



Land of Standing Up Rocks

As you enter Chiricahua National Monument you are climbing up a sky island—an isolated mountain range rising above the surrounding grassland sea. Meadows dotted with cactus and mesquite begin to fill with sycamore, juniper, and oak trees. Farther up are cypress, pine, and fir woodlands. So far the landscape is typical of the basin-and-range topography in this part of the Southwest. It's the rock pinnacles looming over the road like guardians of the forest that announce you're in Chiricahua country.

The Chiricahua Apache called these pinnacles "standing up rocks." Their origins began 27 million years ago when erup-

tions from the Turkey Creek Volcano spewed ash over 1,200 square miles (3,100 square km). These superheated ash particles melted together, forming layers of gray rock called rhyolite. Cooling and subsequent uplifting created joints and cracks in the rhyolite. Eons of weathering by ice wedging and erosion by water enlarged the cracks. Weaker material washed away, leaving behind an endless variety of spires, balanced rocks, and other shapes. This sculpting by the forces of nature continues today. The longer you look, the more alive the formations seem. Many have names; use your imagination to name your own.



Four ecosystems meet in the Chiricahua Mountains. Both Chiricahua National Monument and Mexico's Ajos-Bavispe National Forest Reserve and Wildlife Refuge protect sky island habitat. The two parks have had a working partnership since 1996.

Chiricahua National Monument was established in 1924 to preserve and protect the pinnacles. In 1934 the Civilian Conservation Corps began improving the road and building trails and structures. The park comprises 12,025 acres (4,866 hectares); 84 percent is designated as wilderness. It has trails for everyone—from the short, wheelchair-accessible nature trail at Massai Point to all-day hikes that wind through the formations. An eight-mile scenic drive climbs from the grasslands to the summit at Massai Point, where you get a true sense of being atop a sky island.

Rhyolite formations with Dos Cabezas Mountains in background.
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The Chiricahua Apaches

From the early 1400s southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico have been home to the Chiricahua Apaches (*right*). The Chokonon, one of four main bands, lived in and around the Chiricahua Mountains.

Traditionally they were nomads who hunted large animals and gathered edible plants. Superb warriors whom neighboring tribes feared and respected, the Apaches fiercely resisted colonization beginning in the 1500s, when the Spanish arrived. They quickly learned to handle guns

and horses acquired from the newcomers. Mexican independence in 1821 and encroachment by emigrants and miners led to a pro-

tracted state of war. But not even Cochise and Geronimo's leadership skills could stem the invading tide. In 1886 the Chiricahua

Apaches surrendered and the government eventually relocated them to reservations in Oklahoma and New Mexico.



NPS

Faraway Ranch

The peach and green house in Bonita Canyon (*right*) looks like the door may open any minute, welcoming you for a visit.

Swedish immigrants Neil and Emma Erickson settled here in 1888. By the 1920s their eldest daughter, Lillian, and her husband, Ed Riggs, had turned the homestead into a guest ranch. From 1917 until 1973 visitors came to relax, watch birds, and hike in the hills.

Lillian and Ed built trails and led guests on horseback through

the Wonderland of Rocks. Armed with photographs and colorful stories, they lobbied for the area's protection.

After the deaths of the three Erickson children the ranch and its furnishings became a historic district within the national park. Today

Faraway Ranch tells the story of how one family lived on the land, shaped the land, and was in turn shaped by the land.



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Civilian Conservation Corps

Launched March 31, 1933, as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) enlisted 3.4 million young men hard hit by the Great Depression.

Nicknamed the Tree Army, its enrollees labored at conservation, construction, and rehabilitation projects in all states and territories.

National Park Service areas hosted 118 CCC camps, including NM-2-A, Company 828, at Chiricahua National Monument (*right*).

The CCC offered more than a job. If you could not read or write you received classroom instruction. You could learn carpentry, plumb-

ing, surveying, and other important skills. Monthly pay was \$30, \$25 of which was sent to their families.

The outbreak of World War II led many CCC workers into military service. The CCC camps were disbanded in 1942.



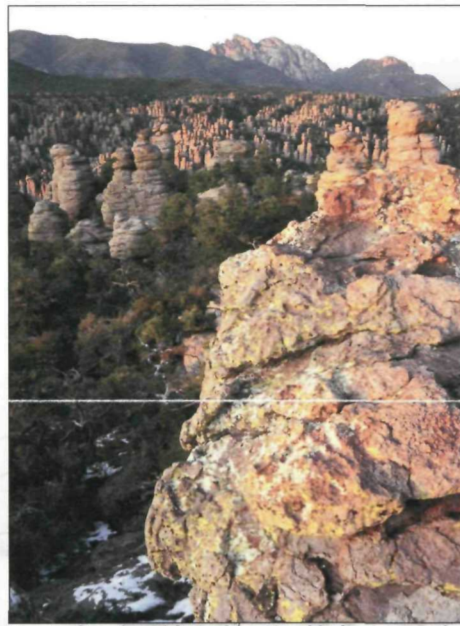
NPS



Wild Chiricahua

Rising to 9,763 feet (2,978 meters), the Chiricahua sky island is home to 1,200 species of plants. Species vary by elevation, exposure to sun, and precipitation. Plants and animals from four ecosystems meet in this range. On cooler northern slopes look for ponderosa pine and Douglas fir; both typify the Rocky Mountains. Sunny southern slopes have Apache pine and border pine from Mexico's Sierra Madre range. Yuccas and sotol from the Chihuahuan Desert coexist with agaves and prickly pear cactus from the Sonoran Desert. Lichens of many colors, including neon green, adorn the pinnacles while ferns thrive in shade.

Birders flock here for the diversity of birds, including many Mexican species at the northern limit of their range. Or you may spot an elusive coatiundi, Arizona white-tailed deer, or—found only in these mountains—Chiricahua fox squirrel. Mountain spiny lizards and black-tailed rattlesnakes are two of the many reptile species.



Heart of Rocks with Cochise Head in background.

Planning Your Visit

Getting to the Park Chiricahua National Monument is 35 miles southeast of Willcox. From I-10, take AZ Rt. 186 south to AZ Rt. 181. Entrance is free. A fee is charged for camping. Find food service, lodging, and gasoline in Willcox, Sunizona, and Douglas, AZ.

Visitor Center Open daily. Stop to receive a map and check current conditions. The museum and store offer opportunities to learn about park resources and items to

help plan and remember your visit. Hours may change seasonally.

Scenic Drive Bonita Canyon Drive winds eight miles to Massai Point, climbing through oak, cypress, and pine forests. The overlook has a 360-degree view of Rhyolite Canyon, adjacent valleys, and surrounding mountain peaks. Your return trip is the best time to stop at roadside pullouts.

Wilderness and Trails Most of the park area is designated wilderness, accessible by foot and horseback, but not by mechanized vehicles. Some 17 miles of day-use trails wind through meadows, forest, and rock pinnacles. Check the map below for trail lengths, elevation changes, and degrees of difficulty. Pets are prohibited on most trails; obey signs. Ask at the visitor center about the hikers' shuttle.

Picnic Areas The Bonita Creek and Faraway areas have tables, grills, trashcans, and restrooms. Massai Point, Echo Canyon, and Sugarloaf areas have tables and restrooms. Water is available at Faraway Ranch and the visitor center.

Camping The 26-site Bonita Canyon Campground is open year-round for tents, and trailers or RVs up to 29 feet long. Tables, grills, restrooms

with flush toilets. No showers or hookups. Group site accommodates 9–24 people. Make reservations at www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777. A fee is charged.

Faraway Ranch and Stafford Cabin The ranch grounds and cabin are open year-round. Ask at the visitor center for a trail guide and information about the Faraway Ranch house tours.

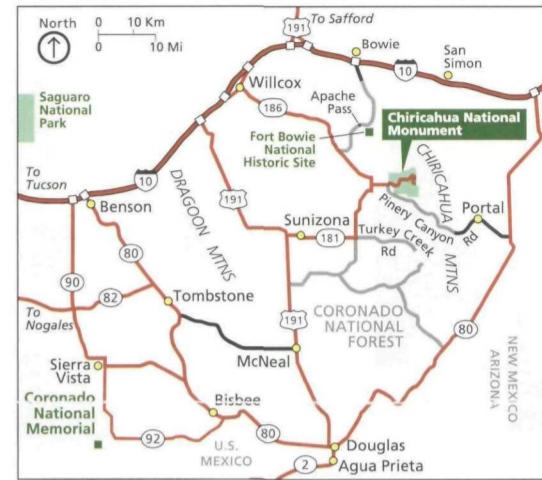
Emergencies call 911

For firearms regulations check our website.

More information Chiricahua National Monument is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities visit www.nps.gov.

Chiricahua National Monument
12856 East Rhyolite Creek Rd.
Willcox, AZ 85643
520-824-3560
www.nps.gov/chir

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org



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For a Safe Visit

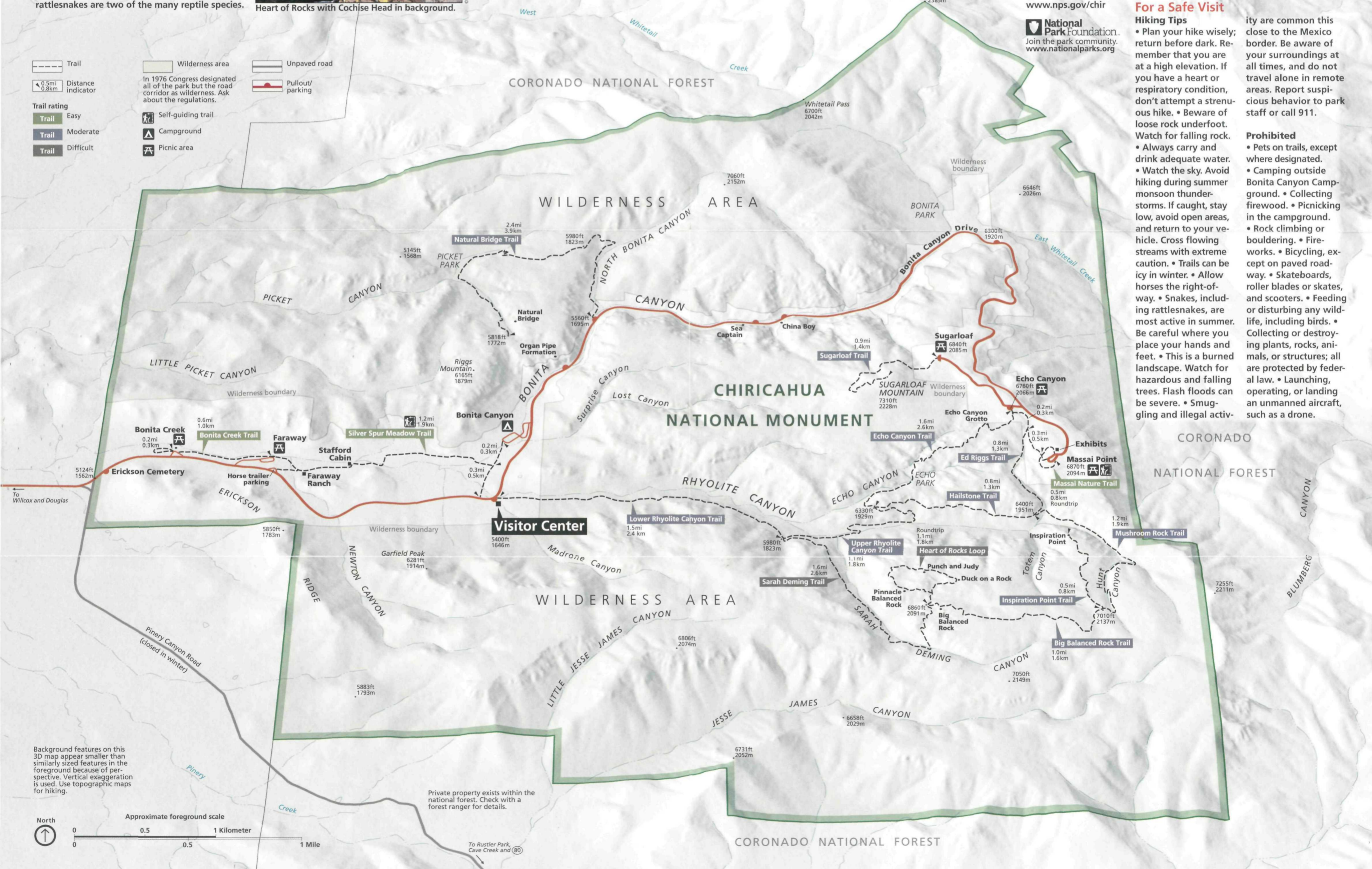
Hiking Tips

- Plan your hike wisely; return before dark. Remember that you are at a high elevation. If you have a heart or respiratory condition, don't attempt a strenuous hike.
- Beware of loose rock underfoot. Watch for falling rock.
- Always carry and drink adequate water.
- Watch the sky. Avoid hiking during summer monsoon thunderstorms. If caught, stay low, avoid open areas, and return to your vehicle. Cross flowing streams with extreme caution.
- Trails can be icy in winter.
- Allow horses the right-of-way.
- Snakes, including rattlesnakes, are most active in summer. Be careful where you place your hands and feet.
- This is a burned landscape. Watch for hazardous and falling trees. Flash floods can be severe.
- Smuggling and illegal activities

are common this close to the Mexico border. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and do not travel alone in remote areas. Report suspicious behavior to park staff or call 911.

Prohibited

- Pets on trails, except where designated.
- Camping outside Bonita Canyon Campground.
- Collecting firewood.
- Picnicking in the campground.
- Rock climbing or bouldering.
- Fireworks.
- Bicycling, except on paved roadway.
- Skateboards, roller blades or skates, and scooters.
- Feeding or disturbing any wildlife, including birds.
- Collecting or destroying plants, rocks, animals, or structures; all are protected by federal law.
- Launching, operating, or landing an unmanned aircraft, such as a drone.



Background features on this 3D map appear smaller than similarly sized features in the foreground because of perspective. Vertical exaggeration is used. Use topographic maps for hiking.

Private property exists within the national forest. Check with a forest ranger for details.