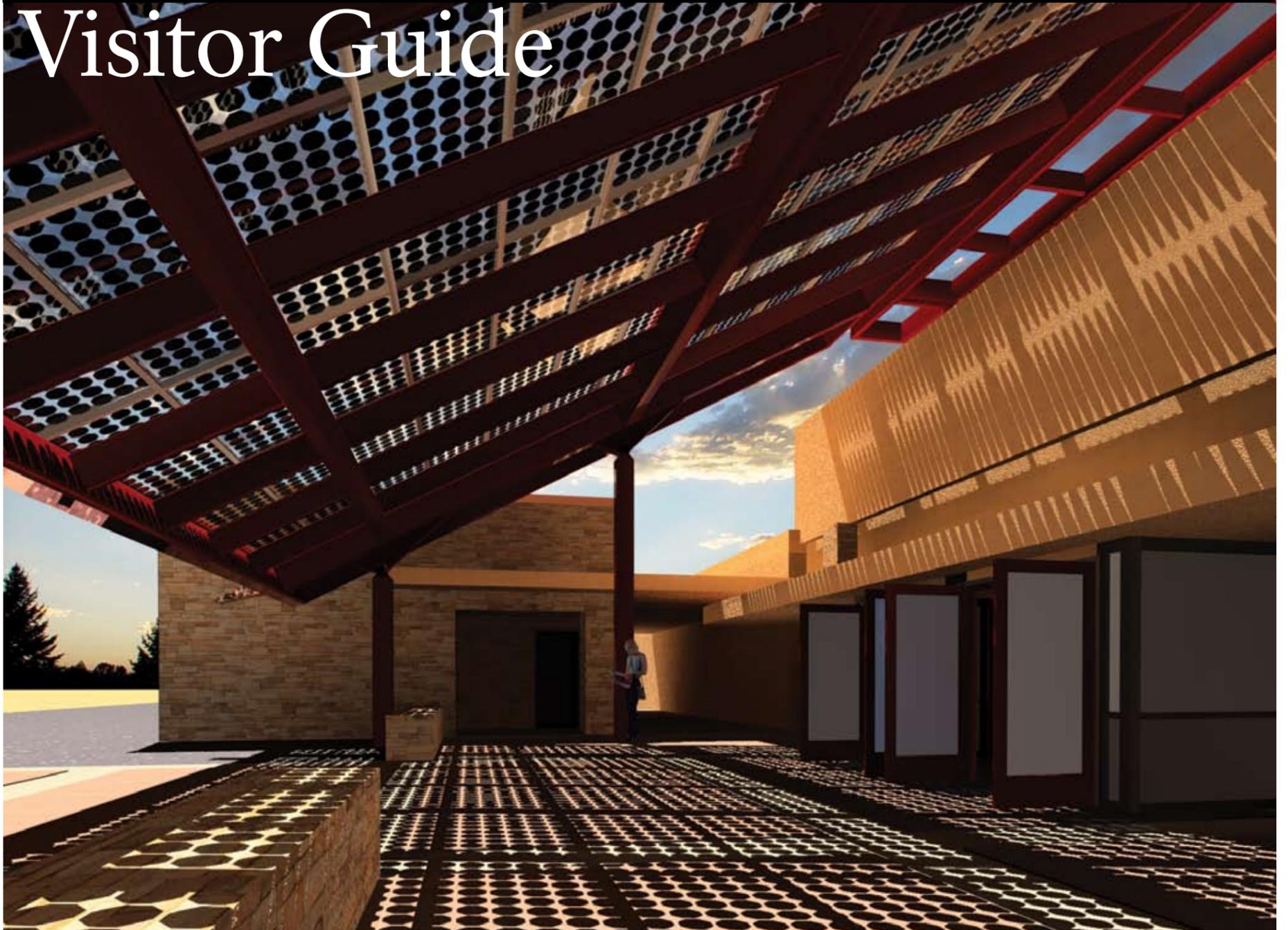




Visitor Guide



Visitor Center Renovation Begins at Carlsbad Caverns National Park

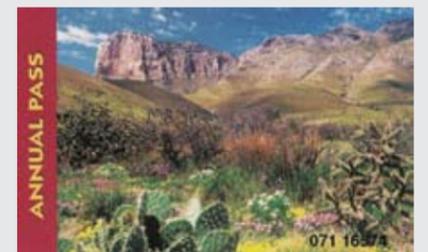
IMPORTANT NOTICE: While the visitor center is under construction, park operations, including the information and ticket counter, gift shop, restaurant, and bookstore, will move into temporary trailers in the parking lot. Cave tours will continue as usual. Each evening following the bat flight program, the park will close the entrance gate and reopen it in the morning. Signs on site will direct visitors where to park and to the temporary facilities.

It's time for an update! After fifty years, Carlsbad Caverns National Park will begin renovating its visitor center in May 2007. Upon its completion in 1957, the visitor center was an example of modern conveniences and technology. However today, it is outdated and past due for a makeover. Park superintendent John Benjamin announced, "This project has been in the works for many years. It's a great feeling to see the hard work of so many people coming to fruition. The rehabilitated visitor center will be more visitor-friendly and everything will work properly!"

electrical, water and wastewater systems, have exceeded their useful life and no longer function effectively or efficiently. The entire visitor center building and infrastructure will be renovated, including the Cavern Supply Company's restaurant and gift shop and Carlsbad Caverns-Guadalupe Mountains Association bookstore.

The \$7.5 million project is funded through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (formerly Recreation Fee Demonstration) and is expected to take one year to complete. Construction specialists and park staff explored various renovation possibilities, including creating a new contact center by the highway instead of directly above the cave. This option proved too costly. Renovations will reduce human impacts on the surface and cave environments. Plans of the "new" building will be available for viewing at temporary visitor facilities.

America the Beautiful—The National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Pass



Your Annual Pass provides you with a full year of enjoyment at America's beautiful lakes, rivers and seashores, wildlife refuges, outstanding cultural and historic sites, and some of the world's most magnificent forests, parks and monuments.

The Annual Pass covers Entrance Fees or Standard Amenity Fees (campground fees are not covered) managed by the National Park Service, United States Forest Service, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation. For more details see page 5 inside.



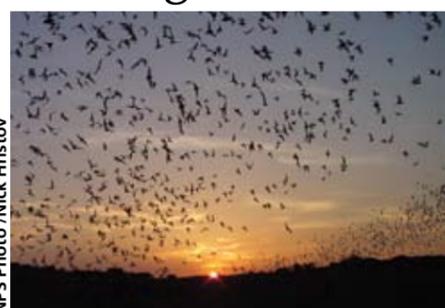
Both Parks are on Mountain Time

Pages 4-5 Cave Tours



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

Page 5 Bat Flight Info



NPS Photo /Nick Hristov

Page 6 Hiking Trails



NPS Photo/Michael Haynie

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Area Attractions	8



Telephone and Web Directory

Official National Park Service sites include .gov in their web address.

Carlsbad Caverns National Park

3225 National Parks Highway
Carlsbad, NM 88220
505-785-2232
www.nps.gov/cave

Guadalupe Mountains National Park

400 Pine Canyon
Salt Flat, TX 79847
915-828-3251
www.nps.gov/gumo

Carlsbad Caverns Guadalupe Mountains Association

Operates both parks' bookstores. Books may also be purchased by mail or online.
P.O. Box 1417
Carlsbad, NM 88221
505-785-2486
505-785-2318 FAX
www.ccgma.org

Food, Lodging and Camping

Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

505-885-6516
www.carlsbadchamber.com

Van Horn Texas Visitors Bureau

915-283-2682
www.vanhornadvocate.com/community-adl.shtml

Weather Conditions

Carlsbad Weather Watch
505-885-1848

Road Conditions

New Mexico: 800-432-4269
Texas: 800-452-9292

Emergency: Call 911

Greetings

WELCOME TO CARLSBAD CAVERNS AND GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS National Parks. Carlsbad Caverns National Park, a World Heritage Site since 1995, features a spectacular cave system of highly decorated chambers. Guadalupe Mountains National Park protects one of the world's best examples of a fossilized reef. Both parks are located within the Chihuahuan Desert, a fascinating place to explore desert life.

Spring and summer bring the return of warmer temperatures, monsoonal rains, and the bats. After having spent the winter in Mexico, Brazilian free-tail bats begin streaming back in the spring. Nightly batflight programs are offered Memorial Day through Labor Day. Check with a ranger for program times.

Park staff are here to help make your visit a truly memorable event. They will be happy to help you plan your visit and provide information. Guided tours at Carlsbad Caverns can enrich your park experience. These tours offer a variety of caving experiences, from easy lantern tours to challenging trips involving crawling and squeezing through tight passages.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park has over 80 miles of hiking trails to explore, ranging from wheelchair accessible paths to strenu-

ous mountain hikes, including an 8.4 mile roundtrip hike to Texas' highest mountain, Guadalupe Peak (8,749').

As you travel and spend time in the area please remember to keep safety in mind. Deer and other wildlife are plentiful—enjoy watching wildlife, but remember they often move across roads, especially in the evenings; be vigilant while driving during twilight hours. Hikers should be prepared for rapidly changing weather conditions. Hikers can become dehydrated in our dry climate, so carry plenty of water (one gallon per person per day is recommended). Always check with a ranger before venturing into the backcountry.

We are wholeheartedly committed to our mission of preserving and providing for the enjoyment of our nation's most outstanding treasures. We wish you a rewarding experience in every way.

Sincerely,

John C. Benjamin
Superintendent

John V. Lujan
Superintendent

Volunteerism Makes a Difference

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO the dedicated effort and talent that volunteers have brought to Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks. Volunteers play a vital role in fulfilling our mission of preserving our natural and cultural heritage and sharing that heritage with the visiting public. Volunteers do everything from staffing the information desk, roving interpretation, patrolling surface and cave trails, to trail maintenance, research, cave restoration, and more. To become a volunteer contact:

Carlsbad Caverns National Park
Dave Thomas
505-785-3097

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
Doug Buehler
915-828-3251 x105

Junior and Senior Ranger Programs

MANY NATIONAL PARKS ACROSS AMERICA OFFER A JUNIOR Ranger program for children to encourage interest in their national parks and to promote a sense of stewardship and ownership for these special places that they come to visit. This self-paced educational program allows children to earn a patch and/or certificate upon completion of required activities that teach them about park resources. Age appropriate activities are included in the Junior Ranger booklet, typically for pre-kindergarten through upper elementary-aged children.

Senior Ranger programs are a new development, currently available at limited locations, aimed at an audience that enjoys a challenge and wants to use an activity book to learn about the park and help plan their visit. Participants earn a badge and a certificate as well. A Senior Ranger program is available at Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

At Carlsbad Caverns, the Junior Ranger program offers activities that teach children about the resources both above ground and below the surface (including plant and animal life of the desert, cave features, and history of the park). Younger children have opportunities to color and draw, find objects on a visual scavenger hunt, use their senses to experience their surroundings and complete games. Older children will sequence events, complete word searches and write

stories and poems. Each activity in the booklet is an optional activity depending on interest and age-level. Once the booklet is checked by a park ranger, the participant is presented a Carlsbad Caverns National Park Junior Ranger patch.

The Junior Ranger booklet is available through the Carlsbad Caverns Guadalupe Mountains Association bookstore, located in the visitor center at the park. There is a charge of \$1.00 to participate in the program, which includes the booklet and patch (given upon completion of the activities). Children of any age may participate.

At Guadalupe Mountains, children work through a separate activity booklet and visit points of interest within the park. The booklet accommodates families of varying travel plans. Many of the activities can be completed at the Headquarters Visitor Center located at Pine Springs. Children who complete three activities earn a badge and certificate, while those who do six earn a patch in addition to the badge and certificate. There is no charge for participation in the program, but donations are always welcome.

Senior Ranger books are available at the Headquarters Visitor Center at Pine Springs for anyone 13 years and older. Activities include visiting sites, learning about the park's history, geology, flora and fauna. Upon completion, participants earn a patch and certificate.

Traveling with a Pet?

ON A WARM DAY THE TEMPERATURE INSIDE A CAR CAN KILL a pet. Do not leave your pets unattended.

At Carlsbad Caverns National Park, pets are not permitted in the cave or at bat flight programs. During the day your pet may be cared for at the kennel for a small fee. A citation will be issued if animals are left in vehicles when ambient air temperatures are 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius) or higher.

At Guadalupe Mountains National Park, pets are not allowed on trails, in the backcountry, in buildings or at evening programs; they are permitted in the campground.

In any national park, your pet must be physically restrained at all times.

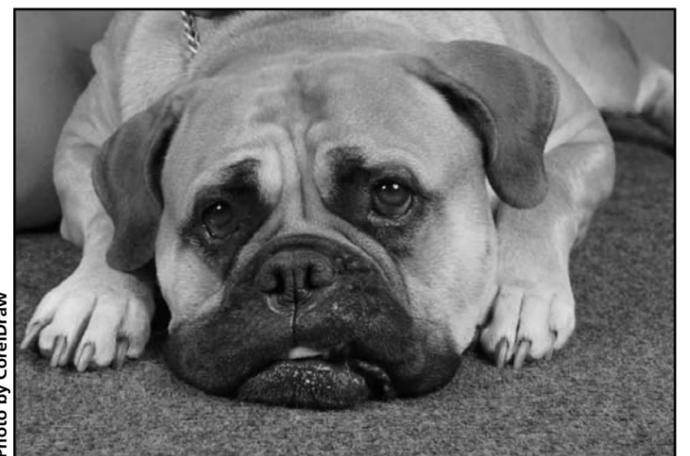


Photo by CoreiDraw

Upcoming Events

Bat Flight Breakfast 50th Anniversary

Mark your calendars! The 50th annual **Bat Flight Breakfast** at Carlsbad Caverns National Park is set for Saturday, July 28, 2007. Activities will begin at 5 a.m. on July 28 with an outdoor breakfast. “We hope visitors will attend the prior evening’s bat flight program, then wake up early, and return to the park for a good breakfast and to watch the bats fly back into the cave!” said breakfast coordinator Avelina Childress. “Some summer evenings there are over a thousand people watching the bats fly out of the cave, but the mornings are peaceful since few people get up early enough to experience the in-flight.”

Park staff started the “bat breakfast” tradition in 1957. They used hot coffee and a meal to lure visitors to the bats’ morning return flight. Unlike the nighttime flight when the bats spiral up all together and leave the cave as a swirling column that looks like smoke, in the morning, the bats form groups that circle several hundred feet overhead and then dive into the cave entrance.

Breakfast is \$7 for adults and \$3 for children age 12 and under, and includes free entrance to the self-guided portions of Carlsbad Cavern.

Historically held the second Thursday in August, the park broke with tradition in 2005 and moved the Bat Flight Breakfast to a Saturday in an effort to attract more participants. That same year it was paired with the **Celebration of the Night** stargazing event, so that people could watch the skies for bats, stars, or planets, straight through the night. This year, the events will be held on separate weekends due to the renovation of the visitor center.

Celebrating Night Skies

Visitors to Carlsbad Caverns expect to see darkness... in the caves. Nights outdoors in the Guadalupe Mountains can also be very dark. To bring attention to the wonders so easily hidden in our well-lit neighborhoods, the park holds an annual event called **Celebration of the Night**. This year’s “celebration” will begin Friday, July 13, after the evening’s bat flight program. The public is encouraged to partici-



NPS Photo /Nick Hristov

Thousands of Brazilian free-tail bats emerge from Carlsbad Cavern each evening in a spiraling pattern. After feeding on insects during the night, the bats return to cave entrance at dawn, diving back into the entrance at high speeds.

pate in the event’s activities, such as star-gazing presentations, talks, and night hikes. In addition, the park invites expert and amateur astronomers to set up telescopes to view stars, planets, constellations, and other celestial features.

In 2005 and 2006, this event was linked to Bat Flight Breakfast. Combining the two made it easier for people to watch the bats’ exit flight in the evening then stay and gaze at the stars until dawn and view the bats’ return. However, until the visitor center upgrade is done, the **Celebration of the Night** will be held on a separate weekend and will not include overnight camping.

More detailed breakfast and star party information will be available in the next few months. For more information, contact Bridget Litten at 505.785.3024, or visit the park’s website at www.nps.gov/cave.

What’s in a Name?

You may hear rangers talk about Brazilian free-tail bats. You may read about them in the park’s informational brochures, books, and websites. You may hear or see the names – Mexican and Brazilian – used interchangeably. For years, people have called the area’s large colony *Mexican* free-tail bats. New studies suggest that we should be calling them, *Brazilian* free-tail bats. This name change is confusing for many, perhaps you, too.

The scientific name for Mexican (or is it Brazilian?) free-tail bat is *Tadarida brasiliensis mexicana*. This kind of bat is found throughout much of the southern and western United States, Central America, and western South America. Due to differences in size and habit, for several decades researchers believed that there were a handful of separate subspecies, the “Mexican” free-tail bat being one, as indicated by its last name. However, recent genetic research shows that the *Tadarida brasiliensis* bats across the US and Central America have the same genetic code, thus are in fact one species, not separate subspecies. (In other words, some say we should drop the *mexicana* part of the name.)

As is common in the scientific community, the findings are still being examined in depth. All have not agreed to adopt the idea that there are not various subspecies. So, what that means to you is that area parks, rangers, and researchers are using the terms Mexican and/or Brazilian. Keep in mind, that by any name, the famous colony of bats that emerges from Carlsbad Cavern is still the same kind of bat, no matter what it’s called. You may get a chance to see them if you are visiting between April and October.

Eyes on the Night Skies

by Shannan Marcak

Deep below the desert of southeastern New Mexico, a complex world of cathedral-like chambers and circuitous passages slumbers. Here, timeless beauty lies hidden by almost impenetrable darkness—a darkness that is as much a part of any cave as rock or water. This darkness, at times, is an almost insurmountable barrier to cave exploration and only grudgingly relinquishes its hold on the secrets of the subterranean world.

In Carlsbad Cavern, for instance, the cave’s second largest chamber remained hidden for almost 70 years. And until the 1980s, the tremendous diversity of microscopic life that thrives in caves was virtually unrecognized. Darkness is a fact of life in caves, an integral part of the natural environment that everyone takes for granted.

In much the same way, we surface dwellers have come to take for granted the connection between darkness and the night. But according to scientists, the darkness of the night sky grows more tenuous every day. In our rush to illuminate Earth’s hidden secrets and to maintain our frenzied level of activity 24/7, human’s are driving away the darkness of the night sky.

Today, as more and more people are seeking to reconnect with the world around them, the loss of this essential aspect of our planet’s natural night and day cycle is of growing concern. Each year, the number of people visiting national parks to experience darkness and the ethereal beauty of the night sky is growing and so is the popularity of ranger-led astronomy and night sky programs.

Due to their remote location, Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks both still enjoy excellent night sky resources. Even here, though, threats are apparent. In an effort to share this precious resource, Carlsbad Caverns is working to develop an astronomy program. The hope is to share with visitors the beauty that can be hidden not just below their feet, but above their heads, and perhaps to encourage thoughtful consideration before the advancing glow of civilization forever obscures the sparkling beauty of the night.

Information on times and dates of astronomy programs will be made available on our website at www.nps.gov/cave; or call (505)785-3134.

Night Sky Calendar Spring & Summer

MARCH

Full Moon	March 3
Last Quarter	March 11
New Moon	March 18
First Quarter	March 25

Best planets for viewing include Venus in the west and Saturn in east-southeast.

APRIL

Full Moon	April 2
Last Quarter	April 10
New Moon	April 17
First Quarter	April 24

Venus appears in the west and Saturn appears in the east.

MAY

Full Moon	May 2 & 31
Last Quarter	May 10
New Moon	May 16
First Quarter	May 23

Venus appears in the west with Saturn above and to the left. Jupiter will appear in the southeast.

JUNE

Last Quarter	June 8
New Moon	June 14
First Quarter	June 22
Full Moon	June 30

Mercury is low in the north-northwest sky at dusk in early June. Venus nears Castor and Pollux in the constellation Gemini in the west. Saturn is above and to the left of Venus. Jupiter will appear in the east-southeast.

JULY

Last Quarter	July 7
New Moon	July 14
First Quarter	July 22
Full Moon	July 29

Venus and Saturn will appear close together in the west. Jupiter will appear in the south. Mars will appear in the east after midnight.

AUGUST

Last Quarter	August 5
New Moon	August 12
First Quarter	August 20
Full Moon	August 28

Venus will not be visible until later in the month and then it will be predawn and in the east. Jupiter is in the south. Mars appears in the east-northeast after midnight. The Perseid meteor shower on the night of August 12-13 should be excellent, because there will be no interference from the moon. Expect a rate of 50-100 meteors per hour.



Carlsbad Caverns Cave Tours

Spring, Fall & Winter Hours

Natural Entrance	8:30 - 2:00
Big Room	8:30 - 3:30
Visitor Center	8:00 - 5:00

Summer Hours

(Memorial Day—Labor Day)

Natural Entrance	8:30 - 3:30
Big Room	8:30 - 5:00
Visitor Center	8:00 - 7:00

Entrance Fees

Adults—age 16 and older.....	\$6.00
Children—15 and younger.....	free
plus Audio Guide.....	\$3.00

There is no entrance fee for those who own any of the following passes (up to three individuals plus the cardholder): The Annual Pass, Senior Pass, Access Pass (all three are part of the America the Beautiful—National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Pass), National Parks Pass issued in 2006 and not yet expired, Golden Age Passport, Golden Eagle Passport issued in 2006 and not yet expired and Golden Access Passport all cover the basic entrance fee.

Entrance fee applies to self-guided tours. Guided tours require an additional fee.

All fees and tours are subject to change.

Reservations

We recommend that you make reservations for guided tours at least six weeks in advance. Some tours fill quickly. Reservations are not necessary for self-guided tours. To make reservations call the National Park Reservation System at: 877-444-6777 or visit www.Recreation.gov

Have a Safe Tour

Cave temperature is 56 degrees F (13 degrees C) year-round. A light jacket or sweater and good walking shoes are recommended. Do not wear sandals. For your safety:

- Stay on the paved trail.
- Supervise children closely; children under 16 must remain with an adult at all times.
- Ask park rangers for help.
- Take prescribed medications with you.
- High humidity in the cave can affect respiratory problems; bring your inhaler just in case.
- If you are DIABETIC, be sure you have eaten enough calories.
- If you have an infant with you, child-carrying backpacks are recommended. Strollers are not allowed.
- Leave your pet at the kennel, not in your car.

Protect the Cave

- Never touch, tap or handle the cave formations; the oils on your skin damage the formations.
- Never take gum, food or drinks into the cave.
- Never throw coins or other objects into the pools.

Photography

Photography is permitted on most tours; however, please use good etiquette. Warn those around you before you flash, keep tripods on the trail, and do not use the rocks as your personal tripod. Video cameras are permitted on the Big Room, Natural Entrance, and King's Palace tours. Please use caution and do not use the ultra-bright lights available on some cameras. Photography is **not** allowed at the Bat Flight Program offered from mid-May to mid-October.



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

NATURAL ENTRANCE SELF-GUIDED ROUTE

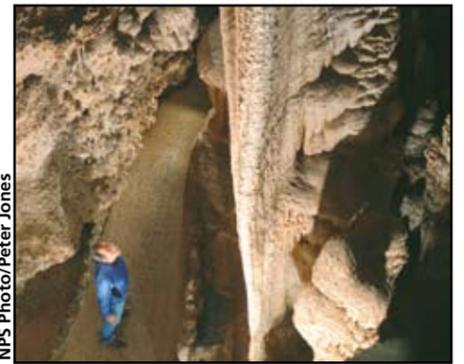
Length: 1.25 miles, 1 hour
Fee: Entrance Fee
This hike is similar to walking into a steep canyon (a descent of about 800 feet in one mile). It is recommended only for those physically fit and healthy; sturdy footwear required. Highlights include the Natural Entrance, Devil's Spring, Whale's Mouth, and Iceberg Rock.



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

BIG ROOM SELF-GUIDED ROUTE

Length: 1.25 miles, 1.5 hours
Fee: Entrance Fee
Descend by elevator to start the tour in the Underground Rest Area. The non-skid trail is paved and mostly level, although there are a couple of short, steep hills. All visitors to Carlsbad Cavern should experience this tour. Highlights include the Lion's Tail, Hall of Giants, Bottomless Pit, and Rock of Ages. This trail is partially accessible to visitors using wheelchairs, with assistance. The park does not provide wheelchairs. This trail can be accessed after hiking the 1.25 mile Natural Entrance Self-Guided Route.



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

KING'S PALACE GUIDED TOUR

Length: 1 mile, 1.5 hours
Fee: Entrance Fee and \$8.00 Tour Ticket
Tours depart from the Underground Rest Area. Tickets may be purchased at the visitor center; however, reservations are recommended. You will visit four highly decorated chambers: King's Palace, Papoose Room, Queen's Chamber and Green Lake Room. The tour guide will turn out the lights for a blackout experience. The trail is paved; however, there is a steep hill that you must walk down and then back up.



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

LEFT HAND TUNNEL

On this lantern-lit tour your guide will highlight cavern history, formations, cave pools and Permian Age fossils. This is the easiest of the adventure tours on unpaved trails. Be aware that the dirt trail winds over small uneven or slippery slopes and careful footing is required to avoid cavern pools and fragile formations. Lanterns are provided. Tour departs from the visitor center lobby.



NPS Photo/Peter Jones

LOWER CAVE

This moderately strenuous tour begins with a ranger-supervised descent down a 10-foot flowstone slope using a knotted rope, followed by a 50-foot series of three ladders. Bring gloves and four AA alkaline batteries per person. The park provides helmets, headlamps and optional kneepads. Tour departs from the visitor center lobby. You will see evidence of early exploration, cave pools and beautiful formations.



NPS Photo/Dale Pate

SLAUGHTER CANYON CAVE

This moderately strenuous tour is through a well-decorated backcountry cave. It is mandatory for each person to bring a strong battery-powered flashlight with fresh batteries. Penlights are not sufficient. The route is slippery, muddy and may require an ascent of a 15-foot slope using a knotted rope.

Do not drive to the visitor center for this cave tour.



NPS Photo/David Harris

HALL OF THE WHITE GIANT

This is a strenuous, challenging tour to a remote chamber in Carlsbad Cavern. You will be required to crawl long distances, squeeze through tight crevices and climb up slippery passages. Bring gloves and four AA batteries per person. We provide helmets, headlamps and kneepads. Tour departs from the visitor center lobby.



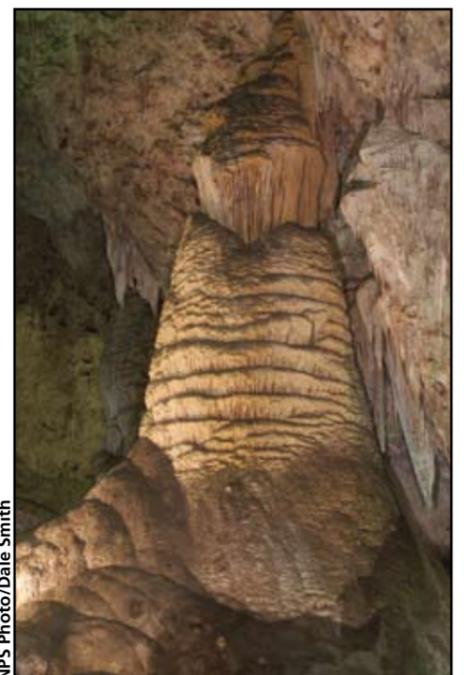
NPS Photo/Peter Jones

SPIDER CAVE

On this strenuous tour you can expect tight crawls, canyon-like passages and bizarre formations. Bring gloves and four new AA batteries per person. The park provides helmets, headlamps and kneepads. The tour departs from the visitor center for a short drive and then a short hike to the cave. Bring water for the hike.



NPS Photo/Dale Smith



NPS Photo/Dale Smith

For Reservations call 877-444-6777

Tour	Trail Surface	Offered	Departure Time	Adult Fee	Age Limit	Tour Length	Group Size
King's Palace	Paved Trail; 80' hill must be climbed on return trip	Daily	Summer 10, 11, 1 & 2 Fall-Spring 10 & 2	Adults \$8 Children (6-15) \$4 Children (4-5) Free A General Admission Ticket is also required.	4	1.5 hours	75
Left Hand Tunnel	Uneven dirt trail and slippery slopes	Daily	9:00 a.m.	\$7.00 and General Admission Ticket	6	2 hours	15
Lower Cave	Must negotiate fifty feet of ladders, variable dirt trails, might get dirty.	Monday through Friday	1:00 p.m.	\$20.00 and General Admission Ticket	12	3 hours	12
Slaughter Canyon Cave	Strenuous climb required to reach cave entrance. Trail in cave is slippery, uneven and rocky.	Saturday and Sunday (Tours offered daily in summer.)	Summer 10:00 & 1:00 Fall through Spring 10:00 a.m.	\$15.00	6	2 hours	25
Wild Caving—kneepads required							
Hall of the White Giant	Climbing and crawling, tight squeezes, drop-offs, will get dirty	Saturday	1:00 p.m.	\$20.00 and General Admission Ticket	12	4 hours	8

Surface Activities

SERVICES

Facilities include a visitor center, exhibits, bookstore, restaurant, gift shop and kennel service. Ranger programs are offered daily. Other activities include:

NATURE TRAIL

This one-mile paved, partially accessible trail begins near the visitor center and highlights desert plants.

SCENIC DRIVE

A one-hour drive through the Chihuahuan Desert, this 9.5 mile gravel road is suitable for most vehicles except trailers and motor homes. Brochures are available for 50 cents. The scenic drive is open 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. mid-May to mid-October. It is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. mid-October to mid-May. These hours are subject to change.

RATTLESNAKE SPRINGS

This historic oasis includes a picnic area, shade trees, restrooms and excellent bird watching. Located 5.5 miles south of White's City on U.S. Highway 62/180, then 2.5 miles west to County Road 418. Day use only.

HIKING & CAMPING

The park's wilderness offers day hikes and backcountry camping (permit required). Rangers at the visitor center can provide free permits, trail and weather information, and backcountry camping tips. The bookstore sells topographic maps, which are considered essential for desert hiking.

BAT FLIGHT PROGRAMS (SUMMER ONLY)

A few hundred thousand bats fly from Carlsbad Cavern each evening from mid-May until the bats migrate to Mexico sometime in mid-October. The ranger program generally begins each evening 30 to 60 minutes before sunset at the park amphitheater, though weather and lightning can cause cancellation of the program. Check at the visitor center for the exact time the program starts or call 505-785-3012. Cameras are **not allowed**. The lights and high frequency sounds made by the cameras disturb the bats. This rule is strictly enforced.



America the Beautiful—The National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Pass



ANNUAL PASS

The America the Beautiful—National Parks & Federal Recreational Annual Pass will replace the Golden Eagle Passport, the National Parks Pass, and the National Parks Pass with Golden Eagle Sticker. The annual pass will be replaced each year. A Federal Lands photo contest will be held each year. The grand prize winning image will be featured on the subsequent year's annual pass. Information on the current contest for the 2008 annual pass image can be found at <http://www.sharetheexperience.org>.

The annual pass sells for \$80.00 and is good for one year from date of purchase. The pass covers entrance fees at National Park Service and Fish & Wildlife sites and standard amenity fees at Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and Forest Service sites. The pass can be purchased at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.



SENIOR PASS

The new Senior Pass will replace the Golden Age Passport. Golden Age Passports will continue to be honored.

The Senior Pass sells for \$10.00 and is good for life. Any permanent resident of the United States 62 years or older may purchase the Senior Pass.

It covers the entrance fees to National Park Service and Fish & Wildlife sites and standard amenity fees at Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Forest Service Sites. Camping and guided tour fees are discounted 50% for cardholders. The pass can be purchased at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.

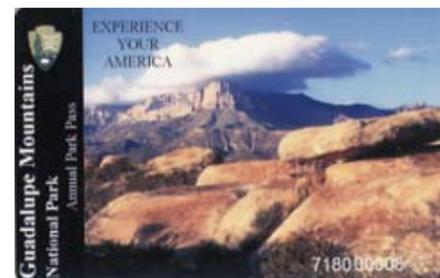


ACCESS PASS

The new Access Pass will replace the Golden Access Passport. Existing Golden Access Passports will continue to be honored.

The Access Pass is available for free to any U.S. citizen or permanent resident of any age that has been medically determined to have a permanent disability that severely limits one or more major life activities.

The Access Pass covers the entrance fees to National Park Service and Fish & Wildlife sites and standard amenity fees at Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Forest Service Sites. Camping and guided tour fees are discounted 50% for cardholders. The pass can be purchased at federal recreation sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.



GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NP ANNUAL PASS

Guadalupe Mountains National Park offers an annual pass for \$20.00 for regional visitors who plan on visiting the park more than once a year, but may not visit other federal fee areas.

The pass covers entrance fees and is good for 3 individuals plus the cardholder (persons 15 years and younger are free with or without the Guadalupe Mountains NP Annual Pass). The pass is available for purchase at the park.

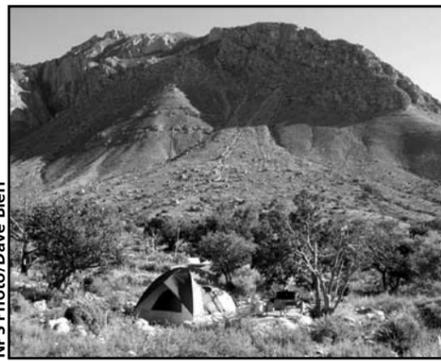
Guadalupe Mountains National Park



NPS Photo/Michael Haynie



NPS Photo/Michael Haynie



NPS Photo/Dave Bieri



Laurence Parent

SERVICES

Facilities and services within and near Guadalupe Mountains National Park are extremely limited. The nearest gasoline stations are 32 miles west or 35 miles east. There is no campstore; bring everything you need with you.

INFORMATION & EXHIBITS

Headquarters Visitor Center

Elevation 5,730'. On U.S. Highway 62/180, 55 miles southwest of Carlsbad and 110 miles east of El Paso. Open every day except Christmas. Open Memorial Day to Labor Day 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Mountain Time Zone); after Labor Day, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Information, natural history museum, introductory slide program.

Frijole Ranch History Museum

The ranch house features exhibits describing historic and current use of the Guadalupe. Grounds include a picnic area near a spring shaded by large oak trees. Restroom available. Staffed intermittently.

McKittrick Canyon

Highway entrance gate is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time. During daylight savings time, hours are expanded 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Restrooms, outdoor exhibits, slide program, picnic tables.

Hike Safely...

- There is no water available along park trails, so be sure to bring plenty with you. One gallon per person per day is recommended.
- Trails are rocky—wear sturdy shoes.
- Carry a trail map.
- Pack warm clothing and rain gear; sudden weather changes are common.

Protect the Park...

- Stay on trails; don't cut across switchbacks or create new trails.
- Carry out all trash, including cigarette butts.
- Report any trail hazards to the visitor center.
- Collecting of natural, historic or prehistoric objects are prohibited.

Weather

	Average Temperature		Average Rainfall
	High	Low	Inches
Jan	56	34	0.67
Feb	59	36	0.90
Mar	65	41	0.58
Apr	73	48	0.60
May	82	56	0.91
June	88	62	2.18
July	88	64	2.37
Aug	86	63	3.29
Sep	81	58	2.54
Oct	73	50	1.34
Nov	63	41	0.97
Dec	56	33	1.05
Average annual precipitation for Pine Springs (1980-2003)			17.4

HIKING

Pinery Trail

Distance: .67 miles
Difficulty: Easy, wheelchair accessible, slight incline on return trip.
Discover the desert as you walk to the ruins of the Pinery, a stagecoach station on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route in 1858. Trailside exhibits.

McKittrick Canyon Trail

Distance: to Pratt Cabin 4.8 miles roundtrip, to the Grotto, 6.8 miles roundtrip
Difficulty: Moderate, level but rocky trail, 200' elevation gain to Grotto.
Follow an intermittent stream through the desert and canyon woodlands to the historic Pratt Cabin. A guidebook is available at the trailhead. One mile beyond the Pratt Cabin is the Grotto Picnic Area and Hunter Line Cabin. Please do not drink the water or wade in the creek. To protect this fragile environment, you are required to stay on the trail.

Guadalupe Peak Trail

Distance: 8.4 miles
Difficulty: Strenuous. Approximately 3,000' elevation gain, steep, rocky path.
Hike to the "Top of Texas" at 8,749' for spectacular views. Avoid the peak during high winds and thunderstorms. During warm temperatures carry a gallon of water per person.

CAMPING

Water and restrooms are available, but there are no showers, RV hookups, or dump stations. The fee is \$8.00 per night, per site, \$4.00 with a Senior Pass (or existing Golden Age Passport) or Access Pass (or existing Golden Access Passport). No wood or charcoal fires are permitted; camp stoves are allowed.

Pine Springs Campground

Located near the Headquarters Visitor Center, there are twenty tent and nineteen RV campsites available on a first-come, first-served basis. Two group campsites are available for groups of 10-20 people. Reservations (for group sites only) can be made by phoning 915-828-3251 up to 60 days in advance. Hikers planning on hiking in McKittrick Canyon, to Guadalupe Peak or the Bowl will want to stay here.

Dog Canyon Campground

Located at the end of New Mexico Highway 137, 70 miles from Carlsbad and 110 miles from Park Headquarters, at an elevation of 6,290' in a secluded, forested canyon on the north side of the park. The campground has nine tent and four RV campsites. There is one group site for groups of 10-20 people. Reservations for the group site only can be

made up to 60 days in advance by calling 915-828-3251.

BACKPACKING

Eighty-five miles of trails lead through forests, canyons, and desert. A free permit is required if you plan to spend a night in the backcountry. Permits are issued at the Headquarters Visitor Center and the Dog Canyon Ranger Station. For those coming through Carlsbad, Dog Canyon is a great place to begin a backpacking trip because it requires less elevation gain to get into the backcountry.

Wood and charcoal fires are prohibited. Camp stoves are allowed. Pack out all your trash. Pets are not allowed on park trails. Firearms are not permitted within the park.

Preparation is the key to an enjoyable backpacking trip. Be prepared for changing weather conditions. Carry plenty of water—there are no water sources in the backcountry. Topographic maps, hikers' guides, and information can be found at the Headquarters Visitor Center and the Dog Canyon Ranger Station.

Trailhead	Trail	Distance Roundtrip	Description
Visitor Center	Pinery Trail	.67 miles	Easy. Discover the desert as you walk to the ruins of the Pinery, a stagecoach station on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route in 1858. Trailside exhibits; wheelchair accessible, slight incline on return trip.
Pine Springs Campground	Guadalupe Peak Trail	8.4 miles	Strenuous. Hike to the "Top of Texas" at 8,749' for spectacular views. Trail climbs approximately 3,000 feet in elevation. Steep, rocky path. Avoid the peak during high winds and thunderstorms.
	Devil's Hall Trail	4.2 miles	Moderate. Rocky hike in Pine Spring Canyon to the Hikers' Staircase and Devil's Hall. After the first mile, the trail drops into the wash. Turn left and follow the canyon bottom to Devil's Hall, where a sign marks the end of the trail.
	The Bowl	9.1 miles	Strenuous. The Bowl shelters a highcountry conifer forest. Recommended route: Tejas Trail to Pine Top, Bowl Trail to Hunter Peak, Bear Canyon Trail, Frijole Trail back to campground. Trail climbs 2,500'. Bear Canyon Trail is very rocky and extremely steep.
	El Capitan Trail	11.3 miles	Strenuous. Desert lovers will appreciate the rocky arroyos and open vistas while skirting along the base of El Capitan. Recommended route: El Capitan Trail, Salt Basin Overlook, and return to Pine Springs on the El Capitan Trail.
Frijole Ranch	Manzanita Spring	.4 miles	Easy. Path is paved and wheelchair accessible. Hike to a small pond that serves as a desert oasis. Dragonflies, butterflies, and birds are active here in the warmer months. During winter, bluebirds frequent the area. Opportunities for chancing upon other wildlife are higher here as well.
	Smith Spring Trail (entire loop)	2.3 miles	Moderate. Look for birds, deer and elk as you pass Manzanita Spring on the way to the shady oasis of Smith Spring. Trees around Smith Spring include madrones, maples, oaks, chokecherry, ponderosa pines and others.
McKittrick Canyon	McKittrick Canyon Trail	4.8 miles	Moderate. Follow an intermittent stream through the desert and canyon woodlands to the historic Pratt Cabin. A guide book is available at the trailhead. The Grotto Picnic Area and Hunter Line Cabin is one mile beyond the Pratt Cabin. Please do not wade in the creek. To protect this fragile environment, you are required to stay on the trail.
	McKittrick Nature Loop	0.9 miles	Moderate. Climb the foothills and learn about the natural history of the Chihuahuan Desert. Trailside exhibits.
	Permian Reef Trail	8.4 miles	Strenuous. For serious geology buffs, this trail has stop markers that can be used with a geology guidebook sold at the Visitor Center. There are excellent views into McKittrick Canyon from the ridgetop. Trail climbs 2,000'.
Dog Canyon	Indian Meadow Nature Loop	0.6 miles	Easy. A guide pamphlet describes ecology and geology.
	Marcus Overlook	4.6 miles	Moderate. Follow the Bush Mountain Trail to the ridgetop for a view into West Dog Canyon. Trail climbs 800'.
	Lost Peak	6.4 miles	Strenuous. Climb out of Dog Canyon on the Tejas Trail to visit the conifer forest above. Outstanding views from Lost Peak. Lost Peak is a short distance off trail to the right before the horse hitches. Trail climbs 1,500'.

Icon of the Southwest

by Doug Buehler

SOMEONE RUSHES INTO THE VISITOR center and excitedly explains they just saw 10 eagles soaring in the sky. Tactfully, the ranger explains that the large soaring birds are probably not eagles, but in actuality are turkey vultures. The name vulture conjures up a less than enthusiastic vision of a beautiful bird. Granted, they may appear ugly and have a close-up appearance only their mother would fully appreciate, but they are actually some of the most interesting and useful birds in the Southwest.

To see the turkey vulture gracefully soaring on heat thermals (rising columns of warm air) is one of the more distinctive sights in the southwest sky. The vulture's wing spread is 6 feet and from a distance certainly the bird appears somewhat like an eagle. They ride the wind effortlessly and hardly flap their wings. Vultures actually fall at a slower rate than the warm air arises, so they are able to keep adrift. Their wing design, which includes the spreading of their primary feathers like fingers, lowers wing tip turbulence. This allows them to stay aloft at slower speeds without stalling. The fact that vultures use very little energy in flying is an important part of survival in the harsh environment they exist in. They have learned to use wind currents to their best advantage; a lesson for us perhaps in looking for future energy sources.

While flying they search for food in a special way. Unlike most birds, turkey vultures have a very acute sense of smell. They can detect odors from great distances. Vultures also have a keen sense of eyesight. When fly-

ing they can spot potential food from heights of 2 ½ miles. Their senses of smell and seeing are some of the best in the bird world. One reason you often see a fairly large number of soaring vultures is that when one sees or smells food and descends, other circling vultures will follow and converge at the source of food. They actually work together somewhat as a team.

Because of what they eat—dead things—turkey vultures get a bad reputation. The question may arise, "Why eat dead things?" One reason is that food source is certainly easy to catch. Vultures have weak talons, unlike hawks, owls and eagles, and are usually not able to catch live prey. Organisms are always dying in the environment from disease, old age, predation and even semi-trucks going down the highway. Vultures play the role of scavengers for some of the bigger carrion. They recycle it back into the web of life and clean up the environment. In nature virtually nothing is wasted, even the roadkilled jackrabbit can be used by scavengers such as vultures. Their scientific name *cathartes* actually means "purifier."

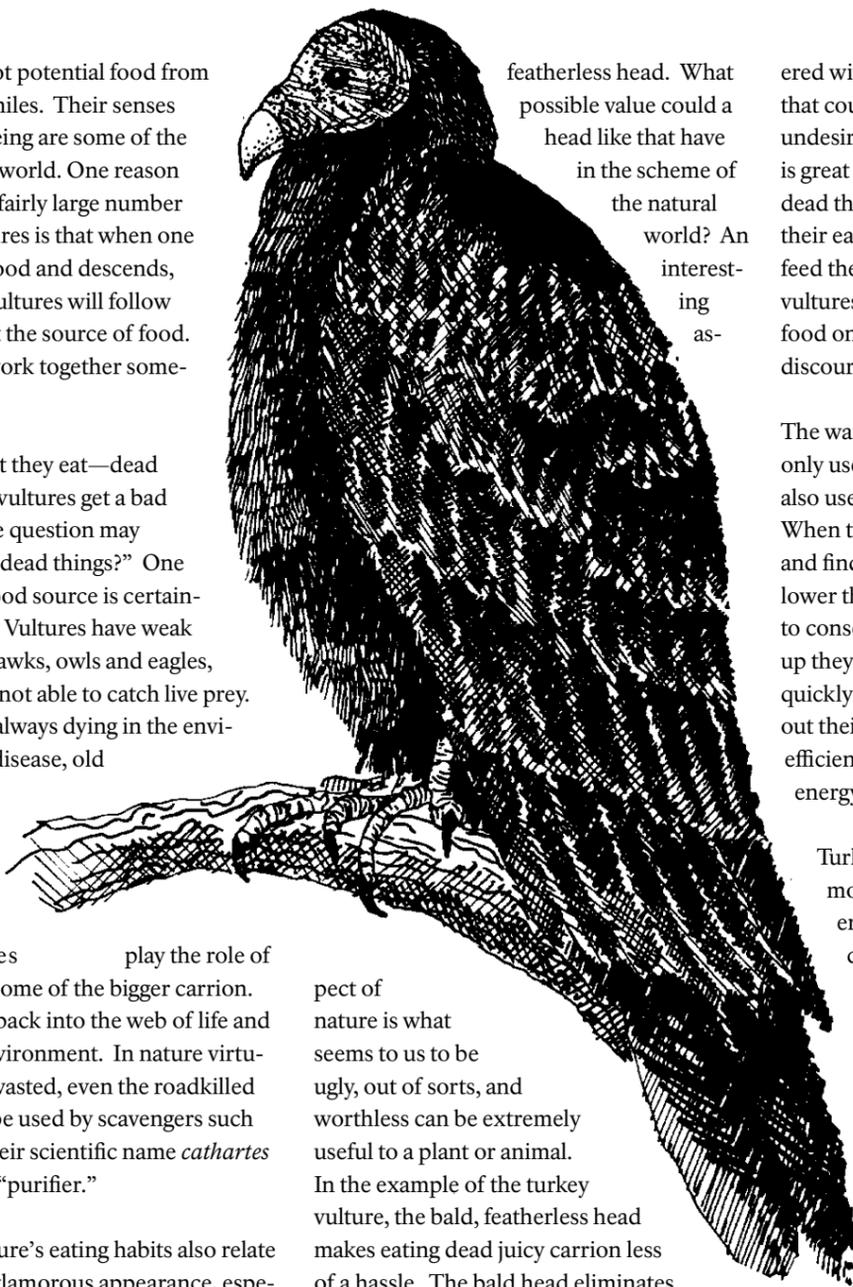
The turkey vulture's eating habits also relate to its rather unglamorous appearance, especially its head. One quickly notices the red,

featherless head. What possible value could a head like that have in the scheme of the natural world? An interesting aspect of nature is what seems to us to be ugly, out of sorts, and worthless can be extremely useful to a plant or animal. In the example of the turkey vulture, the bald, featherless head makes eating dead juicy carrion less of a hassle. The bald head eliminates problems related to feathers being cov-

ered with some rather unpleasant things that could lead to insect problems and other undesirable consequences. One might say it is great to have a bald head when eating juicy dead things. Another interesting feature of their eating is the regurgitation of food to feed their young. For protection, turkey vultures will sometimes vomit foul smelling food on potential enemies. This tends to discourage other animals from attacking it.

The warm thermal wind currents are not only useful for flying, but turkey vultures also use solar heat in another manner. When the air cools down they cease to fly and find a place to roost for the night. They lower their body temperature while roosting to conserve energy. When the sun comes up they spread their wings and absorb heat quickly to get ready for the business of living out their daily routine; another example of efficient use of natural forces to conserve energy and survive.

Turkey vultures, certainly one of nature's more homely looking animals, are nevertheless a fascinating example of a creature that uses energy efficiently and illustrates the important role of each animal in the natural ecosystems found in national parks. When soaring high in the sky, it is truly an icon of the Southwest.



From the CCGMA Bookstore

The Carlsbad Caverns-Guadalupe Mountains Association (CCGMA) is a private, nonprofit organization whose main objectives are to provide interpretation for the park visitor and to support the purposes and mission of the National Park Service at Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, and the lands related to them in New Mexico and West Texas since 1957. To date, CCGMA has donated over \$2.7 million to both Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks. The goals of CCGMA are accomplished through educational programs using a variety of educational media and scientific investigations resulting in a greater appreciation of those resources being conserved for this and future generations. CCGMA has 3 retail bookstore outlets located at Carlsbad Caverns, the Guadalupe Mountains, and the administration office building in the city of Carlsbad

Books may also be purchased by mail or online.

PO Box 1417
Carlsbad, NM 88221
(505) 785-2486
(505) 785-2318 FAX
www.ccgma.org

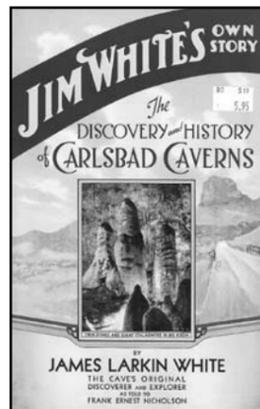
Consider joining CCGMA. As a member you will receive a 15 percent discount on all purchases. This discount is extended to several cooperating associations of other national parks as well. You will also receive the CCGMA newsletter and the Visitor

Guide for Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks (2 issues a year). In addition to these benefits, you will receive a free book on the work of artist Clark Cox or a coffee mug. Most importantly, your contribution helps further our mission of providing aid to these parks.

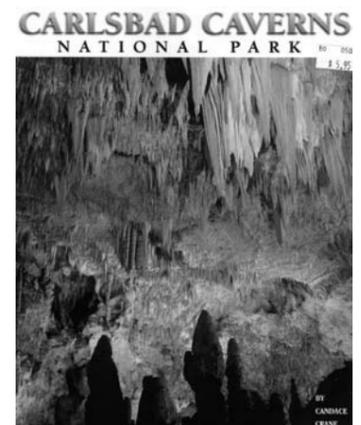
Membership (1 year)	\$25.00
The Guadalupe	\$ 4.00
Stories from Stones	\$ 7.95
Trails of the Guadalupe	\$ 5.00
Carlsbad Caverns National Park:	
Worlds of Wonder	\$ 6.95
Jim White's Own Story	\$ 5.95

Purchases may be made by credit card or check. Include your address and daytime phone number. If ordering by credit card include the card number, the date of expiration, and the signature of the cardholder. The following cards are accepted: American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa. Make checks payable to CCGMA.

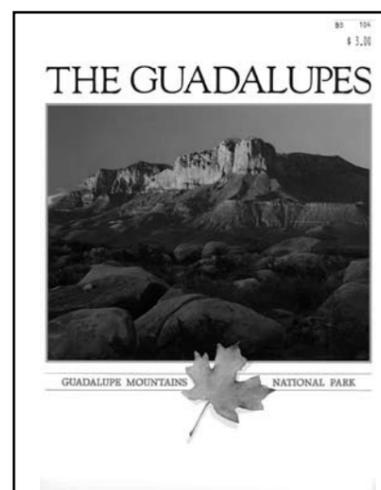
Shipping and handling charges for book orders are as follows:
\$4.00 for purchases up to \$15.00
\$5.00 for purchases \$15.01-30.00
\$6.00 for purchases \$30.01-50.00



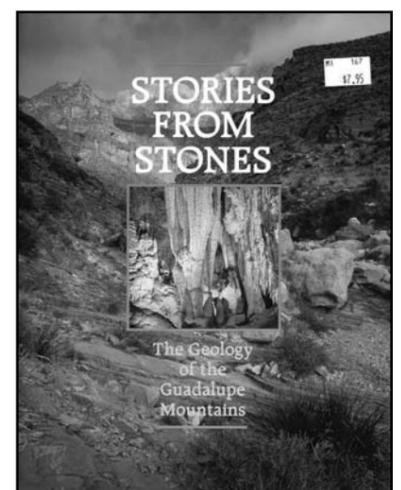
In this book, Jim White tells of his initial discovery and early adventures in Carlsbad Cavern. Numerous historic black and white photos, 32 pages, 6x9.5 inches. \$5.95



This book covers the formation of the Guadalupe Mountains, the creation and discovery of Carlsbad Cavern, history, bats, and Lechuguilla Cave. Color photography, 56 pages, 9x12 inches. \$6.95



This picture book provides a general overview of Guadalupe Mountains National Park history, biodiversity, and geology. Full color photography throughout, 32 pages, 8.5 x 11 in. \$4.00



A thorough, but still accessible, discussion on Guadalupe Mountains' geology. Includes sections on cave and speleothem formation. Color photography, 40 pages, 8.5 x 11 inches. \$7.95

Nearby Attractions

LIVING DESERT ZOO & GARDENS STATE PARK

505-887-5516

Come face to face with a mountain lion at this unique zoo and botanical garden offering an opportunity to experience the Chihuahuan Desert first-hand. See a large collection of live animals, including the rare Mexican gray wolf, and the roadrunner, the state bird of New Mexico. There is also an unusual collection of cacti and other succulents from around the world.

The park is located high atop the Ocotillo Hills overlooking the northwest edge of Carlsbad, just off Highway 285 and features exhibits, an art gallery, gift shop, and refreshments.

Open daily except December 25.
Wheelchair accessible.

Summer Hours

(Memorial Day to Labor Day)

8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Last tour entry—6:30 p.m.

Winter Hours (after Labor Day)

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Last tour entry—3:30 p.m.

Fees

Ages 13 and up	\$5.00
Children 7 - 12	\$3.00
Children 6 and under	free
Group (20+) discount available.	

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

505-885-4181

The forest encompasses 285,000 acres for hiking, caving, camping, picnicking, horseback riding, hunting and sightseeing. Maps are available at the Guadalupe Ranger District Office located in the Federal Building, 114 S. Halagueno, Room 159, in Carlsbad.



Sitting Bull Falls (in Lincoln National Forest)

Wheelchair accessible.

Day use only—no camping.

Entrance fee—\$5.00 per vehicle.

Seven miles southwest of State Highway 137 on Forest Route 276, this 130 foot falls is one of the highest in New Mexico. Picnic area, trails and restroom.



Five Points & Indian Vistas

Eleven miles south of State Highway 137 on Forest Route 540, an improved gravel road. A panoramic view of the desert from the top of the Guadalupe Mountains. Interpretive signs explain natural features.

BRANTLEY LAKE STATE PARK

505-457-2384

Located 12 miles north of Carlsbad on U.S. Highway 285, the campground has 51 RV sites with water and RV electric hookups (a few with sewer), a dump station, playground, restroom with hot showers, shelters, tables and grills. Other facilities include picnic areas with sheltered tables and grills, playground, a fishing dock, boat ramps with docks, and a visitor center.

Open all year—24 hours/day.
Wheelchair accessible.

Fees

Day Use Only	—\$5.00 per vehicle
Camping	—\$14.00 per night (\$10.00 for each additional vehicle driven into the same site)
Primitive Camping Area	—\$8.00 per vehicle per night

