

Grand Canyon-Parashant

National Monument Arizona



A TRANSITIONAL LANDSCAPE

Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument is seen by few people. Deep canyons, mountains, and lonely buttes testify to the power of geological forces and provide colorful vistas to all visitors.

At night the sky is resplendent with stars. Parashant features some of the darkest night skies to be seen anywhere in the continental United States.

Three floristic provinces converge here, the Mojave Desert, Great Basin, and Colorado Plateau and support a diversity of plant and animal communities.

Geologic, geographic, and biological transitions give rise to the monument's remarkable ecological diversity. Here two geologic provinces meet, the Basin and Range and Colorado Plateau. Their layers and features, relatively unobscured by vegetation, reveal the area's geologic history. Two ecoregions also meet here, the Mojave Desert and Colorado Plateau.

The monument's variety of desert, shrubland, and montane habitats result from geologic variations and elevations that range from 1,400 feet above sea level near Grand Wash Bay to over 8,000 feet on Mt. Trumbull.



Whitmore Canyon Overlook: A very rough and steep dirt road winds down a lava flow and ends in an area with spectacular views of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River.



The cooler conditions found in higher-elevation ponderosa pine forests provide habitat for wild turkeys, northern goshawks, and Kaibab squirrels. Middle elevations feature pinyon-juniper woodlands and sagebrush that support pinyon jays, Great Basin rattlesnakes, and mule deer.

The low-elevation Mojave Desert is characterized by creosote bush and Joshua trees, Gila monsters, Gambel's quail, and desert bighorn sheep. Springs with life-giving water host distinctive plant and animal life.

Some visitors may not see how this landscape could support human life, but people have flourished here for over 12,000 years. Those who settled here about 3,000 years ago

left rock images, home sites, tools, and quarries. In October 1776 the Southern Paiute and Europeans met for the first time when Spanish priests passed through the area. Later, European Americans settled in this rugged land and called it the Arizona Strip. Remnants of their ranches dot the landscape, adding to the stories that await today's explorers of Parashant.

From Native American cultures to the ranching way of life to today's modern explorer, Parashant is a land of discovery, enchantment, and wonder. Here the wildlife is still wild, and their habitats remain largely undisturbed. The variety of ecosystems provides a diverse richness of plant and animal species.



Nampaweap: A short trail (less than one mile) takes you to a petroglyph site, one of the largest on the Arizona Strip. Hundreds of images provide clues about the lives of early native residents.



Desert Wash

The Mojave, driest of all North American deserts, gets less than 10 inches of rain a year. Snaking across this arid landscape, scoured desert washes carry the runoff after monsoon rains. Desert tortoises and Gila monsters actively forage after these refreshing storms. Deep-rooted plants grow along the washes, providing black-tailed jackrabbits with shady hiding places.

Joshua Tree Forest

Joshua trees are characteristic Mojave Desert plants that grow up to 40 feet tall. Their prickly branches give many animals shelter, a food source, and nesting materials. As many as 25 bird species nest in Joshua trees. Scott's orioles hang nests from branches, other birds

build nests in foliage, and northern flickers peck nest holes in the trunks. Toppled trunks house insects that are important for creating the foundation of a complex food web.

Mojave Desert Scrub

This community's spiny, succulent plants denote desert to most people. In rainy periods barrel cacti store water in their vault-like spiny bodies. Surviving long periods of no rain, they live up to 130 years. Rock-dwelling chuckwalla lizards also use their body's store of water and fat during dry periods. They can wedge themselves into rocks by inhaling air, making it hard for predators to pull them out.



Tassi Ranch: Tucked in rocky hills beside a flowing spring, a rustic stone house and other ramshackle structures paint a vivid picture of life on a cattle ranch in the 1930s and 1940s.



Sagebrush Steppe

The sagebrush steppe is found on semi-arid plains and flanked by pinyon-juniper woodland (right). You will drive for miles through this multi-hued landscape of sagebrush, shrubs, and short grasses. Big sagebrush is the most common plant, and rabbitbrush and other plants also thrive here. The adaptable coyote hunts rabbits and other small animals that hide in the shrubs.

Pinyon - Juniper Woodland

Pinyon pines and Utah junipers grow on plateaus and mountainsides above the steppe. Junipers can live over 1,000 years, yet they only grow 20 to 30 feet tall. Slow-growing pinyon pines germinate beneath the protective

shade of other vegetation. Mature pinyon pines produce nutritious seeds (pine nuts) eaten by birds, rodents, and people. The birds and rodents cache some pine nuts for the winter. Their buried and forgotten seeds sprout into new trees.

Ponderosa Pine Forest

Cooler, higher, and with more rain, the Colorado Plateau ecoregion supports ponderosa pine, Gambel oak, serviceberry, and New Mexican locust. This forest is home to turkeys, Kaibab squirrels, mule deer, and goshawks. Ponderosa pines can live over 900 years and can grow over 150 feet tall. Their thick bark is fire resistant and smells like vanilla. Periodic fires are essential to maintaining the health and vigor of ponderosa pine forests.



Pakoon Springs: An island of lush trees and cattails reveal that flowing water is here. Pakoon is one of the monument's largest springs.

A Monumental Partnership

Here, in over a million acres of vast, remote, and sparsely developed landscapes, the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service have embarked on a monumental joint venture to conserve the features and wild character of this remote place. The monument encompasses the lower Shivwits Plateau, an important part of the Colorado River watershed. The monument is designated an International Night Sky Province by the International Dark Sky Association for the Parashant's astonishing and largely unimpaired night skies.

Congress has designated four areas of the monument for protection as wilderness under the National Wilderness Preservation System Act.

Special regulations apply in designated wilderness. Please check at the information center.

Planning Your Visit

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Park Service (NPS) invite you to experience the 1,048,321-acre Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument. The Public Lands Information Center in Saint George, Utah, offers exhibits, publications, and maps. Staff can answer your questions and update you on road conditions.

Emergencies

Call 702-293-8998 to reach 24/7 emergency dispatch at Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Satellite phone service only.



Backcountry Campsite at Whitmore Canyon Overlook.

Tuweep and Toroweap

This area is within Grand Canyon National Park and subject to its regulations. No camping unless you already have a reservation and permit. Otherwise, day-use only, sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset, as permitted. Vehicle numbers and types limited.

Getting Around

The only roads into the monument are unpaved, some are very rough. If you plan to travel on roads not shown on this map, you need the BLM Arizona Strip Visitor Map or topographical maps. The Arizona Strip map can be purchased at the Public Lands Information Center or at Pipe Spring National Monument. The Public Lands Information Center also has topographic maps.

Respect Private Property

Some roads within the monument cross private land. Please respect owners' property by remaining on the road. Leave gates as you find them.

Regulations and Safety

Some regulations, including those for firearms, differ between NPS and BLM lands within the monument. Check each agency's website or inquire at the Public Lands Information Center before you enter the monument.

You must be prepared for adverse conditions and isolation. Hazards include rough, unmarked roads, venomous reptiles, insects, extreme heat, and flash floods.



Emergency Gear

- Drive only on open roads. High-clearance vehicles recommended. Four-wheel drive often necessary.
- No facilities, services, or gasoline available.
- Cell phones do not work here. Only satellite phones and satellite messenger devices work.
- Tire strength, including spare, should be all-terrain or stronger.
- Carry a second full-size all-terrain spare tire or a tire patch kit and air compressor.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- If you break down, stay with your vehicle.
- Take extra food, water, and enough clothing for weather changes.
- Roads wash out after a storm.

- Motorized vehicles must stay on existing and open roads.
- No vehicles allowed in wilderness areas or on roads marked closed.
- All operators and vehicles, including ATVs, must be licensed on county and National Park Service roads.
- Be cautious when using navigation systems. They may not accurately portray roads, including which roads are open to the public.

Contact Information:

Grand Canyon-Parashant NM
Public Lands Information Center
4001 E. Aviator Drive
Saint George, Utah 84790
435-688-3200

www.nps.gov/para
www.blm.gov