



# Summer Guide



NPS/Brad Sutton

## The Hot Season

AT MIDDAY, THE SUN BEATS RELENTLESSLY DOWN ON a still and silent desert landscape. Few animals stir as the air temperature soars over a hundred degrees. Wildlife escape the fierce heat of the sun by sheltering underground or in the shade. People, too, seek comfort in cooler places, reveling in the icy blast of air conditioned cars and buildings.

When the heat of the summer afternoon yields to the cooler temperatures of evening, little feet begin to scurry across the sandy soil. The desert life that slumbered until dusk begins to wake.

Not all animals slept the day away, though. On all but the most scorching days, lizards, snakes, and desert tortoises may be out and about when few other animals are active. How can reptiles stand the heat?

Reptiles are sometimes referred to as “cold-blooded,” but that term is misleading: reptile blood is not cold all the time. A more accurate word for describing reptiles is “ectotherm,” meaning “outer heat.” Reptiles don’t generate their own body heat using energy from food, as we mammals do. Instead, they absorb heat from the external environment to regulate their internal body temperature. Cold winters make reptiles sluggish and unresponsive. The heat of the summer sun spurs them to greater activity.

Being an ectotherm is a great strategy for a desert animal because, overall, food is scarce in the desert. Without a constant need to take in food just to maintain body temperature, reptiles are able to burrow underground and go dormant to escape the fatal, freezing cold of winter. They can go for months without eating or even drinking. On the other extreme, while hot is good for an ectotherm, too hot is still too hot! Even the desert-adapted reptiles have their limits.

Human-caused climate change has already made the desert southwest hotter and drier than it used to be, and these changes are expected to continue. Because reptiles are so sensitive to external temperature, some species will likely suffer.

Recent research by Dr. Cameron Barrows, an ecologist at the University of California Riverside, suggests that some lizard species present in Joshua Tree National Park today will probably vanish from the park. Blainville’s horned lizards (formerly known as coast horned lizards) and western fence lizards living in Joshua Tree, for example, are already at the edge of the range of conditions they can tolerate. Increasing temperatures or changing precipitation patterns may push them out of the area.

Climate change doesn’t just affect reptiles. The range of the Joshua tree itself is expected to shrink, while pinyon pines may vanish from the park altogether. Mountain quail, which in Joshua Tree are found mainly in association with pinyon-juniper woodlands, were abundant in the 1950s but are now scarce in the park. Will they continue to survive here as the world warms?

Climate change threatens the integrity of national parks. For almost a hundred years, the National Park Service has protected America’s most special places for future generations to experience. Simply trying to preserve natural processes is no longer enough.

So look for reptiles on your summer visit. Appreciate the adaptations that make them so different from us, and so well suited for desert life. And reflect on how these fascinating creatures can best be protected for an uncertain future.



Blainville’s horned lizard could disappear from Joshua Tree National Park as the climate continues to warm.



### Welcome to your park!

Summer is a magical time at Joshua Tree National Park. The traffic slows down, the temperatures rise, and peace comes to the desert.

I just want to take a second and welcome you to your national park. Over the last 80 years, millions of people have come from around the globe to enjoy the wonders of JoshuaTree. This last year, over 2 million people came to see the diversity of wildlife and plants that make this such spectacular place.

I need your help to protect the magic that is Joshua Tree. Help us keep the wildlife wild by not feeding the animals. When you’re hiking along the trail and come across someone’s litter, pick it up. If you see folks doing things that are not good for the park, take some time out and call a ranger.

We’re here both to serve you and to protect this park.

Have a safe and wonderful time at your national Park.

*David Smith*

David Smith  
Superintendent

## Summer Safety

Summer is traditionally the quiet season in Joshua Tree, but it is getting busier every year as visitors discover the sense of wonder that comes with experiencing the desert in the hot season. Learn about how to stay safe and enjoy your Joshua Tree visit to the fullest on **pp. 2-3**.

**Emergency - Dial 911 or 909-383-5651**

## Map & Hiking

Orient yourself to Joshua Tree using the park map in the centerfold of this newspaper. On the same page, find suggestions for hiking trails. Whether you are interested in short, easy walks or a tough, full-day hike, you’ll find inspiration on pages **pp. 4-5**.

## Ranger Programs

Enrich your experience of Joshua Tree National Park by joining a friendly, knowledgeable ranger for a guided walk, patio talk, or evening program. Most ranger-led activities (except tours of Historic Keys Ranch) are free and do not require advance sign-up. See **p. 8**.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Joshua Tree National Park** preserves and protects the scenic, natural, and cultural resources representative of the Colorado and Mojave Deserts' rich biological and geological diversity, cultural history, wilderness, recreational values, and outstanding opportunities for education and scientific study.

**Superintendent**  
David Smith

**Park Information**  
760-367-5500

**Emergency**  
Dial 911 or 909-383-5651

**Mailing Address**  
74485 National Park Drive  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

**Website**  
www.nps.gov/jotr

**Social Media**  
instagram.com/JoshuaTreeNPS  
twitter.com/JoshuaTreeNP  
facebook.com/JoshuaTreeNPS  
flickr.com/photos/JoshuaTreeNP  
youtube.com: Search JoshuaTreeNPS

**E-mail**  
jotr\_info@nps.gov

**Lost & Found**  
Call Lost & Found Coordinator Jeannie Campbell at 760-367-5518. Lost property reports should include owner's name, mailing address, telephone number, a detailed description of the lost item, and the date and place where you think you lost the item.

**Newspaper Editor**  
Cathy Bell, cathy\_bell@nps.gov  
Please email with comments or corrections.

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

# Safety: What You Need to Know

We want your trip to Joshua Tree to be safe and enjoyable. Ultimately, your safety is your responsibility. This information will help you prepare.



**BRING WATER WITH YOU**  
Water is available at only a few locations around the edges of the park:

- Oasis Visitor Center in Twentynine Palms
- Black Rock Campground
- Cottonwood Campground
- West Entrance (no RV water access)
- Indian Cove Ranger Station (no RV water access)

## STAY HYDRATED & EAT SALTY SNACKS

We recommend drinking a minimum of one gallon (about 4 liters) of water per person, per day. You will need more fluids if you are active: vigorous hiking, cycling, or climbing can cause you to lose water and salts at a rate of 1 ½ quarts per hour. Replace these fluids and electrolytes by drinking water or sports drinks and consuming salty foods.



## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEAT & SUN

Expect high daytime temperatures, intense sunlight, and low humidity. Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. Apply sunscreen to all exposed skin. Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses.



Be generous in applying sunscreen, and reapply often. The desert sun is strong.



**CELL PHONES ARE UNRELIABLE**  
Most of Joshua Tree National Park is remote wilderness and there is *no cell coverage*. Do not count on your phone for navigation or in case of emergency.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Emergency phones are found at two locations:

- Indian Cove Ranger Station
- Intersection Rock parking area near Hidden Valley Campground

If you are in an area with cell service and you have an emergency, **call 911** or 909-383-5651 for assistance.



## PREVENT BITES & STINGS

Joshua Tree is home to seven species of rattlesnakes, as well as venomous scorpions and spiders. These animals are not out to get you. You can avoid problems by paying attention to your surroundings. Never step or reach into places you cannot see. Use a flashlight or headlamp at night. Campers, check your shoes and bedding for critters before use.

In summer, thirsty bees congregate around any source of moisture they detect, including human perspiration and car AC systems. Stay calm around bees and do not swat at them. Keep drinks and food inside your vehicle.



Never reach into rock crevices or onto ledges where you can't see.



**GIVE WILDLIFE A BRAKE**  
Park roads are narrow and winding, and some areas are often

congested. Obey posted speed limits. The maximum speed in the park is 45 mph (73 kph), and in many locations the speed limit is lower. Driving slowly and cautiously helps protect park wildlife. If you want to stop to view animals or scenery, please use a pullout and get completely out of the travel lanes to prevent accidents.

## DON'T TRUST GPS FOR DRIVING DIRECTIONS

In the desert, some GPS units or navigation apps may try to direct you to roads that are unsafe for your vehicle. For safety, refer to the park map for navigation, or check with a ranger.

## TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN

Flash floods occur when summer thunderstorms pour large amounts of rain in a short time. Avoid canyons and washes during rainstorms and be prepared to move to higher ground. While driving, be alert for water running across the road. Wait for floodwaters to subside rather than trying to drive through.

## STAY OUT, STAY ALIVE

Many old mine sites exist within the park. If you choose to visit them, use extreme caution, appreciating them from a safe distance. Never enter old mine tunnels, shafts, or fenced areas.



Many historic mine sites exist within Joshua Tree National Park. Admire, but do not enter.

## Rules and Regulations



### Watch wildlife respectfully

We recommend staying at least 25 yards (23 m) from wildlife. If an animal reacts to your presence by changing its behavior, you are too close—even if you are more than 25 yards from it. Move quietly away to give the animal space. Remember, the park is home for wild animals. We are just visitors here.



### Never feed any wild animals

Consuming human food is unhealthy for wildlife and may encourage aggressive behavior. Coyotes, squirrels, ravens, and other animals should be left alone to rely on natural sources of food. All food, trash, scented products, and cooking tools must be stored securely in a vehicle or hard-sided container.



### Travel responsibly with your pet

Pets are allowed in the park, but their activities are restricted. Pets must be on a leash at all times. They cannot go more than 100 feet (30 m) from a road, picnic area, or campground. Pets are not allowed on hiking trails. Owners must never leave a pet unattended or tied to an object. Bag and dispose of pet waste.



### No drones or remote controlled vehicles

Remote controlled vehicles, including aircraft and rockcrawlers, are prohibited in Joshua Tree National Park. Drones and other remotely-operated craft can disturb wildlife and disrupt the visitor experience.



### Campfires

Campfires are allowed only in designated fire rings or grills that are found in park campgrounds and picnic areas. Campfires are not allowed in the backcountry. Bring your own firewood and extra water to douse your campfire. Do not use park vegetation, living or dead, for fuel.



### No collecting park resources, including living or dead vegetation

It is the mission of the National Park Service to preserve all natural and cultural resources unimpaired for future generations. Please leave everything in the park as it is for others to enjoy. Do not destroy, deface, dig, collect, or otherwise disturb any park resources including plants or animals (whether they are dead or alive), rocks, fossils, or artifacts.



### Rock climbing

Climbers may replace existing bolts if they are unsafe. New bolts may be placed in non-wilderness areas if in accordance with the bolting checklist, available on the park website. Bolting in wilderness requires a permit. Hand drills only.



### All motor vehicles and bicycles must stay on roads

The desert environment is more fragile than it may look. The ruts and scars left by vehicles illegally taken off-road can last for years or even decades. Red and green sticker dirt bikes, ATVs, and UTVs are prohibited in all areas of the park.



### Watch for tortoises

The desert tortoise is a threatened species that often dies from being hit by cars. Be very watchful and drive carefully in the park: small tortoises on the road look a lot like rocks. Be especially mindful during monsoon season, when tortoises often come to roads to drink from puddles. Tortoises also sometimes go under cars to get out of the strong summer sun. Check under your vehicle before driving.



### Firearms and weapons

Firearms may be possessed in accordance with California state and federal laws. However, they may not be discharged in the park. Fireworks, traps, bows, BB guns, paintball guns, and slingshots are not allowed in the park.

# What to See and Do

THE DESERT IS AT ITS BEST WHEN viewed up close and at a slow pace. From a whizzing car, the landscape may at first appear bleak or drab. Closer examination, though, reveals a fascinating variety of plants and animals. Rocks sculpted by weather and time contrast with the brilliant blue of the desert sky.

Joshua Tree National Park has endless opportunities for exploration and discovery. Begin your trip at a park visitor center, where a ranger will be happy to answer your questions and get you oriented.

## IF YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS:

- Plan to drive between the West Entrance and North Entrance of the park to see the Joshua trees and boulder fields that make this park famous.
- Drive to Keys View for a lovely vista of the Coachella Valley. On days with little air pollution, you may be able to see beyond the shining Salton Sea to Signal Mountain in Mexico.
- Take a short walk on one or two of the park's nature trails (p. 4-5) to get an up-close look at desert scenery and plants.
- Kids of all ages are invited to participate in our Junior Ranger program (p. 8).

## IF YOU HAVE AN ENTIRE DAY:

- Hike one or two of the park's longer trails (pp. 4-5). In summer, it's best to plan physical activity for early mornings and evenings, when temperatures are cooler.
- Attend a ranger-led activity like a patio talk, guided walk, or evening program (p. 8). If you'll be visiting on a weekend, consider calling ahead to make a reservation for a Keys Ranch tour (fee).
- Drive through both the Mojave Desert and the Colorado Desert by going from the West Entrance to the South Entrance. See where Joshua trees grow in the Mojave, in the western half of the park, and observe the different vegetation of the Colorado in the lower-elevation Pinto Basin and Cottonwood areas.

## IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE DAY:

- Spend the night in one of our campgrounds (p. 6). If you have the right gear, experience, and fitness level, consider an overnight backcountry trip.
- Explore the longer hiking trails around Black Rock or Cottonwood (p. 4-5).
- If you have a mountain bike or high-clearance vehicle, consider exploring a backcountry road (p. 6) to experience parts of the park that most visitors never see.



Keys View is a popular destination featuring panoramic views of the Coachella Valley, San Andreas Fault trace, Mt. San Jacinto (distant left), and Mt. San Gorgonio (distant right).

## Visitor Center Hours and Locations

Visitor Center	Address	Hours of Operation
Oasis Visitor Center 760-367-5500	74485 National Park Drive Twentynine Palms, CA 92277	daily 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Joshua Tree Visitor Center	6554 Park Boulevard Joshua Tree, CA 92252	daily 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Cottonwood Visitor Center	6 miles (10 km) inside South Entrance, access from I-10	daily 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Black Rock Nature Center	9800 Black Rock Canyon Road Yucca Valley, CA 92284	closed June – September

## Essential Tips for Desert Travel

Summer in the desert poses challenges for travelers today, just as it did in 1905 when miner Matt Riley “died of thirst” (right) while trying to walk 25 miles in temperatures of 114° F (45.6°C)—with only one canteen of water. Don't fall victim to the same fate! Travel prepared to survive.



### Always have water with you.

When driving in hot weather, have with you in your vehicle at least two gallons (about 8 liters) of water per person, per day. If you leave your vehicle, carry water with you.

### Fill your gas tank and be sure your vehicle is in good condition before driving into the park.

There is no gas available in Joshua Tree National Park. The park is a big place, so start your day with a full tank of gas. Before entering the park, check your tire pressure and fluid levels, especially coolant.

### What if your vehicle breaks down?

Stay with it until help comes. Do not try to walk for help during the heat of the day.

### Notify a friend or family member of your itinerary.

Let someone know your intended route and return time. Check in by phone when you are safely back. If you miss your check-in, your contact should notify park rangers by calling the Federal Interagency Communication Center at **909-383-5651**.

### Watch for signs of heat-related illness in yourself and others.

Headaches are often a sign of dehydration. Prevent them by drinking water. If you feel dizzy or nauseated, or if you experience muscle cramps, get out of the sun immediately and drink water or sports drinks. Dampen clothing to lower body temperature. If symptoms are severe or persist, seek medical attention immediately! Heat-related illnesses can be fatal. Be alert for symptoms in others.

### Bring a desert first aid kit.

Many desert plants are armored with sharp spines. Suggested items for a desert first aid kit include tweezers, safety pins, bandages of various sizes, antibiotic ointment, antiseptic towelettes, wound closure strips, moleskin or duct tape for blisters, compression bandage, ibuprofen, aspirin, antihistamine tablets, extra food and salty snacks, and an emergency blanket.

### For outdoor activities, know your skill level. Do not take chances.

Enjoy the Joshua Tree desert safely!

# Leave No Trace

LEAVE JOSHUA TREE PRISTINE FOR those who visit the park after you. Learn and practice the seven Leave No Trace principles.

## PLAN AHEAD & PREPARE

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass. Do not set up rock cairns or other physical markers.

## TRAVEL & CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, and gravel.
- No camping in rock shelters or caves.
- Allow wildlife free access to scarce desert water sources. Do not camp nearby.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

- In popular areas, concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
- In pristine areas, disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails. Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

## DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products. These items do not break down in the arid desert environment, even when buried.

## LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.

- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

## MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Campfires are allowed only in established metal fire rings in campgrounds and picnic areas with fire grates. All wood must be brought in from outside the park—no collecting.
- Keep your fire small. Put it out completely before you leave your site.
- No campfires in the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking.

## RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach animals.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to danger.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or harsh weather conditions.

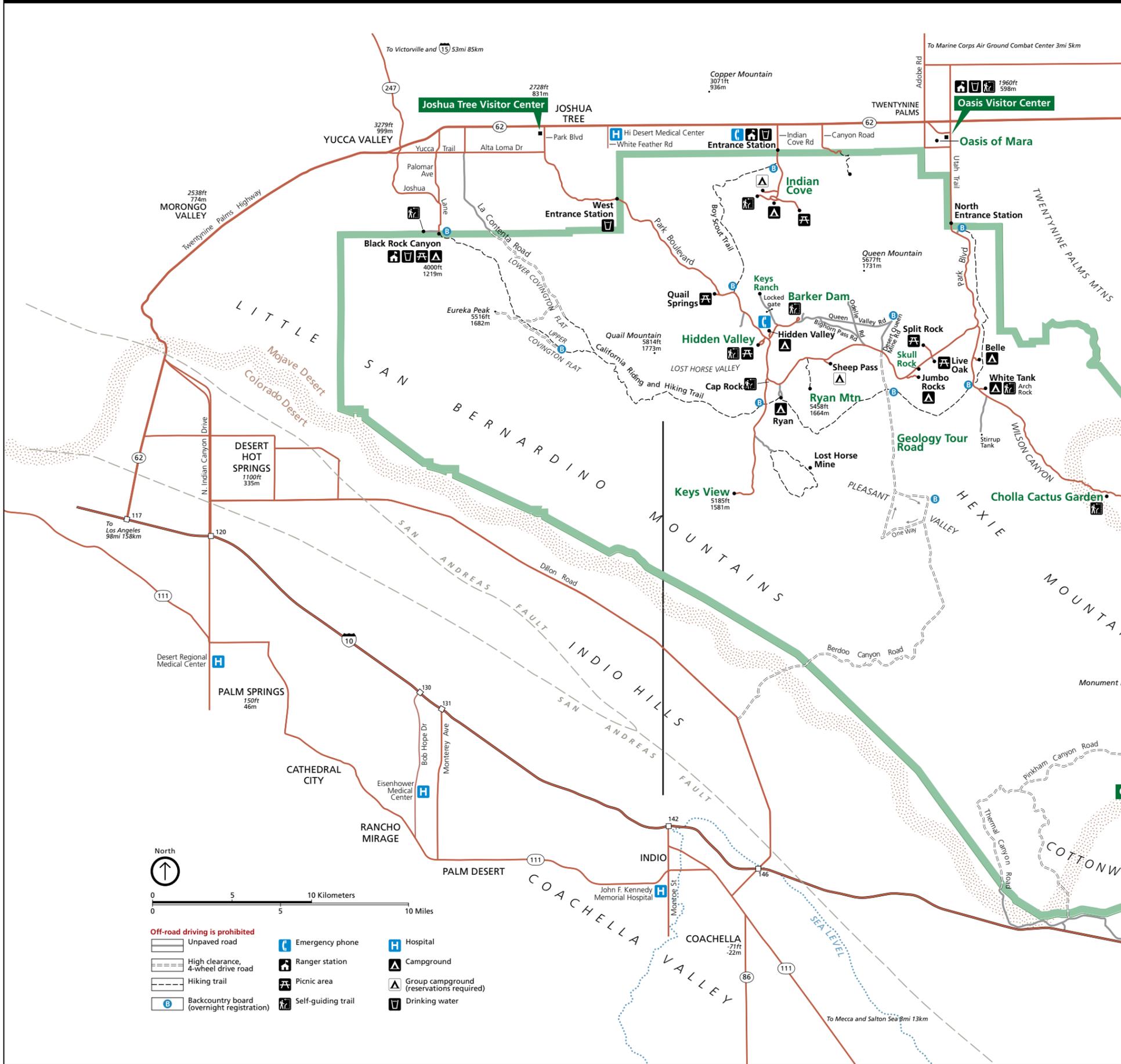
## BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail. Hikers traveling uphill have right-of-way.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises. Respect campground quiet hours.



Learn more about how to minimize recreation impacts and protect Joshua Tree's wildlands for the future. Talk to a ranger or visit [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org).

# Map of Joshua Tree National Park



## Hiking

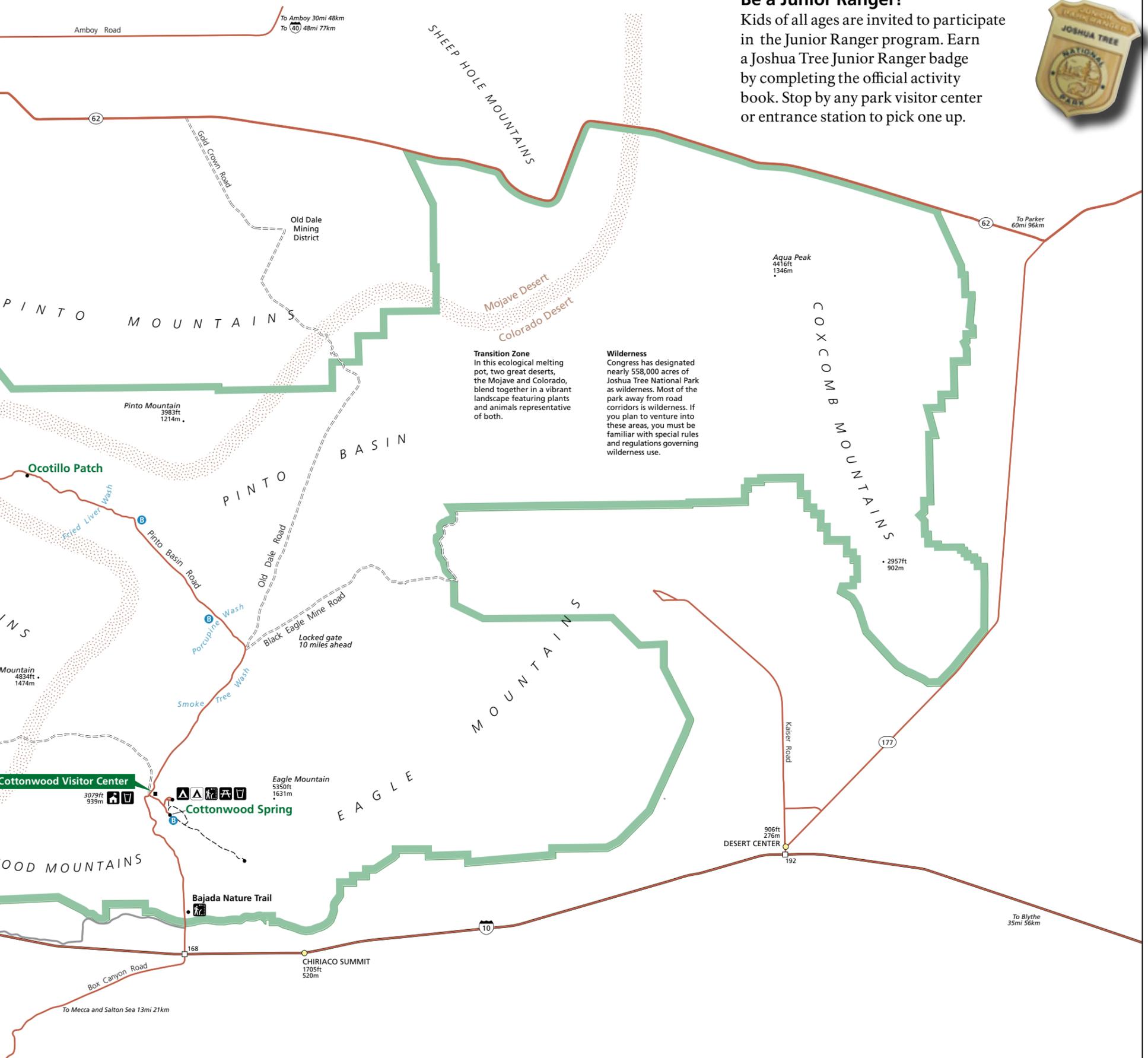
### Short Walks and Nature Trails

Trail	Trailhead Location	Distance	Estimated Time	Description
<b>Arch Rock</b>	White Tank Campground, opposite site 9	0.3 mi (0.5 km)	30 minutes	Loop. Explore the geology of a unique area and view a natural arch on this short walk.
<b>Bajada</b> 	South of Cottonwood Visitor Center; 0.5 mi (0.8 km) north of the South Entrance	0.25 mi (0.4 km)	15-20 minutes	Loop. Walk on a bajada and discover plants of the Colorado Desert on this easy, accessible path.
<b>Barker Dam</b>	Barker Dam parking area	1.1 mi (1.8 km)	1 hour	Loop. Explore cultural history and view a water tank built by early cattle ranchers. Watch for bighorn sheep.
<b>Cap Rock</b> 	Cap Rock parking area, at the junction of Park Blvd. and Keys View Rd.	0.4 mi (0.6 km)	30-45 minutes	Loop. View boulder piles, Joshua trees, and other desert plants on this easy, accessible path.
<b>Cholla Cactus Garden</b>	20 mi (32 km) north of Cottonwood Visitor Center	0.25 mi (0.4 km)	15-30 minutes	Loop. View thousands of densely concentrated, naturally growing cholla cactus. Stay on the trail, wear closed-toe shoes, and be aware of prickly cactus.
<b>Hidden Valley</b>	Hidden Valley picnic area	1 mi (1.6 km)	1 hour	Loop. Discover a rock-enclosed valley that was once rumored to have been used by cattle rustlers.
<b>Hi-View</b>	Northwest of Black Rock Campground	1.3 mi (2.1 km) from board at parking area. 3 mi (4.8 km) from visitor center.	1½ hours	Loop. Discover the world of Joshua tree forests. Hike up a ridge on the western side of the park and take in panoramic views of the area. There are some steep sections, as well as several benches to take a break and enjoy the view.
<b>Indian Cove</b>	West end of Indian Cove Campground	0.6 mi (1 km)	30-45 minutes	Loop. Walk on a gently rolling path with a few steps. Take a closer look at desert plants and learn about their traditional uses by American Indians.
<b>Keys View</b> 	Keys View	0.25 mi (0.4 km)	30 minutes	Accessible Overlook. Short, paved loop path is steeper and may be accessible with assistance. See breathtaking views of the San Andreas Fault, Mt. San Jacinto, Mt. San Gorgonio, and the Salton Sea.



## Be a Junior Ranger!

Kids of all ages are invited to participate in the Junior Ranger program. Earn a Joshua Tree Junior Ranger badge by completing the official activity book. Stop by any park visitor center or entrance station to pick one up.



On any desert hike, remember the ten essentials: water, hat, sunscreen and sunglasses, food, sturdy shoes, map and compass, layers of clothing, pocket knife, flashlight, and first aid kit.

Carefully review the safety tips on pp. 2-3. Leave your planned route and expected return time with a friend or family member before hiking. Check in with this person when you return. In an emergency, call 911 or 909-383-5651.

### Short Walks and Nature Trails...cont'd.

Trail	Trailhead Location	Distance	Estimated Time	Description
<b>Oasis of Mara</b> 	Oasis Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms	0.5 mi (0.8 km)	30-45 minutes	Loop. Explore a desert oasis on this easy, accessible walk. See how the Oasis of Mara has been used by wildlife and people throughout time.
<b>Ryan Ranch</b>	Ryan Ranch trailhead, about 0.5 mi (0.8 km) east of Ryan Campground	1 mi (1.6 km)	1 hour	Out and back. Enjoy an easy hike along an old ranch road and see a historic adobe structure.

### Moderate Hikes

Trail	Trailhead Location	Distance	Estimated Time	Description
<b>Lost Horse Mine</b>	Lost Horse Mine trailhead off Keys View Rd.	4 mi (6.4 km)	2-3 hours	Out and back. Explore around one of the most successful gold mines in the park. Stay outside the fenced area to protect the millsite and mine. For a longer option, see Lost Horse Loop, under Challenging Hikes.
<b>Mastodon Peak</b>	Cottonwood Spring parking area	3 mi (4.8 km)	1½-2½ hours	Loop. An optional rock scramble takes you to the top of a craggy granite peak. The trail then loops around past an old gold mine. Elevation change is about 400 feet.
<b>Pine City</b>	Pine City trailhead at end of Desert Queen Mine Rd.	4 mi (6.4 km)	2-3 hours	Out and back.
<b>West Side Loop</b>	Black Rock	4.7 mi (7.6 km)	2½-4 hours	Loop. Explore the ridges and washes west of Black Rock campground.
<b>Split Rock Loop</b>	Split Rock picnic area	2.5 mi (4.0 km)	1½-2½ hours	Loop. Distance includes side trip to Face Rock.
<b>Wall Street Mill</b>	Barker Dam parking area	2 mi (3.2 km)	1½-2½ hours	Out and back. Travel to the remains of an historic gold milling site.

# Camping



Campgrounds	Number of Sites	Fee	Elevation	Water	Flush Toilets	Pit Toilets	Tables	Fire Grates	Dump Station
<b>Belle</b> <i>closed June - September</i>	18	<i>closed</i>	3,800 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>Black Rock</b>	54 open of 100 total	\$20	4,000 ft	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	no	yes	yes	<b>yes</b>
<b>Cottonwood</b>	31 open of 62 total	\$20	3,000 ft	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>	no	yes	yes	<b>yes</b>
<b>Hidden Valley</b> <i>RVs and trailers may not exceed a combined maximum length of 25 ft.</i>	44	\$15	4,200 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>Indian Cove</b>	39 open of 101 total	\$20	3,200 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>Jumbo Rocks</b>	124	\$15	4,400 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>Ryan</b> <i>closed June - September</i>	31	<i>closed</i>	4,300 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
<b>White Tank</b>	15	\$15	3,800 ft	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no

In the summer months, it is usually easy to find a campsite. On weeknights, you may have few neighbors, making for a peaceful and serene experience. Enjoy dark night skies and listen for the yips and yowls of coyotes in the night.

Visitors staying overnight in the park must camp in a designated campground or backcountry camping area. Sleeping in your vehicle outside of a campground is prohibited, as are camping at roadside pullouts, trailheads, or along the side of the road.

A maximum of six people, three tents, and two cars may occupy an individual campsite, if there is space. Some sites only have enough parking for one vehicle.

All tents, tarps, and camping equipment must be set up within 25 ft of the picnic table or fire grate at a site. Do not set up slacklines in campgrounds.

Check in and check out are at noon. Camping fees must be paid within one hour of selecting a campsite.



Equestrian Campgrounds <i>for visitors with horses only</i>	Number of Sites	Fee	Elevation
<b>Ryan Horse Camp</b> <i>closed June - September</i>	4	<i>closed</i>	4,300 ft
<b>Black Rock Horse Camp</b>	20	\$20	4,000 ft

Group Campgrounds <i>reservations required: www.recreation.gov or call 1-877-444-6777 group sites accommodate 10-60 people</i>	Number of Sites	Fee	Elevation
<b>Cottonwood Group</b> <i>Tents only. RVs and habitable trailers prohibited.</i>	3	\$25-40 depending on group size	3,000 ft
<b>Indian Cove Group</b> <i>Can accommodate RVs or trailers, maximum combined length 25 feet.</i>	13	\$35-50 depending on group size	3,200 ft
<b>Sheep Pass Group</b> <i>Tents only. RVs and habitable trailers prohibited.</i>	6	\$35-50 depending on group size	4,500 ft

Quiet hours are from 10 pm-6 am. Generator use is permitted only from 7-9 am, 12-2 pm, and 5-7 pm.

There is a 30-day camping limit each year. Only 14 of these nights may take place from October - May.

## Backcountry Roads

Joshua Tree's backcountry roads allow properly equipped visitors to explore remote areas of the park. See the safety tips on p. 3, and ask a ranger for current information.

For your own safety and the protection of natural features, all wheeled vehicles (including bicycles) must remain on designated roads. Off road driving and riding are prohibited.

### **GEOLOGY TOUR ROAD** 18 mi (29 km)

There are 16 interpretive stops along this route, starting 2 mi (3.2 km) west of Jumbo Rocks. Pick up a guide from the brochure box at the start. A round trip takes about two hours. The first few miles of the road are open to most vehicles, with four-wheel drive needed after marker 9.

### **QUEEN VALLEY ROADS** 13.4 mi (21.7 km) total

Usually passable to all vehicles, this network of dirt roads crisscrosses a valley of boulder piles and Joshua trees. The Queen Valley dirt roads are popular with cyclists and dog walkers.

### **COVINGTON FLATS ROADS** 9 mi (21.7 km) total

The dirt roads in Covington Flats offer access to some of the park's largest Joshua trees, junipers, and pinyon pines. You can drive all the way to the summit of Eureka Peak (5,518 ft/1,682 m) for panoramic views from Palm Springs to the Morongo Basin. High clearance recommended.

### **BERDOO CANYON ROAD** 11.5 mi (18.4 km) within the park

Connecting the south end of Geology Tour Rd. with Dillon Rd. in the Coachella Valley, this road requires high clearance and four-wheel drive; narrow wheel-base suggested.

### **PINKHAM CANYON ROAD** 20 mi (32.4 km)

This challenging road begins at Cottonwood Visitor Center, travels along Smoke Tree Wash, and then turns south down Pinkham Canyon. Sections of the road run through soft sand and rocky plains. High clearance and four-wheel drive are required; narrow wheel-base suggested.

## Equestrian Use

Horseback riding is a popular way to experience the park. The Backcountry and Wilderness Management Plan provides for 253 miles of equestrian trails and trail corridors that traverse open lands, canyon bottoms, and dry washes. Many riding trails are already open, clearly marked, and ready to be enjoyed. Other trails are in various states of development. Trail maps for the west entrance area and for the Black Rock Canyon area are available.

Stock use is limited to horses and mules and is restricted to designated equestrian trails and corridors, open dirt roads, and shoulders of paved roads. Riders should travel single file to reduce damage to soil and vegetation. Stock animals are not permitted within ¼ mile of any natural or constructed water source. Horses and other stock are not permitted on nature trails, in the Wonderland of Rocks, in campgrounds, in picnic areas, or at visitor centers.

For more information, please see the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/horseback-riding.htm> or ask a ranger about horse use.

### **BLACK EAGLE MINE ROAD** 9 mi (14.5 km) within the park

This dead-end dirt road begins 6.5 mi (10.5 km) north of the Cottonwood Visitor Center. It runs along the southern edge of Pinto Basin, crossing several dry washes before reaching the park boundary. Beyond that is Bureau of Land Management land. High clearance and four-wheel drive required.

### **OLD DALE MINE ROAD** 12.3 mi (19.8 km) within the park

Starts at the same point as Black Eagle Mine Rd., but heads north across sandy Pinto Basin, a dry lake bed. It then climbs steeply to the park boundary. About 11 miles (17.7 km) north of the park, it connects with Hwy 62. High clearance and four-wheel drive required; narrow wheel-base suggested.

# Joshua Tree National Park Association

Park Partner



## Be a Part of the Adventure

The Joshua Tree National Park Association has been supporting preservation, scientific research and education at Joshua Tree National Park since 1962. As the park's primary non-profit partner, we operate four visitor center bookstores that are often the first stop for visitors from around the world; offer a field institute with classes taught by experts in natural sciences, cultural history and the arts; and raise funds for the park through public events and our membership program. Join us and make the most of your Joshua Tree experience!

## Connect with Nature

Whatever your passion, you'll learn more about Joshua Tree National Park at our visitor center bookstores. Wildflower identification, climbing and hiking guides, birding, geology, stargazing, native plants, and local history are just a few of the topics included in our great selection of books. And don't forget the kids: we have games, activity books, everyone's favorite desert animals and Junior Ranger gear. Start your journey now at our online store!

## Experience the Great Outdoors

Pick up a trail guide in the bookstore, or sign up for a Desert Institute field class and make the park your classroom. If you don't see exactly what you're looking for, a custom program will ensure a perfect fit! Classes are not offered in the summer months, but take home a schedule and plan ahead.

## Become a Member

Join the Joshua Tree National Park Association and you'll support park programs and projects while enjoying some great benefits. Our members are a committed group of supporters whose contributions each year help the park fulfill its educational, interpretive, and research plans. As a member you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting youth programs, scientific research and the park's historical collections, and you will assist in the preservation of our fragile desert environment for generations to come.

Your annual membership includes these benefits:

- 15% discount on merchandise at Joshua Tree National Park Association bookstores, with reciprocal bookstore discounts at many other National Parks
- Keys Views, our JTNPA newsletter, and a monthly e-newsletter update on park events
- Invitations to special events
- \$10 discount off every Desert Institute class

Please ask for a membership brochure at one of the Joshua Tree Visitor Centers or call 760-367-5535.

[www.joshuatree.org](http://www.joshuatree.org)

# Joshua Tree's Boulders

THE BOULDERS AND ROCK formations of Joshua Tree National Park define the park landscape. The rocks catch the eye of climbers, photographers, hikers, and motorists. Most everyone asks, "What are they?" "Where did they come from?" or "What's with all the strange shapes?"

### WHAT ARE THEY?

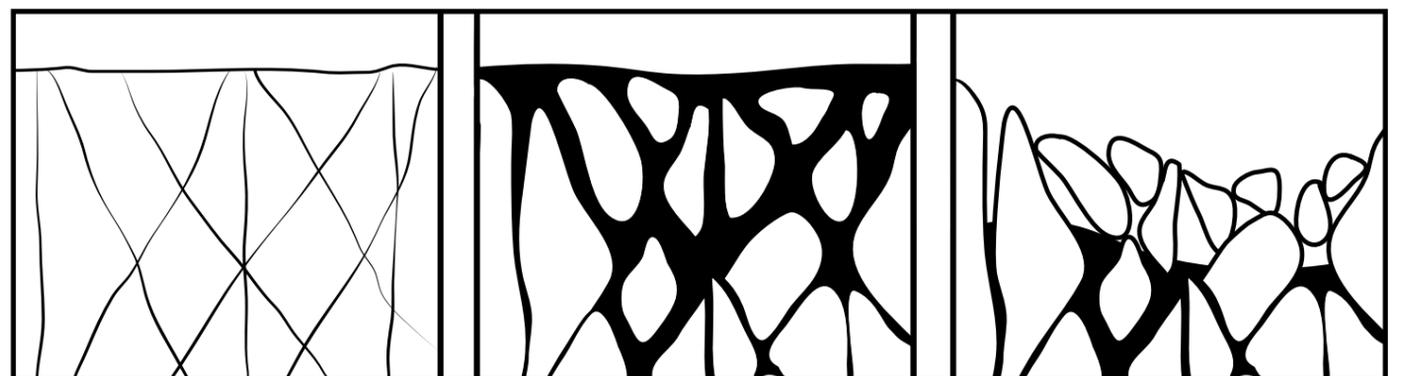
Many visitors think the rocks look like layers of sandstone, but they are actually a kind of granite, not unlike the rock commonly used for countertops. Granites are igneous in origin, meaning they formed when hot, molten fluids within the earth's crust gradually cooled into hard rock.

Most granites in the park are a particular type called "monzogranite." Joshua Tree's monzogranites solidified beneath the surface of the Earth starting about 245 million years ago, with the youngest rocks formed over 100 million years ago.

### WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?

About 250 million years ago—before the dinosaurs came to dominate the planet—the thick North American plate began riding over the thinner Pacific Plate. The water-rich oceanic plate was forced under the continent at an angle.

Water at depth, where temperatures are extremely hot, helped to melt the rock into granitic magma. It was hot, liquid, and lightweight, and was able to ooze



1. Parallel sets of fractures formed in the hard monzogranite while it was still underground. Water began infiltrating along the cracks.

2. The edges and corners of buried rock blocks became rounded as water broke the rock down into smaller particles.

3. Erosion carried away the small particles of broken-down rock, exposing the rounded rocks that had once been beneath the surface.

upward along deep-seated cracks in the crust that had been fractured by the fierce crunching of the charging plates.

The liquid granite couldn't force itself all the way up to the surface, so the granite stalled and formed huge, ball-shaped masses within the ancient rock. Over a long period of time, the great blobs of granite cooled and hardened.

The ancient rock, called gneiss (pronounced "nice"), began to erode. Over millions of years, the gneiss has completely vanished from the surface in most of the park. The gneiss, dark in color, does remain

exposed on mountain tops. Younger and lighter-colored monzogranites are seen in the valley bottoms.

### WHAT'S WITH ALL THE STRANGE SHAPES?

In many places in the park, the boulders appear as if some gigantic child piled them up. Some boulders have carved faces, are shaped like animals, or take other fanciful forms.

*Cracks in the rocks and water* are the keys to the appearance of our rocks today. Horizontal stresses from the collision of tectonic plates created sets of parallel, vertical fractures within

the buried rock. Later, mountain building pushed the rocks upward to form sets of X-shaped cracks standing at angles in the granite. All the fractures were avenues for rainwater to seep downward through the rocks to etch and shape and round the originally angular blocks into the varied forms seen today in the park.

During the last Ice Age, the climate was cooler and wetter; rainwater was abundant. Much of the water etching occurred then. No glaciers existed this far south at these elevations, so glaciers were not a factor in making the landscape we see today.

by Dar Spearing, Ph.D.



# Be a Junior Ranger



Kids of all ages are invited to participate in Joshua Tree National Park's Junior Ranger program.

Kids can earn a Joshua Tree Junior Ranger badge by completing the official activity book. Stop by any park visitor center or entrance station to pick one up.

In addition to completing age-appropriate activities in the booklet, kids are asked to attend a ranger-led program such as a patio talk, guided walk, or evening program (see schedule below).

If attending a ranger program isn't possible, kids can fulfill this requirement by learning from exhibits in a visitor center or along a trail.

The Junior Ranger program is designed for kids ages 4-14, but anyone can do it. (Older "kids" should expect to be asked to do more activities!)

## Ranger Programs

Discover Joshua Tree with free guided walks, talks, and evening programs given by park rangers and volunteers. Learn how humans, wildlife, and vegetation have adapted to survive in the desert, and how geologic forces have shaped this arid land.

Programs start promptly at the times noted below, so arrive a few minutes early to allow time for parking. Children under age 16 must be accompanied

by an adult. Programs take place outdoors, but may be canceled or moved inside during inclement weather or if there is a danger of lightning.

**Please bring a hat, wear sunscreen, and carry plenty of water with you.** For evening programs, bring warm layers and a flashlight.

Time	Program	Meeting Location	Duration, Distance	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
6:00 pm	<b>Keys Ranch Tour</b> Explore the colorful story and numerous artifacts of this premier historical site. <b>Reservations are required.</b> Tickets must be purchased at least 24 hours in advance. You may purchase tickets by phone at 760-367-5522, or in person at the Joshua Tree and Oasis Visitor Centers. Adults (12 & up) \$10; Senior Pass or Access Pass holders \$5; children ages 6-11 \$5; children under 6 free.	Keys Ranch Gate	1.5 hours 0.5 mi (0.8 km)				Advance reservations required. There is a fee for Keys Ranch tours.			
9:00 pm	<b>Evening Program</b> Relax beneath the stars and enjoy a presentation about the park's fascinating natural or cultural history. Check at a visitor center for topics.	Jumbo Rocks	45 min							✓ 6:00 pm
varies	<b>Special Programs</b> Check at any visitor center for additional program-listings.									✓

### Essential Information

#### Getting Here

Joshua Tree National Park is located in Southern California, about 140 miles east of Los Angeles, 175 miles northeast of San Diego, and 215 miles southwest of Las Vegas. Visitors may drive to Joshua Tree via Interstate 10 or Highway 62 (the Twentynine Palms Highway). The closest commercial airport is in Palm Springs. There is no public transportation to the park.

#### Dates and Hours of Operation

The park is always open; visitors may come and go at any time. However, several areas are designated for day use only. For visitor center hours, see p. 3.

#### Entrance Fees

- \$20 for a single, non-commercial vehicle.
- \$10 per motorcycle.
- \$10 per person on foot, bicycle, or horseback.

*Also available:* \$30 Joshua Tree National Park Annual Pass, \$80 Interagency Annual Pass, \$10 Interagency Senior Pass for U.S. citizens or permanent residents ages 62 and over, free Interagency Access Pass, free Interagency Military Pass. Ask at an entrance station for more details.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Joshua Tree National Park  
74485 National Park Drive  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

**Emergency**  
Dial 911 or 909-383-5651



The National Park Service turns 100 on August 25, 2016, and you're invited to take part in the celebration! The centennial will kick off a second century of stewardship of America's national parks and engaging communities through recreation, conservation, and historic preservation programs. Learn more at [www.findyourpark.com](http://www.findyourpark.com).