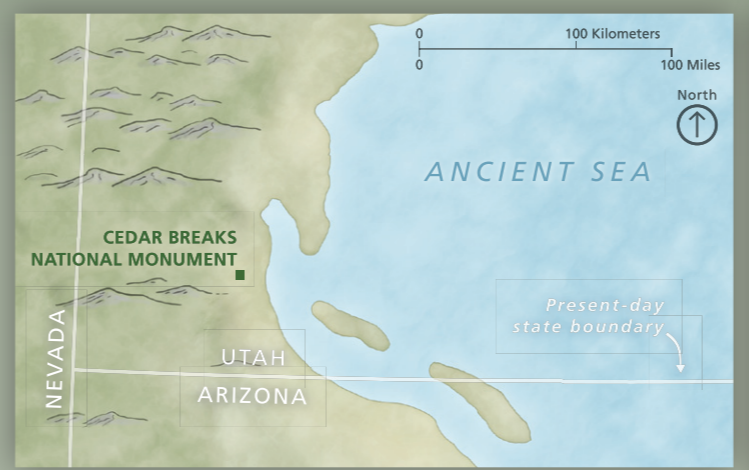




## An Abrupt Change

On the drive from Cedar City to Cedar Breaks National Monument, a cascade of sensory changes begins. At 10 thousand feet, the air cools and becomes crystal clear. It sharpens the reds and whites, purples and pinks of the landscape. The Milky Way and celestial objects beyond our solar system fill the night sky. Meadows blaze urgently with wildflowers. Sleet falls in July. At the spot where the Colorado Plateau abruptly ends and the land breaks away to the west, you've crossed a line into the unexpected. A stop here, on the way to better-known destinations, can stretch into a satisfying day, or days, if you allow it.

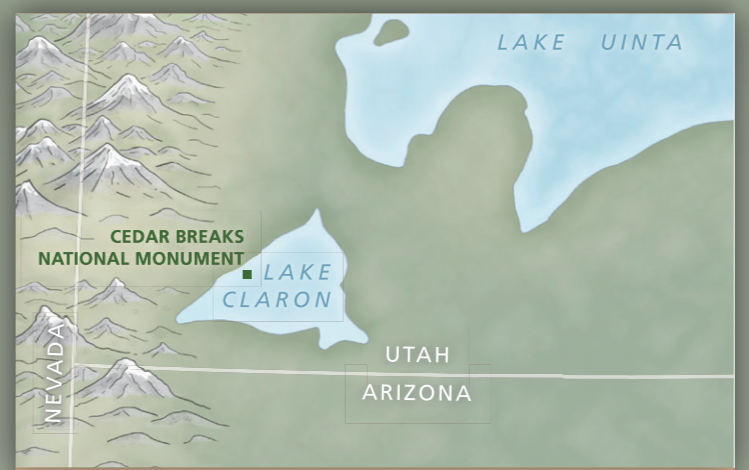
In 1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated these 6,155 acres as a national monument. Early visitors arrived by rail or car at Cedar City, then continued by bus on a circuit that included Cedar Breaks National Monument, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Zion national parks.



**An inland sea** 90 million years ago

As mountains to the west aged, they shed sediments, including sandstone, limestone, and shale. Rivers and streams carried these sediments eastward to a sea that covered much of present-

day Utah and northern Arizona. As the sea drained, it exposed rock formations created by compressed layers of sediments. You can see these formations in the canyons near Cedar City.



**Lake Claron** 60 million years ago

After the sea retreated east, a low-lying area formed and filled with fresh water carried by streams, rivers, and rain that drained from the new mountains to the west. Sediments and minerals, including oxides of iron and manganese, sank to

the bottom of Lake Claron, along with organic matter like algae and the remains of shelled creatures. All contributed to the brilliant hues you can see in the canyons of Cedar Breaks (*below*).



**Volcanic ash and earthquakes** 20 million years ago

A fault became a conduit for molten rock to rise from deep in the earth, creating lava beds. Volcanoes blanketed the region with ash, creating the Brian Head Formation. For about the last 10 million years, earth-

quakes continuously lowered the landscape to the west, leaving the park at the highest elevation point of the Grand Staircase.

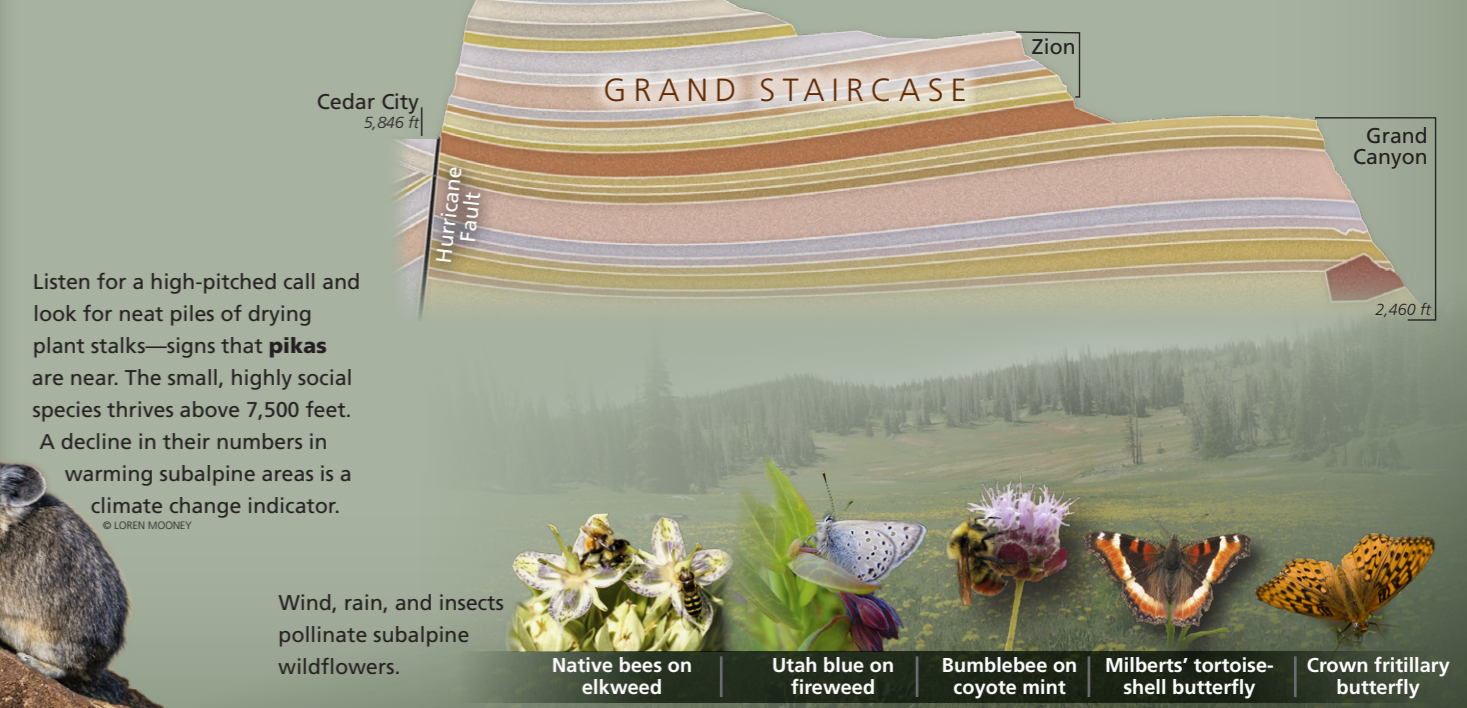
**The Colorado Plateau today**

Cedar Breaks, at the western edge of the Colorado Plateau's Grand Staircase, is higher, cooler, and wetter than points to the east. It supports species that thrive in high-elevation condi-

tions, including coyote mint (*below*), southern ligusticum, deer, and elk (*far left*). Outside the park, American Indians continue to gather and hunt these and other species for healing and food.



Listen for a high-pitched call and look for neat piles of drying plant stalks—signs that pikas are near. The small, highly social species thrives above 7,500 feet. A decline in their numbers in warming subalpine areas is a climate change indicator.



Wind, rain, and insects pollinate subalpine wildflowers.

- Native bees on elkweed
- Utah blue on fireweed
- Bumblebee on coyote mint
- Milberts' tortoise-shell butterfly
- Crown fritillary butterfly

**Bristlecone pines** are among Earth's oldest surviving organisms. In a grove at Spectra Point, some trees are over 1,500 years old. Few other tree species will grow at the edge of the breaks, where the soil is poor, water is scarce, and wind is extreme.

**Bristlecone pinecones**

**Markagunt penstemon**

**Illustration—NPS/ARLENE BRAITHWAITE; ALL OTHER IMAGES NPS UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED.**

# Plan Your Visit to Cedar Breaks

Roads, facilities, and services are open daily from late May to mid-October.

**Scenic Drive** Take a 7½-mile road through the highcountry. Protect yourself and wildlife by obeying posted speed limits. Do not drive into meadows, which are easily damaged. Stop only at designated roadside parking areas and overlooks.

**Overlooks** View the massive Cedar Breaks amphitheater from different perspectives at four overlooks along the scenic drive. Stay behind fences and away from the edge, where the rock is loose and crumbly. Do not throw rocks or other objects off the rim. Watch children

closely. Avoid exposed areas during thunderstorms.

**Camping and Picnicking** The 25-site campground is open mid-June to mid-September. All of the campsites can be reserved at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) up to six months in advance. The campground has water, restrooms, showers, tables, and fire grills. Daytime temperatures are in the 60s and 70s°F; nighttime lows are in the 30s and 40s°F. The picnic area has a shelter, water, and tables. Fires are permitted only in the campground.

**Safety and Regulations** Your safety is your responsibility. • High altitudes may cause shortness of breath and tiredness—slow down, rest often, and drink plenty of water.

- Wear a hat and use sunscreen.
- Pets must be leashed and attended; they are prohibited on trails.
- Hunting is prohibited inside the park. For firearms and other regulations, check the park website.
- Do not feed wildlife.
- Do not pick flowers or plants.
- Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features; leave them undisturbed.

**Accessibility** We strive to make our facilities, programs, and services accessible to all. To learn more, ask a ranger or visit the park website.

**Emergencies call 911 first, then contact a park employee.**

*Cell service is limited in the park.*

**More Information**  
Cedar Breaks National Monument  
2390 West Hwy. 56, Suite 11  
Cedar City, UT 84720-4151  
435-986-7120  
[www.nps.gov/cebr](http://www.nps.gov/cebr)

Cedar Breaks National Monument is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

 National Park Foundation  
Join the park community.  
[www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org)

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## Ski and Snowshoe

Roads, facilities, and services are closed mid-October through May because of heavy snow, but it's possible to pursue winter sports. Visit the park website for more information.

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## See the Stars

An International Dark Sky Park, Cedar Breaks hosts star parties throughout the year to celebrate and share the beauty of the night sky. Visit the park website for scheduled programs and locations.

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## Take the Trails

Cedar Breaks offers hiking options for all skill levels. Pets are allowed only on Sunset Trail and must be leashed at all times.

### Sunset Trail, 2 miles, roundtrip

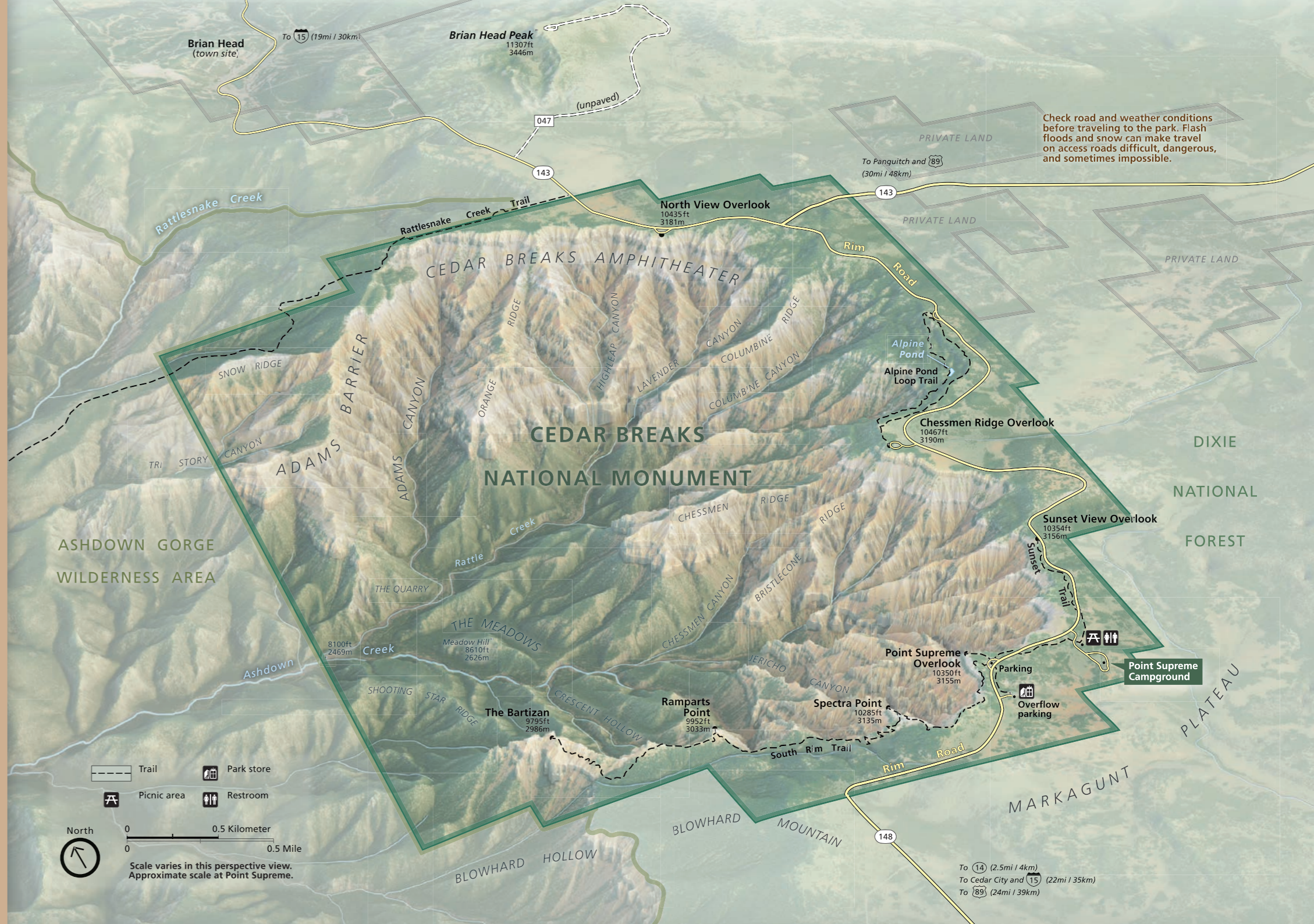
The easy, paved, wheelchair-accessible path passes through the Point Supreme picnic area and campground. It connects the Point Supreme and Sunset View overlooks and offers gentle slopes and many rest areas.

### Alpine Pond Loop Trail, 2 miles

Easy to moderate. The upper trail takes you past meadows of native wildflowers, through spruce-fir-aspen forest, and past ancient deposits of volcanic materials. The lower trail offers excellent views of the “breaks.”

### South Rim Trail, 5 miles, roundtrip

Moderately strenuous, not recommended for those with cardiac or pulmonary problems. The trail follows the plateau rim. It includes steep climbs, spectacular views, and ancient bristlecone pines. Viewpoints along the trail include Spectra Point (1 mile), Ramparts Overlook (2 miles), and the Bartizan (2½ miles).



Sunset over Cedar Breaks from the rim.  
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