

Canyoneering

Canyoneering is not a new adventure sport. Intrepid canyoneers have been exploring canyons throughout the American Southwest for several decades. However, the growth in its popularity over the past few years can only be described as phenomenal. States with significant canyoneering activity currently include Utah, Arizona, Colorado, California and Washington. Other states with canyon terrain – including Texas, Nevada, Oregon and Hawaii – are likely to experience increased canyoneering activity over the next few years.

People are drawn to canyoneering for a variety of reasons – the beauty and solitude of the canyons, the technical problem solving challenges and the unique combination of hiking, swimming, climbing and rappelling (often over waterfalls).

Canyons provide very diverse venues, from the dry and semi-dry sculpted sandstone canyons of the Colorado Plateau (southern Utah and northern Arizona) to the swift water canyons of Washington and Colorado. The skills required to descend canyons safely varies with the terrain. Some require specialized anchors, rigging systems and pothole escape techniques. Others require a combination of advanced rope work and swift water techniques.

Canyoneering includes risks that stem from objective hazards (i.e. adverse weather, flash floods, desert heat, cold water, rock fall) and subjective hazards (i.e. lack of appropriate skills, preparation or equipment). Accidents have occurred; some resulting in serious injuries and fatalities. As the sport continues to grow and attract increasing numbers of participants, rescue teams will be called to respond with greater frequency.

Topics to be addressed in the presentation include:

- History and growth of canyoneering in the U.S.
- Geographic and geomorphic factors in canyoneering
- Overview of modern canyoneering techniques
- Objective and subjective hazards that contribute to canyoneering accidents
- Unique terrain and hydraulic features that will complicate rescues

About the Presenter

Rich Carlson: Rich started climbing in 1973 while living in Boulder, Colorado, and has since enjoyed climbing and canyoneering throughout the U.S., Latin America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. He owned and operated an AMGA accredited guide service in Phoenix from 1990 to 2002; the first in the U.S. to offer canyoneering.

Rich has held certifications in technical rope rescue and swift water rescue (SRT2). In 1999 he became the first American certified as a canyon guide in Europe and subsequently founded the American Canyoneering Association (ACA) to promote safety, responsibility and ethics.

The ACA, based in Cedar City, Utah, now serves more than 3,000 members. Its courses, certification programs and canyon rendezvous draw participants from across the country and around the world.

Additional biographic information at:

<http://www.wildernessadventures.com/yourguide.html>

American Canyoneering Association's website is at:

<http://www.canyoneering.net>

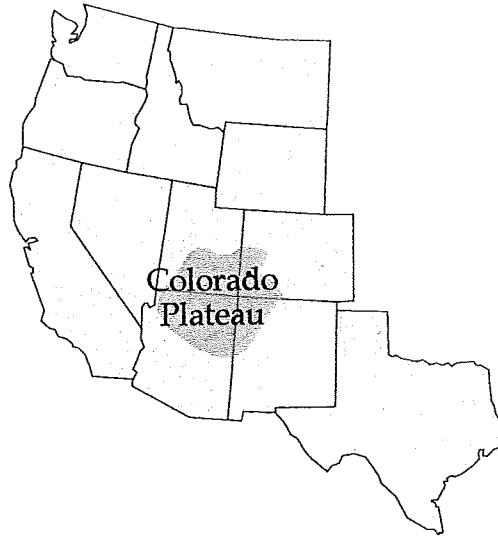


www.canyoneering.net

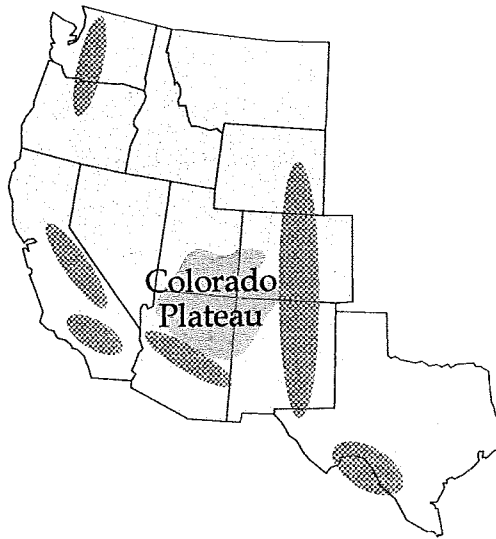
CANYONEERING

aka Canyoning

The Colorado Plateau



... Everything Else



ACA Canyon Rating System

Terrain - Techniques

- Class 1 : Canyon Hiking
- Class 2 : Basic Canyoneering
- Class 3 : Intermediate Canyoneering
- Class 4 : Advanced Canyoneering

ACA Canyon Rating System

Water - Current

- Class A : Dry
- Class B : Pools
- Class C : Current

ACA Canyon Rating System

Time - Commitment

- I : Short
- II : Half Day
- III : Most of a Day
- IV : Long Full Day
- V : Overnight
- VI : Multi Day

ACA Canyon Rating System

Risk

- R : Higher than Normal
- X : Extreme

ACA Canyon Rating System

Examples

- 3B
- 3B IV R

CANYONEERING

Skills & Techniques

Canyoneering vs Climbing

"It's only rappelling ..."

- Water
- Direction of Travel – Descending
- Commitment
- Anchors
- Temperature Extremes
- Additional Risks

Specialized Systems

"It depends ..."

- Rigging Double vs Single Rope?
- Fixed vs Releasable Rope?
- Figure Eight vs Tube (ATC)?
- Self-Belays (autoblocks)?
- Safety Tethers?

CANYON RESCUE

Accidents in the News

- Kolob Canyon
- Antelope Canyon
- Interlaken, Switzerland
- Choprock Canyon
- Heaps Canyon
- Knotted Rope Canyon
- Pine Creek

Challenges

- Vertical Rescue ?
- Horizontal Movement
- Restricted Space
- Silos and Bomb Bays
- Dynamic Environments
- Water Water Water
- Pothole Escapes
- Cold Water and Ice
- Anchors

ACA Resource

- Technical Canyoneering Courses
- Canyon Leader-Mentor Training
- Guide Certification
- Canyon Rescue Training/ Consulting
- Online Forums
- Canyon Database
- Accident Reports/ Database