

**"B" LEVEL HIKING GROUP – MONDAY**

**Meet at the Eagle's Nest clubhouse at 7:15 a.m., depart at 7:30 (Times subject to change for early starts. . . always check the weekly e-mail).**

**December 3 – Dixie Mine + Thompson Peak Trails** (Fountain Hills). Rating B. This is a 9.8 mile out and back hike with an elevation change of 1800 ft. The .6 mile trail in Fountain Hills is along a paved sidewalk in an exclusive neighborhood. The Dixie Mine trail then enters the McDowell Mountain Park (where you pay your entrance fee). At 2.5 miles you see the remnants of the Dixie mine. Turn left on the jeep road – this is the Thompson Peak trail. From here, it goes up and up and up. Some sections are actually cemented road – very steep but easy to hike on. You can see the Fountain Hills fountain from a few spots along the trail if your timing is right (on the hour). There is a crested saguaro at the entrance to the parking lot, which is on the left just before the gated entrance to the neighborhood. Restrooms and cold water are at the trailhead. Park fee is \$2.00 per person. Driving distance is 110 miles RT.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Fountain-Hills/Dixie-Mine-Loop/B-HikeLynnW2016-2017/>

**December 10 -- Fossil Springs** Fossil Springs Trail (Strawberry area). Rating B. Three trails access Fossil Springs. We will hike one of these, the Fossil Springs Trail. Round trip is 8 to 9 miles with an elevation gain of 1,500 ft. Average grade is 13%. The trail down to the springs is wide and very easy, as it once was an old road. The beginning of the trail is desert but on the descent changes to tall sycamores, oak trees, fern grottos and wild blackberry bushes. At the bottom of the canyon the trail becomes a footpath along a stream. It is about 3.6 miles to Fossil Springs. The spring pumps out 275 gallons/second at a constant temperature of 72 degrees. We will have lunch at or near the springs and then return to our vehicles. Also, it is rattle snake territory around the springs. A lot of campers use the area so just be alert. For a longer hike we can continue on the trail past the springs and towards the Irving Power Plant. The footpath will lead to a roadway used to service the flume that provides water to the power plant. This road way meanders alongside a wide valley above Fossil Creek and on to the power plant. It is about 5 miles from the springs. Be sure to take plenty of water, as the climb out is difficult. A restroom is at the trailhead. No park fee. Driving distance is 268 miles RT. [SCG=8.0/2100/4.6].

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/CoconinoNationalForest/Fossil-Springs-Trail>

**December 17 – Mesquite Flats Fork Trail (Superstition Mountains).**  
**Rating C/B.** This is a 6 to 8 mile “Y” shaped hike with an elevation gain of 1000- to 1600 ft. The C version follows an old road to two overlook areas, while the B version extends the two forks with bushwhacks to higher overlook areas. All of the overlook areas provide views of parts of Canyon Lake and deep canyons in the Superstition Mountain. No restrooms at the trailhead. No park fee. Driving distance is 142 miles RT.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/SuperstitionWilderness/Mesquite-Flats>

**December 24 – Black Canyon Trail - Big Bug Trailhead North (off Hwy 69) Rating B.** Restroom is at the trailhead. This is an in-and-out hike of 12 miles with an elevation gain of 1600 ft. It goes under Hwy 69 and crosses rolling hills of brushy desert and ends at a running creek. Javalina and sheep have been spotted on this trail. Trail condition - good hiking trail. No Park Fee. A restroom is at the trailhead. Driving distance is 150 miles RT.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/BlackCanyonNationalRecreationT/Big-Bug-Trailhead-South/B-Exploratory-HikeLynnW2016-2017/i-LD8tFbd>

**December 31 – Walking Jim/Big Jim Loop (Hells Canyon Wilderness).**  
**Rating B+.** A 12.5 mile hike with an elevation gain of 3200 ft. The trail parallels a mostly dry creek and offers a wide variety of vegetation (from cottonwood trees to Saguaro cacti) and wildlife (wild burros, etc). It then goes up to a high ridge with great panoramic views. No restrooms. No park Fee. Driving distance is 80 miles RT. [SCG=12.5/3200/6.8].

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/LakePleasantArea/Walking-Jim/B-HikeWalking-Jim-ModifiedLynnW2017-2018/>