



REVISED DEC. 1968

**ABOUT YOUR VISIT**

The entrance, which is on the west side of the monument, can be reached by road from Bowie, Willcox, Douglas, and Bisbee.

Your first stop should be at monument headquarters, about 1 mile beyond the entrance. Here, National Park Service personnel will explain the features of the monument and suggest ways to see them. Here, too, are exhibits that graphically describe the history and natural history of the area. This preparation will help you appreciate what you will see along the scenic drive and trails.

**Points of interest—Massai Point Drive.** This paved mountain road leads up Bonita Canyon to Massai Point, from which you can get an extensive view of the monument and of Sulphur Springs Valley to the west and San Simon Valley to the east. At the Massai Point Exhibit Building, you can learn about local geology.

More than 15 miles of trails provide views of all the monument's features. For your and others' safety, it is suggested that you stay on the trails, whether you are hiking or on horseback. Other tips: Wear comfortable shoes, take water and food on the longer trips, plan to be back before dark, and set an easy pace.

**Massai Point Trail.** You can obtain a guide booklet for this trail at the register box at the Massai Point Exhibit Building. Features along the trail include a balanced rock, lookout point with telescope, and plants of the Transition life zone. Walking time: 20 to 30 minutes.

**Echo Canyon.** The 1/4-mile walk through Echo Canyon to Echo Park presents one of the most scenic sections of the monument. Walking time: 1 hour, one way.

**Heart of Rocks.** This 4- or 5-hour hike leads to such interesting rock formations as Punch and Judy and Big Balanced Rock. You should carry water on this trip.

**Sugarloaf Peak.** A 1-mile trail from the Sugarloaf parking area will bring you to the peak, one of the highest points in the monument and one that offers exciting views in all directions. Walking time: 40 minutes, one way.

**Foothills Forest Trail.** This self-guiding trail, starting at the headquarters parking area, will take you among plants of the Upper and Lower Sonoran life zones. Walking time: 15 to 20 minutes.

**Horseback trips.** Horses are available at Faraway Ranch, and most trails are open to horseback parties.

**Climate**—Temperatures are generally moderate. Mean daily temperature in January is 40° and in July, 74°. Most of the average yearly precipitation of 18 inches occurs during July and August. Except for winter and its light snowfall, the rest of the year is relatively dry.

**Camping and accommodations**—A campground is located in Bonita Canyon, one-half mile from monument headquarters at an elevation of 5,340 feet. Drinking water, fireplaces, and tables are provided for 37 campsites; restrooms are centrally located. The fireplaces are a charcoal-burning type, and you should bring your own charcoal. Camping and picnicking are restricted to the campground area.

Trailers up to 22 feet can be accommodated, but no special facilities, such as electricity, are available.

A 14-day limit on camping is enforced in summer, the season of heaviest use; this limit may be extended at other times.

Motels and restaurants are available in Willcox, 36 miles from the monument.

**A reminder**—Hunting is prohibited. Firearms must be cased or broken down to prevent their use.

All pets must be on leash or kept in a vehicle.

The disturbance of any animal, plant, or feature is prohibited.

No wheeled vehicles are permitted on the trails.

**Administration**—Chiricahua National Monument, established on April 18, 1924, is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Dos Cabezas Star Route, Willcox, Ariz. 85643, is in immediate charge.

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chiricahua national monument, arizona



# chiricahua

Rising steeply from the dry grasslands of southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico, the Chiricahuas present a verdant, forested island in a sea of desert. Many species of trees, shrubs, and flowering herbs clothe steep canyon walls. Shady glens, alive with birds, are sheltered by rows of strange massive spires, turrets, and battlements in this fascinating wonderland of rocks.

**Story of the rocks**—What geological forces created these striking and peculiar pinnacles and balanced rocks? Geologists explain that millions of years ago volcanic activity was extensive throughout this region. A series of explosive eruptions, alternating with periods of inactivity, covered the area with layers of white-hot volcanic ash that welded into rock. Because the eruptions varied in magnitude, the deposits were of different thicknesses.

Finally, the eruptions ceased, followed by movements in the earth's crust which slowly lifted and tilted great rock masses to form mountains. The stresses responsible for the movements caused a definite pattern of cracks. Along the vertical cracks and planes of horizontal weakness, erosion by weathering and running water began its persistent work. Cracks were widened to form fissures; and fissures grew to breaches. At the same time, under-cutting slowly took place.

Gradually the lava masses were cut by millions of erosional channels into blocks of myriad sizes and shapes, to be further sculptured by the elements. Shallow canyons became deeper and more rugged as time passed. Weathered rock formed soil, which collected in pockets; and plants thus gained a foothold.

Erosion is still going on slowly and persistently among the great pillared cliffs of the monument. Pedestal, or balanced, rocks have formed and fallen; others are tottering; more are just taking shape. Within a human lifetime, only minor changes may be noticed, but with the passage of centuries the face of the land shows vast changes.

Although the curious erosional remnants and the massive columnar structure of the cliffs will impress you even if you hurry through, you will see much more of geological interest if you use the trails. Here and there are exposed beds of volcanic ash, indicating the explosive nature of the ancient eruptions. Road construction has uncovered shale which was once the mud of a lakebed. One trail is strewn with "volcanic hailstones" weathered out of a ledge composed of marblelike pellets, some firmly cemented into a peculiar "peanut-brittle" rock.

**Plants and animals**—Because they form an island in a sea of arid grassland, the Chiricahua Mountains afford a haven for a multitude of plants and animals of many species. Elevations range from 5,160 to 7,365 feet causing a corresponding range in climatic conditions and types of vegetation dependent upon them. Winter snows and summer rains feed springs and small streams. Dense vegetation covers the shaded canyon bottoms and the cool north slopes of the higher elevations. In contrast, southern exposures feel the full heat of the summer sun and produce plants characteristic of the desert. Red-stemmed manzanitas and bark-shedding madrones mingle with the chalky-white limbs of the sycamore and the feathery gray foliage of the Arizona cypress. Green north-facing slopes, covered by chaparral of scrub oak and manzanita, face open southern exposures dotted with a desert vegetation of yuccas, centuryplants, and cactuses. Seasonal changes bring with them many varieties of wildflowers.

Arizona white-tailed deer are numerous in the Chiricahuas; in the monument, where they are protected, they have become accustomed to man and are frequently seen. Coatis and peccaries are increasing. Rodents are common, as are birds of many species. Each vegetative belt and plant association has its own distinctive animals, some of which are unique because of the relative and long-established isolation of the Chiricahua Mountains.

**Indians of the Chiricahuas**—What student of American history has not heard of Cochise and Geronimo, famous

warriors of the Chiricahua Apache Indians? For more than 25 years, they led a valiant yet vain attempt to halt the march of civilization and retain their way of life.

Mountain ranges of the Southwest were long the home of the nomadic Apache Indians. These resourceful people lived mainly on wild animals and native plants. When the Spaniards came into the area, some Apache tribes moved into the Chiricahua Mountains, from which they descended to plunder the invaders' horses, cattle, and grain. The horses they stole from the Spaniards increased the mobility and widened the range of their activities, so that what is now the southeastern corner of Arizona became an Apache stronghold.

With the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 and the opening of the region to settlement by the United States citizens, these Apaches became more troublesome. United States troops were dispatched to the Southwest to protect settlers, prospectors, travelers, and the stages of the Butterfield Overland Mail, which were sometimes attacked. This skirmishing turned to open warfare in 1861 after the Bascom Affair, an event that touched off a dozen years of bloody warfare, when the army attempted to capture Cochise for a crime committed by another band of Indians. Of all the many camps and forts established in the Southwest, none played a more vital role in the final subjugation of the Chiricahuas than Fort Bowie. From its founding in 1862 until the final surrender of Geronimo in 1886, Fort Bowie was the focal point of military operations against the Chiricahua Apaches.

In 1872, the Chiricahua Apaches were placed on a reservation, and Arizona enjoyed a brief period of relative peace. In 1876 the reservation was disbanded and most of the Indians were sent to San Carlos, Ariz. Resistance of the Chiricahuas all but ended with the final surrender of Geronimo; however, the Apache Kid and "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 famous Apaches.



unbelievably tall, slender pinnacles, amazing stone likenesses of giant beasts and men, grotesquely weird forms as though of another world—all these and many more, carved by nature in volcanic rock, are crowded into the monument's seventeen square miles of ridge and canyon on the side of the Chiricahua Mountains

