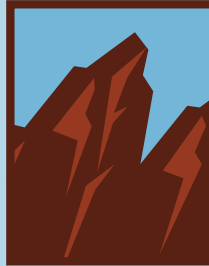


the **RED ROCK RAG**



FRIENDS OF
RED ROCK CANYON

Volume 22, #1
Spring 2020

 <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofredrockcanyon>

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President's Report

Our precious open space requires a lot of maintenance and loving care. During these difficult and unique times of “social distancing,” the significance of 1500 acres of open space is apparent.

Spring has arrived in the canyons and meadows of Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

A soft carpet of green is spreading. The Pasque and Indian Paintbrushes are popping up and the hummingbirds are buzzing overhead. Painted Lady and Cabbage butterflies are bouncing around wildly.

Even when the parking lots appear full you can hike a 2-3 mile loop and see very few people. A very special place where one can renew one's spirit and soul. Something we all need, especially in these times.

Volunteer projects that were planned had to be cancelled but the Park Staff and Rangers have been busy and a lot of work is still being accomplished.

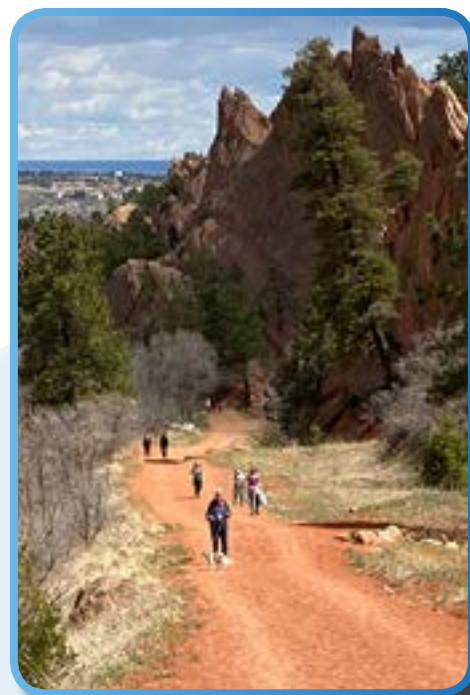


www.redrockcanyonopenspace.org

Education in Red Rock Canyon

The Friends of Red Rock Canyon will not be offering any of our educational series of hikes this summer, typically known as "Talk and Walks". The uncertainty of how Covid restrictions will play out, along with present guidelines limiting groups to no more than 10 people, restricts the group programs for now.

We do want to share some ways you can learn about Red Rock Canyon. There are a couple websites available where you can get information, and participate, with the habitats observed in Red Rock Canyon. One site, iNaturalist, is about the biology in Red Rock Canyon. The other website, eBird, records birds seen. These websites help in identifying what you might find, but allows you to share what you see with others. Personally, we have used the iNaturalist site with Red Rock Canyon, but it also helps us identify unknown insects and critters around our house. So good to have it on hand, giving you a wealth of information on your smart phone or your computer at home.



Canyon website under the Education tab. Link: <https://redrockcanyonopenspace.org/education/>

iNaturalist <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/red-rock-canyon-open-space-bioblitz-colorado-springs-trails-open-spaces-and-parks>
The link above is from the BioBlitz in Red Rock Canyon last summer. You can still add observations to it. iNaturalist is a worldwide site. You can record observations and see what others find locally, in Red Rock Canyon, or even close by in your neighborhood.

eBird <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L1175561?yr=all&m=&rank=mrec>
Another direct link to Red Rock Canyon in the eBird website. Again, like iNaturalist, you can make your observations in regions of your choice. It's amazing to see how many birds have been documented in Red Rock Canyon. Great app to have and use, if you like to see what birds are around.

Another resource offering brief information on Red Rock Canyon about Biology, Geology and History, can easily be found on our Friends of Red Rock

Geology, along with History, are both well covered in the book **Geologic Folio, Red Rock Canyon Open Space**. See the next article in this newsletter about this book which has been reprinted and now available again.

Hope this helps to explore and learn about Red Rock Canyon during these special and limited times!



Geologic Folio of Red Rock Canyon Back in Print!

Have you ever wondered when visiting Red Rock Canyon Open Space, what is the story behind all you see? Why are there stone foundations on the hill by the 31st Street trailhead? Where did the red rocks go from the quarry, off the Red Rock Canyon trail? Are the ripples marks in a climbing wall, "Ripple wall", made from a previous sea?

The stone foundations are remnants of the Colorado-Philadelphia Mill, a gold mill working over the ore from Cripple Creek (page 25). Most of the Red Manitou Sandstone, taken from the Lyons formation in Red Rock Canyon, can be found in the Capital Hill neighborhood in Denver (p. 136). Though some of the red stones can be found in local buildings. The ripples in the red "Ripple Wall" have come about from weathering (p. 91). Though ripples lines left over from a past shallow sea can readily be seen in the Dakota formation in the Open Space (p. 196).

These are only a few facts taken from the book **Geologic Folio, Red Rock Canyon Open Space, Colorado Springs**, which has just been released as a second edition. The book is considered to be the best in a comprehensive coverage of Red Rock Canyon Open Space. We, the Friends of Red Rock Canyon, are thrilled to see it back in print and available to everyone again. Ken Weissenburger and Sharon Milito have dedicated this second release to Don Ellis a co-author. Don's contribution to this

book, along with many articles he wrote, were written covering the history of this area. Most of you may know Don from his efforts to make Red Rock Canyon a public open space today. He also helped to make the Friends of Red Rock Canyon as well publishing other local history stories.

Presales for the second edition are available now. The price is heavily discounted. Information on ordering can be found below.

(Continued on next page)

SPECIAL PRESALE
the new **SECOND EDITION 2019**
dedicated to the memory of friend
and co-author, Don Ellis

In light of cancelled activities and continued uncertainty, FoRRC has replaced the book launch, delayed from this spring, with a "quickly distanced" summer presale.

"Red Rock... is a wonderful laboratory for lessons about Earth history, human history, and the comingling of the two." This colorful soft cover edition of 206 pages, in a large 8 1/2 x 11" format, is illustrated with over 400 photographs and drawings including 35 map insets of places at Red Rock to see geologic features of interest.

- Geology of Red Rock Canyon
- The fossil record
- Geologic mapping of the Pikes Peak Region and the West
- Red Rock Canyon quarrying and mining
- Red Rock Canyon stone in historic buildings

Presale package price is \$27.95
(regular retail is \$39.95 for the book alone) Package includes all sales taxes and delivery by USPS media mail.

Preferred ordering is by email to: outwestbooks@gmail.com
Mention the Red Rock Presale and include an email address for them to respond with a secure ordering and payment link.
(No email?, then phone 10-3 Mon-Sat Out West Books in Grand Jct. 970.986.8086)

Any questions or special needs should be directed to
FoRRC/David Vaiker 719.685.4792 phone or email
frinds@redrockcanyonopenspace.org/

All presale purchases are final.

published by Uncompahgre Press in support of Friends of Red Rock Canyon and the Old Colorado City Historical Society

(Continued from previous page)

Normally we would have an event to announce and order this book, but with the Covid restrictions at this time we chose not to do a public event. The reduced price is offered now.

Red Rock Canyon is a beautiful place to visit. When visiting the Open Space, many people do not know all geological treasures that are exposed and available to see. When doing our educational "Talk and Walks" with geology presenters, we

would often hear what a special place we have. One geologist stated "In order for students to see this much geology, that is different formations exposed, one would have to drive around to several different places. Where here, in Red Rock Canyon, you can see all while walking."

This is your chance to get a copy of the Geologic Folio. Maybe it will answer a few questions you have had about Red Rock Canyon Open Space?

Heart of the Canyon Update

The unbuilt connector trail at the northern end of the landfill we sometimes call the "Heart of the Canyon Trail". It is important because it creates the best one-hour walking trail loop from the picnic area parking lot and because it allows for one of the most scenic short walks in the park and avoids walking through the middle of the old landfill. It is also important for people who have limited walking ability or limited time to see the best part of the park {personal opinion}. The City had been planning to change the RRC master plan and eliminate the trail forever. BUT now there is good news and hope.

The City has done a great job in remediating the erosion at the north end of the landfill. Using heavy equipment they have brought in rock to armor the gullies creating good channels for storm water to pass through safely. They are in the process of removing the old broken cement. Someday this will be one of the prettiest and shady places in the park. In the process they have

also made a 600 foot rough road to access the area. That road shortens the trail construction by 600 feet and provides the elevation gain to make the rest of the trail relatively easy to build.



Because of the new road the City is willing to re-evaluate eliminating the trail from the Master Plan. Later this summer (after the State has signed off on the City's remediation of some problems with the landfill) the City will go out with FoRRC, Medicine Wheel and other stakeholders to see how the trail can best be built. This trail is so important that the board of FoRRC is willing to fund the design of the new

shorter connector trail, if necessary. Hopefully, with City staff support, we will persuade the Colorado Springs Park Board to follow the Master Plan and build the trail. After the trail is built,

volunteers from the Friends of Red Rock Canyon and Manitou Trail CATS are committed to clean up this area and plant some native shade trees. We think this will be a great place for a bench or two for people to rest in the middle of their hike. We will keep you informed of the next steps we need to make this all happen and heal this heart of Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

Covid and Red Rock Canyon

Greetings everybody as we emerge from Covid 19 isolation! We still have to be careful and have good habits to prevent Covid 19 from having another big spike this summer or fall, but we do not have to be scared of other people when we see them hiking, riding and enjoying Red Rock Canyon. Some of us have used parks and open spaces a lot over the last couple months. It was a good way to pass the time while everything was closed. Others stayed home to protect ourselves and others. Together we faced the challenge and things are better now.



We have learned a lot about our community, our parks and ourselves. Many have explored new places to enjoy the outdoors. We are learning to be sensitive, considerate and supportive to people who may need a little help or protection.

We are learning when are the better times to hike and ride when it is less crowded. We have been learning to be aware of the space around us and be courteous when approaching and passing people on the trail. We are learning to appreciate rangers and people who take care of and clean up our parks and open spaces. "Leave No Trace" and picking up after ourselves and our dog actually keeps us all safer. Keeping our parks clean and beautiful shows our pride in our homeland. Because of Covid 19 isolation we have learned how important nature and outdoors really is to all of us.

Notice Changes on the Trail?

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, "Change is the only constant in life." Over the past few months, we have seen a tidal wave of change in our open spaces, parks and regional trails. Last year, no one knew what social distancing was. Today the trails feel like a fashion show with everyone's unique handmade masks.

The way people spread out on trails and other virus safety precautions are not the only changes we are seeing.

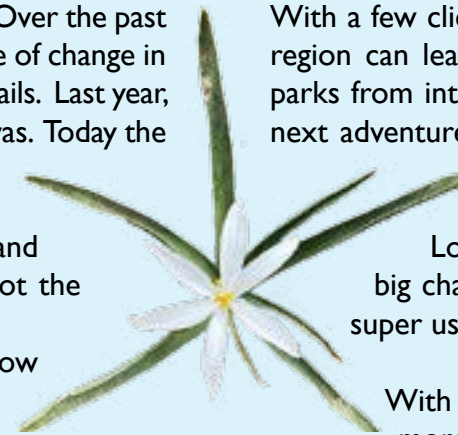
A renaissance is taking place with how people are using their parks and open spaces in the Pikes Peak region. With people staying home or frequenting parks in their neighborhoods, we are seeing an explosion in the popularity of birding and kite flying. The stay at home order and the great weather this spring has inspired more plein air artists and landscape photographers to blossom outside. Bob Ross would be proud. One of the biggest changes we have seen is how

park lovers have embraced virtual programming. With a few clicks of the mouse, people in our region can learn about the wildlife in county parks from interpretive staff or pick out their next adventure with the TOSC "Get Out, Spread Out" videos

featuring lesser known spots.

Looking into the summer, the next big change we will experience are the super users becoming super stewards.

With spending more time on trails, our super users will be inspired to spend more time taking care of what you love. I think this is a change that we all can embrace.



#GetOutSpreadOut

Mountain Biking News

It's been a busy spring on the trails in Red Rock Canyon Open Space, as both new and seasoned mountain bikers looked for ways to ride safely and locally during the COVID-19 lockdown. The good news is that we had a bit of new trail to work with in RROS, specifically the Meadows Loop Trail on the southeast end of the park which provides a moderate alternate climb from the Overlook Trail to Intemann/Section 16, and a fun "green" fast and flowy descent back down (as always, remember that these are multi-use trails and that bikers must yield to hikers and equestrians, so please ride in control at all times).

Plans are also well underway to extend the Lions Trail significantly to the south per the park's Master Plan – with any luck this extension will be completed later this summer and add some significant "blue" trail mileage to the east side of the park. We also hope to conduct some (socially-distant) trail maintenance days with our friends at Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates to provide some much needed repairs to both the Overlook Trail (specifically the continually eroding switchback on its west side) and the challenging and technical Upper Codell Trail.



Regarding the increase in trail use of late, we all need to do our part to avoid conflicts with other users, whether on bike, foot, or horseback. Personally I've found one of the best ways to prevent potential issues is to ride with a Timberbell. It's basically a small bell that you attach to your handlebars and it rings continuously as you ride in a passive, ice-cream-truck-jingle sort of way. It allows other trail users to hear you coming without having to actively ring the bell "at" them, and I've found it does wonders to help soothe frayed nerves and minimize potential conflicts. I can't count the number of times I've had hikers thank me for having it, and I'd bet 90% of the time they have already yielded to me (even though they don't have to) before I even reach them. (I don't have any personal stake in the company, I just like their product.)

Lastly, given all the new users of late, let's all take a bit of extra time to help bring them into the mountain biking fold in a positive way. New mountain bikers may not know the basic trail etiquette rules for yielding (bikers yield to all other trail users, and downhill riders yield to uphill riders, etc.), or not realize when they've stopped for a break and blocked the trail with their bike, or not know how to fix a flat tire. Let's all try to take a moment to guide them into the sport we love in a way that keeps them coming back for more and teaches them to be good stewards of our natural resources.



Summer Climbing Tips During the Pandemic

Red Rock Canyon Open Space has seen increased use by hikers, mountain bikers, and climbers during the pandemic spring. We all should know the rules of social distancing by now for trail use, including using the park only with family members or close friends that we know have also practiced distancing, staying local to recreate rather than traveling far afield, keeping a minimum of six feet away from other park users, using face masks when appropriate, and not doing anything risky so we don't have to stretch medical resources or put rescue personnel at risk.

Rock climbing, however, is different from other Red Rock Canyon uses. By its nature, climbing is a somewhat solitary sport and climbers usually practice social distancing except if they gather in groups. Climbing is also dangerous, which can burden rescue agencies like the Colorado Springs Fire Department and El Paso County Search and Rescue.

Lastly, climbers run the risk of touching holds with their hands that were also touched by infected people. Levi Yant, a professor of evolutionary genomics, told Alpinist Magazine, "If someone carrying COVID-19 touched rock—or coughed or sneezed on it—there's clear evidence suggesting that, yes, COVID-19 may be contracted via contaminated rock or plastic."



He advised not climbing in groups and avoiding climbing routes after others have been on them.

The Pikes Peak Climber's Alliance adheres to climbing guidelines during this age of plague that were set by the American Alpine Club. **Please follow these basic rules to stay safe when climbing at Red Rock Canyon this summer.**

- Follow federal, state, county, and city health emergency guidelines and recommendations.
- Recreate close to home, don't travel to climb.
- Take cues from local land managers and climbing organizations.
- Keep your outdoor objectives conservative. Climbing accidents place further stress on first responders, search and rescue teams, and hospital staff.
- Be kind, respectful, and patient with one another during this time. We all want to feel safe spending time outside; let's create an environment that allows this.

If you feel confident that you can safely climb at Red Rock Canyon, keep the following questions in mind before heading to the park.

- Do I feel sick or have reason to believe I've recently been exposed to COVID-19?
- Do not go climbing if you feel sick!
 - You may be a carrier of COVID-19 without experiencing symptoms—make decisions based on the most vulnerable members of our community.

Who should I climb with?

- Climb with people from your own home. If you can't do this, climb with just one partner.

Where should I climb?

- Comply with all local climbing organization and land management guidelines.
- Restrict travel and climb close to home. Avoid going to vulnerable rural or gateway communities.

(Continued on page 9)

Trail Improvements

This will be a busy summer for trail improvements and reroutes.

The Lion Trail will be rerouted and lengthened to follow the general layout designated in the Master Plan. On the southern end, the trail will meet the upper Landfill Road (also referred to as the Lion Trail on some maps) and proceed northerly through the scrub oak. This route will eliminate the drop in elevation on the adjacent road. The new route will then join the existing trail for a short stretch before heading into the scrub oak again. The steep rocky hillside section will be eliminated and a more gradual line will lead to a series of switchbacks before joining the Red Rock Rim Trail at the northern end.

Also on the list are improvements to the Parallel trail. The City wants

to eliminate several unsustainable sections of the Parallel Trail. This trail gets its name from the fact that it parallels the main Section 16 Trail. About halfway up the trail is a cutoff that crosses the Section 16 Trail and connects to the Intemann Trail. The plan calls for adding a series of switchbacks. Currently, at the top of the Parallel Trail there is a dropoff to the Section 16/Palmer Red Rock Loop Trail. The City plans to build a more gradual descent to this intersection.

At the intersection with the Section 16/Palmer Red Rock Loop Trail, the Parallel trail will meet the new Waterfall Trail. This trail will switchback down a scrub oak and mountain mahogany hillside until it connects to the Intemann Trail, near the top of the Overlook Trail. There will be

a cutoff to the waterfall (which is dry most of the year) for those that want to explore the deep, dark canyon. Most sections of the original Waterfall Trail will be closed. With the reroute of the Waterfall Trail, there will be an east-west connection across Red Rock Canyon Open Space. Hikers, bikers and horseback riders can start at the new 26th Street trailhead and parking lot (to be completed in July) and proceed west to the Red Rock Canyon Overlook Trail and then connect to the Waterfall Trail and the Parallel Trail or take the Palmer Red Rock Loop.

Enjoy the new trails and don't forget to leave no trace.



Overcoming the Parking Challenge

Sometimes there is enough parking for all the people who want to enjoy our parks and open spaces. We have experienced the frustration when it is too crowded and we can't find a legal parking space. It is not just about adjusting to Covid 19 protocol, our region's population is growing. Soon we will be more than a million people but our natural land can't grow. It is good that we all want to get outside and have some physical exercise. We are all creatures of the planet earth. It is part of what keeps our community mentally and physically healthy. Life is changing and we have to adapt.

One adaption we can make is to use Red Rock Canyon when it is not as busy so we can find parking

spaces. Often there is more parking available in the 31st Street parking lot of Red Rock Canyon. During busy times we can go to Bear Creek Regional Park off 21st street or use the free bus in Manitou Springs to the top of Ruxton Avenue to hike the Ute Indian Trail or the Intemann Trail. We hear that (for now) there is parking available in Garden of the Gods because there are fewer tourist (Who'd of thunk it). You can find your own best place to go during busy times. We are victims of our own success.

The City, County, neighbors and FoRRC collaborated to overcome our parking challenge that makes the neighborhood west of RRC dangerously congested when visitors park on both sides of the street.

(Continued on next page)

Membership Form for Friends of Red Rock Canyon

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Work Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Newsletter Delivery Preference: Via email (full-color, recommended) Via postal mail

Yes, I want to join Friends of Red Rock Canyon for the coming year

Individual/Family membership (\$15) Organization / Business membership (\$30)

I would like to help even more with a contribution of \$ _____.

I would like to be involved in volunteer efforts. Please describe your interest: _____

Please mail this membership for with your check to:

Friends of Red Rock Canyon

PO Box 6754

Colorado Springs, CO 80904-6754

Board Meetings are held at the Westside Community Center, at 1628 West Bijou Street, on the second Monday of each month beginning at 6:30pm.

(Climbing Tips, Continued from page 7)

What should I do if I choose a crag close to home, and when I arrive, it's packed with people?

- Have a plan B, or even plan C. If you get to the crag, and it's too crowded to maintain social distancing guidelines, head to another spot like a less crowded RRC cliff, Garden of the Gods or North Cheyenne Cañon.
- Consider the approach conditions—is the trail vulnerable to erosion or damage if you have to leave the trail to maintain six feet of distance?

What can I do when I get to the cliff to protect myself, my partner, and others?

- Keep your outdoor objectives conservative.



- Practice frequent hand sanitation before, during, and after climbing.
- Treat the rock and gear as you would surfaces at home.
- Wear a mask when near others.
- Avoid putting climbing gear in your mouth—your rope as you pull slack to clip, for example.
- Follow Leave No Trace principles.

(Parking Challenge, continued from previous page)

For safety reasons we had to have no parking on one side of High Street. However, we still need more parking and the City has the answer. The City is adding 45 spaces to the main parking lot. The City is also building a new parking lot in Sand Canyon, west of the entrance circle, with 60 new

spaces and a new trailhead and parking lot for 17 vehicles on 26th Street just north of Gold Camp Road. All of these new parking areas were designated in the 2013 RRC Master Plan. Construction is underway and should be completed in July. Check it Out!

The Red Rock Rag

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We appreciate your support!



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