The Joy of the Unexpected

DO YOU REMEMBER... the last time you put on an old coat that hadn't been worn for a while, stuck your hand in the pocket, and pulled out a twenty dollar bill? Or you returned home from a trying day at work to find a phone message from a childhood friend you hadn't heard from in years. Or better yet, you jumped out of bed, having overslept, dressed in a frenzy and bolted out the door to work only to realize it was Saturday?

Often the unexpected can turn an ordinary day into an extraordinary one. Millions of people travel every year on interstate highways from Los Angeles to Las Vegas. Thousands of those people choose to take the road less traveled through what many have referred to as the "Lonesome Triangle." Bordered by I-15 on the north and I-40 on the south, Barstow at its apex and the Nevada state line at its base, this rough triangle of land is the third-largest unit of the National Park System in the contiguous United States.

For those who have ventured to cross this high desert, seeking no more than a shortcut, many have come away with the sense of an unexpected joy. I know that was the case for me when I began work here last fall.

As a ranger in Yellowstone, Glacier and Yosemite, my passion has always been for those mountainous parks, dense with forests and glacial lakes, vast with meadows and high-alpine tundra, rich with waterfalls and wildlife. So to come to the desert, a 6,8 million acres of dry, desolate, barren land (or so I thought), was somewhat disheartening. But it wasn't long before my preconceptions of this high desert landscape were proven wrong.

The first sunrise breaking over a horizon delineated by 6,000-foot-high ranges caught my breath, the first sunset unobscured for hundreds of miles stopped me short; the night sky open in a full dome for the eye to see in every cardinal direction left me speechless. Water, though scarce, was not absent. Over 250 springs and seeps give evidence of an extensive system of perched aquifers just beneath the surface. Snow falls on a land whose elevation rises from 900 to nearly 8,000 feet. With a total of 8 to 10 inches of precipitation yearly, water is not non-existent, but definitely precious.

Life can be harsh and competitive as species vie for meager resources, and in that I began to see a tenacity and resiliency in the life of this desert. Its allure and grandeur may not be like that of Yosemite or Yellowstone, but it’s difficult to explain the pureness of silence only the desert can afford, and the subtle beauty that one finds only by taking the time to explore and immerse oneself in this place.

Mojave is unique in both its natural topography and its cultural diversity. Where the two meet is the desert itself. Mojave, in the middle of the “Lonesome Triangle,” is in large part because of the presence of that incredibly valuable resource: water. Nearby springs at the base of the Providence Mountains provided the water necessary to power the Union Pacific's steam locomotives. En route from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City, those "iron horses" encountered the Cima grade. This 2.2 percent slope required the aid of helper engines and led the construction of the roadbed for the Union Pacific's steam locomotives. En route from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City, these "iron horses" encountered the Cima grade. This 2.2 percent slope required the aid of helper engines and led to the construction of the roadbed for the Union Pacific's steam locomotives.

The distant blare of the horn, the roar of the engine, and the vibration of the windows announce the approach of a Union Pacific diesel train. The rhythmic clunks of the cars over the tracks, the squeaking of brakes, and then silence - a pure, complete silence that makes one strain to hear even the faintest sound. That silence broken by the roar of those locomotives may seem like an awful contradiction, yet both come together to tell the story of an oasis in the barren desert that really isn’t all that barren. It’s a place where you may find joy in the unexpected.

Jennifer Morrell
Park Ranger

3-Preserving the Past
Wind whistled through the warped and weathered walls, sunlight streamed down through broken roof shingles and cracked wallboard. The remains of an earlier era were nearly lost. Find out how Mojave National Preserve is carefully piecing together bits of high desert culture by restoring the structures where history was made.

4-Mojave by Car
Just getting around Mojave National Preserve can be a trial for some. But it need not be. Plan ahead and prioritize; familiarize yourself with Mojave’s paved and dirt roads and the major sites to see along the way. And remember – you won’t see it all in one day (but you can always come back)...

6-Chukar Hunting
“An experienced chukar hunter thinks about chukar country the same way a high-time pilot thinks about flight. He will love it, be drawn to it, hate to leave it, spend every possible minute in it – but…”

With 40 years of hunting experience, Pat Wray writes of the unique perspective in pursuing this bird. With 40 years of hunting experience, Pat Wray writes of the unique perspective in pursuing this bird.

Welcome to Mojave!
As the superintendent of Mojave National Preserve, I want to extend my personal welcome to you and my hope that your visit to this special place will be rewarding. Cooler temperatures make fall and winter a wonderful time to visit the Mojave Desert, and the season’s softening light offers a bolder, warmer palate for desert photographers, some of whose work can be viewed in the Desert Light Art Gallery.

Mojave’s landscape varies tremendously as you travel around the preserve, and I encourage you to take short walks in various areas. There is a lot to see and experience. Inside this guide you’ll find information on how to visit the Kelso Dunes, Cinder Cones and lava beds, and the Joshua tree woodland on Cima Dome. On the east side of the park, campgrounds, hiking trails, and cave tours are all available for those who have more time to explore.

Over 1,800 miles of dirt roads await desert explorers in street-legal vehicles, providing access to old mining sites, springs, and roadside campsites. Some routes require high-clearance vehicles, and road conditions change rapidly during rainy weather, so check with a ranger before heading out.

If you would like to learn more about what to see and do, talk to the rangers at the Kelso Depot Visitor Center or the Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center, visit our website, or call the headquarters information desk. Mojave staff are eager to chat with you about your visit and share their excitement and knowledge of the area. In fact, in our spring visitor survey, they achieved a 98% good or excellent visitor satisfaction rate. We look forward to meeting you!

Dennis Schramm
Superintendent
Essential Information

Dates and Hours of Operation
The preserve is always open. Information centers maintain regular hours of operation.

Fees and Reservations
There are no entrance fees. See page 7 for information about campground reservations and fees.

Information Centers
Three information centers provide orientation, information, and trip-planning advice.

Kello Depot Visitor Center
Located 34 miles south of Baker, Calif., on Kelbaker Road. Open daily, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center
Located 20 miles north of I-40 on Essex and Black Canyon roads. Winter hours (Mid-October–April): open daily, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Summer hours (May–September): open daily, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Headquarters Information Center
Located at 2701 Barstow Road, Barstow, Calif. Open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Food: The Beanyary at Kelso
The lunch room concession offers hot & cold beverages, hot dogs, chili, salads, sandwiches, es, snacks, and desserts. Located at Kelso Depot Visitor Center. Open daily from 9 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Water
Drinking water is available only at Kelso Depot Visitor Center. Hole-in-the-Wall (HITW) Information Center, and the following campgrounds: HITW, Black Canyon, Mid-Hills, and Providence Mountains State Recreation Area.

Gasoline
There are no gasoline stations within Mojave National Preserve. Gasoline can be purchased along I-40 at Needles, Fenner, Ludlow, and Barstow, Calif., along I-15 at Baker, the Cima Road exit, and Primm, Nev., and along U.S. 95 at Searchlight, and the 163 junction at Palm Gardens, Nev.

Lodging
There are no motels in Mojave National Preserve. Lodging is available in Barstow, Baker, Nipton, Ludlow, and Needles, Calif., and in Primm, Cal Nv Ari, and Searchlight, Nev.

Bicycles
Bicycles are allowed in parking areas, on paved roads, and on existing open dirt roads. Bicycles are not allowed in wilderness areas, on hiking trails, or for cross-country travel.

Pets
Pets are welcome in Mojave National Preserve, though they are not allowed inside information centers. They must be leashed and never left unattended. Dogs used during hunting activities must be under the owner’s control at all times. Please collect and dispose of pet waste in garbage receptacles.

Collecting and Vandalism
Disturbing, defacing, or collecting plants, animals, rocks, historic or archeological objects is prohibited. Leave these resources as you find them for everyone to enjoy. Metal detectors are not allowed.

Permits
Permits are required for all organized events, group events (more than 15 individuals or seven vehicles), and commercial activities, such as filming. Fees apply. Proof of insurance and posting of a bond may also be required, call 760-252-6107 or visit www.nps.gov/moja for more information.

Hunting
Hunting is permitted in accordance with state regulations. All hunting activities require a license; requirements for additional permits and tags might apply. Visit the California Department of Fish & Game website at www.dfg.ca.gov for more information.

Target shooting or “pinking” is prohibited. Firearms use and transport within the preserve must be in accordance with state and federal law. No shooting is permitted within a ½-mile of developed areas, including campgrounds, information centers, Kelso Dunes, Fort Piute, Sweeney Granite Mountains Desert Research Center, and Desert Studies Center at Zzyzx.

New Firearms Law
On February 22, 2010, people who can legally possess firearms under federal, state of California, and local laws, are allowed to possess firearms in Mojave National Preserve. It is the visitor’s responsibility to understand and comply with all applicable state, local, and federal firearms laws.

Private Property
Private holdings are found throughout the preserve. Please respect the rights of our neighbors. It is your responsibility to obtain permission before entering private property, including to hunt or hike.

Cattle and Fences
Most grazing within Mojave National Preserve occurs on public land. This land is open to you to explore, but please don’t disturb cattle, fences, or water tanks. Leave gates as you find them.

Firewood and Campfires
Wood is scarce in the desert. Cutting or collecting any wood, including downed wood, is prohibited. All firewood, including kindling, must be brought in. Campfires are allowed in fire rings and other established sites. To minimize your impact, use a firepan and pack out the ashes. Please do not leave fires smoldering or unattended.

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Vanishing Treasures - Hilltop House Restoration

"THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS DEDICATED TO CONSERVING unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations."

In the 1990s, a grassroots initiative was started to address the deterioration of prehistoric and historic sites in our National Parks. The “Vanishing Treasures Initiative” aims at achieving this goal in three specific ways: through documentation, repair, and training of craftsmen. The National Park Service identified parks which were deemed "in danger" in terms of losing valuable cultural resources. Of the three listed in California and Nevada, Mojave National Preserve was one. The question becomes, what is it that’s in danger?

Cultural resources are defined as those historic items that exist in our parks as physical evidence of the existence or passage of mankind on the landscape. These include 10,000-year-old artifacts representing hunting or seed processing or perhaps something as recent as 50-year-old mining cabins. Regardless of age, all of these “human remains on the landscape reflect the history of mankind’s culture as it has existed in different areas of the world.

Our national parks are here to preserve those vital historic records for future generations as witnesses to the hardy nature of our species. One example of this preservation effort can be found here in Mojave National Preserve and dates to circa 1910, an era of rampant prospecting and mining efforts throughout the Mojave Desert Region.

The Bighorn Mine operator and the primary investors, Herbert and Anna von Wagenheim, were living at the mine to keep watch over their interests. The Bighorn Mine operation was one of the customers to whom the historic 7IL Ranch cattle operation (under the proprietorship of Mark and Mary Pettit at the time) delivered beef.

When Lt. Drum focused on controlling the reliable springs at both fortifications, but the Piutes became bolder in trying to thwart white incursions through their territory. The remnants of a small redoubt are still visible today at the remote site.

Late in 1867, the soldiers on duty found themselves surrounded during a 24-hour siege by Piutes holding higher ground. If not for a dawn patrol returning to Arizona from Fort Soda Springs to the west, the tiny command would doubtless have been overrun.

After Lt. Drum’s frontier service at Camp Rock Spring and the 30 years that he served in the 19th-century Old Army, he had advanced to the rank of Captain. By 1898 he found himself campaigning alongside Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt’s volunteer regiment of Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War. It was in the assault of San Juan Heights where, standing on a rock exposed to enemy fire, Capt. Drum delivered a final order to his men: “Ready, aim, fire!” as a sniper bullet pierced his heart.

The “Hilltop House” is known to have been a gathering place for local miners, ranchers, and homesteaders for holidays and other celebrations. The structure collapsed in high winds during the fall of 2008, and preserve maintenance staff are now in the process of putting the building back up. Their purpose is to reestablish its presence on the landscape and the work that’s been put in to restore it by leaving it as you found it. Thank you and enjoy a bit of our history – yours and mine.


Dave Nichols
Archaeologist

Herbert and Anna von Wagenheim

Hidden Hills Mining District

Kelso Schoolhouse

The one-room schoolhouse on the edge of town was built in 1924, along with the new Kelso Depot. The school served as the center of education through Kelso’s World War II boom years and then, like the town, grew silent. Now, in 2010, park service restoration crews are working to restore this bit of Kelso history.

Kelso Schoolhouse - 2010

Preserve Projects for 2010/2011

The Kousch House

Nestled in a forested alcove of Caruthers Canyon, the residence often referred to as the Leja cabin, was originally built by John A. Kousch and has been home to several families over the decades. Once abandoned, the residence slowly fell into disrepair. In 2010, a restoration crew from Point Reyes National Seashore, cleaned, sanitized and stabilized the cabin and grounds.

The Kousch House - 1941

Kelso Schoolhouse

John Drum

Mojave National Preserve 3
Avenues to Adventure

Mojave National Preserve is vast. At 1.6 million acres, it is the third-largest unit of the National Park System in the contiguous United States. Some of Mojave’s wild and historic splendor can be seen from the primary roads of the preserve (see map on page 8), while even more awaits those who travel its trails and unmaintained roads.

Black Canyon Road
Black Canyon Road (unpaved north of Hole-in-the-Wall) connects Cedar Canyon Road with Essex Road, 20 miles to the south.

Mid Hills
Campground, trailhead, vault toilets, water. Not recommended for RVs.
About 2 miles west of Black Canyon Road at the north end of and of Wild Horse Canyon Road, Mid Hills supports pinyon-juniper woodland habitat. The effects of a fire that swept through the area in June 2005 are evident, although several campsites in the popular campground still contain shady stands of pinyon pine and juniper.

Cedar Canyon Road
Mostly unpaved, the 20-mile Cedar Canyon Road connects Kelso Cima Road in the west with Ivanpah Road in the east, paralleling (and sometimes joining) the historic Mojave Road.

Rock Spring
Wayside exhibits, no services.
A well-known watering hole for early travelers, Rock Spring is located 5.2 miles east of Black Canyon Road on Cedar Canyon Road, then 1/4 mile south on a sandy road marked with a small hiking sign. Camp Rock Spring, a military redoubt established in 1866, was one of the most isolated and formidable army posts in the West.

Sand & Mud Driving Tips
• Be sure to carry plenty of drinking water and emergency supplies.
• Engage four-wheel drive before entering deep sand or mud.
• Don’t gun the engine—this will spin the tires, dig you in deeper and could bury your vehicle to the frame. Smooth, easy power is better than too much power; try it for yourself—run down a steep slope. Try it for yourself—run down a steep slope. Try it for yourself—run down a steep slope. Try it for yourself—run down a steep slope.
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• When you get stuck, stay put. A stationary, stranded vehicle is much easier to locate than a person traveling on foot. Avoid dangerous activities during the heat of the day, stay in the shade of your vehicle.

Cima Road
About 26 miles east of Baker, the paved Cima Road connects I-15 with Cima, Calif., 16 miles to the southeast.

Cima Dome & Joshua Tree Forest
Self-guiding trail, no water.
The near-perfect symmetry of Cima Dome rises 1,500 feet above the surrounding desert and provides ideal habitat for the world’s largest concentration of Joshua trees. Although the top of the dome is located west of Cima Road near the Teutonia Peak Trailhead, this unusual geological feature is best seen from a distance. Try the view looking northwest from Cedar Canyon Road, 2.5 miles east of Kelso Cima Road.

Clark Mountain
No signs or services.
The only portion of Mojave National Preserve north of I-15, Clark Mountain, is also its highest point at 7,920 feet. A recent white line groove near the top is one of only three in the Mojave Desert. Check detailed maps or ask a ranger for access information—High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended.

Ivanpah & Lanfair Roads
Eleven miles south of Prim, Nev., Nipton Road begins at I-15 and passes through Nipton, Calif., 11 miles east. Ivanpah Road (only the north-ernmost miles paved) heads southeast of Nipton Road, through the Ivanpah and Lanfair valleys, eventually connecting with the paved Lanfair Road and the Fenner Valley. Together stretching 46 miles, Ivanpah and Lanfair Roads connect the northern preserve boundary (bordering Nipton Road) with the southern near Goffs, Calif.

Caruthers Canyon
Primitive camping, hiking, no signs or services.
About 5.5 miles west of Ivanpah Road on New York Mountain Roads, then 2 miles north on an unsigned road, Caruthers Canyon is located in the rugged New York Mountains. Surrounded by mountains rising over 7,500 feet, a botanical “island” of chaparral plants remains from wetter times of the past. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended.

Lanfair Valley
No signs or services.
South of the New York Mountains along Ivan- pah and Lanfair roads, this high valley shelters an impressive Joshua tree forest and was an early ranching and homesteading center. From 1893 until 1923, the Nevada Southern Railway ran up the valley from Goffs, providing services to homesteaders and ranchers in the valley and to miners in the mountains beyond. While little evidentiary remains of homesteads that once dotted the valley, tracts of private property still exist. Please respect the rights of landowners.

Wild Horse Canyon Road will take you on a ten-mile scenic drive around Gold Valley

Kelber Road
A 56-mile paved road stretching from I-15 at Baker, Calif. in the north to I-40 east of Ludlow, Calif. in the south, Kelber Road winds past cinder cones, lava flows, Kelso Depot, Kelso Dunes and the Granite Mountains.

Cinder Cones & Lava Flows
No signs or services.
About 14 miles southeast of Baker, Kelber Road traverses a 25,600-acre area of lava flows and volcanic cinder cones thought to range in age from 10,000 to 7 million years old. In 1973, the area was designated as Cinder Cones Na- tional Landmark due to its scenic beauty and exceptional geological value. Aiken Mine Road (19 miles southeast of Baker, Calif.) offers an interesting side trip through the heart of the area and access to a lava tube. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended.

Kelso Depot Visitor Center
Information, three floors of exhibits, orienta- tion film, art gallery, bookstore, lunch counter, restrooms, water, and picnic area.
Located 34 miles southeast of Baker, Kelso De- pot began operation in 1924 and served as train station, restaurant and employee housing on the Los Angeles and Salt Lake line of the Union Pacific Railroad. Now Mojave National Preserve’s principal information center and museum, ex- tensive exhibits describe the cultural and natural history of the preserve. Historically furnished rooms offer a glimpse into Kelso’s past.

Kelso Dunes
Self-guiding trail, vault toilets, no water.
About 41 miles southeast of Baker (7 miles south of Kelso Depot), then 3 miles west on a graded dirt road, Kelso Dunes were created by winds carrying sand grains from the drier Soda Lake and Mojave River sink located to the northwest. The Providence and Granite moun- tains served as barriers that trapped the blowing sand. Created over the course of 25,000 years, the dunes are nearly 700 feet high and cover a 45-square-mile area. The Kelso Dunes produce a “booming” or “singing” sound when sand with the right moisture content slides down the steep slopes. Try it for yourself—run down a dune slope (but don’t trample vegetation!) to initiate the sound.

Granite Mountains
No signs or services.
An imposing jumble of granite marks the south entrance to the preserve, 50 miles southeast of Baker on Kelber Road. Portions of the Granite Mountains lie within the University of Califor- nia Desert Research Center; please respect the signs that mark the boundary. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended.

Dirt Road Driving
Prepare Your Vehicle
Email 24 hours in advance in good condi- tion: tires, oil, and gas purchase.
For emergencies, carry tools, tire jack, tow rope, extra water, and fluids for your vehicle.

Know the Rules of the Road
All vehicles operating within Mojave National Preserve must be street-legal in accordance with California DMV require- ments, including current registration and tags, lights and turn signals, and valid insurance. California “Green Sticker” and “Red Sticker” programs are not recog- nized within the preserve.

Diff-pavement travel is allowed only on existing open dirt roads. Do not travel cross-country or create new routes. This rule is strictly enforced; violators will receive citations. Driving in washes is not permitted. Watch for and respect Wilderness Boundary signs; motorized vehicles and bicycles are not allowed in designated Wilderness Areas.

Check Road Conditions
Road conditions vary widely. Dirt roads might be rough, sandy or muddy, render- ing impassable, and the unpaved motorist could be trapped many miles from help. Watch for cattle, burros and other wildlife on roadways. Not all roads are shown on all maps, trails and illegal shortcuts add to the confusion. Carry a good map, and ask a park ranger for current road conditions.

Piute Spring
Trail, wayside exhibits, no signs or services.
Willetts, cottonwoods, and rushes thrive along a half-mile section of Piute Creek. Fort Piute (still visible) was one in a string of military outposts built along the Mojave Road. Please don’t climb on the foundations or remove anything.

Zzyzx Road
Six miles southwest of Baker on I-15, Zzyzx Road leads 5 miles south into the preserve along the western shore of Soda Dry Lake.

Zzyzx/Soda Springs
Self-guiding trail, wayside exhibits, vault toilets, non-potable water, picnic area. Historically known as Zzyzx and later renamed Zzyzx/Soda Springs, this oasis is home to the California State University Desert Studies Center. The buildings and pond were developed in the 1940s by Curtis Springer, who operated a health resort at Zzyzx. The pond is open to the public—stroll around Lake Tsuande and along the shore of Soda Dry Lake. Please do not disturb participants when classes are in session.

Exploring Mojave
The setting sun shines warm shadows on the sands of 700-foot-high Kelso Dunes.
Hiking

Although there are few established hiking trails in Mojave National Preserve, abandoned dirt roads, washes, and ridge lines offer an abundance of cross-country hiking opportunities. All trails and routes listed below are shown on the National Geographic Trails Illustrated topographic map for Mojave National Preserve. This and other maps are available for purchase at all information centers (see page 2 for locations and other information).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Trailhead location</th>
<th>Total Distance</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Rings Loop Trail</td>
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<td>Quiet basin, Granite Outcroppings</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Panoramic Views, Singing Sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber Peak Loop Trail</td>
<td>6 miles (9.6 km)</td>
<td>3.5 hours</td>
<td>Volcanic Cliffs, Evidence of Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Hills to Hole-in-the-Wall Trail</td>
<td>8 miles one-way (12.8 km)</td>
<td>4.5 hours</td>
<td>Evidence of Fire, Canyon, Solitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quail Basin Trail</td>
<td>6.5 miles (10.4 km)</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Quiet basin, Granite Outcroppings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelso Dunes Trail</td>
<td>3 miles (4.8 km)</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Panoramic Views, Singing Sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber Peak Loop Trail</td>
<td>6 miles (9.6 km)</td>
<td>3.5 hours</td>
<td>Volcanic Cliffs, Evidence of Fire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Distance**
- 1 mile (1.6 km)
- 45 minutes
- Petroglyphs, Banshee Canyon

**Description**
- Discover how Hole-in-the-Wall got its name and ascend narrow Banshee Canyon with the help of metal rings mounted in the rock. Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center parking area, 20 miles north of I-40 on Essex and Black Canyon Roads.

**Highlights**
- Petroglyphs

**Trailhead Location**
- Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center parking area, 20 miles north of I-40 on Essex and Black Canyon Roads.

**Distance**
- 8 miles one-way (12.8 km)

**Access**
- Self-guided, 4.5 hours
- Evidence of Fire, Canyon, Solitude

**Conditions**
- Barren valleys with sparse vegetation

**Notes**
- Watch for trail markers
- Hikers at sunset and sunrise are treated to both cooler temperatures and the rose-colored glow of the dunes.

**Camping**
- None

**Information**
- For reservations and information, call 760-928-2586.

Mojave National Preserve

**Mitchell Caverns:** A State Park within a National Preserve

**Location:** 11 miles north of I-40 on Kelbaker rd. north of Cima Dome and beyond.

**Highlights:**
- Fascinating formations
- Extensive network of chambers
- Beautiful stalactites and stalagmites

**Trailhead Location:** Mitchell Caverns:
- A State Park within a National Preserve
- 11/2-mile walk and lasts about 1 1/2 hours. The temperature inside the cave is a comfortable 65°F.

**Guided Tours:**
- Available for groups of 10 or more and must be made by calling at least 3 weeks in advance.

**Information:**
- For reservations and information, call 760-928-2586.

**Access:**
- Guided tours of Mitchell Caverns require a 1 1/2-mile walk and last about 1 1/2 hours. The temperature inside the cave is a comfortable 65°F.

**Guided Tours:**
- Available for groups of 10 or more and must be made by calling at least 3 weeks in advance.

**Information:**
- For reservations and information, call 760-928-2586.
Hunting in Mojave National Preserve

Hunting is authorized in 69 national parklands, including Mojave National Preserve. Here, the National Park Service (NPS) continues to provide a unique experience and support for an important American heritage and cultural value.

The hunting season for the Preserve is September 1 to January 31 (except through the first Sunday in February for big horn sheep). Commonly hunted game species include mule deer, quail, chukar, rabbits, big horn sheep and mule deer. Nongame species are also hunted within the Preserve.

Have a safe, enjoyable, and lawful hunt: familiarize yourself with applicable NPS and California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG) regulations and San Bernardino County ordinances. A current copy of hunting regulations is indispensable, and is available online at www.dfg.ca.gov/regulations or by calling 916-653-4899.

YOUTH Qual & Chukkar Hunt
October 22–23 at Hole-in-the-Wall
For more information contact wildlife biologist, Neal Darby, at 760-252-6146.

A Chukar Hunter’s Perspective

The land where chukars are found is big country. And you may never be able to see so far or so much as when you are chukar hunting.

If you keep at it long enough, chukar hunting changes your perspective on a couple of levels. On the macro level you stop seeing chukar country as a harsh, unforgiving, dangerous place and begin to see it as a beautiful and productive land. You begin to appreciate the variety and diversity introduced at every spring, under every tree, in every dry streambed. After hundreds of hours spent prowling around the high desert, you’ll begin to understand a little bit about how this incredible ecosystem functions. You’ll see the interactions between the critters that live there. You’ll experience some of the potential weather patterns. You’ll want to learn more. You’ll read, you’ll ask questions, you’ll start arranging your schedule to spend more and more time hunting chukars and just poking around in that dry country.

One day, without knowing how it happened, you’ll realize how much you’ve come to love the high desert. At some point shortly thereafter, you’ll begin to feel it loves you, too.

You will be wrong.

That’s when chukar hunting starts getting risky. Because the high desert is harsh, unforgiving, dangerous - a tough place to stay alive in when things go wrong. The inexperienced chukar hunter enjoying his new love affair with the desert is in the same situation as the new pilot whose 500 flight hours and sense of competence and complacency blind him to the risks he just doesn’t recognize yet. An experienced chukar hunter thinks about chukar country the same way a high-time pilot thinks about flight. He will love it, be drawn to it, hate to leave it, spend every possible minute in it - but he’ll never forget that mistakes have a higher price tag in the high desert realm, that it will kill him if given the chance.

On the micro level, chukar hunters learn to notice and understand the very small things that most people never see. You’ll learn to look beneath the sagebrush, bitterbrush and cheatgrass to find bird tracks on the dirt between the rocks. You’ll learn to distinguish their tracks from the tracks of other critters that live there. You’ll learn to recognize the rocks where their lookout perches from the buildup of droppings, and you’ll find the rocky bowls that catch rainwater where they drink during the day. You’ll find feathers where a chukar made a mistake and a hawk made a kill. You’ll find tracks you won’t recognize until the day you watch an animal making those same tracks. Gradually, you will open the book the high desert offers and turn its pages slowly. You’ll find shed mule deer antlers, rodent tracks in the dirt, badger dens, occasional obsidian flakes or even Indian arrowheads and other tools. You’ll find rattlesnake skins and mountain lion scat.

After you’ve paid your dues, after hundreds of muscle cramps, frozen eyelashes, blisters, windburned cheeks, sunburned ears, fingers so cold they won’t bend and lips so cracked they can’t smile, after days when you’d trade your shotgun for a library card and your dog for a goldfish, you’ll look out one day over a landscape that opens itself only to those people who love it and realize you are one of them. You’ll hear that rhythmic chuk ... chuk ... chukkerrr from the birds you pursue. Rookie chukar hunters consider it mocking laughter, but you’ll know better. You’ll know they’re talking to you, telling you: Hurry back, hurry back - bring it on. That sound, that invitation, that challenge, helps you put the entire experience in perspective.

A chukar hunter’s perspective.

Excerpts from Pat Wray’s book, “A Chukar Hunter’s Companion”

Pat Wray is a fulltime freelance writer and book author living in Corvallis, Oregon with his wife, Debbie, and three hunting dogs. For more information on Mr. Wray or his book, go to http://patwray.com

Park Ranger Programs

Kelso Depot Tours - Kelso Depot
Monday-Friday @ 11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.
(year-round)

Kelso Dunes Walk - Kelso Dunes Trailhead
Saturdays @ 11:00 a.m.
(October-April)

Petroglyhs: Rocks that Talk - Hole-in-the-Wall
Saturdays @ 3:00 p.m.
(October-April)

Someplace Special - Hole-in-the-Wall Amphitheater
Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.
(October-April)

Geology Talk - Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center
Sundays @ 9:00 a.m.
(October-April)

Mojave National Preserve provides range after range of high desert vegetation and topography that serve as home for Chukar and other wildlife.
Camping & Backcountry Travel

Backcountry Guidelines & Regulations

Backcountry travel and camping—backpacking, dispersed camping, and horsepacking—require careful planning in order to ensure a safe and rewarding experience. Visitors should adhere to National Park Service regulations and are further encouraged to follow Leave No Trace guidelines to minimize their impact on the fragile desert environment. Additional regulations apply for roadside camping (see below) and horsepacking (talk with a park ranger or visit us online for more information: www.nps.gov/moja).

Leave No Trace principles are rooted in scientific studies and common sense. The message is framed under seven Leave No Trace principles presented below with accompanying regulations and guidelines specific to Mojave National Preserve:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
   - There is no permit or registration system for backcountry camping at Mojave National Preserve; be sure to notify others of your travel itinerary.
   - Few established trails exist; carry a good map and familiarize yourself with desert travel and survival skills before beginning your trip.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
   - Reuse existing campsites (required for dispersed camping—see below).
   - Do not make camp in a dry wash—flash floods develop quickly in the desert.
   - Camping is limited to a maximum of 14 consecutive days per visitation and 30 total days per year.
   - Campsites must be more than 200 yards from any water source.
   - Camping is not permitted: within 1/4 mile of any paved road; within 1/2 mile of Fort Piute or Kelso Depot; within 1 mile north of the Kelso Dunes (i.e., the crest of the dunes) or 1/4 mile south of the Kelso Dunes access road. (Exceptions might apply for dispersed camping—see below.)

3. Dispose of Waste Properly
   - Store all food and garbage in a manner that will prevent access by wildlife. Carry plastic bags and pack out all trash.
   - Pack out all toilet paper and hygiene products.
   - Pet excrement must be collected and disposed of in garbage receptacles.

4. Leave What You Find
   - Disturbing, defacing, or collecting plants, animals, rocks, and historic or archaeological objects is prohibited. As part of our national heritage, these resources should be left as they are found for all to enjoy. Metal detectors are not allowed.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
   - Campfires are allowed in established fire rings only, or with use of a portable firepan (be sure to pack out ashes). Do not leave fires unattended.
   - Cutting or collecting any wood, including downed wood, is prohibited. All woodfuel must be brought into the preserve.

6. Respect Wildlife

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

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Campsites

Near Kelbaker Road:
- Rainy Day Mine Site: 15.2 miles southeast of Baker on Kelbaker Road, then 0.3 miles northeast on the unsigned and very sandy road to the Rainy Day Mine. Four-wheel drive recommended; no RVs.
- Granite Pass: 6.1 miles north of I-40 on Kelbaker Road, just north of Granite Pass, then west on one of several access roads. Campsites are located just north of the granite spires. High clearance vehicle recommended; no RVs.
- Kelso Dunes Mine: 4 miles west of Kelbaker Road on the unpaved Kelso Dunes Road. One campsite is located south of the road, ½ mile past the marked trailhead. Several others are available ¼ mile beyond, near a clump of trees. Except at these sites, roadside camping is prohibited along Kelso Dunes Road (including at the trailhead).

Near Cima Road:
- Sunrise Rock: 12 miles south of I-15 on the east side of Cima Road. Trailhead for Tuletona Peak Trail is nearby on the west side of Cima Road.
- Black Canyon Road (East): 4 miles south of Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center on the east side of Black Canyon Road, above a wash and near a hill with views of the Providence Mountains. Another site is located about 4 miles further south, near rock piles.
- Ivanpah and Cedar Canyon Roads: Caruthers Canyon: 5.5 miles west of Ivanpah Road on New York Mountains Road, then 1.5 to 2.7 miles north to campsite. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended; no RVs.

Near Kelbaker Road:
- Rainy Day Mine Site: 15.2 miles southeast of Baker on Kelbaker Road, then 0.3 miles northeast on the unsigned and very sandy road to the Rainy Day Mine. Four-wheel drive recommended; no RVs.
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- Ivanpah and Cedar Canyon Roads: Caruthers Canyon: 5.5 miles west of Ivanpah Road on New York Mountains Road, then 1.5 to 2.7 miles north to campsite. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended; no RVs.

Roadside Camping (refers to designated sites near paved, graded, and two-track roads)

Roadside camping is permitted in areas that have been traditionally used for this purpose. By reusing existing sites, you help protect the desert from further damage. Sites with existing rock fire rings should be considered disturbed and suitable for roadside camping. Do not camp along paved roads or in day-use areas, and stay at least 200 yards from all water sources. The National Park Service encourages roadside campers to use the following, selected sites:

Hole-in-the-Wall Campground

FACILITIES: pit toilets, trash receptacles, potable water, fire rings, picnic tables, dump station; no utility hookups.

FEES: $12 per site per night; $6 for America the Beautiful Senior/Access Pass holders.

Reserved: not accepted; campsites available on a first-come, first-served basis. At 4,400 feet in elevation, Hole-in-the-Wall Campground is surrounded by sculpted volcanic rock walls and makes a great base camp for hikers (see p.5) and for exploring nearby Mitchell Caverns in the Providence Mountains State Recreation Area. Thirty-five campsites accommodate RVs and tents; two walk-in sites are also available.

Mid Hills Campground

FACILITIES: pit toilets, trash receptacles, potable water, fire rings, picnic tables; no utility hookups.

FEES: $12 per site per night; $6 for America the Beautiful Senior/Access Pass holders.

Reserved: not accepted; campsites available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Hackberry Fire swept through the Mid Hills area in June 2005, burning much of the vegetation; however, about half of the 26 campsites were left unburned and remain surrounded by pinion pine and juniper trees. At 5,600 feet in elevation, Mid Hills is much cooler than the desert floor below. The access road is unpaved and is not recommended for motorhomes or trailers.

Black Canyon Equestrian & Group Campground

FACILITIES: corral, pit toilets, trash receptacles, potable water, fire ring, grill, picnic shelter with tables.

FEES: $35 per group per night.

Reserved: required; call 760-928-2572 or 760-252-6104. Located across the road from Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center. Horses and riders are welcome at Mojave National Preserve! Permits required for large groups (see p.2 for permit information).

Nearby Camping Areas

Providence Mountains State Recreation Area (Mitchell Caverns)

16 miles north of I-40 on Essex Road, has six campsites with tables and fire rings available on a first-come basis for $25 per night. See page 5 for more information.

Afton Canyon

25 miles southwest of Baker on I-15, has a BLM campground with tables and fire rings for $6 per night.

Mojave Desert Outpost -

This privately owned campground offers basic dry camping to large or small groups by reservation only.

Nearby Camping Areas

Near Black Canyon Road:
- Black Canyon Road (East): 4 miles south of Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center on the east side of Black Canyon Road, above a wash and near a hill with views of the Providence Mountains. Another site is located about 4 miles further south, near rock piles.
- Ivanpah and Cedar Canyon Roads: Caruthers Canyon: 5.5 miles west of Ivanpah Road on New York Mountains Road, then 1.5 to 2.7 miles north to campsite. High clearance and four-wheel drive recommended; no RVs.

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