A Hiking Guide to Trails in the Yuma Area

By Geo Montopoli

Professor, Arizona Western College

(Edition 6 – April 8, 2017)

Author Contact: gmontopoli@gmail.com

URL for Latest Version: http://virgil.azwestern.edu/~elr/YumaTrails/
Disclaimer:

This guide contains detailed information about hikes and climbs in the Yuma area. Hiking and climbing are, by their very nature, potentially hazardous activities. Hazards include, but are not limited to, rattlesnakes, spiders, scorpions, cacti, cliffs, lightning, hyperthermia, hypothermia, loose rocks, and falling rocks. The core of the hiking/climbing experience is expressed in decision making: the holds to use, the routes you are capable of hiking/climbing, and the information you can trust. While every attempt is made to insure that the information provided here is correct and safe, it is never a substitute for your better judgment. Remember, some hazards you can control, but others are beyond control.

This compilation of hiking/climbing material is not intended to be the only source of information for those wishing to pursue the sports of hiking and climbing. Prior and competent knowledge in the use of various safety precautions is assumed. Always check information with other sources and your own common sense before trusting your life to it. By use of the provided information, the reader hereby releases the author and provider of said information from liability for any injury, including death, which might result. You have been warned!

Good luck, have a pleasant hike/climb, but be careful.
## Index of Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barry M. Goldwater Range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coyote Peak (Copper Mountains)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hikes – E to D (depends on route); Ascent - V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Raven Butte</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>C, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sheep Mountain</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High Tanks North Trail</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>C, T, V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tinajas Altas Peak</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gila Mountains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Airplane Wreck Mountain</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flag Mountain (Jester’s Peak)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>C, D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Telegraph Peak</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>C, E to V (depends on route)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Trifecta</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trail to Nowhere</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kofa Mountains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Castle Dome</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>D (Climbing variation = V, T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Signal Peak</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laguna Mountains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Roller Coaster Hill</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sugarloaf Peak</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>C, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohawk Valley Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Owl Peak</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>D, T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muggins Peak Wilderness Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Muggins Peak</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>C, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Muggins Peak Summit</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>D, T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pagoda Peak (Kloethe Peak)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Desert Trail (Imperial NWR)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>C, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picacho Peak Area (CA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Picacho Trail</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>C, E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Picacho Peak Ascent &amp; Rappels</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>D, T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Knob (CA)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>E to D (depends on route)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge Peak True Summit</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>E to D (depends on route)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ridge Peak East (CA)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>E (difficult rocky terrain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stud Mountain (CA)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>D to V (depends on route)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinajas Altas Climbs (Sneak Peek)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuma: East and West Wetlands</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• C = classic; D = difficult/strenuous; E = easy; T= technical climbing with exposure; V = very difficult/very strenuous/some scrambling
GPS Tracks Link:
A link to GPS tracks for all the listed hikes/climbs is:  http://virgil.azwestern.edu/~elr/YumaTrails/  
(Copy and paste this link into your internet browser to access the tracks.) The tracks are defined both for a Garmin GPS unit (*.gdb), and for a general GPS exchange format (*.gpx) for use with Google Earth or another GPS brand.

Topographical maps for the United States and other countries are available (for a donation) at:  
http://www.gpsfiledepot.com/  (This is an incredible site!)

Hiking Trails Overview:
Barry M. Goldwater Range

Coyote Peak (Copper Mountains): Coyote Peak, a prominent peak in the rugged Copper Mountains, lies about 13 miles to the southeast of Wellton. The area is pristine and extremely beautiful. One easy hike, one difficult hike, and a very difficult ascent are displayed below. The shorter hike (1 mile) travels to a set of large boulders worthy of top-roping (1st ascent – Renaud family). The other 7.1-mile hike, a walkabout, is difficult. The ascent of the peak is very difficult and involves some scrambling on very steep terrain, as well as avoiding precariously perched large boulders. Plan 1-2 hours for the easy hike, 5-7 hours for the difficult hike, and 3-5 hours for the round trip ascent from the trailhead.

Access Directions: Two driving routes are described below:

1) From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), continue for about another 4 miles, and turn right (south) onto S Ave 25 East. This becomes the Camino del Diablo Highway. Drive approximately 12.2 miles to marker post C10 (Hobbs Drag). Turn left (east) onto Hobbs Drag and follow it about 6.7 miles to the trailhead a short distance before the end of the road.

2) From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. Take Exit 30 (Ave. 29E) at Wellton, and drive south on Ave 29E for about 2.5 miles until it ends. Turn left (east) onto County 14th Street and follow it for about 1.7 miles. Turn right (south) onto a road that parallels the Camino del Diablo road, but lies just to the west of the Copper Mountains. Drive about 9.2 lies to marker post D5 (Hobbs Drag junction), and turn left (east). Follow the road 1.5 miles to the trailhead.

Drive Time: About 1¼ hours from the AWC Campus.

Note: A permit to travel onto the Barry M. Goldwater Range is required. Contact 928-269-7150 for information about obtaining the permit. A 4-wheeled drive vehicle is suggested.
Coyote Peak Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

**Coyote Peak Trail:**

**Trailhead Waypoint:**
N32 29.959 W114 00.813
Elevation: 1073 ft.

**Summit Waypoint:**
N32 30.735 W114 00.377
Elevation: 2792 ft.

Very steep and dangerous section.
Walkabout Trail Distance and Altitude Profile:

![Graph showing elevation profile for Walkabout Trail]

- **Copper Mountain Hiking Trails (easy hike to boulder in red):**
  
  Trailhead Waypoint:
  - N32 29.959 W114 00.813
  - Elevation: 1073 ft.

  Saddle Waypoint:
  - N32 29.463 W113 59.999
  - Elevation: 1840 ft.
Coyote Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the southwest; road in green; boulder hike in blue):

Coyote Peak Walkabout Hiking Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northwest):
**Raven Butte**: This is a classic, easy hike with lots of potential variations (even some boulders to climb). Four hours is a comfortable time for the hike that is presented below.

**Access Directions**: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), continue for about another 4 miles, and turn right (south) onto S Ave 25 East. This becomes the Camino del Diablo Highway. Drive approximately 18 miles to marker post C14 (Raven Butte is extremely visible to the west). Turn right (west) at C14, and follow the dirt road to the very southern tip of Raven Butte, where you can park under some Palo Verde trees.

**Drive Time**: About 1-2 hours (depending on Camino del Diablo road conditions).

**Note**: A permit to travel onto the Barry M. Goldwater Range is required. Contact 928-269-7150 for information on obtaining the permit. A 4-wheeled drive vehicle is necessary.
Raven Butte Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 23.703  W114 06.449
Elevation: 1140 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 23.943  W114 06.497
Elevation: 1777 ft.

Raven Butte Trail:
Raven Butte Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south):

Raven Butte Trail 3-D Image (profile from the north):
**Sheep Mountain:** This hike is very strenuous and it contains large, detached boulders (especially after the Saddle). There is no apparent trail and occasional climbing/scrambling is required. Plan 6-10 hours for the round trip of 4.5 miles.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), continue for about another 4 miles, and turn right (south) onto S Ave 25 East. This becomes the Camino del Diablo Highway. Drive approximately 3 miles and turn right (west) at E County Road 14th St (northern border of the Barry M. Goldwater Range). Drive approximately 0.65 miles west and then turn left (south) onto a dirt road (Marker Post 4). Stay on the main dirt road for about 2 miles, then look for a lesser road (Marker Post 4A) off to the right (west). Do NOT take this road, but continue south on the same dirt road. After about 2 miles, veer left off the main dirt road onto barely distinguishable dirt road toward an old mine (the tailings are clearly visible). After driving about 0.5 miles, park about 50 yards before the old mine at the road’s end. This is the trailhead (see trailhead waypoint below).

**Drive Time:** About 1 hour (depending on Camino del Diablo road conditions).

**Note:** A permit to travel onto the Barry M. Goldwater Range is required. Contact 928-269-7150 for information on obtaining the permit. A 4-wheeled drive vehicle is necessary.
Sheep Mountain Trail Profile:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 33.201  W114 14.386
Elevation:  809 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 31.976   W114 14.053
Elevation:  3136 ft.

Sheep Mountain Trail:
Sheep Mountain Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northwest):

Old mine with visible tailings at trailhead

Looking south from the summit of Sheep Mountain

Saddle area

Trail ascends this canyon
High Tanks North Trail (Tinajas Altas Area): This trip is a classic, strenuous climbing (LBnC) and advanced hiking combination. It begins up and to the right from where you park, and ascends the visible rock ridge (see Picture 1 below). The climbing, although generally not difficult (5.6 with some 5.8 variations), is exposed and technical, and continues for about 800 - 1,000 feet. It is then followed by a strenuous hike to the summit with some scrambling on rock. From the summit down to the top of the High Tanks is a difficult, exposed descent; and from the top of the High Tanks to the valley floor involves some rappelling. A rope and climbing equipment is mandatory to avoid a serious fall. Plan all day for the trip and start early.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), continue for about another 4 miles, and turn right (south) onto S Ave 25 East. This becomes the Camino del Diablo Highway. Drive approximately 25 miles south and bear right at the Tinajas Altas Pass cutoff. Drive about ¼ mile and bear left (do not continue to Tinajas Altas Pass). Follow the dirt road south to the High Tanks wash where a large ridge of rock forming the north border of the High Tanks wash ends about 20 feet from the road.

Drive Time: About 1½ to 2 hours (depending on Camino del Diablo road conditions).

Note: A permit to travel onto the Barry M. Goldwater Range is required. Contact 928-269-7150 for information about obtaining the permit. A 4-wheeled drive vehicle is necessary.
High Tanks North Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 18.818  W114 02.883
Elevation: 1165 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 18.821  W114 03.256
Elevation: 2095 ft.

High Tanks North Trail:
High Tanks North Trail 3-D Image (profile from the south):
High Tanks North Trail with Climbing Route, LBnC:

Note: At the trailhead (parking area), you cannot see the start of the climb. Instead, you are at the base of Mission Impossible Rock (which has several difficult routes), and a top-rope anchor at its top (2 bolts and a chain). Skirt right (north) and up on the low angle slabs below Mission Impossible rock until you can easily scramble up to the start of the ridge route pictured above. Climbing pitches are pictured in alternating colors (rope length: 200 ft; total climbing: ~1,000 ft.).

From the summit, traverse north along the ridge for about 100-200 meters, then drop down the steep backside to the west until you arrive at the obvious saddle (pass) visible from above.

To descend using rappels, hike south from the pass down a steep canyon until you reach the wash that feeds into the High Tanks drainage. Hike east to the top of the drainage, and then descend the High Tanks drainage directly. This involves hiking, climbing, and a fantastic 200ft rappel (you actually rappel into one of the tanks about 100 ft. down on the rappel).

To descent avoiding the rappels, you can hike north from the saddle on easy ground down a moderately steep canyon until you reach the desert floor. Then hike east and south back to the parking area.
**Tinajas Altas Peak:** This venture to the summit of Tinajas Altas Peak involves a strenuous hike with some exposed scrambling and climbing in a very remote area. Though short, there is no trail, and navigation can be difficult. There is abundant vegetation in the wash along with large boulders and occasional 10 ft. vertical steps. The last 500 ft or so to the summit involve some scrambling and climbing with exposure.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), continue for about another 4 miles, and turn right (south) onto S Ave 25 East. This becomes the Camino del Diablo Highway. Drive south about 27 miles until travel further south in vehicle is restricted, and bear right towards the open canyon to the west (Brian’s Big Day Road). After about ½ to 1 mile a road will veer to the left (south). Take that road for about 1½ miles to the trailhead. Refer to topo below

**Drive Time:** About 2 hours (depending on Camino del Diablo road conditions).

**Note:** A permit to travel onto the Barry M. Goldwater Range is required. Contact 928-269-7150 for information about obtaining the permit. A 4-wheeled drive vehicle is necessary.
Tinajas Altas Peak Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Summit Waypoint:
N32.01408 W114.02803
Elevation: 2726 ft.

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32.16947 W114.01781
Elevation: 1213 ft.

Tinajas Altas Peak Trail:
This shows an alternate trail to the summit of Tinajas Altas. Drive to the base of Brian’s Big Day climb (in red) and ascend up the wash and steep canyon to the south (in black). B. Karasek and G. Montopoli ascended this alternate route but did not reach the Tinajas Altas Peak true summit. They climbed a different peak to the east, about ½ miles from the true summit.
Gila Mountains

**Airplane Wreck Mountain**: Though short, this is a moderately difficult hike to the airplane crash site and beyond to the summit. There is a fairly good trail to the airplane crash site, but the trail beyond is sketchy. The descent from the summit to the airplane crash site is the worst part. Plan 4–8 hours for the round trip (it depends on how much time you spend checking out the airplane crash site.)

**Access Directions**: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east to the Foothill Boulevard Exit. Turn right at the exit, then immediately left onto the South Frontage road. Travel east along the Frontage Road until it turns south. Continue on the road past the golf course on the left and right, until the “No Trespassing” signs stop. Make a left as soon as possible and drive east along the primary 4-wheel drive dirt road that eventually travels along a ridge toward Flag Mountain. Before arriving at the Flag Mountain trailhead (about ¼ mile from it), turn left (north) and eventually west along an auxiliary dirt road. You must circle around the prominent south ridge of Airplane Wreck Mountain to get to the trailhead. We advise scouting out the access beforehand, as it is quite involved. Access in the past was much simpler prior to the creation of the golf course and private landowners that closed access to the trailhead (there is a direct access road to the trailhead through the golf course if permission is obtained).

**Drive Time**: About 45 minutes.
Airplane Wreck Mountain Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint: 
N32 38.591  W114 20.246
Elevation: 795 ft.

Summit Waypoint: 
N32 38.065  W114 19.769
Elevation: 2138 ft.

Airplane Wreck Trail:
Airplane Wreck Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northwest):

Crash site:
Flag Mountain (Jester’s Peak): This is a classic, easy-to-moderately difficult hike that ascends to the top of Flag Mountain. As you approach the summit ridge, the hiking gets more difficult, and the trail becomes sketchier (some rock scrambling is involved). The trail is known as Jester’s Trail and is maintained by the BLM Yuma Field Office. The descent from the summit ridge down about 500 ft. is tricky as well. Be careful about losing the trail. Plan 4-6 hours for the trip.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east to the Foothill Boulevard Exit. Turn right at the exit, then immediately left onto the South Frontage road. Travel east along the Frontage Road until it turns south. Continue on the road past the golf course Flagon the left and right, until the “No Trespassing” signs stop. Make a left as soon as possible and drive east along the primary 4-wheel drive dirt road that eventually travels along a ridge toward Flag Mountain. The trailhead is located at the base of a long prominent NNW ridge that descends from the summit of Flag Mountain. A plywood (mostly empty) information billboard is located at the trailhead.

Drive Time: About 30 minutes.
Flag Mountain Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Flag Mountain Trail:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 38.232  W114 20.808
Elevation: 742 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 37.442  W114 20.727
Elevation: 1901 ft.
Flag Mountain Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the southwest):

Flag Mountain Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south):
**Telegraph Peak:** This is an easy to moderately difficult hike up to the summit of Telegraph Peak, depending on the route you take:

- **Easy hike:** From the parking area, you may hike up the dirt road from the barrier at the end of the paved road. You may also hike up a trail to the summit from the parking area at the end of the dirt road by dropping into a wash to the northeast of the parking area and following the well-marked trail (this trail eventually joins the dirt road). The dirt road eventually joins a paved road that you take to the summit. Plan about 4-6 hours for the round trip.

- **More difficult hike (10-Summit Ridge Route):** The more adventurous route to the summit follows the trail we describe below. It starts at the farthest, dirt parking area and ascends northward to the minor peak with the white cross at its top. It then continues along the ridge, or on either side of it, and if you stay on the ridge proper, you will “bag” about 10 summits. It is best to stay on the north side of the ridge whenever necessary to avoid the cholla cactus fields, which are extremely thick at times (bring pliers). Descend back to the trailhead using the road and traditional trail. Plan 6-8 hours for the round trip.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east to the Foothill Boulevard Exit. Turn left at the exit, then immediately right onto the North Frontage road. Travel east along the North Frontage Road until it ends. You may park at the barrier on the paved road, or bear left and drive another quarter mile on a dirt road to a parking area at its end.

**Drive Time:** About 20 minutes.
Telegraph Peak Distance (10-Summit Ridge Route) and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:  
N32 39.793  W114 21.740  
Elevation: 503 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 40.601  W114 20.441  
Elevation: 1720 ft.

Telegraph Peak Trail (10-Summit Ridge Route):
Telegraph Peak Trail (10-Summit Ridge Route) 3-D Image (orientation from the west):

Telegraph Peak Trail (10-Summit Ridge Route) 3-D Image (larger profile from the southwest):
**The Trifecta:** This hike involves ascending Flag Mountain, Airplane Wreck Mountain, and Telegraph Peak all in one day. Detailed information about each hike is given individually in their respective sections above. A topographical map containing all three hikes is given below:

![Topographical Map of the Trifecta Hike]

The following itinerary is given as a reference and was recorded by G. Montopoli when he completed the Trifecta in seven hours (October 2009):

- **8am** – at the Flag Mountain Trailhead starting the hike up the Flag Mountain trail
- **8:47am** – at the flag on the summit of Flag Mountain
- **8:52am** – at the true summit of Flag Mountain
- **9:25am** – back at the trailhead of Flag Mountain trail
- **9:25am to 9:50am** – drove to the trailhead of Airplane Wreck Mountain
- **10am** – at the Airplane Wreck Mountain trailhead starting the hike up the Airplane Wreck trail
- **10:55am** – at the summit of Airplane Wreck Mountain
- **11:30am** – back at the trailhead of Airplane Wreck Mountain trail
- **11:30am to 12:15pm** – drove to the trailhead of Telegraph Peak
- **12:20pm** – at the Telegraph Peak Trailhead starting the hike up Telegraph Peak trail (easy variation)
- **1:55pm** – at the true summit of Telegraph Peak (~1/4 mile past the end of the road/last tower)
- **3pm** – back at the trailhead of Telegraph Peak trail
Trail to Nowhere: The Trail to Nowhere is an interesting, but very difficult hike. As pictured below, it circumnavigates Flag Mountain, passing over several saddles and ridges for nearly 9 miles. Plan a long day for the hike (8-10 hours), and take plenty of water.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east to the Foothill Boulevard Exit. Turn right at the exit, then immediately left onto the South Frontage road. Travel east along the Frontage Road until it turns south. Continue on the road past the golf course on the left and right, until the “No Trespassing” signs stop. Make a left as soon as possible and drive east along the primary 4-wheel drive dirt road that eventually travels along a ridge toward Flag Mountain. The trailhead is located at the base of a long prominent NNW ridge that descends from the summit of Flag Mountain. A plywood (mostly empty) information billboard is located at the trailhead.

Drive Time: About 30 minutes.
Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 38.232  W114 20.808
Elevation: 742 ft.

Trail to Nowhere Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead GPS coordinates):

Trail to Nowhere:
Trail to Nowhere 3-D Image (larger profile from the south):
Kofa Mountains

**Castle Dome:** Castle Dome is a moderately difficult to strenuous hike on a mostly-established trail. Three or so of the 6.2 miles are relatively easy hiking in a wash/gentle slope, but the last 500-800 ft to the summit involves scrambling (and easy climbing) with significant exposure. Descending from the summit for nearly a mile involves difficult, steep hiking on loose boulders and crumbly rock (nearly a mile). An alternate ascent route involving scrambling/easy climbing on exposed cliffs is shown in the last 3-D image. Plan about 7-10 hours for the round trip.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, drive north along state Hwy 95 for about 36 miles. Turn (slightly) right onto Castle Dome Mine Road, a paved road designated by a sign. After a mile or so the road will become dirt. Stay on the dirt road, which heads east toward the peak, then eventually circles north around the western ridges of Castle Dome Peak and arrives at a large wash that runs on the northern backside of Castle Dome Peak. Stop at the GPS coordinates that define the trailhead.

**Drive Time:** About 1 hour.
Castle Dome Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N33 05.915  W114 10.514
Elevation:  1701 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N33 05.083  W114 08.607
Elevation:  3792 ft.

Castle Dome Trail:
Castle Dome Trail 3-D Image (larger profile from the west):

Castle Dome Trail 3-D Image (with an alternate ascent route up the east face - climbing is encountered)
Signal Peak: This is a moderately difficult hike up an established trail. It contains sections that are very steep with some rock scrambling. Signal Peak’s cliffs border the east end of Palm Canyon, and the ascent route is actually located on the eastern flank of the peak. Plan 8-10 hours for the round trip.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, drive north along state Hwy 95 for about 60 miles. Turn right at Palm Canyon Road, onto a dirt road designated by a sign. Travel towards the Palm Canyon trailhead for a few miles until you reach another well-defined dirt road on your left (north). Take the dirt road, which circles around the northern ridges of Signal Peak and eventually enters Kofa Queen Canyon. Continue into Kofa Queen Canyon, and drive for approximately 3 miles. The drive in Kofa Queen Canyon is an adventurous 4-wheeled drive dirt road, mostly in a well-defined wash. Drive until you reach the GPS coordinates that define the trailhead. On the way, you will drive by Skull Rock, a beautiful formation shaped like its name – be sure to stop and check it out.

Drive Time: About 2 hours.
Signal Peak Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N33 22.118  W114 03.713
Elevation: 2805 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N33 21.554  W114 04.974
Elevation: 4884 ft.

Signal Peak Trail:
Signal Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the north):

Signal Peak Trail 3-D Image (larger profile from the south-southeast):
Laguna Mountains

Roller Coaster Hill Trail: This area, which is easily accessible from Yuma and AWC, contains a myriad of hiking trails, bike trails, ATV trails, and 4WD roads. All hikes are easy and enjoyable, and may include combinations of roads, bike paths, and ridges (no trails). The classic hike described below, Roller Coaster Hill trail, is named for several up-and-down sections. Roller Coaster Hill trail includes hiking to the highest point in the area (Laguna Summit). Plan anywhere from several hours to all day.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, drive north to S Hwy 95 and turn left (west). Drive 1 mile and turn right (north) onto Laguna Dam road. Drive about 2 miles, and after driving over the bridge that spans the Gila Valley Main Canal, take a left (north) onto the dirt road that runs along the canal (on the east side of the canal). After 1 mile of driving north on the canal road, it circles to the east at a wash inlet. Continue east for about ½ mile on the dirt road that parallels the wash to the north. Stop and park at a large parking area 200 yards to the northwest of a power line tower (do not ascend the small hill to the tower).

Note: From the parking area, start hiking up the road to the north and east, and then take any one of several ridges running to the east that end at the Laguna Summit. Take any one of several different ridges back and eventually work your way back to your car. The roller coaster section (if you choose to hike it) is the ridge that is directly east of where you park.

Drive Time: About 20 minutes.
Roller Coaster Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 45.956  W114 29.244
Elevation: 254 ft.

Roller Coaster Trail:

Summit Waypoint:
N32 46.604  W114 27.885
Elevation: 714 ft.
Roller Coaster Trail 3-D Image (orientation from above):

Roller Coaster Trail 3-D Image (larger profile from the south):
Sugarloaf Peak:

Sugarloaf Peak trail is a “snapshot” of a desert hike: it involves a 4WD trail access; a hike on a 4WD road, a bike path, and a hiking trail; ascending steep, crumbly rock; scrambling; exposure; and it’s beautiful once you arrive at the summit. It’s easy because it’s short: you can get to the summit and back to the car in 45 minutes if you cruise; however, it’s difficult because of the steep, crumbly rock, scrambling, and exposure (plan more time). Plan 1-2 hours for the trip described below, which goes by a practice cliff used in rescue workshops and by the military for training. You can do some easy climbing and rappelling at the practice cliff. There is an abundance of climbing bolts at the top – please do not remove them.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, drive north to S Hwy 95 and turn left (west). Drive 1 mile and turn right (north) onto Laguna Dam road. Drive about 7 miles and the road curves hard right (east) onto E County 2nd Street. After about 1 mile, the road curves north again (Ave 7½ E). Go about ¼ mile and turn right onto a dirt road with a “bridge” that allows crossing the levee canal. Continue on the dirt road with the goal of circling around Sugarloaf Peak on the north side, then east side for a short distance. The east-side road travels under power lines. As soon as possible, turn right on a road that travels west along the south side of the peak. After travelling about 100 yards, the trailhead is a small parking area on the left.

**Drive Time:** About 40-60 minutes.
Sugarloaf Peak Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 47.535  W114 28.914
Elevation: 254 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 47.504  W114 29.144
Elevation: 648 ft.

Sugarloaf Peak Trail:
Sugarloaf Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from southwest):

Sugarloaf Peak from Trailhead:  Base of Practice Cliff:
Mohawk Valley Area

**Owl Peak:** Although short, this hike is steep and strenuous, and involves some easy, but highly exposed climbing. A climbing rope with appropriate climbing gear is highly recommended. The first half mile or so of the hike is on a minimally-established trail which quickly disappears as the ascent begins. From the summit, hike northwest along the ridge until a step gully that cuts northeast through the cliff band allows you to descend back down to the valley floor. Plan about 4-6 hours for this hike.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After driving for about 50 miles, you will go over Mohawk Pass (Owl Peak is the shear peak to your left (north)). Take the next exit (Ave S2E/Mohawk Valley), and take a right (toward the northeast) at the end of the ramp onto S Ave 52½ E. Continue north on S Ave 52½ E for about 1½ to 2 miles until a dirt road is visible to your left (west). Take the dirt road for about ½ mile until you arrive at the trailhead.

**Drive Time:** About 1 to 1½ hours.
Owl Peak Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 45.212  W113 45.058
Elevation: 498 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 45.080  W113 45.701
Elevation: 1975 ft.

Owl Peak Trail:
Owl Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northeast):

Owl Peak Trail 3-D Image (profile from the east):
Muggins Peak Wilderness Area

Muggins Peak Trail: The classic hike described below is an easy to moderately difficult hike. The trail is well-maintained, but easy to lose. As it circles Muggins Peak, it passes through beautiful rock-rimmed washes, travels over two saddles, and runs along the upper edge of an open wash. Plan about 4-6 hours for the 5 mile hike, and even more time if you do some exploring.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), and turn left (north) onto the Dome Valley Road (S. Ave 20E). After about 4 miles, turn right (east) at the stop sign onto E County 7th St. After about a mile the pavement ends. Continue following the dirt road past the Muggins Peak Wilderness Area Information Board for about ½ mile to its end and park. The trailhead starts here.

Drive Time: About 30 minutes.
Muggins Peak Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):
Muggins Loop Points of Interest Clockwise Order (refer to topo map/photos that follow).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point of Interest</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
<th>Elevation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trailhead</td>
<td>N32 44.034</td>
<td>W114 16.019</td>
<td>338 ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbing Cliff</td>
<td>N32 44.252</td>
<td>W114 15.826</td>
<td>354 ft</td>
<td>Nice top-rope routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot Canyon</td>
<td>N32 44.696</td>
<td>W114 15.607</td>
<td>429 ft</td>
<td>Go through it or above it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pools</td>
<td>N32 44.922</td>
<td>W114 15.550</td>
<td>481 ft</td>
<td>Great after a rainfall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saguaro</td>
<td>N32 44.953</td>
<td>W114 15.549</td>
<td>499 ft</td>
<td>Beautiful pair of Saguaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutoff to North Saddle</td>
<td>N32 45.144</td>
<td>W114 15.544</td>
<td>552 ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Saddle</td>
<td>N32 45.279</td>
<td>W114 15.263</td>
<td>772 ft</td>
<td>Nice place for a break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saguaro Cutoff to North Saddle</td>
<td>N32 45.261</td>
<td>W114 15.102</td>
<td>693 ft</td>
<td>One of areas biggest Saguaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Cutoff to East Saddle</td>
<td>N32 44.982</td>
<td>W114 14.785</td>
<td>626 ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Saddle</td>
<td>N32 44.837</td>
<td>W114 14.847</td>
<td>777 ft</td>
<td>Nice place for lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cutoff to East Saddle</td>
<td>N32 44.448</td>
<td>W114 14.788</td>
<td>446 ft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grotto</td>
<td>N32 44.257</td>
<td>W114 15.598</td>
<td>385 ft</td>
<td>Nice, cool shallow cave in cliff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Muggin Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the north):
Climbing Cliff (first ascents by E. Renaud & family):

Slot Canyon:

Pools:

Saguaro:
North Saddle:

Saguaro Cutoff to North Saddle:  Northern Cutoff to East Saddle:
**Muggins Peak Trail Alternate Route**: For a shorter day, consider taking this trail that cuts off from the Muggins Peak Trail after about 1¾ miles. It traverses some beautiful washes, and passes by the Pagoda Peak Cutoff.

**Muggins Peak Trail Alternate Route Profile and Trail Distance:**

- **Upper Cutoff Waypoint**: N32 45.123 W114 15.548  
  Elevation: 559 ft.

- **Pagoda Peak Cutoff Waypoint**: N32 44.719 W114 16.011  
  Elevation: 399 ft.
Muggins Peak Summit: Pictured below is an ascent route for the two summits of Muggins Peak (in turquoise), along with a descent route (in red). The orientation is from the south, as viewed from the trailhead. The ascent of Muggins Peak involves some easy, but dangerous climbing, with high exposure, especially from the saddle to the northwestern summit. The descent route avoids much of the climbing of the ascent route up the steep gully, but it still involves some dangerous terrain. A climbing rope with appropriate equipment is highly recommended if reaching the summit (or summits) is your primary goal.
Pagoda Peak: Pagoda Peak is also referred to as Klothos Peak on some maps. It is a very strenuous hike. Although remnants of a trail (cairns) are occasionally seen, for the most part there is no visible trail. The terrain involves crumbly, loose rock for a significant part of the hike, and the descent can be very difficult in some parts. Plan a long day for ascending this peak (8-12 hours), and take lots of water.

Note: Alternate ascent routes that involve scrambling/climbing for this hike are shown on the last page. A rope with appropriate gear is highly recommended.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel east toward Tucson. After going over Telegraph Pass, take the first exit (Ligurta/Dome Valley). Merge onto the frontage road running north of Interstate 8, drive through Ligurta (which has a great café), and turn left (north) onto the Dome Valley Road (S. Ave 20E). After about 4 miles, turn right (east) at the stop sign onto E County 7th St. After about a mile the pavement ends. Continue following the dirt road past the Muggins Peak Wilderness Area Information Board for about ½ mile to its end and park. The trailhead starts here.

Drive Time: About 30 minutes.
Pagoda Peak Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

![Elevation Profile Graph]

**Summit Waypoint:**
N32 45.667  W 114 15.850  
Elevation: 1655 ft.

**Trailhead Waypoint:**
N32 44.035  W114 16.019  
Elevation: 350 ft.

**Pagoda Peak Trail:**

![Map of Pagoda Peak Trail]
Pagoda Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northeast):

Pagoda Peak Trail 3-D Image (profile from the west):
Pictured below are two other ascent routes for Pagoda Peak (in orange and red) that branch off the Muggin’s Mountain Loop trail. The orientation is from the east. The ascents involve some easy, but dangerous climbing, with high exposure in some areas. A climbing rope with appropriate equipment is highly suggested if reaching the summit using one of these routes is your primary goal.
**Painted Desert Trail:** The Painted Desert Trail is an extremely beautiful, easy 1.3 mile hike in the Imperial National Wildlife Refuge through an area that was once actively volcanic (30 million years ago). The landscape is incredibly colorful and panoramic views of the Colorado River are occasionally visible in the distance. There are occasional short climbs and rocky terrain is encountered as you hike through desert washes bounded by steep, short rock walls. A trail brochure detailing the hike with several stops is available at the trailhead and information kiosk that is passed on the drive to the trailhead. I outline below a short, moderate variation to the established trail that ascends a short peak and offers an enhanced panoramic view of the Colorado River and surrounding landscape (total distance is 2 miles).

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, drive north along South Ave 8E and turn right (north) onto Hwy US-95. Drive about 16 miles on Hwy 95, and turn left (west) toward Martinez Lake Road. After about 10 miles, turn right onto Wildlife Refuge Road. After about 0.6 miles, continue straight onto Red Cloud Mine Road. After about 1.5 miles, bear right to stay on Red Cloud Mine Road. Continue about 3 more miles on Red Cloud Mine Road until you arrive at the Painted Desert Trail Parking Area.

**Drive Time:** About 1 hour from the AWC Campus.
Painted Desert Alternate Trail Profile:

Summit Waypoint:
N33 02.019  W114 29.666
Elevation: 399 ft.

Trailhead Waypoint:
N33 01.667  W114 29.916
Elevation: 183 ft.

Painted Desert Alternate Trail:
Painted Desert Alternate Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south; original trail is in red):

Trail Variation Cutoff Waypoint: N33 01.959  W114  29.718

Painted Desert Alternate Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the north; original trail is in red):
Picacho Peak Area (CA)

**Picacho Trail:** This classic, easy-to-moderate hike around Picacho Peak in California is extremely colorful and picturesque. It also is close to Picacho State Park and the Colorado River if you wish to take advantage of it. Plan 4-6 hours for the round trip.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, drive north to US Hwy 95 and turn left (west). Once you reach Yuma, turn right (north) at Pacific Ave. Turn left (west) on E 8th Street and follow it around several bends until you get to S Gila Street. Turn right (north) onto S Gila Street, then right on E 1st Street. Follow it over the Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge, then bear right (north) onto Quechan Road. Follow Quechan Road until you get to Picacho Road. Turn right (north) onto Picacho Road and follow it some 16 miles to the trailhead. The trailhead lies about ½ miles north of the (non-operational) Picacho Mine at the start of a large wash with a 4-wheeled drive road running into it.

**Drive Time:** About 1½ to 2 hours (depending on road conditions).
Picacho Trail Distance and Altitude Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Picacho Trail:

Southwest Pass Waypoint:
N32 58.192 W114 39.963
Elevation: 1185 ft.

East Pass Waypoint:
N32 58.392 W114 39.572
Elevation: 967 ft.

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 58.704 W114 38.199
Elevation: 499 ft.
Picacho Trail 3-D Image (orientation from south):

Picacho Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the southwest):
Picacho Peak Ascent & Rappels:

An ascent of Picacho Peak involves ascending a very steep gully on the west side of Picacho that can be accessed from the Southwest Pass. The gully ends in a saddle, from which the route continues up the eastern aspect of Picacho Peak. The route is somewhat straight-forward, ascending the line of least resistance via “wandering” and following an occasional painted arrow. Some very exposed climbing is involved, including climbing over an open abyss, and ascending two ladders. Once the summit ridge is attained, a large block-like formation prevents reaching the true summit without rappelling or difficult down-climbing. A rope and rock-climbing gear are highly advised if the goal is reaching the true summit.

In 2000, George Montopoli, Brian Karasek, Hank Harlow, Scott Beebe, and Liz Renaud placed bolts and pitons, and cables for rappelling down the Southeast Ridge of Picacho Peak. From the true summit of Picacho Peak, scramble south until you get to a shoulder and cannot continue. Four rappels follow:

1) Rappel east about 50 ft. down and over an overhang to reach a large ledge system. Total rappel length: 60 ft.; anchor: steel cable and webbing.
2) From the large eye-bolt, rappel about 200 ft. to the south-southeast. Two 60m (200 ft.) ropes are mandatory. By the end of the rappel, you will be about 20 ft. out from the wall. In fact, for about 170 ft., you will not be touching the wall at all. Total rappel length: 200 ft.; anchor: eye-bolt, steel cable, and an old gold-line rope.
3) From the end of the rappel hike south up and over the knoll, then down and southeast until you get to the next anchor consisting of 2 pitons. From the anchor, rappel down into the first gully (about 20 ft.), then climb up and over into the next gully to the south (this is imperative). Continue the rappel for about 60 ft. to the next bolt anchor located on the wall to the rappeller’s right. Total rappel length: 80-90 ft.; anchor: 2 pitons, cable, and slings.
4) From the bolt anchor, continue rappelling a full rope-length (100 ft.). Total rappel length: 100 ft.; anchor bolt, piton, natural rock and slings.
5) From the end of the rappel, scramble down some 50-100 feet to the top of a ramp. Hike/scramble down the ramp to the north, toward the base of the sheer southeast face of Picacho Peak. From the bottom of the ramp you can hike to the East Pass of Picacho Trail, then back to the trailhead.

Second 200 ft. Rappel:
Third and Fourth Rappels:

In the photo below, rappels are numbered and red, and scrambling is in yellow. Arrows indicate starting points for each of the four rappels.
**Pilot Knob, CA:** Pilot Knob lies only 8 miles to the west of Yuma (from the 4th Avenue Bridge) and is a historically significant, well-known landmark. Pilot Knob contains hikes that are easy, moderate, and difficult. I generally cannot classify them as “classic” hikes because of all the “garbage” encountered as one hikes or ascends the trails. There are many variations of trails that meander around the lower flanks of Pilot Knob, and ascend it as well. For all the various routes, plan 2 - 4 hours for the round trip time.

**Access Directions:** From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel west toward San Diego. Drive west on Interstate 8 into California for about 15 miles. After stopping at an Agriculture Inspection Station, continue about another ½ - 1 mile and take the next exit for Sidewinder Road (Exit 164). Turn left (south) at the end of the exit ramp and cross over Interstate 8 onto Sidewinder Road.

**Drive Time:** About ½ to 1 hour from AWC Campus.

---

**Trails/Ascents (all are shown in maps):**

- For an easy 3.8-mile hike, drive south on Sidewinder Road for about 1 mile, to a point where a large western ridge nears Sidewinder Road. Park just before a fence appears on your left (east) that prohibits vehicular traffic. The easier hike that I show below (in red) starts on the west side of the Pilot Knob formation and circles around the mountain. From the parking area, hike to the base of the West Ridge where you will find the trail. Continue hiking south-southeast for a mile or so, then northeast over two small passes. After descending the second pass, you arrive at a junction. At the East Junction (shown on the map), you may continue around the mountain for an easier hike by travelling north, or ascend the peak for a moderate hike by travelling west.

- For an easy 1.4-mile direct ascent to the summit via the northern slopes, drive south about ¼ mile on Sidewinder Road and then bear left (east) to the large quarry on the north side of Pilot Knob. Park more-or-less in the middle of the quarry close to where an old access road toward the summit begins (I generally descend this road after attaining the summit). Hike directly east along the road toward a large boulder at the east end of the road where it turns toward the
north. Continue hiking east, and slightly up and across a wide gully, until it intersects the obvious trail that ascends south towards the summit ridge. When this trail intersects the summit ridge, hike west to the summit. From the summit, I generally descend to the old access road that takes you back to your car.

- For a more difficult direct route to the summit (some scrambling involved), drive south about ¼ mile on Sidewinder Road and then bear left (east), to the prominent north ridge at the western edge of the quarry. The more difficult ascent shown below approaches the summit directly on the ridge (route shown below in yellow). The descent follows the trail and road on the western edge of the quarry.

- Another more difficult, truly classic hike ascends the direct west ridge to the summit in three steps. From the same trailhead as the easier hike, travel south for a few hundred yards, and ascend the West ridge that intersects the trail. Some scrambling and exposed, easy climbing is encountered by staying right on the apex of the ridge, but the ascent is fantastic. At the top of the first step, one may easily descend back to the trailhead (on a steep trail) if the ascent is too difficult or exposed.

- Another more difficult 2.5-mile route ascends the southern aspect of Pilot Knob after hiking about one mile on the “easy hike” described above, and involves ascending a combination of gullies and ridge crests.

Walkabout (Easy Hike) Profile:
Northern Slopes Easy (but enjoyable) Ascent Profile:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 44.180 W114 44.829
Elevation: 310 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 43.942 W 114 44.811
Elevation: 885 ft.

Direct North Ridge Profile:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 44.304 W114 45.001
Elevation: 272 ft.
• Moderate Trail (to the Summit) Profile:

- Summit Waypoint: N32 43.942 W 114 44.811
  Elevation: 885 ft.

- Trailhead Waypoint: N32 44.065 W114 45.490
  Elevation: 280 ft.

• Direct West Ridge Profile:

- Summit Waypoint: N32 43.942 W 114 44.811
  Elevation: 885 ft.

- Trailhead Waypoint: N32 44.065 W114 45.490
  Elevation: 280 ft.
Southern Trail Profile:

Pilot Knob Walkabout and Moderate Summit Trails (moderate hiking trail to summit in red):
Pilot Knob Walkabout and Moderate Summit Trails 3-D Image (orientation from the east):

Pilot Knob Easy Ascent up the Northern Slopes:
Pilot Knob Easy Ascent up the Northern Slopes 3-D Image (orientation from the northwest):

Pilot Knob Direct North Ridge and Direct South Ridge Summit Trails:
Pilot Knob Direct North Ridge and Direct South Ridge Summit Trails 3-D Image (orientation from the northeast):

Pilot Knob Southern Summit Trails:
Pilot Knob Southern Summit Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south):
Ridge Peak True Summit Hike, CA: Ridge Peak lies about 15 miles to the north-northeast of Yuma (14½ miles north of the AWC main campus). The hike is easy to moderate, depending on the route, and the roundtrip distance is only 2.6 miles. The hike pictured below runs directly from the trailhead up an obvious east ridge until a northwest-southeast oriented ridge is encountered (some difficult hiking is encountered). The true summit (1,532 ft.) lies about ¼ mile to the northwest. The descent involves hiking southeast along the northwest-southeast oriented ridge until a saddle is encountered (hiking is easier along the descent route). A poorly defined trail takes one back to the trailhead. The view from the summit is spectacular. Plan 4-6 hours for the round trip. There is a day-use permit fee.

Access Directions for True Summit: From the AWC campus, drive north along South Ave 8E and turn right (north) onto Hwy US-95. Drive about 13.3 miles and turn left (west) onto Imperial Dam Road. After 3.6 miles, continue onto Laguna Dam Road (entering California). After 3.2 miles, continue onto County Hwy S24. After 0.7 miles, turn right toward Senator Wash, and then continue straight onto Senator Wash road for an additional 2.2 miles. Turn left into a Long Term RV area (Imperial Dam LTVA) and drive along the road (which turns into a dirt road) about 1.2 miles. Bear left at a junction (Road 699), and drive about 2.4 miles to its end at the base of a prominent running east ridge.

Alternate Driving Route: As shown in the picture below, you can shorten the distance by turning left onto Hwy 95 and, after 1 mile, turn north onto South Ave 7E (South Laguna Dam Road to Mittry Lake) until it intersects the East Imperial Dam Road.

Drive Time: About 1 hour from the AWC Campus. The two routes to the trailhead are shown below.
Ridge Peak Trail Profile (with Trailhead and Summit GPS coordinates):

Summit Waypoint:
N32 53.799  W114 33.814
Elevation: 1532 ft.

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 53.865  W114 33.019
Elevation: 600 ft.

Ridge Peak Trail:
Ridge Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south):

Ridge Peak Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the northwest):
Ridge Peak East Summit: Ridge Peak lies about 15 miles to the north-northeast of Yuma. This hike is easy, but it does involve continuous hiking on boulders during the entire trip, so be prepared for an “ankle workout.” The trailhead is conveniently accessed from the south, or Yuma-side, of the range, which avoids the long ride to the Laguna Dam area and the day-use permit (with fee).

The hike is short and direct, and the summit (to the east of the trailhead) is continuously visible as you hike. Once at the summit, you can return via the ascent route, or lengthen the trip by hiking along the ridge either direction until it is convenient to descend back to the car. The views are quite spectacular. Plan 3-6 hours for the trip, including driving time.

Access Directions from the South: From the AWC campus, drive north to US Hwy 95 and turn left (west). Once you reach Yuma, turn right (north) at Pacific Ave. Turn left (west) on E. 8th Street and follow it around several bends until you get to S. Gila Street. Turn right (north) onto S. Gila Street, then right onto E. 1st Street. Follow it over the Ocean-to-Ocean Bridge, then bear right (north) onto Quechan Road. Follow Quechan Road until you get to Picacho Road. Turn right (north) onto Picacho Road and follow it until you reach the All-American Canal not long after the paved road turns to dirt. Turn right onto the All-American Canal (do not cross over it), and drive about 5.2 miles along the south side of the canal until a small bridge crosses over the canal. Turn left onto the bridge and drive north and east a bit for about 0.5 miles until you reach the trailhead – any of several spur roads may be taken.

Drive Time: About 40 minutes from the AWC Campus (20 miles)
Ridge Peak East Profile:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 50.332  W114 32.594
Elevation: 200 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 50.597  W114 31.463
Elevation: 955 ft.

Ridge Peak East Trail:
Ridge Peak East Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the north):

Ridge Peak East Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the west):
Stud Mountain, CA: Stud Mountain lies about 19 miles to the northwest of Yuma (from the 4th Avenue Bridge). Though the ascent along the south ridge is short in distance (only about 3 miles round trip), it is a difficult ascent, and some scrambling is encountered. The view from the summit is quite spectacular.

Access Directions: From the AWC campus, access Interstate 8 and travel west toward San Diego. Drive west on Interstate 8 into California for about 15 miles. After stopping at an Agriculture Inspection Station, continue about another ½ - 1 mile and take the next exit for Sidewinder Road (Exit 164). Turn right (north) at the end of the exit ramp onto Sidewinder Road N. Travel north along Sidewinder Road for about 2 miles, and take a right onto Barney Oldfield Road. Drive in a north-northeast direction for about five miles until you can veer left (west, onto Rd. 715) into a large open canyon that takes you to the trailhead. Although the listed GPS coordinates below take you to a convenient trailhead, any of several southern ridges eventually join the prominent southern ridge that takes you to the summit.

Drive Time: About 1 hour from the AWC Campus.
Stud Mountain Trail Profile:

Trailhead Waypoint:
N32 50.503  W114 44.773
Elevation: 711 ft.

Summit Waypoint:
N32 51.455  W114 45.161
Elevation: 2125 ft.

Stud Mountain Trail:
Stud Mountain Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the south):
Stud Mountain Trail 3-D Image (orientation from the southeast):
A Peek at Several Favorite Climbs in the Tinajas Altas Area (Barry M. Goldwater Range)

For driving directions, refer to Tinajas Altas Peak (page 11).

For detailed information on the routes, go to:

http://virgil.azwestern.edu/~gjm/ClimbingSite/

There are another 20 routes or so that are not listed, including some multi-pitch classics. Until they are added, contact the author for information about these routes.
Yuma: East and West Wetlands

The City of Yuma maintains two areas at its northern boundary along the Colorado River, the East Wetlands and West Wetlands Park/Centennial Beach. Both areas contain a few major hiking trails along with a myriad of variations. Additionally, there are bike/skateboard trails, two large beaches (Centennial beach and Gateway Park beach), a fishing pond stocked by Arizona Game and Fish, a playground for children, athletic fields, and opportunities to participate with several city-sponsored events and tours.

Below is listed location information with a few pictures, along with contact information. Although no specific trails will be discussed, all trails are very easy to negotiate. Be aware that rattlesnakes may be encountered during the hotter months.

East Wetlands:

The Yuma East Wetlands was created by a partnership involving the Quechan Indian Tribe and the City of Yuma. It involved a major restoration project to return the Colorado River riparian area to its native vegetation. With restoration of the native vegetation, many more diverse bird and animal species have returned as well.


Gateway Park, located at the southern end of the East Wetlands, is the easiest access to the East Wetlands (and beach). Directions are given below:
East Wetlands images:
West Wetlands Park/Centennial Beach:

West Wetlands Park is a 110-acre park along the Colorado River that has been restored with native trees and vegetation. It contains a few major hiking trails with many spurs. Additionally, there are biking trails, a boat launch, a fishing pond, Centennial Beach, a kid’s playground, athletic fields, and many other amenities.

Address: 282 N. 12th Avenue, Yuma, AZ


Several images follow: