



# Viewing & Photographing Wildlife

*Safety is important whenever viewing or photographing wildlife – for both you and the animals involved. Take a few minutes to read the information that follows for a better wildlife experience.*



**The horns of a Pronghorn (or the antlers of a deer or elk) are dangerous and can cause serious injury.** (Photo: Kevin Doxstater)

Federal laws exist to protect wildlife in national parks:

*The feeding, touching, teasing, frightening or intentional disturbing of wildlife nesting, breeding or other activities is prohibited. – 36 CFR 2.2 (a)(2)*

Even small animals can pose a serious threat to humans and should be treated with the same amount of respect as large animals. A bite from a chipmunk may take several stitches to close and this same bite could potentially transmit diseases. Female deer or pronghorn with young to protect can be especially dangerous, even without the antlers or horns of the males. Like humans, animals have a “comfort zone.” Keeping your distance and not disturbing an animal leads to a much more enjoyable experience. Observing the natural behavior of wildlife is a rewarding activity for young and old alike.



**Utah Prairie Dogs, a federally listed threatened species, are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act.** (Photo: Kevin Doxstater)

### **Special Protections**

Some animals (and plants) are protected by other Federal laws, including the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Animals that occur within Bryce Canyon National Park that are federally protected by the Endangered Species Act include Utah Prairie Dogs, as well as two rare park visitors, the California Condor and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

### **Watching Wildlife at Bryce Canyon**

As a general rule, if an animal changes its behavior you are too close. Park staff realizes that some animals in areas frequented by people have become habituated. This is partly because they have been fed in the past. We ask that you please avoid this temptation. Sure they are cute, but a squirrel may not know the difference between your finger and the nut you are attempting to feed it. Feeding them can sometimes result in a serious bite. In addition, animals that become accustomed to handouts may become sick or die as their digestive systems are not adapted to foods that are unnatural for them and intended for human consumption. They may also lose their ability/desire to forage for natural foods and starve as a result.

To safely view or photograph wildlife, please follow the simple rules below:

- Keep a safe distance! Stay at least 75 feet (23 m) from most animals and 300 feet (91 m) from bears, mountain lions, and other predators.
- Use binoculars or spotting scopes for close-up wildlife viewing and telephoto or zoom lenses for photography.
- Never feed wild animals.