



2018 CLUB NEWSLETTER

What's New!

Hello Fellow Hikers! Here we are in 2018 and this wonderful group now enters its third year. Looking back, 2017 was special and I'm proud that this group has grown and evolved into a real organization. I'm thankful for all the new friends I've made this year, especially those who came out to support the club and spread the word to others. I cannot count how many new members joined because they work or take a fitness class with someone in our club and heard about what we do. Truly, I send a heartfelt welcome to each and every one of you.

I am excited to present our biggest season yet. In 2018, we add 50% more outings than last year, with a few special additions. For starters, we're going open the year with three snowshoe outings. Of course, that's if we get enough snow(!) Even if we end up just hiking, these events should offer some welcome winter solace before the busy season begins. Also, we are climbing four mountains this year, including Blodgett Peak, Almagre Mountain, Sentinel Point, and Pikes Peak from the western slope. For those who like to sleep in, at least four of our hikes will take place in the afternoon. In perhaps the most exciting news, I am offering three van-trips outside the Pikes Peak region to hike in some very special locations. You can read more about all these unique opportunities in this newsletter.

Of course, we have plenty of standard hikes, too. Due to popular demand, we are heading back to favorite sites such as Spruce Mountain and Paint Mines Interpretive Park. We will also hike plenty of new areas, including Ute Valley Park, Stratton Open Space, and Clear Spring Ranch. The complete schedule is on the last page of this newsletter. How many will YOU do?

I continue to manage our club's website and my wife Sondra helps with the Facebook page. Our club store is still up and running, although I plan to bring a visual order form on our hikes so members can order merchandise in advance. We'll also conclude the year with another club dinner...details on page 7.

Be sure to read this newsletter as it contains important information on hiking rules, weather conditions, privacy policies and required waivers. I welcome your questions or suggestions...just drop me a line. Okay, time to lace up those hiking shoes and enjoy this wonderful year. I'll see you on the trail.

Rob Jackson
Club Organizer

robert@mountaintrailshiking.com



Discovering New Adventures with Friends!
(Seven Bridges Trail, July 2017)

Club Websites

<https://www.mountaintrailshiking.com>

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New! Snowshoeing Events

Snowshoeing offers low-impact, aerobic exercise that helps you stay in shape during the winter. This year, we are offering three winter hikes designed to be snowshoeing events. Since these hikes are in the Pikes Peak region, getting enough snow to strap on snowshoes can be difficult. Fortunately, the selected routes are suitable for winter hiking with or without snowshoes, so we'll plan to go either way. 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 have planned for 2018 are mostly 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.



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.



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.



Fresh Air in Mueller State Park
(Cheesman Ranch Loop - June 2017)

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.

New! Van Trips

Here is some exciting news! This year, our club will be offering three special hikes outside the Pikes Peak region. The idea is that members can reserve a spot in advance and then ride in a 15-passenger van which I will drive to and from the hiking site. I've done this type of leading before, both in New Mexico and also in Switzerland, so you are in good hands. The trips do not involve an overnight stay, but will take up the entire day counting the travel and the hike. Therefore, we'll stop for dinner on the way home. I will rent the van from Intermountain Coach and the cost will only be \$20 per person. I will open each trip for reservation about 30 days prior and space on the van will be first-come, first-served.

Members can also come along in their own vehicle, either following the van or meeting at the hike site. I've already heard from several members who will be doing their own overnight stay and join us on these hikes. There are many options to participate in these trips, so I'm very excited to add these to the schedule.

These trips will depart very early (around 5:00 a.m.), which ensures we hike during the best time of the day and return at a reasonable time back to Colorado Springs. Watch for more information in April, when I send out details for the first trip in May.

Here's a quick description of all three trips:

May 27 - Black Canyon of the Gunnison: This National Park is located near Montrose in western Colorado. The canyon is simply stunning, boasting a deep, steep-walled gorge carved out by the Gunnison River. Most visitors take in the view from the canyon rim; however, our hike will take us down into the canyon, to the river, and then back up. We'll take the more popular Gunnison Trail; the hike is not long, but is strenuous. We'll also drive through the park, stopping at several overlooks to get the best photo opportunities. *[Rating: 7]*



Maroon Bells (Aspen) during peak fall colors

September 22 - Maroon Bells at Aspen: This is perhaps the most picturesque mountain range in the state. Even if you've never heard of the Maroon Bells, you have certainly seen photographs of them. Because of their beauty, this hike will be fairly crowded but well worth it for the scenery alone. We'll hike the 3.5 mile roundtrip from Maroon Lake to Crater Lake at the foot the mountains. This trip is scheduled to enjoy the best of the fall colors. *[Rating: 5]*

October 27 - Picketwire Canyonlands: This is a remote hike in the southeastern part of Colorado, near La Junta. What makes this one interesting is that the hike traverses one of the largest dinosaur track-sites in North America. Along the Purgatoire River, hikers will be able to see hundreds of massive footprints left behind by Brontosaurus and Allosaurus during the Jurassic period. The footprints have turned to stone and we'll walk among them! This hike long with little shade, so we are waiting until mid-fall to avoid the heat. *[Rating: 7]*

What *Not* To Wear



In nearly every hike flyer, I provide advice on clothing to wear (breathable, layers, etc.) However, I've seen some clothing choices on the trail which are not advisable. The worst was a lady wearing high-heeled dress pumps on the trail in New Mexico (really!) Anyway, here are some items you'll want to leave at home:

➤ **Cotton:** Although very comfortable, cotton is generally not a good fabric for hiking because it holds moisture and does not dry quickly. As you sweat, cotton becomes a wet layer, which saps your heat and energy. This is especially a bad idea on cooler hikes, as it can lead to hypothermia.

➤ **Casual shoes:** On all hikes rated above a "3", participants should wear sturdy hiking shoes or boots. The problem with plain old running shoes is they are not made for rough terrain and can produce traction problems on certain surface conditions. As for cowboy boots or flip-flops...do we really need to discuss those?

➤ **Jeans:** We all have a favorite pair of jeans which are SO comfortable. But on a hike, denim is a bad choice, because like cotton, it holds moisture and doesn't dry quickly. And they can lose their shape and fit once a hiker begins to sweat. Jeans are typically fine on easy hikes (rated 1-3), but will cause problems on more difficult outings.

➤ **Big, Heavy Coat:** While staying warm is critical on hikes, the problem with one big layer is that you can easily overheat, and the clothes underneath often do not provide enough protection on their own. A heavy coat will cause you to sweat under even minor exertion, and you'll be wet under the coat. Breathable layers are far more advisable.


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. 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.

 2018 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 _____

Hike Club Store!

Shop now at: <http://www.cafepress.com/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.

New to 2018, I will bring a full merchandise list with order form on each hike. Simply mark what you want and I'll take care the rest. You only pay when I delivery your order. Of course, you may order the from the site at any time.

Show your Club Pride today!

Mountain Climbs



While I try to provide hikes that appeal to casual hikers, I plan to add more hikes each season for those who want more of a challenge. That means more mountaintops! This year, we have four 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 above treeline. Most of these involve difficult stretches over talus and scree, 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:

June 24 - Blodgett Peak (9,426'): Don't be fooled by the lower elevation (compared to the other climbs); this one involves tough scrambling near the summit over loose rock. This one is a challenge but rewards hikers with a great view from the top.

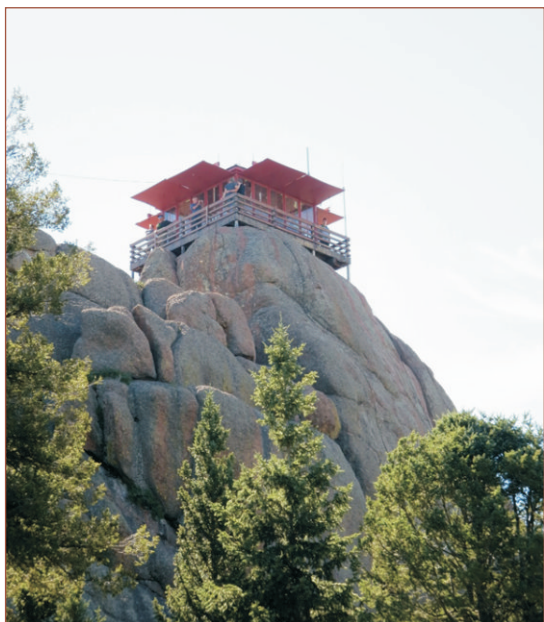
August 26 - Almagre Mountain (12,367'): This is the second highest peak in the range (Sentinel Point is considered part of the Pikes Peak massif). The altitude and mileage makes this one tough. We'll start from Forest Road 379 along Gold Camp Road and take on the 15-MILE(!) roundtrip to the summit.



Sentinel Point near Cripple Creek

September 8 - Sentinel Point (12,527'): This is the pointed mountain between Divide and Cripple Creek...just look up from Highway 67 and you can't miss it. A tough scramble to well above treeline, but incredible views. This one is a challenge!

October 6 - Pikes Peak (14,115'): This year, we'll be taking on the big mountain from the Crags, which means a little rougher trail, but starts much higher up than the Barr Trail route. RSVP will be requested in advance as we'll take a passenger van down from the summit.



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

New Hike Flyers

This year, we are moving to a newly-designed hike flyer with 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

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 park entrance and proceed toward the Quarry Pass trail. We'll hike over the rocks and on to Mesa Trail and Roundup Trail before 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 80904

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.

2018 Club Dinner at The Summit!



Menu

Appetizer: Southwest Eggrolls
Salad: Garden Salad
Entrees: Italian Sausage & Marinara with Penne Pasta
BBQ Chicken
Sides: Roasted Redskin Potatoes with Rosemary
Assorted Bread Rolls
Dessert: New York Cheesecake with Raspberry Sauce
Drinks: Unlimited Sodas, Coffee and Tea

Saturday, December 1, 2018
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
(\$25 per person)

This year, we are holding our annual club dinner at The Summit at Interquest. We have a great dinner planned, with exciting presentations and a preview of the 2019 season.

After dinner (optional), you can join us for FREE bowling for 90 minutes. A great night with good food and fun for everyone!

We continue to grow as a club and this dinner has become a tradition to cap off each season and look forward to the next. Plus, we get to spend some time together, reliving the memories of the year, and just have fun.

Mark your calendars...don't miss this event!



2018 HIKE SCHEDULE

JANUARY

27 (Sat) **Rampart Reservoir** (Snowshoeing) [4]

FEBRUARY

11 (Sun) **Mule Creek Trail** (Snowshoeing) [6]

24 (Sat) **Mueller State Park** (Snowshoeing) [5]

MARCH

18 (Sun) **Red Rock Canyon Open Space** [4]

31 (Sat) **Clear Spring Ranch Park** [3]

APRIL

15 (Sun) **The Incline** [7]

28 (Sat) **Stratton Open Space - Chamberlain Trail** [4]

MAY

06 (Sun) **Bear Creek Park** (Afternoon) [3]

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

21 (Sun) **Spruce Mountain** [5]

27 (Sun) **Black Canyon of the Gunnison** (Van Trip) [7]

JUNE

09 (Sat) **Ute Valley Park** [4]

17 (Sun) **Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument** [5]

24 (Sun) **Blodgett Peak** [8]

JULY

07 (Sat) **Lovell Gulch Trail** [5]

15 (Sun) **Monument Rock Trail** [3]

28 (Sat) **Santa Fe Trail - AF Academy/Ice Lake** [4]

AUGUST

05 (Sun) **Farish Recreation Area** (Afternoon) [4]

11 (Sat) **Castle Rock Trail** [4]

26 (Sun) **Almagre Mountain** [9]

SEPTEMBER

08 (Sat) **Sentinel Point** [9]

16 (Sun) **Homestead Ranch** [4]

22 (Sat) **Maroon Bells** (Van Trip) [5]

30 (Sun) **Devil's Head Lookout Tower** [5]

OCTOBER

06 (Sat) **Craggs to Pikes Peak** (2 hikes) [5/9]

14 (Sun) **Paint Mines** [3]

27 (Sat) **Picketwire Canyonlands** (Van Trip) [7]

NOVEMBER

11 (Sun) **Black Forest Section 16** (Afternoon) [4]

DECEMBER

01 (Sat) **Palmer Park** (2 hikes) (Afternoon) [1/4]

KEY

BLACK indicates a standard hike.

BLUE indicates a Snowshoeing event; if insufficient snow exists, event will take place as a standard hike.

GREEN indicates a Day Trip outside the Pikes Peak region (RSVP required); a 15-passenger van will be used to transport members to and from location (\$20 per person); members may also follow in their own vehicle or meet at the destination.

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

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.

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

FALL
COLORS!