



Discovering Douglas Spring Trail by Treven Hooker and Angel Breault

On Veterans Day, November 11, 2016, 14 devoted members of the Basis North Hiking Club loaded up into our passenger van for their third outing with the Seeds of Stewardship program. This time the hiking club set off to explore the foothills of Tucson's eastern mountain range, the Rincons.

The club unloaded at the Douglas Spring Trailhead around 9 a.m. and eagerly bounded into the desert terrain. They moved so quickly we barely were able to make sure everyone had applied enough sunscreen to deter the strong Sonoran sun. Once on the trail the students quickly began identifying ecology that they had been taught to recognize on prior outings.



These students are packed with knowledge, and due to the fact that this particular group is a club, students of all ages were able to shine, sharing their own knowledge of Arizona's ecosystems. A wild-haired and inquisitive fifth grader shared her knowledge around the difference between lichen and moss. A fast-footed eighth grader shared her knowledge of ethnobotany by discussing the many manners in which cholla buds may be prepared to eat, and which style is the best cuisine. Another excited high school senior lectured several fellow club members about a red-tailed hawk flying overhead.



The students hiked for about three miles along the Douglas Spring Trail, which leads all the way to Cow Head Saddle and then further east to the summits of the Rincon range. Around noon we decided to rest under the shady walls of the dry wash, so that we might eat our lunch and discuss the cool things that we had seen on our journey.

After a refreshing shaded lunch the students took some time to explore and scramble around the beautiful wash. Some chose to investigate farther upstream while some looked for canyon tree frogs hopping around, while others opted to quietly write about their day in field journals.

After about an hour of exploration, investigation, and contemplation, the club trekked back through the desert heat to the air-conditioned shelter of the transit van.

The students shared that they loved exploring different biomes and that they are eagerly anticipating the next scheduled outing in December.



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