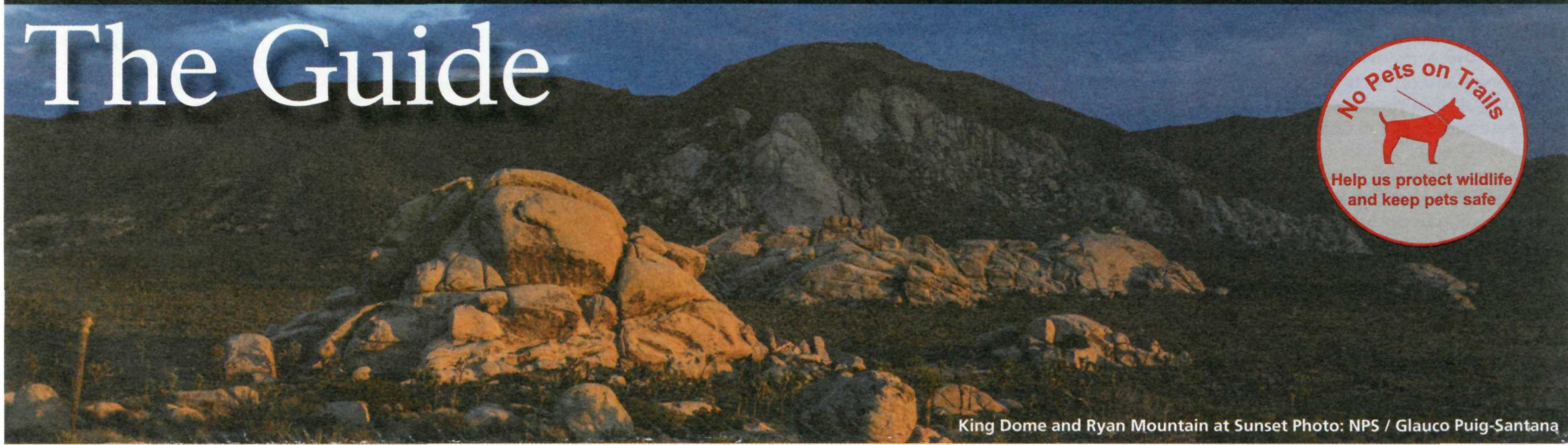




# The Guide



King Dome and Ryan Mountain at Sunset Photo: NPS / Glauco Puig-Santana

## What to See and Do

Drive between West and North entrances to see our famous Joshua trees and boulder fields. To stop and take photos, use paved pulloffs and get completely out of the flow of traffic.



Visit the Pinto Basin and see the Cholla Cactus Garden and Ocotillo Patch. This is a great place to enjoy sunrise and sunset.



Visit Cottonwood Springs to escape the heat in the shade of a desert oasis.



Spend the night in a campground and enjoy the park under the light of the stars.



Enjoy moderate hikes in the early morning and plan to finish before the heat of the day.



Enjoy a short walk on one of the nature trails in the park.



## Support Your Park



### Watch wildlife respectfully

Stay at least 75 feet (23 m) from wildlife. If an animal reacts to your presence by changing its behavior, you are too close. Remember, this is home for wild animals. We are visitors.



### Never feed any wild animals

Consuming human food is unhealthy for wildlife and may encourage aggressive behavior. Food, trash, scented products, and cooking tools must be stored securely in a vehicle or hard-sided container.



### Travel responsibly with your pet

Pets must be on a leash at all times. They cannot go more than 100 feet (30 m) from roads, picnic areas, and campgrounds. Pets are not allowed on hiking trails or in the backcountry. Owners must never leave a pet unattended or tied to an object. Bag and properly dispose of pet waste.



### No drones or remote controlled vehicles

Remote-controlled vehicles, including aircraft and rockcrawlers, are prohibited. Drones and other remotely-operated craft can disturb wildlife and disrupt the visitor experience.



### Campfires

Campfires are allowed only in designated fire rings or grills found in campgrounds and picnic areas. Campfires are not allowed in the backcountry. Bring your own firewood and extra water to douse your campfire. Do not use park vegetation, living or dead, for fuel. High winds may require fire bans.



### No collecting park resources

Leave everything in the park as it is for others to enjoy. Do not destroy, deface, dig, collect, or otherwise disturb any park resources including plants or animals (whether they are dead or alive), rocks, fossils, or artifacts.



### Rock climbing

Climbers may replace existing bolts if they are unsafe. New bolts may be placed in non-wilderness areas in accordance with the bolting checklist, available on the park website. Bolting in wilderness requires a permit.



### All vehicles and bicycles must stay on roads

The desert environment is more fragile than it may look. Ruts and scars left by vehicles and bicycles illegally taken off-road can last for years. Red and green sticker dirt bikes, ATVs, and UTVs are prohibited in the park.



### Watch for tortoises

The desert tortoise is a threatened species, and in the past year a number have been killed by being hit by cars. Drive carefully in the park and look under your vehicle before moving it: small tortoises on the road look like rocks. Tortoises may drink from puddles on the roads after rains or take shelter from the hot sun under vehicles.



### Protect the trees

Attaching lines to vegetation, including Joshua trees and junipers, is prohibited. Hammocks, slacklines, and other horizontal ropes must be tied to rocks and climbing bolts, and are not permitted in campgrounds.



### Firearms and weapons

Firearms may be possessed in accordance with California state and federal laws. Firearms may not be discharged in the park. Fireworks, traps, bows, BB guns, paintball guns, smoke bombs, and slingshots are not allowed in the park.



### No graffiti

Over the last few years there has been an increase in graffiti and acts of intentional vandalism, including carving into rocks, trees, and historic structures within the park. This is illegal, it damages resources, and costs the park significant time and money to continually remove graffiti from rocks. Report incidents of graffiti to:

[jotr\\_graffiti@nps.gov](mailto:jotr_graffiti@nps.gov)



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Joshua Tree National Park** preserves and protects the scenic, natural, and cultural resources representative of the Colorado and Mojave Deserts' rich biological and geological diversity, cultural history, wilderness, recreational values, and outstanding opportunities for education and scientific study.

**Superintendent**  
David Smith

74485 National Park Drive  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

760-367-5500  
[www.nps.gov/jotr](http://www.nps.gov/jotr)  
[jotr\\_info@nps.gov](mailto:jotr_info@nps.gov)

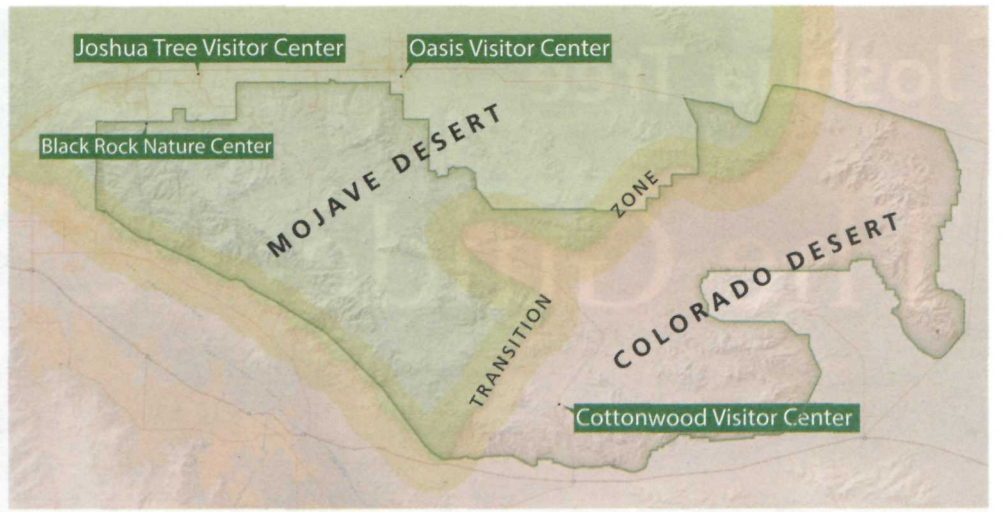
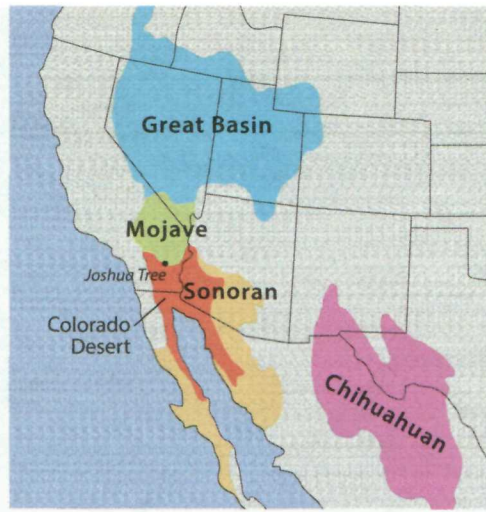
**Emergency**  
911

**Social Media**  
@JoshuaTreeNPS  
@JoshuaTreeNP  
[joshuatreenps.tumblr.com](https://www.tumblr.com/joshuatreenps)

**Lost & Found**  
[www.nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/lostandfound.htm](http://www.nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/lostandfound.htm)  
[jotr\\_lost\\_and\\_found@nps.gov](mailto:jotr_lost_and_found@nps.gov)

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™



The Colorado Desert is a subsection of the larger Sonoran Desert (left). The transition zone between the Colorado and Mojave Deserts hosts a wealth of biological diversity and is home to species characteristic of both deserts (right).

## Caution: Roadwork Delays

A major road-improvement project is being completed in the park. Work will include crack sealing, micro-surfacing, chip sealing, pavement repairs as well as, new striping and road markings.

Construction may occasionally affect parking in campgrounds and turnouts. Minor traffic delays will also be a factor during the months of May and June. Work will take place Monday–Friday (except holidays), between the hours of 6 am and 7pm.

Delays may be up to 30 minutes in some areas and will also affect shuttle service. Park officials ask visitors to please obey to all signs and notices and be especially cautious around flaggers while traveling through the park.

Please be patient and plan a little extra time into your trip to account for any delays.

These improvements will extend the life of park roads and parking areas as well as improve visitor safety at Joshua Tree and greatly enhance the park driving experience. For any questions please contact Kirk Diamond, Chief of Facility Maintenance, at 760-367-5680.

## Safety



- Water is available at:
- Oasis Visitor Center
  - Black Rock Campground
  - Cottonwood Campground
  - Cottonwood Visitor Center
  - West Entrance
  - Indian Cove Ranger Station

Stay hydrated; drink at least one gallon (4 L) of water per person, per day and lots of salty snacks or electrolyte drinks when active.



In most of the park there is no cell coverage. Do not count on your phone for navigation or in case of emergency.

GPS units and navigation apps are not reliable in the park and may direct you to unsafe roads. Refer to the park map for navigation.



Never put your hands or feet into rock crevices or onto ledges where you can't see. Use a flashlight.



Drive slowly to protect wildlife. When stopping to view animals or scenery use a pullout and move out of the way of traffic.



Use sunscreen and reapply often. Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat.



Many historic mine sites exist here. Structures may be unstable and may contain toxic chemicals. Do not enter.



Bees are common and attracted to moisture. Roll up windows and exit vehicles quickly to minimize the likelihood of bees in your car.



Flash floods occur during summer monsoons. Avoid canyons and washes and move to higher ground. Don't drive through water.



## Emergency Phones

- Indian Cove Ranger Station
- Intersection Rock parking area near Hidden Valley Campground
- Cottonwood Ranger Station

In an emergency, if you have cell service, dial 911 for assistance.

# Park Campgrounds

## Camping Regulations

- A maximum of six people, three tents, and two licensed vehicles may occupy an individual campsite, if there is space. Some sites only have enough parking for one vehicle. A vehicle towing a trailer, popup, tent trailer, or fifth wheel—or a motorhome towing a vehicle—is considered two vehicles.
- Attaching lines to vegetation, including Joshua trees and junipers, is prohibited. Hammocks, slacklines, and other horizontal ropes are not permitted in campgrounds.
- There is a 30-day camping limit each year. Only 14 of these nights may take place from October–May.
- Campsites left vacant for 24 hours will be treated as vacant. Holding or reserving campsites for persons not present is not allowed.
- Pets must remain on leash at all times and may not be left unattended.
- At Hidden Valley and White Tank campgrounds, RVs and trailers may not exceed a combined maximum length of 25 feet. Other campgrounds have length restrictions not to exceed 35 feet, unless otherwise noted.

## First-come, first-served sites

During the off-season, June–September, all campgrounds are first-come, first-served. Please note, due to construction, some campgrounds may be subject to intermittent closures during the summer. Reservations can be made for Black Rock, Cottonwood, Indian Cove, and Jumbo Rocks for dates during October–May: [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov), (877) 444-6777.

### Belle



This campground is typically closed throughout the summer.

### Black Rock



56 sites available in summer. \$20 per night. 4,000 feet in elevation. Water, flush toilets, tables, fire grates, and a dump station. Half of this campground is closed during the summer.

### Cottonwood



33 sites available in summer. \$20 per night. 3,000 feet in elevation. Water, flush toilets, tables, fire grates, and dump station. Half of this campground is closed during the summer.

### Hidden Valley



44 sites. \$15 per night. 4,200 feet. Pit toilets, tables, and fire grates. No water.

### Indian Cove



39 sites available in summer. \$20 per night. 3,200 feet in elevation. Pit toilets, tables, and fire grates. No water. Half of this campground is closed during the summer.

### Jumbo Rocks



124 sites. \$15 per night. 4,400 feet in elevation. Pit toilets, tables, and fire grates. No water.

### Ryan



This campground is typically closed throughout the summer.

### White Tank



15 sites. \$15 per night. 3,800 feet in elevation. Pit toilets, tables, and fire grates. No water.

# Camping Outside of the Park

Campgrounds are usually full on weekends October through May. To improve your chances of getting a campsite and avoid disappointment, visit during the off-season (June–September), reserve a site, and/or have alternate overnight plans ready.

## Private Campgrounds

### North of the Park

**HipCamp**  
[www.hipcamp.com](http://www.hipcamp.com)

**Joshua Tree Lake RV & Campground**  
2601 Sunfair Road  
Joshua Tree, CA  
760-366-1213  
[www.joshuatreelake.com](http://www.joshuatreelake.com)

**Joshua Tree Retreat Center Campground**  
59700 29 Palms Highway  
Joshua Tree, CA  
760-365-8371  
[jtrcc.org/accommodations/camping](http://jtrcc.org/accommodations/camping)

**JT Sportsman's Club**  
6225 Sunburst Avenue  
Joshua Tree, CA  
760-366-2915  
[www.jtsportsmansclub.com](http://www.jtsportsmansclub.com)

**Twentynine Palms RV Resort**  
4949 Desert Knoll Avenue  
Twentynine Palms, CA  
760-367-3320  
[www.twentyninepalmsresort.com](http://www.twentyninepalmsresort.com)

### South of the Park

**Chiriaco Summit**  
62450 Chiriaco Road  
Chiriaco Summit, CA  
760-227-3227

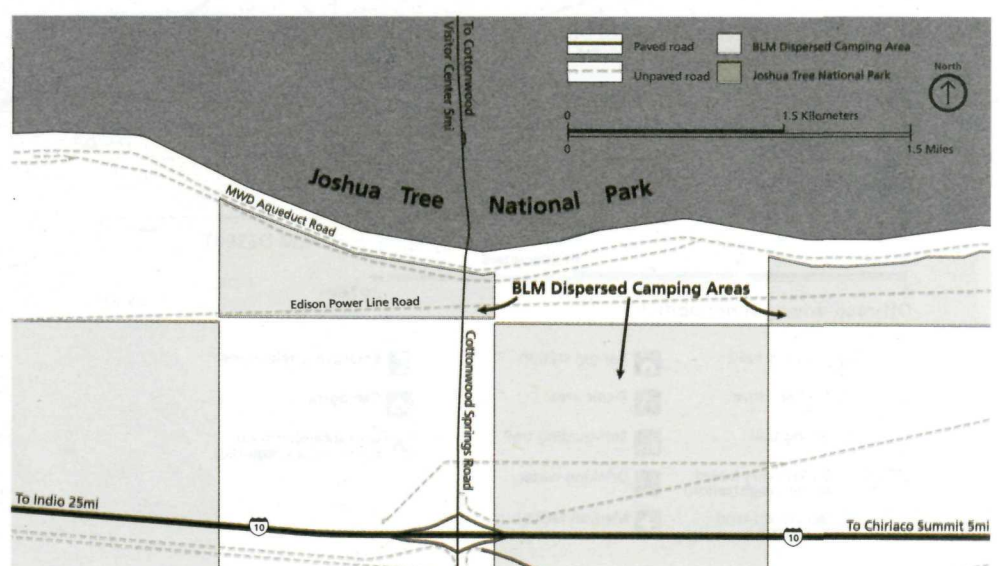
**Palm Springs/Joshua Tree KOA**  
70405 Dillon Road  
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92241  
[koa.com/campgrounds/palm-springs/](http://koa.com/campgrounds/palm-springs/)

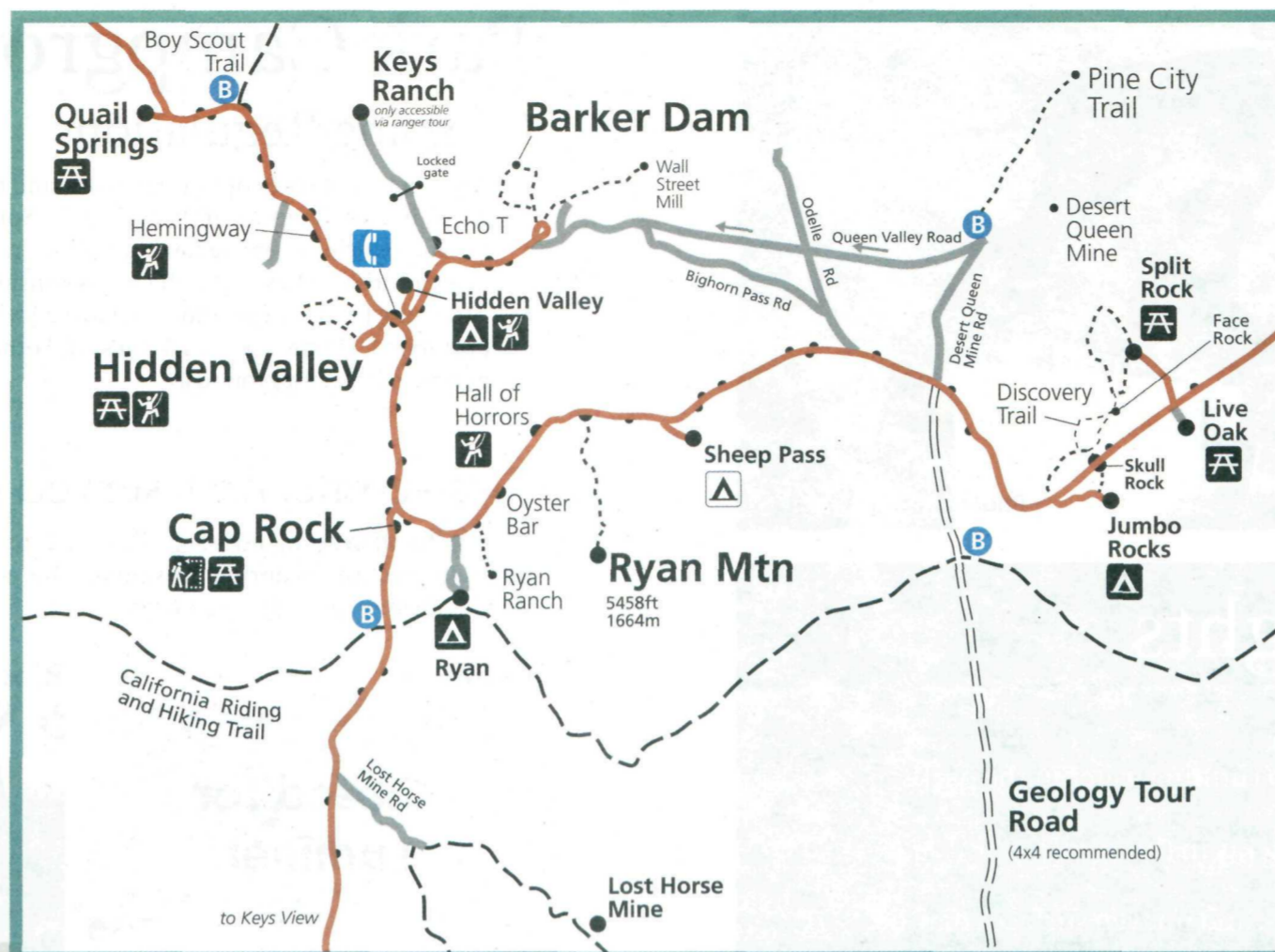
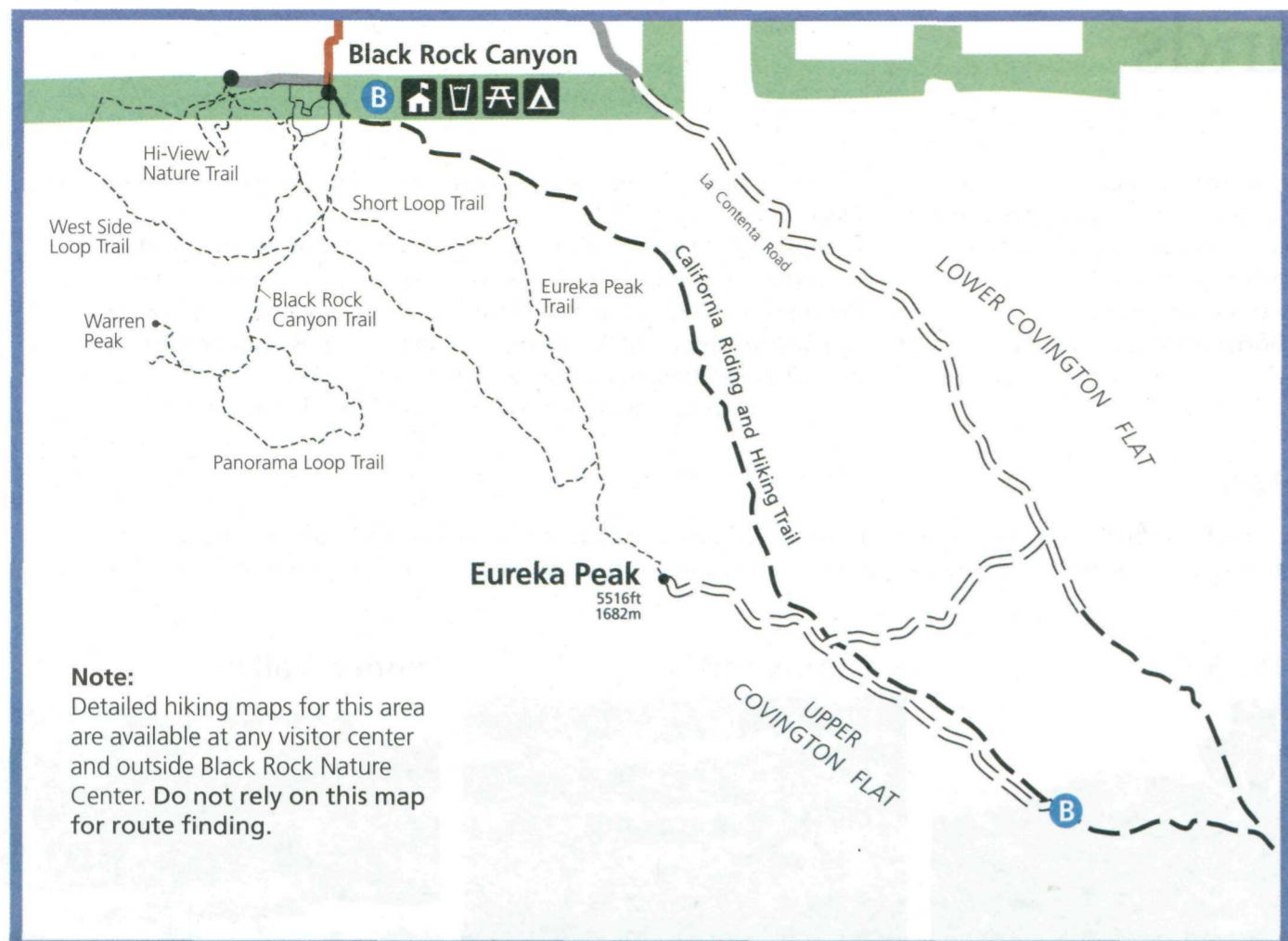
## Dispersed Camping

Public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offer free dispersed camping south of the park. Camping is allowed except within 300 feet (91 m) of roadways. There are no developed facilities in dispersed camping areas: no restrooms, no water, no trash collection. Bring what you need and pack out all your trash. All vegetation, living or dead, is protected by law. Campfires require a permit, available from BLM offices or online.

**Dispersed Camping North of the Park**  
To get to this area, from the intersection of Sunfair and Twentynine Palms Highway drive 2.5 miles north to Sunflower. Turn right on Sunflower Road and continue for another mile to turn left on Cascade Road. These roads can be washed out or deeply rutted; 4-wheel drive is recommended.

**Dispersed Camping South of the Park**  
See the map (right) for dispersed camping areas.





### Visitor Centers

**Oasis Visitor Center**  
760-367-5500  
74485 National Park Drive  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277  
8:30 am–5 pm

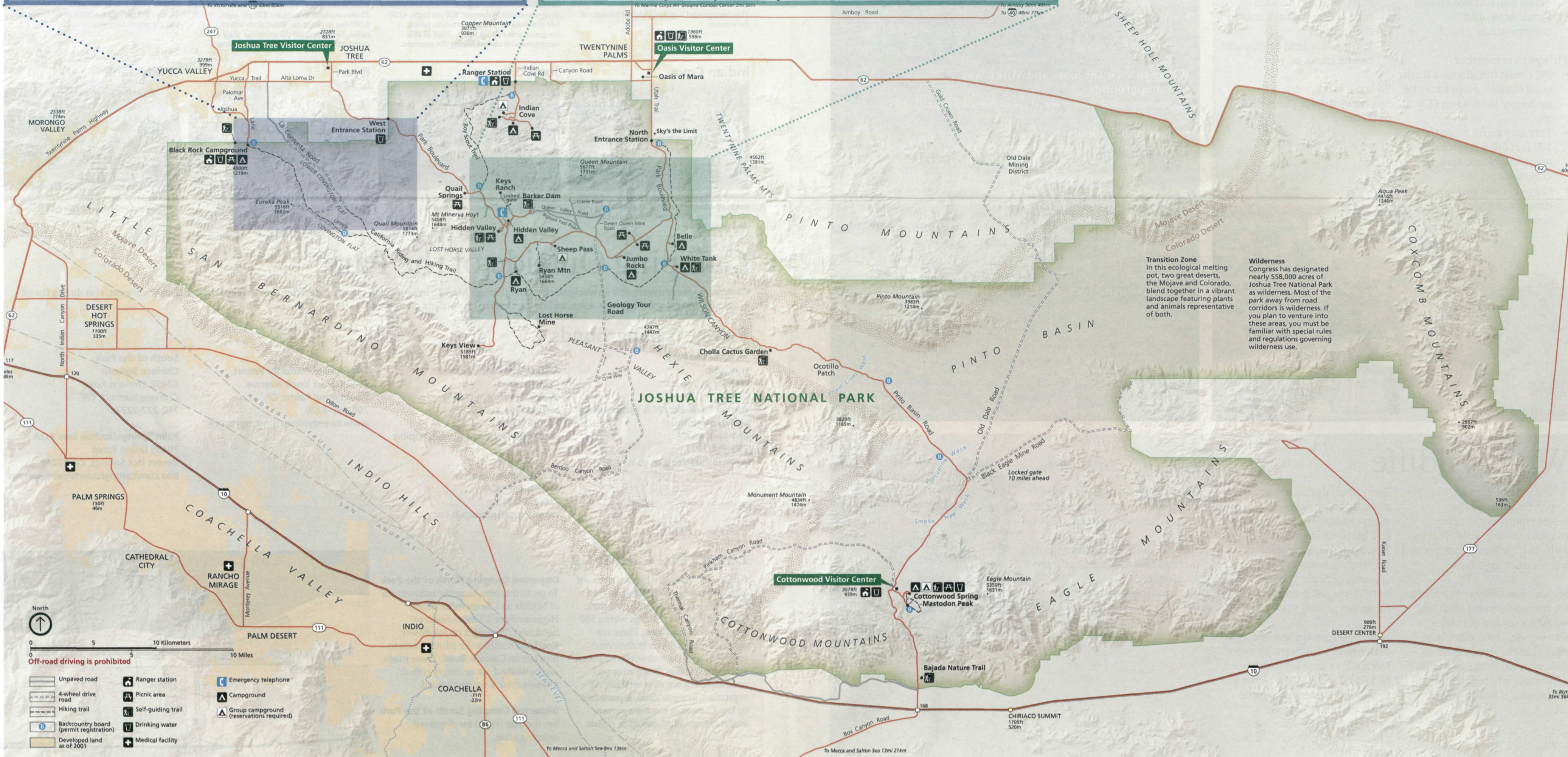
**Joshua Tree Visitor Center**  
6554 Park Boulevard  
Joshua Tree, CA 92252  
8 am–5 pm

**Cottonwood Visitor Center**  
6 miles (10 km) inside South Entrance  
8:30 am–4 pm

The park is always open.

### Backcountry Boards

- Black Rock
- Cottonwood Spring
- Covington Flat
- Geology (Geo Tour Road)
- Indian Cove
- Juniper Flats (Keys View Road)
- Keys West (Boy Scout Trail - south)
- North Entrance
- Pine City (at the junction of Desert Queen Mine and Queen Valley roads)
- Pleasant Valley (by one-way, 4WD only section of Geo Tour Road)
- Porcupine Wash (8 miles north of Cottonwood on Pinto Basin Road)
- Turkey Flats (13 miles north of Cottonwood on Pinto Basin Road)
- Twin Tanks (between Belle and White Tank campgrounds)



North

0 5 10 Kilometers / 0 5 10 Miles

Off-road driving is prohibited


# Ranger Programs

Check in visitor centers for dates and times

Explore and learn more about the park through ranger programs about history, geology, plants, and more. Program offerings vary throughout the season. Please check park visitor centers for a list of this week's programs.

Updated schedules are also available on the park website: [nps.gov/jotr](https://nps.gov/jotr)

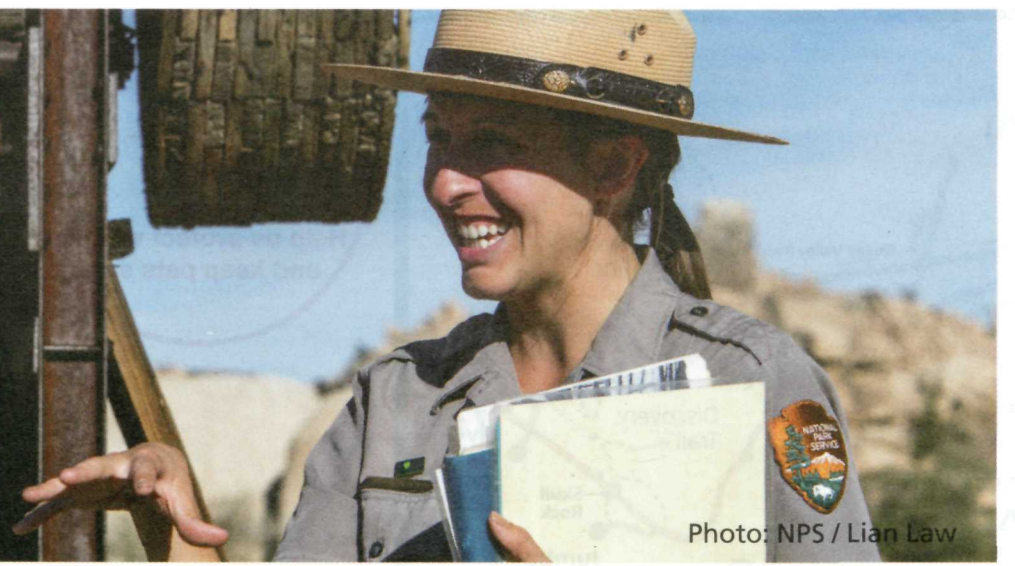


Photo: NPS / Lian Law

## Pets

While park regulations don't allow pets to join you on trails, in the backcountry, or in park buildings, there are alternate areas to explore.

### Places to go

- Paved and unpaved roads
- Picnic areas and campgrounds

### Things to remember

- Pets must remain on a leash at all times. Leashes may be no longer than 6 feet (1.8 m).
- Pets may go no more than 100 feet (30.5 m) from any road, picnic area, or campground.
- Owners must pick up any droppings and dispose of them properly.

### Things to remember (cont.)

- Bring plenty of water for your pet. Dogs have died in the park from dehydration/heat illness.
- Do not leave your dogs in your vehicle unattended, even for short periods of time. Temperatures soar in the summer.
- Paved areas heat up fast and can be harsh on paws.

To learn more, visit: [nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/pets.htm](https://nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/pets.htm)

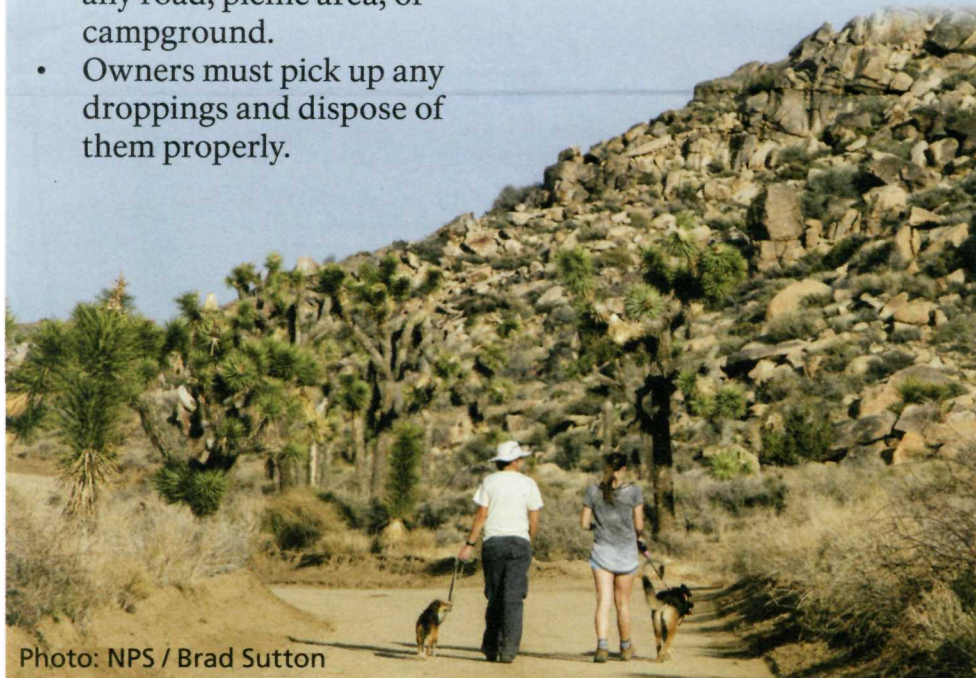


Photo: NPS / Brad Sutton

## Starry Nights

### Tips for Stargazing

- **Bring Food and Water**  
Plan ahead. There is no running water in the park.
- **Layer Up**  
Temperatures drop quickly in the evening.
- **Watch Your Step**  
Cacti, nocturnal animals, and uneven surfaces may be difficult to see.
- **Avoid the Moon**  
Check the moon's phase and rise and set times to find the best time to stargaze.

### Where to View the Stars and Milky Way

- **Campgrounds**  
Spend a night under the stars in one of Joshua Tree's nine campgrounds.
- **Roadside Pullouts**  
Park in any of the roadside pullouts to watch the stars overhead. Stay awake and alert within 20 feet (6 meters) of your vehicle. Camping is only permitted in designated campgrounds.

### Things to Remember

- Overnight camping is not allowed along roadsides or in parking lots.
- Day-Use Only areas are closed from dusk to dawn.
- Pets must be leashed at all times and are not allowed on trails or in the backcountry.

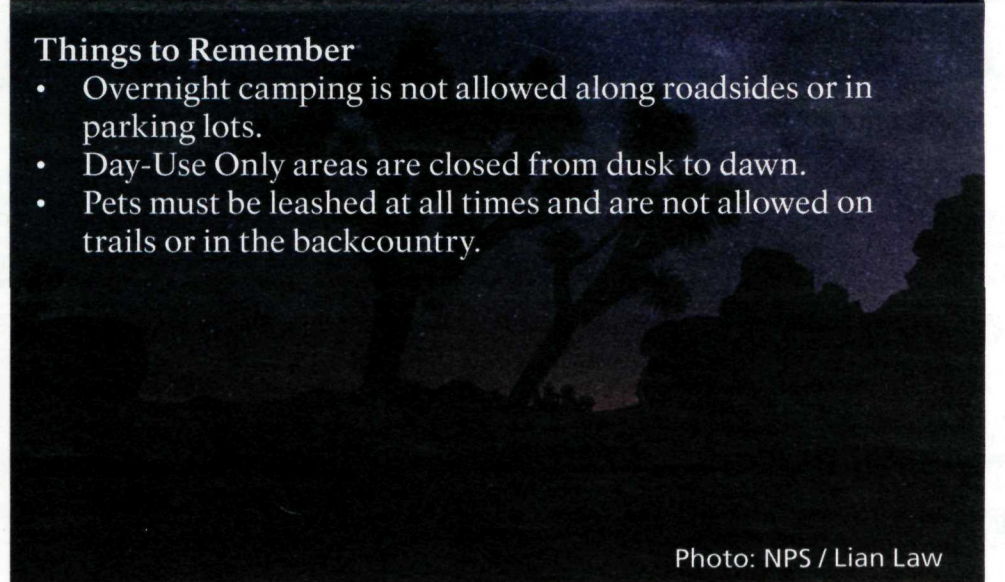


Photo: NPS / Lian Law

## Wild Wildlife

Wild animals adapt to help them thrive in the desert environment. These adaptations help wildlife cope with scarce water resources and temperature extremes.

You're most likely to see birds, lizards, and ground squirrels because they are diurnal—active in daytime. But it is at night that the desert is most alive with wildlife, especially in summer when daytime temperatures soar over 100°F (38°C).

Some animals that are active at night include snakes, bighorn sheep, kangaroo rats, coyotes, and black-tailed jackrabbits. Dawn and dusk are good times for viewing many kinds of animals, because you can see both those just going to bed and those just getting up.

Water sources are few and far between in the desert, so most Joshua Tree animals don't need to drink as much or as often as people do. Desert mammals use water more efficiently than humans. Reptiles have physiological adaptations that

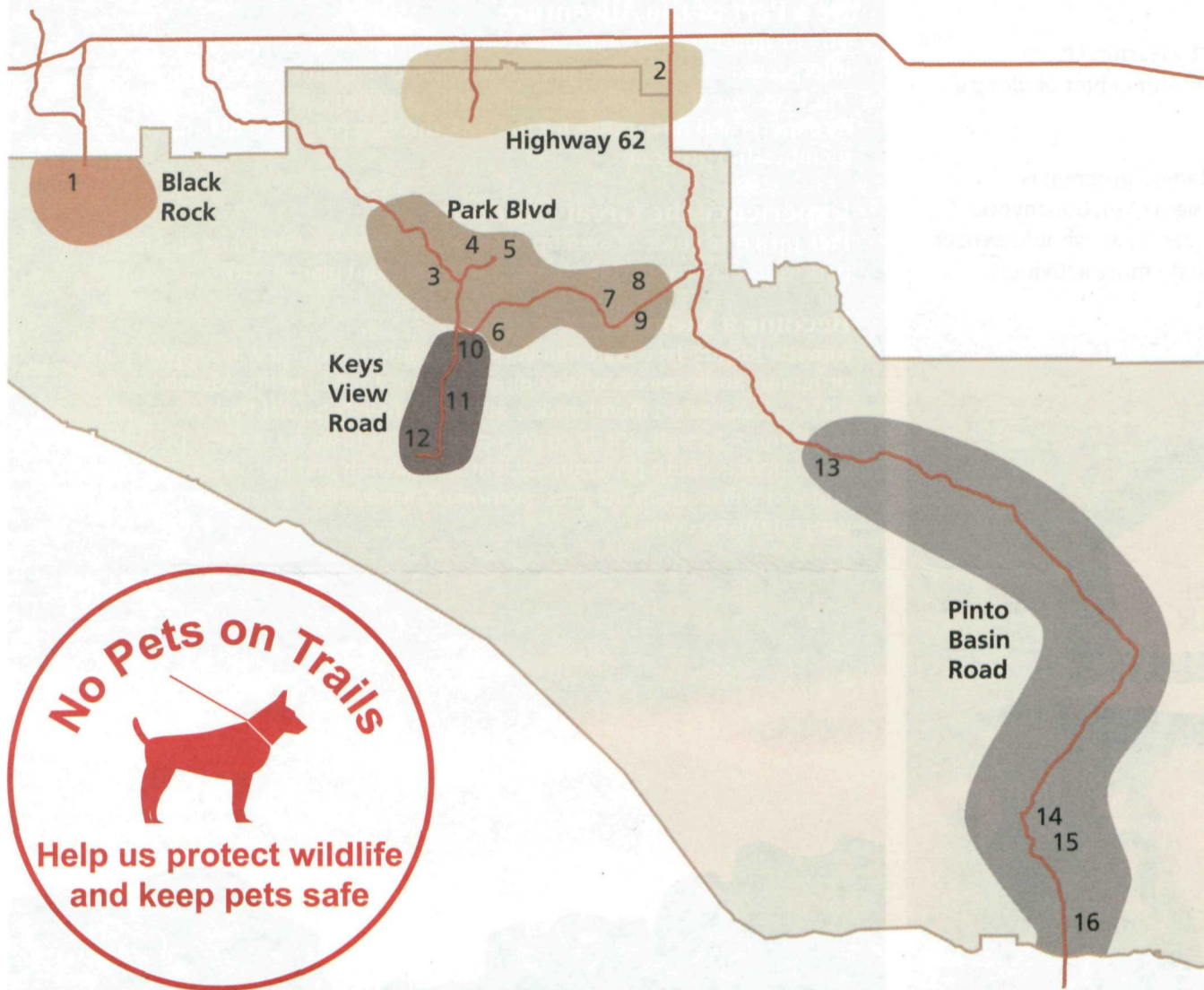
allow them to drink very little water, and birds can fly to water sources when they need a drink.

To learn more about the wildlife that call this area home and see species lists: [nps.gov/jotr/learn/nature](https://nps.gov/jotr/learn/nature)



Photo: NPS / Glauco Puig-Santana

# Hiking



# Hiking Safety

- **Avoid the heat**  
Finish hiking before 10 am or start after 5 pm.
- **Stay hydrated**  
Drink at least one gallon (4L) of water per person, per day.
- **Sun Protection**  
Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- **Snack time**  
Eat salty snacks and drink electrolyte drinks. You're sweating and losing salt.

Hike	Distance/ Elevation	Time	Description
<b>Black Rock</b>			
1 Hi-View	easy 1.3 miles (2.1 km) 400 ft (122 m)	1 ½ hours	Loop. Hike up a ridge on the western side of the park and take in panoramic views of the area. Steep sections with benches to take a break and enjoy the view.
<b>Highway 62</b>			
2 Oasis of Mara	easy 0.5 mile (0.8 km)	30–45 minutes	Loop. See how the Oasis of Mara has been used by wildlife and people throughout time. Wheelchair accessible. Pets on leash allowed.
<b>Park Blvd</b>			
3 Hidden Valley	easy 1 mile (1.6 km)	1 hour	Loop. Discover a rock-enclosed valley that was once rumored to have been used by cattle rustlers.
4 Barker Dam	easy 1.1 miles (1.8 km)	1 hour	Loop. Explore cultural history and view a historic dam built by early cattle ranchers. Watch for bighorn sheep.
5 Wall Street Mill	moderate 2 miles (3.2 km)	1 ½–2 ½ hours	Out and back. Travel to the remains of a historic gold milling site and see old rusted cars and an old homestead. Leave what you find.
6 Ryan Ranch	easy 1 mile (1.6 km)	1 hour	Out and back. Enjoy an easy hike along an old ranch road and see a historic adobe structure. Leave what you find.
7 Discovery Trail	easy 0.7 mile (1.1 km)	30–45 minutes	Loop. Connects Skull Rock and Split Rock trails at Face Rock.
8 Skull Rock	easy 1.7 miles (2.7 km)	1–2 hours	Loop. Take an easy hike and explore boulder piles, desert washes, and the trail's namesake.
9 Split Rock Loop	moderate 2.5 miles (4 km)	1 ½–2 ½ hours	Loop. Distance includes trip to Face Rock. Explore the park's rocking geology up close.
<b>Keys View Road</b>			
10 Cap Rock	easy 0.4 miles (0.6 km)	30–45 minutes	Loop. View boulder piles, Joshua trees, and other desert plants. Wheelchair-accessible.
11 Lost Horse Mine	moderate 4 miles (6.4 km) 550 ft (168 m)	2–3 hours	Out and back to mine. Explore one of the most successful gold mines in the park. Stay outside fenced area. Full loop distance is 6.5 miles (10.5 km).
12 Keys View	easy 0.25 mile (0.4 km)	15–20 minutes	Loop. Short, paved path is steeper and may be wheelchair accessible with assistance. Breathtaking views of the San Andreas Fault, Mt San Jacinto, Mt San Gorgonio, and the Salton Sea.
<b>Pinto Basin Road</b>			
13 Cholla Cactus Garden	easy 0.25 miles (0.4 km)	15–30 minutes	Loop. View thousands of densely concentrated, naturally growing, cholla cactus. Stay on the trail, wear closed-toe shoes, and be aware of prickly cactus.
14 Cottonwood Spring	easy 0.1 mile (0.2 km)	10 minutes	Out and back. Short walk to fan palm oasis with cottonwood trees. Fantastic birding location with plentiful shade.
15 Mastodon Peak	moderate 3 miles (4.8 km) 375 ft (115 m)	1 ½–2 ½ hours	Loop. An optional rock scramble takes you to the top of a craggy granite peak. The trail then loops around past an old gold mine.
16 Bajada	easy 0.25 mile (0.4 km)	15–20 minutes	Loop. Walk on a bajada and discover plants of the Colorado Desert. Wheelchair-accessible.

# Junior Rangers

Kids are invited to participate in the Junior Ranger program.

Earn a Joshua Tree Junior Ranger badge by completing the activity book. Stop by any park visitor center or entrance station to pick one up.

Additionally, you'll be asked to attend a ranger-led program.

If attending a ranger program isn't possible, kids can fulfill this

requirement by learning from exhibits in a visitor center or along a trail.

The Junior Ranger program is designed for ages 4-14, but anyone can do it. (Older "kids" should expect to be asked to do more activities!)



## Joshua Tree National Park Association

### Be a Part of the Adventure

The Joshua Tree National Park Association has been supporting interpretation, education, preservation, and scientific research since 1962. They operate four bookstores, offer a field institute with classes taught by experts and raise funds for the park through public events and our membership program.

### Experience the Great Outdoors

Pick up a trail guide or sign up for a Desert Institute field class and make the park your classroom. Take home a schedule and plan ahead.

### Become a Member

Join the Joshua Tree National Park Association and you will support park programs and projects while enjoying some great benefits. Members receive a 15% discount on merchandise at Joshua Tree National Park Association bookstores, as well as a discount on all Desert Institute classes. In turn, your gift supports youth programs, scientific research and historical collections, and you will assist in the preservation of our fragile desert environment for generations to come.



760-367-5535  
[www.joshuatree.org](http://www.joshuatree.org)



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Joshua Tree National Park  
74485 National Park Drive  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

Emergency 911

POSTAGE HERE