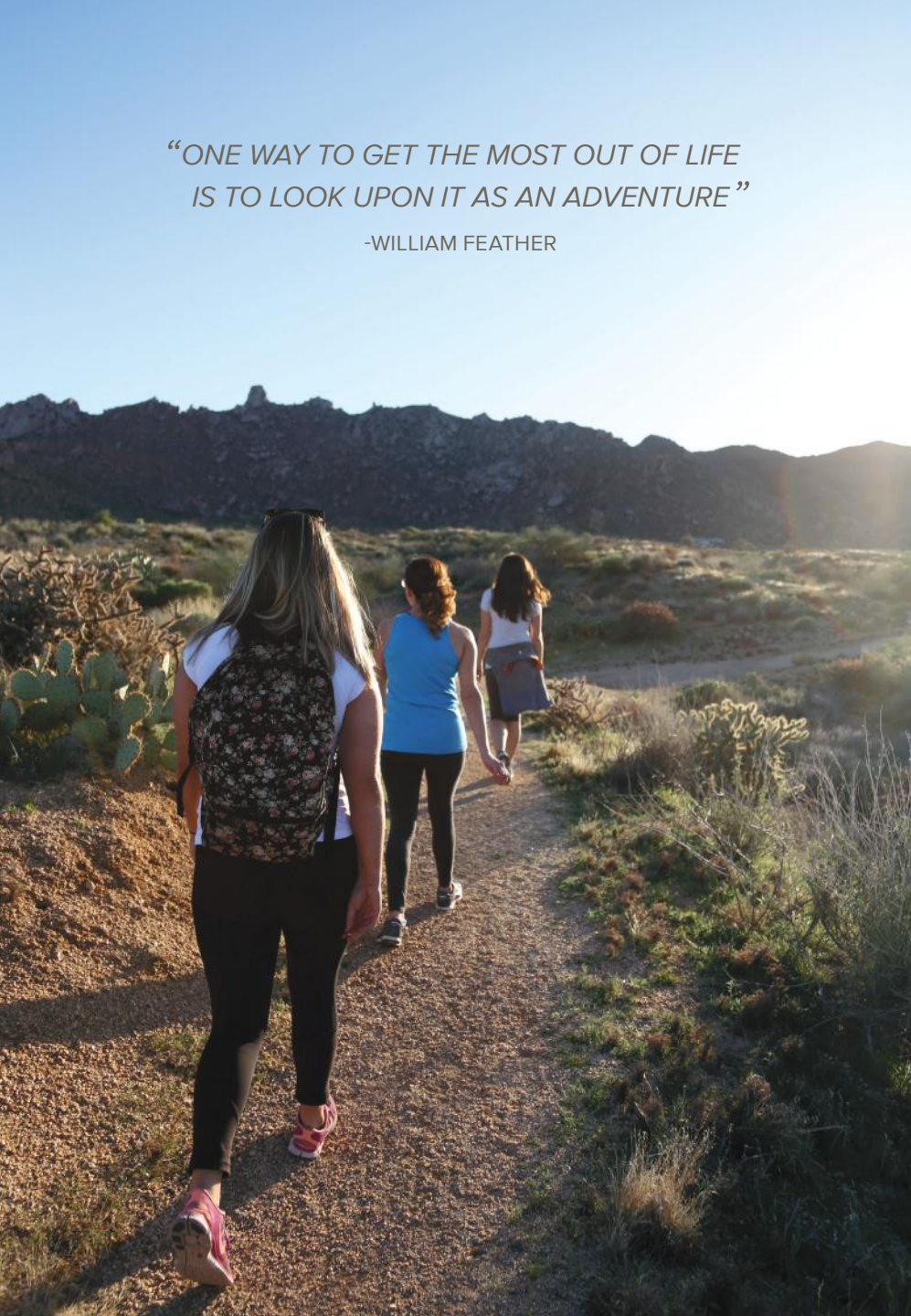


*“ONE WAY TO GET THE MOST OUT OF LIFE
IS TO LOOK UPON IT AS AN ADVENTURE”*

-WILLIAM FEATHER

SCOTTSDALE AREA

HIKING & TRAIL GUIDE



SCOTTSDALE
ARIZONA

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER

Scottsdale Fashion Square, Food Court

7014 E. Camelback Rd., Suite 582 | Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

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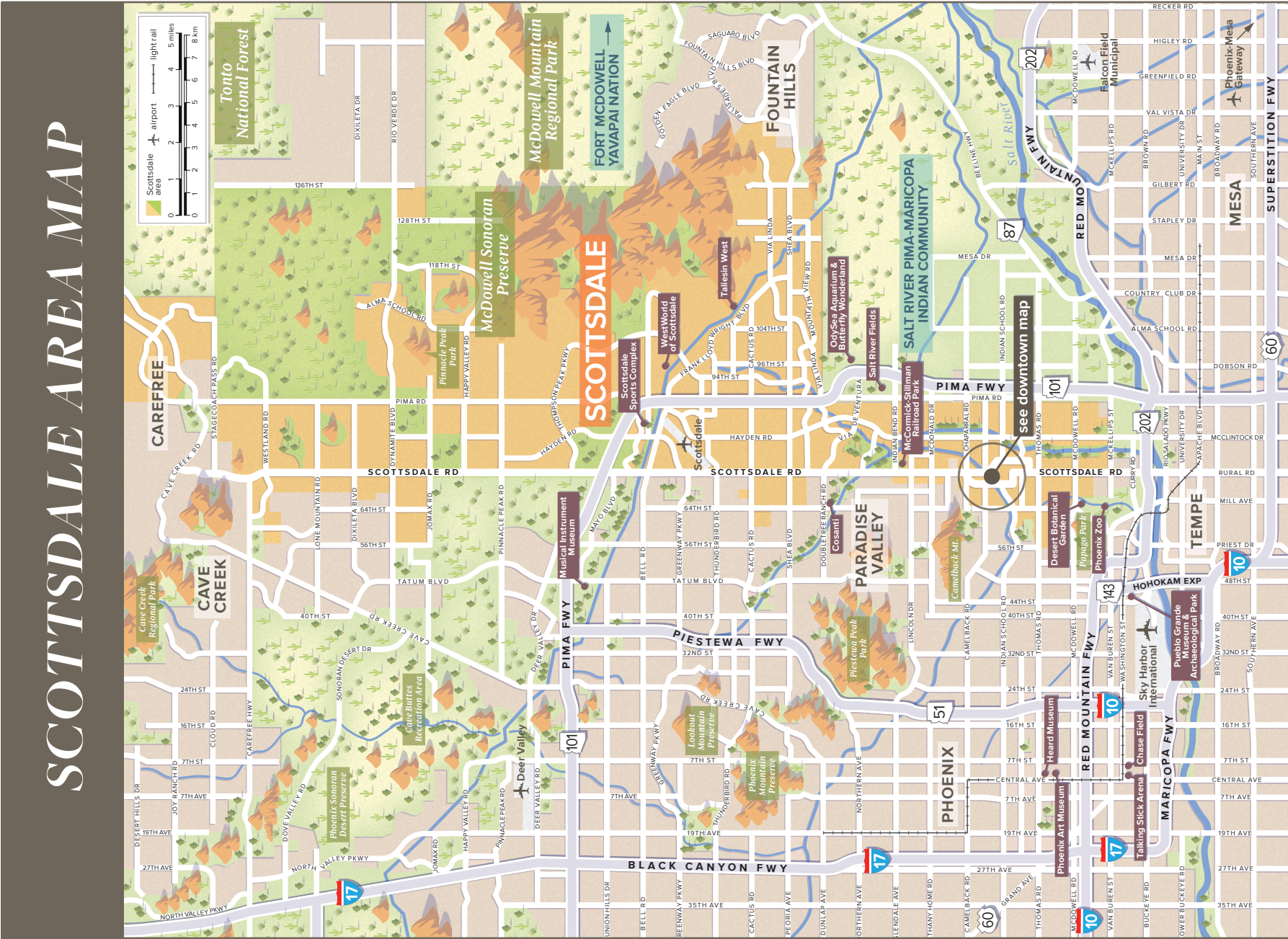


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MAPS. Inside Back Cover

A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, several tall saguaro cacti stand among low-lying desert shrubs and scattered rocks. A dirt trail winds through the middle ground. In the background, a rugged mountain peak rises against a vast, clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

WELCOME TO *THE SONORAN DESERT*

WE'RE ALL EXPLORERS AT HEART.

We may go about it differently – some with quiet intention, others with wild abandon – but we're all searching for a new experience to collect, a discovery that quickens our pulse just a bit. Welcome, fellow explorers, to one of the world's most spectacular natural playgrounds – Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert!

Known for its boulder-strewn mountain peaks, verdant desert washes and pristine lakes and rivers, our Sonoran Desert invites you to get out and explore. Experience the serenity of a desert trail at sunrise with only the cacti and quail as your companions. Let your curiosity ride shotgun as you bounce along rugged trails on a guided Jeep tour. Plunge through whitewater rapids or settle in to a horse's gentle sway. The choice, and the adventure, is yours.

If Scottsdale's bustling downtown is the city's heart, then the Sonoran Desert is its soul – and we'd like to share it with you. That's why we've included in this guide some of our favorite places to hike, bike, climb, or just sit and contemplate. We hope that as you learn more about it, you'll be inspired to see the Sonoran Desert's beauty for yourself, in every season!

GEOLOGY & TERRAIN

The Sonoran Desert covers more than 100,000 square miles in Arizona, California and northern Mexico, and is one of four major deserts in North America. Geologically, the Sonoran Desert lies in the vast Basin and Range province of the western United States. A land of soaring mountains and flat valleys, the Basin and Range encompasses nearly eight percent of the country's land area and is one of the nation's youngest topographies, born between 15 million and eight million years ago.



Fast Facts DESERT WATER

- ▶ The Colorado River is Scottsdale's main water source.
- ▶ The Sonoran Desert boasts numerous lakes, rivers and streams that create lush riparian areas that support desert wildlife.
- ▶ The canals that channel water from area reservoirs are based on an ancient irrigation system designed by the Hohokam Indians, who inhabited the area until 1450 A.D.
- ▶ Scottsdale golf courses use reclaimed water for irrigation and water features.

SUSTAINING LIFE IN THE DESERT

With as much sunshine (330 days per year) and as little rainfall (9 inches annually) as we get in the desert it might seem impossible that so many species could not only exist here, but actually thrive. Their success is largely due to special adaptations that make the most of what little moisture we do get.



- ▶ Most cacti have pleated stems that expand to store rainwater for times of drought.
- ▶ Cactus spines provide shade for the stem and act as a wind break to reduce water loss.
- ▶ The root systems of many desert plants are shallow and grow outward rather than down to better absorb surface moisture.
- ▶ Certain plants, like palo verde trees, conserve water by dropping their leaves during the dry season.
- ▶ Small mammals, including cottontails and jackrabbits, get most of their water from the vegetation they eat.
- ▶ Desert tortoises have large bladders that can store up to 40 percent of their weight in water for use when needed.



THE FIVE SEASONS OF THE SONORAN DESERT

	WINTER	SPRING
DATES, AVERAGE TEMPERATURES* & NORMAL RAINFALL:	Dec. 1 – Feb. 15 High: 70° F (21° C) Low: 40° F (4° C) Normal Rainfall: 2"	Feb. 16 – April 30 High: 79° F (26° C) Low: 47° F (8° C) Normal Rainfall: 1.5"
WHAT TO EXPECT:	Mild to cool sunny days and clear, brisk nights Possible light rain coming from the northwest	Warm, sunny days and cool nights Mountain snow beginning to melt and filling the creeks and washes
WHAT TO LOOK FOR:	Creosote sprouting new leaves after a winter rain Jackrabbits and coyotes enjoying the mild temperatures Mesquites and palo verdes dropping their leaves if the temperature drops to freezing Desert wildflowers such as Mexican gold poppies, lupines and owl-clover beginning to show their colors	Desert plants and cacti sprouting new leaves, branches, arms and pads Animals active in the daytime gathering food, building homes and enjoying warmer days The desert landscape blooming with wildflowers and annuals Ocotillos producing red to orange flowers and palo verdes bursting forth in bright yellow blossoms Reptiles basking in the sun and birds migrating north for the summer

DRY SUMMER	WET SUMMER	FALL
May 1 – June 30 High: 99° F (37° C) Low: 64° F (18° C) Normal Rainfall: < 0.25"	July 1 – Sept. 15 High: 103° F (39° C) Low: 73° F (23° C) Normal Rainfall: 2.25"	Sept. 16 – Nov. 30 High: 87° F (31° C) Low: 56° F (13° C) Normal Rainfall: 1.74"
Clear, dry, warm days and balmy evenings Little to no precipitation	Afternoon thunderstorms drawn up from the Gulf of Mexico by monsoon winds Warm to hot days with moderate humidity	Warm days followed by refreshing, cool nights The end of monsoon-driven thunderstorms
Nighthawks swooping through the air after the sun goes down Animals resting during the day and coming out at night Owls emerging at dusk to hunt Saguaro and queen of the night plants blooming, with bats and moths drinking their nectar at night Prickly pears blooming in early May followed by saguaros from mid-May to mid-June	Butterflies emerging after the rains Ocotillo and other desert plants leafing out after a storm Reptiles beginning to shed their old skin with the wet weather Hummingbird activity increasing before the birds head south for the winter	Wintering hawks beginning to arrive Lizards and snakes eating as much as they can Anna's and Costa's hummingbirds at feeders Desert mammals remaining active in the daytime and sleeping during cooler nights Birds forming flocks and getting ready to migrate for the winter Quail forming groups called "coveys"

* Source: www.weather.com

DESERT PLANTS

Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert is overflowing with botanical treasures, from regal saguaro cacti and lacy mesquite trees to cactus blossoms and wildflowers in all the colors of the rainbow. Here's a sampling of the desert plants you might see as you explore.



The highly fragrant blossoms of the **Queen of the Night** open only for one night and close with the morning sun.



Juice from **Prickly Pear** fruit buds is used in drinks, syrups and candy. Prickly pears produce vibrantly colored blossoms.



The Tohono O'odham people use the leaves of one species of **Yucca** for basketry fiber. Yucca fruits and flowers are edible fresh or dried.



The bean-like pods of the **Mesquite Tree** provided a source of food for pre-Columbian desert dwellers.



The **Agave** is best known as the plant from which Tequila is made. It also was cultivated by the Hohokam as a major food crop.



It's hard to miss the bright gold blossoms and green, chlorophyll-bearing trunks and branches of the **Palo Verde Tree**.



Fast Facts GIANT SAGUARO

- The saguaro blossom is the state flower of Arizona.
- A 10-year-old saguaro may measure only about an inch tall.
- Saguaro arms typically appear when the plant is between 50 and 100 years of age.
- A mature saguaro can store one ton of water.
- In the right conditions, saguaros can live to be 150 to 200 years old.
- They're considered the "indicator plant" of the Sonoran Desert because they only grow here.
- It is the largest cactus in the United States and can grow to 50 feet in height.



The **Barrel Cactus** tends to grow leaning toward the south, which is why it is also called the "compass" cactus.



The **Jojoba** shrub is highly valued for its brown, acorn-like seeds that contain a high-quality liquid wax.



A member of the Agave family, the **Century Plant** grows a flowering stalk that can reach up to 15 feet in height.



Devil's Claw has long trailing stems and scalloped leaves. It is a signature material in baskets created by the Tohono O'odham and Pima people.



The barbed thorns of the fuzzy-looking **Cholla** have earned them the nickname "Velcro of the desert."



Ironwoods are spiny trees that sprout small leaves when the soil is moist. They bloom in May/June with violet, wisteria-like flowers.



The whip-like branches of the **Ocotillo** sport fiery red blossoms in the spring.



The stem of the **Brittlebush** exudes a gum that can be chewed or used as incense. This shrub blooms from late winter to early spring.



Fast Facts CREOSOTE

- Creosote is thought to be the oldest living plant in the world.
- A ring of creosotes looks like separate plants, but all are descendant from a common seed.
- Native people used creosote secretions to waterproof baskets and mend pottery.
- The creosote's flowers and foliage feed more than 60 species of insects.
- It gives off a fresh, unmistakable fragrance following a rain.
- These common evergreen shrubs can live to be over 100 years old.

DESERT CRITTERS

Pause for a moment and you're likely to hear it – the scurrying of quail, the chatter of a cactus wren or, at sunrise or sunset, the howl of a coyote. The Sonoran Desert is home to hundreds of species of mammals, birds and reptiles, including these common critters.



Coyotes are best known for their mournful howl, the signature sound of the Southwest.



Feisty **Cactus Wrens** are strikingly spotted and typically nest in saguaros, chollas and palo verde trees.



Staying true to its name, the **Roadrunner** can reach ground speeds of up to 15 miles per hour.



Harris Hawks can be identified by their dark brown bodies and long black-and-white tail feathers.



Gambel's Quail are gregarious birds that spend most of their time scurrying along the ground in search of food.



Arizona Blond Tarantulas are hairy-looking spiders that measure between three and four inches in length.



Resembling small wild boars, **Javelina** can weigh up to 55 pounds and live in groups of 2 to 20 animals.



Measuring nearly two feet tall, **Great Horned Owls** have white throats, striped undersides and prominent ear tufts.



Desert Tortoises are gentle creatures that can live for up to 40 years and measure up to 14 inches in length.



Scorpions fluoresce under ultraviolet light, so a black light is a must for nocturnal hunting (don't touch these venomous insects).



Jackrabbits are known for their huge ears, long hind legs and large feet.



Poisonous **Rattlesnakes** often hide under shrubs, rocks and other desert debris. They're known for the warning buzz of their tail rattle.



Desert Cottontails, the most abundant desert "bunnies," rarely drink, getting most of their water from the food they eat.



Most of the holes you'll see in desert saguaros were drilled by **Gila Woodpeckers** for their nests.



Venomous **Gila Monsters** can grow up to 18 inches in length and are pink and black, usually in a reticulated pattern.



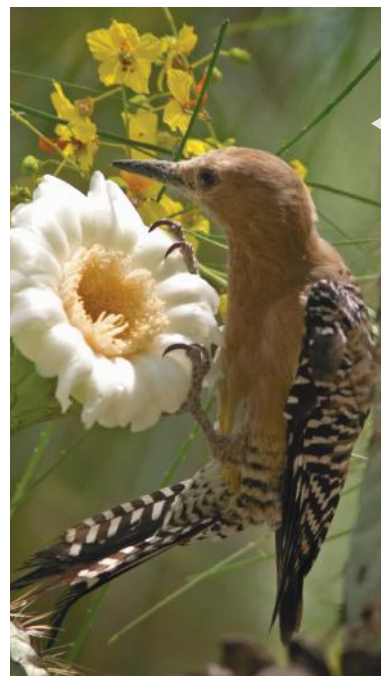
Sonoran Desert Hummingbirds range in length from two and a half to five inches. Their wings beat up to 80 times per second.



Butterflies, like monarchs and painted ladies, are often spotted in the Sonoran Desert during their late summer and early fall migrations.



The **Western Banded Gecko's** tail, which is almost as long as its body, stores food and water for the lizard to use during lean times.



WILDLIFE WATCHING TIPS

- ▶ Dress in neutral-colored clothing that blends with the desert landscape.
- ▶ Avoid wearing perfume or other scented products.
- ▶ Head out early in the morning when most desert animals are active.
- ▶ Look near blooming or fruiting plants, as well as around moist, lush areas like desert washes, streambeds, rivers and ponds.
- ▶ If you encounter snakes or large mammals like coyotes and javelina, observe from a safe distance.
- ▶ Never get between mothers and babies of any species.
- ▶ Don't step or put your hands in places that you can't see, like burrows, under rocks, or behind bushes – you never know who might be living in there.
- ▶ Remember your binoculars and camera!

A photograph of three people sitting on a rocky ridge, looking out over a desert valley at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare. The people are seen from behind, looking towards the horizon. The landscape is arid with sparse vegetation and distant mountains.

EXPLORE *THE SONORAN DESERT*

NOW THAT YOU'VE LEARNED A LITTLE about Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert, it's time to get out and explore! From guided desert tours to do-it-yourself hikes, Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert answers your call for adventure with options that are as varied as the landscape itself. But first, let's take a quick look at the numbers:

- ▶ 30,200+ Acres in Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve that are available for hiking, biking, climbing and horseback riding
- ▶ 330 Days of annual sunshine – perfect weather for outdoor adventures of all kinds
- ▶ 200 Named climbs in Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve
- ▶ 400+ Miles of trails in the Scottsdale area
- ▶ 180+ Miles of trails in Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve
- ▶ 6 Lakes within a one-hour drive of downtown Scottsdale
- ▶ 2 Rivers ideal for rafting, kayaking, tubing, canoeing, fishing and bird-watching

Add it all up and it makes for a pretty spectacular Great Outdoors! So, check out our "Safety First" and "Things to Bring" tips, then pick your favorite activities, set your intensity level and get ready for the adventure of a lifetime.

SAFETY FIRST

While Scottsdale's fresh air, sunshine and picturesque terrain are inviting, preparation is imperative to help ensure that your outdoor experience is both fun and safe!

HYDRATE

Be sure you're well hydrated before hitting the trail and bring along more water than you think you'll need for everyone in your hiking party, including pets. In general, bring at least one quart per person for short hikes (less than two hours) and a minimum of one gallon per person for longer hikes. When half your water is gone, it's time to turn back toward the trailhead.

CHECK THE WEATHER

Daytime temperatures in the desert rise quickly, particularly during the summer. Know the forecast for the time you'll be hiking and avoid hiking in temperatures above 90° degrees Fahrenheit (32° C). If you get caught in one of our rare desert rainstorms, do not take shelter in washes or low-lying areas as they will flood quickly.

TELL A FRIEND

Always let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Closed-toe hiking or athletic shoes are a must for desert exploration. Long-sleeved shirts and long pants offer protection from the sun and heat, as well as prickly desert plants. Other musts include a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and plenty of sunscreen.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Choose an adventure that matches your abilities and experience. All trails in this guide are ranked by difficulty. Inexperienced hikers will do best on trails rated "Easy." Trails rated "Difficult" or "Extremely Difficult," such as Camelback Mountain's summit trails, should only be tackled by experienced hikers who are in very good health.

PACE YOURSELF

If you become fatigued while hiking or riding, stop, rest, drink plenty of water and turn back toward the trailhead as soon as you feel able. Don't hesitate to ask a fellow hiker for assistance – most are friendly and more than willing to help.

STAY ON THE TRAIL

Always bring a trail map to keep you on course and stay on the designated trail. Doing so not only helps you avoid natural hazards such as prickly cacti, snakes and unstable terrain, it also helps protect the desert's delicate ecosystem. If an emergency arises, staying on the trail will allow first responders to find you as soon as possible.

PROTECT YOUR DOG

You wouldn't hike the desert barefoot – don't make your dog do it! Foot protection for your dog will help avoid painful injuries from sharp rocks and cactus spines. Carry plenty of water for your dog, keep your pet on a leash at all times, and remember that dogs have physical limits, too. If your dog is not used to hiking or the weather is above 90°F (32°C), it's best to leave your pet at home or at your hotel. Don't forget to always clean up after your dog!

THINGS TO BRING



WATER – Carry more than you think you'll need for everyone in your party, including pets. In general, bring at least one quart per person for short hikes (less than two hours) and at least one gallon per person for longer hikes.



CELL PHONE – A fully charged cell phone is the best item to have in the event of an emergency. Pay attention to trail markers and/or natural landmarks to help rescuers find you.



HEALTHY SNACKS – Exploring takes lots of energy, so be prepared with snacks like nuts, dried fruit, jerky, trail mix and energy bars – all are good choices to help you refuel.



TRAIL MAP – Maps of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve can be found in the back of this guide, as well as at most Preserve trailheads, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy office and the Experience Scottsdale Tourist Information Center.



SUNSCREEN – Scottsdale's perennially sunny skies make sunscreen a necessity no matter what time of year you visit. Apply before you head outside and reapply often during your adventure.



WHISTLE – If you should need assistance while exploring the desert, the sound from a whistle carries farther than your voice and requires less effort.



CAMERA – Scottsdale's Sonoran Desert offers abundant opportunities for great photos. A small digital camera is all you need to record the breathtaking scenery.



COMB – A fine-tooth comb comes in handy for flicking away cholla cactus buds that may attach to shoes, skin or clothes if you brush against them.

USING AN ADVENTURE OUTFITTER

Working with an adventure outfitter is a great way to take the guesswork out of exploring a new area or trying a new sport. In addition to providing you with interesting information about the desert's history, geology and ecosystem, they know of hidden treasures (like secret caves and petroglyph sites) that you might not find on your own.



- Confirm what gear is included in the tour cost and what you are responsible for providing. Most outfitters offer rental equipment at an additional cost.
- Find out if your outfitter provides transportation from your hotel or if you need to meet them at a rendezvous point.
- Ask if the outfitter provides water and snacks, or if you'll need to bring your own.
- Wear comfortable clothing that is weather-appropriate and allows freedom of movement.
- Tips are customary and are always appreciated on guided tours, so you may want to have some cash on hand.



CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE STYLE



LOW-KEY ADVENTURE

- Stroll the Bajada Nature Trail at the Gateway to Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve.
- Wander along the themed trails at the Desert Botanical Garden.
- Explore downtown on a segway tour.
- Enjoy a calm-water float on the Lower Salt River.
- Sit back and relax on a desert tour aboard a luxury SUV.
- Saddle-up for a two-hour horseback ride.
- Glide over the desert in a hot air balloon.
- Enjoy the scenery and a power boost on a battery-powered bike tour.



HIGH ADVENTURE

- Traverse rugged trails and rocky streambeds behind the wheel of a Tomcar or C2 vehicle.
- Hit the rocks on Pinnacle Peak or Tom's Thumb.
- Sweat it out on Camelback Mountain's Echo Canyon summit trail.
- Conquer class III and IV rapids on the Upper Salt River (seasonal).
- Don your night-vision goggles for an after-dark Jeep or Hummer tour.
- Take a helicopter tour of the Sonoran Desert or Grand Canyon.
- Go target shooting with NRA-certified instructors.



TREK

Lace up your hiking boots and get up-close and personal with the Sonoran Desert! From scenic strolls to serious workouts, Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve boasts 180+ miles of shared-use trails for beginners and seasoned trekkers alike. Other popular hiking destinations include Camelback Mountain, Pinnacle Peak and McDowell Mountain Regional Park. All reward you with expansive scenic views and the opportunity to see the desert's amazing plants and animals.

- 🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided and self-guided hikes from 1 hour to a full day are available
To help you find your perfect hike, check out the trail information beginning on page 26.



TRAIL TIPS & ETIQUETTE

- ▶ Always carry more water than you think you'll need.
- ▶ Stay on marked trails.
- ▶ Be considerate of other trail users – you're all here for the same reason.
- ▶ When approaching horses, make your presence known with a soft voice and follow the instructions of the rider.
- ▶ All trail users should yield to horses. Downhill traffic should yield to uphill traffic. Bicyclists should yield to all other trail users.
- ▶ Leave it as you find it – do not destroy or remove plants, rocks, artifacts, etc.
- ▶ Clean up after your pets and keep them on a leash at all times.
- ▶ Do not use trails when wet or muddy.



CRUISE

Climb aboard an open-air Jeep, well-muscl'd Hummer or luxury SUV for a guided off-road tour of the Sonoran Desert. There are even you-drive options in Tomcar and C2 vehicles. No matter which tour you choose, expert interpretive guides provide insight into the desert's delicate ecosystem, as well as the area's colorful history. Options include ecotours, night-vision tours, cultural history excursions and combination adventures that add in activities like river rafting, hot air ballooning, horseback riding, or target shooting.

- 🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided tours range from 4 hours to full day. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.



OFF-ROAD TOUR TIPS

- ▶ Wear sturdy closed-toe shoes since you may leave the vehicle to explore on foot.
- ▶ Off-road tours travel on uneven terrain, so be prepared for a bumpy and exciting ride.
- ▶ Classic Jeeps, some Hummers, and Tomcar and C2 vehicles are open-air, while other Jeeps and Hummers are climate-controlled; inquire when you make your reservations.
- ▶ Many off-road tour companies provide resort pick-up and drop-off. Those that don't will meet you at an easily accessible location to begin your adventure.
- ▶ Carry a small day pack for keys, money, ID and other necessities.
- ▶ Leave good jewelry, purses and other valuables secured at your hotel.



RIDE

Saddle up and get a taste of the Old West on a horseback riding excursion. You'll experience the beauty of Sonoran Desert plants and cacti, see curious critters and, on some rides, cross pristine desert streams. Whether you're a first-time rider or have logged some serious saddle time, Scottsdale's experienced outfitters will match you with a horse that complements your abilities and will be the perfect companion for your cowboy-style adventure. Some stables also provide cookouts, hay wagon rides and other activities.

🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided tours from 2 hours to a full day are available. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.



HORSEBACK RIDING TIPS

- ▶ Wear jeans or long pants and closed-toe shoes to protect you from the sun and brushes with prickly desert plants.
- ▶ Carry a small day pack for keys, money, ID and other necessities.
- ▶ Leave good jewelry, purses and other valuables secured at your hotel.
- ▶ Dress in layers depending on the weather forecast.
- ▶ Wear a hat and sunglasses with a securing strap.
- ▶ A bandana will help protect you from dust.



CLIMB

Whether you're new to the sport or are a certified rock rat, you'll find your perfect climb in the Sonoran Desert. Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve alone is home to more than 200 named climbs with a wide range of difficulty ratings on formations like Tom's Thumb, Sven Slab and Granite Ballroom. Beginners will love the personalized instruction and encouragement from Scottsdale's experienced climbing guides.

🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided climbs range from 4 hours to a full day. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.



CLIMBING TIPS

If you're climbing on your own:

- ▶ Research the route you're planning to take so that you know what to expect.
- ▶ Climb with a buddy if at all possible.
- ▶ Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to be back.
- ▶ Carry snacks and more water than you think you'll need.
- ▶ Make sure your cell phone is charged and carry it with you at all times.

If you're climbing with an outfitter:

- ▶ Confirm what gear is provided in the tour cost and what you are responsible for providing. Most outfitters offer rental equipment at an additional cost.
- ▶ Ask if the outfitter is providing water and snacks or if you are responsible for bringing your own.



FLOAT

The Scottsdale area is home to eight scenic lakes and rivers that are perfect for getting your feet wet on a river rafting, tubing or kayaking adventure. The calm waters of the Lower Salt River are ideal for wildlife watching from a raft, kayak or inner tube, while the Upper Salt's class III and IV rapids (seasonal) provide plenty of whitewater thrills and chills. On local lakes, choose from waterskiing, fishing, jet skiing, kayaking, wake boarding, canoeing and touring by paddle boat.

🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided tours range from 4 hours to full day. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.



WATER ADVENTURE TIPS

- ▶ A swimsuit and/or shorts are ideal for most water adventures.
- ▶ You may want a t-shirt to wear over your swimsuit to help protect you from the sun.
- ▶ Bring a change of clothes and a towel for after your trip.
- ▶ Wear water sandals that secure with straps (not flip flops) as lake and stream bottoms can be rocky.
- ▶ Waterproof sunscreen and a waterproof camera are musts.
- ▶ A valid Arizona fishing license is required for anglers 14 years or older fishing any public accessible water in Arizona. Licenses may be purchased through Arizona Game and Fish or at local sporting stores.



SOAR

For the most expansive scenic views of the Sonoran Desert, take to the skies! Hot-air balloon flights offer a serene experience as you float quietly over rolling desert terrain, at times low enough to see desert creatures scurrying about below. Helicopter and fixed-wing tours to popular sites like the Grand Canyon, Sedona and Monument Valley are also great ways to enjoy Arizona from the air.

🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided tours from ½ hour to full day are available. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.



AERIAL ADVENTURE TIPS

- ▶ If you're ballooning, get ready for an early morning – most flights take place at sunrise because that's when wind and thermal conditions are calmest.
- ▶ Dress in layers – temperatures at altitude will be cooler than on the ground.
- ▶ Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes since balloon take-offs and landings will be in the desert.
- ▶ A hat is recommended for hot air balloon flights since the radiant heat from the burners can be warm on your head.
- ▶ Please note that most balloon outfitters preclude pregnant women from flying.



BIKE

The undulating mountain foothills of Scottsdale’s Sonoran Desert are ideal for mountain biking. If you’re a beginner, Scottsdale’s adventure outfitters provide all-inclusive, guided experiences that include transportation, how-to and safety briefings, and interpretive information about the desert’s geology, flora and fauna. For those who don’t want to do all the pedalling, there’s even a battery-assisted bike tour option. If you prefer to hit the tracks on your own, select outfitters will deliver rental bikes, helmets and accessories right to your resort.

🕒 **TOUR TIME:** Guided tours from 4 hours to a full day are available. Visit ExperienceScottsdale.com for a list of local adventure outfitters.
To help you find your perfect ride, check out the trail information and map beginning on page 26.



CYCLING TIPS


- ▶ For a desert riding experience, Scottsdale’s McDowell Sonoran Preserve offers more than 180 miles of gorgeous shared-use trails.
- ▶ McDowell Mountain Regional Park and Pinnacle Peak Park also offer miles of desert biking trails.
- ▶ For a more urban experience, the Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt offers a network of paved trails close to city amenities like restaurants and coffee shops.
- ▶ Dress in layers based on the forecasted temperature and always wear sunscreen.

HIT THE TRAILS

Ready to get your adventure on? Great! This section of the guide will help you find your perfect trail, whether you’re looking for a casual stroll or a serious workout. Let’s start with a look at the trail rating symbols you’ll see on the following pages.

TRAIL RATING GUIDE				
RATING SYMBOL	DEFINITION	SURFACE	AVERAGE TRAIL GRADE / MAX GRADE	OBSTACLES / STEPS
○ Easiest	ADA accessible trail	Paved or hard and smooth	<5% Max 5%	None
● Easy	Mostly smooth and wide	Dirt with occasional unevenness	<5% Max 10%	2" or less, rocks and ruts
■ Moderate	Mostly smooth, variable width	Dirt with occasional unevenness	<10% Max 15%	<8", rocks and ruts, loose material
◆ Moderately Difficult	Mostly uneven surfaces	Dirt and rock	<15% Max 20%	<12", rocks and ruts, loose material
◆ Difficult	Long rocky segments with possible drops and exposure	Dirt and loose rock with continual unevenness	>15% Max >20%	12" or taller, loose rocks, exposure to drops
◆◆ Extremely Difficult	Long rocky segments with possible drops and exposure	Dirt and loose rock with continual unevenness	>15% Max >20%	12" or taller, loose rocks, exposure to drops and excessive heat >90°F

NOTE: All trails are rated one difficulty level higher when temperatures exceed 90°F (32°C).



DISCOVER SCOTTSDALE'S *McDOWELL* *SONORAN PRESERVE*

CRAVING THE FEEL OF A NEW TRAIL UNDER YOUR BOOTS? Head for Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve! At 30,200 acres (and growing), it's the largest urban preserve in the nation and offers more than 180 miles of shared-use trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. And you don't have to be an experienced outdoorsman to enjoy the natural beauty and tranquility of this desert gem. There are trails for everyone, from ADA-accessible interpretive paths to challenging summit climbs.

To help you get started, we've collected some of our favorite Preserve hikes on the following pages. Each hike includes a difficulty rating, turn-by-turn directions and a brief description of the natural wonders you'll see along the way. You'll also find removable Preserve maps in the back of this guide – be sure to take them along on your hike.

Access to Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve is free and trailheads are open daily from sunrise to sunset. Leashed dogs are welcome at the Preserve and several trailheads, including Gateway, Lost Dog and Brown's Ranch, offer doggie comfort stations.

For more information on the Preserve, contact:

McDowell Sonoran Conservancy
480.998.7971
mcdowellsonoran.org

City of Scottsdale
480.312.7013
scottsdaleaz.gov/preserve



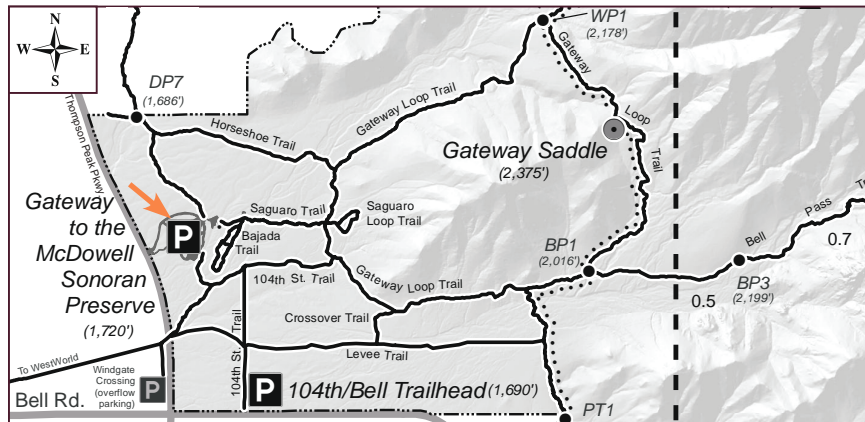
GATEWAY TRAILHEAD

The largest of the Preserve's trailheads, the Gateway is fully barrier-free and has all the amenities an outdoor recreation enthusiast could want. Its central-Scottsdale location, ample parking and easy access make it one of the Preserve's most popular trailheads.

ADDRESS: 18333 N. Thompson Peak Parkway, Scottsdale 85255

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset daily

AMENITIES: Restrooms, water, shade ramadas, passenger vehicle and horse trailer parking, hitching rails, water trough, interpretive signage



RECOMMENDED HIKES

BAJADA NATURE TRAIL LOOP

This ADA accessible trail is ideal for families with young children or strollers, the elderly, people using wheelchairs or walkers, and others with mobility challenges. As the trail winds across the bajada, interpretive exhibits reveal fascinating stories of the plants and animals that call the McDowell Sonoran Preserve home. It's the perfect introduction to the Sonoran Desert!

Route: Head east on the Saguaro Trail for 0.1mi (0.16km) and follow the signs to the Bajada Nature Trail on your right.

LENGTH: Two loop options – 0.45mi or 0.7mi / 0.72km or 1.13km

ELEVATION CHANGE: 43ft / 13.1m

DIFFICULTY: ○ Easiest / ADA Accessible

USE: Hiking, walking, wheelchairs, strollers

GATEWAY LOOP

One of the most popular trails in the Preserve, the Gateway Loop gives you the feeling of being immersed in the serenity of the Sonoran Desert while providing a great fitness opportunity. The trail passes over the Gateway Saddle, from which you'll enjoy expansive scenic views of the surrounding landscape. Bump up your pace if you'd like to get a good workout while enjoying the views

Route: From the Gateway Trailhead, head east on the Saguaro Trail to the junction with the Gateway Loop Trail. From this point, you can go left or right, as it is a loop trail and will return you to this location.

LENGTH: 4.5mi / 7.2km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 655ft / 199.6

DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding

WINDGATE AND BELL PASS LOOP

If you're an experienced and well-prepared hiker looking for a challenging trek, this is the hike for you. Stunning desert terrain, spectacular mountain and valley views, and a great workout are your rewards for tackling this calorie-crunching hike known for its steep inclines and rugged stretches.

Route: From the trailhead, go east on the Saguaro Trail, then left on the Gateway Loop Trail to the Windgate Pass Trail. Follow the Windgate Pass Trail as it climbs to Inspiration Viewpoint, then on to Windgate Pass. Continue east and you'll begin your descent along the eastern slope of the McDowell Mountains. At the Bell Pass Trail junction, turn right and begin your ascent to Bell Pass. Continue west and turn left at the Gateway Loop Trail then left again on the Saguaro Trail to return to the trailhead.

LENGTH: Approx. 9.6mi / 15.5km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 1,400ft / 426.7m

DIFFICULTY: ◆ Difficult

USE: Hiking*, biking*, horseback riding* (*experienced and well-prepared only)



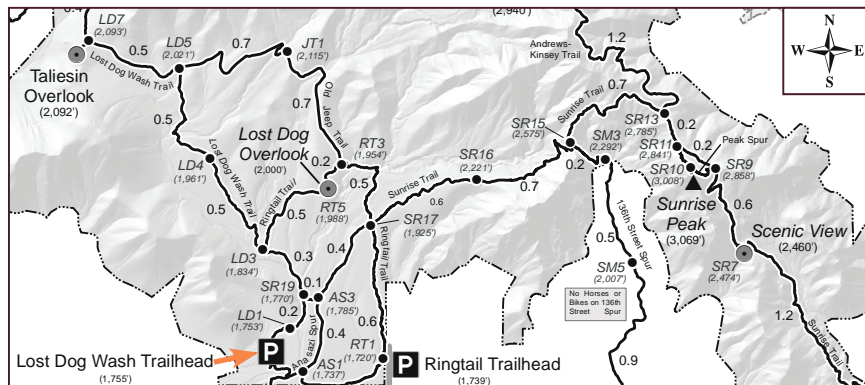
LOST DOG WASH TRAILHEAD

This trailhead provides easy access to the Preserve's southern regions. It offers somewhat shorter and easier trails that meander around and across a natural desert wash. The wash's lush vegetation makes it an excellent spot for catching glimpses of desert wildlife, including Gambel's quail, cactus wrens and lizards. You may even be lucky enough to spot an elusive bobcat or mule deer!

ADDRESS: 12601 N. 124th St., Scottsdale 85259

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset daily

AMENITIES: Restrooms, water, shade, passenger vehicle and horse trailer parking, hitching rails, water trough, interpretive signage



RECOMMENDED HIKES

KOVACH FAMILY NATURE TRAIL

This trail provides a fun and exciting educational experience that emphasizes family and family relationships in nature. Signs along the trail explore such topics as "Ancient Families in the Wash," "Water is Powerful!" and "Can Cactus Jump?" This trail is ADA accessible, making it ideal for families with young children or strollers, the elderly, people using wheelchairs or walkers, and others with mobility challenges.

Route: This trail is located just beyond the trailhead building on the Preserve side of the Lost Dog Trailhead.

LENGTH: 0.5mi / 0.8km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: Minimal

DIFFICULTY: ○ Easiest / ADA Accessible

USE: Hiking, walking, wheelchairs, strollers

LOST DOG WASH TRAIL TO TALIESIN OVERLOOK

On this hike, you'll parallel the Lost Dog Wash as it spills out of the McDowell Mountains. Your goal is the Taliesin Overlook, where you'll enjoy scenic views of north Scottsdale and Phoenix to the west. You'll also catch a distant glimpse of Frank Lloyd Wright's desert masterpiece, Taliesin West, from the overlook.

Route: From the trailhead, take the Lost Dog Wash Trail approximately 2.4mi (3.9km) to Taliesin Overlook. Return the way you came on Lost Dog Wash Trail to the trailhead.

LENGTH: 4.8mi / 7.7km (round trip)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 300ft / 91.4m

DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding

SUNRISE TRAIL TO SUNRISE PEAK

From its juncture with the Lost Dog Wash Trail, the Sunrise Trail climbs steadily along mountain ridges studded with lush Sonoran Desert vegetation. The views from Sunrise Peak are magnificent, giving you a bird's-eye view of the desert below.

Route: From the Lost Dog Wash Trailhead, travel north on the Lost Dog Wash Trail approximately 0.25mi (0.4km) to the junction with the Sunrise Trail. Turn right and head east toward Sunrise Peak. From Sunrise Peak, you can return the way you came, or take an excursion out and back from the Sunrise Trail on the Andrews Kinsey Trail for great eastern views, including the famous Fountain Hills fountain. Note: the full out-and-back side trip will add approximately 4mi / 6.4km to the distance given below.

LENGTH: 5.8mi / 9.3km (round trip)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 1,300ft / 396.2m

DIFFICULTY: ◆ Difficult

USE: Hiking, biking*, horseback riding* (*experienced riders only)



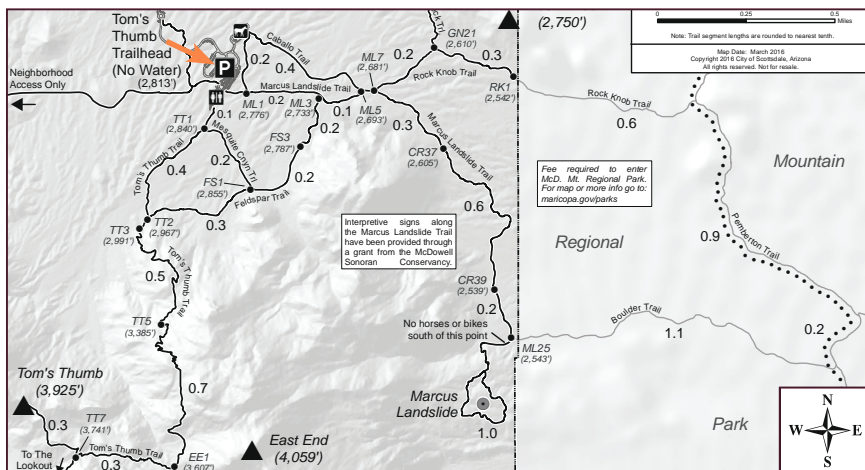
TOM'S THUMB TRAILHEAD

The Tom's Thumb Trailhead is popular with hikers and rock climbers alike, offering access to many of the Preserve's most notable natural features, including Tom's Thumb, Gardener's Wall, Sven Slab, Windgate Overlook and Mesquite Canyon.

ADDRESS: 23015 N. 128th St., Scottsdale 85255

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset daily

AMENITIES: Restrooms, shade, passenger vehicle and horse trailer parking;
NO WATER



RECOMMENDED HIKES

TOM'S THUMB, FELDSPAR, MESQUITE CANYON LOOP

Feldspar is one of the three minerals that make up the granite boulders prominent in this area of the Preserve, which winds along the northern slope of the McDowell Mountains. This easy hike also provides dramatic views of Mesquite Canyon.

Route: From the trailhead, head south on the Tom's Thumb Trail, then left on the Feldspar Trail, then left again on the Mesquite Canyon Trail, back to the Tom's Thumb Trail. Take a quick right, and you will return to the trailhead. **Note:** You can extend this hike to 1.4mi (2.3km) plus 80ft (24.3m) elevation change if you stay on the Feldspar Trail until it connects with the Marcus Landslide Trail. Take a left on the Marcus Landslide Trail to return to the trailhead.

LENGTH: 1.1mi / 1.8km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 150ft / 45.7m

DIFFICULTY: ● Easy

USE: Hiking, biking, climbing, horseback riding

MARCUS LANDSLIDE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

This beautiful trail has interpretive signs explaining the origin of the Marcus landslide, one of the largest ever discovered in Arizona. Highlights include tremendous views of the little-seen eastern side of the McDowell Mountains and an interesting area of huge boulders. Add an additional 0.8mi (1.3km) of distance and 200ft (61m) of elevation change if you take the loop trail on top of the landslide.

Route: Follow the signs to this trail from the south end of the parking area. Go east on the Marcus Landslide Trail and stay straight on the trail past various junctions on the right and left. Return the way you came.

LENGTH: 3.0mi / 4.8km (round trip)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 280ft / 85m

DIFFICULTY: ◆ Moderately Difficult

USE: Hiking, biking*, climbing, horseback riding* (*final loop on the Landslide is foot traffic only)

TOM'S THUMB TRAIL TO THE BASE OF TOM'S THUMB

This steep trail climbs through fantastic boulder formations into an area high in the McDowell Mountains that showcases many unique plants and provides some of the finest views in the Preserve. Please note that seasonal access restrictions may be in place at the base of the thumb (approximately March through June) due to nesting birds of prey.

Route: From the Tom's Thumb Trailhead, head south on the Tom's Thumb Trail. After following the TT Trail for approximately 2.0mi (3.2km), you will reach the TT7 emergency marker where you will turn right and follow the 0.3mi (0.5km) spur trail to the base of Tom's Thumb.

LENGTH: 4.6 mi / 7.4km (round trip)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 1,100ft / 335.3m

DIFFICULTY: ◆ Difficult

USE: Hiking, biking*, climbing, horseback riding* (*experienced riders only)



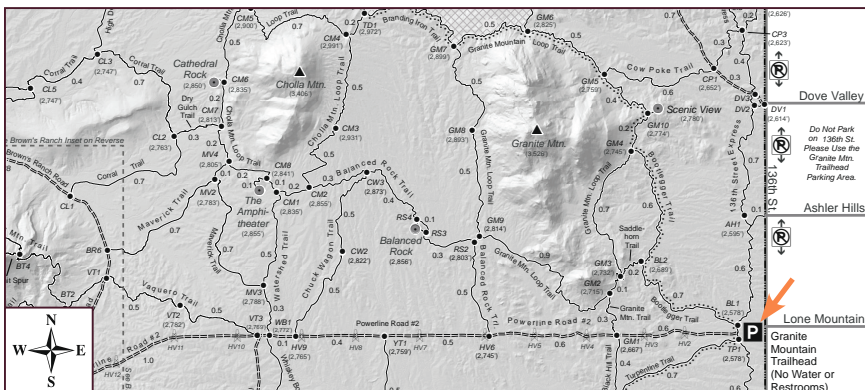
GRANITE MOUNTAIN TRAILHEAD

This relatively new trailhead provides access to pristine areas in the Preserve's northern region around Granite Mountain. These are some of the highest elevations in the Sonoran Desert, which means the area enjoys slightly cooler temperatures and a bit more rainfall than other regions of the Preserve. As a result, vegetation is even more verdant here, including an abundance of stately saguaro cacti.

ADDRESS: 31402 N. 136th St., Scottsdale 85262

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset daily

AMENITIES: Passenger vehicle and horse trailer parking; NO RESTROOMS OR WATER



RECOMMENDED HIKES

BOOTLEGGER, GRANITE MOUNTAIN, SADDLEHORN TRAIL LOOP

This hike passes through magnificent granite boulders along the eastern slope of Granite Mountain. Be on the lookout for mule deer and Gila monsters that are commonly seen in the area. The views to the east across the Verde River Valley to the Matatzal Mountains are stunning, especially on cold winter mornings if the distant Matatzal's are dusted with snow.

Route: Start off on the Bootlegger Trail, named for the felonious activities that occurred in the area long ago. Travel approximately 1.3 miles to the intersection with the Granite Mountain Loop Trail. Turn left and follow the Granite Mountain Loop Trail to the Saddlehorn Trail. Turn left again to return to the Bootlegger Trail, where a right hand turn will return you to the trailhead.

LENGTH: 2.9mi / 4.7km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 175ft / 53.3m

DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding

GRANITE MOUNTAIN LOOP TRAIL

This trail loops the boulder-studded slopes of Granite Mountain, affording fabulous views of the surrounding desert and distant Matatzal Mountains. Consider adding a side trip to Balanced Rock, a molar-shaped giant perched precariously on a slab of igneous stone (adds approximately 0.75mi / 1.2km to the length given below).

Route: From the trailhead, travel 1.3 miles on the Bootlegger Trail to the Granite Mountain Loop Trail. Turn right and follow the trail, as you circumnavigate Granite Mountain. You can follow the loop all the way around the mountain and return to the Bootlegger Trail, or you can use the Saddlehorn Trail as a short cut back to the Bootlegger Trail where you'll turn right to return to the trailhead (trims approximately 1.1mi / 1.8km off the length given below).

LENGTH: 6.9mi / 11.1km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 330ft / 100.5m

DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding

GRANITE MOUNTAIN LOOP W/ EXTENSION THROUGH COYOTE CANYON

The Coyote Canyon Trail passes through a unique narrow canyon rimmed by steep granite walls. The canyon was given its name by locals who frequently saw coyotes in the area.

Route: Follow the route description for the Granite Mountain Loop above (Bootlegger to Granite Mountain), then turn right on the Cow Poke Trail, then left on the Dove Valley Trail, then left on the Coyote Canyon Trail, then right on the Granite Mountain Loop. Trail length below was calculated using the Saddlehorn Trail shortcut described in the prior Granite Mountain Loop route.

LENGTH: 7.9mi / 12.7km

ELEVATION CHANGE: 330ft / 100.5m

DIFFICULTY: ◆ Difficult

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding



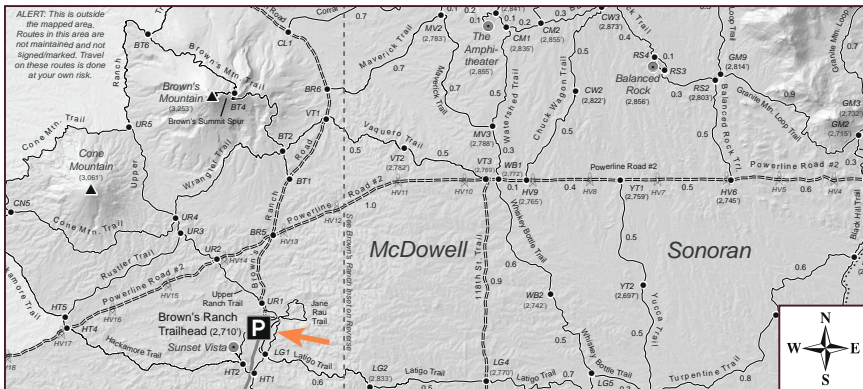
BROWN'S RANCH TRAILHEAD

Hikers visiting the Brown's Ranch Trailhead will find interpretive exhibits about the human history of the Preserve. This trailhead serves as the major access point to the vast network of trails in the area and provides access to such unique destinations as Granite Mountain, Cholla Mountain, Brown's Mountain and Cathedral Rock.

ADDRESS: 30301 N. Alma School Pkwy., Scottsdale 85262

HOURS: Sunrise to sunset daily

AMENITIES: Restrooms, water, shade ramadas, passenger vehicle and horse trailer parking, hitching rails, water trough, interpretive signage



RECOMMENDED HIKES

JANE RAU INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

This trail is named after Jane Rau, one of the original advocates for the creation of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and a founding member of the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy. Jane is known to frequent the trail on Friday mornings with her dog Pipi. Interpretive signs along the trail provide information about the flora and fauna of the area and the human history of the Preserve.

Route: The Jane Rau Trail loop begins on the eastern side of the trailhead complex.

LENGTH: 0.5mi / 0.8km (loop)

ELEVATION CHANGE: 37ft / 11.2m

DIFFICULTY: ○ Easiest / ADA Accessible

USE: Hiking, walking, wheelchairs, strollers

BROWN'S MOUNTAIN LOOP

From the summit of Brown's Mountain, you'll enjoy a 360-degree view of the beautiful upper Sonoran Desert. To the north you'll see remnants of Brown's Ranch, which was a working cattle ranch from the early 1900s through the 1970s.

Route: From the trailhead, head north on Brown's Ranch Road approximately 0.7mi (1.1km) and turn left on the Brown's Mountain Trail. From the summit, continue west on the Brown's Mountain Trail to the Upper Ranch Trail and turn left. From that juncture, it is approximately 2.0mi (3.2km) back to the trailhead. For a shorter hike, simply return from the summit the way you came and deduct 1.3mi (2.1km) from the length given below.

LENGTH: 3.9mi / 6.3km

ELEVATION CHANGE: 500ft / 152.4m

DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding

CHOLLA MOUNTAIN LOOP

There's plenty to see on this moderately challenging hike, from the site of the historic Brown's Ranch to the Amphitheater and Cathedral Rock formations. At Cathedral Rock, look for the indentations in the bedrock, known as metates, where Native Americans ground mesquite pods into flour.

Route: From the trailhead, proceed north on the Brown's Ranch Road Trail approximately 1.3mi (2.1km) to the junction of the Corral Trail. Turn right and head east on the Corral Trail. After roughly 0.75mi (1.2km), turn right on the Dry Gulch Trail and follow that to the Cholla Mountain Loop Trail. You can go left or right on this 3.1mi (5.0km) loop and return to the junction of the Dry Gulch Trail. From that point, retrace your path back to the trailhead.



LENGTH: 8.7mi / 14.0km

ELEVATION CHANGE: 300ft / 91.4m





DIFFICULTY: ■ Moderate

USE: Hiking, biking, horseback riding







OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

CITY	TRAILHEAD / PARK NAME	TRAIL & ACCESS Nearest trailhead with parking	APPROXIMATE LENGTH (MI / KM) (one way unless otherwise noted)	ELEVATION CHANGE (FT / M)	DIFFICULTY RATING	USE		FACILITIES AT ACCESS TRAILHEAD (restrooms may be porta-potties or plumbed)	LEASHED DOGS ALLOWED	ENTRANCE FEE	PARK HOURS	TRAIL NOTES
SCOTTSDALE	Florence Ely Nelson Desert Park 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/parks	Nature Trail 8950 E. Pinnacle Peak Rd.	< 1.0 / <1.6	Minimal	 Easiest	Walking		Restrooms, picnic areas, ramadas, playground, spray pad	Y	N	Sunrise to 10:30 p.m. daily	Easy trail exhibiting desert plants and cacti.
	George “Doc” Cavalliere Park 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/parks	Hiking Trail 27775 N. Alma School Pkw.	1.0 / 1.6 Loop	Minimal	 Easy	Hiking		Restrooms, water, picnic tables, ramadas, basketball courts	Y	N	Sunrise to 10:30 p.m. daily	This short loop trail provides a nice introduction to the North Scottsdale desert.
	Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/ parks/greenbelt	Varies Along Hayden Rd. from Shea Blvd. south to Tempe	Varies	Minimal	 Easy	Walking, Biking, Rollerblading		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic tables, lakes, sports courts, dog park	Y	N		Eleven miles of paved paths connect Scottsdale to Tempe. The greenbelt doubles as a flood- control channel during rare times of heavy rain.
	Nature Area 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/trails	Nature Area Trail 6901 N. Hayden Rd.	<1.0 / <1.6	Minimal	 Easiest	Walking		Restrooms, ramada	Y	N	Sunrise to 10:30 p.m. daily	An easy walking trail located within a nine-acre park adjacent to the Arizona canal.
	Pinnacle Peak Park 480.312.0990 scottsdaleaz.gov/ parks/pinnacle	Pinnacle Peak Trail 26802 N. 102nd Way	1.75 / 5.6	1,300 / 396.2	 Moderate	Hiking, Climbing		Restrooms, drinking fountain, ramada, picnic tables	N	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	This scenic trail has a very smooth tread with a number of ups and downs and offers panoramic Valley views. Interpretive desert tours, astronomy talks and other programs are held throughout the year.
	Scottsdale Ranch Park 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/trails	Desert Garden Park 10400 E. Via Linda	<1.0 / <1.6	0 / 0	 Easiest	Walking		Restrooms, ramadas, sports courts, playground	Y	N	Vary seasonally; see website for details	The Garden Park has three zones: a hummingbird nest for the low desert area, a saguaro and bat sanctuary for the high desert area, and a butterfly garden for the riparian community area.

OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

CITY	TRAILHEAD / PARK NAME	TRAIL & ACCESS Nearest trailhead with parking	APPROXIMATE LENGTH (MI / KM) (one way unless otherwise noted)	ELEVATION CHANGE (FT / M)	DIFFICULTY RATING	USE		FACILITIES AT ACCESS TRAILHEAD (restrooms may be porta-potties or plumbed)	LEASHED DOGS ALLOWED	ENTRANCE FEE	PARK HOURS	TRAIL NOTES
SCOTTSDALE	Stonegate Park 480.312.PARK scottsdaleaz.gov/trails	Nature Trail 9555 N. 120th St.	<1.0 / <1.6	Minimal	 Easiest	Walking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms, ramada, equestrian arenas, playground	Y	N	Sunrise to 10:30 p.m. daily	A scenic nature trail within a 23-acre equestrian park.
CAVE CREEK	Cave Creek Regional Park 623.465.0431 maricopacountyparks.net	Go John 37900 N. Cave Creek Pkwy. <i>Through park entrance to north end of picnic area</i>	5.8 / 9.3 Loop	400 / 121.9	 Moderately Difficult	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms, water, picnic tables, horse staging area	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle + \$2 per person	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.	This popular loop trail offers views of New River, Mesa, Piestewa Peak, Elephant Butte, Camelback Mountain and other local landmarks.
		Overton 37900 N. Cave Creek Pkwy. <i>Through park entrance to picnic area</i>	2.1 / 3.4	396 / 120.7	 Moderate	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms, water, picnic tables, horse staging area	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle + \$2 per person	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.	You can hike this scenic trail out and back or use it to create longer or shorter routes with the Go John trail.
		Quartz 37900 N. Cave Creek Pkwy. Through park entrance to north end of picnic area (Go John Trailhead)	1.4 / 2.3	250 / 76.2	 Moderate	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms, water, picnic tables, horse staging area	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle + \$2 per person	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.	A well-graded trail that slowly descends and follows the contours of the hills on the park's southern end.
	Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area 623.465.0431 maricopacountyparks.net	Spur Cross Trail 44000 N. Spur Cross Rd.	5.2 / 8.4	429 / 130.1	 Moderate	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms, picnic tables, horse staging area	Y	\$3 per person	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.	Spur Cross is a lightly trafficked loop trail on the outskirts of Cave Creek. The Trail winds through lush riparian areas and crosses Cave Creek several times.
FOUNTAIN HILLS	Fountain Hills 480.837.1654 hikearizona.com experiencefountainhills.org	Botanical Garden Trail Fountain Hills Blvd. at Kingstree Blvd.	0.6 / 0.9	50 / 15.2	 Easy	Hiking		None	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	Twenty-nine desert plants are identified along this meandering trail that provides interesting views of rock formations, desert flora, animal life and an abandoned P-Bar Ranch campsite next to the April 25, 1941 constructed dam wall.

OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

CITY	TRAILHEAD / PARK NAME	TRAIL & ACCESS Nearest trailhead with parking	APPROXIMATE LENGTH (MI / KM) (one way unless otherwise noted)	ELEVATION CHANGE (FT / M)	DIFFICULTY RATING	USE		FACILITIES AT ACCESS TRAILHEAD (restrooms may be porta-potties or plumbed)	LEASHED DOGS ALLOWED	ENTRANCE FEE	PARK HOURS	TRAIL NOTES
FOUNTAIN HILLS	Fountain Hills (continued)	Dixie Mine Golden Eagle Rd. north of Palisades Blvd.	5.6 / 9.0	266 / 81.1	 Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Restrooms	Y	\$2 Self-Pay	Sunrise to sunset daily	This trail meanders over rolling hills in the scenic McDowell Mountain foothills.
		Lake Overlook Trail Trailhead is across Panorama Dr. from lake's eastern parking lot	1.5 / 2.4 Loop	150 / 45.7	 Moderate	Hiking		Nearby Fountain Park includes restrooms, ramadas, water fountains, playground, splash pad, picnic tables	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	Although this urban trail passes close to hillside homes, it offers spectacular views of the town's famous fountain, desert flora and fauna, and the Four Peaks mountains. The fountain goes off for 15 minutes on the hour from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
	McDowell Mountain Regional Park 480.471.0173 maricopacountyparks.net	Lousley Hill 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.	1.2 / 2.0 Roundtrip	268 / 81.7	 Moderate	Hiking		Park offers restrooms, nature center, gift shop, horse staging and water fountains.	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m	This scenic trail offers views of Bartlett Lake, Verde Valley, Superstition Mountains and Four Peaks.
		North 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.	2.9 / 4.7 Loop	<170 / <51.8	 Easy	Hiking, Biking		Park offers restrooms, nature center, gift shop, horse staging and water fountains.	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m	A loop trail, the North Trail offers outstanding views of desert vegetation as well as distant views of the Four Peaks, Mazatzal and Superstition mountains.
		Pemberton 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.	15.4 / 24.9 Loop	800 / 243.8	 Difficult	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Park offers restrooms, nature center, gift shop, horse staging and water fountains.	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m	The longest of the park's trails, the Pemberton passes through very dense desert vegetation. Lots of dips and climbs, gorgeous scenery and a long downhill stretch at the end make it a favorite ride for mountain bikers.
		Scenic 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.	3.5 / 5.6	Minimal	 Moderate	Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding		Park offers restrooms, nature center, gift shop, horse staging and water fountains.	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m	The trail ascends a low ridge with good views from the top. The valley portion of the trail follows several washes, which, when lush with vegetation, offer good opportunities to spot birds and other desert wildlife.

OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

CITY	TRAILHEAD / PARK NAME	TRAIL & ACCESS Nearest trailhead with parking	APPROXIMATE LENGTH (MI / KM) (one way unless otherwise noted)	ELEVATION CHANGE (FT / M)	DIFFICULTY RATING	USE		FACILITIES AT ACCESS TRAILHEAD (restrooms may be porta-potties or plumbed)	LEASHED DOGS ALLOWED	ENTRANCE FEE	PARK HOURS	TRAIL NOTES
FOUNTAIN HILLS	McDowell Mountain Regional Park (continued)	Wagner 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Dr.	1.1 / 1.8	117 / 35.7	● Easy	Hiking, Biking		Park offers restrooms, nature center, gift shop, horse staging and water fountains.	Y	\$6 per motorized vehicle	Sun. – Thurs. 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. Fri. – Sat. 6 a.m. – 10 p.m	The low-rolling Wagner Trail offers you a choice between a “short loop” and “long loop,” both of which run through easy desert terrain.
PHOENIX	Camelback Mountain 602.261.8318 phoenix.gov/parks/trails	Echo Canyon Summit 4925 E. McDonald Dr.	1.3 / 2.1	>1,200 / >365.8	◆◆ Extremely Difficult	Hiking		Restrooms, picnic table	N	N	Sunrise to sunset	Spectacular sandstone formations and Valley views can be seen from the trail and summit. The saddle at the top of the lower trail segment offers breathtaking views and is an excellent turnaround point for less-experienced hikers.
		Cholla Summit 6131 E. Cholla Ln.	1.5 / 2.4	1,200 / 365.8	◆◆ Extremely Difficult	Hiking		None	N	N	Sunrise to sunset	Panoramic views of the Valley and The Phoenician resort from the summit are your reward for hiking this strenuous trail. There are steep, rocky segments with drops on both sides. Parking is limited.
		Bobbie's Rock ▲ 4925 E. McDonald Dr.	.25 / .40	<200 / <61	● Easy	Hiking		Restrooms, picnic table	N	N	Sunrise to sunset	This short path off the Echo Canyon Trail winds its way along the head of the Camel. Parking is limited.
	Desert Botanical Garden 602.941.1225 dbg.org	Desert Discovery Loop 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy.	0.3 / 0.5	Minimal	○ Easiest	Walking		Access to full Garden amenities including restrooms, snack bar, etc.	N	Adults: \$22; Students (13-18 yrs.): \$12 Children (3-12 yrs.): \$10; Under 3: Free	Regular Garden Hours (vary seasonally)	This is the Garden's main trail and highlights the great diversity of form, texture and color found in cacti and succulents from around the world.
		Plants & People of the Southwest Loop 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy.	0.3 / 0.5	Minimal	○ Easiest	Walking		Access to full Garden amenities including restrooms, snack bar, etc.	N	Adults: \$22; Students (13-18 yrs.): \$12 Children (3-12 yrs.): \$10; Under 3: Free	Regular Garden Hours (vary seasonally)	Learn about plants that have been used for food, fiber, medicine and cultural purposes for 2,000 years. You'll also explore examples of Tonoho O'odham, Western Apache and Hispanic houses.

▲ Only accessible via other trails. Please refer to the map and account for the access trail mileage when planning your hike.

OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

CITY	TRAILHEAD / PARK NAME	TRAIL & ACCESS Nearest trailhead with parking	APPROXIMATE LENGTH (MI / KM) (one way unless otherwise noted)	ELEVATION CHANGE (FT / M)	DIFFICULTY RATING	USE		FACILITIES AT ACCESS TRAILHEAD (restrooms may be porta-potties or plumbed)	LEASHED DOGS ALLOWED	ENTRANCE FEE	PARK HOURS	TRAIL NOTES
PHOENIX	Desert Botanical Garden (continued)	Sonoran Desert Nature Loop 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy.	0.25 / 0.4	Minimal	○ Easiest	Walking		Access to full Garden amenities including restrooms, snack bar, etc.	N	Adults: \$22; Students (13-18 yrs.): \$12 Children (3-12 yrs.): \$10; Under 3: Free	Regular Garden Hours (vary seasonally)	This trail focuses on the plants and animals of the Sonoran Desert. Experience majestic organ pipe cactus and find out if the cholla cactus really jumps.
		Center for Desert Living Trail 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy.	0.25 / 0.4	Minimal	○ Easiest	Walking		Access to full Garden amenities including restrooms, snack bar, etc.	N	Adults: \$22; Students (13-18 yrs.): \$12 Children (3-12 yrs.): \$10; Under 3: Free	Regular Garden Hours (vary seasonally)	A desert gardener's delight – this trail showcases ideas and strategies that demonstrate efficient, useful, sustainable and harmonious ways to work with nature in the desert environment.
		Desert Wildflower Loop 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy.	0.3 / 0.5	Minimal	○ Easiest	Walking		Access to full Garden amenities including restrooms, snack bar, etc.	N	Adults: \$22; Students (13-18 yrs.): \$12 Children (3-12 yrs.): \$10; Under 3: Free	Regular Garden Hours (vary seasonally)	This trail boasts 32 interpretive exhibits illustrating the complex relationships between desert wildflowers and their pollinators (bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, moths and bats).
	Papago Park 602.495.5458 phoenix.gov/parks	Hole in the Rock Papago Park Rd. east of Galvin Pkwy.	825 (ft) / 251.5 (m)	200 / 61	● Easy	Hiking		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	This short trail leads to a popular landmark with some good Valley views. This trail gains all of its elevation in a very short distance.
		Nature Trail Papago Park Rd. east of Galvin Pkwy.	0.25 / 0.4	0 / 0	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	This trail, which begins at the ranger office, features interpretive signs that describe Sonoran Desert plants and animals.
		Ranger Office Loop Papago Park Rd. east of Galvin Pkwy.	0.6 / 1.0	Minimal	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	A short, scenic trail that passes two of the park's lakes.

OTHER SCOTTSDALE-AREA TRAILS

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PHOENIX	Papago Park (continued)	Big Butte Loop ▲ Papago Park Rd. west of Galvin Pkwy.; access from Double Butte Loop Trail	0.8 / 1.3	Minimal	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	A spur off the Double Butte Loope that encircles the larger of the area's two buttes.
		Double Butte Loop Papago Park Rd. west of Galvin Pkwy.	2.3 / 3.7	50 / 15.2	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	The trail circles two of the Papago Buttes' namesake formations.
		Elliot Ramada Loop Papago Park Rd. west of Galvin Pkwy.	2.7 / 4.4	Minimal	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	A partially paved/part dirt trail that is accessible to people using wheelchairs.
		Little Butte Loop ▲ Papago Park Rd. west of Galvin Pkwy.; access from Double Butte Loop Trail	0.5 / 0.8	Minimal	● Easy	Hiking, Biking, Horseback riding		Restrooms, ramadas, picnic areas within Papago Park	Y	N	Sunrise to sunset daily	From the Double Butte Loop, this spur trail makes a close circle around the smallest of the buttes in the western portion of the park.

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OTHER VALLEY OF THE SUN HIKING HOT SPOTS

In addition to the Scottsdale-area trails listed on the previous pages, you'll find great hiking at these regional recreation areas:



**Estrella Mountain
Regional Park**
623.932.3811
maricopacountyparks.net
14805 West Vineyard Ave.,
Goodyear



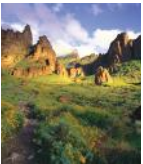
North Mountain/Shaw Butte
602.262.7901
phoenix.gov/parks
10600 N. 7th St., Phoenix



Lookout and Shadow Mountain
602.262.7901
phoenix.gov/parks
15800 N. 16th St., Phoenix



**Piestewa Peak/
Dreamy Draw**
602.261.8318
phoenix.gov/parks
2701 E. Squaw Peak Dr.,
Phoenix



Lost Dutchman State Park
(Superstition Mountains)
 480.982.4485
 azstateparks.com
 6109 N. Apache Trail,
 Apache Junction



**South Mountain Park/
Preserve**
602.262.7393
phoenix.gov/parks
10919 S. Central Ave.,
Phoenix



Reach 11 Recreation Area
602.534.6265
phoenix.gov/parks
See website for access
points



**Usery Mountain
Regional Park**
480.984.0032
maricopacountyparks.net
3939 N. Usery Pass Rd.,
Mesa



**Rio Salado Habitat
Restoration Area**
602.262.6863
phoenix.gov/parks
See website for
trailhead locations



**White Tank Mountain
Regional Park**
623.935.2505
maricopacountyparks.net
20304 W. White Tank
Mountain Rd., Waddell

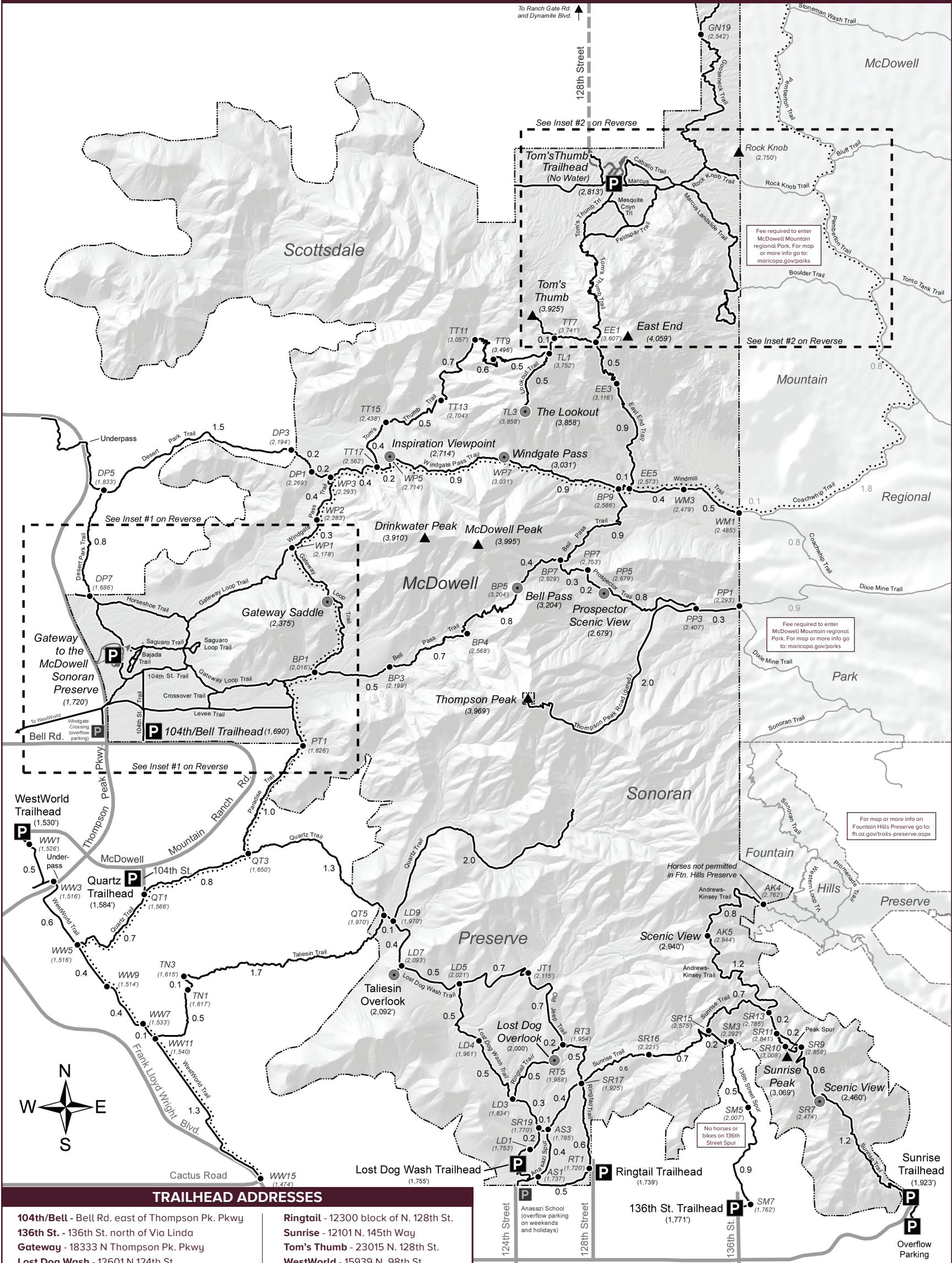
See websites for specific trailhead locations, usage and trail ratings.

FIELD NOTES

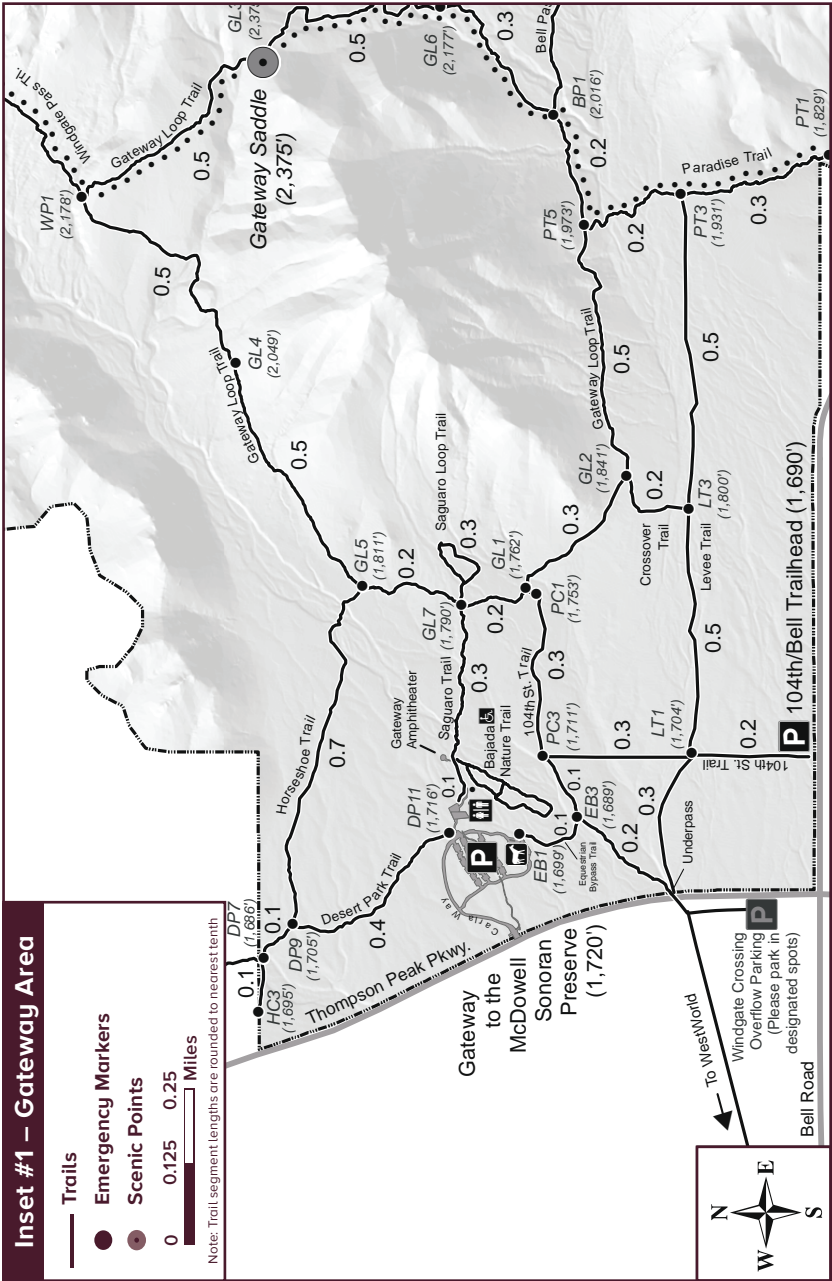
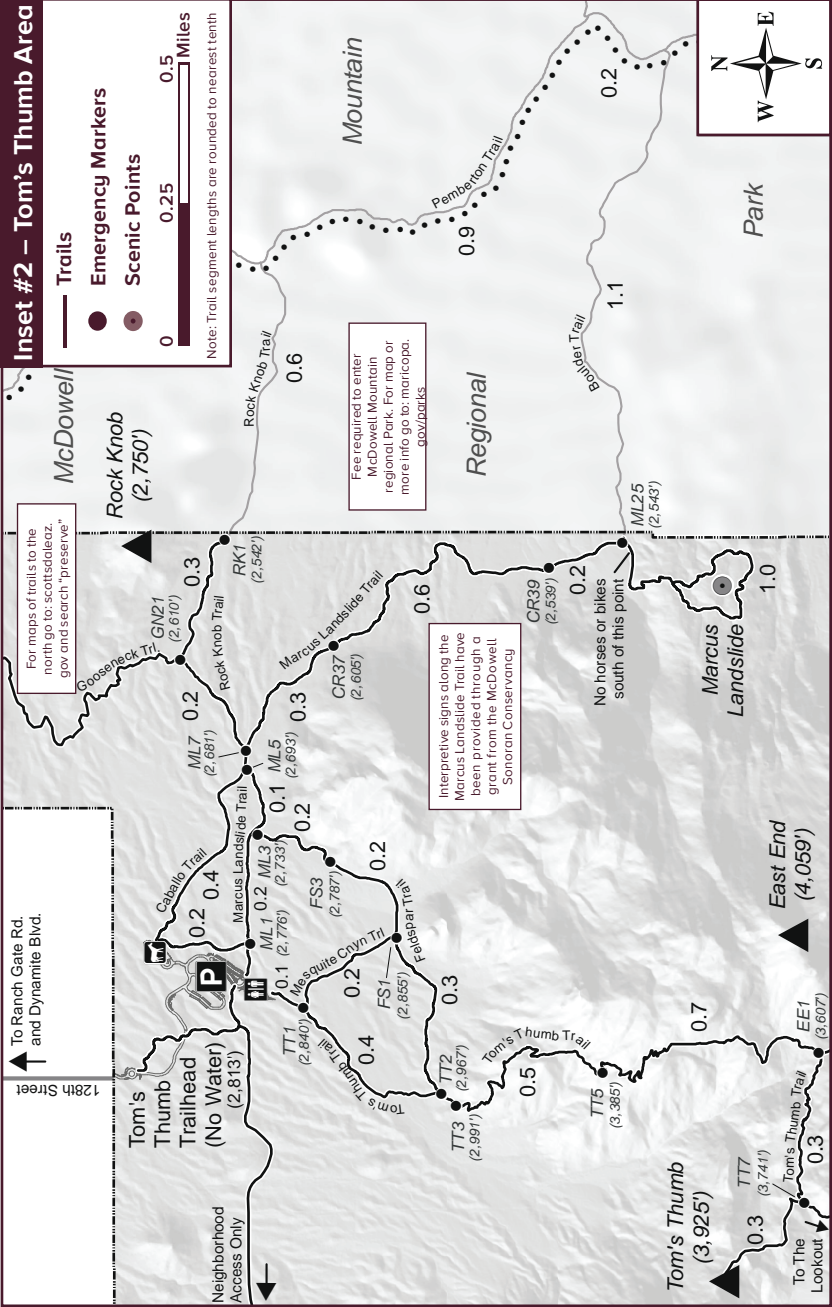
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SCOTTSDALE'S MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE TRAILS: CENTRAL & SOUTHERN REGIONS



Trail maps courtesy of City of Scottsdale



PRESERVE HOURS

Sunrise to Sunset

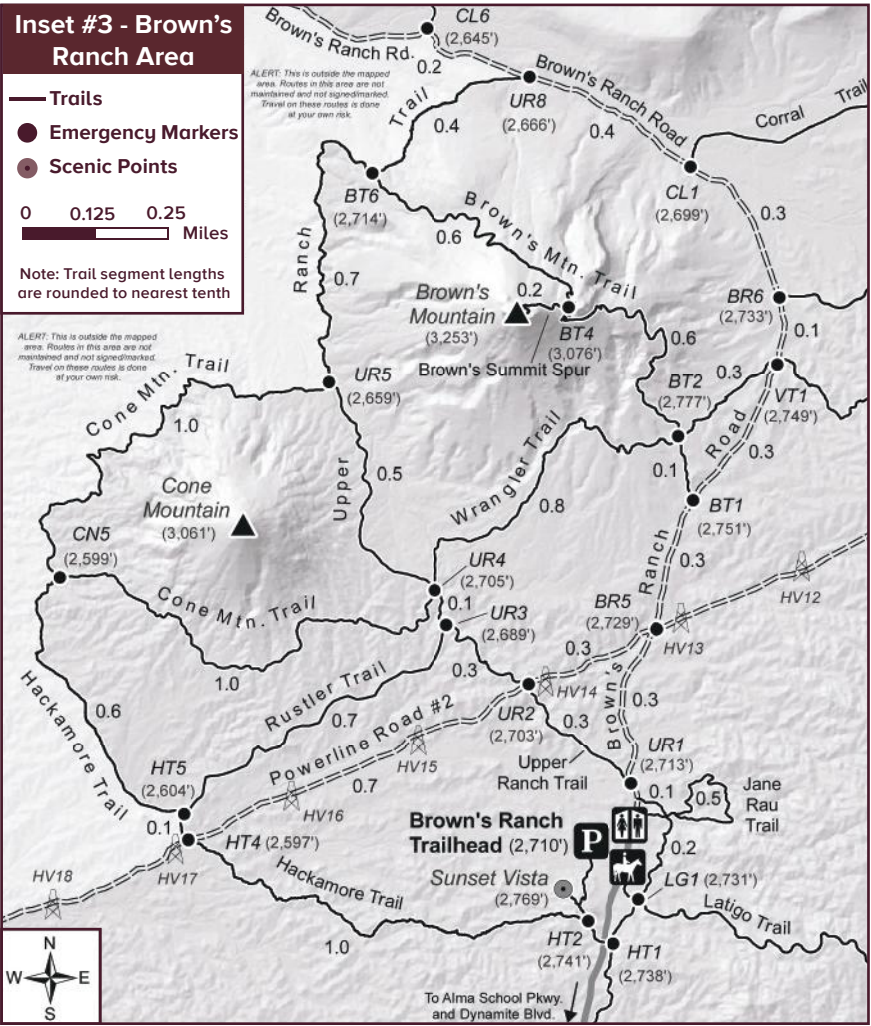
- ▶ The Preserve is open for use from sunrise to sunset.
- ▶ Nighttime use is reserved for the wildlife.

PRESERVE HOURS

Sunrise to Sunset

- ▶ The Preserve is open for use from sunrise to sunset.
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TRAIL SAFETY

- ▶ Bring ample water and a cell phone.
- ▶ Be aware of extreme heat:
 - Limit activity to the cooler parts of the day.
 - Wear light-colored clothing, a hat and sunscreen.
 - Leave your dog at home if it's not accustomed to hiking and/or weather exceeds 90°F (32.2°C)
- ▶ Wear sturdy footwear.
- ▶ Tell a friend or family member where you are going and when you plan to return.
- ▶ Leave valuables at home or lock them out of view in your trunk.

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TRAIL ETIQUETTE

- ▶ Be considerate of other trail users - you are all here for the same reason.
- ▶ Downhill traffic should yield to uphill traffic.
- ▶ All trail users should yield to horses.
- ▶ Bicyclists should yield to all other users.

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