



Tecopa Area Field Trip

February 20 & 21, 2016

Field Trip: This is a field trip planned by the 2016 Multi-Club Field Trip Committee, planned by representatives of several local lapidary clubs who desire to create interesting field trips for their members.

Field Trip Leaders: Robert Burson (Searchers) – bursonrocks at verizon.net (562) 706-4892 and Andrew Hoekstra (Delvers) – ajhoekstra at yahoo.com (562) 584-3190.

Where: Tecopa Area and Sperry Wash for collecting of rocks, minerals, fossils and exploring mine sites and other interesting activities! The area is 50 miles north of Baker, California.

Collecting: Trilobites, petrified wood, opals and more. Agate is found at Sperry Wash, but the area is best known for "petrified bog" with permineralized palm (roots, bases & axis cuts), wood (birch & cottonwood), and grasses, from 1 or 2 million years ago.

Duration: This can be a one day trip from LA, or an overnight (see camping and lodging details). Since this trip is so close to Las Vegas and Death Valley, some participants will want to continue to these areas following the field trip.

Access:

- Paved highway all the way to the Tecopa meeting site and local motels.
- The trilobite collecting site is adjacent to a paved highway.
- The unpaved roads are probably fine for normal cars as far as the talc mines.
- We will be walking around in Sperry Wash and good shoes are recommended.
- If we opt to drive into Sperry Wash high-clearance is necessary (not necessarily 4WD) and we will partner up with those who have such vehicles in that case.

Bring: Bring the usual provisions, rock pick, spray bottle, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, snacks and plenty of water.

Details:

1. Participants will meet at the Denny's in Baker at 9:00 AM on Saturday, February 20th. Be sure to fill your gas tank in Baker, and use a restroom.
2. Those who plan on arriving earlier or from another direction can proceed directly to the camping site, which is our meeting location in the field. Contact the field trip co-leader for directions – Andrew Hoekstra. The last time we checked there was no cell service at the collecting area, so plan ahead!
3. Following a head count and briefing we will caravan north on Hwy 127 to the group camp site, on the west side of CA-127, about 2 miles north of the intersection of Spanish Trails Highway - across from the ruins of the old 1900's Zabriskie Railroad Station. Look for rock club marker. See the attached map.
4. On Saturday we will start with the Trilobite collecting site. Saturday's lunch break will be at the famous China Ranch Date Farm. In the afternoon we will work our way into Sperry Wash. There is a restroom at China Ranch, otherwise there are no facilities.
5. Saturday Night. There will be a potluck on Saturday night for those staying at the group camp. Bring a food dish to share - firewood, too.
6. Sunday will bring more exploring and collecting. The scouting party found a nice precious opal and saw some others collected by an unrelated party.



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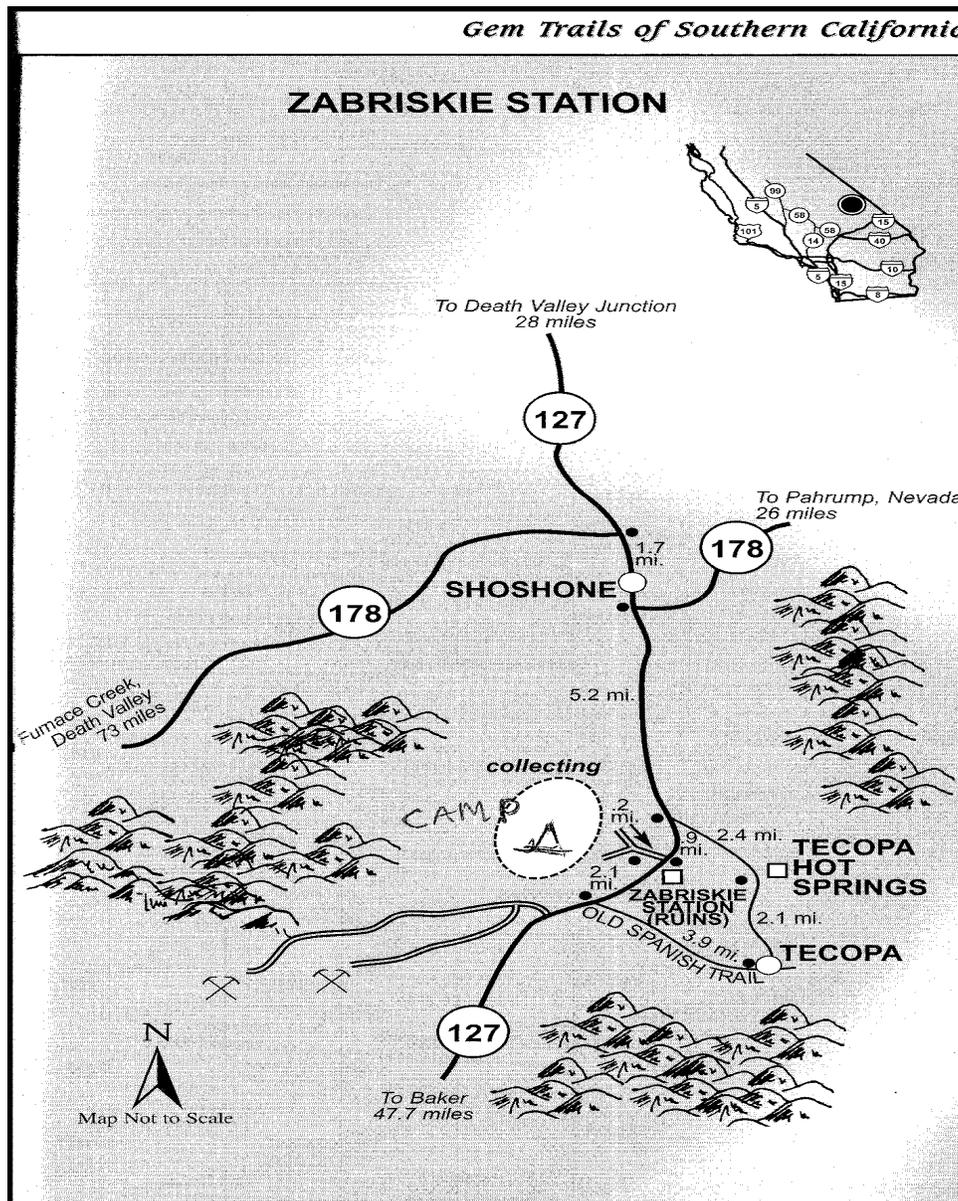
Map and Directions

Directions to Denny's in Baker, CA

1. Allow 3 hours to drive the 168 miles from Pasadena to Baker.
2. From the Lake Avenue entrance to the 210 Freeway, drive east 37 miles to where I-15 intersects.
3. Merge onto I-15 N via EXIT 64A toward Barstow and drive 130 miles.
4. Take the CA-127/Kelbaker Rd exit, EXIT 246, toward Death Valley.
5. At the end of the exit ramp turn left and then right onto Baker Boulevard for 0.44 miles.
6. Arrive at Denny's Restaurant at 72415 Baker Boulevard.

Directions to the camping/meeting area (Allow one hour of driving)

1. From Denny's, drive southwest on Baker Boulevard to the 2nd right onto Death Valley Rd/CA-127.
2. Drive 47.88 miles to the intersection of CA-127 and Old Spanish Trail Hwy.
3. Drive 2.1 miles. On the right are the Zabriskie Station ruins. The meeting/camping area is on the left.
4. We will be monitoring channel 4.11 or channel 4 on FRS radios.





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Accommodations Near the collecting sites

Note: The fortunes of remote desert motels are fickle, so be sure you have a reservation before planning to stay there!
As of our most recent Google Search these were the current motels in Baker.

Tecopa Hot Springs Resort (760) 852-4420

860 Tecopa Hot Springs Road, Tecopa, Ca. 92389

Website: www.tecopahotsprings.org/

Info: Simple resort with mineral water tubs Motel rooms, cabins, dry camping and hook-ups. Cabins and motel rooms are simply decorated with basic furnishings, and they don't have TVs or telephones. Rooms have bathrooms with showers. Cabins have toilets and sinks, some include showers and/or kitchenettes. The resort features 5 private hot springs soaking tubs for guest use. There's also an on-site bistro with a seasonal menu featuring locally grown organic food, a meditation labyrinth and an art gallery. Resort facilities are shared with a campsite.

Directions: Hwy 15 north, to Baker. Take the Kelbaker road hwy 127 north for 48 miles. Turn right (east) at Old Spanish Trail. At Tecopa town center, turn left (north) on Tecopa Hot Springs Road. The resort is 2 miles ahead at the northeast corner of Tecopa Hot Springs and Noonday Road.

Delight's Hot Springs Resort (760) 852-4343

368 Hot Springs Rd , Tecopa, CA 92389

Website: www.delightshotspringsresort.com/

Info: Rustic desert spot with 4 mineral pools, Wi-Fi & a mix of cabins, motel rooms, suites & an RV park.

Directions: Take the I-15 north. Take the second Baker Exit. Turn left onto Highway 127 heading toward Death Valley (look for the Death Valley National Park road sign). Travel about 51 miles. Turn right on the Old Spanish Trails Highway towards Tecopa. Turn left onto Tecopa Hot Springs Road. Travel two miles. Look for the old red Dutch windmill on the right hand side - you've made it!

Shoshone Inn and Trailer RV Park (760) 852-4569

Hwy 127, in the center of Shoshone, CA

Website: <http://shoshonevillage.com/shoshone-inn.html>

Info: The Shoshone Inn is conveniently located in the heart of Shoshone Village only a short stroll from the Crowbar Café and Saloon, the Charles Brown General Store, and the Shoshone Museum. Lodging in Death Valley has never been more convenient.

Since the early 1900s Shoshone Village has been a base camp for visitors exploring the Death Valley National Park. Shoshone Inn offers old west hospitality in a contemporary setting featuring seventeen rooms complete with wireless access and telephones. Five rooms have kitchenettes for extended stays in addition to a bungalow called the "Whiffletree" named by Levi Noble, a famous Death Valley geologist. The Whiffletree has a full kitchen, living room and an inviting outdoor area which is a great venue for meetings and groups.

Directions: From Baker, drive 56.6 miles on CA-127 to the town of Shoshone.

Cynthia's Hostel - (760) 852-4580

2001 Old Spanish Trail Hwy, Tecopa, CA 92389

Website: www.discovercynthias.com/

Info: Desert retreat with lodging in vintage trailers, hostel beds & Native American-style tents. It is without cell phone connection, high speed internet, crime, stress, social pressures. It has dark night skies and perfect quiet.

Directions: From CA-127, turn right onto Old Spanish Trail Highway. Drive 5.3 miles. Destination will be on the right.

Tecopa Palms RV Park (760) 852-4347

155 Tecopa Hot Springs Road, Tecopa, CA 92389



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Accommodations, Notes, Reference

50 minutes away in Baker

Note: The fortunes of Baker motels are fickle, so be sure you have a reservation before planning to stay there! As of our most recent Google Search these were the current motels in Baker.

Bun Boy Motel — 72130 Baker Blvd. 760-733-4363

Will's Fargo Motel, 72252 Baker Blvd. 760-733-4477

Notes from Robert Burson:

Sperry Wash is an incredible outside museum - it contains a tremendous quantity of petrified organic materials. Petrified woods, palm, cycad, and variety of roots and twigs. This was riparian environment, probably a glaciated fed swamp. The thicknesses of the materials are in some places ten feet thick. Colors of material are gray, orange, red, and pink. Just down the road is the south entrance to Death Valley centered around Tecopa Hot Springs, which gives us the opportunity take a warm mineral bath. This might be a consideration if the majority wishes. To the south end our collecting area is the Amargosa River. There are pools that are inviting deep enough for a few hearty individuals. Of course you will have to share the water with tadpoles and pupfish, but this can be very delightful on a warm day. The road in to the south end of Sperry Wash is challenging as well as scenic. It is hard to imagine that this was once a paved road in the 30s. Ruins of mining operations and camping during the depression compose many of the man-made sights. Those miners looking for gold and silver settled for borates, talc and gypsum.

This is an environmentally sensitive area. No driving is permitted off road because of its Wilderness status. Walking is required. I suggest you wear good walking shoes, and bring a backpack with the necessary provisions, rock pick, spray bottle, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, snacks and plenty of water. There are no restroom facilities in this area. This area is badland topography, resembling areas of the southwest where petrified wood is found. One collecting location on the old Spanish trail is a Cambrian Trilobite location, which is a reasonable deposit for really old fossils. These bugs are about the same age as the Marble Mountains, trilobites, Cambrian. Geological note: the nearby Dumont Sand Dunes are not only fairly spectacular but they are composed of white gypsum, which makes them a rare feature. I hope you will find this a fascinating area! China Ranch is an oasis date farm which will be on the docket. Try the cookies and date shakes, a tasty choice. Don't forget a trip to the hot springs, feels great on those sore muscles. Oh yes we do the Saturday night potluck. This field trip truly has the characteristics of a great one! Other locations we'll look at for collecting are Tecopa Hot Springs for fire opal reeds, somewhat rare but well worth it. There is also Kingston Mountain for amethyst, Halloran Springs for turquoise, but not this weekend. — RB

Quick Reading — before we go:

<http://thesciencegirl.com/nopah-range-trilobite-dig>

<http://woostergeologists.scotblogs.wooster.edu/2013/03/14/exploring-the-tecopa-region-and-finally-the-trilobites/>

<http://donaldkenney.x10.mx/SITES/CANOPAH/CANOPAH.HTM>

<http://archive.pahrumpvalleytimes.com/2009/Sep-04-Fri-2009/news/30999908.html>

Rockhounding California - Page 108 - Sperry Wash

http://www.nealrideoutphotography.com/sperry_wash



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Tips For Overnight Camping

8/26/2015

Basics for overnight camping

These are some ideas for preparing for overnight camping. Campers must be self-sufficient and not depend upon other campers for their needs.

Shelter: tent with rain cover, trailer or vehicle. Two plastic tarps. Enough bungee cords and tent stakes to meet your needs.

Sleeping: warm sleeping bag and ground pad or mattress, wool blanket, pillow

Toilet: have access to one in a nearby town, carry a portable or have a shovel and seek privacy nearby. Coleman makes a fold-up enclosure that doubles as a shower and toilet enclosure.

Folding table for cooking, eating and working off of the ground.

Cooking:

- metal utensils, including slotted spoon, ladle, spatula, can opener.
- 14" frying pan
- 4 quart metal pot
- Cup - metal, ceramic or sturdy plastic for hot beverages.
- heating device: fuel stove or burner.
- If planning to cook over a fire - bring quick-lighting product such as Duraflame Fire Logs (one per cooked meal), a steel fire grille large enough to set on rocks over your fire log and cook on (20" minimum), a hot pad and something to get your food off of the fire.
- Soap, sponge, mesh and steel scrubbers.

Eating: Paper plates and bowls, paper or plastic cups, plastic utensils. Enough for each meal.

Chair - those with a side table and cup holders are convenient.

Lights:

Head lamp for hands-free task work.

Flashlight - strong battery LED type with extra batteries.

Lantern (optional but a nice accessory) - battery or gas model.

Notes: Those lights and lanterns that use multiple C or D batteries are usually more cost effective than those that use one 6volt battery). The new LED models provide longer hours of use and provide more light.

Ice Chest plus a small insulated tote for lunches.

Water - containers to allow at least 2 gallons a day, plus water during activities. The 7 gallon size carried by Wal-Mart travels well.

Food:

- Plan your meals carefully. Make a day-by-day meal plan and list each item that you will need to bring to meet your plan.
- Purchase only what you can prepare with the resources that you have (i.e.: don't bring steaks if you don't have the cooking equipment, don't bring cereal if you don't have milk, bowls and spoons).
- There are excellent canned, pre-cooked and frozen products that can be reheated with little effort by boiling or heating in a pot or skillet.

Meal Plan - This is an idea of what a meal plan might look like:

Breakfast: 1cup dry cereal, 1 cup milk, 1 banana, 1 instant coffee

Lunch: 2 slices bread, 2oz peanut butter, 2oz jelly, bottled water

Dinner: 1 can soup or re-warmed fried chicken

Other: bug spray, warm clothes for the cool nights, light clothes for the sunny afternoons, hiking shoes, sunscreen, large brim hat, first aid kit, shovel, rock hammer or pick, gad or chisel, sledges, collecting bags, buckets, day pack, eye protection, sturdy shoes, drinking water, trash bags and the usual stuff you bring when you camp. Food for the potluck.