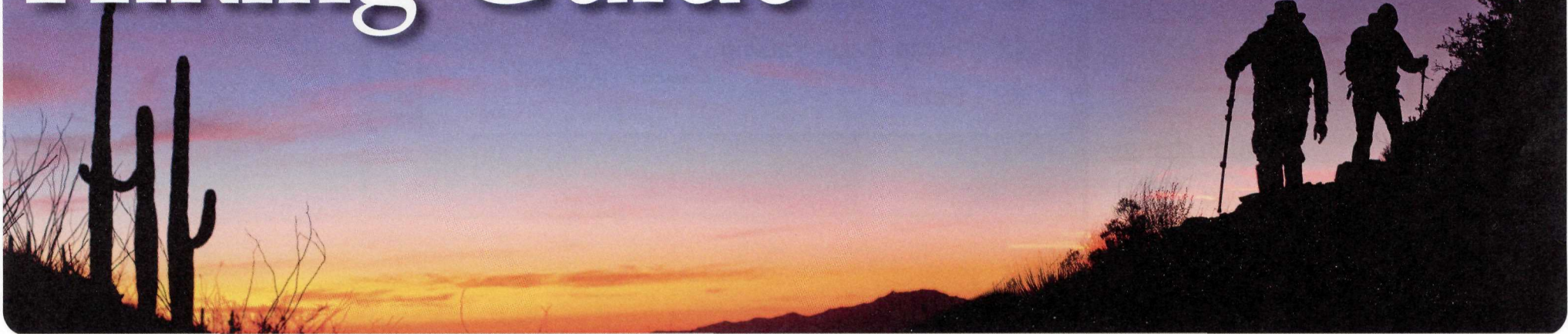




Hiking Guide



INTRODUCTION

Saguaro (sah-WAH-row) National Park's West District has a wonderful variety of over 40 miles of hiking trails for you to explore. This guide is intended to help you decide which of the trails will meet your needs, help you to have a safe visit, & inform you about park regulations.


DECIDING WHICH TRAIL TO TAKE


"I want to hike for 2 hours...4 hours...5 hours..."

The time it takes to complete a trail depends on how fast someone hikes, how many stops, the steepness of the trail, etc. A very rough estimate of average hiking speed is 2 miles per hour; so dividing the trail distance by 2 will give you a rough estimate of your time.

"I want an easy hike...strenuous hike..."

How easy or difficult a hike is depends on a hiker's physical condition, experience, etc., & is very subjective. For this guide we have delineated the trails as "Relatively Easy", "Moderate", or "More Challenging"

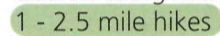
 = Relatively Easy - less than 300ft of elevation gain/loss & does not have steep inclines.

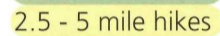
 = Moderate - gradual elevation gain/loss greater than 300ft, but less than 1000ft.

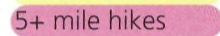
 = More Challenging - steeper trail sections with elevation gain/loss of over 1000ft.

"I want a long...short...medium...hike"

Again, these terms are very subjective. For this guide, the trail suggestions have been broken down into three distinct categories:

 1 - 2.5 mile hikes

 2.5 - 5 mile hikes

 5+ mile hikes

Nearby trails shorter than 1 - mile are shown in the general park brochure & are not addressed here.

Rough or Smooth?

All trails (except the paved accessible trail) are natural soil with some rough rock steps. Some steeper trails may have many steps. Many trails also have low lines of rock angled across the trail. These are called "water bars" & are periodically installed to slow & divert rain runoff to reduce the formation of gullies.

HOW TO READ A TRAIL SIGN

Small (approx. 12") black metal signs mark the intersections of the trails. The UPPERCASE name at the top of the sign should be the trail on which the sign is located. The name & distance to the next junction is usually shown below.

GENERAL INFORMATION & PARK REGULATIONS

Hikers must remain on trails at all times. NO OFF-TRAIL USE IS PERMITTED. Hiking groups are limited to 18 people. Larger groups must be divided & remain separated.

The unpaved roads are open to vehicles from dawn to dusk. Hiking at night is allowed but vehicles may not be at trailheads along the dirt roads. *Note that King Canyon & El Camino del Cerro trailhead parking areas, although on paved roads, are on county property & are closed from dusk to dawn.*

Pets are not allowed on trails, except for paved paths (such as Desert Discovery and the Cactus Garden), as well as on the Golden-Gate Multi-Use Trail. Pets may be walked along the roads & are allowed in the picnic grounds (except Mam-A-Gah). All pets must be on a leash at all times. Bicycles must remain on designated roadways at all times.

HIKING SAFETY



PLAN YOUR TRIP -

Always tell someone where you are going & when you will return. Stick with your itinerary & let them know when you have safely returned.



HIKE EARLY -

In summer, it can be very hot & dry. Plan to do your hiking in the early morning when it is cooler. During the hotter summer months, make sure to be back to the trail head by 10am. As well, if the forecast estimates temperatures over 110 °F, abort your hiking plans for the day. Hiking when it is hot can be dangerous, even deadly!



CARRY PLENTY OF WATER -

Water is available only at the visitor center. Open water sources in the park are very limited and not safe to drink. Treat all open water before drinking to avoid illness. One gallon of water per person per day is the absolute minimum that should be carried. However, studies suggest that one should consume 1 liter of water PER HOUR PER PERSON while hiking in the heat. WHEN THE WATER IS HALF GONE, TURN AROUND. DO NOT RATION YOUR WATER...A smart tip is to drink some type of electrolyte beverage while hiking and bring salty snacks. Excessive loss of electrolytes can lead to health risks such as heat exhaustion, hypotension, etc.



DRESS PROPERLY -

Good closed-toed hiking shoes, loose fitting natural-fiber clothing, a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, & sunscreen are a must for the desert climate. Desert temperatures can reach over 90 °F & drop below 50 °F in one day. Summer temperatures can reach 125 °F in some locations.



WATCH THE WEATHER -

Watch or listen frequently to weather reports on a radio or a cell phone app. Avoid deep canyons & dry river beds during stormy weather. Also, do not hike on top of exposed peaks or ridges during a storm. If heavy rains occur, move to high ground immediately. Flash floods can be caused by heavy rain - it may not be raining where you are, but water can come down the canyon or river bed in a hurry!



DEFENSIVE PLANT LIFE -

Most plants are armed with spines or thorns. Stay on the trail & watch where you are going. Cholla cacti are known for their spines that easily stick to any animal or person who brushes against them. The best tool for cholla removal is a regular pocket comb which can be used to get between the cholla & you so it can be flicked away from the body.



BE AWARE OF ANIMALS -

Be aware of rattlesnakes. NEVER PLACE YOUR HANDS OR FEET WHERE YOU CANNOT SEE THEM. If a rattlesnake is encountered, give it space & do not attempt to catch, move, or touch it at all. Be aware of bees going into and out of a cavity in a saguaro, tree, or other nook - honeybees in the Sonoran Desert are "Africanized" & will defend their hives aggressively. If a bee should begin "bumping" you, that is a sign you are too close to a hive. Be aware of any animal that is not behaving in a normal manner. No healthy animal will approach you. Do not interact with any animal that appears injured, sick, or otherwise "not normal."

GENERAL INFORMATION

All listed distances reflect the total round-trip trail length.

Mileages between trail junctions are shown on this map.

Hohokam road is one-way from the Hugh Norris trailhead to the junction of Golden Gate road.

DECIDING WHICH TRAIL TO TAKE

Distance	and	Elevation change
1 - 2.5 miles	<	300ft =
2.5 - 5 miles		
5+ miles	300 - 1000ft =	
	>	1000ft =

HUGH NORRIS TRAIL TO WASSON PEAK

Start at: HN Distance: 10mi
Take the Hugh Norris trail up to the ridgeline & proceed to Wasson Peak & back. At 4687 feet, Wasson is the highest peak in the Tucson Mountains.

HUGH NORRIS TRAIL BIG LOOP

Start at: HN Distance: 6.6mi
Take the Hugh Norris trail up to the ridgeline & proceed to the Sendero Esperanza (SE) trail junction. Descend on the trail towards the SE trailhead. Take the Dobe Wash trail to the Bajada Wash trail. Follow the Bajada Wash trail then take the connector trail from Bajada Wash trail to the HN trailhead.

WILD DOG TRAIL

Start at: VV Distance: 1.8mi
Take the Valley View trail to the Wild Dog trail. This trail ends at the junction of Golden Gate Rd. & the turnout to Signal Hill picnic area. If your group has hikers & non-hikers, the hikers could be dropped off at the beginning of the trail while non-hikers drive around the loop & pick them up at the end or at Signal Hill picnic ground. The Signal Hill road adds 0.5 mile to the hike.

CACTUS WREN/ENCINAS/MANVILLE LOOP

Start at: A-3 Distance: 1.7mi
Take the Cactus Wren trail to the Encinas trail, then loop over to the Manville trail and return to the original trailhead. This path is mostly flat & relatively smooth while traversing the western part of the park through typical Sonoran Desert vegetation. The trail is sandy in some areas.

CACTUS WREN/SIGNAL HILL/ MANVILLE LOOP

Start at: SH Distance: 4.3mi
Take the Signal Hill trail, where you can enjoy the petroglyphs, up to the Cactus Wren trail. Return on the Manville trail. *Note: This hike could also begin starting from A-1 or A-3.*

DESERT WINDS TRAIL

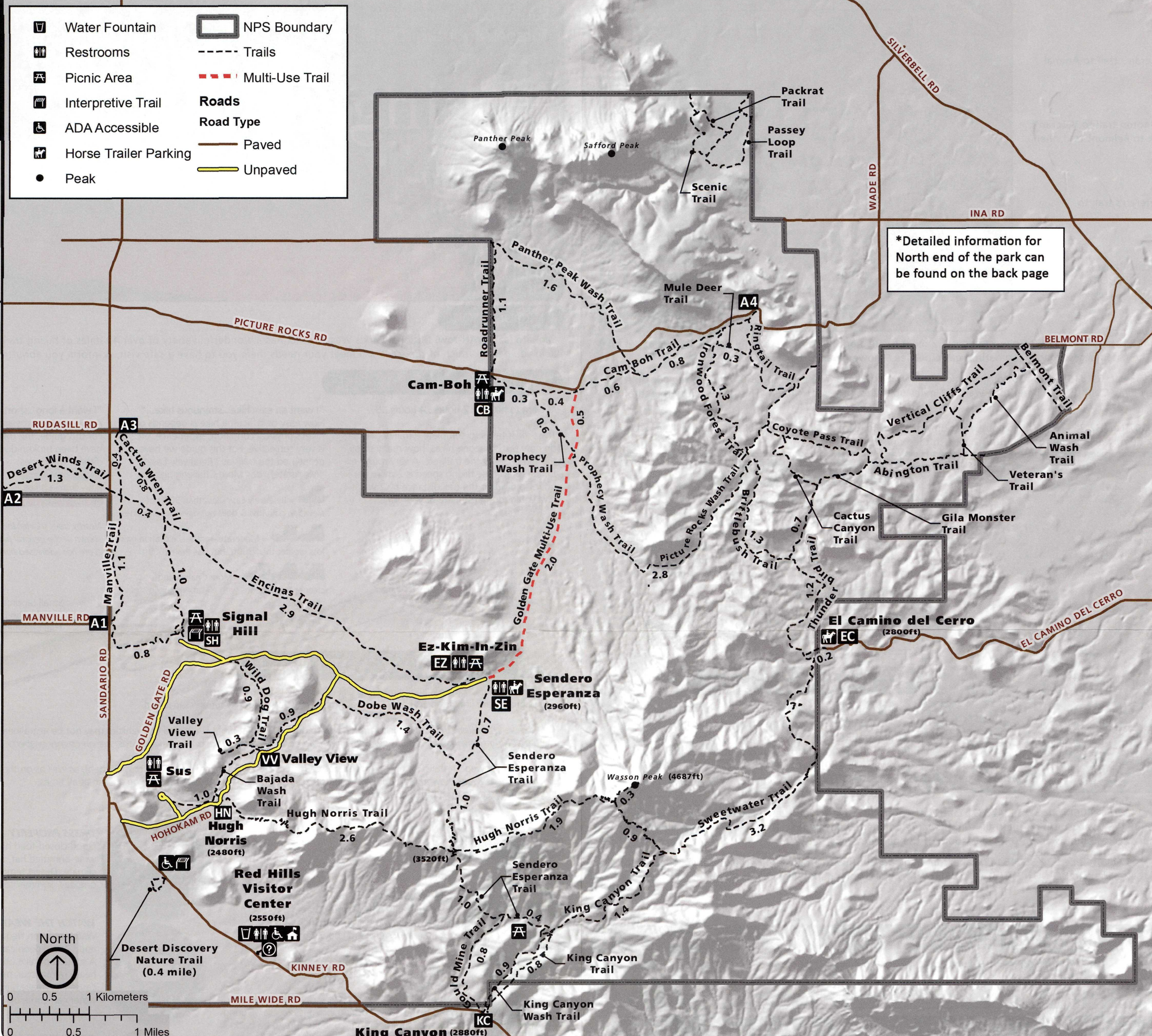
Start at: A-2 Distance: 1.8 mi
This trail traverses the far western "flats" of the park.

ENCINAS TRAIL

Start at: EZ Distance: 6.6mi
This trail goes gradually downhill to Sandario Rd. This trail was once the road the Civilian Conservation Corp. work crews used in the late 1930s to enter the park to build the trails and picnic grounds.

SENDERO-ESPERANZA TO THE RIDGELINE

Start at: SE Distance: 3.4mi
Take the Sendero-Esperanza trail to the Hugh Norris trail junction on the ridgeline. The first mile is relatively flat (roughly 220ft of elevation gain). The trail then ascends the switchbacks to the ridgeline. Return the same way.



SENDERO ESPERANZA TRAIL BIG LOOP

Start at: SE Distance: 8.5mi
Take the Sendero-Esperanza trail to the Hugh Norris trail junction on the ridgeline. Follow the Hugh Norris trail west along the ridgeline & descend to the Hugh Norris trailhead. Cross Hohokam road & take the connector trail to the Bajada Wash trail. Proceed to the right (NE) on the Bajada Wash to the Dobe Wash trail. Return on Dobe Wash & Sendero Esperanza trails to the trailhead.

SENDERO ESPERANZA TO WASSON PEAK

Start at: SE Distance: 8mi
Take the Sendero-Esperanza trail to the Hugh Norris trail junction on the ridgeline. From there, follow the Hugh Norris trail up the ridge to Wasson Peak & return the same way.

PICTURE ROCKS/PROPHECY WASH LOOP

Start at: CB Distance: 7.6mi
Take the Cam-boh trail East towards the Ironwood Forest trail and take that South. Then take a left (heading SouthWest) for the Picture Rocks Wash trail which will turn into the Prophecy Wash trail. Take this trail back to the Cam-boh trailhead.

ROADRUNNER/PANTHER PEAK WASH

Start at: CB Distance: 4.3mi
Take the Roadrunner trail North to the Panther Peak Wash trail and then head SouthEast on Panther Peak Wash towards Cam-boh trail. Once on Cam-boh, head west on the trail until you return to the Cam-boh trailhead.

TRAILS FROM BOX CANYON

Start at: A-4 Distance: variable
Trails in this area go in between & over a series of lower hills. A variety of loops can be hiked ranging from 1 mile, using the Ringtail trail, Mule Deer trail and the Cam-boh trail to create loops over 14 miles.

SWEETWATER TRAIL TO THE RIDGE

Start at: EC Distance: 6.8mi
This out & back route goes up to the ridge of the King Canyon trail junction & returns the same way.

SWEETWATER TRAIL TO WASSON PEAK

Start at: EC Distance: 9.2mi
Take the Sweetwater trail to the ridge. Go up the ridge on the King Canyon trail to Wasson Peak & return the same way.

THUNDERBIRD TRAIL(S)

Start at: EC Distance: variable
The Thunderbird trail ascends gradually around the mountain & then drops down into the lower hills. A variety of loops can be hiked, from 3 miles to over 14 miles.

KING CANYON SHORT LOOP

Start at: KC Distance: 1.8mi
Take the King Canyon Wash trail up the sandy wash bottom between the canyon walls to the junction & return via the King Canyon trail (an old mining road). *Note: there are several rocky "stair-step like" sections in the wash bottom. Also due to moisture, there may be bees present in the wash bottom.*

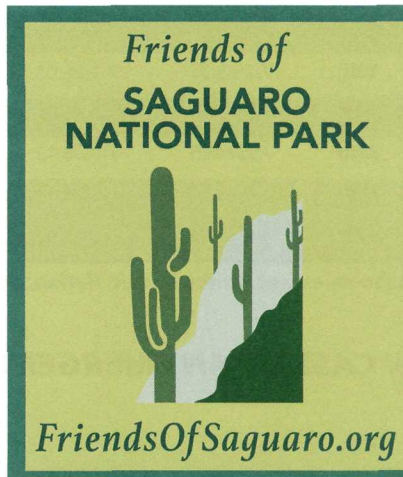
KING CANYON/GOULD MINE LOOP

Start at: KC Distance: 2.4mi
Take either the King Canyon Wash trail (see notes above) or the King Canyon trail up the canyon. Then take the Sendero Esperanza trail to the Gould Mine trail & return to the trailhead. *Option: Take the Sendero Esperanza (SE) trail from the SE/Gould Mine junction up to the ridge & back. This option adds 2 miles to the total distance.*

KING CANYON/GOULD HIGH LOOP

Start at: KC Distance: 7.8mi
Take either the King Canyon Wash trail (see notes under KING CANYON SHORT LOOP) or the King Canyon trail to their junction. Proceed up King Canyon trail to Wasson Peak. Return down the ridgeline on the Hugh Norris trail. Take the Sendero Esperanza trail to the Gould Mine trail & return to the trailhead.

Observations:



This hiking guide was generously provided by our official fundraising partner, Friends of Saguaro National Park

HIKING IN THIS AREA

VERTICAL CLIFFS SHORT LOOP

Start at: A-5 Distance: 2.6mi

Take the Belmont trail to Vertical Cliffs trail to Veteran's trail to Animal Wash trail to the Belmont trail and return to A-5

VERTICAL CLIFFS LONG LOOP

Start at: A-5 Distance: 3.9mi

Take the Belmont trail to Vertical Cliffs trail to Abington trail to Veteran's trail and then down to Animal Wash trail and back to Belmont trail, then return to A-5

ABINGTON SHORT LOOP

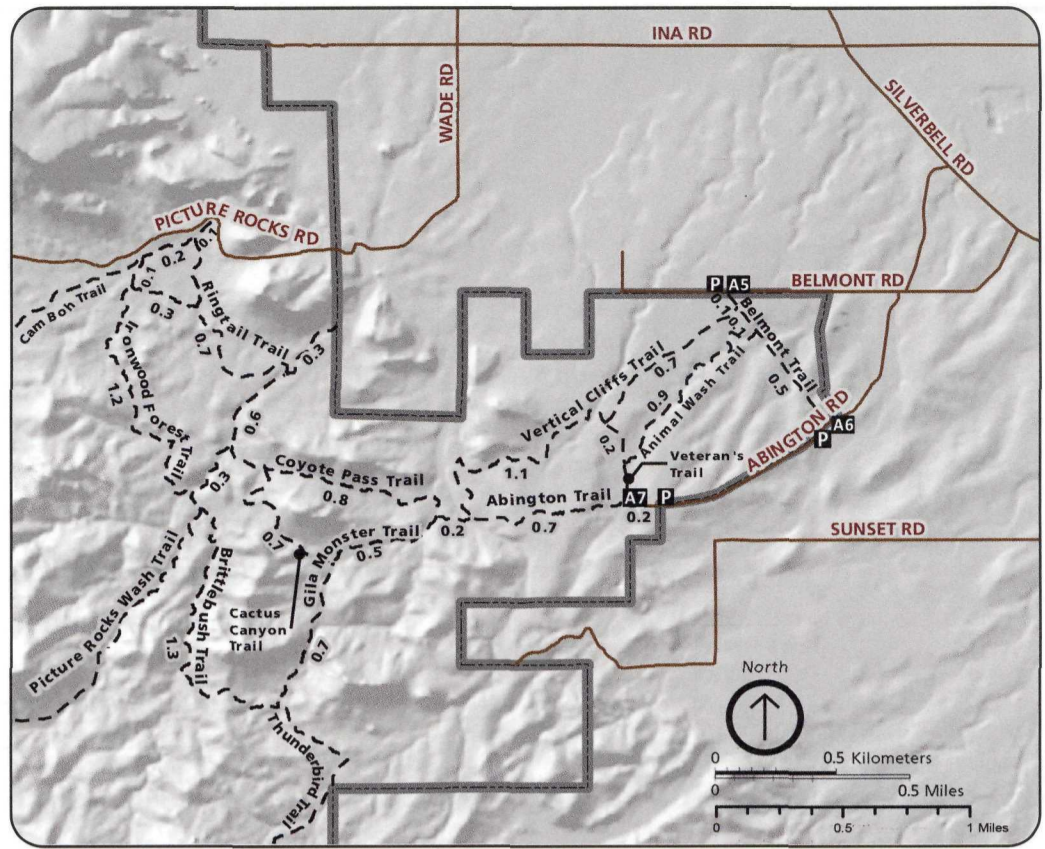
Start at: A-7 Distance: 2.4mi

Take the Abington trail to Vertical Cliffs trail to Veteran's trail to Abington trail and return to A-7

ABINGTON LONG LOOP

Start at: A-7 Distance: 4.9mi

Take the Abington trail to Gila Monster trail to Cactus Canyon to Coyote Pass and then follow the rest of the ABINGTON SHORT LOOP (described above).

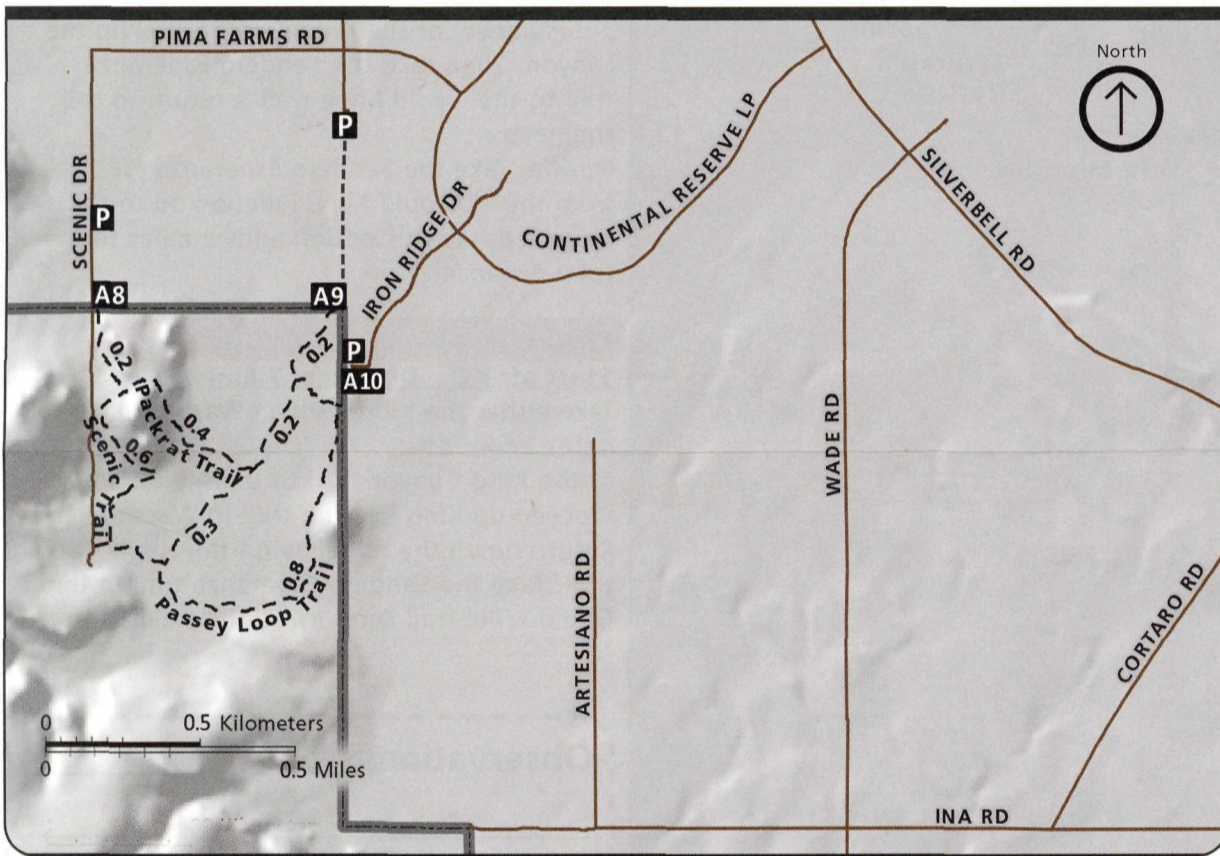


PARKING IN THIS AREA

A-5 North Belmont Access - (Long: -111.09613485 Lat: 32.32311343) Go west about 1.2 miles on Belmont Rd. off Silverbell Rd. You will see a gated road on your left, park in the area in front of the gate. The gated access road along natural gas pipelines & power lines is the Belmont trail.

A-6 South Belmont Access - (Long: -111.08951153 Lat: 32.31555148) Go southwest on Abington Rd. off Belmont Rd. about 0.6 miles. On your right will be a pullout area, a gated dirt road, & a trail sign by Pima County. Park here, then walk 0.1 miles up hill to park access point. This is the southern end of the Belmont trail.

A-7 Abington Road Access - (Long: -111.09648007 Lat: 32.21148507) Go southwest on Abington Rd. past A-6. At about 1.1 miles you will see a small turnout on your right with a "no outlet" sign. Park here, walk up the road about 0.2 mile to the park access point, A-7.



HIKING IN THIS AREA

SCENIC/PASSEY/PACKRAT LOOP

Start at: A-8 Distance: 1.7mi

A short, scenic loop with spectacular views of Safford Peak, also northwest of Tucson. Some climbing involved, but short & not too strenuous. Take the Scenic trail to Passey Loop trail to Packrat trail to Scenic Loop then back to A-8

PASSEY LOOP TRAIL

Start at: A-9 Distance: 1.6mi

This flat trail in the northwest part of the Park is easy & travels through typical desert vegetation. It can also be accessed from A-10.

PARKING IN THIS AREA

A-8 Scenic Drive Access - (Long: -111.14009347 Lat: 32.35581005) Take Pima Farms Rd. west from continental Reserve Loop to its end at Scenic Drive; turn left, go about 0.2 mile to a paved circle (just beyond the driveway of 8230). Park here, DO NOT PARK IN/NEAR SANCTUARY COVE. After parking, walk another 0.2 mile south to the park access point.

A-9 Sand Dune Place Access Parking - (Long: -111.13120068 Lat: 32.35747387) Take Pima Farms Rd. west to Sand Dune Place, turn south, & go to the end. Park in the circle and DO NOT BLOCK ANY DRIVEWAYS. Walk south on the trail from the large boulder along the fence line. Stay on the trail; the areas east & west of the trail are private property. The park access point is about 0.37 mile south of the parking area.

A-10 Thelon Court Access Parking - (Long: -111.13117148 Lat: 32.35046442) Take Iron Ridge Rd. southwest from Continental Reserve Loop. Thelon Court is the last cul-de-sac at the end. Park along the railing and DO NOT BLOCK ANY DRIVEWAYS. Follow the park fence line south about 415 feet to the park access point.

General Weather Information

Average Maximum and Minimum Monthly Temperature

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max	65.8° F	63.3° F	75.7° F	84.5° F	84.8° F	100.8° F	103.6° F	101.9° F	94.3° F	86.4° F	76.3° F	65.4° F
Min	39.5° F	40.2° F	47.8° F	54.1° F	56.9° F	69.6° F	77.1° F	76.6° F	70.2° F	56.6° F	51.3° F	40.9° F

Sunrise and Sunset Times for Tucson, AZ (Mountain Standard Time, GMT-7)

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1st	7:25/5:30	7:17/5:57	6:51/6:21	6:12/6:43	5:38/7:04	5:18/7:25	5:21/7:34	5:39/7:21	5:59/6:49	6:18/6:10	6:41/5:35	7:07/5:19
5th	7:25/5:33	7:14/6:00	6:46/6:24	6:07/6:46	5:35/7:07	5:17/7:27	5:23/7:34	5:42/7:18	6:01/6:44	6:20/6:05	6:44/5:31	7:10/5:19
10th	7:25/5:37	7:10/6:05	6:40/6:28	6:02/6:48	5:30/7:10	5:17/7:29	5:25/7:33	5:45/7:13	6:05/6:37	6:24/5:58	6:48/5:28	7:14/5:19
15th	7:25/5:41	7:06/6:09	6:34/6:31	5:55/6:53	5:26/7:14	5:17/7:31	5:28/7:31	5:48/7:08	6:08/6:31	6:27/5:52	6:53/5:24	7:17/5:21
20th	7:23/5:46	7:01/6:13	6:27/6:35	5:49/6:56	5:23/7:17	5:18/7:33	5:31/7:29	5:51/7:03	6:11/6:24	6:31/5:47	6:57/5:22	7:20/5:23
25th	7:21/5:50	6:55/6:18	6:21/6:38	5:40/7:00	5:21/7:21	5:19/7:34	5:34/7:26	5:55/6:57	6:14/6:17	6:35/5:41	7:02/5:20	7:22/5:25
30th	7:10/5:55		6:14/6:42	5:39/7:03	5:19/7:24	5:21/7:34	5:38/7:23	5:58/6:51	6:17/6:11	6:39/5:36	7:06/5:19	7:24/5:28

Arizona, except for the Navajo Nation, does not observe Daylight Savings Time. Please note that sunrise and sunset times are approximate and will vary slightly from year to year.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911!



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