

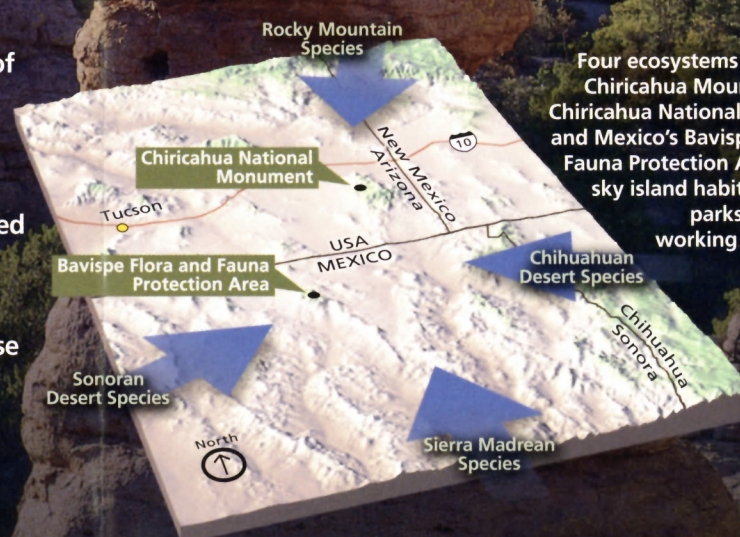


Land of “Standing Up Rocks”

The road to Chiricahua National Monument climbs to a sky island—an isolated mountain range that rises from the surrounding grassland. Meadows dotted with cactus and mesquite begin to fill with sycamore, juniper, and oak trees. Higher up are cypress, pine, and fir woodlands. The basin-and-range landscape is typical in this part of the Southwest. Then rock pinnacles begin to loom over the road. Like guardians of the forest, they announce Chiricahua country.

Chiricahua Apaches call these pinnacles “standing up rocks.” They originated 27 million years ago when the Turkey Creek Volcano spewed ash over 1,200 square miles (3,100 square

kilometers). The melting ash particles formed layers of gray rock called rhyolite canyon tuff. Cooling and uplifting created joints and cracks in the rock. Ice wedging and erosion by water enlarged the cracks. Softer material washed away, creating spires, balanced rocks, and other shapes. This sculpting by the forces of nature continues today. The longer you look, the more alive the formations seem. Many have names; use your imagination to name your own.



Four ecosystems meet in the Chiricahua Mountains. Both Chiricahua National Monument and Mexico's Bavispe Flora and Fauna Protection Area protect sky island habitat. The two parks have had a working partnership since 1996.

Chiricahua National Monument was established in 1924 to preserve and protect the pinnacles. In 1934 the Civilian Conservation Corps began improving the road and building trails and structures. With 84 percent of its 12,025 acres (4,866 hectares) designated as wilderness, the park has trails for everyone—a short, wheelchair-accessible nature trail at Massai Point and all-day hikes that wind through the formations. A narrow, eight-mile scenic drive climbs from the grasslands to the summit at Massai Point, where you get a true sense of being atop a sky island.

Rhyolite canyon tuff formations and Dos Cabezas Mountains
© EDWARD MCCAIN

Chiricahua Apaches

Southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico have been the traditional Chiricahua Apache homeland since the early 1400s (*right*). Chokonen, one of four main bands, lived in and around the Chiricahua Mountains.

Nomadic hunter-gatherers and superb warriors, Apaches were feared and respected by neighboring Tribes. They fiercely resisted colonization by the Spanish in the 1500s and quickly learned to handle guns and horses acquired from the newcomers. Mexico's independence in 1821

and a surge of new immigrants led to a protracted state of war. Despite Chief Cochise and Geronimo's skills, in 1886 the Chiricahua Apaches surrendered to the US military. They were the last Native American

Tribe to concede. The government removed them to reservations in Oklahoma and New Mexico.

The door of this two-story house in Bonita Canyon (*right*) looks like it may open any minute, welcoming you for a visit.

Faraway Ranch

In 1888 Neil and Emma Erickson came here from Sweden. By the 1920s their eldest daughter, Lillian, and her husband, Ed Riggs, had turned the homestead into a guest ranch. From 1917 until 1973 visitors came for relaxing and birding—much as they do today.

Lillian and Ed built trails and led guests on horseback through

the Wonderland of Rocks. Armed with photographs and colorful stories, they lobbied for the area's protection.

After the deaths of the three Erickson children, the ranch, with its furnishings, became a historic district within the national park. The

ranch tells the story of how one family lived on and shaped the land, and was in turn shaped by it.



© GEORGE H. HUEY

Civilian Conservation Corps

Established March 31, 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. It enlisted 3.4 million young men hard hit by the Great Depression.

Known as the Tree Army, they labored at conservation, construction, and rehabilitation projects in all states and territories.

National Park Service areas hosted 118 CCC camps, including NM-2-A, Company 828, at Chiricahua National Monument (*right*).

The CCC offered more than a job. Those unable to read or write received classroom instruction. They could learn carpentry,

plumbing, surveying, and other important skills. Monthly pay was \$30; \$25 was sent to their families. The outbreak of World War II

led many CCC workers into military service. The CCC camps were disbanded in 1942.



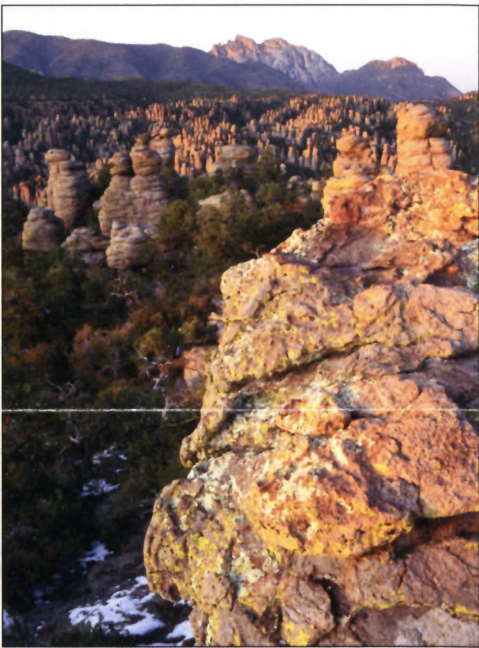
NPS



Wild Chiricahua

Rising to 9,763 feet (2,978 meters), the Chiricahua sky island is home to 1,200 plant species, which vary by elevation, exposure to sun, and precipitation. Plants and animals from four ecosystems meet here. On cooler northern slopes, look for ponderosa pine and Douglas fir; both are typical in the Rocky Mountain range. Sunny southern slopes have Apache pine and border pine from Mexico's Sierra Madre range. Yuccas and sotol from the Chihuahuan Desert coexist with agaves and prickly pear cactus from the Sonoran Desert. Lichens, some of them neon green, adorn the pinnacles; ferns thrive in shade.

Many birds, including Mexican species at the northern limit of their range, live here. You may spot an elusive coatimundi, Arizona white-tailed deer, or Chiricahua fox squirrel (found only in these mountains). The black-tailed rattlesnake is one of the many reptile species.



Heart of Rocks with Cochise Head in background

Planning Your Visit

Getting to the Park Chiricahua National Monument is 35 miles southeast of Willcox, Arizona. From I-10, take AZ 186 south to AZ 181. Entrance is free. A fee is charged for camping. Food, lodging, and gasoline are available in Willcox, Sunizona, and Douglas, Arizona.

Visitor Center Open daily. Stop to pick up a park guide and check weather and current conditions. The museum and store offer opportunities to learn about the park and items to help plan

and remember your visit. Hours may change seasonally.

Scenic Drive Bonita Canyon Drive winds eight miles to Massai Point. It climbs through oak, cypress, and pine forests. The overlook has a 360-degree view of Rhyolite Canyon and adjacent valleys and surrounding mountain peaks. Your return trip is the best time to stop at roadside pullouts. Don't miss our starry nights. The monument was designated an International Dark Sky Park in 2021.

Wilderness and Trails Most of the park is designated wilderness, reachable by foot and horseback but not by motorized vehicles and bicycles. Seventeen miles of day-use trails wind through forest, meadows, and rock pinnacles. Check the map below for trail lengths, elevation changes, and levels of difficulty. Pets are prohibited on most trails; obey signs. Ask at the visitor center about the hikers shuttle.

Picnic Areas The Bonita Creek and Faraway areas have accessible tables, trash-cans, and restrooms. Massai Point, Echo Canyon, and Sugarloaf areas have tables and restrooms. Get drinking water at Faraway Ranch and the visitor center.

Camping The Bonita Canyon Campground, open year-round, has 26 sites for tents and trailers or RVs up to 29 feet long. It has tables, grills, and restrooms with flush toilets. No showers or

hookups. A group site accommodates 9 to 24 people. Reserve (fee) at www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777.

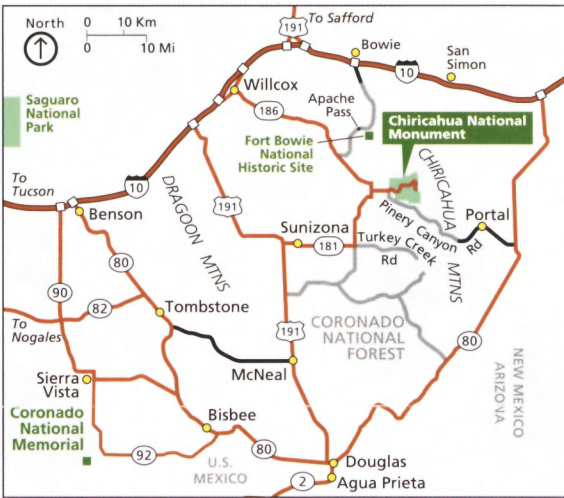
Faraway Ranch and Stafford Cabin The ranch grounds and cabin are open year-round. Ask at the visitor center for a trail guide and information about the Faraway Ranch house tours.

Check the park website for firearms regulations.

More Information Chiricahua National Monument is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more, visit www.nps.gov.

Chiricahua National Monument 12856 East Rhyolite Creek Rd. Willcox, AZ 85643 520-824-3560 www.nps.gov/chir

Use the NPS App to guide your visit.



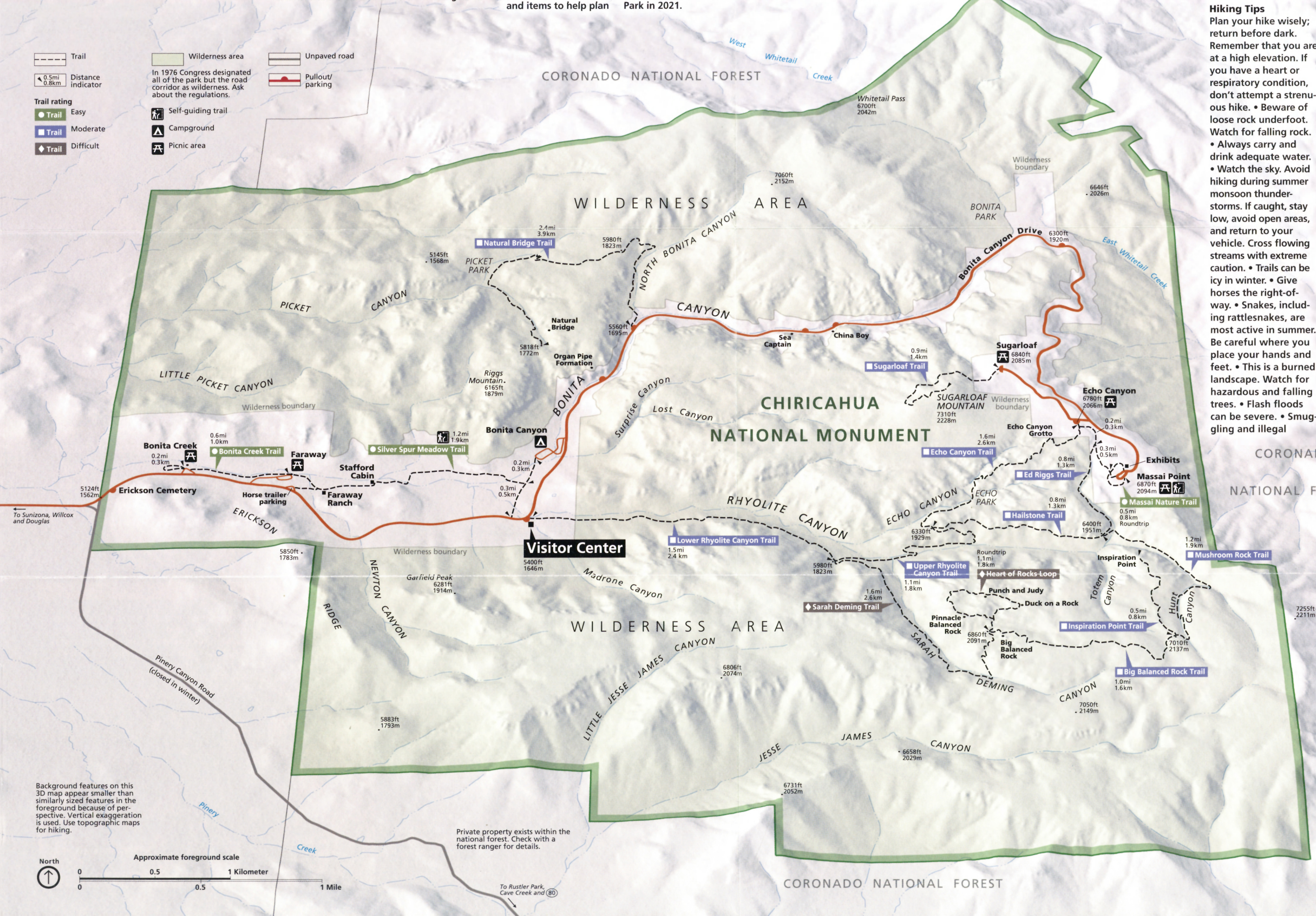
COCHISE HEAD 8113ft 2473m

For a Safe Visit

Hiking Tips Plan your hike wisely; return before dark. Remember that you are at a high elevation. If you have a heart or respiratory condition, don't attempt a strenuous hike. • Beware of loose rock underfoot. Watch for falling rock. • Always carry and drink adequate water. • Watch the sky. Avoid hiking during summer monsoon thunderstorms. If caught, stay low, avoid open areas, and return to your vehicle. Cross flowing streams with extreme caution. • Trails can be icy in winter. • Give horses the right-of-way. • Snakes, including rattlesnakes, are most active in summer. Be careful where you place your hands and feet. • This is a burned landscape. Watch for hazardous and falling trees. • Flash floods can be severe. • Smuggling and illegal

activity are common close to the border. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and do not travel alone in remote areas. Report suspicious activity to park staff or call 911.

Prohibited • Pets on trails, except where designated. • Camping outside Bonita Canyon Campground. • Collecting firewood. • Picnicking in the campground. • Rock climbing or bouldering. • Fireworks. • Bicycling, except on paved roads. • Skateboarding, roller blading or skating, and scooters. • Feeding or disturbing any wildlife, including birds. • Collecting or destroying natural or cultural features; all are protected by federal law. • Using remotely piloted aircraft like drones.



Background features on this 3D map appear smaller than similarly sized features in the foreground because of perspective. Vertical exaggeration is used. Use topographic maps for hiking.

Private property exists within the national forest. Check with a forest ranger for details.