

Announcing Fall Hikes for the Ironwood Forest National Monument Hike the Monument, Fall 2017!!

The Friends of Ironwood Forest invites you to join us for Hike the Monument (HTM) on **Saturday, November 4th**. Choose from the hikes and activities below to explore and experience the wonders of the Ironwood Forest National Monument. This event is conducted in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Native Plant Society, University of Arizona faculty and Old Pueblo Archaeology Center.

1. Cocoraque Butte Archaeological District – moderate terrain but challenging hikes to see most of the petroglyphs up close
2. Nature hike – easy terrain / family oriented
3. Waterman Mountain Elephant Trees Botanical Hike – moderate / steep
4. Ragged Top Peak Adventure Hike – difficult / steep / loose footing / rock scrambling – For Experienced and Capable Hikers

Please read the hike descriptions to see which hike best fits your **desire and ability**.

Sign up, find additional information, directions and map at: Ironwoodforest.org.

The number of participants for each hike is limited, sign up early!

Please specify which hike you would like to sign up for, the number of people you are bringing, and whether or not you have a high-clearance vehicle and are willing to drive to the hike trail head. You will receive a confirmation email letting you know if you are on the hike roster or on a wait list.

Please remember to dress in layers, appropriate for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, water, snacks, lunch, and your camera. There are no restrooms or other facilities available on the hikes. Restrooms are available at the Marana Airport.

November 4th, all hikes will meet at the Marana Regional Airport at 11700 W Avra Valley Road. The Marana Airport is located 5 miles West of the I-10 and Avra Valley Road, exit 242.

Schedule of events:

7:30 – 8:00am sign in

8:00 – 8:30am briefing

8:30 – 9:00am car pools form up and depart

Expect that hikes will complete no later than 2pm and return to the airport by 3pm. The Marana Regional Airport is at 11700 W Avra Valley Rd, 5 miles west of the I-10 and Avra Valley Road exit 242. Restrooms are available in the Marana Airport Operations building.

- 1. Cocoraque Butte Archaeological District Hike.** Join Allen Dart, Old Pueblo Archaeology Center, accompanied by Gordon and Lin Hanson, Saguaro National Park West Environmental Educational Ranger and Archaeology Preservation Volunteer, in co-leading this educational hike. This area is one of the abundant rock art and other archaeological objects of scientific interest sites within the Monument. Humans have inhabited the area for more than 13,000 years. At least 150 sites from the prehistoric Hohokam period (ca. A.D. 650-1450) have been recorded in the area. Expect unusual petroglyphs that you may not have seen before and bring your camera. Expect moderate rocky terrain on this hike. The trek from the parking area to the petroglyph sites is a relatively flat and easy hike. Getting up to the petroglyphs area will be challenging for some hikers because one needs to scramble up and around boulders and bedrock on a 120-foot-high butte to see many of the petroglyphs. You must be in good physical condition to go on the hike. Pack water (one to two quarts), snacks, lunch and sunscreen. Don't forget your hat and camera.
- 2. Nature Hike.** An easy paced 3 mile (or so) hike. Learn the natural wonders of the Sonoran Desert and about the geologic and topographic variability that contributes to the area's high biological diversity. The Waterman's are a rare limestone uplift in the Sonoran Desert. Walk along with naturalist and botanist Ries Lindley and co-leaders Rachel Feuerbach, U of A geologist, Bill Peachey, geologist and Saguaro specialist, and Bill Thornton, the cacti recognize him. This is a family oriented nature hike, children are welcome, in the vicinity of the Waterman Restoration Site off of Avra Valley Road. High clearance vehicles are not required for this hike. The Nature Hike generally ends well before 2pm. Pack water, snacks, lunch and sunscreen. Don't forget your hat and camera. The Restoration area is a good spot for lunch or you may wish to stop at the recently dedicated Titan II Missile Interpretive site on your way out to have your lunch and a self-guided tour. **There is no limit to the number of hikers, what you may learn or how much fun you can have learning it!!**
- 3. Waterman Mountain Elephant Tree Botanical Hike.** This adventurous and fun, moderate to slightly difficult, hike covers about 3.5 miles round trip, walking on loose rocks in steep terrain. Accumulated elevation gain is about 650 ft. High-clearance vehicles are needed for this hike. Drew Milsom, University of Arizona, is leading this hike. We follow an old steep mining road in the Waterman Mountains to find the Elephant Trees and endangered Nichols Turks Head Cactus. The Waterman's are a rare limestone uplift in the Sonoran Desert. There are lots of great plants to discuss along the way, as well as opportunities to view the unique geology of the mountains. You will also see evidence of the mining conducted in the Waterman's. Pack water, snacks, lunch and sunscreen. Don't forget your hat and camera.
- 4. Ragged Top Peak Adventure Hike.** Jim Avramis, Friends of Ironwood Forest, will lead this hike. We will start our ascent from a trail head at the east base of Ragged Top. From the parking area we hike up to the saddle between Ragged

Top and Wolcott Peak (south and east of Ragged Top), then around and up to a high second saddle on the south side of Ragged Top. The climb to the second saddle is steep with generous amounts of scree and vegetation. From here we go up a steep chute / slot, thick with vegetation, which takes us up to the base of Ragged Top's peak. The final ascent to the peak is very steep, climbing up a very narrow ridge with severe drop-offs on both sides. This final ascent is described as a class 2 – 3 rock scrambling effort. At the top we will have hiked about 1.7 miles with an elevation gain of over 1600ft. The views at the top are incredible and the area at the top is larger than it appears when looking up at it. Now, we have the descent and return to the trail head before us. The descent is steep and through generous amounts of scree which may have you scooting on your backside. At times, throughout the hike, vegetation is thick, difficult to avoid and rarely without thorns. This is a rugged adventure hike just to get up to the second Saddle. **Hiking poles, gloves, long pants and a long sleeve shirt are suggested.**

To sign up for a hike – send an email message to Jim@ironwoodforest.org or leave a message at [520-628-2092](tel:520-628-2092).

Worth repeating:

The number of participants for each hike is limited, sign up early!

Please specify which hike you would like to sign up for, the number of people you are bringing, and whether or not you have a high-clearance vehicle and are willing to drive to the hike starting point.

All hikes will meet up at the Marana Airport on Avra Valley Road at 8:00 am on Saturday, November 4th. We expect to be done hiking no later than 2 pm and to return to the airport by 3 pm. The Marana Airport is located 5 miles West of I-10 and Avra Valley Road, exit 242.

Please remember to dress in layers, appropriate for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, water, snacks, lunch, and your camera. There are no restrooms or other facilities within the Monument. Some roads are not maintained.