

**Sun City Festival Hiking Club**  
**HIKE DESCRIPTION FORM**

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**Hike Name:** Gateway Loop Trail in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve

**Location:** Scottsdale. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve, West entrance

**Hike Description:** The city of Scottsdale contains a large mountain preserve on its northeastern border. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve contains an entire mountain range that rises a couple thousand feet above the surrounding Sonoran Desert. Despite the rapid outward growth of Scottsdale, this preserve is like having a national park in town. There are numerous hiking trails that wind through the mountains or follow prominent ridges. The Gateway Loop Trail has a nice balance of level and elevation, taking you through the desert with views of the mountains in one direction and territorial views of Scottsdale in the valley. Many beautiful varieties of cactus and other plants.

**Rating:** Moderate      **Type:** Desert loop

**Trail Names:** Saguaro Trail, Gateway Loop Trail (optional Windgate Pass Trail to Inspiration Point)

**Length – Miles and Time:** 4.2 miles for the loop. Option to add another 2.6 miles up and back, up Windgate Pass Trail to Inspiration Viewpoint. This extra trail has more elevation and adds to the loop for a longer, more challenging hike of 6.8 miles. We can split at junction if we have members wanting a more strenuous hike.

**Trailhead Start and End:** Gateway Entrance of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, off Thompson Peak Pkwy.

**Elevation Change:** 680'      **Entrance Fee:** None

**Travel Directions:** Sun Valley Parkway east to Bell Ave. Bell Ave to 101 Loop N. Drive 21 miles and exit Princess Dr/Pima Rd (exit #36). Left on N. Pima Rd. Right on Legacy Blvd. Right on N. Thompson Peak Pkwy. Left at Gateway Entrance to McDowell Preserve.

**Travel Time:** 1 hour, 5 minutes with no traffic.

**Parking:** Yes

**Rest Rooms:** Yes, at trailhead