

Planning Your Visit

Hiking, backpacking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, and walking through the orchards are favorite activities at Capitol Reef National Park. Below are some suggested ways to spend your time for:

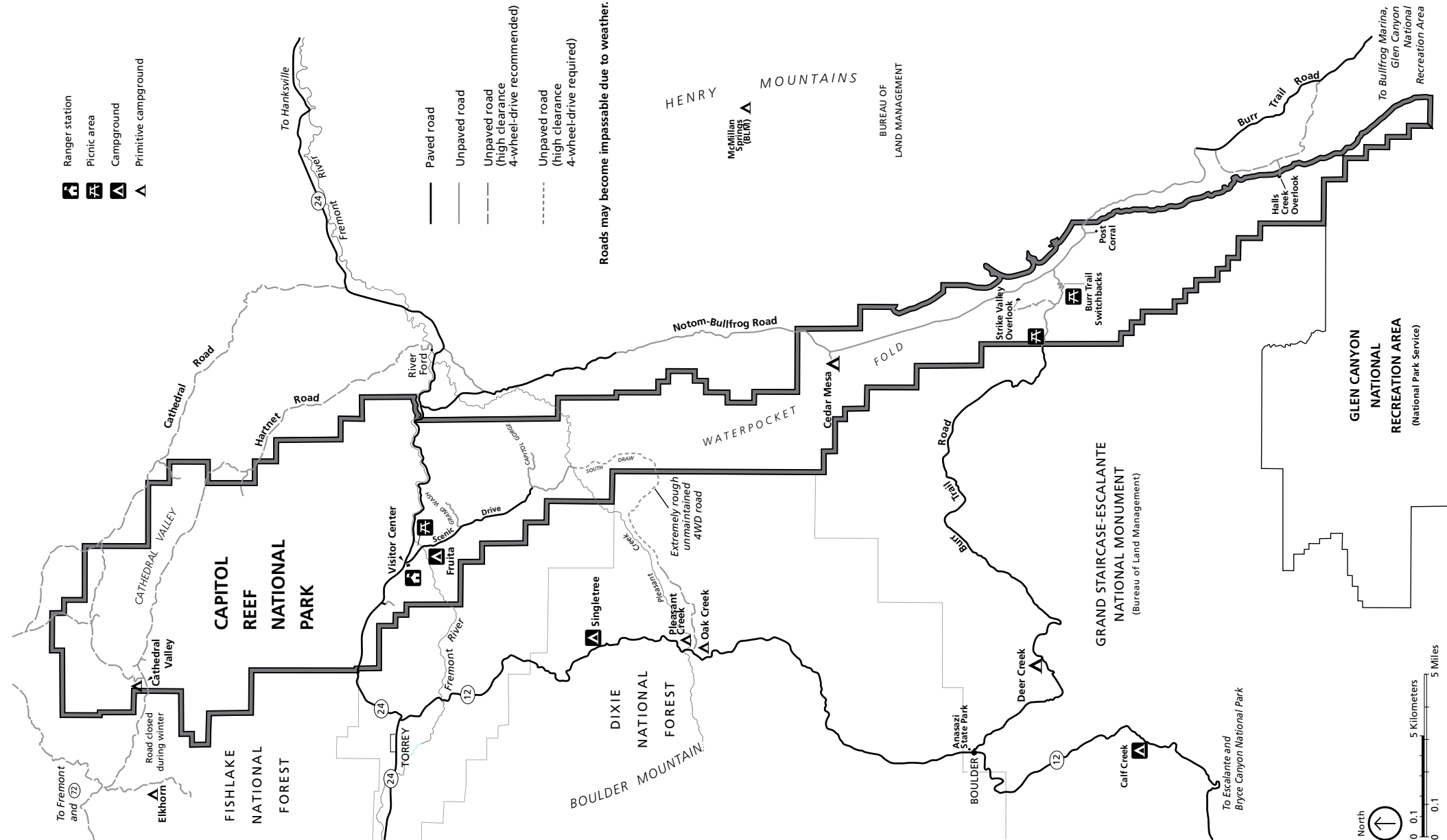
- An Hour or Two:**
- Stop at the visitor center and view the displays and orientation movie.
 - Pick some delicious fruit when in season.
 - Hike one of the shorter trails in the Fruita area.
- One Day:**
- Tour the Scenic Drive (approximately 90 minutes round trip).
 - Visit the petroglyphs, historic schoolhouse, or Behunin Cabin (along Highway 24), or the Historic Gifford House, nature center, or blacksmith shop (on the Scenic Drive).
 - Join a ranger-guided program.

- Several Days:**
- Combine day trip options.
 - Hike the shorter trails and routes along the Waterpocket District or Cathedral Valley Loops.
 - Experience solitude and quiet by backpacking into remote areas of the park. Check for current weather, road and trail conditions at the visitor center. A free permit is required for overnight backcountry use.

Additional Park Information

Capitol Reef National Park
 HC 70 Box 15 435-425-3791
 Torrey UT 84775 www.nps.gov/care

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National Park Service
 U.S. Department of the Interior
 Capitol Reef National Park
 HC 70 Box 15
 Torrey UT 84775

Trip Planner



Geologist Clarence Dutton described this landscape as “A sublime panorama... the extreme of desolation, the blankest solitude, a superlative desert.” Capitol Reef National Park is in the heart of Utah’s canyon country between Canyonlands and Bryce Canyon National Parks along Utah Highway 24.

General Information

Capitol Reef became a national monument on August 2, 1937, conserving and protecting significant natural and cultural resources. The boundaries were later changed, and Capitol Reef became a national park in 1971. Today the park encompasses 243,921 acres (381 square miles).

The park features the geologic landforms of the Waterpocket Fold and Cathedral Valley. Archeological evidence of prehistoric American Indians and elements of a historic Mormon settlement are preserved. A range of habitats support diverse plant and animal communities.

Fees

A fee of \$10 per vehicle, good for seven days, is charged to tour the Scenic Drive. Individual entrance fees are \$7 per person (foot or bicycle travel). Children 16 and under are admitted free. Camping fees are separate.

America the Beautiful National Parks & Federal Recreational Lands Passes are sold at the visitor center. The \$80 Annual Pass allows entry into federal fee areas for one year from the month of purchase.

Military Passes are available for active military personnel and dependents, with valid military ID. The free annual pass allows entry into federal fee areas for one year from the month of issue.

Senior Passes are available to US citizens 62 years of age or older for a one-time charge of \$10. This pass provides the bearer free entry into federal fee areas and discounts on some use fees, such as camping.

Access Passes are free of charge to handicapped or disabled US citizens or residents and offer the same benefits as the Senior Pass.

Fees are subject to change.

Accessibility

The visitor center and all park restroom facilities are accessible. The 18-minute orientation movie is accessible and closed-captioned. The Fruita campground has five accessible sites. Amphitheater programs are wheelchair-accessible with assistance. The petroglyphs along Utah Highway 24 are also accessible.

Visitor Center Operations

The park is open year-round and the visitor center is open daily, except for federal winter holidays. Brochures, books, and maps are available for sale. Rangers answer questions and provide information about travel, trails, road conditions, and weather.

The visitor center offers exhibits on geology, ecology, archeology, and history, as well as an 18-minute orientation movie.

Things to Do

The park offers a variety of **ranger-guided programs** from spring to fall at no charge. These include interpretive talks, dark-sky presentations, and evening programs at the outdoor campground amphitheater.

The **Fruita Schoolhouse** is a restored pioneer structure located 0.8 mile east of the visitor center on Highway 24. An audio wayside describes teaching in a one-room school.

The **blacksmith shop**, located 0.9 mile south of the visitor center on the Scenic Drive, offers an audio wayside about life in a Mormon pioneer community.

A **picnic area** is located 1 mile south of the visitor center on the Scenic Drive. There are tables, fire grills, rest rooms, drinking water, lawn, and shade trees.

The **Gifford House Store & Museum**, 1.1 miles south of the visitor center on the Scenic Drive, is typical of rural Utah farmhouses of the early 1900s. It is open seasonally, with handmade items and baked goods for sale.

Bicycles are restricted to maintained roads open to vehicular traffic. Recommended bicycle routes are identified and described on our website.

Fishing is permitted in the Fremont River with a valid Utah fishing license.

Horseback riding is permitted in some locations. Check at the visitor center for details.

Kid-friendly Activities

Kids of all ages can complete activities in the Junior Ranger booklet and earn a badge (allow 1-2 hours to complete).

Enjoy interactive exhibits, games and activites, and free educational programs at the **Ripple Rock Nature Center**, 0.9 mile from the visitor center on the Scenic Drive. Open primarily in summer. Ask at the visitor center for hours and activities.

Adults can borrow a **Family Fun Pack** free of charge at the visitor center and the nature center. The packs contain books, games, and activities to encourage learning and exploration of the park.

Hiking and Backpacking

There are over 140 miles of roads in and around the park and over 150 miles of trails and backcountry routes for the hiker and backpacker. Information and maps are available at the visitor center and on our website.

Many day hike trailheads are located along Utah Highway 24 and the Scenic Drive. Longer, more rugged hiking routes are established in the north and south districts of the park. Never underestimate the difficulties of hiking in a rugged area like Capitol Reef. Carry plenty of water and wear appropriate clothing and footwear. It is safest not to hike alone; but for those who do, inform another party of your plans. The elevation and desert climate make the area prone to temperature extremes and flash floods. Know what to expect and plan accordingly. Summer brings intense heat, low humidity, and monsoonal thunderstorms. Winter brings freezing temperatures, snow, ice, and the potential for hypothermia and impassable roads.

A free backcountry permit is required for all overnight stays outside an established campground. Permits are available at the Capitol Reef Visitor Center, Glen Canyon’s Bullfrog Visitor Center, Anasazi State Park in Boulder, and the multi-agency visitor center in Escalante. All fires are prohibited; use camp stoves only. Water is scarce, especially in summer. Waterpockets, seeps, and springs are unreliable sources of water; carry all you need. At least one gallon per person per day is recommended for drinking in warm weather. Additional water is needed for cooking and washing. Filter, treat, or boil water from backcountry sources to kill parasitic organisms.

Camping

All campgrounds operate on a first-come first-served basis. Occupancy is limited to eight people per site.

The 71-site Fruita campground is the only developed campground in the park, offering picnic tables, fire rings, restrooms, water, and a dump station. A \$20 nightly fee is charged. It is open year-round.

A group campsite is open seasonally and is always closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Maximum group size at the group site is 40 people and 10 vehicles, with a maximum stay of five days. The fee is \$3 per person per night with a minimum fee of \$50. Visit our website for application procedures.

Primitive campgrounds at Cathedral Valley (6 sites) and Cedar Mesa (5 sites) provide pit toilets, picnic tables, and fire rings. No fee is charged. Bring your own water and firewood. Collecting firewood is prohibited within the park.

Fires are permitted only within fire rings provided in the campgrounds and the picnic area, or use camp stoves.

In spring and fall, the Fruita campground fills by early afternoon, especially on weekends and holidays—please plan accordingly. Information about other camping options is available at the visitor center.

Camp only in designated campgrounds. Camping is prohibited at trailheads, parking lots, and roadsides. Permits are required for backcountry camping.

Fees are subject to change.

Orchards

Many orchards are located in the Fruita Historic District. Visitors may pick fruit in season. There is no charge for fruit that is consumed in the orchard, but a fee is charged for any fruit removed from the orchards. Harvest times vary considerably from year to year. Follow safety directions (including ladder safety) posted at the visitor center and in the orchards.

A listing of the range of flowering and fruiting times is available at the visitor center and on our website. Call the orchard hotline for updated information during the summer at 435-425-3791. Follow voicemail prompts; press one for general information, then five for the orchard hotline.

Safety Rules and Regulations

- Always carry plenty of water in warm weather—at least one gallon per person per day is recommended.

- Collecting wood, rocks, plants, animals, artifacts, or other park resources is prohibited.

- Do not feed, harass, or approach any park wildlife.

- Use caution near cliff edges as rocks can be slippery or crumble under your weight.

- Visit http://weather.gov/saltlakecity when storms threaten. Avoid canyons and dry washes where flash floods may occur suddenly and unexpectedly. Avoid open and exposed areas prone to lightning.

- Do not litter. Pack out all trash. Recycling bins are located at the visitor center, picnic area, and campground.

- All vehicles, including bicycles, must stay on maintained roadways. Off-road travel is prohibited. ATV/UTV use is prohibited.

- Fires are permitted only within fire rings provided in the campgrounds and the picnic area.

Weather

Month	Temp (F) Avg Hi	Temp (F) Avg Lo	Precip Avg In	Snow Avg In
January	41	20	0.49	4.8
February	47	26	0.55	2.2
March	58	33	0.52	2.3
April	66	40	0.57	0.4
May	75	48	0.61	0.0
June	87	58	0.34	0.0
July	91	65	1.01	0.0
August	88	63	1.21	0.0
September	80	54	0.95	0.0
October	66	44	0.87	0.0
November	51	31	0.53	1.5
December	41	21	0.34	2.4

Flash floods can occur at any time of the year, but are most common in summer and early fall. Flooding can occur even under a clear sky as rain may fall over a vast area many miles upstream. Your safety depends on your own good judgment, adequate preparation, and constant attention. Ask at the visitor center about potentially dangerous weather conditions.

Pets

Pets are allowed on leash (maximum 6 feet) in the developed areas of the park: along paved and dirt roadways, in the picnic area, in campgrounds, and in orchards. They are not permitted on trails, in public buildings, or in the backcountry. Pets may not be left unattended in campgrounds. There are no kennels in the park. Consider your plans carefully before bringing your pet with you.

Firearms

Hunting or any other use of firearms is not allowed in any area of the park. For detailed information about restrictions on the transportation and use of guns in national parks, go to www.nps.gov/care/learn/management/lawsandpolicies.htm.

Nearby Services

A Medical Clinic is located in Bicknell, 19 miles west of the park on Utah Highway 24. The closest hospital is located in Richfield, 75 miles west of the park.

Groceries, camping supplies, gasoline, and lodging are not provided within the park. For a listing of area services and accommodations, contact:

Wayne County Travel Council PO Box 7 Teasdale UT 84773 800-858-7951 www.capitolreef.org	Garfield County Office of Tourism PO Box 200 Panguitch UT 84759 800-444-6689 www.brycecanyoncountry.com
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Note: Many local businesses are closed during the winter off-season, as well as on Sundays year-round.

Capitol Reef Natural History Association

Additional information about Capitol Reef and the Colorado Plateau can be obtained through the park’s non-profit cooperating association. The Capitol Reef Natural History Association operates the park store at the visitor center which carries maps, books, media, posters, postcards, and souvenirs. For a free publication list, contact:

Capitol Reef Natural History Association HC 70 Box 15 Torrey UT 84775	435-425-4106 http://www.capitolreefnha.org
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