

TIPS FOR A SAFE VISIT

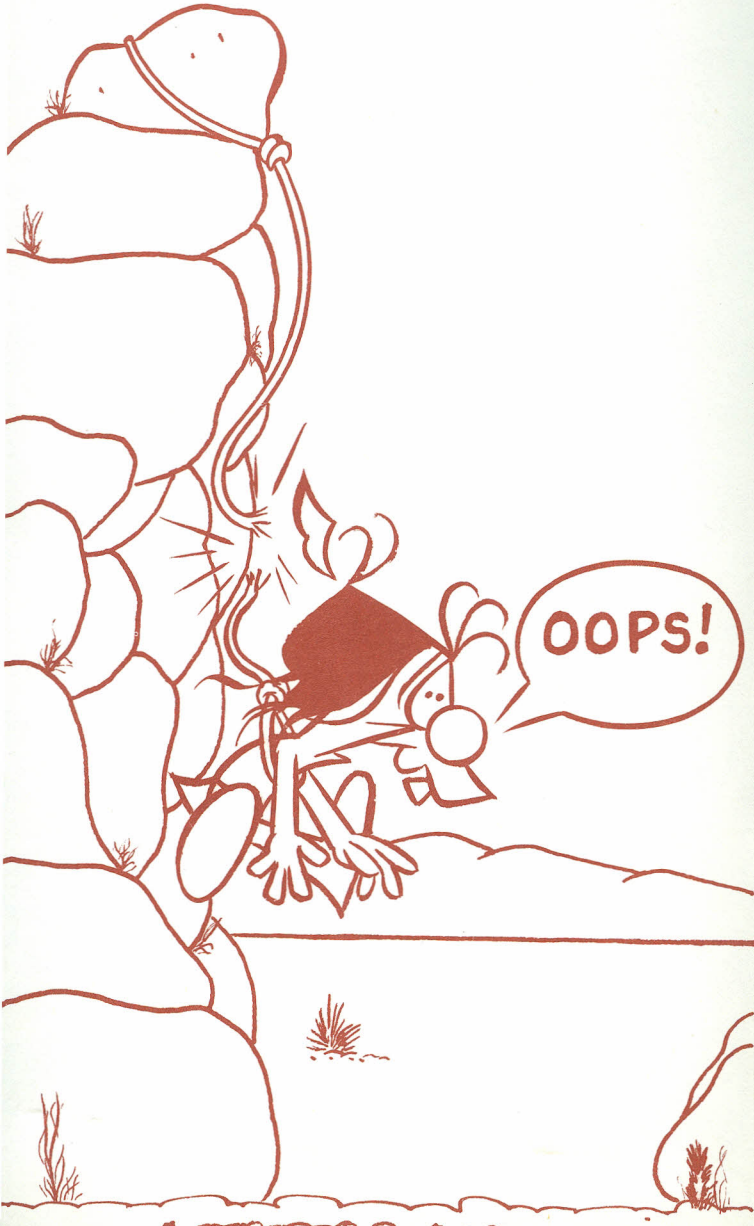
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT



ROCK CLIMBING

Those piles of boulders can be more dangerous than they look, especially to "indestructible" kids. (They really aren't.) Our accident records show that many adults are breakable too.

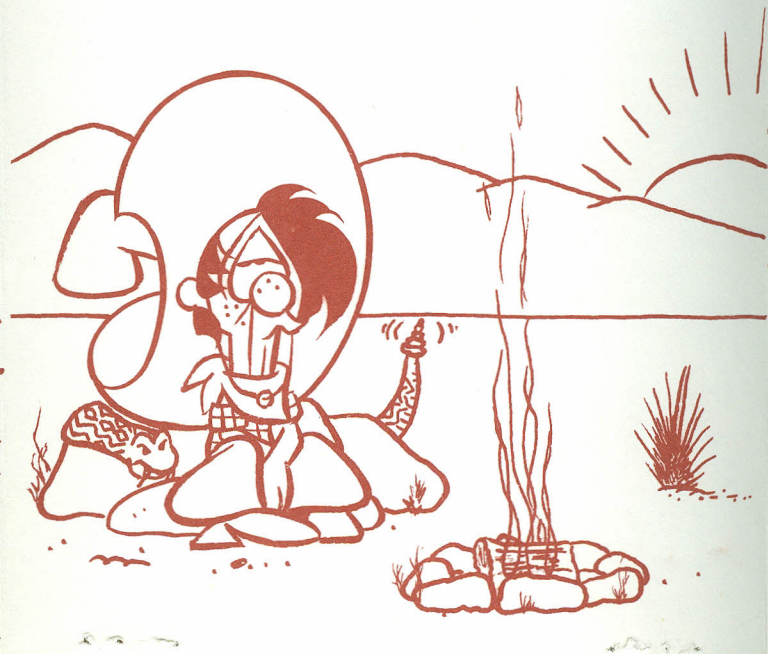
If you really can't resist the urge, at least hedge your bet. Heads are especially fragile so pack yours, like you would an egg, in something cushioned on the inside and hard on the outside. A helmet is a handy item. Sturdy climbing boots are a help but you'll still have to watch for loose surface material.



POISONOUS CRITTERS

Black widow and brown recluse spiders, scorpions and five kinds of rattlesnakes live in the Monument. We haven't had even a little luck in changing *their* habits so we'll have to count on you changing yours.

When it's hot, be careful of shaded areas under rocks and bushes. When it's cold, snakes are more likely to be found in the open sunning themselves. They won't be expecting you so be careful where you step or put your hands.



DRIVE SAFELY

Most of the roads here follow wagon tracks laid down by miners and ranchers. Their wagons weren't built for speed. Neither are the roads.

Take it slow and keep one eye open for speed and curve signs. Let the people riding with you do most of the scenery watching.

The view from a ditch can get pretty boring before you're on your way again.



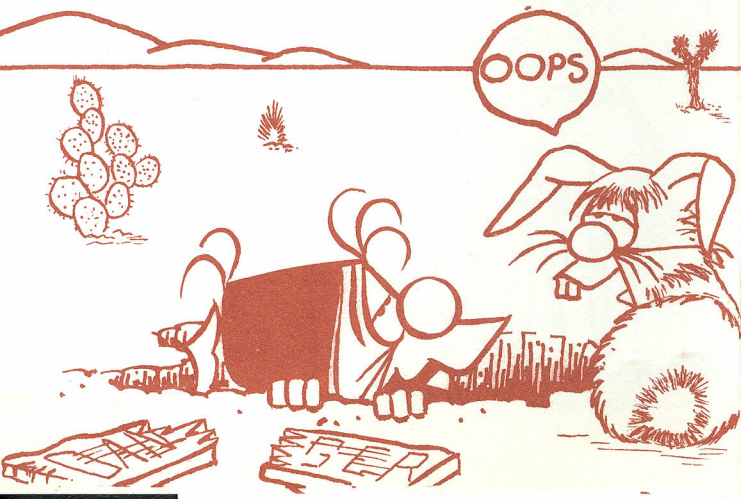
ABANDONED MINES

Prospectors and miners were great diggers but not much for filling in holes when things didn't work out. We're fencing them as fast as we can. Stay extra alert -- don't find one before we do!

Watch for loose gravel around openings, undercut edges and never trust ladders or timbers. **STAY COMPLETELY CLEAR.** If you feel perfectly safe, you're still too close.

The best we could say about a fall is that it would probably be a thrilling experience (while it lasted), but then it would end abruptly. Some of the shafts contain water, poisonous fumes and are popular hangouts for snakes, scorpions and spiders. If you survive the fall, there's probably one or more of these attractions to look forward to.

"Tumbleweeds" characters used by permission of T.K. Ryan and King Features Syndicate



WHILE VISITING THE DESERT:

Watch out for flash floods. A seemingly innocent dark cloud poised above a canyon can suddenly turn a dry wash into a raging river. July through September is normally the rainy season in this area. Desert rainfall tends to "wash" rather than soak in and water may flow across roadways. Don't attempt to cross flooded areas until water has receded and stay clear of washes.

Carry enough water with you. Minimum requirement is one gallon of water per person per day for drinking purposes. Carry water even on short walks to reduce your danger should you become lost. Carry extra water for vehicles so drinking supplies will not have to be used in case of boil over. When backpacking, be sure to carry extra water for cooking needs. Freeze-dried foods are not recommended because of their requirements for extra water.

Dress properly for the climate. Seasonal temperatures vary from 100 degrees plus in summer to zero in winter. During the summer months wear a wide brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt, loose fitting clothing, sturdy boots and don't forget sunglasses. During the winter months down-insulated jackets and sleeping bags are recommended.

Regardless of season -- carry a snake bite kit and first aid kit. If your car breaks down or gets stuck, wait right there for help. Other's knowledge of where you are going and when you expect to return is the best life insurance coverage you can carry in the desert. If you check in with someone, be sure to check out when leaving.

U. S. DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR
National Park Service