

GEOLOGY of EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS, COURTHOUSE ROCK, CEMETERY RIDGE and NOTTBUSCH BUTTE

“The 15-mile stretch of the Eagletail Mountains which includes the formidable Courthouse Rock, forms the northern boundary of the wilderness. This jagged range rises nearly 2,000 feet above the Harquahala Plain and is the remnant of a volcanic dike that was formed nearly 20,000,000 years ago. It consists of a mixture of basalt and rhyolite flows, that are punctuated by several exposures of yellow tuff, a rock formed from cemented volcanic ash and dust.

To the south lies Cemetery Ridge which is composed of a wide variety of crystalline rocks such as diorite and pegmatite. The highest peaks are capped with a dark basaltic rock similar to, but younger than, those found in the



Eagletail Mountains distinctive ridge line is 15 miles long and includes a wide variety of Sonoran desert plants and animals.

Eagletail Mountains. The dramatic Nottbusch Butte dominates this area and sits atop one of the few local exposures of sandstone and other sedimentary rocks.

As you travel throughout this area, you are bound to wander upon other interesting geologic specimens such as quartzite, geodes, fluorite, and marble. Feel free to collect one or two for yourself, but understand that commercial rock hounding and prospecting are prohibited”*.

*From Bureau of Land Management hiking trail kiosk sign. For more about the Eagletail Wilderness and surrounding BLM land see: http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/blm_special_areas/wildareas/eagletail.html