

Diverse Habitats

To understand the ecological diversity that characterizes the landscape, one must look east to the Great Basin, north to the Cascades, and west to the Siskiyou Mountains. Influences from each of these regions converge in the Monument, resulting in a constantly changing and colorful landscape.



Oak woodlands representative of Oregon's western valleys intermingle with gnarled juniper trees from the eastern basins, creating an unusual plant community.

Oak Woodlands

Hardy mountain mahogany and sagebrush on rocky bluffs are reminiscent of the Great Basin, and provide homes for rock wrens, rattlesnakes, and kangaroo rats.



Rocky Bluffs



Impressive stands of old-growth trees, associated with forests of the western Cascades and coast range, provide habitat for species such as northern spotted owls and northern goshawks.

Old Growth

Our Heritage

The CSNM is part of the Bureau of Land Management's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), established to protect some of the nation's most remarkable and rugged landscapes. The NLCS provides opportunities for current and future generations to explore and discover some of our last, great open spaces.

SCARLET FRITILLARY



BLACK BEAR



GREAT GRAY OWL

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument



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Crossroads

A Recipe for Diversity

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument is the nation's first monument designated in recognition of an area's biological diversity. The Monument's remarkable ecology is a product of its location at the crossroads of two different mountain ranges—the Cascades and the Siskiyou—as well as its proximity to the Great Basin.

THE ANCIENT SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS

The western portion of the Monument is part of the Siskiyou Mountains—an ancient range containing some of the oldest rocks known in Oregon at 425 million years old. Their unusual east-west orientation creates an important connection between the Cascades to the east and the coastal ranges to the west. In addition, the Siskiyou Mountains were not heavily glaciated in the last ice age and served as a refuge for species whose habitat disappeared under tons of continental ice.

THE VOLCANIC CASCADES

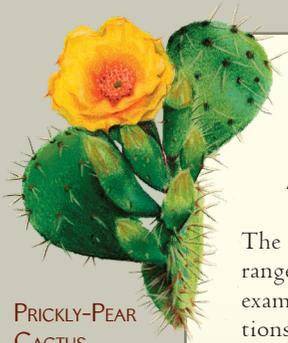
The Cascades are a relatively young mountain range, built up by volcanic activity beginning approximately 40 million years ago. They run north and south through the central and eastern portions of the Monument.

THE GREAT BASIN

The Monument's proximity to the Great Basin adds to the area's biological diversity. Species adapted to this open, arid landscape to the east mingle with species found in the western Cascades and Siskiyou.

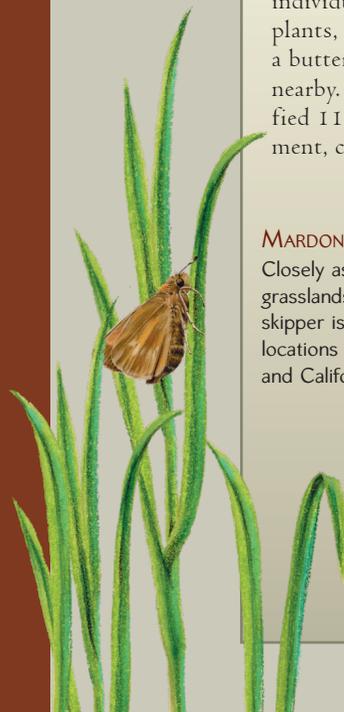


KANGAROO RATS
Typically found in desert-like habitats, kangaroo rats move by hopping on their hind feet, using their very long tail for balance.



PRICKLY-PEAR CACTUS

Found at the Monument's southern edge, the prickly-pear cactus illustrates the Great Basin's influence.



MARDON SKIPPERS

Closely associated with native grasslands, the rare mardon skipper is found in only a few locations in Washington, Oregon and California.

WAPATO

Also known as arrowleaf, this important wetland species produces edible tubers that were harvested by Native Americans.



A Wealth of Species

A Variety of Plants and Animals Share the Landscape

The Monument's diversity depends on other key ingredients such as a wide range of soil types, elevations, moisture levels, and temperatures. Rainfall, for example, ranges from 20 inches at lower elevations to 40 inches at higher elevations. All of these factors directly affect the types of plant and animal habitats found throughout the Monument.

BOTANICAL TREASURES

Different rock types create the foundation for diverse soils, which, in turn, support a stunning variety of plant life. Spring and summer reward the casual hiker and seasoned botanist alike with a colorful display of wildflowers. Many rare and unusual plants are found throughout the Monument.

INDICATORS OF DIVERSITY

Numerous butterfly species provide evidence of the Monument's ecological diversity. Butterflies are good indicators of plant diversity since the caterpillars of individual species only feed on specific plants, called host plants. The presence of a butterfly indicates that its host plant is nearby. To date, field surveys have identified 111 butterfly species in the Monument, compared with 162 in all of Oregon.

UNUSUAL NEIGHBORS

Thanks to the Monument's location, plants and animals typically found in different geographical regions can find homes in this varied landscape. Species generally found in arid climates, such as kangaroo rats, are neighbors with northern spotted owls and rough-skinned newts, species associated with much wetter western forests.

WETLANDS

A multitude of seeps, springs, and wetlands add to the diverse habitats found in the Monument. Wetlands are a critical water source for many species during summer drought. Some springs are home to tiny snails found only in the Monument.

NORTHERN SPOTTED OWLS

The northern spotted owl nests in the coolness of the Monument's old-growth forests.



ROUGH-SKINNED NEWTS

Residing in or near ponds and streams, rough-skinned newts secrete one of the most deadly natural toxins yet discovered.

