

**WORTHINGTON FIELD STUDIES, INC.  
SUMMER 2011 – DESERT SOUTHWEST**

**HAZARDS LIST**

While on this field study experience some hazards beyond highway travel are:

**HYPOTHERMIA** is the inability of a body to stay warm is always present. We will be in conditions where we can get wet and cold. It is important to know and recognize the first signs of hypothermia.

**FALLS** can occur anywhere and at anytime, especially if you are tired. When we are in conditions where falls can happen very easily (wet, muddy or icy surfaces, loose gravel or snow), we will not tolerate horseplay.

**INSECT OR SPIDER BITES** are infrequent at high altitudes but can "zap" you anywhere. Some areas we will be in can have ticks which may carry Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever or Lyme Disease. Insect/Tick repellent is recommended as are bite kits if you are allergic. You must tell us of any allergic conditions you have.

**GETTING LOST** is minimized by NOT hiking alone, informing others where and when you go anywhere, and by carrying and knowing how to use a compass and map.

**DEHYDRATION** occurs very easily at high altitudes when hiking. Your body uses water much more rapidly than when sitting at home. It is a general rule that you should drink at least 3 or 4 quarts of water daily. While hiking, the recommended amount is one quart each hour.

**BURNS** can happen quickly around fire pits, while cooking meals or lighting lanterns. If you forget how to operate a stove or lantern safely, ask one of the leaders.

**SUNBURNS** above 10,000 feet as well as in the desert, can happen within twenty minutes on unprotected skin. It can happen more quickly if you are prone to burning. Because of the increased intensity of sunlight we recommend a 15 SPF or higher-rated sunscreen no matter how tan you are.

**LIGHTNING AND STORMS** arise quickly in the mountains. At times we will be the tallest objects on open grounds. You must be aware of the proper procedures in stormy situations.

**ALTITUDE SICKNESS** can happen to anyone above 8500 feet regardless of how fit you are. It begins as a headache even when you are climbing slowly. Gentle exercise, water, a snack and getting to a lower altitude usually corrects the illness.

**GIARDIA** can be contracted by drinking any untreated water. It is caused by a protozoan and can be difficult to treat. You may feel weak and have severe intestinal pain. All untreated water **MUST** be filtered, treated with iodine or boiled.

**PLANTS** in some areas will be dangerous, such as poison ivy or small cacti needles. These plants will be identified and you will be able to recognize and avoid them. The easiest way to avoid cactus needles (and sharp glass and rocks) is to wear shoes at all times.

These are the most common hazards. Other hazards will be covered in greater detail during trip.