

Canyonlands

NATIONAL PARK, UTAH

Indescribably diverse are the landscapes of this new National Park: arches, needles, spires, and standing rocks; broad plains, steep scarps, bold mesas, and crenelated buttes; roaring rapids, placid reaches, sandbars, bits of level bottom land; intricately dissected tributary canyons.

The Colorado River, which slices through the center of this colorful land, has with its tributaries been the single greatest shaper of the scenery. The Green River joins it within the park. Both rivers are entrenched in labyrinthine gorges, and below the confluence their waters slide into the echoing depths of Cataract Canyon. Benches, 1 mile to 15 miles wide, extend from the inner canyons to the cliffs of orange-red sandstone rimming the highlands that surround the confluence.

Bisected by the canyons of the rivers, the park consists of the Island in the Sky and the Needles districts.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

Island in the Sky district: Drive south on Utah 279 from the point at which it leaves U.S. 160 about 3 miles northeast of Moab.

Needles district: Drive west on the road that leaves U.S. 160 about 12 miles north of Monticello. The graded dirt roads into the two districts are slippery when wet, but they are used regularly by drivers of ordinary passenger cars.

ACCOMMODATIONS

At present there are no overnight accommodations or sources for food and gasoline within the park. Nearest facilities are in Monticello, southwest of the park, and Moab, northeast of the park. Camping supplies are available in both towns.

CAMPING

Campgrounds have tables, fireplaces, and pit toilets. Firewood is not available, so bring your own fuel. Trailer and camper units are welcome, but there are no hookups or special facilities for them. Primitive campsites are available in the Needles district, on the White Rim, and along the river for boaters. Camping time is limited to 14 days.

WHAT TO SEE AT THE PARK

A 4-wheel-drive vehicle is still the preferred means of transportation within the park, because many of the roads are too rough for ordinary passenger cars. In the Island in the Sky district, however, most of the roads are open to 2-wheel-drive vehicles. In the Needles district, 2-wheel-drive vehicles can negotiate the road to the base of Elephant Hill. But 4-wheel-drive vehicles are needed for the roads to Chesler Park,

the Confluence, and Salt Creek (Horse Canyon and Angel Arch). (See map.)

The placid parks, particularly Chesler and Virginia, ringed by the bristling forest of fantastic needles, are outstanding. Elephant Canyon, offering rapidly changing scenery every hundred yards, has towering Druid Arch as a climax at its head. Salt Creek and Horse Creek and their tributaries provide equally intriguing but very different visual values, as well as Indian ruins of archeological significance. Angel Arch in Salt Creek Canyon is incomparable. The grabens in the Needles country are scenically outstanding and geologically remarkable. Cataract Canyon—the explorers' nightmare and modern river-runners' challenge—is a feature well worth seeing (and hearing). In the heart of the Canyonlands the Green and Colorado Rivers merge their differing shades of silt-laden waters to form the wildest river on the continent—an untamable stream, whose geologic history of erosion is astounding, and whose basin holds some of the world's most vivid scenery.

Monument Basin would merit national protection on its own for its concentration of huge, sculptured fins and standing rocks. So would Upheaval Dome, a feature geologically unique, with an appearance as unusual as its story. The Island in the Sky, a great plateau ringed by sheer cliffs and connected to the main land mass by a neck of land only 40 feet wide, is a superb vantage point. Other overlooks in Canyonlands provide different but equally inspiring views.

Ask a park ranger for directions to these places.

TRAVEL ON THE RIVERS

Approximately 95 miles of the Green and Colorado Rivers lie within the boundaries of the park. For your safety, you are required to register with the superintendent before attempting a trip through Cataract Canyon.

CONDUCTED TOURS

Experienced professional guides offer tours by 4-wheel-drive vehicles and pack trips into Canyonlands and boat trips through the canyons of the Green and Colorado Rivers. For additional information on the tours, write to the superintendent or to the Chambers of Commerce of Moab and Monticello, or—after you arrive—ask a park ranger.

CLIMATE AND ELEVATION

Annual precipitation in this dry country ranges from 5 to 9 inches, much of the moisture coming in late-summer thunderstorms and winter snowfalls. Temperatures range from as high as 110° in summer to as low as -20° in winter.

Elevations within the park range from 3,600 feet in Cataract Canyon to almost 7,000 feet at Cedar Mesa.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—the Nation's principal natural resource agency—has a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that our renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

U. S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service



PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Plants and animals of the park are not of major significance in themselves, but they supplement the scenery. A few Douglas-fir grow in niches along the upper rim, and cottonwoods and other water-loving plants grow here and there around a few seeps and springs. But this is arid country, and the dominant impression is of pinyon-juniper woodland and grassy flats on the plateaus and of desert shrub and thin grass on the lower benches.

Mule deer, rodents, birds, and reptiles characterize the vertebrate animal population. Bighorn are present in the canyon country along the Green and Colorado Rivers.

WATER

Drinking water is available in the Needles district at Squaw Spring. There is no water in the Island in the Sky district. Take extra water with you at all times.

REGULATIONS

Canyonlands National Park is a sanctuary for all wildlife; hunting within the boundaries is not permitted. Firearms are not allowed unless they are unloaded and broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use.

Collecting rocks, fossils, plants, or any natural or manmade object is prohibited.

Pets must be kept under physical restraint at all times.

Aircraft are not permitted to land within the park.

Trash barrels are provided; please do not bury trash.

Trail bikes must be licensed, muffled, and operated by a licensed driver. Bikes **MUST** stay on established roads and jeep routes.

THE FEDERAL ANTIQUITIES ACT

The Federal Antiquities Act of 1906 specifically prohibits the appropriation, injury, destruction, or removal of any object of antiquity, or the excavation, injury, or destruction of any ruin on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture, and the Army, except such scientific research or excavation as these Secretaries may authorize. Please do not enter any ruin.

ADMINISTRATION

Canyonlands National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

A superintendent, whose address is Canyonlands National Park, Moab, Utah 84532, is in immediate charge of the park.

