The Importance of Ray V. Davis in Early Caverns History
by Bob Hoff

I would speculate that almost everyone who knows about the early history of Carlsbad Caverns knows about the importance of explorer and guide Jim White. For some people, including myself, White’s contributions were so large and long-lasting that he is “Mr. Carlsbad Caverns.” I would also speculate that another important contributor to the early caverns history, photographer Ray V. Davis, is virtually unknown to many people. In their book Carlsbad Caverns: The Early Years—A Photographic History of the Cave and Its People, William Halliday and Robert Nymeyer include a chapter entitled, “The Story of George Adams and Ray V. Davis, Photographers,” richly illustrated with some of Davis’ photographs. The life of Ray Davis reveals how the unplanned and seemingly inconsequential aspects of our lives can lead to greater events, destined to be historic in scale.

In 1913, nineteen-year-old Ray Vesta Davis was traveling to California from Kansas with his parents Martin and Nevada Davis and the rest of his family. While stopped in Clovis in northeastern New Mexico, the Davis family chanced to hear some land “boosters” from Eddy County in southeastern New Mexico. The boosters promoted the virtues of settling down in this area, especially with the massive irrigation and reclamation projects underway in the Pecos Valley. The Davis family agreed and came to Carlsbad to settle.

For young Ray Davis, his interest in farming quickly sputtered out after arriving in Carlsbad, replaced by a burning desire to be a photographer. Shortly after moving to Carlsbad, he opened a photographic studio named the “Picture Gallery.” In later years, he recalled that his first camera was a small box Kodak made by Eastman. He also recalled that the camera began his seventy year love affair with photography (Halliday and Nymeyer, 1991, p. 57).

In 1915, explorer and guide Jim White was 33 years old, with nearly two decades under his belt of exploring and guiding others in what was then called “Bat Cave.” The underground wonders that White and his companions had seen defied description. White was stymied in his effort to promote awareness of the cavern to those who refused to believe what they hadn’t seen with their own eyes. Imagine trying to put the caverns into words for others before it became known to the world through publicity.

Sometime around 1915-1918, the paths of Jim White and Ray V. Davis crossed and Jim invited Ray to the caverns to take pictures. Davis, twelve years junior in age to White, fell in love with the cavern just as White had himself years before. Almost immediately, Davis, like White, also realized the need to make known the caverns in order to share it with others.

With White guiding Davis in the caverns and Davis taking photographs, the key combination for bringing the caverns to the attention of the world began, starting the changes that would evolve the “Bat Cave” as an early 20th century bat guano mining site into a National Monument in 1923, a National Park in 1930, and a World Heritage Site in 1995.

Just how important were Ray V. Davis’s photographs to the future of Carlsbad Caverns? Consider:

- His pictures began attracting local interest in the early 1920s. He even organized an expedition of prominent city people to explore the cavern in 1922.
- Davis turned over some of his earliest photographs to the New Mexico Land Office; copies of these photos ended up in the possession of the U.S. General Land Office who shared their interest with the National Park Service in Washington D.C. in March 1923.
- The National Park Service responded by asking the GLO to send an exploration expedition to the caverns. In April 1923, an expedition from Roswell, New Mexico, headed by GLO Mineral Examiner Robert Holley arrived on the scene. Holley estimated several hundred thousand dollars of land holdings had been defrauded from the United States by unscrupulous speculators. The National Park Service decided to spend considerable time touring the Big Room to answer the questions the group had before it became the Carlsbad Cavern National Park.

Somewhere along the way, Davis met a school group at the Top of the Cross. When I asked if there were any questions, I got the usual responses: How old is it? How big is it? How was it made? What’s it worth?

Another benefit is the opportunity to talk to the park visitors and answer their questions about the formation and history of the cavern. On one memorable day, I met a school group at the Top of the Cross. When I asked if there were any questions, I got the usual responses: How old is it? How big is it? How was it made? What’s it worth?

What’s it Worth? The group seemed to be willing to listen, so I talked for a few minutes about the geology and formation of the cavern. I explained that, essentially, we have 250 million years of labor, vast amounts of materials and the efforts of a truly superb designer…What’s it worth?

Let’s compare Carlsbad Cavern to some of the great man-made objects in the world. How about the Great Pyramids? What’s it worth? That last question took me a little off guard. I had never thought of the cavern as a thing with a specific value. While I tried to think of a proper answer, I started talking about the cavern…The abbreviated version of Geology 101.

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Greetings!

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

Within the boundaries of these parks, you will find areas preserved as wilderness. A wilderness designation is the highest level of land protection our society can grant. Here, travel is by foot or horseback only and natural processes are allowed to operate freely. September 3, 2004 marked the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. What better way to honor the Wilderness Act than to enjoy the gift of wild lands inherited from one generation and passed on to the next? Ask a ranger where you can hike into the wilderness and how best to prepare.

The park staff is here to help make your visit a truly memorable event. They will be happy to help you plan your visit and provide information. Guided tours at Carlsbad Caverns continue through the winter months. These tours offer a variety of caving experiences, from easy lantern tours to challenging treks involving crawling and squeezing through tight passages. Fall Colors at Guadalupe Mountains National Park is an exhilarating experience. Please call us for up-to-date information on the changing colors and the best time to visit. And don’t forget, the highest peak in Texas and some of the most incredible vistas around are just a few hours away.

As you travel and spend time in the area, please remember to keep safety in mind. Icy roads are infrequent, but do occur, especially on the Caverns access road and at the top of the Guadalupe Pass near the Guadalupe Mountains Headquarters Visitor Center. Call the numbers listed on this page to check road conditions if there is a chance of severe weather. Deer and other wildlife are plentiful—enjoy watching wildlife, but remember they often move across roads, especially in the evenings; be vigilant while driving during twilight hours. Hikers should be prepared for rapidly changing weather conditions. Even in cooler temperatures, hikers can become dehydrated in our dry climate; carry plenty of water. Always check with a ranger before venturing into the backcountry.

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

John Benjamin
Superintendent
Carlsbad Caverns National Park

John Lujan
Superintendent
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

Experience your America

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

Telephone and Web Directory

Carlsbad Caverns National Park
3225 National Parks Hwy
Carlsbad, NM 88220
(505) 785-2232
www.nps.gov/cave

Guadalupe Mountains National Park
HC60, Box 400
Salt Flat, Texas 79847
(915) 828-3251
www.nps.gov/gumo

Carlsbad Caverns
Guadalupe Mountains
Association
Operates both parks’ bookstores. Books may also be purchased by mail or online.
PO Box 1417
Carlsbad, NM 88221
(505) 785-2486
(505) 785-2318 FAX
www.ccma.org

Food, Lodging, and Camping
Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce:
(505) 887-6516
www.caverns.com/e-chamber/

Van Horn, Texas Visitors Bureau:
(915) 283-2682
www.vanhornadvocate.com/communityad1.shtml

Thank You, Volunteers!

Your work above and below ground is key to caring for the parks! Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks appreciate our volunteers’ generous donations of time and skills. Volunteers do everything from staffing the information desk, roving interpretation, patrolling surface and cave trails, to trail maintenance, research, cave restoration, cave mapping, and more. Your dedication helps both parks reach their goals.

To become a volunteer contact...

Carlsbad Caverns
Jason Richards
(505) 785-3135

Guadalupe Mountains
Doug Buehler
(915) 828-3251 x105

Experience your America

The National Parks Pass costs $50.00 and covers entrance fees into National Park Service areas for one year. It is available at any National Park Service site with an entrance fee. Passes are available by phone at 888-GO-PARKS or on the web at www.nationalparks.org.

A reminder from Ranger Rufus...

On a warm day the temperature inside a car can kill a pet. Do not leave an animal unattended; the kennel is the only safe place for your pet.

At Carlsbad Caverns, pets are not permitted in the cave or at bat flight programs; during the day your pet may be cared for at the kennel for a small fee.

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

In any national park, your pet must be physically restrained at all times.
days for the exploration; instead it took five weeks and was guided by Jim White and photographed by Ray Davis. In his report, Holley urged that the caverns be established as a national monument.

- After U.S. Geological Survey geologist Willis T. Lee visited for two weeks in August later that summer, he rushed back to Washington D.C. to urge what Holley had recommended. When Lee led a six-month expedition of day trips here from March – Sept 1924, he used Davis’ pictures to illustrate his first article for the National Geographic magazine.

A now world famous cavern owes its fame in part to the contributions of an obscure photographer Ray Davis combined a passion for photography with an appreciation of the natural world. His talent and efforts helped bring the world’s attention to the hidden treasure beneath our feet.

Worth continued from page 1

Pyramid of Giza? The archeologists say that it took over 20 years and 20 thousand men to build the Great Pyramid. Without adding in the cost of materials this adds up to over four-hundred thousand man-hours. If they were worth as much as the average auto mechanic that adds up to nearly $70 Billion not including overhead and benefits.

Of course a pyramid isn’t a cavern, although they did move millions of cubic yards of material. A better example might be some of the great holes in the ground that have been built. For example, the “chunnel” across the English Channel, or New York City’s third water tunnel. The Chunnel is about 30 miles long and consists of two railroad tunnels and a service tunnel. The third water tunnel in New York will be sixty miles long when it is finished, and about 30 feet in diameter.

Without going into a lot of detail, the cost of drilling a nice straight hole in the ground 30 miles long is about 7 billion dollars. Of course there is more to a cavern than just the hole. There needs to be some decoration. In the cavern there are stalactites, stalagmites, columns, draperies, helictites, a wide variety of decorations in truly stupendous numbers; the cavern is truly a world class piece of art.

What does art cost? Christie’s is an auction house that sells some of the greatest art ever made by man. In their catalogue of May 8, 2000, there are different water tunnels and a service tunnel. The third water tunnel in New York will be sixty miles long when it is finished, and about 30 feet in diameter.

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Of course, that number represents some of the most expensive art works in the world with prices ranging from 1.5 to 24.5 million dollars. Let’s say the decoration of the cavern is based on a more reasonably priced artist at perhaps $10,000 per square foot.

How many square feet of cavern wall are there? Let’s make a gross estimate. Carlsbad Cavern has about 30 miles of surveyed passages. To calculate the surface area to be decorated, a cave 30 miles long and fifty feet in diameter has approximately 24.8 million square feet of surface area. That gives us the fantastic number of 248 billion dollars worth of decoration. Add to that the 7 billion dollars for construction and we get a really fantastic number.

The Volunteer Experience

by Sarah Ruhland

How many people do you know who gladly show up at work every morning, knowing they will not get paid? Volunteers at Carlsbad Caverns and Channel Mountains National Parks do just this, generously giving their time to both the parks and the visitors who come to learn and experience.

Volunteers in our national parks bring with them a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. They are college students and retirees, teachers and former bankers, extroverts and sometimes, aspiring park rangers. Our volunteers are diverse, yet they all share a love of our national parks that has inspired them to donate their time and skills.

Jerry Kinensly first came across the Volunteers in Parks (VIP) program when visiting Petrified Forest National Park. A former employee of the park service, Jerry spent the late 1940s guiding visitors at Oregon Caves National Monument. Now retired, Jerry is spending his summer volunteering for the interpretation division at Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

A dynamic, upbeat man, Jerry can be seen giving presentations, leading tours, roving the grounds, and working at the park’s information desk. “I love people,” he says. “The best part of my job is talking to visitors and sharing my knowledge with them.”

Seeing visitors’ response to the caverns as well as constantly learning new things are vital to Paul Volpe’s daily motivations. Paul is a high school physics and chemistry teacher who is returning to Carlsbad Caverns for a second summer of volunteer work in interpretation. Paul explains, “My experience in the park has made me a better public speaker, and I have more to share with the students in my classes.”

Other volunteers work behind the scenes, applying their unique skills to areas such as outreach, education, and cultural resources. In the past, volunteers have been responsible for creating educational materials for local schools, giving children’s programs, and cataloging library materials for the park historian. Verna Kinensly, Jerry’s wife, is also a VIP, working in the park’s library. She brings with her experience as a teacher’s aide and computer skills she gained when working for a health organization. Verna’s assistance has been essential in providing resources to park employees developing programs and tours.

Volunteering is an excellent way to learn about the park service and to explore future career options. The Student Conservation Association provides students and others opportunities to work in our nation’s National parks. The SCA is the largest and oldest conservation service organization in the United States with volunteers completing almost 1 million service hours annually at over 400 sites. 46,000 alumni have used their experience to start and supplement careers in the National Park Service, education, conservation, and a multitude of other fields.

SCA volunteer Luke Fields hopes that his experience working with park visitors will apply to any career he may pursue in the future. Also working in interpretation, Luke encounters visitors in the caverns, always learning and sharing new facts and information. Luke finds it hard to identify the best part of his job, but “living in one of the most beautiful parts of the country” is an unquestionable benefit.

The next time you see a volunteer, be sure to thank them for all they do. Our parks could not operate without them. Parks all over the country are always looking for willing volunteers, for more information, contact parks directly, or visit volunteers.sca.org. More information on the Student Conservation Association can be found at www.sca.org, or by calling their offices at (603) 543-1788.
Carlsbad Caverns
Tour the Main Cave...

Spring, Fall, & Winter Hours
Natural Entrance 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Big Room 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Summer Hours (May 28 - August 14)
Natural Entrance 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Big Room 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Fees
Entrance Fees
Adults—age 16 and over $6.00 plus $3.00
Children—age 6 to 15 $3.00 plus $3.00
Children—age 5 and under free plus $3.00

The National Parks pass, Golden Age Passport, Golden Eagle Passport, and Golden Access Passport all cover the basic entrance fee.

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

All fees and tours are subject to change at any time.

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

Reservations (800) 967-CAVE (2283)
TDD (888) 530-9796
Cancellations (800) 388-2733

Surface Activities

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

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

Bat Flight Programs (Summer Only)
A few hundred thousand bats fly from Carlsbad Caverns each evening from mid-May until the bats migrate to Mexico sometime in mid-October. The ranger program generally begins each evening 30 to 60 minutes before sunset at the park amphitheater.

Photography
Photography is permitted on most tours; however, please use good etiquette. Warn those around you before you flash, keep tripods on the trail, and do not use the rocks as your personal tripod. Video cameras are permitted on the Big Room, Natural Entrance, and King’s Palace tours. Please use caution and do not use the ultra-bright lights available on some cameras.

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

• stay on the paved trail.
• supervise children closely; children under age 16 must remain with an adult at all times.
• ask park rangers for help.
• take prescribed medications with you.
• high humidity in the cave can affect respiratory problems; bring your inhaler just in case.
• if you are DIABETIC be sure you have eaten enough calories.
• leave your baby stroller in the car; child-carrying backpacks are recommended.
• leave your pet at the kennel, not in your car.

Protect the Cave
• Never touch the cave formations; the natural skin oils on your hands damage the formations.
• Never take gum, food, or drinks into the cave.
• Never use tobacco of any kind in the cave.
• Never throw coins or other objects into the pools.

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Carlsbad Caverns
...or try something different!

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

Slaughter Canyon Cave
This moderately strenuous tour is through a well-decorated undeveloped backcountry cave. Tours depart from the cave entrance at the schedule time. It is mandatory for each person to bring a two to four C or D-cell alkaline battery flashlight with fresh batteries. Penlights are not permitted. The route is slippery, muddy, and at times requires a supervised ascent of a 15-foot flowstone slope using a knotted rope. Do not drive to the Visitor Center for this cave tour. Allow plenty of time to drive to Slaughter Canyon and 45 minutes for the steep and strenuous 0.5-mile hike to the cave entrance. Attempt this hike only if you are in good health. Carry water—the desert is dry, and can be very hot in summer and very cold in winter. Stay on the trail and wear good walking shoes.

Lower Cave
This moderately strenuous tour begins with a ranger supervised descent down a 10-foot flowstone slope using a knotted rope, followed by a 30-foot series of three ladders. Bring gloves and four AA alkaline batteries per person. The park provides helmets, headlamps and optional kneepads. Tour departs from the Visitor Center lobby. You will see evidence of early exploration, cave pools, and beautiful formations.

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

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

Cave Tours Reservations:
call 1-800-967-2283

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tour</th>
<th>Trail Surface</th>
<th>Offered</th>
<th>Departure Time</th>
<th>Adult Fee</th>
<th>Age Limit</th>
<th>Tour Length</th>
<th>Group Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King’s Palace</td>
<td>Paved trail; 80’ hill must be climbed on return trip</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Summer 10,11,2 &amp; 3 Fall-Spring 10 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Adults $8 Golden Age $4 Golden Access $4 Children (6-15) $4 Children (4-5) Free</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Left Hand Tunnel</td>
<td>Packed dirt trail</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9:00 am</td>
<td>$7.00 and General Admission Ticket</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaughter Canyon Cave</td>
<td>Strenuous climb required to reach cave entrance. Trail in cave is slippery, uneven, and rocky</td>
<td>Saturday and Sunday (Tours offered daily in summer)</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Cave</td>
<td>Must negotiate fifty feet of ladders, variable dirt trails, might get dirty</td>
<td>Monday through Friday 1:00 pm</td>
<td>$20.00 and General Admission Ticket</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall of the White Giant</td>
<td>Climbing and crawling, tight squeezes, drop-offs, will get dirty</td>
<td>Saturday 1:00 pm</td>
<td>$20.00 and General Admission Ticket</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Plan Your Trip Wisely!

Facilities and services within and near Guadalupe Mountains National Park are extremely limited. The nearest gasoline stations are 32 miles west or 35 miles east of El Paso. Open every day except Christmas. Open Memorial Day to Labor Day 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; Labor Day to Memorial Day 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. Information, natural history museum, introductory slide program.

Frijole Ranch History Museum
The ranchhouse features exhibits describing historic and current use of the Guadalupe Mountains. Grounds include a picnic area near a spring shaded by large oak trees. Restrooms, outdoor exhibits, staffed intermittently.

McKittrick Canyon
Highway entrance gate is open 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M., Mountain Standard Time; 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M., Mountain Daylight Savings Time. Closing time changes when Daylight Savings Time begins and ends. Restrooms, outdoor exhibits, slide program.

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

Pine Springs Campground
Located near the Headquarters Visitor Center, there are twenty tent and nineteen RV campsites available on a first-come, first-served basis. Two group campsites are available for groups of twenty or less. Reservations (for group sites only) can be made by phoning (915) 828-3251.

Information and exhibits

Headquarters Visitor Center
Elevation 5,740’. On U.S. Highway 62/180, 55 miles southwest of Carlsbad and 110 miles east of El Paso. Open every day except Christmas. Open Memorial Day to Labor Day 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; Labor Day to Memorial Day 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. Information, natural history museum, introductory slide program.

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Day Hikes

Guadalupe Mountains

Day Hikes at Dog Canyon

Indian Meadow Nature Loop
Easy. 0.6 miles roundtrip.

A guide booklet describes ecology and geology.

Marcos Overlook
Moderate. 4.6 miles roundtrip.

Follow the Bush Mountain Trail to the ridge-top for a view into West Dog Canyon. Trail climbs 800 feet in elevation.

Lost Peak
Strenuous. 6.4 miles roundtrip.

Climb out of Dog Canyon on the Tejas Trail to visit the conifer forest above. Outstanding views from Lost Peak. Trail climbs 1,500 feet in elevation.

Weather

Average annual precipitation is 21.06 inches. Pine Springs Weather Station, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, elevation 5,500’. Average    Average
Temperatures (F.)  Rainfall
High  Low    Inches
Jan 53    30    1.04
Feb 58    35    1.04
March 63  38   0.87
April 71   46   0.57
May 78    55   1.26
June 88   63   1.48
July 87   63   3.08
Aug 84   62   3.77
Sept 78   57   5.22
Oct 77   49   1.41
Nov 61   38   0.65
Dec 57   33   0.67

Hike safely...

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

Protect the park

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

Entrance Fees ($3.00 per person 16 years and older) can be paid at trailheads. Good for one week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trail-Head</th>
<th>Trail Length</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Center</td>
<td>Camp Trail</td>
<td>Easy. Discover the desert as you walk to the ruins of the Pancho, a stagecoach station on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route in 1858. Trailside exhibits; wheelchair accessible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guadalupe Peak Trail</td>
<td>8.4 miles</td>
<td>Strenuous. Hike to the “Top of Texas” at 8,749 feet, for spectacular views. Trail climbs 3,000 feet in elevation. Avoid the peak during high winds and thunderstorms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devil’s Hall Trail</td>
<td>4.2 miles</td>
<td>Moderate. Rocky hike in Pine Springs Canyon to the Hikers’ Staircase and Devil’s Hall. After the first mile the trail drops into the wash. Turn left and follow the canyon bottom to Devil’s Hall, where a sign marks the end of the trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bowl</td>
<td>9.1 miles</td>
<td>Strenuous. The Bowl shelters a high country conifer forest. Recommended route: Tejas Trail to Pine Top, Bowl Trail to Hunter Peak, Bear Canyon Trail. Frijole Trail back to the campground. Trail climbs 2,500 feet in elevation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Capitan Trail</td>
<td>11.3 miles</td>
<td>Strenuous. El Capitan Trail continues to Williams Ranch, an additional 4.7 miles one-way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frijole Ranch</td>
<td>Smith Spring Loop Trail</td>
<td>Moderate. Look for birds, deer, and elk as you pass Manzanita Spring on the way to the shady oasis of Smith Spring. Please do not drink the water or wade in the springs. The first 0.2 miles to Manzanita Springs is wheelchair accessible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKittrick Canyon</td>
<td>4.8 miles</td>
<td>Moderate. Follow an intermittent stream through the desert and canyon woodlands to the historic Pratt Cabin. A guidebook is available at the trailhead. One mile beyond the Pratt Cabin is the Grotto Picnic Area and Hunter Line Cabin. Please do not drink the water or wade in the creek. To protect this fragile environment, you are required to stay on the trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKittrick Loop</td>
<td>6.9 miles</td>
<td>Moderate. Climb the foothills and learn about the natural history of the Chihuahuan Desert. Trailside exhibits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perman Reef Trail</td>
<td>8.4 miles</td>
<td>Strenuous. For serious geology buffs, this trail has stop markers that can be used with a geology guidebook sold at the Visitor Center. There are excellent views into McKittrick Canyon from the ridgetop. Trail climbs 2,000 feet in elevation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Easy. 0.6 miles roundtrip.

A guide booklet describes ecology and geology.

Marcos Overlook
Moderate. 4.6 miles roundtrip.

Follow the Bush Mountain Trail to the ridge-top for a view into West Dog Canyon. Trail climbs 800 feet in elevation.

Lost Peak
Strenuous. 6.4 miles roundtrip.

Climb out of Dog Canyon on the Tejas Trail to visit the conifer forest above. Outstanding views from Lost Peak. Trail climbs 1,500 feet in elevation.
To the Top of Texas and Back
by Doug Buehler

The day starts as first light peeks over the eastern horizon. The air is cool and the awakening of the landscape is signaled by chirping of birds and quiet rustling of male deer in nearby bushes. A water check is made, sunscreen put on exposed skin, and shoelaces tightened to insure good footing. Thus begins a hike up to Guadalupe Peak, the highest point in Texas at 8,749 feet. The trailhead starts at the back of the Pine Springs Campground.

The first 1 ½ miles zig-zag up switchbacks along a very steep portion of the trail. One can easily imagine a sure-footed Desert Big Horn sheep being in the area. These animals were here until the early 1900’s. Native Americans hunted them and drew pictographs depicting them. Rest stops are taken frequently on this steeper section of trail. While resting and viewing the surrounding landscape it is hard to imagine the area was once a large inland ocean where a world famous fossilized reef formed—the Capitan Reef. The sheer walls of the neighboring mountain El Capitan are made up of debris from the reef. You are actually walking on the reef and rocks associated with it on parts of the hike. At times each step you take is upon ancient sea life such algae, sponges, brachiopods mixed in with lime and sand sediments. Watching for fossils is an interesting challenge while hiking trails in the park.

After about 1 ½ hours of hiking there is a notch in the trail and it switches back to a less severe slope. One walks through conifer trees on this cooler north-facing slope. The wind continues to increase as the trail climbs. It is easy to believe that this is one of the windiest places in the United States, especially in the spring. Winds in Guadalupe Pass have been strong enough to topple over 18-wheeled trucks on the highway.

More continuous climbing brings one into an exposed area without trees. Moving about is a rock squirrel and sand sediments. Watching for fossils is an interesting challenge while hiking trails in the park.

Autumn's Splendor
by Andrew Smalldon

The canyons of the Guadalupe Mountains fill with colorful displays of maple, sumac, walnut, and ash leaves. It's no wonder that Fall Colors draw some of the largest crowds of the year.

Late October and early November are the prime weeks for viewing fall colors.

Weekends in McKittrick Canyon are extremely busy, and access is limited. Those arriving late may have to wait several hours to enter. Rangers recommend that you visit during the week. On weekends, consider hiking the Devil’s Hall Trail near Pine Springs Campground or in Dog Canyon.

McKittrick Canyon hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (4:30 p.m. starting on Nov. 1st.) Other trails are always open. Plan to spend at least three hours to hike in far enough to fully appreciate the area. There are no restrooms available at Prell Cabin.

Help protect fragile park resources. Stay on the trail and out of the stream.

Call (915) 828-3251 for current conditions.

Your Connection to the Wilderness
by Laurence Parent

Wilderness is different for each one of us. It may be a place that is unknown, a place to face a challenge, or an area that you feel is being protected. To many it is a place that allows us to experience nature on its own terms. Wilderness is seen as a living breathing thing: something to go into. Only in a Wilderness area, where there is the least amount of influence by man, can we test ourselves to see if we measure up to our personal beliefs. Many individuals do so every year by camping, hiking, and enjoying the Wilderness. As a society we are challenged to use our voices to keep the wilderness system alive. Some supporters of the wilderness may never step foot into it. It is the knowledge that it is there that satisfies them.

We all connect to the wilderness in some form, whether we know it or not. For some of us it is hiking trips and living close to nature without the conveniences of today. It may be a response to the misuse and needless destruction of natural areas that give profit to a few. Wallace Stegner called wilderness “part of the geography of hope.” The pain that many feel when they witness or hear of destruction of the natural world is alleviated by the knowledge that some wilderness remains protected forever. One connection to the wilderness that is not always obvious is that wilderness can benefit society at large by helping to protect the water we drink and the air we breathe. Some people resent their connection to wilderness, because they see wilderness as locking up the land. To them wilderness is not a place free of machines and the excesses of civilization, but a place where they cannot log, mine, or build a house. Some of us may not have found our connection with wilderness. We may be pushed and pulled by things we hear. Do we need less Wilderness? Do we need more? Whatever your connection, take a moment to consider where you stand. Do you stand in the wilderness or outside of it?

The backcountry of the Guadalupe Mountains in Texas and New Mexico is home to an array of plant and animal life that has adapted to the harsh climate of the Chihuahuan Desert. This domain has long been viewed as a hazard and inhospitable by man. It is also where thousands come every year to enjoy the diversity of life. Allowing access to these areas helps us all connect with nature.

The idea of setting an area of land aside for an intangible purpose makes little sense to many. Does it need to have a purpose or is it just to be? You may think there is nothing happening out in that neck of the woods, but there are people thinking about it and appreciating of its significance even if they never set foot in it. The National Wilderness Preservation System is one of the nation’s hottest environmental topics of our time. Each of us has the key to unlock the wilderness. What is your connection to the Wilderness?
Come face to face with a mountain lion at this unique zoo and botanical garden offering an opportunity to experience the Chihuahuan Desert first-hand. See a large collection of live animals, including the rare Mexican gray wolf, and the roadrunner, New Mexico’s state bird. There is also an unusual collection of cacti and other succulents from around the world.

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

Lincoln National Forest
(505) 885-4181

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

Sitting Bull Falls
Wheelchair accessible.
Day use only—no camping.
Entrance fee—$5.00 per car.

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

Five Points Vista
Eleven miles south of State Highway 137 on Forest Route 540. A panoramic view of the desert from the top of the Guadalupe Mountains. Interpretive signs explain natural features.

Maps are available at the Guadalupe Ranger District Office located in the Federal Building, 114 S. Halagueno, Room 159, in Carlsbad.