

Melanie's Upcoming Events:

The Hayduke Trail (HDT). This is an 820+ mile hike starting in Arches National Park in Utah, extending through many National Parks in Utah and Arizona and ending in Zion National Park in Utah.

Yeti (my husband), Mike O'Brien and I have already spent months planning this trip. We have tons of map info thanks to Yeti's technical expertise: GPS tracks, paper maps and Avenza maps (all geo-referenced). I've read numerous journals from past hikers and read the original guide book several times - working on my next read! Even though I always think I have all the equipment I need, I always end up buying new stuff. This year, I'm trying a Gossamer Gear Mariposa pack along with my trusty Zpack Arc Blast. I also purchased a free standing tent by Henry Shires (Tarp tent) - the Bowfin 1S. It seems really nice. Heavier than the Aeon Notch Li (my other tent option), but I have the ability to switch tents as I choose. The difficulty of the terrain and getting stakes into hard soil or soft sand prompted me to get a free-standing tent, which I always wanted anyway! Same thing goes for the pack: I can switch off and see which works better.

There are so many challenges for this hike: desert terrain, slot canyons, cold more than heat, snow, steep climbs and descents with exposure, hitching across the Colorado River - and the dreaded Nankoweap Trail. I hiked this trail over 20 years ago and hoped never to repeat the experience. It has some really hairy, steep and exposed sections where the trail is less than one foot wide with a death-defying drop on one side. But, hey I was less experienced then. Last fall's fire in the Grand Canyon in the area where we do a final bushwhack down the north side from Muav Saddle may make this section even more difficult (it's known to be one of the toughest of the trail if not the toughest). I'm a bit nervous, but cannot wait to do this hike. It has been on my to do list for some time.

To follow this trip go to Melanie's Trail Journal at:

<http://www.trailjournals.com/MelanieHDT2020/>