

SaddleBrooke Hiking Club Program Coyote Buttes and The Wave

The SaddleBrooke Hiking Club is featuring a program on Coyote Buttes and the Wave on Wednesday, October 21, 3 p.m. in the Coyote Room, SaddleBrooke Clubhouse. Five SaddleBrooke hikers spent five days exploring this geologic wonderland under the guidance of Dean and Cheryl Werstler. Dean will show his DVD program which highlights these unusual geologic formations.

The Coyote Buttes Wilderness is an area of gnarled, polished, and twisted rock, among the most extraordinary formations on the Colorado Plateau. This protected area is part of the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument which is located in the northeastern corner of the Arizona Strip. Within Coyote Buttes North is the Wave, the popular crown jewel of the area, a magical place with colorful sandstone gyrations. Many visitors are elated by the sight of the main Wave but are unaware of other fascinating formations in Coyote Buttes North such as Top Rock, the Second Wave, Melody Arch, the Teepees, and elusive dinosaur tracks.

Coyote Buttes South is overshadowed by the more glamorous Coyote Buttes North with its famous Wave. Because of its remoteness and long difficult access in a 4WD vehicle, one can hike through this most unique of landscapes in complete solitude. Included in this area are the Paw Hole Teepees, the Cottonwood Teepees, "brain" rocks, and incredibly shaped hoodoos, just as spectacular as formations to the north.

Southeast of Coyote Buttes is the White Pocket, accessed after miles of 4WD sandy tracks. Very different from the formations in Coyote Buttes, White Pocket is a treat for the eyes. One can spend hours exploring this phenomenal landscape of brainrocks, swirls, and crossbedding. The mostly grayish inches-thick top layer covers deep red sandstone that pops up here and there like frosting.

The Cockscomb is a 50-mile long fault crossing from the Grand Staircase in Utah to the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument in Arizona. Near the classic backpacking areas of Paria Canyon and Buckskin Gulch is Cobra Arch. A sandy 4WD track and a cross country hike over rough terrain leads to this arch which is the shape of a cobra snake complete with checkerboard striations reminiscent of serpent's scales.

At Lee's Ferry the Spencer Trail climbs to the top of the Vermilion Cliffs featuring views of the Colorado River valley, the famous horseshoe bend of the Colorado River, the distant Kaibab Plateau to the southwest and the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area to the northeast.

Come and experience these scenic wonders through Dean Werstler's DVD program of this area featuring explorations by SaddleBrooke hikers. For further information contact Mary Ganzel, SBHC Program Chairperson, 818-1828, after October 1.