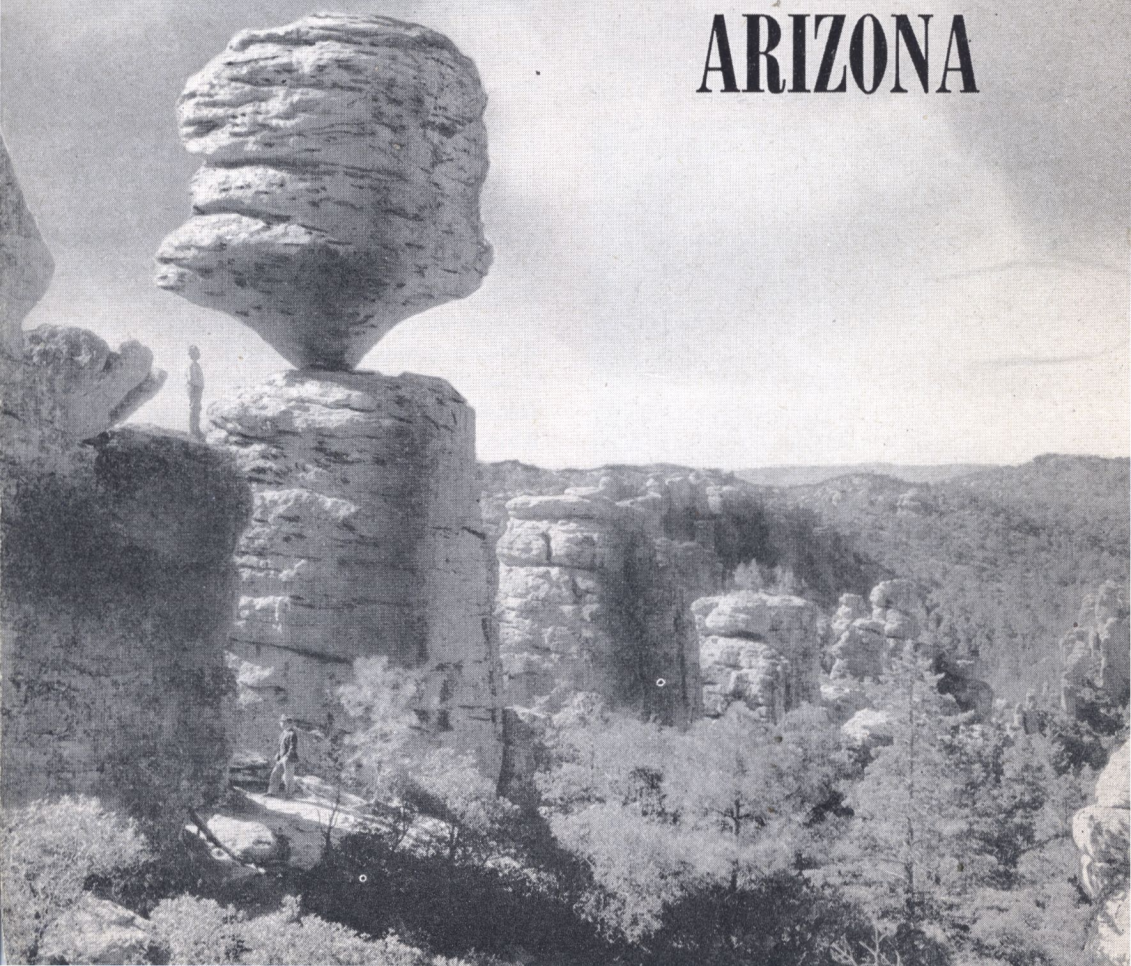


Chiricahua

National Monument

ARIZONA



Chiricahua

NATIONAL MONUMENT

A R I Z O N A



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR
J. A. Krug, Secretary

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Newton B. Drury, Director

Weirdly beautiful pinnacles and columns eroded in volcanic rocks high in a forested range, which forms a mountain island in a desert sea.

Unbelievably tall and slender pinnacles, startling likenesses of giant beasts and men, grotesque and weird figures such as might inhabit another world—all these and many more, carved by Nature in volcanic rock, are crowded into 17 spectacular square miles of ridge and canyon on the west flank of the Chiricahua Mountains.

Rising steeply from the grasslands of southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico, the Chiricahuas (Cheer'-e-cow-ahs) present a verdant, forested island in a brown sea of desert. Many varieties of trees, shrubs, and flowering herbs clothe the steep canyon walls. Shady glens, alive with birds, are frowned down upon by rows of quaint yet massive spires, turrets, and battlements in this fascinating "wonderland of rocks."

Geological Story

What whim of Nature has formed these striking and peculiar pinnacles and balanced rocks? Geologists explain that thousands of years ago volcanic activity was rampant throughout this region. Series of lava flows covered the then level area with sheets of basaltic and rhyolitic rock. Many years, perhaps centuries,



"China Boy" is among the best known of Chiricahua's rock figures.

elapsed between periods of activity, resulting in a series of blankets, layer upon layer. Since some of the eruptions were of considerable magnitude, while others were of a minor nature, deposits varied in thickness. Thinner sheets cooled more rapidly than the massive layers. The molten lava shrank in cooling, causing vertical cracks to form in definite patterns.

Finally, eruptive activity ceased, to be followed by movements in the earth's crust, which slowly lifted and tilted great blocks to form mountains. Storms and other agencies of erosion, especially running water carrying small particles of rock, immediately set to work on the long, slow task of wearing down these mountains. Shallow canyons became deeper and more rugged as time passed. Weathered rock formed soil which collected in pockets, and plant life gained a foothold.

Where previous volcanic activity had spread sheets of lava, the mountains were now capped with layers of basalt and rhyolite. Along the vertical shrinkage cracks and between the horizontal layers, erosion began its persistent work. Cracks were

widened to form fissures; fissures grew to breaches. Undercutting slowly took place along lines between layers. Gradually the lava masses were cut by millions of erosional channels into blocks of a multitude of sizes and shapes to be further sculptured by the capricious elements.

Erosion is still going on slowly but steadily and persistently among the great pillared cliffs of Chiricahua National Monument. Some of the most exposed portions have already been worn away. Pedestal or balanced rocks have formed and fallen; others are tottering; more are just taking shape. Within the span of a human life, only minor changes may be noticed, but with the passage of the centuries the face of Nature is ever changing.

Although the spectacular erosional remnants and the massive columnar structure of the cliffs impress the hurried visitor, the more leisurely traveler who has opportunity to pause along the trailside sees much more of geological interest. Here and there are exposed beds of volcanic ash and cinders, indicating the explosive nature of some of the ancient eruptions. Road construction has uncovered shale which was once the mud of a lake bed whose waters were impounded when lava blocked a stream channel long ago. One trail is strewn with "petrified grapes" weathered out of a ledge composed of millions of marblelike pellets firmly cemented together into a peculiar "peanut-brittle" rock.

Plant and Animal Life

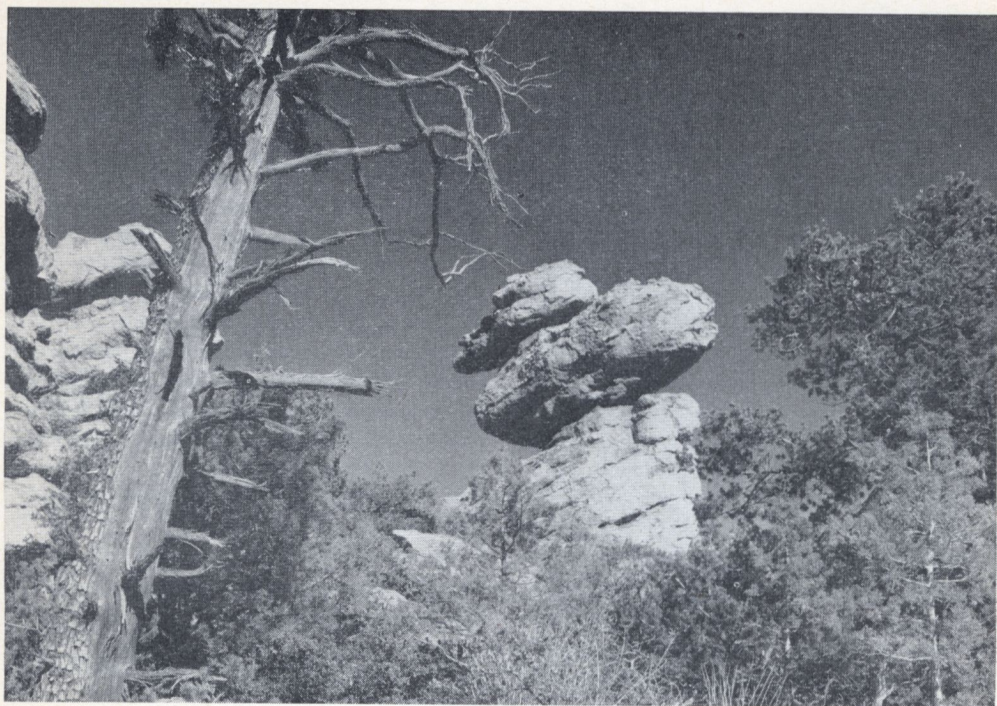
Because of its location as a mountainous island in a sea of arid grassland, the Chiricahua Range affords a haven for a multitude of plants and animals of many varieties. Winter snows and summer rains result in springs and small streams, some of which flow the year around. Dense vegetation covers the shaded canyon bottoms and the cool north slopes of the higher elevations. In contrast, south exposures feel the full heat of the hot summer sun and display plants characteristic

of the desert. Red-stemmed manzanitas and bark-shedding madrones rub branches with the chalky-white limbs of the sycamore and the feathery gray foliage of the Arizona cypress. Green slopes, covered by chaparral of scrub oak and manzanita, face open hillsides dotted with a desert vegetation of yuccas, century plants, and cacti. Seasonal changes bring with them many varieties of wild flowers.

Arizona white-tail deer are numerous in the Chiricahuas, and in the monument, where they are protected, they become accustomed to man and are frequently seen. Smaller mammals, especially the rodents, are common as are birds of many species. Each vegetative belt and plant association has its own distinctive animal population. A few of these forms, because of the relative and long-established isolation of the Chiricahua Range, are unique. Others, such as the coppery-tailed trogon and the thick-billed parrot, are occasional visitors, coming for a short stay in the Chiricahuas from their homes among the wooded highlands of northern Mexico.

Natural sculpture, called "Punch and Judy."





"Duck on a Rock"—one of many strange figures carved by Nature from the rhyolite rock in the monument.

Historical Background

What student of American history has not heard of Geronimo (Her-on'-i-moe), famous war chief of the Chiricahua Apache Indians? When, in 1886, Geronimo and his band of renegades finally surrendered to United States soldiers, there ended one of the most stubborn phases of aboriginal resistance to white domination. For centuries, the Chiricahua Mountains and their neighboring ranges were the ancestral home of the predatory and warlike Apache Indians. Living on wild animals and native plants, these resourceful people moved from place to place depending upon the requirements of the season and the supply of food. Occasionally they raided the farmer Indians of the desert valleys, and with the coming of the Spaniards, they found increased incentive to pillage for the European cattle, horses, and cereals introduced by the white men.

Stolen horses greatly increased the power and widened the range of Indian

activities, and the southeastern corner of what is now Arizona became an Apache stronghold. With the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 and the opening of settlement of the region to United States citizens, the Apache raiders became more and more of a hazard. Detachments of United States troops were dispatched to the Southwest to protect settlers, prospectors, travelers, and the mail- and passenger-carrying stages of the Butterfield Route which were often attacked. Cavalry camps and bases were established. One of the most famous of these, Fort Bowie, established in 1862, commanded strategic Apache Pass at the end of the Chiricahua Mountains, north of the monument. From 1860 until 1872, the Chiricahua Apaches under the leadership of the wily Cochise matched the strategy of the soldiers.

In 1872, the Chiricahua Apaches were finally rounded up and placed on a reservation, but hostilities continued to flare up when renegade bands left the reservation to attack travelers and pillage isolated

ranches. Geronimo, who was the most persistent and cunning of the renegade leaders, was captured in 1886. This ended the organized resistance of the Chiricahua Apaches, but "Big Foot" Massai staged several one-man escapades in later years. Cochise Head, just north of the monument, and Massai Point and Massai Canyon, within its boundaries, immortalize the names of two of the famous Apaches of the Chiricahua group.

The Monument

Proclaimed a national monument by President Coolidge on April 18, 1924, the Chiricahua reserve has an area of 10,529 acres of rugged and spectacular mountain scenery. Elevations within the monument range from 5,320 feet to 7,308 feet above sea level. The monument is entered from the west over well-graded approach roads which connect with paved highways at Bowie, Douglas, Willcox, and Pearce.

Development within the monument is well advanced, a high-grade mountain road taking automobiles up scenic Bonita Canyon to Massai Point from which an extensive view may be had of the monument and over the Sulfur Springs Valley to the west and the San Simon Valley on the east. Fourteen miles of well-built trails enable the visitor to reach all parts of the monument on foot or horseback. Visitors register and are furnished with information at monument headquarters, about 1 mile beyond the entrance. Here there is a small exhibit room, and free interpretive service is provided. When personnel is available, visitors are accompanied to points of interest by park rangers who explain the geologic phenomena which resulted in the spectacular rock figures for which the monument is noted.

Free campgrounds with picnic tables and water are located in Bonita Canyon, a short distance from the monument headquarters. For visitors who prefer not to camp, meals and lodging are obtainable at Silver Spur Ranch, near the monument

headquarters. Saddle horses also are available. Hunting, or injury to any plant, animal, or feature of the monument, is prohibited.

Administration

Chiricahua National Monument is a part of the National Park System owned by the people of the United States and administered for them by the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior. In these, the scenery and the objects of historic, prehistoric, and scientific interest are carefully preserved and displayed for public enjoyment. This area is in charge of a resident custodian with headquarters in the administration building in the monument.

All communications should be addressed to the Custodian, Chiricahua National Monument, Dos Cabezas, Ariz.

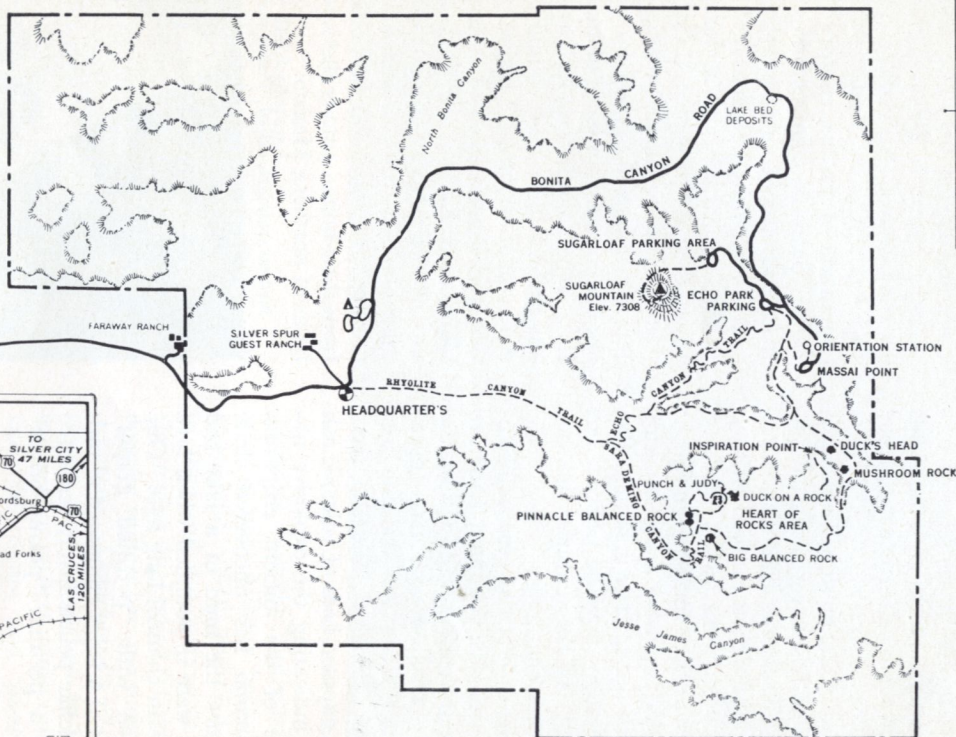
Geronimo, famous war chief of the Chiricahua Apache Indians.



CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT ARIZONA

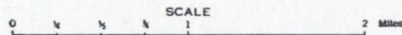
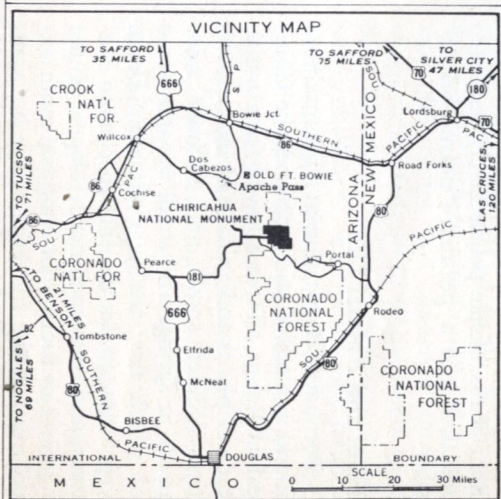
LEGEND

- Monument Boundary
- Road
- Trail
- Camp Ground
- Ranger Station
- Fire Lookout



← TO WILLCOX 44 MILES

VICINITY MAP



N