



## History Time Line

- 1803** - Mountain acquired by the United States in the Louisiana Purchase
- 1806** - "Discovered" and unsuccessfully climbed by Zebulon Pike
- 1820** - Dr. Edwin James of the Long Expedition successfully climbed the mountain
- 1858** - Julia Archibald Holmes was the first woman to climb the mountain
- 1859** - Colorado City founded - 1st town in the region/territory
- 1869** - Gold rush lured prospectors and explorers to the Colorado Territory: "Pikes Peak or Bust"
- 1871** - Colorado Springs founded
- 1873** - The U.S. Army Signal Corps constructed a U.S. Signal Service/Weather Station on the summit
- 1878** - Bridal Path to the summit constructed
- 1889** - The first carriage road completed
- 1891** - The carriage road was abandoned
- 1891** - Gold was discovered in Cripple Creek
- 1891** - The COG Railway began using the now abandoned Weather Station as a terminal
- 1892** - The Pikes Peak Timberland Reserve was created - name later changed to Pike National Forest
- 1893** - Katherine Lee Bates ascended the mountain in a prairie wagon inspiring the words for "America the Beautiful"
- 1895** - "America the Beautiful" set to music and published
- 1899** - Steel observation tower built near the terminal
- 1900** - Observation tower relocated to terminal roof
- 1901** - First horseless carriage - a Locomobile Steamer - made the trip to the summit
- 1905** - Manitou Reservoir was built
- 1915** - Pikes Peak Auto Highway constructed
- 1916** - Highway opened to public
- 1916** - The Pikes Peak Auto Hill Climb began
- 1918** - Barr Trail completed
- 1923** - First fireworks from the summit by the "Frozen Five"
- 1924** - AdAmAn created when an additional person was added to the "Frozen Five"
- 1933** - Crystal and South Catamount Reservoirs completed
- 1935** - The Pikes Peak Auto Highway added to the State Highway System
- 1948** - Responsibility for the Auto Highway was granted to the City of Colorado Springs under a special use permit
- 1953** - Summit House burned
- 1956** - First Pikes Peak Marathon run
- 1963** - Land above 14,000 feet declared National Historic Landmark
- 1964** - Present Summit House constructed
- 1968** - North Catamount Reservoir finished
- 1997** - Pikes Preserve fund established

# CRYSTAL RESERVOIR

## SELF-GUIDED NATURE TRAIL

Welcome to the **Crystal Reservoir** self-guided nature trail. This short trail travels through habitats displaying a variety of plant and animal life. The trail guide corresponds with numbered markers along the way. Your hike on this trail should take 15 to 20 minutes. We hope that you enjoy your hike at Crystal Reservoir. If you have any questions, please contact a Park Ranger or stop by the tollgate.

**While on the trail, please observe the following:**

- **Pets are to be on a leash.**
- **Please do not pick the flowers or disturb the wildlife.**
- **Please do not litter.**
- **Please stay on the trail.**



The trail was designed and developed by the Interpretive Department on Pikes Peak America's Mountain.

Summer 2001

1. **Geology:** Pikes Peak is made up of "Pikes Peak" granite. As you look around, you will see smaller pieces of the pinkish colored granite under your feet. The north face of Pikes Peak has been carved out over millions of years from glacial activity and erosion from the wind, rain, and freezing and thawing.
2. **Limber Pine *Pinus flexilis*:** This tree can be found all over on Pikes Peak. They are generally short, reaching heights of 30 to 50 feet. The branches of this pine vary in length, giving the tree a ragged appearance. The branches are very flexible and bend easily in the wind, giving this tree its name. The needles of the limber pine are 2 to 3.5 inches long, slender and grow in bundles of five. Its yellowish, mature pine cone is egg-shaped and has thick scales. The seeds are favorites of birds such as Clark's Nutcrackers and red crossbills.



(Continue up the stairs to the right.)

3. **Aspen Tree *Populus tremuloides*:** Aspens are one of the most popular and colorful trees in Colorado. The leaves are attached to the twigs by long stems, thus the leaves seem to "quake" in the slightest breeze.
4. **Kinnikinnick *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*:** Also known as Bear Berry, because bears eat the little, red berries that are produced each year. Thick, leathery evergreen leaves help this common mat-forming shrub to survive on dry, sunny slopes in the Colorado mountains.

5. **Creeping Juniper *Juniperus horizontalis*:** A sprawling, evergreen shrub with trailing branches less than 6 inches high. They have sharp, pointed needles. The plants with berries are the females and the egg-shaped pollen cones are the males. Common in the rocky foothills and dry, Montane slopes throughout the Rockies.
6. **Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii*:** A friendly fir. Remember, needles on pines are pointed and prickly. Firs are flat, soft and friendly. A fir can grow up to 250 feet. They have distinct cones with 3-pointed bracts protruding between the scales. They almost look like little, scared mice hiding in the cone with only their back legs and tail hanging out.
7. **Green Gentian:** Look around on the ground and you will see succulent looking plants with broad leaves. This plant takes 7 to 20 years to bloom. Notice the mature, taller plant(s) with green blooms. Also called the "monument plant" because it towers over the other plants. After the plant flowers, it dies.
8. **Life Zones on Pikes Peak:** As you drive up Pikes Peak, you will travel through 4 of the 5 life zones. The first life zone is the "Foothills" (6,000 to 8,000 feet) as you pass through the park's entrance. The second is the "Montane" life zone (8,000 to 9,500 feet). The elevation here, at Crystal Reservoir, is 9,390 feet. The "Sub-alpine" life zone is from 9,500 to 11,500 feet. The fourth life zone is called the "Alpine" and is 11,500 feet and above.

9. **Look for Animal Signs. Tracks and Scat, Oh My!** There are many animals living in this area: black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, elk, mule deer, rabbit, golden mantel ground squirrel, chipmunk and Abert squirrel.
10. **Ponderosa Pine *Pinus ponderosa*:** Its long needles (up to 7 inches in length and arranged in bundles of 2 or 3) easily identify this conifer. These pines must be at least 25 years old before they produce cones. Walk up and smell the bark. Ponderosa pines fill the air with a sweet smell of vanilla or butterscotch, especially when the bark is warmed by the sun. Their cones have scales that end in sharp prickles. The trees can grow to 130 feet and the Ponderosa forest is home to woodpeckers, nuthatches, western tanagers, chickadees, turkeys, mule deer, elk and Abert squirrels.

**Engleman Spruce *Picea engelmannii*:** Notice the tall tree about 60 feet just to the right. It grows up to 130 feet. They have sharp four-sided needles and exude a pungent odor when crushed. Cones often grow in clusters. To identify, look for narrow, spire-like crowns and whorls of drooping lower branches.

11. **North Face Vista and Ranger Barb's Bench for Reflecting.**

**You have come to the end of your journey on the Crystal Reservoir self-guided nature trail. We hope you enjoyed your hike!**

**Thanks for taking our trail today, please recycle your brochure in the box provided!**