

Date: 10/21/2015 10:19:49 PM

Subject: Postcard

This may come as a total shock to you but we're not very good at spontaneous. We make reservations. We do research. We plan. But there we were, hiking around Chimney Rock at 7:00 this morning, on a notion. Confident in our trail map, our GPS and our finely tuned hiking sense and, because there was an unexpected break in the rain forecast, off we went.

Things started out just fine. We did the loop most of the way around Chimney Rock.



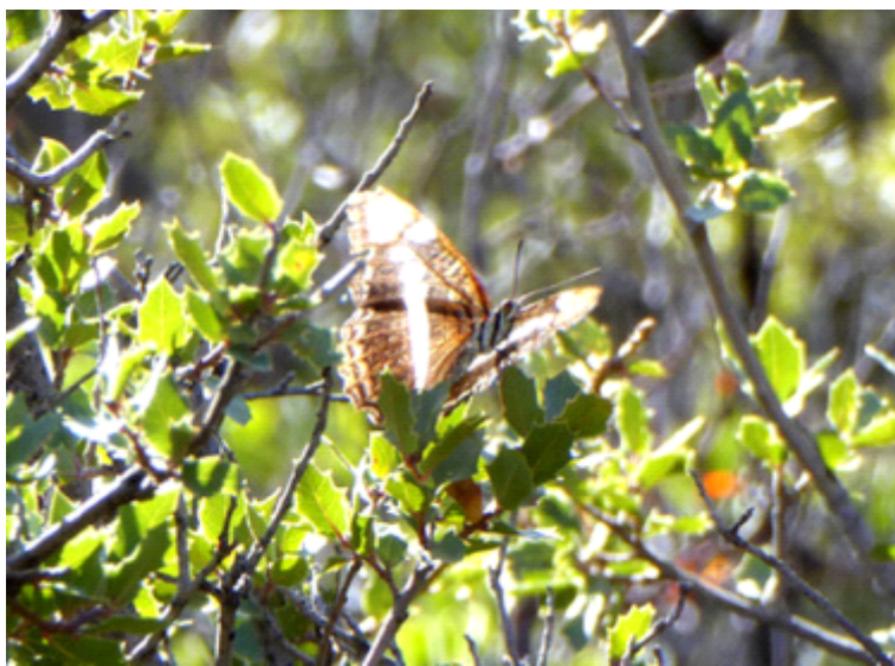
Saw a pinon jay.



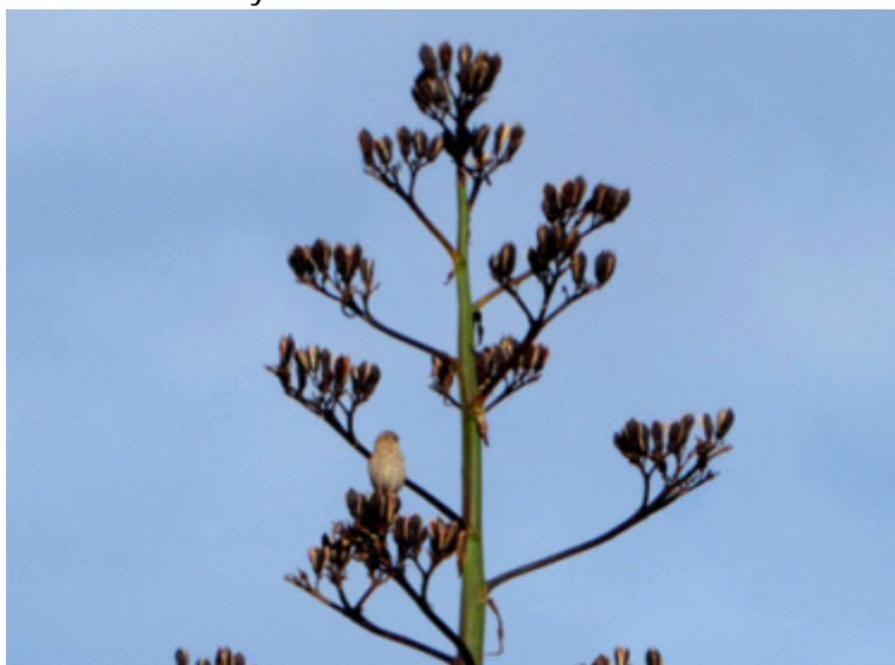
Saw a red rock angel.



Saw an Arizona Sister.



Saw a finch on a yucca.



Saw a house really close to the trail.



Hate houses really close to the trail.
Wish *we* had one.

It was turning into a fine day. The sun shone, the rocks beckoned, and we decided to adlib some more. Hey, instead of just finishing the Chimney Rock circle, let's take this Thunder Mountain loop, too. It should add about a mile and bring us right back to Bogie. Cool.



Sedona has 127 certified National Forest Trails. They intersect, they circle, they connect with multiple trailheads. Today we were on about 90 of them.





Yes, of course we are. But we don't want to be. Where the hell's our car?

Let's try down this path, it looks like the one here on the map...



Nope that's just another house we hate and wish we owned.

Here, maybe this is it...



Nope, it's a temple. Uh huh.

Yes! Here's a trailhead! Nope, not ours.

We pass 2 kids trying to light up a joint in the middle of Grand Central Trail System ("Look out, someone's coming!"). They stare at us. Hi guys.

Suddenly Dale says: *OW!*

Sheila says: *What's that?*

Dale says, pulling barbed needles from his knee: *Cactus spines! There's a prickly pear hanging over the path!*

Stoner slowly says: *Javalinas eat those.*

Now we stare at them. Bye guys.

Yes! Here's a trailhead! Nope, not ours.

At this point we're about 3 hours into a 1 hour hike and you might say our fuse is a bit short. So of course The

EuroWhacko descends on us. We'll call her Francine. She's out hiking alone on 127 interlocking trails without a map and is loster than we are. She bums our map and won't give it back. I tug. She pulls. I pull. She yanks. In exasperation I say "Exactly where do you want to go?" (as if I can help – I don't even know where I am). She says "I just want to walk today in a beautiful place". I said "Then you're already there" and ripped the map back. Adieu, Francine.

In a just a few more minutes we rediscovered our starting trailhead. Went back to our rental to de-spontaneify.

D&S

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