



*Sun City Oro Valley Hiking Club*

## **HIKER'S HANDBOOK**

*This handbook provides valuable information for both experienced hikers and those new to hiking.*

*The purpose is to assure that Club hikes are safe and enjoyable for everyone.*

*All hikers should read this completely and contact any club officer or hiking guide with any questions.*



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## **CURRENT LIST OF HIKES**

- The current list of hikes is available on the club's website: <http://www.scovhiking.org>

## **HIKE DESCRIPTION**

- Here is a typical hike description:

***Romero Pools, Lower [C/6mi/1400'/\$2/8am]*** From Catalina State Park, hike Romero Canyon Trail to lower pools for snack or lunch, return by the same route. Romero Trail is rugged in some sections. Joe Guide [jguide@gmail.com](mailto:jguide@gmail.com) 520-555-1234

- Note the information in the brackets: **[ hike rating/total distance/elevation gain/\$'s contributed to driver/departure time ]**

## **HIKE RATINGS**

**D:** up to 4 miles and less than 500 feet cumulative elevation gain.

**C:** 4+ to 8 miles or 500-1500 feet cumulative elevation gain.

**B:** 8+ to 16 miles or 1500-3500 feet cumulative elevation gain.

**A:** over 16 miles or over 3500 feet cumulative elevation gain.

Distance is total for out and back. If elevation gain is in a higher category than mileage, elevation gain takes priority in hike rating.

## **CHOOSING A HIKE**

- Select a hike from the current list based on your realistic capabilities to handle the distance, elevation gain, degree of difficulty, temperature sensitivity, and your ability to maintain a reasonable pace.
- All Trails App online or Green Trails maps from local retailers are valuable references for choosing a hike.
- Discuss with the guide the degree of difficulty if you are unfamiliar with the selected hike.
- Contact the guide to register for a hike (see hike description for contact information). Consider your other schedule commitments before signing up.
- You must receive an email confirmation from the guide that you are on the hike list regardless of how you signed up.
- The latest time to register for a hike is 4:00pm the day before the hike (unless otherwise specified).
- If you need to cancel (e.g., not feeling well or become unsure of your ability to do the hike), do so ASAP so the guide can offer your place to another member on a wait list.
- Do not depend on a hike being done at a specific time. If time for you that day is tight, don't go on the hike. Guides do not adjust hikes to meet individual schedules.
- Tell the guide if you are available to be a driver and the seating capacity of your vehicle. Members (if they are able) should take their turn being a driver.
- Privately inform the guide, when you register for a hike, about any physical limitations or medical conditions that may affect you on the hike.
- The guide has the discretion to accept or reject a hiker based on the guide's determination of the hiker's capability to do the hike. Please accept the guide's decision as final.
- The guide may cancel a hike for weather or other considerations.

## **HIKE PREPARATION**

- Attach your name tag and medical emergency form outside of your pack or wear your own name tag for others to see.
- Have proper equipment: hiking boots, hiking socks, wide-brim hat, layered clothing, hiking poles (optional), sunglasses, name tag, sweat or cooling towel.
- Use sun screen and lip protection.
- Do not use any fragrances (e.g., perfume or cologne).
- Bring adequate water for the duration of the hike and the temperatures expected. Water should be accessible without having to remove backpack or fanny pack.

### **Guideline: 1 liter (34 oz.) for every 5 miles**

- To sustain your energy, bring adequate food to include a salty snack. Bring water with electrolytes for higher temperatures, as well as all hikes rated A or B
- Bring your medications and a personal first-aid kit. (Examples: alcohol wipes, bandages, moleskin; and for cactus needle removal, a fine-tooth comb, tweezers, and duct tape.)
- Bring toilet paper and a zip-lock bag for disposal.
- Extra socks are useful for hikes with stream crossings or long hikes in higher temperatures.
- Cameras may be used, but without slowing the pace of the group.
- A backpack or fanny pack should be used for the carried items.
- Bring after-hike clothing and shoes if desired (leave in the vehicle).
- Pets, firearms, and smoking are not allowed on SCOV Hiking Club hikes.

## **RIDES TO TRAILHEAD**

- Most hikes start in the parking lot in front of the SCOV golf pro shop, unless the hike description indicates otherwise. Please arrive 10 minutes before the departure time.
- Hikers may arrange carpooling among themselves at the start or they may drive separately and meet at the trailhead.
- Hikers that drive separately must tell the guide ahead of time that they are doing so.
- Drivers are individual club members who provide their own vehicle as a voluntary service. Drivers are responsible for vehicle insurance coverage. Each hiker should contribute the suggested \$ amount for their ride. Please pay using the exact \$ amount.
- The guide has the discretion to disallow a person from a hike if the guide believes the hiker may be a safety risk to themselves or others. Example: showing up for a hike without sufficient water or proper gear.
- A RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT must be signed by members and guests prior to their first hike with the club.

## **PERMITS**

- An Arizona State Parks permit or a National Parks permit is the responsibility of each driver. Each of these permits covers the driver and three passengers.
- An Arizona State Trust Land permit is the responsibility of each individual hiker (see the club's website for how to purchase).

## **WHILE ON A HIKE**

- Drink water frequently to ensure proper hydration.
- Do not avoid drinking to avoid outdoor bathroom breaks. Request a "Separation Break" if you need to use the outdoor bathroom.
- Stay within the hiking group (between guide and tail guide). Each hiker should have at least one other hiker in view except during separation breaks.
- Maintain a reasonable distance between hikers to avoid swinging hiking poles or sudden stops.
- Hikers who use poles should remember to point them towards the ground and in front.
- Talking on cell phones is restricted to emergency use only.
- If you want to use a camera, position yourself toward the back of the line and then catch up with the group. Tell your guide or other hiker of your plan.
- Watch and listen for snakes. If you see a snake or hear a rattle, yell "SNAKE!" and point to it so that others can avoid the reptile.
- Look before you sit on or reach under rocks.
- Step aside to allow other hikers, horses, or bikers to pass.
- Uphill hikers have the right of way.
- Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them. What you carry in, you carry out.