

ACCESS

The Preserve is open every day from sunrise to sunset. Individuals and groups are welcome to visit the Preserve. For tours and information contact:

Coachella Valley Preserve
P.O. Box 188
Thousand Palms, CA 92276
(619) 343-1234

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Lloyd 500 Building, Suite 1692
500 N.E. Multnomah Street
Portland, Oregon 97232

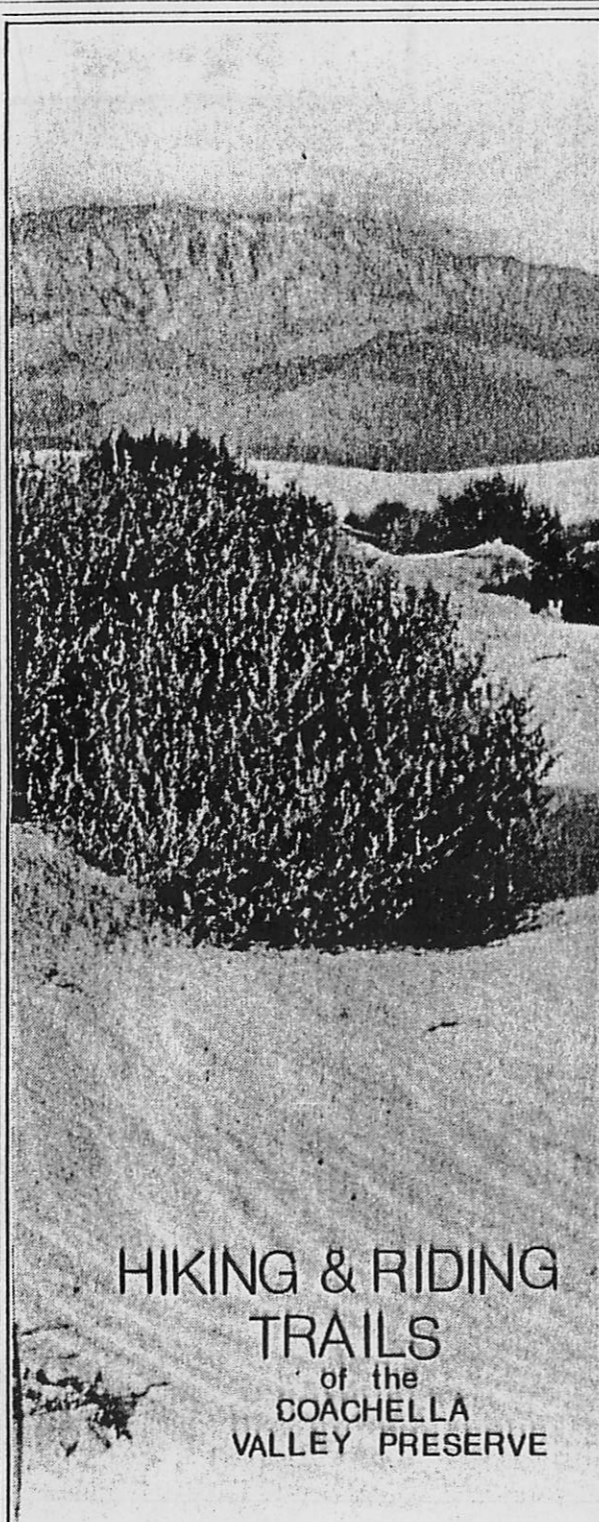
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Indio Resource Area
1900 E. Tahquitz-McCallum Way, Suite B-1
Palm Springs, California 92262
619/323-4421

California Department of Fish and Game
245 West Broadway, Suite 350
Long Beach, California 90802
213/590-5151

The Nature Conservancy
1800 North Kent Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

California Nature Conservancy
785 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94103

To report violations or
for emergency assistance
call: (714)383-5651
or dial 911



HIKING & RIDING TRAILS of the COACHELLA VALLEY PRESERVE

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The Coachella Valley Preserve comprises nearly 13,000 acres of desert habitat. Originally designed to protect the federally threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, the Preserve protects the entire spectrum of flora and fauna which were once common in the Coachella Valley.

A Preserve of this magnitude was difficult, if not impossible for any one agency to purchase and manage alone. Consequently, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and a private organization, The Nature Conservancy, have teamed up to own and manage this Preserve together.

While the Preserve is primarily a sanctuary for nature, its diverse terrain and spectacular views are ideal for day hiking and horseback riding. We encourage these uses, but ask that you follow a few rules to help protect the Coachella Valley Preserve's natural values.

1. No overnight camping allowed. The possibility of escaped campfires in palm groves, and problems associated with cooking and human wastes can result in situations too great for our limited staff and resources to handle.
2. No motorized vehicles allowed on any trails or dirt roads within the Preserve.
3. No discharging of firearms.
4. No pets allowed. The Preserve is for native wildlife.
5. Please pick up all trash.
6. Please stay on existing trails. This limits impacts to the trail area, leaving unspoiled land for miles on either side of the trail. Foot traffic, and especially horses hooves, cause harmful impacts including soil compaction, caving in rodent burrows and destroying native plant life. Horses should be kept out of palm groves.

Remember you are in a desert. Bring plenty of water with you; no drinkable water is available on any of the trails. Dress appropriately for the desert heat. Rattlesnakes are a concern mainly when you travel off the trails or at night, both of which are prohibited.

The following narratives describe the popular trail routes on the Coachella Valley Preserve. Numbers correspond to locations on the associated map.

1. The McCallum Trail

This is a 1.4-mile round-trip, starting at Thousand Palms Oasis, that takes about 1.5 hours. A self-guided trail booklet can be obtained at the trailhead and will give hikers a detailed introduction to the history and ecology of this area. This is a "must" trip for all first-time visitors to the Preserve. The trail was dedicated to John McCallum, whose family foundation provided critical funding for the acquisition of this important natural area. This trail is limited to hikers only, horses are prohibited.

2. Smoke Tree Ranch Trail

Starting just outside the palm house in Thousand Palms Oasis, this trail is for those who are short on time or energy; the 1/8-mile loop takes only 10-15 minutes. Many plant species are identified along the trail which encircles the palm oasis. Mesquite thickets along this and the McCallum trail are excellent places to see migrant birds during the spring and fall. This trail commemorates a generous gift toward the establishment of this Preserve by the Smoke Tree Ranch colonists of Palm Springs. Horses are prohibited on this trail.

3. Indian Palms Trail

This 1-mile round-trip takes hikers and riders east of the Thousand Palms Oasis parking lot to a small palm oasis called Indian Palms. Allow about an hour or so for the round-trip. The trail heads across Thousand Palms Canyon Road near a place where the road passes Squaw Hill (with the cross on it). Because the trail passes through a large wash that floods during summer thunderstorms, there is no set path to follow until you near the oasis. Head toward the lower rocky bluffs due east from Squaw Hill; you'll see the palms in a small canyon when you're a little more than halfway across the wash. From the mouth of the canyon an obvious trail takes you up into the palm groves.

4. Wash Trail

This is a good all-day horseback riding trail winding through the desert washes in the northern portion of the Preserve. The route takes you through wild, remote country rarely traveled by today's visitors. Bring plenty of water, a map and a good sense of direction.

COACHELLA VALLEY PRESERVE

5. Hidden, Horseshoe and Pushawalla Palms Trail

This is a trail for the more ambitious hikers. Horseback riders are welcome but portions of the trail may be too rugged for horses. Plan on taking anywhere from a couple of hours to almost all day depending on how many of the oases you visit.

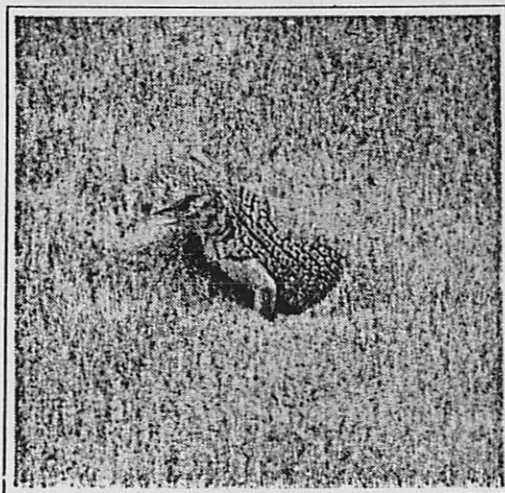
Begin at the Thousand Palms Oasis parking lot and head southeast from Squaw Hill (with the cross on it). Head toward the sharp, tall, rocky bluff across the wash. An old Indian trail is obvious as it moves diagonally up the bluff (follow the telephone poles). When you reach the top of the bluff you are on Bee-rock Mesa. Look back toward the north and you can see Indian Palms Oasis. In the central portion of Bee-rock Mesa are cleared areas that are all that are left of an ancient Malpais Indian camp, perhaps 5,000 years old.

From the point where you reach the top of this mesa a trail heads up to your left along an uplifted portion of the Mission Creek branch of the San Andreas Fault. This trail will take you above Horseshoe Palms and then on to Pushawalla Palms. A more obvious trail heading across the mesa to the southeast leads more directly to Horseshoe Palms and then eventually to Pushawalla Palms. The upper trail offers better views of the Salton Sea and the southern portion of the Coachella Valley, but is often much windier. Horseshoe Palms is a long narrow palm grove growing right along the earthquake fault. Pushawalla Palms is a beautiful oasis growing within the narrow, steep-sided confines of Pushawalla Canyon. It takes about an hour to an hour and a half to hike directly to Pushawalla Palms.

To reach Hidden Palms, just follow the telephone poles south from where the trail first reaches the mesa top. This is a rocky traverse without a clear trail path. If you count the poles, you'll be able to see Hidden Palms from between the 11th and 12th. At that point, follow the ravine south, right into the oasis. Allow 45 minutes to an hour to reach Hidden Palms from the parking lot.

6. Willis Palms and West Mesa Trail

Hike or ride horseback from trailheads either off Ramon Road or Thousand Palms Canyon Road toward Willis Palms. Horseback riders please keep horses out of the palm grove, you're welcome to walk in. The trail continues west for 1/4 mile, then turns north up a large sandy wash. Keep to the right as you continue up the wash; after about a mile you'll take the trail as it heads up the steep cliff on your right. It is a large trail (was once a road) that you can't miss. When you reach the top of the mesa you will have excellent views of the western half of the Coachella Valley. Follow the trail south, back to Willis Palms.



COACHELLA VALLEY FRINGE-TOED LIZARD
(*Uma hornata*)

