

Cedar Breaks

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Monument
Utah



Cedar Breaks amphitheater

NPS

Where Nature's Art Comes To Life

A dynamic vista of colorful rock formations, bristlecone pine groves, and lush wildflower meadows awaits all who aspire to explore the crown of the Grand Staircase.

Past generations viewed this ancient land of lush highcountry and vivid rock formations as nothing short of spectacular. The Southern Paiute called this area *u-map-wich*, "the place where the rocks are sliding down all the time." Later settlers—who misidentified the juniper trees as cedars and described the steep, heavily eroded terrain as breaks—named it Cedar Breaks. Over time people acted to preserve these extraordinary natural features. In 1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt established Cedar Breaks National Monument to protect this land for future generations.

A 3-mile wide amphitheater (*above*) sets the stage for a striking natural display. Limestone uplifted over millions of years and exposed by erosion has produced a cast of natural features, like hoodoos, arches, fins, and canyons. Located on the western edge of the Markagunt Plateau, which has been uplifted by an active fault, these features are shaped by erosion, rain, ice, and wind. Behind the scenes, oxidized iron and manganese play a starring role in the amphitheater's characteristic red, yellow, and purple color variations.

Saturated with brilliant colors and continuously changing, this dramatic backdrop rises over 10,000 feet above sea level to the amphitheater's rim—an amazing high point of geologic art.

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FLOWERS—NPS EXCEPT SCARLET PAINTBRUSH © MARGARET LITTLEJOHN

Tour the Highcountry

Cedar Breaks' highcountry starkly contrasts the rocky amphitheater below it. Subalpine meadows of grasses and seasonal wildflowers cap the 10,000-foot high Markagunt Plateau. Here you will find lush scenery, vibrant colors, and the scent of spruce-fir forests—as well as Alpine Pond, a spring-fed pool in a shady grove of Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir, and quaking aspen.

A yearly show of wildflowers begins in late June. Mountain bluebell, lavender fleabane, cushion phlox, and other early bloomers burst onto the scene. In mid-July displays begin to peak. The summer meadows overflow with larkspur, lupine, columbine, scarlet paintbrush, and more. By fall, groves of quaking aspens color the mountains in golden yellows, sunny oranges, and fiery reds.

Gnarled, weather-beaten bristlecone pine trees thrive on Cedar Breaks' thin soil and harsh, wind-swept cliffs. In fact, a bristlecone pine at Spectra Point is over 1,600 years old. Competition from other trees is greatly reduced here, and conditions encourage centuries of slow, steady growth.

Forests and fields are alive with an abundant diversity of wildlife. Clark's nutcrackers, black ravens, and red-tailed hawks soar above the plateau. You might see mule deer, pikas, marmots, porcupines, chipmunks, and red squirrels. More reclusive animals, like black bears and mountain lions, also live in this protected natural area.

Cedar Breaks Wilderness

Congress has recommended over 80 percent of Cedar Breaks for protection under the 1964 Wilderness Act. While awaiting Congressional action, the National Park Service manages the area to preserve wilderness character and values. Wilderness is meant to protect forever the land's natural conditions, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and scientific, educational, and historical values. In wilderness people can sense being a part of the whole community of life here on Earth. Preserving wilderness shows restraint and humility and benefits generations that will follow us. For information about the National Wilderness Preservation System please visit www.wilderness.net.

Explore Cedar Breaks



Plan Your Visit

Information Center Start your visit here. Bookstore. Open daily late May to mid-October.

Scenic Drive A 7.5-mile road through the high-country takes you to the park's attractions. Protect yourself and wildlife by obeying posted speed limits. Do not drive into meadows, which are easily damaged; use designated roadside parking areas only.

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.

Hiking Hike the plateau rim along **Ramparts Trail** (4 miles round-trip). Steep climbs lead to spectacular views and groves of ancient bristlecone pines at Spectra Point and Ramparts Overlook. **Alpine Pond Trail** (a 2-mile loop) leads to a forest glade and pond. A trail guide is available at the trailhead or information center. The park's only pet-friendly trail, the **Campground Trail** (½-mile one-way) connects the campground and information center. **Sunset Trail** (1 mile one-way),

a wheelchair-accessible paved path, connects the information center via the Campground Trail to Sunset View Overlook. Most of the trail is relatively flat with some slightly steep spots along its rolling walkway.

Camping and Picnicking The 28-site campground is open mid-June to mid-September. Several sites can be reserved online up to 6 months in advance at www.recreation.gov. 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 water and tables. Fires are permitted only in the campground.

Winter Activities The park is open for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Snowmobiling is allowed only on the marked, groomed trail. Roads, facilities, and services are closed mid-October through May due to heavy snowfall.

Safety and Regulations Remember: 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 and in the

information center. • Hunting is prohibited inside the park. For information on firearms and other regulations, check the park website. • Do not feed wildlife. • Do not pick flowers or plants. • Federal laws protect all natural features; leave them undisturbed.

Accessibility We strive to make our facilities, programs, and services accessible to all. To learn more ask at the information center 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
435-586-0787 (late May to mid-October)
435-586-9451 (mid-October to late May)
www.nps.gov/cebr

Cedar Breaks National Monument is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. Learn more about national parks at www.nps.gov.