

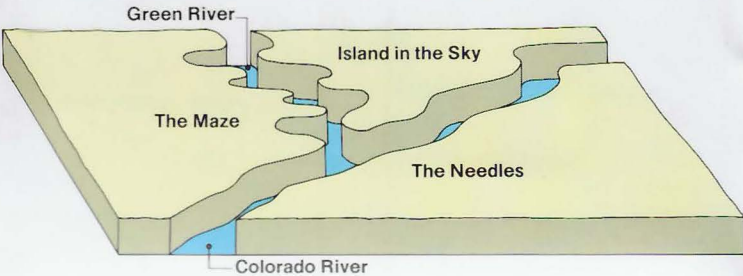
Canyonlands

Official Map and Guide

Canyonlands National Park
Utah

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Canyonlands preserves an immense wilderness of rock at the heart of the Colorado Plateau. Water and gravity have been the prime architects of this land, cutting flat layers of sedimentary rock into hundreds of colorful canyons, mesas, buttes, fins, arches, and spires. At center stage are two great canyons, those carved by the Green and Colorado rivers. Surrounding the rivers are



vast, and very different, regions of the park: to the north, Island in the Sky; to the west, the Maze; and to the east, the Needles. The areas share a common primitive spirit and wild desert atmosphere. Each also offers its own special rewards. Few people were familiar with these remote lands and rivers when the park was established in 1964. Prehistoric Indians, cowboys, river explorers, and ura-

anium prospectors had dared to enter this rugged corner of south-eastern Utah, but few others did. To a large degree, Canyonlands remains untrammelled today. Its roads are mostly unpaved, its trails primitive, its rivers free-flowing. Throughout its 527 square miles roam desert bighorn sheep, coyotes, and other animals native to this land. Canyonlands is wild America.

A Wilderness of Rock

Island in the Sky



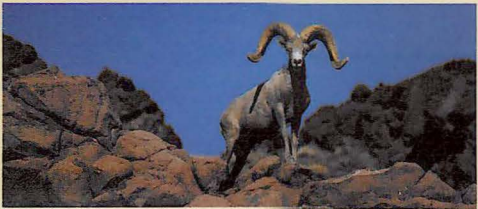
Reptiles like the collared lizard are among the more colorful of the Island's creatures.

Views from Island In The Sky reach from the depths of the Green and Colorado rivers to the heights of distant mountaintops and above. They stretch across canyon after canyon to the horizon 100 miles distant. A broad, level mesa wedged between the Green and Colorado, Island In The Sky serves as Canyonlands' observation tower. From its many overlooks sightseers absorb overwhelming vistas of almost incomprehensible dimensions. Closest to the mesa's edge is the White Rim, a nearly continuous sandstone bench 1,200 feet below the Island. Another 1,000 feet beneath the White Rim are the rivers, shadowed by sheer canyon cliffs, and beyond them lie the Maze and the Needles.

Outside the park's boundary three jagged mountain ranges abruptly break the pattern of the flat-topped canyon landscape. To the east rise the La Sal; to the south, the Abajo; to the southwest, the Henrys. Rain that passes by the arid soil of Canyonlands keeps these mountains mantled in forests of pine and fir. On the Island, vegetation is much sparser. Open fields of Indian rice grass and other grasses and pinyon-juniper pygmy forests survive on less than 10 inches of rain a year. Coyotes, foxes, squirrels, ravens, hawks, and smaller birds share the food of these lands. Herds of cattle and horses once grazed these desert pastures, too; abandoned water troughs and fences are reminders of those bygone days. Rocky ledges that lead down to and below the White Rim are a favorite habitat for many of Canyonlands' desert bighorn sheep. From the Island mesa the sheep look like tan, fly-sized specks; only the sharpest observers will detect them. The many trails around the Island are good places to encounter wildlife, especially at dawn, at dusk, or during the cooler months. Trails also lead to striking vistas, arches, and other out-



David Muench
It was "... the splendor of the landscape, the perfection of the silence ... that writer Edward Abbey remembered after visiting the Island.



Bob McKeever

Small bands of desert bighorn sheep scramble up and down terrain few people travel.

standing geological features. Geologists would probably single out Upheaval Dome as the oldest geologic feature on Island In The Sky. Measuring 1,500 feet deep, the Dome does not look like a dome at all, but rather like a crater. How was Upheaval Dome created? One popular theory suggests that slowmoving underground salt deposits pushed layers of sandstone upward. Another more recent theory suggests that the Dome was created when a meteor hit. Whatever the origin of the Dome, the present-day landform of a jagged-edged crater is the result of erosion.

Explorations From U.S. 191 take Utah 313 south to the Island. A paved road continues across the Island. Facilities include: four-wheel-drive roads; self-guiding and primitive trails; developed campground; primitive campsites (backcountry permit required); picnic areas; overlooks; roadside and trailside exhibits; ranger talks and programs (seasonal); commercial tours from nearby towns. Reservations for White Rim primitive campsites are recommended and can be requested in writing; address inquiries to the Reservations Office in care of Canyonlands National Park; backcountry permits and fee required. No water is available on the Island; an entrance fee is charged. Open year-round.



David Muench

First a cattle trail, then a road for uranium hunters, Shafer Trail today is a well-traveled 4-wheel-drive route that winds down the island's edge.

The Maze



The claret cup cactus and other desert plants are well-adapted to the arid environment of the Maze.

The Maze District west of the Colorado and Green rivers is Canyonlands at its wildest. It ranks as one of the most remote and inaccessible sections in the United States. There is the Maze itself, a perplexing jumble of canyons that has been described as a "30 square mile puzzle in sandstone." Beyond are the weirdly shaped towers, walls, buttes, and mesas of the Land of Standing Rocks, Ernie's Country, the Doll House, and the Fins. People come to this wilderness of broken rock, little water, and stunted junipers and find intangible resources hard to find elsewhere: solitude, silence, and challenges demanding self-reliance. The 600-foot descent to the bottom of the Maze is a plunge into the heart of this country. Until the park was created few individuals had explored these canyons.

Even today there are few visitors each year. Many come to see the ghostly figures painted on the walls of Horseshoe Canyon, a detached unit west of the main body of the park. Left by American Indians at least 2,000 years ago, the haunting lifelike forms are considered among the finest examples of prehistoric rock art in the country. They are a fitting reminder of the otherworldly spirit of this region, where people come and go, but never stay. When visiting take photographs, but leave no trace of your visit.

Explorations From Utah 24 or 95 take two- and four-wheel drive routes east to the Maze. Facilities include: four-wheel-drive roads; primitive hiking routes; primitive campsites (backcountry permit and fee required); overlooks; commercial tours from nearby towns. No water is available.



Stephen Trimble

From one point of view the Maze's confusion of canyons is inhospitable; from another, it is an inviting refuge from civilization.

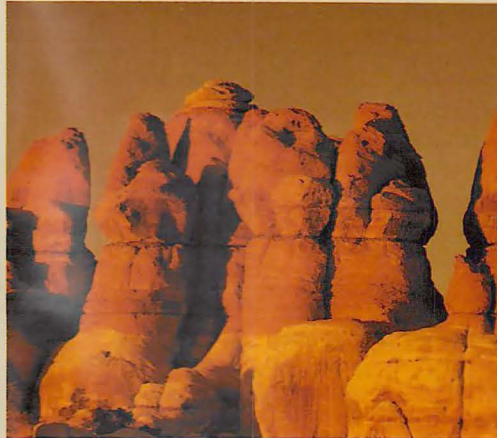
The Needles



Thea Nordling

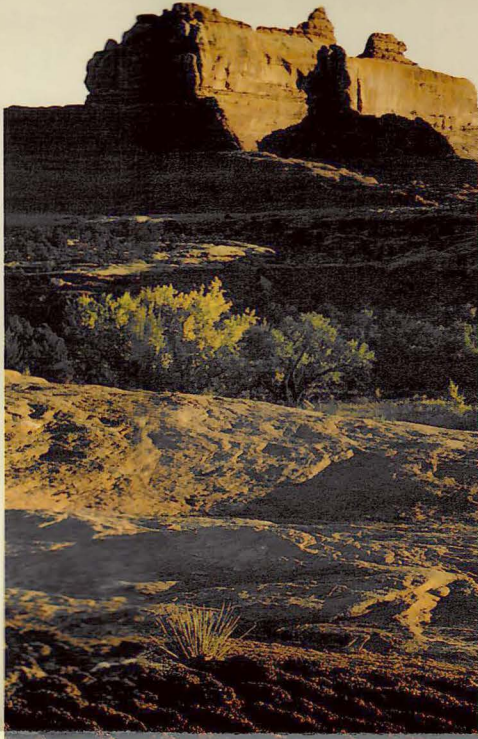
Tower Ruin is one of hundreds of sites in the Needles where signs of ancient Indians exist.

The contrasting names in the Needles District reflect the diversity of the land itself: Devils Kitchen and Angel Arch, Elephant Hill and Caterpillar Arch, Gothic Arch and Paul Bunyans Potty. The Needles is a startling landscape of sculptured rock spires, arches, canyons, grabens, and potholes. The dominant landforms are the Needles themselves—rock pinnacles banded in red and white. Earth movements fractured the rock, and water, wind, and freezing and thawing eroded it into the jumbled terrain of today. Grassy meadows such as the 960-acre Chesler Park offer a striking contrast to the Needles' bare rock. And arches add a touch of the unusual to the region. Like Arches National Park to the northeast, the Needles District boasts a fascinating collection of natural rock spans. Angel Arch, located in a side canyon of Salt Creek Canyon, stands 150 feet high. The Wooden Shoe Arch, on the other hand, has just a small tunnel-like opening. Other arches are shaped like a caterpillar, a wedding ring, a horse's hoof. Most of the arches lie hidden in backcountry canyons and are well-deserved rewards for those who make the long four-wheel-drive trips or hikes to see them. The Grabens are also accessible by four-wheel drive. To reach these vertical-walled, grass-carpeted valleys requires negotiating infamous Elephant Hill. With steep, rocky inclines and sharp switchbacks, Elephant Hill tests the skills of the most accomplished four-wheel driver. Continuing past the Grabens, roads and trails lead to the Confluence Overlook, a point 1,000 feet above the meeting place of the Green and Colorado rivers. Throughout this country the Ancestral Puebloan Indians once ranged, growing corn, squash, and beans, hunting deer and bighorn, and gathering native seeds, fruits, and roots. This advanced culture was part of the same group of people who built the great stone pueblos of Mesa Verde



David Muench

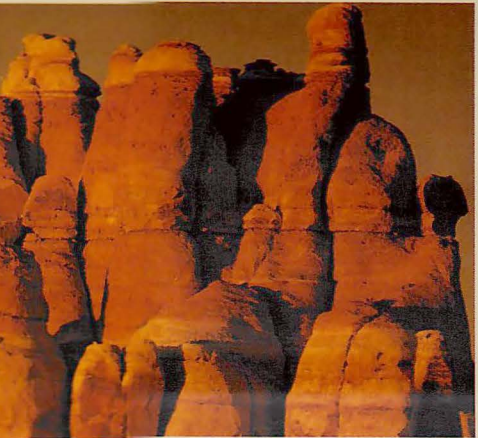
The massive sandstone spires (above) that give the Needles its name were created by erosion and fracturing, forming a crazy quilt pattern over the land. The park is also noted for the cryptobiotic crusts (top) that



Gary Ladd

in Colorado and Chaco Canyon in New Mexico. Traces of the Ancestral Puebloans can be found in almost every canyon in the Needles. Many of their stone and mud dwellings and storehouses are remarkably well-preserved. Tower Ruin, built high on a cliff ledge in a side canyon of Horse Canyon, is an outstanding example of the Ancestral Puebloan architecture. They also left a record in the petroglyphs they etched and the pictographs they painted on cliff walls, as did the Archaic hunters and gatherers who were here centuries before them. The meaning of the many figures, faces, handprints, and other images remains largely a mystery. Unfortunately, many pots, tools, and other items crafted and used by these prehistoric peoples are gone, stolen by looters. Leave artifacts in place.

Explorations From U.S. 191 take Utah 211 west to the Needles. The paved road continues into the park. Facilities include four-wheel-drive roads; self-guiding and primitive trails; developed campground; primitive campsites (backcountry permit and fee required); overlooks; evening campground programs (seasonal); commercial tours from nearby towns. Water is available spring through fall. Entrance and camping fees are charged. Open year-round.



stabilize desert soils. Watch your step; these crusts are easily destroyed. Always walk on slickrock or in dry sandy washes.

The Rivers



Walter Meyers Edwards

Once in Cataract Canyon boats must plunge through one rapid after another; there is no turning back.

Explorer John Wesley Powell recorded the first impressions of the Canyonlands region as seen from the Green and Colorado rivers on his pioneering 1869 boat trip. "We glide along through a strange, weird, grand region. The landscape everywhere, away from the river, is of rock," he wrote. More than a century later the rivers still run wild here. Above the confluence, the Green and Colorado meander slowly through deep, sheer-walled canyons. Below the confluence, the combined waters begin a 14-mile rush and tumble through the rapids of Cataract Canyon. It is one of the country's most treacherous whitewater stretches, rivaling any in the Grand Canyon. The Jekyll-and-Hyde personality of the rivers satisfies those looking forward to a quiet float, those eager for a helter-skelter river run, and those who want both.

As the only major water source in the midst of a dry expanse, the rivers attract a variety of wildlife. Deer, foxes, beavers, bobcats, and migratory birds find shelter in the riverside cottonwoods, tamarisks, and willows. Hanging gardens of lush maidenhair fern, monkeyflower, and columbine cling to the 1,200-foot cliffs along water seepage lines. A lazy pace is best suited for observing life along the rivers. As in other corners of the park, cliffside stone structures and rock art of ancient Indians are scattered along the rivers. Enjoy but do not destroy this cultural heritage.

Explorations Boating is popular above and below the confluence. Permits and fees are required for all river trips. River access is located near the towns of Green River and Moab. Guided whitewater trips are available. Self-guiding canoe trips on flatwater sections of the river are also popular.



Stephen Trimble

Born high in the mountains of Wyoming and Colorado, the Green and Colorado Rivers converge deep in the heart of Canyonlands.

General Travel Information

Canyonlands' first superintendent, Bates Wilson, invited visitors to "come to our wilderness, but be ready to rough it." Today, many years later, that advice still holds true for much of the park. Park rangers strongly recommend that you stop for information at the Moab or Monticello Information Center, or at any park visitor center or ranger station. Brochures, hiking and driving guides, books, topographic maps, and up-to-date reports on park conditions are available at all park offices. Park activity schedules are posted. You can also obtain information and reservations by writing: Superintendent, Canyonlands National Park, 2282 South West Resource Boulevard, Moab, UT 84532-8000; or by calling 801-259-7164. Find more information at www.nps.gov/cany on the Internet.

Climate The park's desert climate is characterized by hot summers, pleasant spring and fall months, and cool winters. Low humidity partially offsets the heat of summer. Precipitation is scarce; most of it falls in late summer and early fall thunderstorms. Light snowfalls occur in the winter.

Seasonal temperatures are:

<i>Summer</i>	daytime: 80 to 100°F night: 50 to 60°F
<i>Spring, Fall</i>	daytime: 60 to 80°F night: 20 to 50°F
<i>Winter</i>	daytime: 30 to 50°F night: 0 to 20°F

Exploring on Your Own

By Road Driving in the park can mean a comfortable ride on a paved road or a tortuous four-wheel-drive climb up a steep, rock road. Paved and two-wheel-drive dirt roads at Island In The Sky and in the Needles lead to interesting natural features, overlooks, trailheads, picnic areas, and developed campgrounds. Four-wheel-drive roads wind throughout the park, offering trips as short as a day or longer than a week. One of the most popular, the 100-mile White Rim Road, can be driven in two days or explored over many days. Primitive campsites are located along many of these roads. A backcountry permit and fee are required for overnight trips. Always carry food, water, and tools for emergencies. In remote

areas, travel in the company of a second vehicle. Motorized vehicles and bicycles must stay on designated roads.

By Trail Both short walks and long hikes lead to some of Canyonlands' outstanding features. Short trails (less than one mile) on the Island and in the Needles will take you to overlooks, to arches and other geologic features, and to archeological sites. Some trails have wayside exhibits or brochures, which can be picked up at trailheads or visitor centers. Longer trails penetrate wilder regions. Trails are generally primitive, marked only with rock cairns. They are rugged and require strenuous exertion. Do not hike alone. Stay on trails. Carry a map and water. Obtain a backcountry permit if you plan to camp.

By River Motorboats, rafts, and canoes can navigate the quiet upper waters of the Green and Colorado. Persons boating above the confluence are required to have a backcountry permit and pay a fee. Anyone planning a trip below the confluence through Cataract Canyon in a raft or specialized whitewater boat must obtain a permit in

advance. A limited number of available permits restricts the number of people allowed to run this challenging whitewater stretch each year. Boat launch sites are located north of the park near the towns of Moab and Green River. There are no services along the rivers. The best times for trips are spring through fall.

Guided Tours

Four-wheel-drive and mountain bike tours, hiking trips, and river float trips are operated by commercial tour guides. The tours vary widely in the territory covered, length, cost, and amenities provided. Tours operate out of nearby towns year-round. Reservations are usually required. A list of Park Service concessioners is available from the park.

Campgrounds and Picnic Areas

Two modestly developed campgrounds are open year-round on a first-come, first-served basis. Willow Flat, at Island In The Sky, and Squaw Flat, in the Needles, have picnic tables, grills, and toilets. Squaw Flat has water spring through fall; Willow Flat has no water. A fee is charged at

Squaw Flat spring through fall. Group campsites can be reserved in the Needles by writing to the park.

Primitive campsites are located along four-wheel-drive roads and in other remote areas; they do not have water. Backcountry permits and fees are required for primitive camping.

Picnic areas at Island In The Sky have tables, grills, and toilets, but no water. The Needles picnic areas have tables only.

Reservations and Fees

Fees are charged to enter Island In The Sky and the Needles. Permit fees are charged for overnight backcountry camping and some day use; reservations are available by writing to the park.

Safety and Regulations

Be prepared for the heat. Carry and drink at least one gallon of water per person per day. Rest occasionally to avoid overexerting yourself. ■ Use extreme caution at overlooks and other cliff edges. Walk carefully on slickrock surfaces.

It is easy to get stranded. ■ Stay with companions in the backcountry; separation can mean getting lost. If you become lost, stay where you are. Wandering will endanger your life and make finding you difficult. ■ Pets must be leashed at all times and are not permitted on trails, at overlooks, or in the backcountry. ■ Help preserve American Indian structures, rock art, historic sites, and other artifacts. Leave them undisturbed; entering structures or touching rock art is a violation of federal law. ■ All park features are protected. Do not pick flowers or collect rocks. ■ Flash floods can occur without warning. Never camp in a dry wash or drive across a flooded area. ■ Stay off fragile cryptobiotic crust. This black, crunchy soil is actually a delicate, living community of lichens and cyanobacteria that plays a vital ecological role. ■ Avoid overexposure to cold, wet conditions—especially on the rivers—that can lead to hypothermia. ■ Lightning is a serious threat. When a thunderstorm is near, avoid overlooks, return to your vehicle, and close the windows. ■ Park trails are primitive and generally unmaintained. Use caution when hiking.

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Travel Advisory This map shows the main features of the park—its prominent natural features and its main roads, trails, and visitor services. Services are very limited. Drinking water is not available at Island In

The Sky or the Maze. Drinking water is available in the Needles, Food, gasoline, stores, and lodging are not available in any of the districts. The Canyonlands Needles Outpost, 1.5 miles from the Needles Visitor

Center, has gasoline, food, and limited supplies. Full services are available in Moab, Green River, Monticello, Hanksville, and other nearby towns. Stop at a visitor center and check on park road and trail conditions; weather can make areas impassable. Detailed maps and guides of four-wheel-drive routes and hiking trails are available. For longer trips topographic maps are essential. They are sold at visitor centers.

Unpaved two-wheel-drive roads can be negotiated by regular passenger vehicles. Four-wheel-drive roads are too steep, rocky, rough, sandy, or hazardous for two-wheel-drive vehicles. High-clearance

two-wheel-drive vehicles can travel some of these roads under good conditions. Check with a ranger for more information. Bicycles and motor vehicles must remain on roads.

Unpaved 2-wheel-drive road

Unpaved 4-wheel-drive road

Overlook/ Paved road

Trail

Rapids

Locked gate

Boat launch

Ranger station

Picnic area

Self-guiding trail

Campground

Primitive campsite

Water available seasonally

Drink one gallon of water per person per day in this semi-desert environment

