RV & Travel Trailers
Parking at Oregon Caves is limited and it is very difficult for visitors with RV or travel trailers to find a parking space. The road to the monument is narrow with many curves and not easy driving for RV-size vehicles. If you are towing a travel trailer, you can disconnect and leave your trailer at the Illinois Valley Visitor Center in Cave Junction (see map on page 4). RVers can leave their RV in the same location and drive towed vehicles to the Monument.

PARK REGULATIONS
1. Do Not Feed Wildlife
2. Stay on marked trails.
3. Pets are not permitted on trails. Pets must be attended and must be kept on a leash at all times.
4. Camping and fires are not permitted on the Monument.
5. Smoking is not permitted on any of the trails.
6. Hunting, trapping, and/or the possession of weapons or firearms is prohibited.

Lost and Found
Lost and found items should be reported to the National Park Service at the Information Station or office building located adjacent to the main parking lot (see map below).

Winter Travel
The final eight miles of Highway 46 may be covered with snow or ice from November to April. When these conditions exist, tire chains are advised. The monument's developed area lies at approximately 4,000 feet and two feet of snow commonly accumulates near the cave entrance. Hiking trails may have patches of ice and should not be used during cold, snowy, or windy weather unless you are well prepared.

Construction Delays
Construction projects on Highway 46 (the road to Oregon Caves) will be in progress through the summer. Expect delays.
Hiking In & Around Oregon Caves

The trails of Oregon Caves National Monument take you through stands of old-growth forest and over the fern covered slopes of the Siskiyou Mountains. The three loop trails that depart from the historic district near the cave entrance are each about one mile in length with minor elevation gains of 200 to 300 feet. Trail guides and activity sheets for each of these loop trails are free to children who want to participate in the monument's Junior Ranger Program (see page 7 for more information).

The only "level" trail on the monument is a segment of the No Name Trail that takes off from the parking lot near the Chateau and goes out into the forest for about a quarter a mile before turning to follow the steep descent of No Name Creek. This level segment of trail offers a pleasant stroll for those who do not want a strenuous hike. A special trail guide for this segment of level trail is available for small children ages 4-5 (see "Chickaree Rangers", page 7 for more information).

The Big Tree Loop is a beautiful trail if you are looking for a more strenuous hike. The trail climbs past one of the largest Douglas fir trees in Oregon to a ridge where it traverses meadows filled with flowers. If you want a more challenging hike, you can continue upward on the Boundary Trail whose junction is found at the top of the Big Tree Loop. This trail climbs to Mount Elijah, approximately 2000 feet above the historic district of Oregon Caves. From here you can follow the ridge to the Mountain Meadows Trail and loop your way back to the Boundary Trail for the descent to Big Tree Loop Trail and the historic district. The Mountain Meadows Trail and Bigelow Lakes can also be accessed by gravel roads. USFS 960 takes off from the lower parking lot of Oregon Caves and traverses the mountains for three miles before it meets USFS 070. Turn right and drive about half a mile to a fork in the road. Turn to the right and park near the junction (the road is washed out about a quarter a mile from the junction, making it difficult to turn around). Follow the road approximately one mile to the Mountain Meadows trailhead. From here, it is a 700 foot gain in elevation to Mt Elijah. Follow the Boundary Trail down and look for a trail on the right that takes you back to USFS 070 and your vehicle.

The region surrounding Oregon Caves National Monument is commonly referred to as the berry capitol of Oregon. Just about any time of the year it is possible to find a wide variety of berries being produced at various elevations. You may see tempting berries as you walk monument trails but keep in mind that there are edible berries and poisonous berries often growing side by side. Below are pictures of two edible favorites (raspberry and huckleberry) and two poisonous varieties (honeysuckle & baneberry).

Do not eat berries you cannot positively identify.

Raspberry: The prickly stems of this plant make it an easy one to identify.

Huckleberry: single fruits with a disk-like opening at the bottom.

Honeysuckle: A close look reveals this to be two berries in one. It contains compounds similar to those found in soap and hence can make you ill but probably won't kill you.

Baneberry: This is a very common plant found along many of the monument's trails. It is deadly poisonous and some reports indicate one or two berries are enough to kill a human.

Vista point on the Cliff Nature Trail above the caves.
CLIFF TRAIL
Length: Total loop distance: 1.0 mile (1.5 km).
Duration: 45 minutes if starting from cave exit. One hour if hiking whole loop.
Elevation gain: 75 ft (22 m) from Cave Exit to top. 300 feet (75 m) from the Chateau to the highest point of trail.

This is an ideal trail to take after the cave tour. The total distance for the cave tour and this trail is one mile with most of the climbing done inside the cave. The trail goes over marble rock outcrops and through a pine forest. Trail-side signs describe some of the natural features seen along the way. Of all the loop trails, this offers the best vistas.

Free Children Activity Guides are available for all three loop trails.

OLD GROWTH TRAIL
Length: Total loop distance: 0.8 mile.
Duration: 30 minutes
Elevation gain: 200 feet (75 m) from Chateau to highest point.

This historic trail route offers a look at spectacular old-growth trees. An ideal route to take from the Chateau to the main parking lot.

NO NAME TRAIL
Length: 1.1 mile (1.75 km)
Duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour
Elevation gain: 250 feet (120 m)

The No Name Trail leads past tumbling mountain streams, mossy cliffs, and dense mixed forests. A good route to take back to the parking lot after a cave tour.

MOUNTAIN MEADOWS TRAIL
Length: 2.5 mile (4 km) loop from jet with USFS 070 to Mt Elijah.
Duration: 3-4 hours
Elevation gain: 700 ft (210 m) from USFS 070 to Mt Elijah.

Trail climbs to a ridge through meadows in a glacially carved basin.

CAVE CREEK TRAIL
Length: 1.5 mile (2.5 km)
Duration: 1 hour
Elevation gain: 800 ft (240 m)

This trail follows Cave Creek through a forest of oaks and conifers.

BOUNDARY TRAIL
Length: 6 miles to Red Buttes Wilderness; 15 mi to Pacific Crest Trail.
Duration: 4 hrs to Red Buttes Wilderness; 10 hrs to Pacific Crest Trail.
Elevation gain: 2,300 feet (690 m) from Chalet to Mt Elijah.

Trail climbs approximately four miles to the top of Mt Elijah then follows ridge tops to the Red Buttes Wilderness.

This is a generalized map of the Oregon Caves region. More detailed maps are recommended for navigating USFS roads.

Oregon Caves National Monument
Points of Interest in Illinois Valley

**Waldo Historic Site**

This historic town site marks the first gold discovery in Oregon made by three sailors in 1852. The town site is located in the wide ravine on the south side of Waldo Road. It once had stores, a hotel, and a roller skating rink.

**Rough & Ready Botanical Area**

The plant communities of Rough & Ready Creek are strongly influenced by serpentine soils. Best parking and access is along Highway 199 on the east side of the Rough & Ready Creek bridge.

**Kerbyville Museum**

Displays on local mining, logging, farming, Native Americans and an 1890's log school house. William & Nannie Naucke House built in 1883 is on register of Historic Places.

**Baby Foot Botanical Area**

18 miles of graded gravel road takes you to this mountain top location. A short hike to Baby Foot Lake is suitable for families with young children.

**Eight Dollar Mountain**

This is one of the most easily accessible serpentine botanical areas in the region. Access to swimming in the Illinois River is found at the bridge about three miles from Highway 199.

**Fort Hay**

Watch for the interpretive sign on the south side of Highway 199 that describes this early pioneer outpost and stage stop between the boom towns of Jacksonville and Waldo.

**Kalmiopsis Wilderness**

Best access is from the Baby Foot Botanical Area where several trails take you into the upper Chetco River drainage. A very geologically and botanically unique area.

**Red Buttes Wilderness**

Named for its red stained crags of serpentine rock, this region offers a diversity of flora associated with this type of rock. The area is most easily accessed from Applegate Lake but can also be accessed by the Boundary Trail from Oregon Caves. The Pacific Crest Trail passes through the southern end of this Wilderness.

**Siskiyou Wilderness**

A geologically unique area composed of ocean crust and glaciated granite peaks. Accessed by graded gravel roads.
The Scenic Route to Oregon Caves

Mile 0.0: Visitor Center
The scenic route begins at the Illinois Valley Visitor Center located one block from Highway 199 (see map to left). Set your odometer to zero as leaving the parking lot.

Mile 1.2: Serpentine Rock
Even in a location of high rainfall, serpentine rock exposures have plant communities reminiscent of areas with low rainfall. Serpentine rock exposures in this region constitute the largest outcrop of this rock type in the United States.

Mile 1.6: Holland Loop Rd
Turn right on Holland Loop Road and continue on tour.

Mile 3.5: Takilma Road
Keep to the LEFT at this fork.

Mile 7.0: Holland
This town was established in 1898 as a supply point for mining operations in the adjacent mountains.

Mile 8.5: Robinson Road
Keep to the LEFT at this fork.

Mile 9.0: Highway 46
Turn RIGHT.

Mile 14.1: Siskiyou National Forest Sign
You will be in Siskiyou National Forest for the rest of the trip to Oregon Caves.

Mile 14.3: Grayback Camp
This Forest Service camp has 32 sites situated next to Sucker Creek. A bridge over the creek goes to an interpretive trail.

Mile 14.6: Historic CCC Camp
The flat area behind the cabin on the left was once the location of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp in the 1930s. Many of the crews assigned here were responsible for the construction of walls in the Historic District of Oregon Caves as well as much of the trail construction that tours follow through Oregon Caves.

Mile 14.7: Interpretive Trail
The gravel road on the right just after the bridge crosses over Sucker Creek to the Grayback Interpretive Trail, located about 300 feet from the road.

Mile 18.6: Cave Creek Camp
The rocks exposed in the road cut (just past the turnoff to the campground) are granites from the Grayback Pluton, a mass of molten rock that intruded into this region over 150 million years ago and contributed to the production of marbleized rock at Oregon Caves. The edge of the pluton can be seen on the right as light colored rocks with vertical striations just as you enter the road cut. Cave Creek Camp has 18 sites situated next to Cave Creek. A two-mile trail goes from the campground to the caves.

Mile 21.0: Lake Creek
This steep walled canyon was carved by melting water from glaciers in peaks about three miles upstream from the bridge. These glaciers carved small basins that are today filled with water of Upper and Lower Bigelow Lakes. Panther Creek can be seen cascading over the canyon wall next to the bridge. Panther Creek originates in Oregon Caves National Monument near Big Tree, the widest Douglas Fir in Oregon.

Mile 22.2: Entrance Sign
This sign is one of the first places where the National Park arrowhead was displayed at an entrance to a National Park.

Mile 22.3: Parking lot and Information Station
Park your vehicle and walk to the Information Station at the parking lot of Oregon Caves National Monument who can help you.

Historic District (see map on bottom of front page). If in an RV or towing a trailer, please use one of the parking spaces at the lower end of the parking lot. The road shoulder near the entrance sign can be used for parking if lot is full.

Mile 2.8: Fort Briggs
Gold was first discovered in this valley in 1852 and many homesteads were established shortly after. Disputes between Native Americans and emigrants broke out in 1855 and several small “forts” were established as a refuge for settlers. Ten years later, around 1865, Kerby and Waldo were both booming mining towns. Oregon Caves was not discovered until 1874.

Mile 3.2: Sucker Creek
Caves Creek, with headwaters at Oregon Caves, is a tributary of Sucker Creek.

Most of Illinois Valley is devoted to ranching, a heritage that hails to early settlement of this region during the mid to late 1800's. The ocean strongly influences the climate of this region and hence influences the vegetation patterns in and around Oregon Caves. Three vineyards and wineries along this tour route produce wines reflective of this climatic regime.

Ensatina Salamander

Oregon Caves National Monument  Page 5
What is so significant about Oregon Caves National Monument?
The Monument is small but full of big surprises.

1. **FOSSILS**
   Oregon Caves possesses a significant collection of Ice Age fossils consisting of about 15 species of animals including jaguar, bat, bear and rare salamander fossils. In addition to fossils, ancient foot prints of bear and mountain lion have also been found in a remote part of the cave. Fossil discoveries in Oregon Caves may change theories regarding the timing and extent of animal migration across the Bering Land Bridge during the last Ice Age.

2. **WATER**
   The National Monument preserves a pristine watershed in the headwater tributaries of the Illinois River, one of the last major, undammed rivers in the Pacific Northwest whose entire watershed is open to spawning salmon and steelhead. Oregon Caves offers a unique opportunity to follow the watershed into a mountain, to view underground water movement as expressed by ancient cave formations.

3. **GEOLOGY**
   Oregon Caves sits in the Siskiyou Mountains, a range made up of large chunks of ocean crust. The marble outcrops that now contain Oregon Caves began as a limestone reef growing on top of an active volcano in a geologic setting known as a back-arc basin. During the opening of the Atlantic Ocean, the continent was pushed over the reef thus burying it an estimated 12 miles beneath the continent’s edge. The reef has since been uplifted to 4000 feet above sea level. Such a geologic history is unusual for caves.

4. **CAVE LIFE**
   The caves provide habitat and temperatures that support several cave-adapted organisms (troglobites). Several of these creatures are likely relicts of the Ice Age and constitute one of the largest number of endemic cave species (only known from this cave system) in the United States.

5. **OLD-GROWTH**
   Oregon Caves contains an old-growth forest that supports an assemblage of wildlife and flora representative of the ancient Siskiyou Mountains.

6. **BATS**
   A scarce six percent of all caves in the world are suitable for bat hibernation and Oregon Caves is one of them. Natural winds in the cave as well as the cave’s configuration contribute to this suitability.

7. **HISTORY**
   The Oregon Caves Chateau is a National Historic Landmark, a prestigious designation for a historic structure. In addition to this, the entire plaza area is designated a National Historic Site.

8. **Cave adapted life like this centipede are sometimes seen along cave trail.**

9. **Across**
   1. Oregon Caves reef grew on top of an active ___.
   2. Ancient forest.
   3. A National Historic Landmark at Oregon Caves.
   4. An animal dependent on Oregon Caves for hibernation.
   5. Geologic setting where the Oregon Caves reef developed.
   6. Type of spawning fish found in lower Cave Creek.
   7. Animals found only in this cave system.
   8. Oregon Caves is made up of this type of rock.
   9. A factor that makes Oregon Caves suitable for bat hibernation.
   10. Fossils inside the caves are from this time period.
   11. The highest part of a watershed.
   12. Rocks of the Siskiyou Mountains are from an ___.
   13. An animal of the Ice Age no longer in this region.
   14. An animal of the Ice Age that still exists today.

10. **Down**
   1. Oregon Caves reef grew on top of an active ___
   2. Ancient forest.
   3. A National Historic Landmark at Oregon Caves.
   4. An animal dependent on Oregon Caves for hibernation.
   5. Geologic setting where the Oregon Caves reef developed.
   6. Type of spawning fish found in lower Cave Creek.
   7. Cave adapted life.

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**Natural History Association BOOK STORE**

**BOOKS**

This nonprofit organization works with the National Park Service to provide programs of education, interpretation, and research in Oregon Caves National Monument. Donations come from money earned through book & map sales in Natural History Association Bookstores. One outlet is located at Illinois Valley Visitor Center in Cave Junction. A complete list of publications and maps available through the Natural History Association as well as applications for membership and information on member discounts can be obtained by writing to the address below or visiting their website:

Crater Lake Natural History Association
PO Box 157
Crater Lake, OR 97604

http://www.nps.gov/orca/nha/nha-orca.htm

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**MAPS**

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For getting the most out of your visit to Oregon Caves

During summer months, get your visit off to a good start by arriving early to avoid crowds and long waits for tours. It is a 3-4 minute walk from the parking area to the cave entrance. Take all the things you will need before leaving your car behind (jacket, cameras, etc).

If you have children, stop at the Information Station (see map at bottom of first page) to pick up Junior Ranger Activity Books. Most children can finish the required activities in about half an hour. If you are interested in getting out and doing some short hikes with your children, you should also pick up some of the Junior Ranger Trail Activity Guides. The most popular is the Cliff Trail.

Next, purchase your cave tour tickets so you will know when your cave tour will be. Go to the restroom before going on tour (you will be in the cave for 75 minutes).

After the tour, consider taking a hike on the Cliff Trail which starts where the cave tour ends. The total distance for the cave tour and the Cliff Trail is one mile. The trail will take you back to the ticket booth where the cave tour began. If you want more hiking, take the Old Growth Trail or No Name Trail both of which meander through the forest and return you to the main parking area.

Books & Badges are Free to Participants

Complete the Activity Book and get a Badge.

To become a Junior Ranger, follow the instructions on the back cover of the Junior Ranger Activity Book. Take your completed Junior Ranger activity book to the Ranger Office at Oregon Caves and receive a badge that looks just like the ones Rangers wear on their uniforms.

Chickaree Activities for Children too small to go on a cave tour.

4 - 5 Years Old

Activity Book
Trail Guide
Activity Kit

Stop at the Information Station or Illinois Valley Visitor Center for more information.

Children that complete the activity book get a special Junior Ranger badge.

The Chickaree Activity Book is made available by a grant from the Natural History Association

Hike trails and get trail buttons

To get your trail buttons, pick up a Junior Ranger Trail Activity Guide and hike the trail. Do the activities as you hike. Take the finished activity guide to the Ranger Office at Oregon Caves and get a different button for each trail activity you complete.

Junior Ranger Trail Activity Guides are made available by a grant from the Natural History Association

Oregon Caves National Monument Page 7
This map shows the general extent of Oregon Caves. It does not show many of the upper and lower level passageways. Do not use this map to navigate the cave.

Don’t Feed the Animals

To feed one animal is to make another suffer.

Feeding of squirrels and bluejays results in abnormally large populations of these animals. Other wildlife are forced from their homes and die as a consequence of overcrowding.

Keep wildlife wild and healthy.

Oregon Caves National Monument
WEB SITE
http://www.nps.gov/orca/index.html

Information on cave tours, the local region and volunteer positions.

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