



## Welcome to Devils Tower National Monument!



Tim C. Reid - Superintendent

Devils Tower is spectacular and iconic, inescapably profound and significant to all who see it. We are grateful for the opportunity to tell these stories of significance; whether the story of sacred spirituality it holds for the great American Indian tribes of the area, its position in the generational fabric of the region's ranching culture, or the singular position it holds for the worlds of rock climbing and geology. As it has done for thousands of years, Devils Tower catches the eye, inspires wonder, provokes questions, makes a lasting impression, and touches everyone in a different way. Get out and hike the trails, view the Tower, attend an interpretive program or guided walk, or simply watch the light play across the Tower columns. This remarkable igneous formation inspired President Theodore Roosevelt to protect it by designating it as America's first national monument in 1906. What inspiration will you find as you visit the monument over one century later?

As we embark into the second century of the National Park Service, it is important that you assist us in our goal of engaging the next generation of park stewards. Use this visit to Devils Tower as a springboard to start, renew, and share your connection to our national parks. Taking others on a visit to Devils Tower, or another national park unit, can be the catalyst for a lifetime of experiences. As you find your park and discover what these places mean to you, we hope you will take the time to share what makes that park so special to you. Devils Tower National Monument is a perfect opportunity for all of us to realize that the greatest treasures are often hidden in plain sight – so get out there and Find Your Park!

Thank you,

Tim C. Reid, Superintendent

# FIND YOUR PARK

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Devils Tower National Monument | WY-110, P.O. Box 10, Devils Tower, WY 82714 | (307)-467-5283

[www.nps.gov/deto](http://www.nps.gov/deto)

### Things to do:

- Watch the prairie dogs
- Explore the Visitor Center
- Attend a ranger program
- Become a Junior Ranger
- Take a hike
  - Tower Trail: 1.3 miles
  - Joyner Ridge Trail: 1.5 miles
  - Red Beds Trail: 3 miles
- Look for wildlife
- Climb the Tower
- Camp in the Belle Fourche River Campground (May - October)
- Visit the smoke-ring sculpture
- See the stars
- Listen to nature
- Take photographs

### Parking at Devils Tower

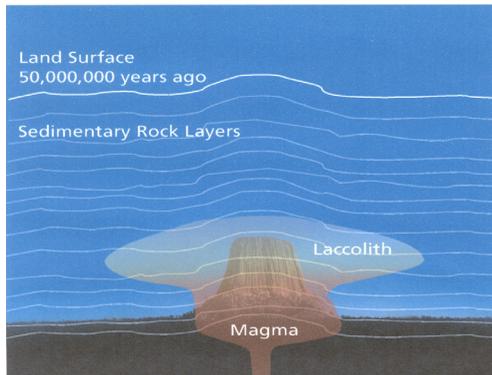
During the summer, parking around the Visitor Center between 11 am and 2 pm is often limited. Consider alternative parking locations during these peak visitation hours. For vehicles with trailers, long-vehicle parking spaces are available to unhook your rig before heading up to the Visitor Center - find them on the way to the picnic area.

The picnic area provides access to the Circle of Sacred Smoke sculpture and the prairie dog town. You can also find parking at Joyner Ridge trailhead (inaccessible to most RVs and other large vehicles). From these areas, you can choose to hike to the Visitor Center.

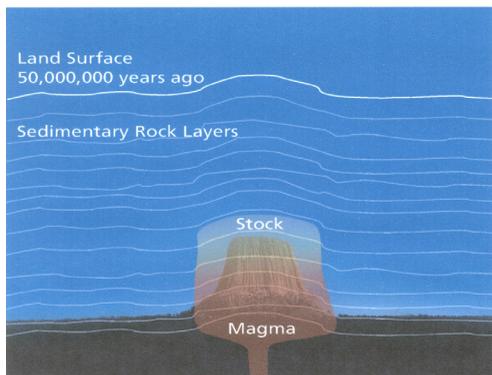
# The Geologic Story of Devils Tower

The origin formation of the Tower has fascinated and inspired geologists and other casual passersby for hundreds of years. Just like any good mystery, there are many different theories on how the Tower formed. Explore the details of the different theories and decide for yourself the origins of the Tower.

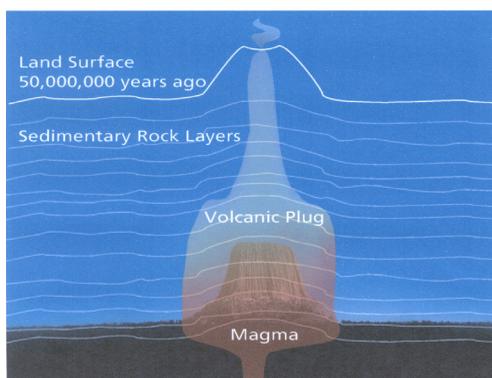
Geologists agree on a couple of main points on the origin of the Tower. They agree that the tower is composed of an igneous rock known as phonolite porphyry. It formed approximately 1.5 miles below the surface when magma pushed up through sedimentary layers about 50 million years ago. What they cannot agree upon is how that process took place and whether or not the magma reached the land surface. Numerous ideas have evolved since the first geologic studies of the Tower in the late 1800s. Today, there are four primary theories, but geologists continue to search for more detailed explanations.



Laccolith Remnant

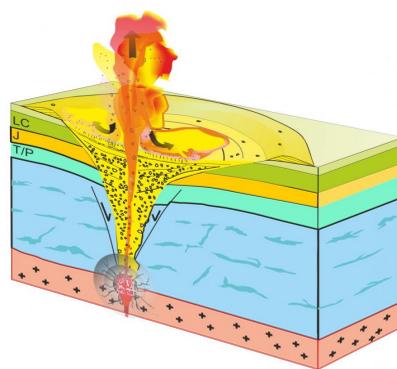


Igneous Stock Formation

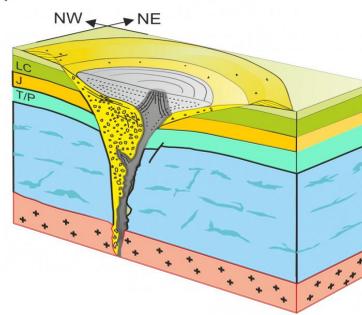


Volcanic Plug Remnant

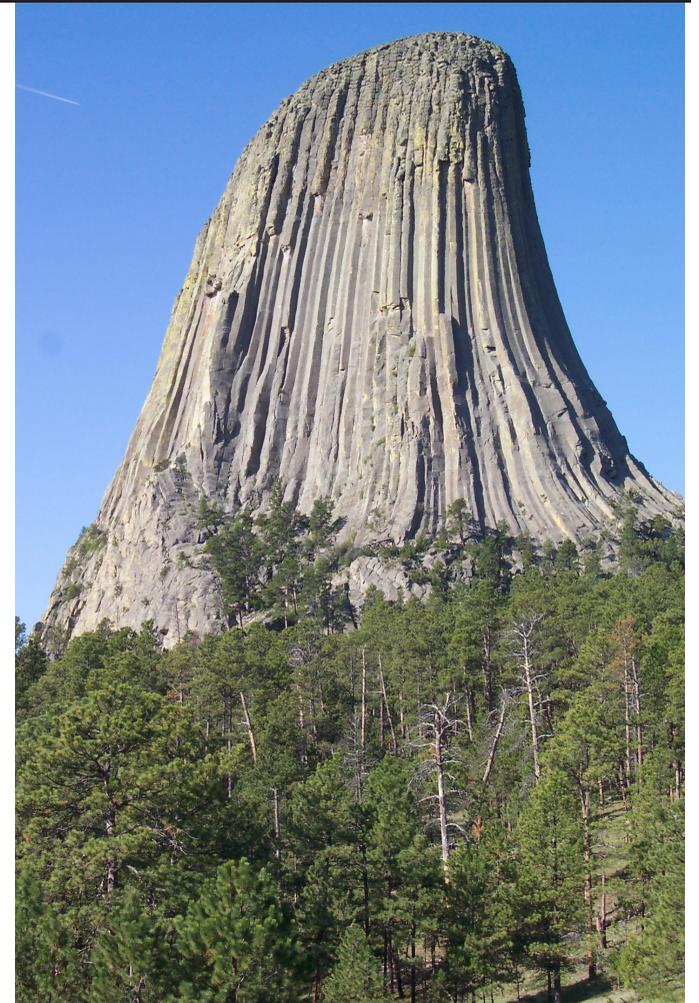
- **Laccolith Remnant** - The Tower could be the remains of a mushroom-shaped igneous intrusion. The magma that formed the laccolith solidified before reaching the surface.
- **Igneous Stock** - The Tower could be an irregularly shaped, igneous intrusion called a stock. It would have been formed when magma cooled and crystallized before reaching the earth's surface.
- **Volcanic Plug Remnant** - The Tower could be what is left from a cylinder-shaped igneous intrusion that plugged the flow to a volcano.
- **Remnant of a Diatreme/Lava Coulée** - Magma underneath the surface encounters groundwater. The magma turns groundwater nearly instantly into steam. The trapped steam caused a crater to appear on the surface that is surrounded by debris. A pipe to the surface is also created. The pipe is a weak conduit to the surface. Remaining magma flows up the pipe to the surface. The magma/lava flows gently up and out, and pools in the bottom of the crater. It hardens into the Tower.



Remnant of a Diatreme/Lava Coulée-  
The initial crater and debris



Remnant of a Diatreme/Lava  
Coulée - The formation of the  
Tower

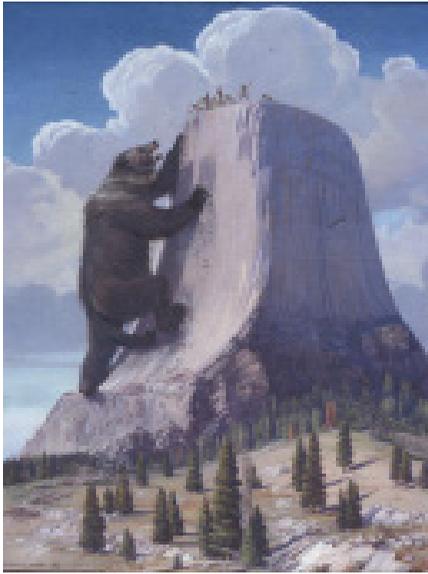


The Tower during the summer

Despite the uncertainty of how the Tower formed, geologists do agree on how it came to appear the way it does today. Until erosion began its relentless work, the Tower was not visible above the overlying sedimentary rocks. But the forces of erosion, particularly that of water, began to wear away the soft sandstones and shales above and around the Tower. The much harder igneous rock of the Tower survived the onslaught of erosional forces, and the gray columns of the Tower began to appear above the surrounding landscape. As rain and snow continue to erode the sedimentary rocks surrounding the Tower's base, and the Belle Fourche River carries away the debris, more of the Tower will be exposed. Rocks are continually breaking off and falling from the steep walls. Rarely do entire columns fall, but on remote occasions, they do. Piles of rubble, broken columns, boulders, small rocks and stones lie at the base of the Tower, indicating that it was once larger than it is today.

With enough time and exposure, even the Tower itself will erode away!

# Stories of the Tower



An artist's impression of the Cheyenne oral history of the Tower's creation. Although similar to the Kiowa's story, different tribes all had their own unique stories about the Tower.

## Kiowa Oral History of the Tower's Creation

The following is a direct quote from a Kiowa soldier to Dick Stone. This story along with many of the stories of the other tribes at the Tower can be found in the short novella *First Encounters*.

Before the Kiowa came south they were camped on a stream in the far north where there were a great many bears, many of them. One day, seven little girls were playing at a distance from the village and were chased by some bears. The girls ran toward the village and the bears were just about to catch them when the girls jumped on a low rock, about three feet high. One of the girls prayed to the rock, "Rock take pity on us, rock save us!" The rock heard them and began to grow upwards, pushing the girls higher and higher. When the bears jumped to reach the girls, they scratched the rock, broke their claws, and fell on the ground.

The rock rose higher and higher, the bears still jumped at the girls until they were pushed up into the sky, where they now are, seven little stars in a group (The Pleiades). In the winter, in the middle of the night, the seven stars are right over this high rock. When the people came to look, they found the bears' claws, turned to stone, all around the base. No Kiowa living has ever seen this rock, but the old men have told about it - it is very far north where the Kiowa used to live. It is a single rock with scratched sides, the marks of the bears' claws are there yet, rising straight up, very high. There is no other like it in the whole country, there are no trees on it, only grass on top. The Kiowa call this rock "Tso-aa", a tree rock, possibly because it grew tall like a tree.

*Told by I-See-Many-Camp-Fire-Places, Kiowa soldier at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, 1897.*

## George Hopkins - Unlucky Parachutist

In October 1941, during the international upheaval and strife of the Second World War, Devils Tower National Monument made headlines across the nation. A professional parachutist named George Hopkins was stuck atop the Tower with no way down.

Early in the morning on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1941, without the consent or knowledge of National Park Service officials, Hopkins parachuted from an airplane to the top of Devils Tower. He wanted to prove that a parachutist could land precisely on a small target - the Tower summit being just over one acre in size. His plan was to descend using a 1,000-foot rope which would be dropped from the plane after him. Hopkins hit his mark, but his rope landed out of reach on the side of the Tower, leaving him stuck on top.

The National Park Service now had a problem to solve, and newspapers around the country ran with the story. While they considered options for rescuing the stranded man, airplanes dropped food, water and warm clothing to keep Hopkins alive. Letters written by concerned citizens, corporations and the military posed uncertain suggestions for getting him down. These suggestions included everything from using a blimp to requesting the use of an experimental helicopter. Eventually they decided on sending a climbing team up to rescue Hopkins. Jack Durrance, one of the early technical climbers to scale the Tower, offered to lead a rescue party that included several famous climbers including Chappell Cranmer and Paul Petzoldt.

On October 5, Durrance and his party arrived at the monument. Working closely with the park service, they laid out a safe climbing route for rescue operations. On the following day, Durrance led the team to the summit of the Tower. They found Hopkins who, in spite of his ordeal, was in excellent physical condition and in good spirits. The descent was made without major incident. The stranded parachutist and the rescue operations attracted many spectators: during the six-day period, some 7,000 visitors came to the monument to witness events first-hand.



George Hopkins, shortly before his infamous parachute drop onto Devils Tower in October 1941.

# Flora and Fauna at the Tower

Please do not feed any of the wildlife. Human food is hard for many animals to digest and often contains additives that can kill them. Remember that these are wild animals.

If you have any questions about any of the wildlife or plants at the monument, please feel to ask any uniformed staff members or look online at [www.nps.gov/deto/learn/nature](http://www.nps.gov/deto/learn/nature).

## Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs



Black-Tailed Prairie Dog demonstrating normal eating behavior

Prairie dogs are small, short-tailed animals with eyes and small ears set far back on their heads. Their light-brown fur blends well with the dirt of their mounds except when the animal has been blackened by burrowing into coal seams. Named for their bark-like warning call and black-tipped tail, prairie dogs average 14 to 17 inches in total length and weigh 1 to 3 pounds. With short, muscular legs and long-nailed toes on their front and hind feet, they are well equipped for a burrowing lifestyle.

## White-tailed Deer

White-tailed deer are one of the largest animals present at the monument. Named for their distinctive white tails that they raise like a flag when surprised, they are one of three species of deer that can be found at the monument including mule deer and Rocky Mountain elk. Primarily active during the crepuscular (dusk and dawn) time periods, they can still be seen during the day hiding in the shade of the forest or grazing on the sedge grass of the prairie.



Male White-Tailed Deer, also known as a buck

## Wild Turkey



Male Turkey demonstrating a mating display

Wild Turkey are one of the most iconic birds in the United States and at the Tower. They can be seen year round at the monument. Turkeys spend most of their time on the forest floor scavenging for food. If you keep a sharp eye out you might even get to see where they have dug up the ground looking for food. These birds are also known for their mating rituals in which the males show off their colors like the bird in the photo to the left. Despite their appearances, turkeys are capable of flight to escape from predators.

## Exotic Plant Control Efforts

Exotic species are organisms found outside of their native ranges. Exotic plants which grow or spread quickly, out-compete native plants and alter ecosystems are referred to as *invasive*. These invasive plants disrupt natural food chains and become a nuisance for land managers attempting to preserve native ecosystems.

Exotic species are introduced by human activity, either intentionally or accidentally. Agricultural crops, landscape ornaments, international trade, and tourism are all vectors for exotic introduction. Once established, an invasive species out-competes native species, leading to losses of individual species or even entire habitats. More than sixty exotic plant species have been identified at Devils Tower National Monument. While some spread slowly, others have replaced native plant communities, reducing the biological diversity of the monument's ecosystems. The monument's most aggressive invasive plants are:

- Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
- Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*)
- Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

You can help control the spread of invasive plants by identifying exotic species and avoiding travel through infested areas. Clean vehicles, pets, clothing, and recreational equipment before leaving the area. Support the park's effort in controlling invasive plants by spreading the word, not the weeds!



Houndstongue

## Prescribed Fire Efforts

As you explore the monument, you may notice that some of the tree trunks are blackened. Those markings are due to prescribed fires that occur at the Tower. Fire, despite the instinctual fear, is a healthy part of the ecosystem. The ponderosa pine, one of the primary components of the forests around the Tower, needs fire for successful growth and seed germination. To promote these benefits and to limit the negative effects of fire on the ecosystems, the National Park Service occasionally conducts prescribed fires at the Tower.



Wildland firefighters starting a prescribed fire at the Tower

# Exploring the Tower

## Ranger Programs

During the summer, join a park ranger or park volunteer for a short program to learn more about the Tower. There are three regularly scheduled programs. For more information about the daily schedules, topics, and any special events, please stop by the visitor center.

**Tower Walk** (1 hour) - Join a ranger on a short 1.3 mile hike around the base of the Tower. Individual topics vary but can include ecology, geology, history and cultural information.

**Patio Talk** (20-30 minutes) - Join a ranger in front of the kiosk in the center of the parking lot for a short program of the ranger's choice.

**Evening Programs** (45 minutes) - Join a ranger in the amphitheater by the picnic area for a program about the Tower. The Special Presenter Series is a part of this program.



Park Ranger giving a Patio Talk program

## Special Presenter Series

The Special Presenter Series highlights the different ways in which various cultures relate to the Tower, while also offering a shared vision for all of us who find meaning in a visit here. The programs are offered during the weekend evenings in the months of June, July and August at the Campground Amphitheater. You might meet Theodore Roosevelt, a Cheyenne champion Grass Dancer, or a world-renowned rock climber on a summer evening at Devils Tower.

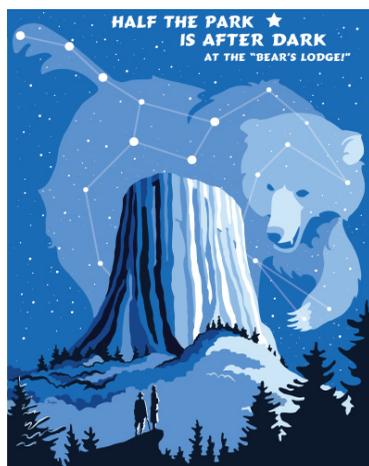
Each special guest will share their view of the importance of Devils Tower so we can share in their experiences and find our own ways to appreciate the Tower. Ask at the visitor center or check our online calendar for more information about guest speakers.



Phillip Whiteman Jr.

## An Astronomical Place...

Devils Tower National Monument is committed to educating the public about astronomy. During major astronomical events the park will host free night sky programs. The park is open 24 hours, so come late to enjoy the stars because "half the Park is after dark!"



## ...With Astronomical Events!

### August 21- Total Solar Eclipse

For the first time since 1979, a total solar eclipse will occur over the United States. While the full eclipse will pass to the south, it still will be a spectacular show so please join us for this once in a lifetime event!!

## Quick Facts about the Tower

- **How high is the Tower?** 867 feet (264 meters) from the Visitor Center
- **How old is the Visitor Center?** It was originally built in 1935
- **How old is the Monument?** It was authorized in 1906 and was the first national monument
- **How big is the top of the Tower?** About the size of a football field, approximately 1.25 acres
- **Why is the rock of the Tower green?** The rock itself isn't green, but gets its color from lichen that grows on the rock surface. Lichen is a combination of plant and fungus that live together symbiotically
- **What kind of rock is the Tower?** The Tower is made of *phonolite porphyry*, which is similar to granite but lacks quartz
- **How much does the Tower weigh?** It could weigh up to 60,000,000 tons
- Rock climbing is allowed at the Tower; in 2016 there were over 6000 climbers on the Tower
- The fastest recorded ascent of the Tower is 18 minutes!!
- The first people to climb the Tower were two local ranchers who built a ladder into the Tower in 1893

For more information about the Tower, please stop by the visitor center

## Hey Kids, Become a Junior Ranger!

Discover Devils Tower National Monument through our two Junior Ranger programs.

Ask for a Junior Ranger booklet at the visitor center. Return your completed booklet, and earn a Junior Ranger badge and certificate. You can keep the pencil.

If you are still interested in learning more, ask at the visitor center about our Junior Climbing Ranger program.



# Rock Climbing at Devils Tower

**ROCK CLIMBING IS DANGEROUS; WITHOUT THE PROPER TRAINING, EQUIPMENT, AND GUIDANCE, ACCIDENTS AND/OR DEATH MAY OCCUR.**

## The story of Climbing at the Tower

For over a hundred years, climbers have tested their skills on the vertical faces of Devils Tower. Using various techniques and specialized equipment, climbers have inched their way up and down the steep walls. Today there are over 200 routes around the Tower. It has been climbed by a variety of people including a six-year old boy and an eighty-one-year old man.

The first recorded climb of Devils Tower occurred over ten years before its establishment as a national monument. Willard Ripley and William Rogers were two ranchers living near the Tower in the 1890s. Working together, the two managed to construct a simple stake ladder which they used to climb to the Tower's summit. The feat occurred on July 4th, 1893 and drew spectators from as far as Rapid City, SD.



Remnants of the Stake Ladder

As years went on an untold number of people used the ladder to scale the Tower columns. But by the 1920s the ladder was in a state of serious disrepair. The bottom section has since been removed, with the top 200 feet restored by the park service in 1972.



Fritz Wiessner Leading His Team

The next evolution in climbing at the Tower occurred in 1937 when a group of rock climbers sought to make history by scaling the sides without the use of a ladder. Fritz Wiessner was a German-American climber and member of the American Alpine Club. Climbing with Lawrence Coveney and William House, Wiessner led the trio in the first free climb of Devils Tower. Wiessner helped set the standard of rock climbing at the Tower, and his name is still attached to the route he and his cohorts pioneered in 1937.

The following year, Jack Durrance began the second expedition up the Tower columns. He studied the route Wiessner used the year before, and determined there could be a slightly easier option. What became known as the "Durrance Route" is today the most popular climbing route on the Tower. Considered by many to be the least difficult route, it still provides a challenge to experienced climbers scaling the Tower for their first time. These pioneering climbers started a tradition of climbing at the Tower that still exists to this day.



Jack Durrance at the Devils Tower Visitor Center

## How do they get to the Top

The majority of climbers "free climb" the Tower, meaning climbing without the use of artificial aid, mechanical means or ladders. They climb up by gripping onto features of the rock, such as cracks and edges. Climbers use precautions to protect themselves in the event of a fall, such as ropes, harnesses and removable pieces of equipment placed in cracks in the rock. The first, or lead, climber places removable equipment like cams or nuts, while the second climber keeps the rope taut (a process known as *belaying*). If the lead climber falls, the belayer catches them with a friction device on the rope. Once the leader has reached the end of the rope, they make an anchor and belay the second climber up. The second climber removes the gear as they ascend.



Rock Climber part way through the ascent

## Interested in climbing the Tower

Check in at the Climbing Office or parking lot kiosk near the visitor center and obtain a free, mandatory climbing permit. The office has information on climbing routes and weather conditions. Routes are "TRAD" (traditional climbing) and are generally long; plan for 6-10 hours round trip.



Assorted Rock Climbing Equipment

- Take plenty of gear - 2 ropes, double rack, helmets
- Make plans for self-rescue or assistance from other climbers for unexpected incidents
- Use caution in crowded areas - Durrance, Bowling Alley, Meadows Rappel, etc.
- Watch the weather. Storms can develop quickly!

## Voluntary June Climbing Closure



Native American Ceremony at the Tower

Northern Plains Native Americans regard Devils Tower as a sacred site. Out of respect to these beliefs, the monument's Climbing Management Plan provides a voluntary closure to climbing during the month of June, an important ceremonial month for tribes affiliated with the Tower. During June we recommend that climbers utilize one of the several world-class climbing areas near the Tower.

# Supporting Partners

## Thanks, Partner!

Yes, we mean you! By paying the entrance fee, you become partners with the National Park Service through the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Program. Your entrance fee is used to help support park projects, such as improved roads, signs, campgrounds, visitor facilities and more! 80 percent of all entrance fee money stays within Devils Tower.

During 2016, park entrance fee money was used to support the following projects:

- Paving the Tower Trail
- Night Sky Programs
- Campground Improvements/Maintenance
- Climbing Education Programs
- 3D GIS Imaging of Devils Tower

## The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Series

A pass is your ticket to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites. Please stop by either the visitor center or park entrance for more information or to pick up one for yourself. There are currently six types of passes available.

Annual Pass - \$80 per year

Annual Military Pass- Free for current U.S. Military

Annual 4th Grade Pass - Free for 4th graders

Senior Pass - \$10 for life (pending any changes)

Access Pass - Free for life for U.S. citizens with a permanent disability

Volunteer Pass - Free for a year for volunteers who donate over 250 hours to federal land agencies.



## Devils Tower Natural History Association

Devils Tower Natural History Association supports interpretive and educational programs at Devils Tower. The association operates the bookstore located in the visitor center.

When you make a purchase at the bookstore, proceeds are donated to the monument that support park programs, such as the Junior Ranger Program, and many other services. You can also consider becoming a member of the association. Membership benefits include a 15% discount in the bookstore and a discount on items purchased at other national park cooperating association bookstores.

# Park Neighbors in the Black Hills

NPS / ERIC DODD



## Jewel Cave National Monument

Jewel Cave is 100 miles east of Devils Tower on US Hwy. 16. With more than 180 miles surveyed, it is the third longest cave in the world. Cave tours provide opportunities for viewing this cave system and its wide variety of speleothems. Call (605) 673-8300 to plan your visit. [www.nps.gov/jeca](http://www.nps.gov/jeca)



## Custer State Park

Custer is located 115 miles East of Devils Tower via US Hwy. 16. At 71,000 acres, it is one of the largest state parks in the nation. It has many lakes, and hiking opportunities. Call the Peter Norbeck Visitor Center at (605) 255-4515 to plan your visit. [www.custerstatepark.info](http://www.custerstatepark.info)



## Mount Rushmore National Memorial

Mount Rushmore is located 126 miles east of Devils Tower via I-90, US Hwy. 16 and SD Hwy. 244. From the history of the first inhabitants to the diversity of America today, Mount Rushmore brings visitors face to face with the rich heritage we all share. Call (605) 574-2523 or visit [www.nps.gov/moru](http://www.nps.gov/moru)



## Wind Cave National Park

Wind Cave is located 126 miles east of Devils Tower on US Hwy. 385. It is one of the world's longest and most complex caves. It is famous for its boxwork, an unusual calcite cave formation resembling honeycomb. Call (605) 745-4600 for additional information. [www.nps.gov/wica](http://www.nps.gov/wica)



## Badlands National Park

Badlands is located 190 miles east of Devils Tower via I-90 and US Hwy. 240. Badlands consists of 244,000 acres of sharply eroded buttes, pinnacles and spires blended with the largest protected mixed-grass prairie in the U.S. Call (605) 433-5361 to plan your visit. [www.nps.gov/badl](http://www.nps.gov/badl)



## Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

Minuteman Missile is located 182 miles east of Devils Tower on I-90. The site preserves a launch control facility and a nuclear missile silo of the Minuteman II missile system. Tours by reservation only. Call the site at (605) 433-5552 or stop by the visitor center. [www.nps.gov/mimi](http://www.nps.gov/mimi)

# Devils Tower Park Map



Pets may not be taken on trails or left unattended at any time. They may be walked in the parking areas on a leash .



Collection of rocks, plants, or any other natural material is prohibited by law.



Collection of archeological artifacts is prohibited by law.



It is illegal and dangerous to feed any park wildlife, including prairie dogs.



Travel above the boulder field can be dangerous and requires a permit .

**SPEED LIMIT 25**

Speed limits are strictly enforced for the safety of visitors, park wildlife and employees.



If you have any questions about park regulations, feel free to ask a uniformed employee.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Devils Tower rises 1,267 feet above the Belle Fourche River. Also known as Bear's Lodge, it is a sacred site for many American Indians. President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed Devils Tower the first national monument in 1906.

Devils Tower National Monument  
P.O. Box 10, Devils Tower, WY 82714

Phone: (307) 467-5283

Email: [deto\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:deto_interpretation@nps.gov)

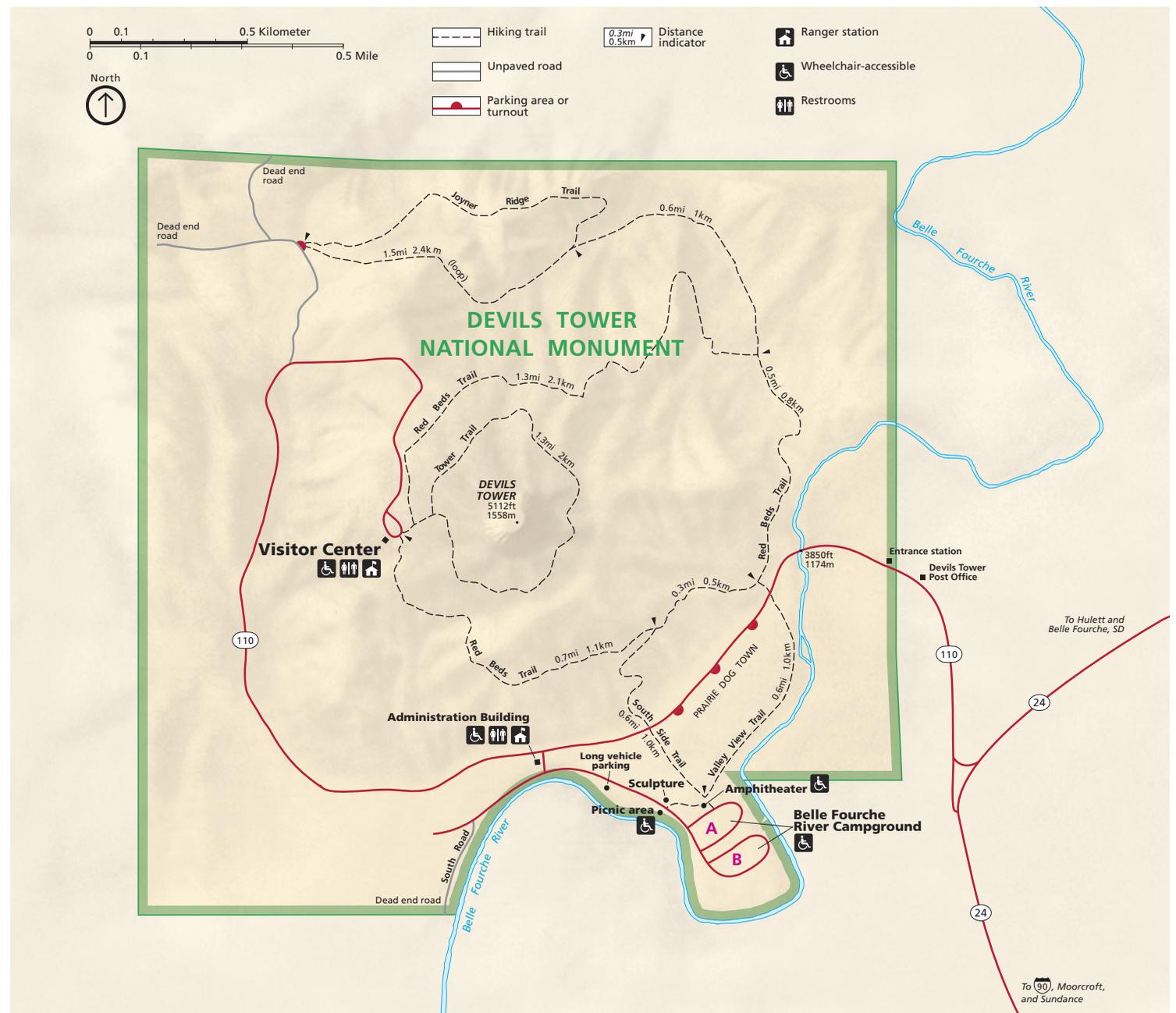
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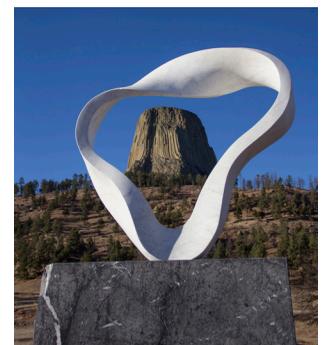
Instagram - DevilsTowerNPS

Official Website - [www.nps.gov/deto](http://www.nps.gov/deto)



## Hiking Trails at Devils Tower

1. The Tower Trail - 1.3 Miles- A short rolling hike around the base of the Tower. This is the easiest and most popular trail at the monument. Enjoy close-up views of the Tower as you walk through the boulder field and ponderosa pine forest around the base. This is the only paved trail at the monument.
2. Red Beds Trail - 2.8 Miles- The longest and most intense trail at the monument. This trail meanders through pine forests and meadows, with views of the valley floor, distant hills, and Belle Fourche River. It also features spectacular views of the bluffs known as the Red Beds, the formation from which the trail gets its name.
3. Joyner Ridge Trail - 1.5 Miles- This trail traverses the ridge top and descends a sandstone cliff into a secluded meadow. The north and west faces of the Tower are visible from the trail.



Visit our new interactive exhibit at the Sacred Circle of Smoke sculpture