

Queen Creek Canyon

Queen Creek Canyon is one of Arizona's best winter climbing destination. The area is about 1 1/2 hours east of Phoenix and elevation is around 4000 feet. The rock is a thick formation of ash that was deposited between 15 and 24 million years ago and harden by heat and pressure. Today, you will find nice compact cliffs in the canyon above Highway 60. Pinnacles on the Oak Flat and lots of Boulders also on the Oak Flat.



When to go

Lots of South facing cliffs make the area one of the best winter destination in Arizona. October to April are the best time to climb at Queen Creek Canyon. Sometimes winter can be chilly, but the next warm day will come fore sure. Summer can get very hot, way too hot for climbing. However, Atlantis, down in the canyon might stay pretty cool (not covered in this guide).

Restriction, Access, Ethics and Family Issues

Most of the climbing is on public land, the Tonto National Forest. No restriction except that climbing along Highway 60 in the Canyon is prohibited. Dogs are allowed in all areas but the approach to the Pond might be a problem. There are many easy climbs in the Mine Area for your kids. Also a good playground. Approach to the Pond might be too dangerous.

Hazards and Emergencies

Rattle Snakes and Tarantulas are common in the area. Stuff can break out and rock fall is common. Approach to the Pond is tricky. Emergency call 911. Cobra Valley Community Hospital, 1 Hospital Drive, Claypool, AZ 85532, 520-425-3261

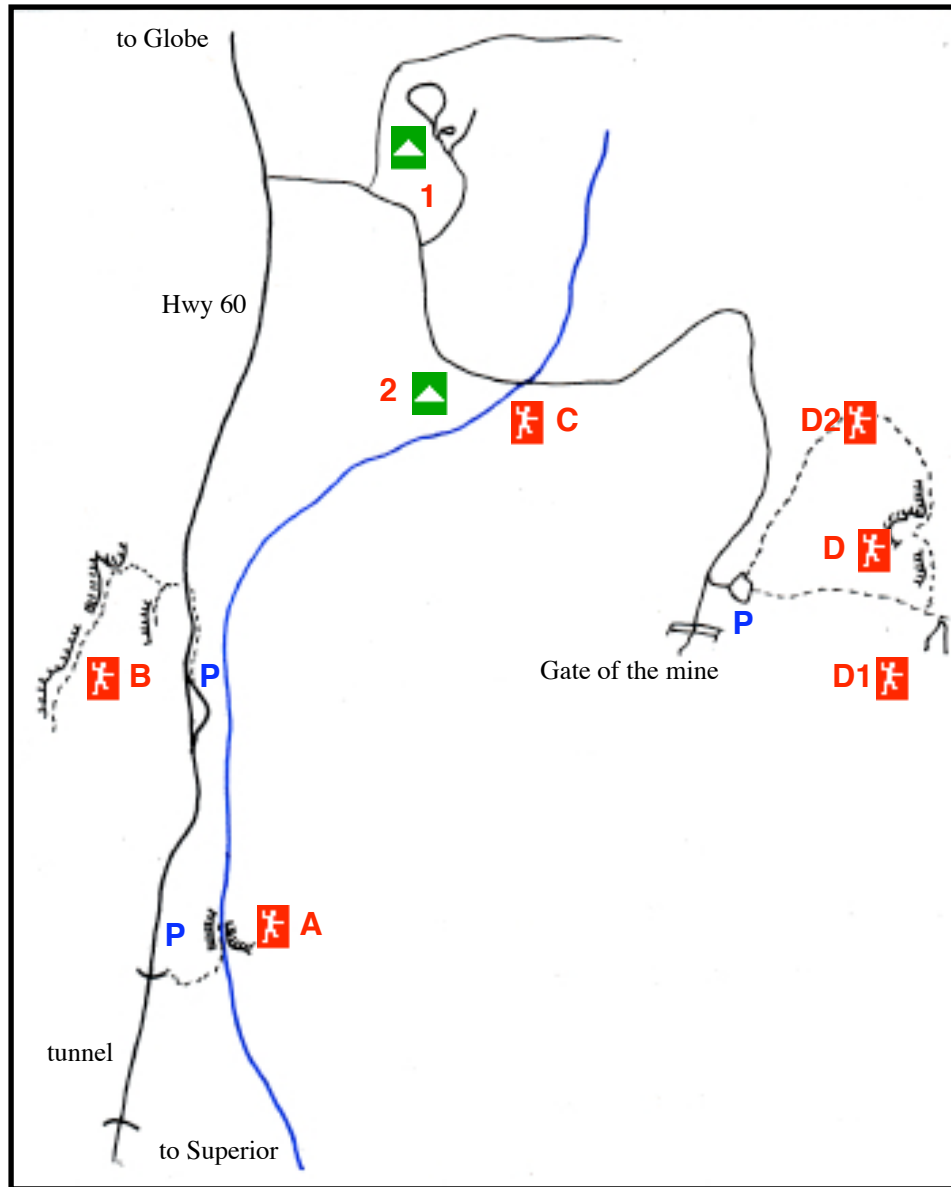
Camping

Free camping at the Oak Flat Campground, 14 days limit, primitive camping further up the road towards the Mine Area directly in the bouldering area in the National Forest (some of those spots have even a own boulder)

Guidebooks

The Rock Jocks Guide to Queens Creek Canyon by Marty Karabin Jr.

Overview



Getting there

Queen Creek Canyon lies about 60 miles East of Phoenix between Superior and Globe on Highway 60. In fact it is just a couple miles past Superior if coming from Phoenix.

Climbing

- a Atlantis (not covered)
- b The Pond
- c Oak Flat Bouldering
- d The Mine Area
Upper Looner Land
- d1 Entrance Boulder
- d2 Lower Looner Land (not covered)

Camping

- 1 Oak Flat Campground
official free camping, no water
- 2 a few primitive camping spots

The Pond

- The Lower Pond Wall
- The Upper Pond Wall

3
4
4

Services and more

5



The Pond

The Pond is the most popular crag in the Queen Creek climbing area. Several moderate to hard climbs are found here. The South facing cliffs makes it also one of the best winter destination in Arizona. However, the Highway, the approach and sometimes the rock quality are kind of a drawback. We highly recommend helmets for both, the climber and the belayer.

The climbing is mostly steep and pumpy. Lots of tiny pockets all over the place. Some cracks can be found as well

Unknown climber on a unknown route right of Pocket Puzzle (Upper Pond West)

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Type | | Approach | | about 10 - 20 min | Altitude | 4000 ft / 1250m |
| Style | | Descent | | bolts with chain | Length | 110 ft / 35m |
| Rock | Tuff | Gear | 220 ft / 70m rope, 12 quick draws, Helmet | | Exposure | mostly South |
| Grade | US 5.8 - 5.12a | Protection | | | Commitment | |



Unknown climber on a unknown route right of Pocket Puzzle (Upper Pond West)



Unknown climber on a unknown route right

The Lower Pond Wall

The cliffs at the Lower Pond Wall are already a bit away from the Highway. Climbing therefore is allowed. The two routes far to the left are a lot of fun and worth climbing. All climbs are bolt protected and the anchors are in a good shape.



Approach

From the parking area walk up the canyon along Highway 60 on the right side. Cross the road at the bridge (do not walk over the Highway). Most of the climbing is to your left (also see page 3).



- a Unknown, moderate
- b Unknown, moderate
- c Liquid Sunshine, 5.10c

The Upper Pond Wall

The cliffs at the Lower Pond Wall are already a bit away from the Highway. Climbing therefore is allowed. The two routes far to the left are a lot of fun and worth climbing. All climbs are bolt protected and the anchors are in a good shape.



Approach

From the parking area walk up the canyon along Highway 60 on the right side. Cross the road at the bridge (do not walk over the Highway). Most of the climbing is to your left (also see page 3).



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Services and more

Grocery:

- Limited in Superior. Saveway and other shops in Globe

Restaurant

- Fine and cheap Mexican just at the Rest Area in Superior

Water / Showers:

- Water can be found at the rest area in Superior

Internet Access:

- Public Library in Globe

Outdoor Gear:

- REI in Paradise Valley and Tempe (Phoenix), check out [ww.rei.com](http://www.rei.com) for directions and maps

Other activities and attractions

- **Mountain Biking** is popular in the area. Many dirt roads and trails in the Oak Flat Area
- **Hiking / Back Country** Possible but not that nice
- **Jogging** is nice around the Oak Flat Campground
- **Tonto National Monument** protects two old pueblos high above the Tonto Basin
- Check out www.rockandmusic.com for more information

Climbing areas close by you will find on www.rockandmusic.com

- **Superstition Mountains** about an hour towards Phoenix on Highway 60
- **Mount Lemmon** close to Tucson

Other climbing areas close by

- Many other areas around Queen Creek Canyon including Atlantis and Devil's Canyon
- Several crags around Phoenix

RaM Experience Board

Always check out the RaM Experience Board before you head out to a climbing area. There might be an important message. Should you encounter anything special could we kindly ask you to add your experience/comment to the RaM Experience Board. A big thanks from all the other climbers.

Please read this

We were in all the covered areas and climbed there too. The pictures, the Real Picture Topos and the given information are from us. However, there is no guarantee that the given information and the line of the routes are correct. Climbing is a risk and everybody should be aware of what he/she is doing and be able to judge the situation. We can not be responsible for any problem, accidents or other consequences that may happen while using information given in this guide.