

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
December 2015- November 2016



Cactus Chronicle

Superintendent's Welcome

No matter how long your stay, there are many treasures awaiting your discovery. Take the time to explore the spirit and secrets of the park. The variety of plants and animals found in the desert is astounding. I hope you will take advantage of our exhibits and ranger programs and learn about the fascinating ways that plants and animals have adapted to living in the Sonoran desert.



Camping, hiking, birding, photography, exploring – the list of ways to enjoy and understand Organ Pipe Cactus's natural beauty and history is unlimited. Experience your America, make Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument your own special place and have a safe and memorable visit.

A visit to Organ Pipe Cactus can begin a lifetime of experiences enjoying your national parks. In 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its 100th birthday. As we celebrate 100 years of preservation and stewardship, we invite you to Find Your Park, no matter where that may be, and to be inspired by all of these special places.

-Brent Range
Superintendent

A True Desert Experience Awaits

Whether you are here for 2 hours or 2 weeks, there are plenty of opportunities to explore Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. Any trip should start at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center. A fifteen minute movie, exhibits, and park rangers are available to answer your questions.

2 Hours or less:

- Stop by the Kris Eggle Visitor Center watch the 15 minute film, explore the exhibit hall, and stroll the nature trail.
- Drive the North Puerto Blanco Drive to the Pinkley Peak Picnic Area (10 miles round-trip, for great views of the desert and cacti.
- Do a short hike around the campground.

2-4 Hours:

- Tour the Ajo Mountain Scenic Drive. Road is 21 miles round-trip on a graded dirt road. Be sure to pick up a free road guide at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center.
- Take a moderate hike in the Senita Basin area.
- Attend a ranger led hike or location talk.
- Visit Quitobaquito Springs

All Day:

- Drive the Puerto Blanco Scenic loop. This trip will take 4-6 hours, and a high clearance vehicle is required.
- Explore the Ajo Mountain Scenic Drive and hike the Bull Pasture/Estes Canyon Loop Trail.
- Visit Quitobaquito Springs
- Join a Ranger for a guided van tour

One day not enough?

Stay the night at Organ Pipe Cactus and experience the calmness of the desert after dark. Camping is available at Twin Peaks Campground. Primitive and backcountry camping is also available.

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Visitor Center

The Kris Eggle Visitor Center is open 8:00 am - 5:00 pm. Stop by for an informative slide presentation, a 1/10 mile stroll on the handicapped-accessible nature trail, the nature and museum exhibit room, bookstore, and answers from a park ranger or volunteer at the information counter.

Ranger led talks, walks and guided tours are offered from January through March.

Mailing Address

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
10 Organ Pipe Drive
Ajo, Arizona 85321-9626

E-mail
orpi_information@nps.gov

Phone
520-387-6849 ext 7302

Website
www.nps.gov/orpi

Visitor Center and Campground Area



**FIND YOUR
PARK**

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL



Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

Protecting 516 square miles of Sonoran Desert, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is a sanctuary for diverse species some endangered. The park was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1937 and has since been recognized as a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations. Over 95 percent of Organ Pipe Cactus is designated wilderness. Come explore the wonders and the wild of the Sonoran Desert!

Superintendent
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http://www.nps.gov/orpi
Facebook
http://www.facebook.com/OrganPipeNPS

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

Information and Services

Emergencies

For 24-hour emergency response, call 911. The closest medical clinic is the Desert Senita Community Health Center in Ajo, 520-387-5651. The closest hospitals are in Phoenix and Tucson.

Visitor Center

The Kris Eggle Visitor Center is open daily 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. except Thanksgiving and Christmas. There is a 15 minute film, short accessible nature trail, exhibits and park store. Ranger led talks, tours and hikes are offered January through March.

Lost and Found

Contact the Kris Eggle Visitor Center at 520-387-6849 ext. 7302.

Accessibility

The Kris Eggle Visitor Center, restrooms and 1/10 mile nature trail are fully accessible, and certain ranger programs are accessible. Ask for an accessibility brochure at the Visitor Center.

Entrance Fees

- \$12 per vehicle, \$4 per pedestrian or bicyclist. Good for seven days.
- Free with Interagency and Organ Pipe Cactus Annual passes
- Free with Golden Age, Senior, and Access lifetime passes.

Pets

Pets must be on a leash at all times. Pets are allowed in campgrounds, picnic areas, the Palo Verde and Campground Perimeter trails, and monument roads.

Fires

At Twin Peaks Campground fires are permitted only in campground, fire grills using pressed logs, charcoal, or firewood. Wood fires are prohibited at Alamo Campground. Gathering dead or down wood is prohibited.

Western National Parks Association

The Association is our partner and operator of the park bookstore, located in the visitor center lobby. It sells educational books, post cards, local arts and cultural items.

Internet Access

Free public wifi is available at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center. After hours, visitors can access the wireless from outside the building.

Firearms

As of Feb. 22, 2010, federal law allows people who can legally possess firearms under federal, Arizona and local laws to possess firearms in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

It is the visitor's responsibility to understand and comply with state, local, and federal firearms laws. Federal law prohibits firearms in certain facilities in the monument. These are identified by signs at public entrances. If you have questions, please contact the Arizona Department of Public Safety at (800) 256-6280 or visit their website http://www.azdps.gov/Services/Concealed_Weapons/.

Special Programs

Special educational and recreational opportunities for the public will be offered throughout the season. Check with a ranger, at a bulletin board, or at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for more information. Programs are subject to change and cancellation. All programs take place at the visitor center unless otherwise noted. These programs run January 2016 through April 2016.

Lecture Series:
Speakers include biologists, archaeologists, rangers and other specialists who delve more deeply into subjects tied to Organ Pipe Cactus.

2:00pm
Second and fourth
Wednesdays of the month.
1 hour

Humanitarians In the Desert
Join representatives from local organizations to learn about humanitarian relief efforts in the desert.

Check bulletin boards or at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for schedule.

Border Patrol 101:
Join agents from the U.S. Border Patrol in the Kris Eggle Visitor Center Auditorium to explore their role and mission.

2:00pm
First and third Wednesdays
of the month.
45 minutes

Healthy Parks, Healthy People:
Join instructors for beginning yoga classes at Organ Pipe Cactus. No experience required.

Check bulletin boards or at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for schedule.

Chief Talks:
Meet members of the monument's management team and learn about how different divisions in the park work towards a common goal.

11:00am
First and third Thursdays of
the month. 20 minutes

Full Moon Hikes:
Hike the Desert View Trail with a Ranger under the light of the full moon. Dress warmly, wear sturdy shoes, and bring a flashlight and water. Meet the ranger at the Group Campground.

January 23, February 22, and March 23
Check bulletin boards for times.

Night Sky Talks:
Explore the night sky with a park ranger. Programs will include a short program, followed by night sky viewing through a variety of devices, including telescopes.

January 9, February 8, April 7
Check bulletin boards for time and other special night sky events.

Flower Guide

When Does the Sonoran Desert Bloom?

If you are lucky, you may see the desert carpeted in flowers. After heavy winter rains, plants burst into bloom, some flowering only days after receiving water. Other plants wait patiently for the summer rains to come.

Sonoran Desert wildflowers grow quickly and in large numbers after it rains. Once the soil dries, plants die back. Desert wildflowers are not only beautiful, but they are essential to the survival of many desert creatures.



Buckhorn cholla



Pincushion cactus



Teddy bear cholla



Mexican gold poppy



Mojave lupine



Fairy duster



Desert marigold

Blooming Seasons	Winter Rain			Summer Rain					Winter Rain			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cacti												
Organ Pipe												
Saguaro												
Cholla												
Prickly Pear												
Other Perennials												
Palo Verde												
Ironwood												
Fairy Duster												
Brittlebush												
Ocotillo												
Annuals												
Globemallow												
Mex. Gold Poppy												
Lupine												
Desert Marigold												
Chuparosa												

NOTE: The blooming times of all annuals and many perennials depend upon the amount of rain and the time of year when the rain falls. The chart is only an average.



Teddy Bear Cactus



Barrel Cactus

How do you say that?

Ajo: AH-ho. Spanish for garlic; also a Tohono O'odham word for a copper-colored pigment.

Bajada: ba-HAH-dah. The gravelly slope at the base of a mountain range. Many diverse species take advantage of the bajadas' well drained soil. They are good places to look for wildlife.

Cholla: CHOY-yuh. A group of cacti known for painful spines and easily detachable, jointed branches. Also called "jumping cactus."

Gila: HEE-lah. As in Gila monster, Gila woodpecker and Gila River.

Ocotillo: OH-koh-TEE-yo. A very thorny plant, often mistaken for a cactus. The ocotillo has the ability to sprout leaves within 48 hours of rain.

Saguaro: sa-WA-roh. Arizona's tallest cactus (growing to over 70 feet - usually 45 to 50 feet) and a major indicator species for the health of the Sonoran Desert.

Birds, Birds, Birds:

A Who's Who in Organ Pipe Cactus

The Sonoran is a vibrant desert. Every season of the year, one can find a diversity of birds flitting amongst the cholla, soaring above the Ajo Mountains, or sitting atop a saguaro cactus. More than 270 birds have been identified as occurring at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

There are a number of birds that visitors can count on seeing at different times of the year. Phainopeplas are a common sight in the winter, with their glistening black plumage and rakish crest. The cactus wren, the state bird of Arizona, builds its nests in the safety of cactus. The Gambel's quail is almost comical as it dashes quickly through the underbrush of the desert, its thick dark plume dancing with each motion of its head.

The bright red plumage of the northern cardinal is most commonly seen in the riparian and mixed mountain scrub habitats, but not as often in the desert scrub. Some areas of the monument are especially good places to see a variety of birds. The Alamo Canyon Trail follows a wash which often has small pools of water. The lush vegetation of the wash and the water, make this one of the best places to see birds. At the end of the one-mile trail, one can find a spot under a tree in view of a bit of water, bring out a bird book and binoculars, and wait. Patience surely will be rewarded, especially in the morning hours.

The area around the visitor center is also a good birding spot. With the pond in the back patio and the many trees and flowering plants, visitors do not usually have to wait long to see some birds. A Harris hawk might light on the towering saguaro in the patio, or a Costa's hummingbird might dart around the chuparosa blooms.

Other good locations to see birds include the Twin Peaks Campground, the Ajo Mountain

Drive, and Quitobaquito Springs.

Some birds on our list are permanent residents, nesting here and staying year-round, like the Gila woodpecker and the cactus wren. Most are seasonal, spending only part of the year here.

Some birds, including a number of flycatchers, are migrants stopping in on their way north in the spring or south in the fall.

Vagrants are birds that are some distance from their normal range, but will make an appearance here every now and then.

Whether one visits in the cool of winter, the heat of summer, or one of the shoulder seasons, visitors are sure to have an opportunity to see a variety of birds.



Harris' Hawk



Gambel's quail



Vermilion flycatcher



Cactus wren



Phainopepla [fay-noh-pep-luh]



Costa's hummingbird feeding



Dusky-capped flycatcher



Gila woodpecker

Free Ranger-Led Programs

Please check at park bulletin boards or by calling the visitor center at (520)-387-6849 for more information. Bring sunscreen, water, and snacks to all outdoor programs. Van spots may be reserved by calling the visitor center no more than seven days in advance. Children must be accompanied by parents. Programs and shuttles are offered from mid-December through early April unless otherwise noted. Programs may be canceled due to inclement weather and staff availability.

		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30am 1.5 hrs	Desert View Hike: Explore the desert ecosystems and see desert plants up close! A 1.5 mile easy loop trail with great views. Meet at the group campsite in Twin Peaks Campground.	●	●			●		●
9:00am 3 hrs	Ajo Mountain Van Tour: <i>Reservations Required</i> Enjoy a unique three hour experience on a ranger led van tour of the scenic Ajo Mountain Drive. Several stops will provide an intimate look at monument. Seating limited to 10.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
10:30am 45 min	Location Talk- Quitobaquito Spring: Join a ranger at this gorgeous desert oasis and learn about the animals and its rich cultural history. Meet the ranger at Quitobaquito or reserve a spot in a van- seating limited to 10. Van departs at 9:30am. <i>Begins January 2016</i>		●		●		●	
11:00am 15 min	Patio Talk: Meet on the patio of the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for a short ranger led presentation. Topics vary, check bulletin boards for topics. Accessible.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
1:30pm varies	Ranger's Choice Hike: Join a Park Ranger for a hike through the Sonoran Desert. Check at bulletin boards for topics and location. Meet the ranger at the trailhead or sign up with the visitor center for a shuttle. Shuttle pickup from campground at 1:00pm.		●		●		●	
1:30pm 30 min	Location Talk- Gachado Line Camp: Join a ranger at this historic cowboy line camp an explore the hard work it took to ranch the Sonoran Desert. Meet the ranger at Gachado or reserve a spot in the van- seating limited to 10. Van departs at 12:45pm. <i>Begins January 2016</i>			●		●		
2:00pm 15 min	Patio Talk: Meet on the patio of the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for a short ranger led presentation. Topics vary, check bulletin boards topics. Accessible.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3:00pm 15 min	Patio Talk: Meet on the patio of the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for a short ranger led presentation. Topics vary, check bulletin boards for topics. Accessible.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7:00pm 45 min	Evening Program: End your evening with a traditional ranger program. Presentations cover a variety of topics, including natural and cultural history. Check at bulletin boards for topics. Accessible. <i>Begins January 2016:</i> <i>*Evening Programs are held in the park and also bi-monthly in Ajo- contact the visitor center for location and time.</i>	●		●	●	●	●	●

Hiker Shuttles

Free hiker shuttles depart from the telephone kiosk at the Twin Peaks Campground. Call the Kris Eggle Visitor Center at (520)-387-6849 or register in person to reserve a spot. Shuttles are one way transportation and allow visitors to hike back to the campground. Seating is limited to 12.

		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30am	Senita Basin Trailhead: Access the Puerto Blanco trails from the south. Experience the diversity of Senita Basin and see the rare Senita Cactus. 4.6 miles to hike back to the campground. <i>Begins January 2016</i>	●		●		●		
1:30pm	Red Tanks Tinaja Trailhead: Access the Puerto Blanco trails from the north. Trail gains slight elevation and offers great views of the desert. 6.7 miles to hike back to the campground.	●		●	●	●	●	●

Scenic Drives

There are a number of scenic dirt roads that can take you into the heart of the Sonoran Desert. Roads have a varying degree of difficulty- and offer great experiences for visitors in all kinds of vehicles. Bring plenty of water and food for long full day drives. Always obey posted speed limits. Be mindful that some roads are two-way, and other vehicles might be approaching.

Easy - passenger cars

Ajo Mountain Loop: 21 mi (34 km) 2 hours round trip.

This scenic loop crosses the Diablo Mountains to the base of the Ajo Mountains and returns through the Sonoyta Valley. Along the way there are dense concentrations of saguaro and organ pipe cactus. Picnic tables and hiking trails are accessible along this route. A free interpretive guide is available at the visitor center. Route begins across Highway 85 from the visitor center entrance.

North Puerto Blanco to Pinkley Peak: 10 mi (16 km) 45 minutes roundtrip

This road has scenic views of mountains and dense concentrations of saguaro cactus. At the turnaround there is a picnic area with views to the Valley of the Ajo and Pinkley Peak. *The road continues as a rugged one-way loop recommended for high clearance vehicles only.*

South Puerto Blanco to Quitobaquito: 28 mi (45 km) 3 hours roundtrip

This drive parallels the international border for several miles, and provides access to Quitobaquito Spring, an oasis in the middle of the desert. Great examples of organ pipe and saguaro cactus can be seen. *The road can be washboarded- slow down and allow extra time.*

South Puerto Blanco to Senita Basin Trailhead: 7 mi (11.2 km) 2 hours roundtrip from Hwy 85

This drive offers the quickest access to Senita Basin trailhead. Here, you will see the greatest concentration of senita cactus in the monument. Kino Peak can be seen from the road. A large network of hiking trails can be accessed from this point. *The road can be washboarded- slow down and allow extra time.*

Camino de Dos Republicas: 9.6 mi (14 km) 1 hour roundtrip from Hwy 85

Starting from Hwy 85, the road is rough as it crosses several washes. The Gachado line-shack is located just before the junction of the Roosevelt Easement Road that leads to the ranch buildings at Dos Lomitas. The road is closed to the public beyond this point. *Please read the caution signs at the beginning of this road.*

Medium - high clearance

North Puerto Blanco- South Puerto Blanco Loop: 37 mi (60 km) 4 hours roundtrip

This scenic drive provides the greatest variety of plants and scenic vistas in the monument. It is a rugged route with few facilities. The road provides access to several hiking trailheads as well as historic sites. Access to Quitobaquito is possible from this loop. There are picnic tables along the route.

Bates Well Road to Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Refuge: 26 mi (41.8 km) 2 hours one-way

Starting from Hwy 85 north of the monument, this road will provide access to Bates Well Ranch (17 mi, 27 km) and the Pozo Nuevo Rd (23 mi, 37 km) before reaching the monument boundary. Highlights include the Bates Well Ranch site and access to the El Camino de Diablo in Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge.

Hard - high clearance and 4x4

Pozo Nuevo Road: 7 mi (11.2 km) 2 hours one-way from either start of the road.

This rugged north to south road in the western portion of the monument connects the South Puerto Blanco Drive to the Bates Well Road. This route offers great views of the Cipriano Hills, the Growler Valley, and the historic Pozo Nuevo line-camp.



Ajo Mountain Drive



Quitobaquito Spring



North Puerto Blanco Drive



Bates Well Ranch



Gachado Line-camp

Night Skies

A resource so threatened, yet so recoverable

We all have a personal connection to the night sky. The stars are at peace, drifting slowly through the darkness and into our deepest being. We are free at night. We can contemplate, brood, imagine. Every culture through all of human time has its own imaginary sky, full of myths and mysticism and supernatural explanations for natural phenomena.

Native Americans saw the skies as a part of an organic whole with the earth and all the trees, rocks, animals, and people on it. Other cultures saw in the sky the work of gods, powerful but flawed super-humans, who interfered with human affairs.

Our neighbors, the Tohono O'odham, view the stars as cornmeal strewn across the dark fabric of the night sky. The Mongols of the Eurasian Steppe and the Sioux of the American plain saw the night sky as the cover of their yurts and tepees with pinholes being the stars and the seams being the Milky Way.

People have used the night sky for navigation and as a guide to seasonal planting and harvesting. Ancient people have marked the movement of heavenly bodies for millennia. England's famous Stonehenge is matched by similar structures in Central America and the Cahokia Mounds, a World Heritage Site in Illinois.

Today still, we gaze skyward. In the desert we enjoy clean, clear, dry air that seems to make the stars closer, more approachable. The Big Dipper is obvious in any season. The Milky Way is spilled across the night sky year-round, but is especially magnificent in summer. Binoculars can reveal even more stars.

Most of the monument's visitors take an aesthetic view of the night sky, connecting with ancient cultures in an appreciation of its grandeur. The monument provides an opportunity to enjoy a spectacle that is steadily fading from sight in the United States. An estimated two-thirds of Americans cannot see the Milky Way from their homes. Visiting national parks is a great way to connect with the night.

The wilderness, however, is surrounded by non-wilderness. At night from the monument, we can see signs of Phoenix, Tucson, Ajo, and Sonoyta. Their lighting casts a glow into the sky, blotting out stars and constellations.

This evidence of wasteful lighting is light pollution. The famous image of the United States at night, below, is the best graphic illustration of the results of wasteful lighting. Aren't lights supposed to illuminate the ground? Then why can we see them from outer space?

As with any other type of pollution, each of us can make a difference—and save some money as well—with the following measures:

- Use energy efficient lights in your outdoor fixtures.
- Use shields to prevent light from shining upward.
- Use motion sensors on outdoor lights so they are on only as needed.

For more information about preserving the night sky, visit the International Dark Sky Association at www.darksky.org.



NASA Image Visible Earth (<http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/>)

Your Fees at Work



New ADA accessible picnic area at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center.

Here at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, all fees collected stay here to help maintain and improve the facilities at the monument. Visitors can see tangible evidence of improvements paid for with their entrance and campground fees.

Fee dollars paid for the recent remodeling of the museum exhibits in the Kris Eggle Visitor Center. Eight interactive displays depict the monument's natural and cultural history. A state-of-the-art audiovisual system in the auditorium enhances visitor enjoyment of the park video and other presentations.

Crumbling asphalt trails at the visitor center and the campground amphitheater were replaced with red brick pavers, making them accessible.

Fees also paid for signs and landscaping that welcome visitors to the monument at the north and south entrances. Visitor fees funded the replacement of interpretive wayside signs along North Puerto Blanco Drive in 2013, and funded new accessible picnic areas at the Visitor Center and Pinkley Peak Picnic Area.

This year we are replacing trail signs throughout the monument as well as interpretive waysides along the Ajo Mountain Drive Loop. Improvement to campsites at the Twin Peaks Campground includes repaving of some sites, repainting of tables and grills, and building shade structures over some of the accessible sites.

WNPA: The Store People



Myrna Dollar, WNPA Store Manager with visitor.

“Western National Parks Association (WNPA) promotes preservation of the national park system and its resources by creating greater public appreciation through education, interpretation and research.” This statement is the guiding principle under which WNPA operates.

In partnership with the NPS, Western National Parks Association operates the store in the Kris Eggle Visitor Center. It offers a wide selection of books and educational materials about birds, wildflowers, plants, ecology, geology, history and archaeology. There are also postcards, bookmarkers, Native American artwork, tee and sweatshirts, and hats for sun protection.

Proceeds from this and other stores at national parks across the West are used in direct support of education, interpretation and research in the parks as well as outreach programs to schools and communities.

Organ Pipe Cactus: Fun Facts

Creatures of the Sonoran Desert feast on the juicy fruit and disperse the seeds across the desert.

Average height at maturity is 15 feet.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is the only place in the United States where you can see large stands of organ pipe cacti growing naturally.

Just before and during the summer rains, the organ pipe fruit ripens and splits open to reveal its red pulpy flesh.

Early settlers who encountered dead cacti were reminded of church pipe organs and called these cacti organ pipes.

An organ pipe cactus produces its first flowers at around 35 years. The bat pollinated flowers blossom at night and are closed by mid-morning the next day.

Columnar cacti such as the organ pipe and saguaro can form these unusual growths called "crustates."

Organ pipe cactus may live 150 years.

Weather & Adaptations

The heat of the Sonoran Desert can be brutal. In June, July, and August, the average high temperature is over 100 degrees. That's the average! Temperatures as high as 118 degrees have been recorded here. So how do animals deal with that heat? And what can we humans learn from native creatures about dealing with the extremes of summer?

Some animals like pack rats and rabbits are active at night when it is not so hot. We don't recommend going nocturnal, but even creatures active during daylight hours will spend the

hottest part of the day resting in shade. That is what is recommended for our human visitors. If visiting during the summer, do like a bobcat and limit activities of the most exertion to the morning hours before the day heats up or evening hours after it starts to cool down. By the way, the word to describe that is crepuscular, active at dawn or dusk or both.

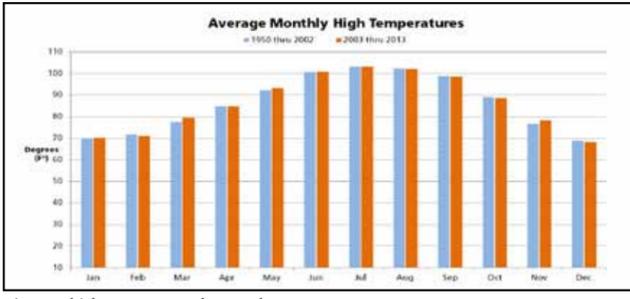
Think about the sun on hot days. To better deal with the scorching sun, the coat of the desert bighorn sheep is somewhat lighter in color than other subspecies of bighorn.

The kangaroo rat is well-known for needing almost no water to drink; it gets what it needs from its diet of seeds. Since humans are not so well adapted to the desert, we encourage visitors to take plenty of water with them wherever they go. It is recommended that visitors drink a gallon of water per person per day. Even just sitting quietly in this dry environment, a person will lose moisture through respiration.

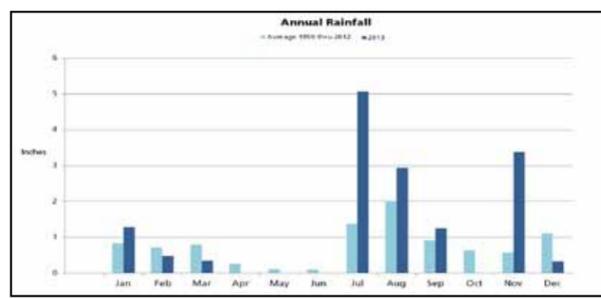
We can learn a lot about how to get along in the desert if we are willing to let the other creatures of the Sonora be our teachers.

Human visitors should slather on the sunscreen and wear a hat and other protective clothing, preferably in lighter colors which are cooler.

What about water? Some creatures can deal with scant water by being able to get the moisture they need from their food.



Average high temperatures by month



Monthly rainfall in inches

Bikes, Horses, and More- Your Guide to Adventure



Equestrian Trails

Equestrian use is welcome at Organ Pipe Cactus. Within designated Wilderness areas, horse use is permitted. Also, horses are allowed on certain developed trails in the monument. Refer to pages 6 and 7 and look for the horse symbol to find your trail.

Remember:

- Horses must only be fed certified weed-free hay
- Water is scarce, so plan ahead
- Horse camping is available at Twin Peaks Campground by reservation.



Bicycles

The winding dirt roads of Organ Pipe Cactus provide great opportunities to explore the desert on bicycle. All vehicle roads in the monument are open for bicycles. Please follow all road laws, obey speed limits, and move to the side of the road to allow vehicles to pass. Water is scarce, so plan ahead.

Popular Routes:

Ajo Mountain Drive: 21 mile (33 km) loop dirt road, slight changes in elevation. Restrooms are located halfway at Estes Canyon.

North Puerto Blanco Drive to Pinkley Peak: 10 miles (16 km) round trip along a winding road. Slight elevation change along the washes. Restrooms are located at Pinkley Peak Picnic Area.

South Puerto Blanco Drive: 28 miles (45km) roundtrip. Road is washboarded for the first 3 miles. No facilities.



Hike For Health Challenge

Explore the beautiful trails and get some exercise. Organ Pipe Cactus invites you to hike for health and challenges you to hike at least 5 miles during your visit. Upon completing the hiking challenge, all participants can claim a reward at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center.

Stop by the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for more information on how to earn your reward.

Look for other hiking challenges across the National Park Service.



For Your Safety

Every year, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument receives visitors from around the world. They come to see this Biosphere Reserve, this unparalleled portion of the Sonoran Desert. In addition to these visitors, others come as well. The 31-mile southern boundary of the monument is the border between the United States and Mexico.

Smugglers do cross the border, but National Park visitors are unlikely to encounter illegal activity in the monument. Smugglers and migrants want to evade detection and therefore try to avoid contact with other people. In rare instances when smugglers or migrants do approach a visitor it is usually because they are lost, need water, or are in medical distress.

You can reduce your likelihood of encountering illegal activity by avoiding unofficial hiking trails. Be aware of your surroundings. Report suspicious activity or people to a ranger, or call 911 if your phone has a signal.

If you should encounter someone or a group traveling cross-country with backpacks, bundles or black water bottles do not make contact. If driving, continue to drive and call for help without inviting strangers into your vehicle; if you are

hiking move away from them to avoid contact. You should not provide water or food as they may continue further into the desert and become distressed, needing assistance in an area where there is no help available. When parked, secure your vehicle and keep valuables, water, and food out of sight.

In reality, the biggest hazards for visitors are not other people but the desert environment. The monument encompasses 516 square miles of the Sonoran Desert, much of it rugged mountains with the remainder being arid scrublands with little or no water. Water that is found here is not potable without treatment and is the only source of water for wildlife. When hiking or camping in the wilderness you should carry sufficient water for twice the amount of time you plan to be in the wilderness.

Wildlife can also be troublesome. Some can be dangerous if cornered or handled. Handling animals of the monument is illegal and can put you and the wildlife at risk of injury. Some animals are poisonous.

Over the years, millions of people have come to Organ Pipe Cactus and have left with good

memories. Follow these safety guidelines, and you can be assured that your visit will be memorable for the right reasons!

Key Points for Desert Safety

- Carry and drink plenty of water - one gallon per person a day is recommended.
- Sun protection is important. Wear sunscreen and protective clothing.
- Desert vegetation is spikey, so avoid contact.
- Flash floods occur quickly and are dangerous. Avoid washes when rain is threatening.
- Never enter a flooded roadway. Wait for the water to subside and it is safe to cross.
- Do not put your hands or feet anywhere you cannot see. Snakes, scorpions, and spiders often hide in these areas.
- Hike with a partner. Let someone know where you are going, when you plan to return, and who to contact if you are overdue.



Your Hiking and Camping Guide

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument offers dozens of miles of hiking trails to help you explore the Sonoran Desert. The following is for trip planning only; please use a map or trail guide for your trip. Bring plenty of water, snacks and sunscreen. Know your own limitations when planning a desert hike. Certain trails are open to horse use: hikers must yield to horses. Take part in the Find Your Hike hiking challenge, see page 8 for more information. Sign up for a hiker shuttle (pg 2) and hike a trail back to the campground.

Visitor Center and Campground Trails

Use the map on the back of the newspaper for for these easy, yet rewarding hikes. All hikes are accessible from either the Twin Peaks Campground or the Kris Eggle Visitor Center.



Head out and explore the many trails of the monument.

Visitor Center Nature Trail: 0.10 mi (0.16 km) 10 minute one-way.

Easy brick path from the visitor center with interpretive information. See different cactus up close, and the Quitobaquito pupfish pond. Accessible to wheelchairs and scooters. Pets allowed on a leash when entering from parking lot.

Campground Perimeter Trail: 1 mi (1.6 km) 30 minutes one-way.

Easy loop trail around Twin Peaks Campground. Offers great views of the desert flats and various cacti.

Palo Verde Trail: 2.6 mi (4.2 km) 1.5 hours roundtrip.

Easy trail between Twin Peaks Campground and Kris Eggle Visitor Center with great views of the Ajo Mountain Range.

Desert View Trail: 1.2 mi (1.9 km) 1 hour roundtrip.

Easy loop trail with beautiful views, impressive stands of Organ Pipe Cactus, and great for sunrise and sunset. Benches provided.

Ajo Mountains Trails

Old Pima County Road: 8 mi (12.8km) one way. 4.5 hours one way.

This is an easy trail that follows the old county road which later became AZ Highway 85. The trail meanders through several washes and provides great views of Pinkley Peak and great up-close encounters with a variety of cactus.

Arch Canyon: 1.2 mi (1.9 km) 1 hour roundtrip.

Easy trail that steadily climbs into Arch Canyon. Good views of the arch and the oak-juniper environment. Great birding opportunities.

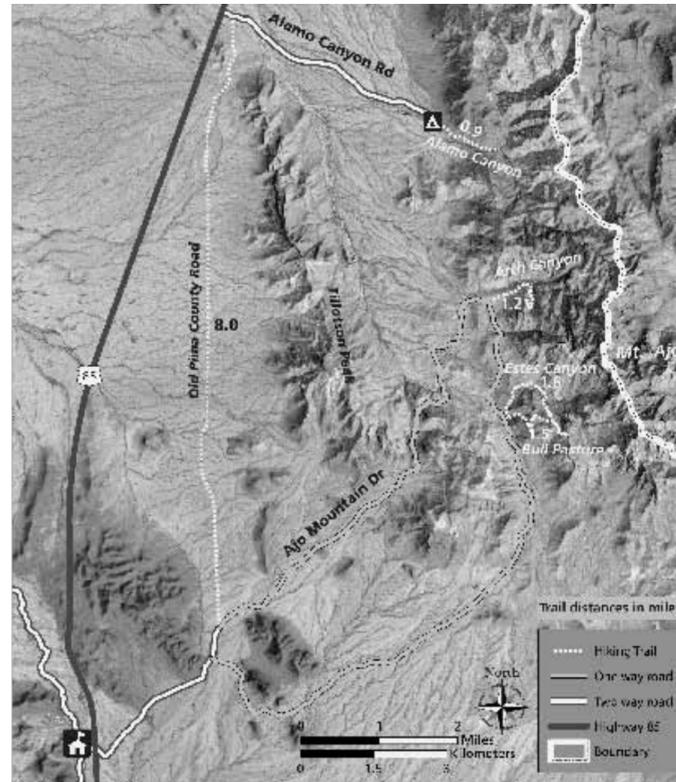
Bull Pasture: 3 mi (1.9 km) 1-2 hours roundtrip.

Difficult trail with steep grade and exposed cliffs. Spectacular views of the monument and Mexico.

Estes Canyon: 3.2 mi (2.1 km) 1-2 hours roundtrip.

Moderate trail which is great for birding. The trail crosses several washes but is relatively flat until the switchback climb to the Bull Pasture trail junction.

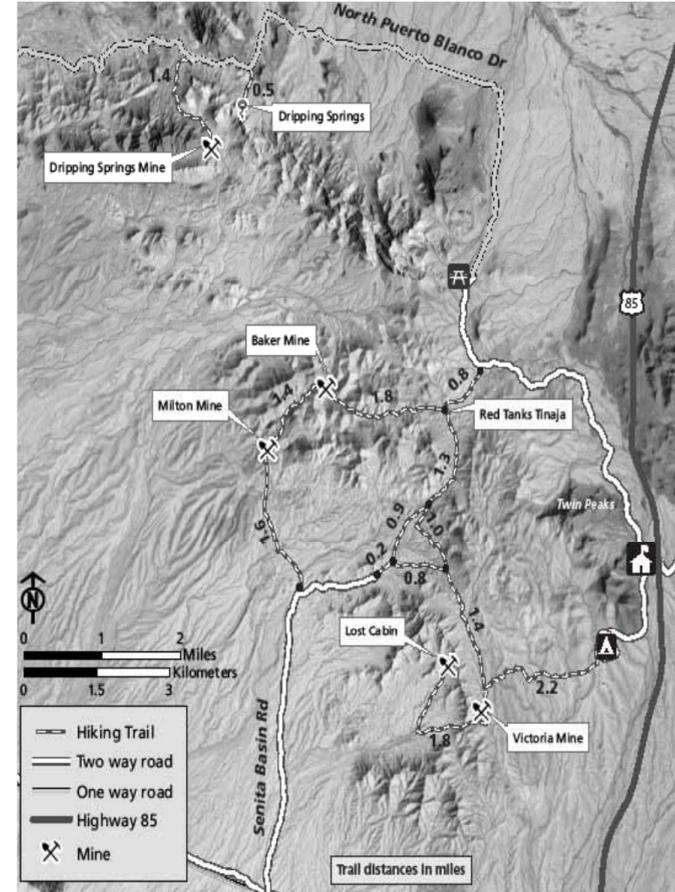
Estes Canyon - Bull Pasture Loop: 3.1 mi (2.0 km) 2 hours roundtrip



Hike for Health!

Hike five miles and earn a reward for being active in your national park! Turn to page 5 for more information.

Puerto Blanco Mountains Trails



Victoria Mine: 4.5 mi (7.2 km) 3.5 hours roundtrip.

Easy trail that will cross several washes on the way to Victoria Mine, home of one of the oldest historic sites on the monument. The mineshaft and ruins of the old mine store remain.

Lost Cabin Mine Trail: 8 mi (12.8 km) 4.5 hours roundtrip.

This is an moderate trail that follows an old mining road. The trail is primitive, but provides great views of the Sonoyta Mountains to the south. Trail ends at the ruins of the old stone mining house, and several prospecting holes can be seen.

Senita Basin Loop: 1.2 mi (3.0 km) 1 hour roundtrip.

Easy loop trail that meanders through an impressive grove of the rare senita cactus with great views of the Puerto Blanco Mountains.

Milton Mine: 3.2 mi (5.1 km) 1-2 hours roundtrip.

Difficult trail with steep grade and exposed cliffs. Spectacular views of the monument and Mexico.

Red Tanks Tinaja: 1.6 mi (2.6 km) 1.5 hours roundtrip.

Moderate trail which leads to a water collecting-basin carved into the bedrock by erosion. Trial includes a section of the old El Camino del Diablo. Do not drink the water.

Dripping Springs: 1 mi (1.6 km) 1 hour roundtrip.

Easy trail to Dripping Springs, one of the few natural water sources in the area. Do not drink the water. Wildlife can be abundant in the area. Trail to the ridgeline is difficult.

Dripping Springs Mine: 2.8 mi (4.5 km) 1-2 hours roundtrip.

Moderate trail to a historic mine site used by bootleggers during Prohibition. Trail offers commanding views of the Saguaro lined horizon.

Many trails can be combined into loop hikes of various lengths and difficulties. Discuss longer hikes with a ranger.

Camping

There are a number of camping opportunities at the monument:

Twin Peaks Campground, near the visitor center, is a developed 208-space campground with RV sites up to 40 ft. and a designated tent section. There are six restrooms, three with showers and a dump station located at the south end of the campground. There are several potable water faucets on each row. There are no electrical or water hookups. No reservations required, register at the visitor center, campground kiosk, or self-register at kiosk after business hours. Open all year. Fee: \$16 per night or \$8 for holders of Golden Age/Access/Senior Passes. Call in advance for vehicles over 40 feet in length. Generator hours vary by season- check with park staff or at bulletin boards for details. Sites are first-come, first-served. There are 34 tent sites and 174 RV sites. If you are enroute and concerned about site availability please call the visitor center.

Alamo Campground is a four space primitive campground with a maximum occupancy of five people per site per night. Sites are for tents, camper vans, and pickup campers only. There is a single vault toilet on site, but no water. Camping is first come first served, a self-registration station is located at the campground. Open all year. Fee \$10 per night or \$5 with a Golden Age/Access/Senior Pass. Ground fires are prohibited.

Group camping is available by reservation only; please call the Kris Eggle Visitor Center for more information. 520-387-6849 ext 7302

Backcountry camping is available in select areas of the monument; you must register at the Kris Eggle Visitor Center to get a camping permit.

