



2024 CLUB NEWSLETTER

Hello Hikers! I am sending out this year's newsletter a little later than usual because I've had an incredibly busy travel year (some planned, some not). Still, I am encouraged by our club's continued success as we near the end of our 9th year. As I have shared with some of you, I am planning on a big year in 2025 (our 10th Anniversary Season), and will begin advertising some of the earlier trips very soon for advance booking purposes. We live in a great place to hike and explore, and more importantly, continue to attract wonderful club members who are fun, considerate, and all-around super companions to have on the trail. I am proud of this club because of its members and look forward to organizing our activities for many years to come.

This year, our club has taken on a variety of incredible adventures! We started the year with a epic snowshoe trek at the top of Hoosier Pass. We introduced the club to more secluded hike locations, such as Quarry Mesa Loop, Emerald Valley, and the unique Tunnel Trail at Canon City. Once again, we supported the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo with the annual Walk to the Shrine event and toured the interesting petrified redwood stumps at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. We took on some major mountains, including both Spanish Peaks (East and West) as well as Mount Sherman, which was a new 14er for our club. We returned to a guided tour of Corral Bluffs, which now has a special prominence due to the recent fossil discoveries highlighted in the PBS Nova TV special "Rise of the Mammals". Finally, we led a double-hike weekend at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. As always, I try to take advantage of this region's endless locations to explore. I learn about many of these places through our own members, so I thank you for sharing your suggestions and hidden gems with the rest of us.

This newsletter contains a number of articles which you may find interesting. In addition to the recurring policies and club information, I include a 2-page article highlighting 7 other hiking/walking clubs in the local area (thank you to those who gave me info on these); I encourage our members to seek out other groups to support as each of them are very unique. I also share an article highlighting the unique geological and cultural history of the Spanish Peaks, which is fitting since we climbed them both this year. This issue includes features on the Walk to the Shrine and Corral Bluffs events. I include details about the Black Canyon of the Gunnison weekend and more. Please be sure to check all this out and provide me feedback; I am going to send out next year's newsletter toward the beginning of the year, returning to where this newsletter is a preview of the year ahead and not just a review of what we have done.

I want to wrap by saying Thank You to all of our active club members. Although we have nearly 180 people on the email list, there are about 40-50 who actively support this club, participate in the hikes, and help with leading and driving. You are the lifeblood of this club and inspire me to continue leading us on to new adventures. I'll see you on the trail!

Rob Jackson
Club Organizer

robert@mountaintrailshiking.com



Devil's Head Lookout Tower
(June 2023)

Club Website

<https://www.mountaintrailshiking.com>



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Basic Rules of Hiking

While hiking itself is little more than walking in nature, participating in an organized group involves a few considerations. Please note the hiking rules below and do your part whenever you participate with the club:

- Do not leave anything on the trail...if you bring it with you, take it out again. This includes food waste. Also, do not remove anything natural you find on the trail. If you find a rock or leaf fascinating, leave it alone so that others may enjoy it as well. Want to do something extra? Picking up trash you do come across would be going the extra mile to improve the trail for others.
- Keep at least one other hiker within sight at all times. This will avoid halting the entire group while we locate a lost hiker.
- Be courteous to other hikers, especially those in our group. Not everyone enjoys hiking the same way; some want to socialize while others may prefer the peace and quiet of the forest. Partner with like-minded members so that everyone can enjoy the hike. Also, try not to tailgate...spread out and share the trail with others. This is not a race, so enjoy the pace!
- Don't take unnecessary risks. Watch your step and stay away from ledges and overhangs. Injuries are possible, but you can minimize the risks by being smart.
- Be responsible with your dog. Most of our hikes are dog-friendly, but remember that some club members may be allergic or otherwise not fond of barking dogs. When bringing a dog, keep them on a leash and give ample space between you and others in our group.
- Come prepared with comfortable clothes and appropriate supplies. Healthy snacks are encouraged for most hikes, but may not be necessary for shorter outings. However, you should always have water or similar beverage as dehydration occurs quickly on the trail.
- Do not attempt any hike for which you are not prepared to do. While it can be fun test your limits, if you cannot complete a hike, you risk cancelling the trip for others (we do not allow hikers to return alone). Start with easier hikes and gradually work your way up.
- Leave wildlife alone. We will frequently see deer, rabbits, squirrels, and birds. Take photos, but please give them space, we are in their home. Encounters with more dangerous wildlife (snakes, mountain lions, black bears) are rare, but if it happens, do not panic, but rather understand how to handle such encounters.
- Be on time. Whether you meet at the designated carpool location or drive straight to the hike site, please be considerate, plan ahead and be on time for hike starts.



Enjoying Nature with Good Friends
(Crazy Gulch to West Creek - October 2023)

Weather Conditions

Hikes are scheduled months in advance, so there is no way to predict what the weather will be like when that day comes around. We live in a location which enjoys year-round sunshine, so you can expect Mother Nature to be cooperative most of the time. However, there will be occasions where the weather will affect our club activities. It's important you understand our policies regarding weather.

All of our hikes begin fairly early in the morning, which not only beats the crowds, but also beats the heat and/or afternoon thunderstorms. My goal is that (for most hikes), we are done before noon. There will be some hikes which are longer and may push into afternoon, but most hikes will be done by midday. For those rare days which have rain in the morning, we will generally still hike. You can make a personal choice if you want to stay home because of rain or snow. There are times where I will postpone if we are planning a high-elevation hike which receives unexpected snow. I will be scheduling hikes for all seasons, but our winter hikes will be at lower elevations and will be more susceptible to schedule changes.

Make no mistake...where I do not mess around is thunder and lightning. Overcast and rain is one thing, but once we have thunder and lightning, I will cancel the hike (if it has not yet started) or return to the vehicles by the most direct route (for hikes in progress). This could mean we do not reach the destination of some of our summer hikes. Set aside your pride, the mountain will still be there for next time. I need you to know and accept that I will never compromise the safety of anyone on our hikes, and I expect club members to fully cooperate should the occasion arise in which I cancel or terminate a hike due to potentially dangerous weather.

2024 Snowshoeing Events

Snowshoeing offers low-impact, aerobic exercise that helps you stay in shape during the winter. This year, we are offering two winter hikes designed to be snowshoeing events. One of these walks are outside of the Pikes Peak region, so half the adventure is in the journey. Flyers will be sent prior to each event, advising which type of hike to expect.

Some of our members have snowshoeing experience, but most have not tried it. Here are some basics:

SELECTING SNOWSHOES: Whether renting or buying, select the type of snowshoe based on usage. The length, angle, crampons (metal teeth), and strap placement will vary for flat, rolling, or mountain terrain. The events we schedule are typically flat, meaning entry-level snowshoes will be fine.

FOOTWEAR: Ideally, you should wear insulated, waterproof boots; however, leather hiking boots work well, too, especially if they are waterproof. Wool or synthetic socks with wicking liners are recommended. Also, consider gaiters to keep snow out of your boots.

CLOTHING: Wear breathable layers which can be added and removed as needed. Avoid cotton, as they retain moisture, which can lead to hypothermia in winter conditions. Plan for three layers: a BASE layer (synthetics and wool) that dries quickly, an INSULATING layer (i.e. polyester fleece) that retains heat when wet and breathes as you exercise, and an OUTER layer (waterproof, breathable shell jacket and pants) that keep you dry and fend off wind. Also, don't forget good gloves or mittens and a hat; adjust the materials and layers as needed to match the conditions. Finally, wear sunglasses, sun-screen on exposed areas and lip balm.

HYDRATION: As in summer, you must drink during cold-weather exercise to keep your muscles functioning and help your body fend off hypothermia. Pouches with drinking tubes (i.e. Camelbaks) are not a good idea in winter as the water can freeze in the tube. Keep your water from freezing by using an insulating cover for your water bottle.



Hoosier Pass to Crystal Lake
(March 2023)

BASICS OF SNOWSHOEING: Walking on flat or rolling ground is fairly intuitive when you first start out. Most snowshoes have simple bindings that fit a wide range of boot styles and sizes. Your stance should be wider than normal when you're on snowshoes, to keep from stepping on the insides of the frames. Use the crampons for traction, especially going up or downhill. Also, hiking poles can be very helpful for balance as well as working out the upper body.

Snowshoeing can be very fun and rewarding. This activity extends the hiking season through the winter months, and provides access over deep snow terrain. You should understand that the pace will be slower than standard hiking, and the exertion will be higher. Rest assured that our routes are neither long nor difficult, which should provide a beginner-friendly experience.

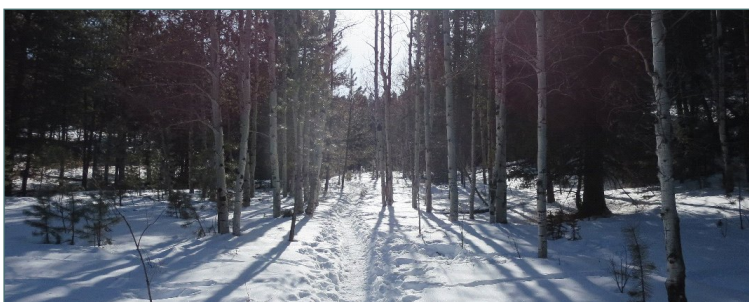
For more information about snowshoeing:

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/snowshoeing-first-steps.html>

For FREE classes on snowshoeing basics:

<https://www.rei.com/events/a/snow-sports-snowshoeing>

In addition to useful information and classes, REI also provides snowshoe rentals and sales. Please visit them or any comparable outdoor activities store.



February 24 - Mule Creek Trail

Mule Creek Trail is a great location to try out snowshoeing for beginners and experienced pros alike. This year's walk is fairly short (~2 miles) and affords participants a chance to walk in deep or shallow snow – great for first-timers or those of us needing a refresher.



March 2 - Hoosier Pass - Crystal Lake

Hoosier Pass (near Breckenridge) presents an epic snowshoeing experience along the Continental Divide! The hike includes a 3-mile roundtrip to Crystal Lake in very deep snow, boasting incredible views - a memorable adventure for more experienced snowshoe hikers.



Other Local Hiking Clubs

Our hiking club members often participate in other hiking groups around the Pikes Peak region. These groups vary in size, organization, difficulty and schedule, but all offer additional opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in friendly company of other hiking enthusiasts. I encourage our members to seek out other groups, especially since many of these offer hikes on weekdays (whereas we only hike on weekends). Here is a small sample of other hiking groups in the local area:

Teller County Hiking and Outdoors Meetup

When do they hike?

Wednesdays and Saturdays (8:00 or 8:30 a.m. start)

Where do they hike?

Teller County and Park County

How long or difficult are the hikes?

Most hikes are 4-7 miles long (Moderate Pace)

Point of Contact

Chris Clark

<https://www.meetup.com/teller-co-hiking-and-outdoors-meetup/>

Are there fees?

No fee

Number of Members

About 1,600

How to Join

Through the website (Click on Request to Join button)

The Wellness Group

When do they hike?

Wednesdays (mornings)

Where do they hike?

Meet at Garden of the Gods Visitor Center (8:30 Summer, 9:00 Fall/Winter/Spring)

How long or difficult are the hikes?

Most hikes are 3-4 miles (They have a Slow and Medium Group)

Point of Contact

Dave and Marilyn (no phone or email provided)

Are there fees?

No fee

Number of Members

Not tracked

How to Join

Interested participants simply meet at Garden of the Gods Visitor Center on Wed mornings



Falcon Wanderers

This group belong to the AVA - American Volkssport Association (America's Walking Club). Volkssport is German and is non-competitive fitness walking.



When do they hike?

Wednesday (evenings) - Seasonal

Where do they hike?

Numerous locations around Pikes Peak region, plus further out (Fort Collins, Estes Park, etc.)

How long or difficult are the hikes?

Hikes range from 5 to 12 KM (3-8 miles)

Point of Contact

Website: <https://www.falconwanderers.org/>

Email: walking@falconwanderers.org

Are there fees?

Individual \$10 first year, \$8 per year thereafter; different rates for couples and families. Free membership for people age 70 and over.

Number of Members

Unknown (Many!)

How to Join

Fill out membership form through website.

Other Local Hiking Clubs (cont'd)

CO Springs Hiking Gals



Facebook group for females only

Website

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2552614478376323/>

Point of Contact

No designated group leader; each hike is led by whoever sets up the event

History and Purpose

Group created in March 2021, now has over 8,700 members; listed as a "A group of 50 ish - give or take 20 years - women who want to hike, make new friends, push themselves a little bit, and find new trails."

When do they hike?

Whenever someone sets up a hike - weekday, weekend, morning, afternoon,...

Where do they hike?

All over, some well known spots, some not so well known

How long or difficult are the hikes?

Varies by whomever has set up the hike

Are there fees?

No cost, just sign up on the Facebook site



Colorado Mountain Club (CMC)

This is the grand-daddy of them all! CMC is a statewide group which has been in existence for over 110 years, with ten chapters and over 6,500 members.

Our local chapter is the Pikes Peak Group



When do they hike?

CMC hosts hundreds events throughout the year, with a rich schedule of outdoor activities, classes, and more

Where do they hike?

Most anywhere, but their specialty is Colorado's big mountains (both technical and non-technical)

How long or difficult are the hikes?

Generally moderate to challenging events

Are there fees?

Standard membership is \$85 per year (\$125 family), but members under 30 only pay \$50 per year.

Point of Contact

Website: <https://www.cmc.org/>
Email: office@cmc.org

How to Join

Fill out membership form through website.

Colorado Mountain Club is an general purpose outdoor group, offering trips, training, and education around a variety of activities, including hiking, camping, mountaineering, rafting, fly fishing, nature, navigation, and much more.

In addition to being an events group, the CMC is well-known as a staunch advocate for environmental conservation, community outreach, and teaching others the best way to experience the outdoors. They have published numerous books on Colorado's mountains and outdoor history. Some of you are familiar with our club member Dean Waits, who is also a member, instructor, and author with the CMC.

The CMC adheres to the same four core values which has governed the club's leadership and activities for more than a century: Community, Education, Adventure, and Conservation.

While the CMC may seem intimidating for many of our own club's casual members, rest assured they are beginner-friendly and eager to help its members get the most of their outdoor experience.

Mountain Climbs



While I try to provide hikes that appeal to casual hikers, I schedule a few each season for those who want more of a challenge. That means more mountaintops! This year, we have five mountain climbs for our more adventurous members. None of these climbs are technical; that is, no special gear is required. However, participants should be in good shape and have experience climbing at high altitudes. Some of these involve difficult stretches over rough terrain, so sturdy hiking boots are a must. These hikes will generally start early to avoid any problems with afternoon thunderstorms. I'll provide all the details as we approach each outing, but here's a quick run-down of this year's selection:

July 13 - Mount Rosa (11,500'): Many of you know this is one of my personal favorites in the Pikes Peak region. This peak is not quite tall enough to push above treeline, but the summit is sufficiently cleared to provide a fantastic 360-degree view of the front range with all of Colorado Springs at your feet. We start and end at Penrose Reservoir, meaning we only climb 1,500 feet with the entire round-trip being around 7 miles. This is a good warm up for the harder peaks that follow.

August 10 - East Spanish Peak (12,688'): Although this peak is the shorter of the two, East Spanish Peak presents just as much of a challenge as its brother to the West. That's because this hike is long (over 13 miles) and climbs 3,500'+ in elevation. This peak boasts a variety of terrains and incredible views. As this is less popular than the western peak, wildlife is more prevalent, including bears. This hike will prove a challenging test for our more experienced club members.

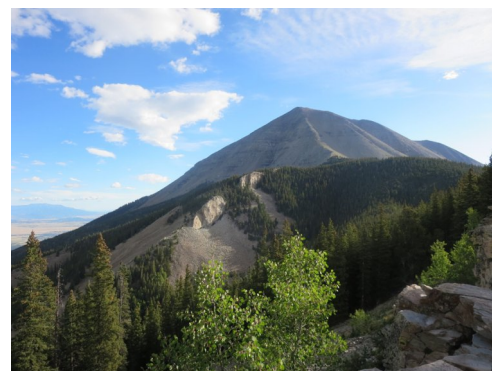
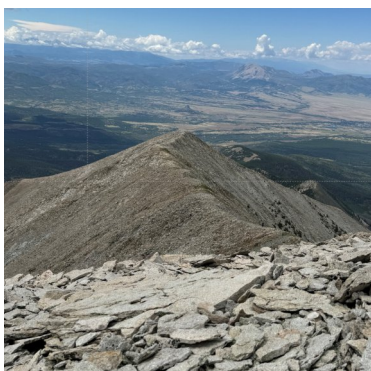
August 24 - West Spanish Peak (13,631'): The hike to this peak is shorter (7.5 miles) and climbs less in elevation gain (~2,400'), but is just as difficult as its eastern twin due to the overall elevation topping over 13,600' (almost a 14er!). Plus, the final mile climbs very steeply up a rocky ridge, weaving among the fixed and loose rocks all the way to the summit. The views from the top are incredible, including stunning views of the dikes (straight-line rock walls) which fan out in all directions from the summit. This one is an incredible adventure!



Venable-Comanche Loop (Phantom Terrace)
(Sangre de Cristo Range - August 2023)

October 12 - Mount Sherman (14,043'): Our tallest mountain this year is a 14er just east of Fairplay. Although this is considered one of Colorado's "easiest" 14ers, it's still a major hike at very high altitude. This hike gains over 2,000' in elevation and is 5 miles round-trip. We'll do this one as an overnight in Fairplay the night before so we can get good parking and an early start. This is a great chance to bag one of the bigger peaks with little or no experience (just be in good shape to hike at this altitude!)

November 9 - Eagles Peak (9,325'): Eagles Peak is a rocky mountain looking directly over the U.S. Air Force Academy. The hike begins on the Academy grounds, but access is permitted to anyone with a photo I.D. This hike is not very long (2.5 miles roundtrip), but climbs steeply over 2,000' through a rough ravine up Goat Camp Creek. Near the top, the trail opens to wonderful aspen groves and spectacular views! This hike can be difficult to follow at times, but the view overlooking the AF Academy and plains to the east are worth it!



Spanish Peaks of Colorado



Geologists Explore the Hidden History of Colorado's Spanish Peaks

Introduction

If you've driven the mostly flat stretch of I-25 in Colorado from Pueblo to Trinidad, you've seen them: the Spanish Peaks, twin mountains that soar into the sky out of nowhere, reaching altitudes of 13,628 and 12,701 feet above sea level.

In a new study, geologists from CU Boulder have laid out a timeline for the emergence of these majestic but isolated mountains. The team's findings could bring scientists closer to answering one of the most enduring puzzles in Colorado geology: What made Denver, the Mile High City, a mile high?

"For geologists, the big question is: Why are Colorado's High Plains so high?" said Sabrina Kainz, who led the research as an undergraduate student studying geology at CU Boulder. The group published its findings in *Lithosphere*.

Colorado's craggy, snow-capped Rocky Mountains attract tourists and more. But for researchers like Kainz and CU Boulder geologist Lon Abbott, the High Plains that extend over much of eastern Colorado—the territory of tumbleweeds and prairie dogs—may be even more interesting.

Abbott explained that the world's highest places tend to be that way because of squishing and squeezing from tectonic plates—giant pieces of Earth's crust that slam together, crumpling up land masses and raising entire mountain ranges. But Colorado's High Plains, which are dominated by sedimentary rocks, aren't crumpled at all. They're one tall, flat stack of geological pancakes.

"The Colorado High Plains are anomalous, really, in the entire world," said Abbott, co-author of the study and teaching professor in the Department of Geological Sciences. "They're not formed the way that mountains are typically formed."

To get nearer to solving the mystery of the plains, the researchers collected and analyzed rocks from the Spanish Peaks east to Two Buttes, a geologic formation near the Kansas border.

They found that the rocks forming the Spanish Peaks injected into the crust below Colorado as magma around 24 million years ago, but remained miles underground until about 17 million years ago. What happened to bring them to the surface remains a mystery.

"We can answer when the plains around the Spanish Peaks got so high," Kainz said. "The 'why' of the matter is a little more complicated."

Colorado Landmark

The Spanish Peaks have long been an important monument for generations of people who have called southern Colorado home.

The indigenous Comanche people referred to these formations as "Wahatoya," which means "Double Mountain." In the early 1800s, travelers following the Santa Fe Trail, which joined Missouri to what is now the southwestern U.S., formerly the northern reaches of New Spain and then Mexico, used the peaks as a landmark. complicated."

"They would spend weeks and weeks traveling in their wagons on the plains," said Abbott, whose book "Geology Underfoot Along Colorado's Front Range" is a primer for the state's rockhounds. "Then, all of a sudden, they'd see those mountains, and they knew they were getting close."

In 1913, hundreds of coal miners striking against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company set up a tent camp not far from the mountains—a prelude to the Ludlow Massacre of 1914, which remains among the nation's deadliest labor disputes.

The peaks have always been a bit mysterious. They are as tall as many of the Rocky Mountain summits to the west, but the Spanish Peaks formed at a different time and from completely different rocks.

For Kainz, now a doctoral student at the University of Washington in Seattle, getting to study those features as an undergrad was a dream come true. She began the project at the height of the COVID pandemic in 2020 and spent hours crammed into cars with dozens of rock samples.

The team included Rebecca Flowers, professor of geological sciences; undergraduate geology student Skye Fernandez; James Metcalf, manager of the Thermochronology Research and Instrumentation Laboratory (TRaIL); and Aidan Olsson, then a student at Fairview High School in Boulder, now studying biology at CU Boulder.

The project hinged on an approach called thermochronology. Kainz noted that small chemical changes in the crystals within many rocks can give geologists clues about how hot or cold those samples were millions of years ago. Rocks buried deep below the Earth tend to be hotter than those closer to the surface.

More Than A Mile High

According to the team's results, the Spanish Peaks first formed when magma welled up from deep within Earth's crust but didn't quite break through to the surface.

Then, something happened. In a very short span of time, geologically speaking, huge tracks of land in southeastern Colorado vanished. Between roughly 18 and 14 million years ago, more than a mile of sedimentary rocks around the Spanish Peaks eroded away, then were swept into the Arkansas River.

The researchers suspect that as-of-yet-unidentified geologic forces were pushing up southeastern Colorado from below—exposing previously underground rocks to rain and flowing water.

Abbott and his colleagues are now exploring how this disturbance may have fit into the broader evolution of Colorado's plains. Their preliminary data, for example, suggests that the flat lands around what is now Denver may not have experienced similar upheaval at the same time.

But the study makes one thing clear: Colorado's High Plains have long been something to behold.

"As high as the High Plains are today, they used to be a lot higher," Kainz said. "They were as high as the Rocky Mountains are today."

Strain, D. (2024, March 4). Geologists explore the hidden history of Colorado's Spanish Peaks <https://phys.org/news/2024-03-geologists-explore-hidden-history-colorado.html>



Special Event: Walk to the Shrine May 18, 2024

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo hosts an annual event to raise funds and allow participants a rare opportunity to run (or walk) to the Will Rogers Shrine to the Sun. This is the only time the road to the shrine is open to foot traffic. Although advertised as a run, many participants (including most in our club) will simply walk the course.

Due to increasing popularity, the event organizers now offer this event over 2 days (Saturday and Sunday evenings). Our club will participate on Saturday (May 18th). Participation requires advance registration. Due to capacity limits, the registration will close once filled up, so club members are encouraged to register early. Our club did this event in 2016 and again in 2020; however, the 2020 event took place in the year of the pandemic and had many restrictions. This year, we're happy to make our return and enjoy it as a group event once again.

The link on the left provides all the details and lists all the benefits, including a t-shirt, full access to the zoo during the event, and even an after-race party. For most of us, the benefit is the wonderful 4-mile round-trip walk to the shine. This is rated a "5" by our club standards, due to the 1,000 foot elevation gain. The route is paved and the pace will be up to each participant, so this can be done by nearly all of our members.

Let's show our support for our hometown zoo and enjoy this rare opportunity to walk to the shrine!



A great walk available only once a year

Information:

<https://www.cmzoo.org/events-programs/special-events/run-to-the-shrine/>

Membership Form / Waiver

As many of you know, I require all members to complete a membership form with waiver each year. Read below for the purpose and use of this information:

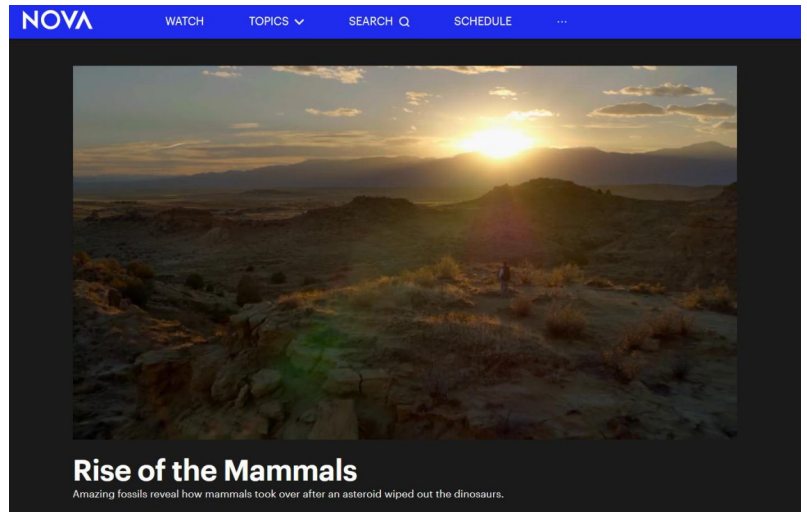
The waiver portion of this form is for you to acknowledge that hiking, as with any outdoor activity, contains some element of risk and that you accept responsibility for incidents arising from participating in these activities. Hiking is low-risk compared to many other outdoor activities, but it is important that you understand your role. I will only lead you on hikes in which I have already completed and know the route, unless otherwise indicated. I have first aid training and a healthy respect for foul weather and other dangers, so you are in good hands. Still, no one knows your limitations and physical condition better than you, so it is vital that you never undertake a hike that you are not fully prepared to accomplish.

Privacy Notice: Although I request your contact information, you can be confident that only the member's name and those listed as additional members within their household may be shared as part of Club business; sample uses may include hike participant lists and member identification in club photographs. No other information will be shared with anyone, either within or outside the Club.

I will ask you to complete this form on your first hike with the club each year. When you receive the form, I encourage you contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

 2024 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (one form per household)	
PART 1: MEMBER INFORMATION	
Disclaimer on Information Sharing: Only the member's name and those listed as additional members within their household may be shared as part of Club business; sample uses may include hike participant lists and member identification in club photographs. No other information will be shared with anyone, either within or outside the Club.	
Primary Member Name (Last, First)	List Additional Household Members Below
Mailing Address (Line 1)	
Mailing Address (Line 2)	
City	State Zip
Email (you may list additional email addresses on the reverse side)	
Telephone	
PART 2: WAIVER AND RELEASE	
I acknowledge and agree that hiking activities carry inherent risks associated with my participation therein, of which I am fully aware. I voluntarily assume the risks associated therewith, which may include health risks and/or bodily injuries, including but not limited to death, whether they occur or arise during or after my participation in hiking events.	
In consideration for being allowed to participate in hikes organized by the Mountain Trails Hiking Club , I hereby release, waive, indemnify, covenant not to sue and hold harmless the Mountain Trails Hiking Club and its organizers, members, participants, and volunteers.	
I HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BY AGREEING TO THIS RELEASE I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL THE TERMS CONTAINED HEREIN AND AM GIVING UP LEGAL RIGHTS THAT I OTHERWISE HAVE FOR INJURIES OR DAMAGES INCURRED DURING AND AFTER MY PARTICIPATION IN MOUNTAIN TRAILS HIKING CLUB EVENTS. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE TERMS OF THIS RELEASE SHALL SURVIVE THE CONCLUSION OF HIKE ACTIVITIES SUCH THAT I AM RELEASING THE RELEASEES FROM ALL CLAIMS THAT MIGHT ARISE AFTER THE EVENTS TAKE PLACE, WHETHER KNOWN OR UNKNOWN AT THE TIME I PARTICIPATED IN HIKE ACTIVITIES.	
I warrant and represent that I am at least 18 years of age, or if I am signing this Release on behalf of someone under 18 years of age I am that person's legal guardian and have legal authority to execute this Release on his/her behalf.	
I agree to the terms and conditions set forth above as it applies to myself and each household member listed on this form.	
PART 3: SIGNATURE	
SIGNATURE	DATE
CLUB USE ONLY:	
RECEIVED BY	DATE

Corral Bluffs Guided Tour



This year, Mountain Trails Hiking Club, in partnership with Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA), is proud to once again offer an exciting, educational tour of the Corral Bluffs just east of Colorado Springs, near Highway 94. Club members may remember when we did this back in 2018 and recall this special event. Information on Corral Bluffs is available on the CoBA website: <https://www.corralbluffs.org/>

This area is on private land and not normally open to the public; however, we have arranged a guided History Tour similar to what we enjoyed last time. The Corral Bluffs Alliance will be our guide for this hike, where we will learn about the flora/fauna, wildlife, geology, history, archeology, and anthropology of this preserved area. The walk itself is not difficult (about 3-4 miles) and will involve frequent stops to learn about the area.

This area has received a great deal of attention since our last hike, thanks to a major fossil discovery in 2019 which helped scientists understand how mammals quickly evolved and spread following the major asteroid strike that wiped out the dinosaurs. No other location on the planet contains the quality and quantity of fossils which were discovered here. The Public Broadcast Service (PBS) show Nova even featured a 1-hour documentary of the discovery, which I recommend to our club members, to celebrate the nature's wonders here in our backyard.

~ Hike Ratings ~ How Are They Determined?

Several of you have asked about the mystery surrounding my hike rating system. As you know, every hike is rated 1-10 based on overall difficulty. But what goes into this number? Well, it's a combination of several factors. The most prominent factors are overall hike length and amount of climbing involved. However, there are other factors as well, such as altitude and terrain difficulty. For example, let's look at two hikes which are both rated a "7". The Mount Rosa climb is rated 7 because of the length of the hike (7+ miles) and high altitude (over 11,000 feet). The Mount Herman climb is also rated a 7, but it is shorter (6 miles) and takes place at lower elevation (7,000-9,000 feet). However, the climb is much steeper and more difficult. Both hikes balance out to an overall "7".

As you come out on hikes, you should get to know which ratings you can accomplish and set your schedule and goals appropriately. If you have issues with specific types of terrain (i.e. bad knees for going downhill), I encourage you to read the hike description in addition to the rating. Hike ratings are not set in stone, so let me know if you feel a hike has been underrated or overrated for difficulty.

RATINGS

Hikes are rated for difficulty based on overall distance, altitude, climbing involved, and terrain difficulty.

1-3: EASY - casual walks, can be attempted by most members

4-6: MODERATE - longer routes or with difficult terrain; for more experienced hikers

7-10: DIFFICULT - long hikes, usually involving lots of climbing; for fit and experienced hikers only

Black Canyon of the Gunnison Weekend!

This year, we are offering a special weekend at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. We hiked here back in 2018; now we return to offer two hikes: a moderately challenging climb up Green Mountain on Saturday and a very challenging scramble to the bottom of the canyon on Sunday. Offering two hikes will allow for a wider spectrum of activities and provide a weekend full of adventure!

In addition to completing these two hikes, we will also have two group dinners (Friday and Saturday Night), along with time to explore the town of Montrose, other parts of the park, and the incredible scenery in the surrounding region. This will be one of the most ambitious events offered by the club to date!

Saturday, October 26
Green Mountain
via North Vista Trail

Rating
6



<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/colorado/green-mountain-summit-via-north-vista-trail>

This 7-mile hike climbs to the top of Green Mountain and provides a spectacular view of the entire canyon. The view from Exclamation Point is breath-taking!

This is moderately-challenging and can be attempted by many of our club members. Since this hike is on the north side of the canyon, hikers can expect solitude and serenity.

A great hike with incredible scenery...not to be missed!

Sunday, October 27
Inner Canyon Climb
via Gunnison Route

Rating
9



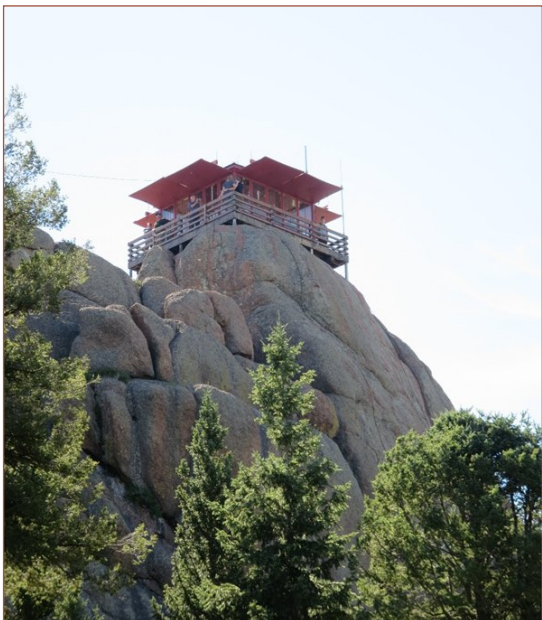
<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/colorado/gunnison-route--2>

This event is a very challenging scramble 1,800 feet down to the bottom of the canyon; much of the route is off-trail and follows a steep rocky ravine; while this climb doesn't require use technical gear, it does involve hands-on scrambling over rocks and roots.

This should only be attempted by club members who are in great shape, sure-footed, and confident to climb up and down rough terrain.

The view of the river at the bottom is a well-deserved reward for the adventurous, followed by the climb back out!

Non-Emergency Contact Information



AGENCY	CONTACT INFORMATION
Colorado Springs Police Department	Phone: (719) 444-7000 Web Site: http://www.springsgov.com
El Paso County Sheriff's Office	Phone: (719) 390-5555 Web Site: http://shr.elpasoco.com
Fountain Communications	Phone: (719) 382-8555 Web Site: http://www.ci.fountain.co.us
Fort Carson Military Police/Fire	Phone: (719) 526-5615 Web Site: http://www.carson.army.mil
Teller County Sheriff's Office	Phone: (719) 687-9652 Web Site: http://www.co.teller.co.us
Woodland Park Police Dept	Phone: (719) 687-9262 Web Site: http://www.city-woodlandpark.org
Cripple Creek Police Department	Phone: (719) 689-2655 Web Site: http://www.cripplecreekgov.com
Peterson AFB Security Police/Fire	Phone: (719) 556-4000 Web Site: http://www.peterson.af.mil

Hike Flyers

Each hike is advertised to club members in a standard flyer. This format has everything you need on one page. Here's how to navigate:

1. **HEADING:** Hike name, date, and difficulty rating
2. **PHOTOS:** Some preview photos of what you can expect to see
3. **NARRATIVE:** Description, weather forecast, and if dogs are permitted
4. **HIKE DETAILS:** Website to learn more about this hike or location
5. **MEETING PLACE & TIME:** Where to meet (with map), usually with opportunity to carpool; depending on the location, some hikes have no designated meet-up point and everyone meets at the hike location. The bottom section includes directions if you decide to drive directly to the hike location.
6. **WHAT TO BRING:** A simple checklist appropriate for this hike



Mountain Trails Hiking Club

1 Red Rocks Canyon

Sunday, March 18, 2018

Rating

4





Let's kick off our main hiking season with a great turnout! Most of you have walked in Red Rocks, but you may not have done this route. Besides, this is about celebrating our club with fresh air and friends...the exercise doesn't hurt, either!

We'll meet at the main entrance and proceed toward the Quarry Pass trail. We'll hike over the rocks and on to Mesa Trail and Roundup Trail. We're walking back down the main Red Rocks Canyon Trail about 4 miles in all and not very difficult.

The weather will be great (upper 40s and sunny), so bring a light jacket and plenty of sun protection. This trail is for sun-lovers and offers little shade...perfect for this March morning!

Dog-Friendly? Yes

Hike Details:
<http://redrockcanyonopenspace.org/>

What To Bring

- ☐ Clothing: Light, breathable layers
- ☐ Sturdy hiking shoes or boots
- ☐ Sun-screen and sunglasses
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Plenty of water or sports drink
- ☐ Healthy snacks
- ☐ Camera or Smartphone

Meeting Place & Time

March 18 – 9:00 a.m.

Red Rock Canyon Open Space
3550 W High Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Meet in outer parking lot, shown below:



If you drive directly to the hike:

We are not providing a separate carpool meeting spot; participants should meet at the hike location. The inner parking lot may be full, so park in the larger outer lot if needed. Please arrive and be ready to hike by 9:00 a.m.

Hike Club Store!

<https://www.cafepress.com/shop/MountainTrailsHikingClub>



The Mountain Trails Hiking Club store is open for business! Visit the link on the left to see over 20 unique items available.

I've set the prices at "no profit" so no commission is being earned, only the lowest prices. Exception: I did add a minor markup on several men's items as I feel that men's and women's clothing should be priced the same.

Show your Club Pride today!



2024 HIKE SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

24 (Sat) **Mule Creek Trail (Snowshoeing)** [4]

MARCH

02 (Sat) **Hoosier Pass to Crystal Lake (Snowshoeing)** [6]

30 (Sat) **Fountain Creek Nature Center** [4]

APRIL

13 (Sat) **Tunnel Trail (Canon City)** [3]

MAY

11 (Sat) **Quarry Mesa Loop Trail** [5]

18 (Sat) **Walk to the Shrine @ Cheyenne Mtn Zoo** [5]

JUNE

01 (Sat) **Corral Bluffs** [4]

15 (Sat) **Elder-Fehn Trail** [6]

29 (Sat) **Florissant Fossil Beds** [5]

JULY

13 (Sat) **Mount Rosa** [7]

AUGUST

10 (Sat) **Spanish Peaks (East Peak)** [9]

17 (Sat) **Santa Fe Trail to Ice Lake** [3]

24 (Sat) **Spanish Peaks (West Peak)** [9]

SEPTEMBER

14 (Sat) **Mueller State Park - Cheesman Ranch Loop** [6]

OCTOBER

05 (Sat) **Emerald Valley** [4]

12 (Sat) **Mount Sherman*** [9]

26 (Sat) **Horsethief Falls / Pancake Rocks** [5/8]

26 & 27 **Black Canyon of the Gunnison*** [6/9]

NOVEMBER

02 (Sat) **Lizard Rock Trail** [6]

16 (Sat) **Palmer Park - Templeton Trail** [6]

23 (Sat) **Cheyenne Mtn State Park** [4]

DECEMBER

07 (Sat) **Garden of the Gods (Afternoon)** [4]

KEY

BLACK indicates a standard hike.

BLUE indicates a Snowshoeing event.

RED indicates a Mountain-Climbing event; no special gear is required, but these are the more difficult hikes.

[U-Lead-It] hikes are placeholder dates for other club members to volunteer a location and lead a group hike; flyers/advertisement provided by club organizer.

* indicates a hike outside of the Pikes Peak region which may involve an overnight stay (participants arrange their own travel and lodging)

NOTES

Schedule subject to change, especially for weather.

Details of each hike, including meeting times and locations, will be sent approximately one week prior to each hike.

Dogs permitted on most hikes, exceptions noted on hike details--please keep dogs on leash at all times.

Please read Hiking Club Rules found in the club newsletter; know your own limits for hike difficulty.

Respect nature and each other--Have Fun !

RATINGS

Hike ratings are shown in brackets [] on each event. Hikes are rated for difficulty based on overall distance, altitude, climbing involved, and terrain difficulty.

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Current as of: 11/24/2024