



**Name of Trail Loop:** Santa Catalina Mountains Loop

**Passage and location:** Santa Catalina Mountains Passages 11 & 12; part of Oracle Ridge Passage 13; and Pusch Ridge Wilderness Bypass Passage 11a

**Length of loop trail:** 43.5 miles

**Loop trail description:**

From the short access trail from the Gordon Hirabayashi Campground head west/right. The AZT shortly joins an old dirt road to a confluence of roads. Continue straight to the west-northwest, following a sign for Sycamore Reservoir Trail #39. The trail enters the Pusch Ridge Wilderness at a saddle about 1.5 miles from the campground. In another mile the trail reaches Sycamore Reservoir which may have water in the spring, but it can be very yucky. After a series of switchbacks, go past Palisade Trail and continue straight (west) on the East Fork Trail #24A. In another 0.9 mile, join the West Fork Trail #24. At mile 7.0 there is a side to Hutch's Pool approximately 0.25 mile to the right. Stay on the West Fork Trail past Cathedral Rock Trail at mile 10.0, reaching Romero Pass at mile 11.7.

Take the Mt Lemmon Trail #5 to the right. After 1.7 miles into Passage 12, turn right/east onto Wilderness of Rock Trail #44. There may be water in Lemmon Creek for about a half mile starting at mile 3.3. At mile 5.6 continue onto Marshall Gulch Trail #3, reaching Marshall Gulch Trailhead in another 1.2 miles. Follow the paved road to the left/north through Summerhaven at mile 8.0 and reach the Catalina Highway in another 0.4 mile. Turn right/east for 0.2 mile then left/north onto Control Road (FR38) going past the fire station. In another 0.3 mile Passage 12 continues onto the Oracle Ridge Trail; the loop stays on the Control Road going through the cattle guard on the right.

From this northern end of the Pusch Ridge Wilderness Bypass Passage, stay on the Control Road for 2.6 miles, going past Green Spring at mile 1.7. At the Crystal Spring Trail junction, turn right/west onto the single track. There may be water in another mile and again at Crystal Spring in another 0.6 mile. Join the Butterfly Trail in another two miles, heading straight ahead. (The Butterfly Trail to the right reaches the highway in about two miles.) After another 1.2 miles, there will be water from Novio spring/stream. In about another 0.1 mile, just after crossing a creek bed, the trail turns sharply to the left/uphill. To the right there is a social trail that leads about 100 yards up the creek/wash bed to the wreckage of a F-86 that crashed in 1957. Stay on the Butterfly Trail going past Davis Spring Trail in a half mile. In another 1.9 mile reach the Bigelow Trail. Mt. Bigelow is about a quarter mile uphill to the right. Follow the trail towards the left, not the trail that goes downhill to the highway. In 0.6 mile, go through two large boulders, cross a road and join the Incinerator Ridge Trail going another 1.7 mile to San Pedro Vista.

At the south end of the parking area, take the Green Mountain Trail. Avoid an unmarked, uphill trail to the right just after starting the Green Mountain Trail—it heads back to a highway parking area. The Green Mountain Trail passes a number of trail junctions: Brush Corral, Brush, Maverick, Guthrie, and a trail to a campground. After 6.1 miles on the Green Mountain Trail, join the Bug Spring Trail. After 4.4 miles there is a short connecting trail to the right/straight which goes to a parking area. Turn left, continuing downhill crossing the highway on the painted white crosswalk. Continue on the trail, reaching the campground in another 0.4 mile.

**Recommended seasons of use:** Spring, Summer, Fall. There can be snow lingering on north slopes until early spring.

**Elevation Start:** 4,820'

**Elevation Gain/Loss:** ~6,372'

**Access point:** The Gordon Hirabayshi Campground is about 10.7 miles on the Catalina Highway from Tanque Verde Road in Tucson, and about 1.7 miles north of Molino Basin Campground. Access can also be from multiple parking areas on the Catalina Highway, such as for Greenway or Butterfly, Trails and at San Pedro Vista. Access could also be from Summerhaven or from the Control Road at the Oracle Ridge Trail junction.

**Water:** There may be water in the Sycamore Reservoir, in the East Fork, in Lemmon Creek, at Green Spring, and at Crystal Spring. Hutch's Pool is reliable and there is always water in Summerhaven. There may also be seasonal water at a few other places. For up to date details on water sources please visit the Arizona Trail Water sources at <https://aztrail.org/explore/water-sources/> and even use the Arizona Trail App <https://aztrail.org/explore/maps/mobile-app/> which has user comments about the status of water sources.

**Notes:** Mountain bikes are not allowed in the wilderness area. Romero Pass is not recommended for equestrians. For specific turn by turn information on the Arizona Trail visit the Arizona Trail databook <https://aztrail.org/explore/databooks/> and even use the Arizona Trail App <https://aztrail.org/explore/maps/mobile-app/>

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