



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Park Service News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MARCH 17, 2010
ED CUMMINS, CHIEF RANGER, MOCA/TUZI, 928-567-3322 x27

Montezuma Castle Hosts Geologist Wayne Ranney Geology Talk Will Highlight the Theory of the Verde Formation

A special talk and book signing by geologist and educator Wayne Ranney will be held at Montezuma Castle National Monument, Camp Verde, Az., on Monday, April 12, starting at 10:30 a.m. In addition, from 10:15 to 10:30 a.m., there will be an overview of the role of non-profit interpretive associations and how bookstore purchases directly benefit National Parks and Monuments.

Wayne Ranney will outline some theories about the Verde Formation, a geologic layer that dominates the landscape in the Verde Valley. The Verde Formation, distinctive as a white limestone zone visible from most areas of the valley, is the remains of sediments of a freshwater lake that was found in the basin nine or ten million years ago, to 2.5 million years ago. Montezuma Castle, located in a natural alcove in the Verde Formation, offers a close-up view of this ancient limestone deposit.

During the April 12 talk, Mr. Ranney will outline some of the methods scientists use to decipher complex geologic deposits. Past interpretations of the disappearance of Lake Verde and formation of the valley, hinged on the fracture of a lava dam that kept Lake Verde intact. Mr. Ranney has suggested other alternatives, including the slow dropping or subsistence of what is now the Verde Valley along a fault while the Black Hills range began an uplift process.

Wayne Ranney started his career as a backcountry ranger at Phantom Ranch in Grand Canyon National Park. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in geology from Northern Arizona University. Today he works as a guide and interpreter for the Museum of Northern Arizona, Smithsonian Institution, and Grand Canyon Field Institute. Mr. Ranney has pursued his love of geology and science in over 75 countries around the world as well as both Poles of the Earth.

In addition to professional papers, the Flagstaff resident is the author of a just published third edition of "Sedona Through Time", "Carving Grand Canyon", "Images: Grand Canyon", and "Ancient Landscapes of the Colorado Plateau", co-authored with NAU professor Ron Blakey. A

selection of these publications will be available for purchase and for the author to sign at a special book signing event starting at 11:15 a.m. in the Montezuma Castle visitor center.

Prior to Ranney's talk, Jon Fistler, Field Manger for Western National Parks Association, along with WNPA associates Kathy Phelps and Dale Scrivner, and Helen Ranney, educational outreach coordinator for the Grand Canyon Association, will talk about the role of bookstores and interpretive associations within the National Park Service. They will explain how the various associations support the operations of the interpretive divisions, and will be available to answer questions about northern Arizona's National Parks and Monuments interpretive associations and the non-profit educational opportunities and programs available.

Regular entrance fees of \$5 per adult, age 16 and older, apply to Montezuma Castle National Monument. The Federal Interagency Annual, Senior, and Access passes are also accepted. Children 15 and under are free. For additional information, call 928-567-3322, extension zero.

Photo Caption:

Geologist Wayne Ranney will discuss theories of the Verde Formation, a geologic layer and remnants of an ancient sea, on Monday, April 12, 10:30 a.m. at Montezuma Castle National Monument in Camp Verde.