons, it will be more difficult to cross while staying dry. There are several sections of quartz rock along the trail. There is a restroom at the trailhead. Trail condition - a good biking trail. There is no park fee. Driving distance is 100 miles RT. The Rock Springs Café (great pies) is .8 miles from the trailhead and you will pass it to get back on I-17.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/BlackCanyonNationalRecreationT/BCT-Skyline-Segment>

December 13 - Granite Mountain Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale). Rating C. This is a 7.3 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 500 ft. It passes through three different "forests" - Saguaro, Jumping Cholla, and two types of Yucca. 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 Pebble Creek. Trail condition – Great hiking trail. No restrooms at the trailhead. No park fee. Driving distance is 110 miles RT.

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

December 20 - Vulture Peak Trail (Wickenburg). Rating C-B. This is a 4.3 mi round trip (4.6 to top), out & back hike on the same trail. Elevation gain is 1360 with the base at 2,480 ft, the saddle at 3,420 ft, and the peak at 3,660 ft. The trail is easy to the base, moderate to the

saddle where most hikers will stop. For those who wish to go to the top of **Vulture** peak, that part is difficult and you leave walking sticks and backpacks behind for hand over hand climbing. Sign in at the top and you can get a certificate at the Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce. **Vulture** Peak Trail meanders through classic Sonoran Desert landscapes, including dense stands of saguaro, ocotillo, cholla, and other cactus varieties; crosses wide desert washes; and offers dramatic scenic vistas of rugged desert mountain ranges and valleys in all directions. Trailhead parking is available for 15 vehicles. Trail condition - basically a very steep and rocky hike up to the saddle. Restrooms are at the trailhead. No park fee. Driving distance is approx 120 miles RT. [SCG=4.0/1200/3.0].<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Wickenburg/Vulture-Peak>

December 27 - Goldfield Mountains #7 - IQ Arch & Helmet Rock Loop (Goldfield Mountains). Rating C. This is a 7 mile lollipop loop hike with an elevation gain of about 1240 ft. The hike goes over a ridge with views of IQ Arch and Helmet Rock. It then goes around Helmet rock through a very colorful golden canyon. Trail condition - average hiking trail. This is a very scenic trail. There are no restrooms at the trailhead. No Park fee. Driving distance is 130 miles RT.
<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/GoldfieldMountains/IQ-Arch-and-Helmet-Rock-Loop>