

Sycamore Reservoir  
2015/6/1, 1:30000, WGS 84



Palisade Trail

3.5 miles, 4600': The Sycamore Trail ends at a signed junction with the East Fork Trail and the Bear Canyon Trail [Waypoint SR-BR-EF]. From here you can continue onto other trails or re-trace your path back to the Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site.

East Fork Trail

Bear Canyon Trail

3.1 miles, 4500': Unsigned junction with the Bear Canyon Shortcut Trail (often marked with a rather large cairn) [Waypoint SR-BRS].

Bear Canyon Shortcut Trail

2.0 miles, 4600': An older/unofficial trail comes in just before the final descent into the Reservoir area [Waypoint SR03].

Bug Spring Trail

2.2 miles, 4500': At the bottom of a steep hill the vegetation becomes thicker - a trail sign helps point the way - a small spur opposite the trail sign leads to the old dam. [Waypoint SR04]

1.1 miles, 5000': Shreve Saddle! At Shreve Saddle the Molino Basin Trail ends and the Sycamore Reservoir Trail begins as you enter the Pusch Ridge Wilderness [Waypoint SR01].

0.0 miles, 4850': This hike starts from the Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site. If the gate is open use the parking area at the end of the road [Waypoint THGHC]. If the gate is closed park in the upper parking area [Waypoint THGHU].

1.2 miles, 5000': Continue downhill from Shreve Saddle - be careful to stay on the main trail, an older/unofficial trail leaves to the right [Waypoint SR02].

Molino Basin Trail

0.5 miles, 4850': Pass the unmarked junction with the route to Point 4981 Above Hairpin Turn [Waypoint] MB P4981 and follow the trail along the wash - eventually the trail leaves the wash [Waypoint MB08] and climbs to Shreve Saddle.

A short connector trail leaves from the south side of the parking loop between the last small parking area and a large parking pull out. The connector will take you up to a large trail sign - turn right on the Molino Basin Trail [Waypoint MB07].

Soldier Trail

0.2 miles, 4850': Pass the signed junction with the Soldier Trail [Waypoint SO-MB] and continue towards the Sycamore Reservoir Trail.

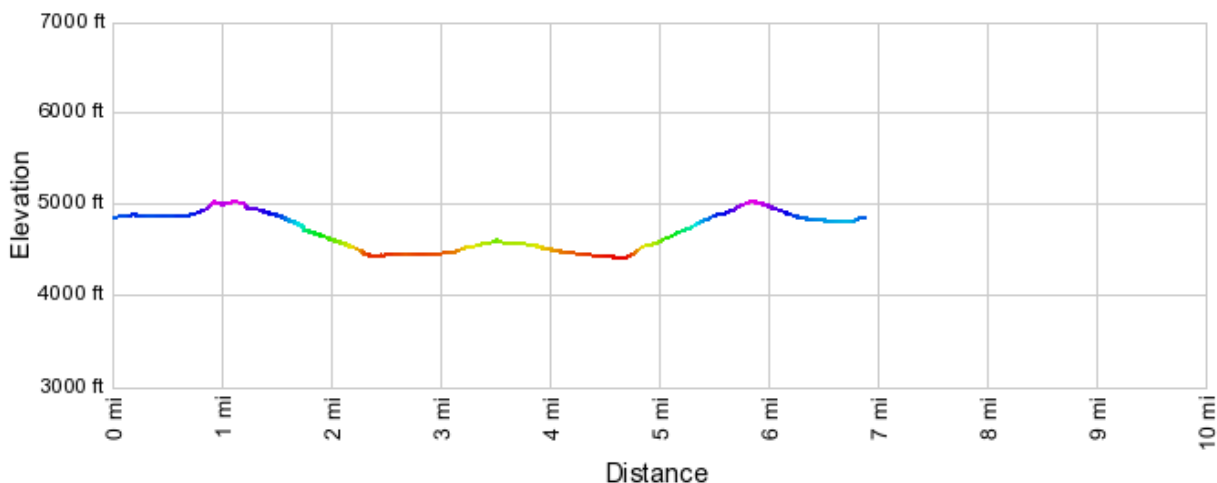
# Sycamore Reservoir Trail

## Overview

From the old Prison Camp this hike takes you up to Shreve Saddle (great views!), plunges down towards Bear Canyon and Sycamore Reservoir (constructed for the Prison Camp – no longer really a ‘reservoir’ but there is often water here), wanders along Sycamore Canyon and finally climbs to a saddle with views of the [East Fork Trail](#) and West Fork Trail. The Sycamore Reservoir Trail #39 is a well-used trail – and for good reason! Just remember as you head down that you will have to hike back up...

- Location: This hike is located in the Santa Catalina Mountains near Tucson, Arizona.
- Start: [Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site \(Lower Highway Hikes\)](#) (Vehicle Access: Most of the drive is Paved Roads/Passenger Car (Mountain Road - be careful of weather conditions!) - the drive to the end of the road parking area is on a dirt road that is generally in good condition and passenger car friendly.)
- End: [Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site \(Lower Highway Hikes\)](#)

- Fee: No
- Driving Distance from Speedway Campbell: 21.3 miles
- Driving Time from Speedway Campbell: 45 Minutes
- Hike Type: Out and Back
- Hiking Distance: 7 miles
- Elevation Gain: 1,100'
- Elevation Loss: 1,100'
- Highest Elevation: 5,000'
- Lowest Elevation: 4,400'
- Downloadable PDF Map: [Sycamore Reservoir Trail Map And Description](#)
- Dogs: Yes
- Bikes: No ([Pusch Ridge Wilderness](#))



# Driving Directions

[Google Maps Directions](#) from the Speedway and Campbell intersection in Tucson to [Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site](#).

Quick version:

- Drive East on Speedway (5.0 miles)
- Left on Wilmot and continue on Tanque Verde (4.3 miles)
- Left on Catalina Highway (11.8 miles)
- Signs mark the turn into the Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site on the down-mountain side of the Highway.
- If the gate is closed: park in the paved upper parking or one of the dirt pullouts and walk to the parking area at the end of the dirt road (this will add to the total mileage of your hike). If the gate is open: drive the 0.3 miles to the parking area at the end of the dirt road. Restrooms are located just before the parking circle at the end of the road (the restrooms may be closed seasonally) – no water is available.



# Trail Notes

This hike is great as an out and back, or use the [East Fork Trail](#) or Bear Canyon Trail to create a longer hike.

The mileages and elevations below are approximate (don't expect the values below to match your GPS exactly).

- 0.0 miles, 4850': This hike starts from the [Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site](#). If the gate is open drive thru the campground area and use the parking area at the end of the road [Waypoint THGHC]. If the gate is closed park in the upper parking area and walk the road (this will add approximately 0.3 miles to your hike) [Waypoint THGHU].
- A short connector trail leaves from the south side of the parking loop between the last small parking area and a large parking pull out. The connector will take you up to a large trail sign for the [Molino Basin Trail](#) [Waypoint MB07]. Turn right onto the [Molino Basin Trail](#).
- 0.2 miles, 4850': Pass the signed junction with the [Soldier Trail](#) [Waypoint SO-MB] and cross a wash near an old wall. Continue towards the Sycamore Reservoir Trail.
- 0.5 miles, 4850': Pass the unmarked junction with the route to [Point 4981 Above Hairpin Turn](#) [Waypoint J MB P4981] and continue along the wash – eventually the trail leaves the wash [Waypoint MB08] and climbs to Shreve Saddle.
- 1.1 miles, 5000': Shreve Saddle! Enjoy the great views – Shreve Saddle is named for [Forrest Shreve](#) – a botanist who moved to Tucson in 1908 and worked at the [Carnegie Institution's Desert Laboratory](#). At Shreve Saddle the [Molino Basin Trail](#) ends and the Sycamore Reservoir Trail begins as you enter the [Pusch Ridge Wilderness](#) (Note: locals will often refer to this entire hike as “the Sycamore Reservoir Trail”...) [Waypoint SR01].
- 1.2 miles, 5000': Continue downhill from Shreve Saddle – be careful to stay on the main trail, an older/unofficial trail leaves to the right not far from the saddle (the unofficial trail will rejoin the main trail but it is better to use the main/official trail) [Waypoint SR02].
- 2.0 miles, 4600': An older/unofficial trail comes in just before the final descent into the Reservoir area [Waypoint SR03].
- 2.2 miles, 4500': At the bottom of a steep hill the vegetation becomes thicker – a trail sign helps point the way – a small spur opposite the trail sign leads to the old dam (worth a visit – be careful on the old structure...). There is a great picture in [Look to the Mountains](#) that shows the reservoir filled with water and the building on the east side of the dam (for years I assumed that the concrete platform on the east side of the dam had always been open like it is now – what a surprise to see the building!). [Waypoint SR04]
- 3.1 miles, 4500': Unsigned junction with the Bear Canyon Shortcut Trail (often marked with a rather large cairn) [Waypoint SR-BRS].
- 3.5 miles, 4600': The Sycamore Trail ends at a signed junction with the [East Fork Trail](#) and the Bear Canyon Trail [Waypoint SR-BR-EF]. From here you can continue onto other trails or re-trace your path back to the [Gordon Hirabayashi Recreation Site](#).

6/1/2015