

# TONTO National Forest



Recreation  
Opportunity  
Guide

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HIKING AND TRAIL RIDING

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## COTTONWOOD CR. TRAIL 247

### RANGER DISTRICT

Cave Creek Ranger Station  
40202 N. Cave Creek Rd.  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85262  
Phone (480) 595-3300 Fax (480) 595-3346

### TRAILHEADS (TH)

Spur Cross TH  
Cave Creek TH (Fee required)  
Bronco TH

### TERMINI INFORMATION

**East end:** (3320 feet elevation): at Cave Creek Trail 4, approx ½ mile west of Seven Springs Campground

**West end:** (2440 feet elevation): Spur Cross Trailhead

### TRAIL INFORMATION

**Trail use:** Light

**Trail difficulty:** More difficult

**Trail length:** 10.4 miles

**Season of Use:** All year

**USGS maps:** New River Mesa, Humboldt Mountain

**Elevation change:** 1440 feet

### TRAIL NARRATIVE

The east end of the Cottonwood Trail branches off the Cave Creek Trail just south of Forest Road (FR) 24B and west of the Cartwright Ranch. It climbs to Bronco Creek and parallels it for a couple of miles. It then climbs over the divide between the Bronco and Cottonwood drainages and follows down Cottonwood Creek for 3 miles. The next couple of miles lead to Spur Cross Trailhead.

### ATTRACTIONS

- Cottonwood Trail provides a nice opportunity for a loop hike or ride of 20 miles, when including the Cave Creek Trail. To make the entire loop, a hiker should allow 2 days; however, a horseback rider can make the loop in one long day.
- This trail provides access to Skull Mesa Trail 248 and Quien Sabe Trail 246.
- This is a varied and scenic hike or ride. It passes through areas of historic interest. Part of the trail was once used as a travel way and a cattle trail to Phoenix from the ranches to the north.
- The higher areas of the trail have stands of chaparral, while at the lower regions there are saguaros.
- This trail passes through the Arizona Upland Phase of the Sonoran Desert and through riparian areas of sycamore and cottonwood.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Closed to motor vehicles.
- Caution should also be taken when using this trail in the summer heat.
- **If you PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!!**
- Carry an adequate supply of drinking water. One gallon/per person/ per day is recommended during hot periods.
- Be sure to allow plenty of time if you are not familiar with the routes.
- Do not drink untreated water. Giardia, a protozoan, is in many water impoundments and streams.