



Petrified Forest

The Official Trip Planner of
Petrified Forest National Park



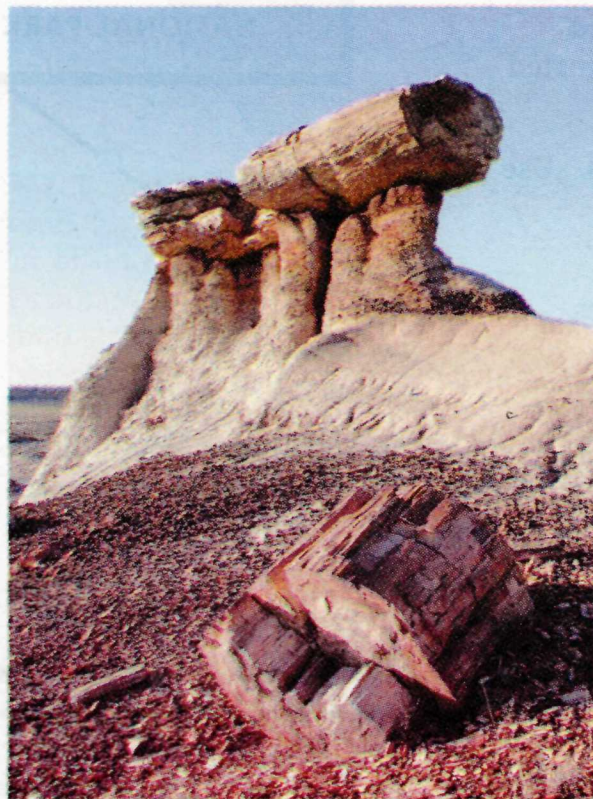
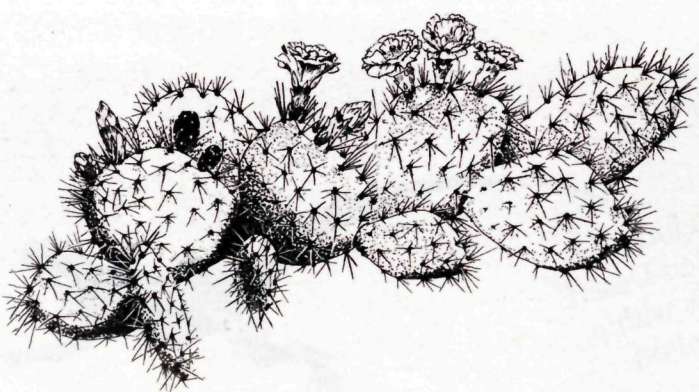
Two Parks in One

Best known for its vast deposit of petrified wood, Petrified Forest National Park is actually two parks in one. Petrified wood is only one type of fossil that can be found in the park. Fossils of giant reptiles and amphibians, early dinosaurs, fish, ferns, cycads, and trees represent an entire ecosystem. From the layers of the often colorful Chinle Formation, scientists continue to put together the story of the past.

Deposited over 225-million years ago, these sedimentary rocks tell a tale of the Late Triassic when this region was part of Pangaea, an ancient supercontinent. Petrified Forest sat on the equator; this region was a tropical floodplain. At the end of the Mesozoic, the continents drifted apart due to tectonic movement of the earth's crust. This area moved north and west to its present position.

Today, the park is part of the Intermountain Basins semi-desert grassland. The climate is very different than the environment represented by the Chinle Formation and its fossils. Winters are cold with a chance of snowstorms while summer is hot and thunderstorms bring the possibility of moisture during the monsoon season. Drought is common, sometimes lasting for years. While many visitors think that nothing can survive in what appears to be a barren place, hundreds of species of plants and animals live here. If you are lucky, you may see one of the pronghorn along the park road, browsing among the shrubs, or hear the liquid song of a western meadowlark near an overlook.

Enjoy the ancient Petrified Forest, but don't forget that it is a living park as well. Take in the vast landscape from an overlook at the edge of the Painted Desert, walk a trail amidst the ancient logs, or merely sit and enjoy the silence of Petrified Forest, two parks in one.



Blue Mesa is one of the most intriguing areas of the park. Representing the blue part of the vast Painted Desert, the colorful layers of the Chinle Formation erode to reveal the Triassic treasure of fossils.

What's Inside?

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Welcome!

Even in a region graced with so many wonderful national parks, Petrified Forest National Park is a unique place. Along with the strange and beautiful Painted Desert, hundreds of archaeological sites, a National Historic Landmark, stretches of endangered grassland, and one of the largest petrified wood deposits in the world, Petrified Forest also offers a chance for silence, solitude, and contemplation.

Most of our visitors concentrate along the overlooks and short trails of the 28-mile park road. In summer, our busiest season, parking areas are packed and facilities are crowded. Like many of the national parks, years of use have made an impact.

Fortunately, the concern and efforts of National Park employees, volunteers, and our visitors aid in the stewardship of Petrified Forest National Park. One of the biggest dangers our park faces is the illegal removal of park resources, particularly petrified wood. With the help of visitors, this selfish act can diminish.

Join us in preserving and protecting one of the most fascinating national parks. Walk the trails amidst ancient petrified logs, take in the wide vistas of the Painted Desert, discover voices of the past in the petroglyphs, listen to the silence of Wilderness.

Enjoy the park!

Lee Baiza, Superintendent



Ranger talks are available year-round

Park Trails

The best way to enjoy and experience Petrified Forest National Park is on foot. Trails range in length from less than a half-mile to over three miles.

Stay on designated trails in developed hiking areas. Off-trail hiking damages the fragile grassland environment and disturbs wildlife habitat, creating unsightly "social" trails. Leaving the designated trail can also be hazardous for hikers due to loose rock and dangerous cliffs. Pets must be kept on leash and on the paved trails at all times. Pets are not permitted in the park buildings or in Wilderness Areas.

*Mile Markers begin at the park's northern entrance off of I-40.



Blue Mesa

Trail	Trailhead	Length	Description
Painted Desert Rim	Tawa and Kachina Points	1-mile round trip	This trail winds through the rim woodland, a place for chance encounters of many species of plants and animals. The view of the Painted Desert is spectacular. <i>Please do not harm animals or plants in the park.</i>
Puerco Pueblo	Mile Marker 11	0.3-mile loop	Walk amidst the remains of a hundred room pueblo, occupied by the Ancestral Puebloan People between A.D. 1250 and 1400. <i>Do not climb on the boulders or walls. Please do not touch the petroglyphs.</i>
Blue Mesa	Blue Mesa sunshelter	1-mile loop Moderately strenuous	Descending from the mesa, this trail loops among badland hills of bluish bentonite clay and petrified wood. Plant fossils, including delicate ferns, have been found in the sedimentary layers of Blue Mesa. <i>Please leave them for others to enjoy.</i>
Crystal Forest	South of Mile Marker 20	0.75-mile loop	Despite more than a century of collecting, a few beautiful crystals hide in the petrified logs of Crystal Forest. <i>Please leave them for others to enjoy. Report anyone removing petrified wood from the park.</i>
Long Logs	Rainbow Forest parking area	1.6-mile loop	Long Logs is one of the largest concentrations of petrified wood in the park. Explore this ancient log jam at the base of gray badlands.
Agate House	Rainbow Forest parking area	2-miles round trip	Archaeologists believe that this small pueblo was occupied for a short time about 700 years ago. Seasonal farmers or traders possibly built Agate House as a temporary home. <i>Long Logs and Agate House Trails can be combined, as they start from the same trail head, for a total of 3 miles round trip.</i>
Giant Logs <i>Trail guide available in the Museum</i>	Behind Rainbow Forest Museum	0.4-mile loop	Giant Logs features some of the largest and most colorful logs in the park. "Old Faithful", at the top of the trail, is almost ten feet across the base.

Safety

- Stay on the designated trails. Do not go beyond protective fencing or guardrails. Avoid cliff edges and steep slopes.
- Be aware of symptoms of high altitude sickness, including nausea, dizziness, headache, rapid heartbeat, and shortness of breath. Keep hydrated, rest, snack lightly, and avoid alcohol and cigarettes.
- Wear sunglasses with UV protection, a hat, and use sunscreen.
- The wild animals in the park can carry diseases including rabies, hanta virus, and plague. Do not handle or allow your pets near any live or dead animals and avoid nests and burrows.
- If you are injured or ill while visiting the park, contact a ranger at any visitor center facility.
- For Lost and Found, contact the Painted Desert Visitor Center, Rainbow Forest Museum, or call the park at (928) 524-6228.
- Yellow emergency phones are located at Puerco Pueblo, Blue Mesa, and Crystal Forest. The park number for **emergency only** is (928) 524-9726.

Is that the right time?
Arizona, except for the Navajo Nation, does not observe daylight savings. During the summer, we are the same time as the Pacific Time Zone; during the winter, we are the same as the rest of the Mountain Time Zone.





Thunderstorm over the Painted Desert.

Wilderness Hiking and Camping

The Wilderness Area in Petrified Forest National Park was the first designated in the National Park System. What is wilderness? The concept is different for everyone. Artists may see shapes and color; backpackers anticipate an adventure; legislators define it in legal terms. In general, wilderness is a place where the human imprint is minimal. In 1964 Congress passed the Wilderness Act, restricting grazing, mining, timber cutting and mechanized vehicles in these areas. Wilderness Areas are protected and valued for their ecological, historical, scientific and experiential resources. The Petrified Forest Wilderness Area consists of over 50,000 acres of mesas, buttes, badlands, and scattered areas of grasslands.

Access to the wilderness is located at Kachina Point, in the northern section of the park. The trailhead for the wilderness area can be found on the northwest side of the Painted Desert Inn Museum. A 1-mile access trail leads into the Wilderness Area.

No permits are required for day hiking. Wilderness hiking offers the opportunity to visit sites seldom seen by most park visitors. There are no developed trails; hiking is cross-country. Clear air, sparse vegetation, and a variety of landmarks combine to make hiking conditions excellent. Be prepared! There is no water and little shade in the backcountry. A gallon of water per person per day is recommended in summer months. Day hikers must be back at their vehicles by the park's posted closing time.

A free permit is required for overnight camping. Backpacking is permitted in the Wilderness Area. A free wilderness permit must be obtained at least one hour before the park closes. Permits are issued at Rainbow Forest Museum, Painted Desert Inn Museum, and the Painted Desert Visitor Center. Hikers must park their cars and enter the wilderness at Kachina Point. Campers must hike to a designated zone north of Lithodendron Wash before setting up camp. There are no maintained campsites in the Wilderness Area.

Groups: Because of the slow rate of decomposition and the fragile desert environment, minimum impact camping is very important. For this reason group size is limited to 8.

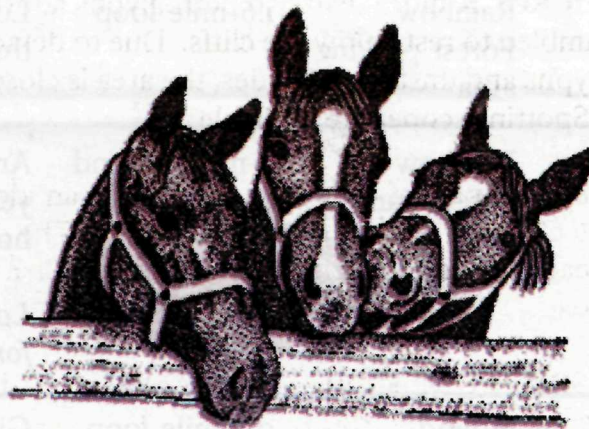
Horseback riding and pack animals are permitted in the wilderness. All information and regulations contained in this article pertain to horse use in the wilderness.

Regulations:

- Collection of plants, rocks, petrified wood, fossils, archaeological objects or other materials is illegal in the park.
- No bicycles, motorized vehicles, firearms, or pets are allowed in the Wilderness Area.
- No wood or charcoal fires are allowed (use fuel stoves).
- Bury human waste. Pack out your trash.



Fantastic formations in the Wilderness Area.



Horseback Riding

The park offers diverse riding opportunities in the Wilderness Area of Petrified Forest National Park.

- Trailhead access is located at Kachina Point, where there is ample trailer parking.
- Park your trailer so that it does not interfere with vehicle traffic flow.
- Please follow all park regulations.
- Clean up after horses in improved areas (parking lots, paved areas, etc).
- Feed must be certified weed-free.
- Do not leave horses unattended, to prevent encounters with other park visitors. Horses are prohibited on paved trails or paved roads.
- Water for horses may be obtained at the service station by the Painted Desert Visitor Center. No water is available in the Wilderness Area.
- Wilderness camping is limited to four animals and eight people. For more overnight use regulations, please see the Wilderness section of the Trip Planner.

The trail down to the Wilderness Area can be very steep with an unstable surface. While there are no maintained trails in the Wilderness Area, there is very little grade change and riding is easy. However, petrified wood is sharp and can cause damage to stock hooves. Take care of yourself, your stock, and your park.

Where can I watch the sunset over the Painted Desert without backpacking? The Painted Desert stretches from St. John to Cameron, covering about 1,500 square miles. There are many places to watch the sunset outside of the park. One site to visit is the Little Painted Desert County Park, north of Winslow on Highway 87.



Thunderstorm over the Painted Desert during the monsoon season of late summer.

Points of Interest and Facilities

In order as seen from north to south

PAINTED DESERT VISITOR CENTER provides information, book sales, exhibits, and restrooms. A free orientation film is shown every half hour. A restaurant, gift shop, gas station, and convenience store are adjacent to the visitor center.

TIPONI, TAWA, KACHINA, CHINDE, PINTADO, NIZHONI, WHIPPLE, and LACEY POINTS are overlooks providing views of the Painted Desert. **KACHINA POINT** is also the site of the Painted Desert Inn National Historic Landmark.

PAINTED DESERT INN MUSEUM once served as a respite for travelers along historic Route 66. Now you may view distant vistas and photo exhibits, while touring this historic building. Information, book sales, and restrooms are available.

PUERCO PUEBLO, a large archaeological site, was occupied from A.D. 1250 to 1400. The pueblo has been partially excavated and a few of the room foundations stabilized.

At **NEWSPAPER ROCK** more than 650 petroglyphs adorn boulders that tumbled to rest below the cliffs. Due to defacement of these petroglyphs and unstable hillsides, the area is closed below the cliff. Spotting scopes are available.

BLUE MESA, the blue part of the Painted Desert, is an ideal setting to see the effect of erosion on badlands hills. The one-way spur road leads to the mesa top, four-miles round trip from the main park road.

The bluffs at **JASPER FOREST** once encased the petrified wood you see strewn across the valley floor.

CRYSTAL FOREST, LONG LOGS, AGATE HOUSE, GIANT LOGS are all trails that feature the many wonders of Petrified Forest. Refer to the Trails section for more information.

RAINBOW FOREST MUSEUM provides exhibits of petrified wood, fossils, and displays of prehistoric animals. Restrooms and book sales are available. The snack bar and gift shop are nearby.



What can I see?

If you have one hour:

Stop at the Painted Desert Visitor Center
Drive through the park
Stop at Kachina Point
Drive Blue Mesa Road
Visit Rainbow Forest Museum and Giant Logs without walking the trail

If you have several hours add:

See the park film at the Painted Desert Visitor Center
Visit the Painted Desert Inn Museum
Stop at Pintado Point, Newspaper Rock, and Jasper Forest
Take Puerco Pueblo Trail
Walk Giant Logs Trail (pick up a trail guide at the Museum)

If you have half a day add:

Walk Blue Mesa, Crystal Forest, Long Logs, Agate House, and Rim Trails

If you have a day or more add:

Hike into the Wilderness Area

Area Information

Hours of Operation

Summer hours are 7 am to 7 pm. Winter hours are 8 am to 5 pm. There are transitional hours of operation during spring and fall.

Picnic areas are available at Chinde Point and Rainbow Forest.

Lodging and Camping

The park does not provide any lodging facilities and camping is limited to backpacking into the Wilderness Area. Nearby communities, national forests, and state parks have a variety of motels and camping offerings. For information call:

Gallup Chamber of Commerce
505-722-2228

Holbrook Chamber of Commerce
928-524-6558, 800-524-2459

Winslow Chamber of Commerce
928-289-2434

For road conditions call:
Arizona 1-888-411-7623;
New Mexico 1-800-432-4269.

What's Over There?

Paula wanted to find a quiet spot all her own to meditate. She saw the perfect place. It was just a dozen yards off-trail to the top of a sandstone outcrop and she could take a picture with that really long petrified log in the foreground. Brian saw footprints an hour later, after Paula had gone, and wondered what there was to see from that vantage point. Kim did the same. By noon, 30 people had followed in Paula's footsteps. By the next day, over a hundred. The trail Paula accidentally cleared divided in half a large patch of microbiotic soil, a living crust that protects the precious topsoil. She had carved an eight-lane freeway through that miniature world and opened it to erosion. The nutrients and moisture retention of that delicate system was gone and the animals and plants that depended on it would suffer. Paula's meditation spot became a place of quiet destruction.

We each have made an effort to come and experience this place. It also takes the effort of every visitor to protect it. "Taking only pictures, leaving only footprints" is not enough in this landscape. Where there is a designated trail, regulations require that you leave your footprints only on the trail. In the Wilderness Areas, watch where you step and follow washes when possible. Together we can protect this fragile and fascinating region.



Junior Ranger Program

Who are Junior Rangers? They are kids who take the time to learn about our national parks and help educate friends and family about these special places. After completing required activities, kids take an oath, promising to help protect and preserve Petrified Forest, and receive a Junior Ranger badge. Would you like to become a Junior Ranger? Stop by the Painted Desert Visitor Center or Rainbow Forest Museum and ask for a Junior Ranger activity booklet.

We invite YOU to become a member of this very special group of people. Help protect our national parks. Join the team—become a Petrified Forest National Park Junior Ranger!

What kind of wildlife will we see?
Depending on the time of day and year, some visitors never see any animals in the park. However, there are hundreds of species, many of which only come out at night or in the evening and morning, while the park is closed. Some of the most common animals include ravens, pronghorn, desert cottontail rabbits, collared lizards, and bull snakes.



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Educators! Bring your students to Petrified Forest National Park for a curriculum-based program or a self-guided fieldtrip. The park has endeavored to provide motivating educational opportunities for students while meeting the Arizona Science and Math Essential Skills. We are always delighted to have classes visit the park with the desire to learn more about this extraordinary place.

Petrified Forest offers:

- Curriculum-based programs on paleontology and archaeology.
- An information booklet for self-guided fieldtrips
- In-class programs, when a ranger brings the park to your students.

For information or reservation, call the park at (928) 524-6228 or send an email to PEFO_Superintendent@nps.gov

What is the difference between a mesa and a butte?
A mesa is a flat-topped landform with steep sides, typically wider than it is tall. A butte can also be flat-topped, but is taller than it is wide. A butte can erode from a mesa.

Volunteers—Very Important People

Have you read the headlines lately? “Vandals Destroy Petroglyphs” — “Fossils are Stolen From Park” — “Petrified Wood Theft Continues”. This is what is happening on our public lands, lands set aside for everyone to enjoy. How can an interested person help deter the increasing damage to our cherished lands? Become a volunteer at Petrified Forest National Park!

Volunteers receive training about the park, including the fascinating scientific discoveries being made here and the problems in protecting our parks. Volunteers may work directly with the public at visitor centers, rove trails, aid researchers, or delve into the park collection with our museum technician. Volunteers are an important part of the National Park Service team.

Our volunteers are, without a doubt, Very Important People! In Fiscal Year 2002, 125,000 volunteers donated 4.5 million hours to national parks. The national parks belong to all of us and they need our protection. No one else will do it for us. If you care, please join us as a VIP, Volunteer-In-Park. Learn something wonderful, meet new people, and make a difference.

For information write to: Volunteer Coordinator, P.O. Box 2217, Petrified Forest National Park, AZ 86028. E-mail: michael_stuckey@nps.gov.





Petrified logs in the snow.

Petrified Forest Museum Association

Promoting Interpretive and Educational Programs

Prognoting Scientific Research and Resource Understanding

Producing Park-Specific Publications and Materials

Preparing the park for Future Generations



Become a Member of the
Petrified Forest Museum Association

Climatic Averages for Petrified Forest (based on a fifty year period)				
Month	Average Max Temperature	Average Min Temperature	Average Daily Precipitation	Average Monthly Precipitation
Jan	47.5	21	0.018	0.571
Feb	54	25	0.018	0.521
March	61	29	0.0195	0.606
April	70	35	0.012	0.371
May	79	43	0.014	0.446
June	89	52	0.012	0.348
July	92	60	0.042	1.311
Aug	89	59	0.056	1.744
Sept	83.5	52	0.041	1.227
Oct	72	40	0.032	1.001
Nov	58.5	37	0.022	0.672
Dec	48	21	0.022	0.679
Total	-	-	-	9.497

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS...

An initial 20% discount on anything purchased along with the membership

15% discount at all Petrified Forest Museum Association Book Stores

10-20% discount at other national park bookstores around the country
Inclusion in any newsletter sent to membership

ADDED BENEFITS...

Individual members receive a select PFMA publication

Family members receive a select PFMA publication and our video "Timeless Impressions"...

SUPPORTING members receive two select PFMA publications and our video "Timeless Impressions"

CONTRIBUTING members receive three select PFMA publications and our video "Timeless Impressions"

LIFETIME members receive all current PFMA publications and all new PFMA publications annually

Contact: (928) 524-6228 x239
Email: pfmabookstore@cybertrails.com
Website: <http://www.cybertrails.com/pfma>



Fees and Passes

Petrified Forest Entrance Fees

- \$20 annual pass to Petrified Forest National Park
- \$10 per vehicle for a seven-day pass
- \$5 for bicyclists, those walking, and single motorcycle riders

Federal Passes

The various federal passes provide admission to any national park charging an entrance fee. Passes admit the pass signee and accompanying passengers in a private vehicle (a noncommercial vehicle).

National Park Pass

The National Park Pass costs \$50 and is valid for one full year from purchase date. The National Parks Pass is nontransferable and does NOT cover or reduce use fees such as charges for camping, parking, tours, and concessions. For an additional \$15, the National Park Pass can be upgraded to a **Golden Eagle Pass**, which is valid for entrance at many other federal lands.

Golden Age Passport

There is a one-time \$10 processing charge to obtain the lifetime Golden Age Passport. It is available only to citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are 62 years of age or older.

Golden Access Passport

This free pass is available only to citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are medically determined to be blind or permanently disabled.

The Golden Age and Golden Access Passports are both valid for entrance at many other federal lands and provide a 50% discount on federal use fees charged for facilities and services such as camping, swimming, parking, boat launching, and tours.

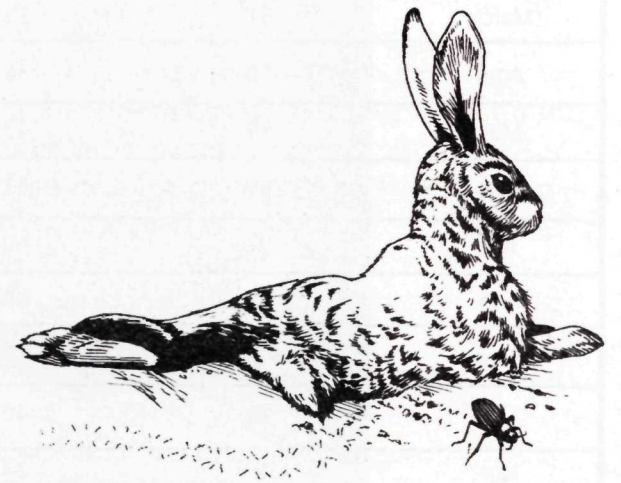
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Mail To: Petrified Forest Museum Association Park Rd. 1 - P.O. Box 2277 Petrified Forest, AZ 86028												
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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Petrified Forest National Park
P.O. 2217
Petrified Forest, AZ 86025



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Petrified Forest National Park

Annual Special Events

Date	Event	
January	Pony Express Ride	Send a letter by Pony Express from Petrified Forest National Park!
March	Arizona Archaeology Awareness Month	Programs, demonstrations, and activities, at the park and throughout the state, give visitors new insights into Arizona's many prehistoric and historic cultures.
April	National Park Week	National Park Week pays tribute to the special places cared for by the National Park Service and honors the people and organizations dedicated to accomplishing the Service's mission. National Park Week events in National Parks encourage people to experience and enjoy their local national parks.
May	Cleanup the Park	Spend part of a day with park employees and other volunteers in cleaning up the park.
May	Memorial Day	Memorial Day will be celebrated by a special exhibit in the park.
June	Summer Solstice	For about a two week period around the Summer Solstice, join rangers at a petroglyph for a solar interaction between 8 am and 10 am.
August	Founders Day	The anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service.
September	Navajo County Fair	Visit with park staff at our exhibit booth during the Fair and learn about Petrified Forest.
October	Earth Science Week	Join the park in celebrating geology and other earth sciences.
November	Veterans Day	Veterans Day will be celebrated by a special exhibit in the park.
December	Parade of Lights	The park joins our gateway community in Holbrook for this evening parade.

Call for more information: (928) 524-6228 or visit our website <http://www.nps.gov/pefo>



National Park Service

Petrified Forest National Park

Mailing Address

Petrified Forest National Park
P.O. Box 2217
Petrified Forest, AZ 86028

E-mail

PEFO_Superintendent@nps.gov

Fax Number

(928) 524-3567

Park Headquarters

(928) 524-6228

Website

<http://www.nps.gov/pefo>

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