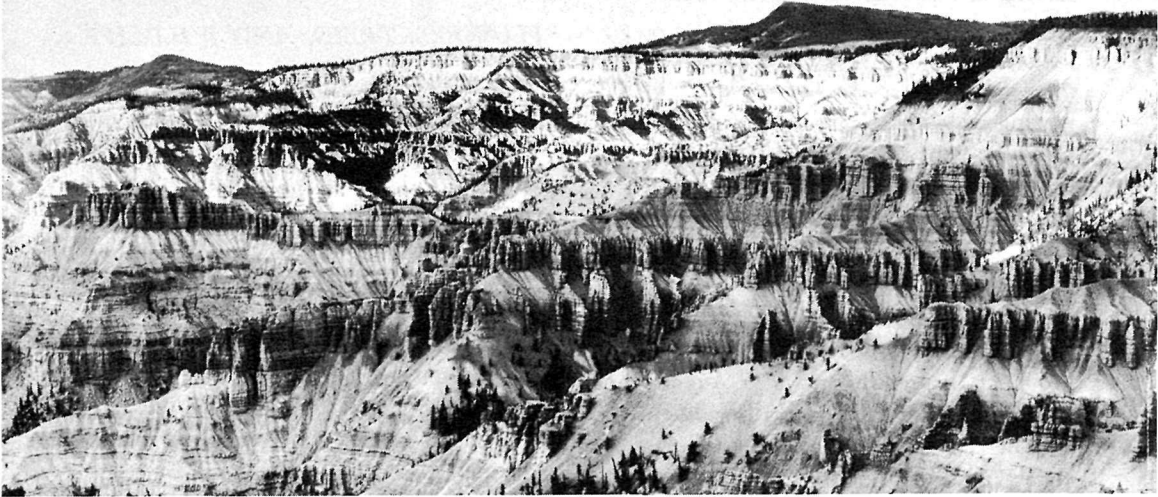


# CEDAR BREAKS

## National Monument • Utah



SITUATED HIGH ON THE Markagunt Plateau in southwest Utah at elevations reaching 10,700 feet, Cedar Breaks National Monument contains a gigantic multicolored natural amphitheater. The Pink Cliffs, a part of the Wasatch formation, have a thickness here of nearly 2,000 feet. They exhibit fantastic erosional features and display an amazing variety of color, 47 different shades having been recognized. With ever-changing tints of the vividly colored rock formations, sweeping vistas, and attractive wildflowers, Cedar Breaks National Monument offers superlative scenic values. One of the most spectacular views is from nearby Brianhead, which has an elevation of 11,315 feet.

The monument is located 21 miles east of Cedar City, Utah, and is surrounded by

Dixie National Forest. It embraces an area of 6,172.20 acres, two-thirds of which consist of high cliffs and steep talus slopes.

Since cedar trees are not evident in the area, the name "Cedar Breaks" is confusing to many visitors. Junipers, which the early settlers called "cedars," grow nearby, but at elevations considerably below the rim of the amphitheater. The settlers also referred to the canyons and cliffs as "breaks" or "badlands."

### HISTORY

Early exploration of the Markagunt Plateau began in 1851 when the Mormons settled in Parowan and Cedar City, in the valley to the west. In 1852, church leaders explored the headwaters of the Sevier and

Virgin Rivers, which rise on the plateau, but made no report concerning the cliffs known today as Cedar Breaks.

It was 20 years before anyone described the colorful amphitheater at Cedar Breaks. Both the Wheeler and Powell Surveys of 1872 made extensive topographic records, as well as observations of flora, fauna, and geology.

For more than three decades following these scientific surveys, use was made of the grazing and timber resources of the area as need developed. The first protection afforded this unique natural gem was in 1905 when it was included as part of the Sevier (now Dixie) National Forest, and was administered by the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture. The area was established as a national monument by Presidential proclamation on August 22, 1933, and was placed under the administration of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

## GEOLOGY

The layers of rock making up the Wasatch formation at Cedar Breaks had their origin about 55 million years ago as limy ooze deposited in shallow lakes on a land surface near sea level. About 13 million years ago the land was uplifted to its present height and gradually eroded into canyons, spires, and cliffs. Some of the surrounding region was raised in separate blocks. The landscape at Cedar Breaks and eastward remained as one large plateau, with only minor breaks along its weaker joints. As this plateau lifted, it produced a very steep escarpment which faced westward while the plateau surface tipped eastward. Rain and snow water rushing down the escarpment cut canyons into the soft limestone. Oxidation of impurities in the limestone—iron in particular—gives the cliffs their color.

Geological disturbances were accompanied by volcanic eruptions. Lava from the more recent eruptions appears to be only a few thousand years old. Many of these lava beds are fresh in appearance and remain without vegetation. They are widely distributed over the plateau.

## FLOWERS, TREES, AND WILDLIFE

As soon as the snow melts in the spring, and throughout the monument travel season which normally extends from June 8 to October 25, the meadows and slopes become resplendent natural flower gardens.

Good moisture conditions and fertile soil encourage the growth of such flowers as the marshmarigold, green-gentian, mountain buttercup, Indian paintbrush, lupine, larkspur, white columbine, monkshood, and bellflower, or bluebells.

Of much interest is the bristlecone (fox-tail) pine, which ekes out an amazing existence on the bare limestone soil.

The higher portions of the rim of the amphitheater are dotted with subalpine meadows and dwarfed clumps of fir and spruce.

The area is a favorable wildlife habitat. Mule deer may be found grazing in the meadows almost any morning or evening. Marmots build their nests among the rocks, and ground squirrels, chipmunks, and red squirrels find the cones of the spruce a good food—ideal for the winter cache.

## HOW TO REACH THE MONUMENT

The monument is located 3 miles north of State Route 14 between Cedar City on U. S. 91 and Long Valley Junction on U. S. 89. It is 25 miles from Long Valley Junction and 18 miles from Cedar City to the turn-off from State Route 14. Cedar Breaks is 84 miles from Zion National Park and 73 miles from Bryce Canyon National Park.

## WHAT TO DO

The monument headquarters and museum building is at Point Supreme, only 1 mile from the south entrance of the monument. A naturalist provides interpretive and informational service. Informal talks on plants, animals, history, and geology of the area are given several times each day at Point Supreme.

Viewpoints offering varied scenes can be reached by driving the 6 miles of road along the rim of Cedar Breaks. On this drive, many flowers are seen, particularly during July and August.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

A concessioner operates a small dining lodge and cabins in the monument. For reservations and rates write to the Utah Parks Co., Cedar City, Utah.

A free public campground is maintained near Point Supreme, with water, sanitary facilities, and trailer space. At the present time (1954), there are no facilities in the monument for obtaining groceries and gasoline and oil.

## ADMINISTRATION

Cedar Breaks National Monument is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior.

The National Park System, of which Cedar Breaks National Monument is a unit, is dedicated to the conservation of America's scenic, scientific, and historic heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.



United States Department of the Interior

Douglas McKay, Secretary

National Park Service, Conrad L. Wirth, Director



The superintendent of Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, whose address is Springdale, Utah, is in charge of the monument. An acting superintendent resides in the monument during the summer.

Certain regulations are designed for the protection of the natural features and for your safety and convenience. Park rangers will help and advise visitors, as well as enforce regulations.

*Natural features.*—Please help us preserve the wildlife, shrubbery, trees, and other natural features. The use of firearms is not permitted.

*Camping.*—Camp or picnic only in the established campground. Keep your fire small and within the fireplace.

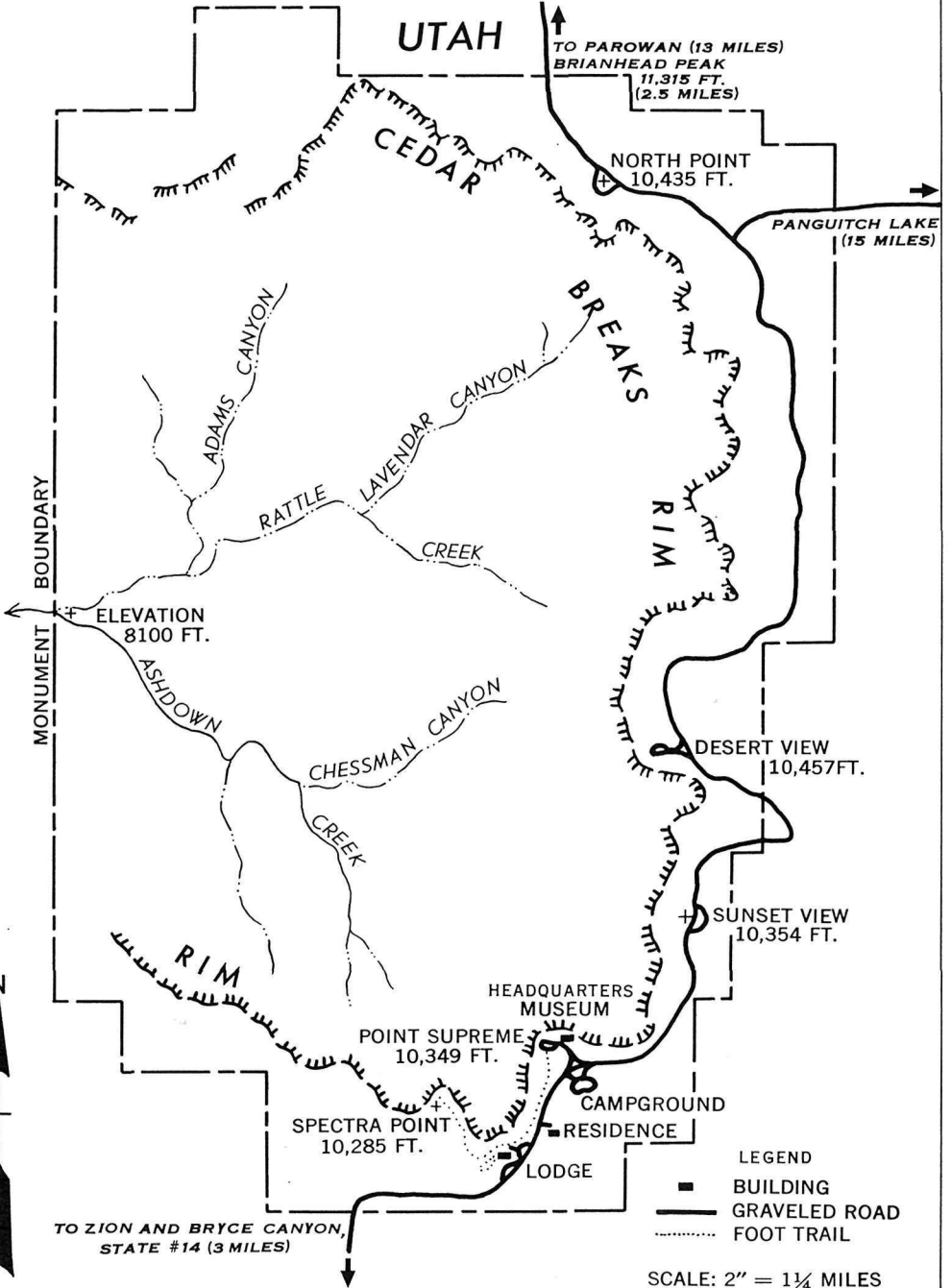
*Hiking.*—Refrain from shortcutting trails. For your safety, seek the advice of the superintendent or ranger concerning climbing or hiking.

*Driving.*—Please drive only on the established roads and use the parking areas.

*Pets.*—Pets must be under physical restrictive control at all times.

*If you are in doubt, consult a ranger.*  
*Please help to keep your monument clean.*

# CEDAR BREAKS NATIONAL MONUMENT



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