

# Acadia National Park



Acadia National Park is located in Mount Desert Island, Maine running along the Atlantic Coast. This park is best known for Cadillac Mountain--whose summit stands at 1,500 feet.

**What to do:** Visitors can go tidepooling to see marine life up close, go birdwatching for loons and bald eagles and boat in Acadia's many lakes and ponds.

**History:** Acadia was originally home to the Wabanaki people, whose name translates to "People of the Dawnland." This is because from October to March, the summit is the first place in the United States to see the sunrise.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park--especially birds. There are over 300 recorded species like loons swimming in the water and snowy owls on the hunt for their next meal.

**Fun Fact:** The sides of the mountain have colorful granite with distinct splotches, spots and stripes.

# Arches National Park



Arches National Park is located in Utah, near the Colorado River. This park is best known for its 2,000 arches and rock formations made out of a distinctive red rock.

**What to do:** Visitors can check out the most popular and largest free-standing arch called, Delicate Arch. Due to its shape, it's been nicknamed things like "Cowboy's Chaps."

**History:** While researchers have not found many dwellings in Arches, there is evidence of tools possibly left by ancient Puebloans who lived near.

**Wildlife:** Given the desert heat, many creatures at Arches like to be awake when the sun is down and the temperature is cooler. These nocturnal animals include kangaroo rats, foxes and even mountain lions.

**Fun Fact:** The park cuts down on light pollution, to create dark skies--designed for stargazing. Be sure to give your eyes some time to adjust to the darkness before looking for constellations.

# Badlands National Park



Badlands National Park is located in South Dakota. The park is best known for its geological formations and sprawling grasslands.

**What to do:** Visitors can check out one of the most popular trails in the park called Loop Road, which leads to many scenic overlooks of skies and rock formations. These formations have been building up for millions of years and are shaped by natural erosion.

**History:** This area formerly belonged to the Lakota Tribe. Badlands is a rough translation of “Mako Sica” which was their name for it.

**Wildlife:** The park is home to plenty of animals like bison grazing in the grass, prairie dogs poking their heads out of the ground or bighorn sheep scaling cliffs with their special hooves.

**Fun Fact:** The Fossil Preparation Lab is where paleontologists study and clean fossils found in the Badlands--some of which are millions of years old and found by visitors.

# Big Bend National Park



Big Bend National Park is located in southwest Texas. The park is best known for its limestone canyons, biodiversity and striking scenic views.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike through over 200 miles of trails, grab some binoculars to go birding, take a scenic drive to enjoy views of the canyon and camp in the backcountry for a solitude experience

**History:** The park is the homeland of the Huna Tlingit, who referred to the area as “S’e Shuyee,” which translates to “edge of the glacial silt.” The park currently has an Huna Tribal House, which is the tribe’s cultural learning center and event space.

**Wildlife:** For about 100 years, this area of Texas was home to the Comanche Indians. They were skilled equestrians and controlled the area until the late 1800s when American settlers forced them out.

**Fun Fact:** There are many stories and historical figures tied to the Big Bend area. One is the chef and restaurateur Chata Sada, an icon known for her tamales and hospitality.



# Biscayne National Park



Biscayne National Park is located in the Florida Keys. The park is best known for its dazzling waters, coral reefs and aquatic activities. Biscayne is 95% water with only one mile of paved road.

**What to do:** Visitors can explore the park by hopping aboard a boat or kayak, snorkel through shipwrecks and over colorful coral reefs, fish for bonefish and just relax by the water.

**History:** The Biscayne waters were utilized by native groups like the Tequesta people, who depended on the sea for food and supplies. Unfortunately, in the mid-1700s European settlers brought diseases that wiped out many indigenous groups in Florida.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals in the park including over 600 native fish species, as well as threatened or endangered aquatic species like manatees and sea turtles.

**Fun Fact:** Maritime Heritage Trail showcases the area's history including the shipwrecks and old lighthouses.

# Black Canyon of Gunnison National Park



Black Canyon of Gunnison National Park is located in Colorado. The park is best known for its steep cliffs and jagged canyons--which are over 2 million years in the making.

**What to do:** Visitors can look out over Black Canyon to take in the scenery, and those looking to challenge themselves may want to try rock climbing, hiking and kayaking adventures.

**History:** The park is named after John Williams Gunnison, who in 1853 went on an expedition out west and through the canyon.

**Wildlife:** The park is home to many animals including rodents like the yellow-bellied marmot, as well as larger creatures like mountain lions, black bears and bobcats. There are also mule deer who frequently cross and walk alongside the park's roads.

**Fun Fact:** While hiking or driving through the canyon, visitors can spot potholes which are shallow wells that collect rainwater. Since it doesn't rain much during the summer months, some animals depend on these potholes for day-to-day survival.

# Bryce Canyon National Park



Bryce Canyon National Park is located in southern Utah. The park is best known for its irregularly shaped rock columns, which are called hoodoos. It is the largest concentration of hoodoos anywhere on Earth.

**What to do:** Visitors can backpack through the park to get an up-close look at the hoodoos and then camp under the stars. Though, be sure not to leave food out in the open, since black bears are common.

**History:** Paiute Indians first lived in Bryce Canyon. They would use the large flat area, called Paunsaugunt Plateau, for hunting and gathering food.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals including the golden-mantled ground squirrel and 11 species of reptiles like the Tiger salamander.

**Fun Fact:** Even though the park is primarily desert, there are dense forests and a variety of colorful wildflower species up on higher surfaces like Paunsaugunt Plateau.

# Canyonlands National Park



Canyonlands National Park is located in Utah. The park is best known for its canyons and the two rivers, Green and Colorado, which run throughout it.

**What to do:** Visitors can look out over Black Canyon to take in the scenery, and those looking to challenge themselves may want to try rock climbing, hiking and kayaking adventures.

**History:** The canyon has been home to different groups of people for over 10,000 years. Ancestral Puebloans and Fremont people lived amongst one another and developed a farming culture—growing corn, squash and beans.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park, including many nocturnal creatures who sleep during the day to beat the desert heat. Some of these include skunks, bobcats, mountain lions and bats.

**Fun Fact:** Cactus, which thrive in the dry heat, are common sites in the park. There are 11 species of these plants and even though they have a prickly exterior, many desert animals still snack on them.

# Capitol Reef National Park



Capitol Reef National Park is located in south-central Utah. It is best known for having striking cliffs, canyons and other geological formations. But, despite its name, there are no coral reefs in this desert.

**What to do:** Visitors can travel throughout the park to explore the many valleys and canyons by hiking, horseback riding and biking.

**History:** The canyon was home to the Fremont people, who lived there 2,000 years ago. Scientists have found evidence of their rich culture including woven baskets and their homes, called pit houses, which were dug into the ground.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals who live in the park such as the desert bighorn sheep who scale the rocky surfaces, ringtails who hideout in hollow logs or the long-nosed leopard lizard looking for some bugs to snack on.

**Fun Fact:** The Waterpocket Fold is a special geographic area in that park. The soil and rain conditions of this 100-mile stretch allow for plants to thrive.

# Channel Islands National Park



Channel Islands National Park is located in southern California. It is best known for its coastal location and ocean activities like snorkeling, fishing, tidepooling, kayaking, diving and surfing.

**What to do:** Visitors can explore the five islands: Anacapa, Santa Cruz, San Miguel, Santa Barbara and Santa Rosa. Each of which has unique features like Santa Cruz which has the most recreational activities or Anacapa which has seabird nesting sites.

**History:** The park was home to Island Chumash, the group of people researchers believed lived on the islands for thousands of years. They relied on the sea for food and traveled between islands with plank canoes made from redwood trees drifting in the water.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park and the surrounding water home including sea otters, dolphins, a variety of whales and the spiny lobster.

**Fun Fact:** There are several harbors where visitors can view thousands of seals and sea lions flopping around on the rocks.

# Congaree National Park



Congaree National Park is located in South Carolina. It is best known for its expansive forests, specifically having the largest area of bottomland hardwood forest. This is a unique type of forest characterized by old growth, soil buildup and occasional flooding.

**What to do:** Visitors can go hiking through old and towering trees, kayak down creeks to get close to wildlife and go fishing.

**History:** The park has many ties to American history. During the Revolutionary War, Francis Marion led his team of patriots to hide in the Congaree forests and ambush British Troops.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park such as coyotes looking for prey, American beavers building dams, snakes like the Texas rat snake and even alligators in the swampy areas of Congaree.

**Fun Fact:** UNESCO, a global organization, recognized Congaree for its rich biodiversity and natural resources.



# Crater Lake National Park



Crater Lake National Park is located in Oregon. It is best known for its mountains and the lake itself, which is one of the clearest and deepest in America

**What to do:** Visitors can view the lake's perimeter on the Scenic Rim Drive, take a boat tour, go on a snowshoe hike and go snowmobiling in the winter months.

**History:** Researchers don't believe that any people permanently lived at Crater Lake. However, it was likely a temporary camping site for groups and is featured in the stories of the Klamath Indians.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including the golden-mantled squirrels, black bears and snowshoe hare. There are two species of fish--kokanee salmon and rainbow trout--which visitors can catch from streams around the park.

**Fun Fact:** Wizard Island, which sits in the middle of Crater Lake, rises 763 feet above the water. It is the top of a volcano that is now nearly submerged by water.

# Cuyahoga Valley National Park



Cuyahoga Valley National Park is located in Ohio, near the cities Cleveland and Akron. It is best known as a refuge for wildlife, and full of hiking, biking and horse riding trails.

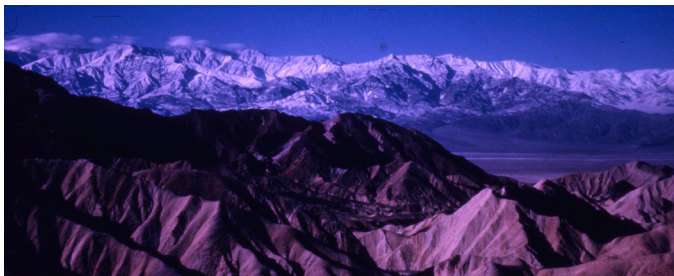
**What to do:** Visitors can have a group picnic, paddle down the Cuyahoga River, backpack a portion of the 1,444 mile Buckeye Trail and follow the Canalway Questing adventure to discover some of the park's gems.

**History:** Researchers don't believe that any people permanently lived at Crater Lake. However, it was likely a temporary camping site for groups and is featured in the stories of the Klamath Indians.

**Wildlife:** The park was home to Paleoindians from 13 to 10 thousand years ago. They hunted large caribou for food and made their homes out of sticks and animal skin.

**Fun Fact:** Over 100 man-made ponds are scattered throughout the park. The ponds were created to serve as space for wetland plants and animals, as well as serene spots for birdwatching and relaxing.

# Death Valley National Park



Death Valley National Park is located in both California and Nevada. The park, which sits below sea-level, is best known for its desert landscapes as well as areas of thriving plants and wildlife

**What to do:** Visitors can watch the sunrise or set on the horizon, bike through the mountains on dirt roads, hike—as long as it's not too hot—and go on the Star Wars tour to see where famous scenes were filmed.

**History:** The park was home to Timbisha Shoshone Indians before European settlers ever found the valley. They followed seasonal migration patterns to grow and harvest foods like pine nuts and beans.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including bighorn sheep climbing up mountains, kangaroos rats who can survive without water, and jackrabbits who avoid the sun while sleeping during the day.

**Fun Fact:** A small portion of the park is covered in sand dunes, which are rippled curves of sand that look like they're out of a storybook

# Denali National Park



Denali National Park is located in Alaska. The park is best known for its tundra landscape, snow-covered mountains and Denali itself—the tallest peak in North America.

**What to do:** Visitors can bike on trails, climb up the mountains with the proper equipment, hop aboard a helicopter for an above-ground tour and search for wildlife.

**History:** Formerly known as Mount McKinley, the current name Denali was formally recognized by the federal government in 2015. The word “Denali” comes from a traditional native language called Koyukon.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including dall sheep balancing on the rocky terrain, caribou running in large herds and a single amphibian—wood frogs who are able to freeze solid to survive the winter.

**Fun Fact:** There are about 35 sled dogs at Denali Park. Travel by way of a sled-dog team is an important Denali tradition, but also a way for park rangers to get around without motorized vehicles—which can be disruptive at times.

# Dry Tortugas National Park



Dry Tortugas National Park is located in Florida, near Key West. The park is best known for its remote location, the historical Fort Jefferson, expansive coral reefs and marine life

**What to do:** Visitors can take a boat ride to fish, paddleboard and try to spot wildlife or snorkel to get a closer look at the coral reefs.

**History:** Congress designated Dry Tortugas as a national park in 1992 to protect the island's ecosystem and marine life. It also aimed to preserve the cultural and historical artifacts, such as the fort and various shipwrecks.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including endangered sea turtles nesting on the shores, gray angelfish navigating around the coral reefs and nearly 300 species of birds like the long-eared owl.

**Fun Fact:** Fort Jefferson was built to protect the Gulf of Mexico. It was never completed, but it is the biggest all-masonry fort in the country.

# Everglades National Park



Everglades National Park is located in southern Florida. The park is best known for its 1.5 million acres of marshy wetlands and the many endangered species living there.

**What to do:** Visitors can navigate around the park by boat, slogging through the off-road paths, or even by geocaching—a treasure hunt where participants have to find hidden containers around the park.

**History:** The park was home to Calusa Indians before the Spanish came to southern Florida in 1513. The Calusa used seashells to make small tools as well as larger formations for architectural purposes like platforms and mounds, likely for sacred spaces

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including alligators and crocodiles, gray fox climbing up trees, southern leopard frogs singing from the water and nearly 300 species of fish like the gulf toadfish

**Fun Fact:** The Everglades has several mangrove forests, which means it is made up of plants that can survive and thrive off of saltwater.

# Gates of the Arctic National Park



Gates of the Arctic National Park is located in Northern Alaska. The park is best known for its 8.4 million acres of completely intact land--which has no trails or roads--just wilderness.

**What to do:** Visitors should be experienced hikers, who are able to plan out trips with topographic maps, consult park rangers and be ready for unexpected weather.

**History:** The parkland has been home to many groups of people including the Nunamiut. They have a close relationship with caribou, depending on every part of them for different purposes like food, clothing, tents, sleds and shoes.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including lynx wandering in the forests, a herd of caribou grazing on plants, snowshoe hard hiding in the brush and beavers paddling in ponds.

**Fun Fact:** From late fall to early spring, temperatures at the Gate of the Arctic can fall between -20 to -50 degrees.



# Gateway Arch National Park



Gateway Arch National Park is located in St. Louis, Missouri. The park is best known for its namesake arch, the Old Courthouse and the city's overall historical role in pioneering and Westward expansion.

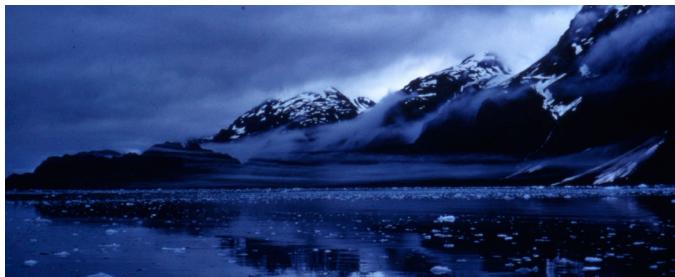
**What to do:** Visitors can explore the museum under the arch to learn about St. Louis history, the arches architect Eero Saarinen, indigenous cultures and more.

**History:** The park was home to indigenous and Creoles people, as well as Spanish and French merchants who moved there to start a commercial village.

**Explore:** To get a view on top of the arch, 630 feet up, hop aboard a tram to get up to the observation room. There, the west side of St. Louis, the Mississippi River and communities over the Illinois border are visible.

**Fun Fact:** The Old Courthouse, built in 1839, is where some monumental legal cases played out. One of these is the Dred Scott case, where a formerly enslaved man sued for his freedom and was sadly unsuccessful.

# Glacier Bay National Park



Glacier Bay National Park is located in southeast Alaska. The park is best known for the bay, the many water passages surrounding it, glaciers and the lush forests at the southern end.

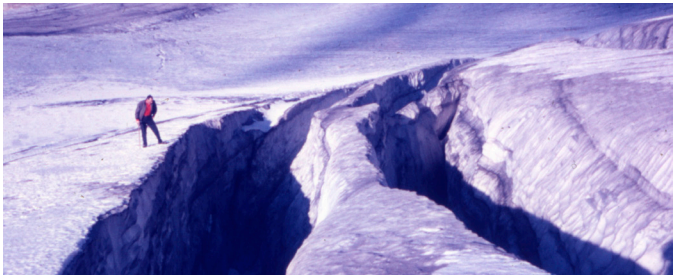
**What to do:** Visitors can see towering glaciers on a boat tour, stroll along the coastline and take a kayak to explore the 3 million acres of parkland.

**History:** The park is the homeland of the Huna Tlingit, who referred to the area as "S'e Shuyee," which translates to "edge of the glacial silt." The park currently has an Huna Tribal House, which is the tribe's cultural learning center and event space.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including humpback whales breaching, prickly porcupines running around in the evening and mountain goats balancing on the ledge of rocks and sea otters floating on their backs.

**Fun Fact:** The Gull Egg Harvest is an annual celebration of the Huna Tlingit tradition to hunt gull eggs.

# Glacier National Park



Glacier National Park is located in Montana. The park is best known for snowy forests and mountains overlooking expansive lakes.

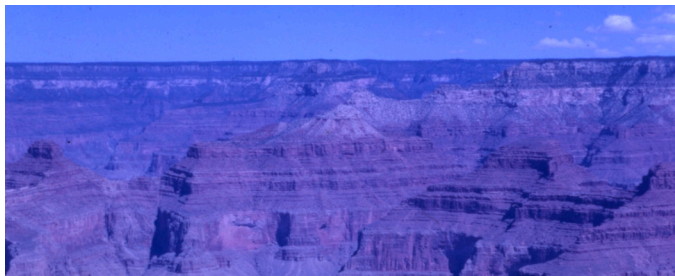
**What to do:** Visitors can hike along more than 700 miles of paved trails, stay in a cozy lodge and drive through Going-to-the-Sun Road to check out the mountains and scenic views.

**History:** One of the tribes which lived in the near parkland is the Blackfeet, who currently have a reservation in the prairies to the east of Glacier. White fur trappers arrived in the 1700s and depleted the area of resources.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including one of the largest grizzly bear populations, elk feeding on wild grasses, lynx looking for a rodent snack and nearly 300 species of birds like osprey.

**Fun Fact:** Many of Glacier's lodges are built in Swiss-style. This means the buildings have distinctive features like large windows, decorative molding and gable roofs.

# Grand Canyon National Park



Grand Canyon National Park is located in Arizona. The park is best known for the canyon itself and the Colorado River which runs through it.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a mule tour around parts of the canyon, raft down the Colorado River and bike down scenic paths.

**History:** Eleven tribes lived in or near the Grand Canyon parkland--one of them is the Ancestral Puebloans. The Tusayan Pueblo is a small, preserved portion of their 800-year village.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including 22 different species of bats who hunt for mosquitos, bighorn sheep scaling the rocky terrain and hog-nosed skunks coming out at night to hunt for food.

**Fun Fact:** In 1890, the first group of miners went to the Grand Canyon in search of valuable materials. Eventually, mining towns popped up, filled with prospective miners who had hopes of finding ore, copper and silver.

# Grand Teton National Park



Grand Teton National Park is located in Wyoming. The park is best known for its mountain range, two hundred miles of trails and the Snake River.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike, bike and raft through the park's four different communities: mountain, forest, sagebrush flats, and the wetlands

**History:** There is evidence of people living in and around the mountains for at least 11,000 years. Groups like the Shoshone wouldn't only hunt wildlife and resources from the mountains, but also maintained spiritual connections to the areas.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including bald eagles feeding on fish from the river, yellow-bellied marmots hiding in the rocks and the mountain whitefish in the chilly, rushing water.

**Fun Fact:** The Tetons are home to a number of endangered species like the gray wolf--of which 32 were found in the park a few years ago.

# Great Basin National Park



Great Basin National Park is located in Nevada, near the Utah border. The park is best known for the towering Wheeler Peak Summit, its marble caves and bristlecone pine forests.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a tour of the Lehman Caves, drive around the mountains and valleys, or hike through the Bristlecone Pine Trail--to see the Bristlecones trees which live for thousands of years.

**History:** The park area was once home to the Fremont People, who lived in pit-homes that are dug into the ground. They also decorated caves with rock art, known as pictographs, which can be viewed in the Upper Pictograph Cave in Great Basin Park.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including a variety of bat species living in the caves, kangaroo rats--who never need to drink water--enjoying the desert and badgers hunting for rattlesnakes.

**Fun Fact:** Archaeologists discovered a portion of a Fremont Indian settlement, called Baker Village, which dates back to around 1220 CE

# Great Sand Dunes National Park



Great Sand Dunes National Park is located in southern Colorado. The park is best known for its dunes, of course, but also the grasslands and lakes surrounding it.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike up the dunes--some of which are over 700 feet tall--and then sandboard or sand sled down them.

**History:** An area of the park, west of the dunes, used to make up a small portion of the Old Spanish Trail. Those looking to get from Santa Fe to California took this often perilous pathway

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including pronghorn sprinting through the grasslands, plateau lizards chilling in the sun and over 250 species of birds like golden eagles who hunt small rodents.

**Fun Fact:** While the park is named after its dry dunes, there are five alpine lakes with many amphibians and trout.



# Great Smoky Mountains National Park



Great Smoky Mountains National Park is located between North Carolina and Tennessee. The park is best known for its abundance of wildlife, remains of Southern history and the Smoky Mountains.

**What to do:** Visitors can bike around looking for waterfalls, take a walking tour of the old log cabins, fish for smallmouth bass in over 600 miles of streams and, of course, hike up the Smokies.

**History:** Before settlers arrived in the late 1700s, the park was home to the Cherokee Indians. They had permanent towns, crops and trails throughout the land.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including white-tailed deer and groundhog, but none are as symbolic to the Smokies as the American Black Bear. There are about 1,500 that currently live in the Great Smoky Mountains.

**Fun Fact:** There are several burial sites and cemeteries where visitors can learn and connect with the park's rich American history.

# Guadalupe Mountains National Park



Guadalupe Mountains National Park is located in western Texas in the Chihuahuan Desert. The park is best known for its Salt Basin Dunes, the Permian fossil reef, high mountain peaks and biodiversity.

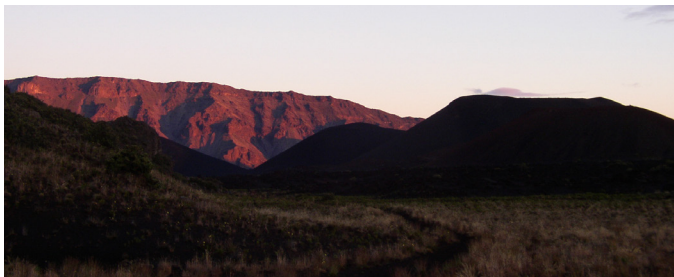
**What to do:** Visitors can go looking for desert animals emerging in the evening hours, stargaze into the clear night skies, and hike up rocky trails and over the Salt Basin Dunes

**History:** For many years, the park and much of west Texas were home to the Mescalero Apaches. They used horses to get around and roasted agave plants for food and drinks.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including black-tailed rattlesnakes hiding in rocky canyons, bobcats coming out to hunt at dusk and all kinds of lizards all over the desert.

**Fun Fact:** The Salt Basins are a result of wind, rain and geological shifts for millions of years.

# Haleakallā National Park



Haleakallā National Park is located in Hawaii on the island of Maui. The park is best known as a protected space for its endangered species, bright and striking sunrises and its rich Hawaiian history.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike more than 30 miles of trails, watch the sunrise atop the summit, attend ranger-led cultural presentations, camp in the wilderness and stargaze.

**History:** Polynesians first arrived at Haleakaliā over 1,000 years ago. When visiting the park, it is important to learn about the native traditions, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs that are tied to the parkland

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including native bird species like the Hawaiian goose or Hawaiian forest birds

**Fun Fact:** The Kīpahulu district of the park was used for traditional farming and permanent settlements for many years. It was a prime location due to its fertile soil and water access.

# Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park



Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park is located in Hawaii. The park is best known for Kilauea and Mauna Loa—two active volcanoes.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike over volcanic terrain, drive down the Chain of Craters Road to enjoy scenic seaside views, and pitch a tent to spend the night at one of two campsites

**History:** Kānaka Maoli is used to refer to Native Hawaiians, whose ancestors were the Polynesians who first arrived on the islands centuries ago. The Kānaka Maoli had a royal class known as Ali'i who wore bright, distinctive costumes and had governing powers.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including the endangered hawksbill turtle, rock crabs camouflaging into the shoreline and Hawaiian Hoary Bats—who first came to the islands more than 10,000 years ago.

**Fun Fact:** In 2018 Kilauea erupted in two different locations. For four months, lava flowed out of the volcano—forcing people to flee their homes.

# Hot Springs National Park



Hot Springs National Park is located in central Arkansas. The park is best known for its historic bathhouses, thermal springs and other unique geologic features

**What to do:** Visitors can go on a tour of Bathhouse Row to see the eight remaining bathhouses, which were built between 1892 and 1923. There are also over 20 miles of hiking paths, areas where visitors can touch the thermal springs and scenic drives to check out the mountains

**History:** Hale Bathhouse, built in 1892, is the oldest standing house. A sauna-like room in Hale is connected to a thermal cave on the side of a mountain.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including wild turkeys trotting through the grass, raptors soaring above and 22 species of amphibians like frogs--singing out into the night.

**Fun Fact:** Some of the first bathhouses were made of canvas and wood, so not surprisingly many of these ended up burning down.

# Indiana Dunes National Park



Indiana Dunes National Park is located in Indiana, running alongside the southern portion of Lake Michigan. The park is best known for its sand dunes, prairies and shoreline.

**What to do:** Visitors can relax on the sandy beaches and hike over 14 different trails.

**History:** There are dozens of historic structures and sites in the Indian Dunes. One of them, the Chellberg Farmhouse, was home to three generations of the Chellberg family from 1863 to 1972. Visiting the house is a way to visualize what day-to-day life in the dunes was like.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including beavers building dams in the Little Calumet River, white-tailed deer grazing and over 350 species of birds like the downy woodpecker.

**Fun Fact:** Over the last 175 years, humans have caused damage to one of the dunes, Mount Baldy. The 120-foot peak is moving inland, so scientists and park rangers are trying different techniques, like building wind-blockades, to restore it.

# Isle Royale National Park



Isle Royale National Park is located in Michigan and is surrounded by Lake Superior. The park is best known for its isolation, vast wilderness and lakes.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike through forests, fish out on Lake Superior, kayak around inland lakes and spend a night camping at a canoe-only accessible location.

**History:** Some of the Native groups who lived or at least hunted on the northern shores of Lake Superior include the Ojibwa, Cree and Assiniboin

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including the iconic moose, river otters splashing around in the lake, sandhill cranes in wetland areas and wolves--the top predator of the Isle.

**Fun Fact:** There have been 10 major shipwrecks in the park's waters. The most popular diving site, the SS America, crashed in 1928. Luckily, every passenger and crew member was safe, though the boat itself couldn't be salvaged.



# Joshua Tree National Park



Joshua Tree National Park is located in southern California. The park is best known for both the Mojave and Colorado deserts.

**What to do:** Visitors can spend a night in the desert under the stars, hike along nearly 300 miles of trails, climb up steep cliffs and take a four-wheeler through backcountry roads for some solitude.

**History:** The Chemehuevi arrived in southern California roughly four centuries ago. They would live in temporary hunting camps during spring and summer. In the cold months, they would move from those camps to larger villages with homes dug into the ground.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including rodents burrowed into the ground to keep cool, Mojave desert tortoises resting in rocky hillsides and more than 250 species of birds like the black-throated sparrow.

**Fun Fact:** Joshua Trees themselves are known for their distinctive twisty, spiky shapes.

# Katmai National Park



Katmai National Park is located in southern Alaska. The park is best known for its large brown bear population, expansive tundras, and thousands of years of human history connected to the area

**What to do:** Visitors can boat down rivers and streams, watch bears following park protocol, go flightseeing to get an aerial view of Katmai, camp in the isolated wilderness and hike at Brooks Camp—one of the few trails in the park.

**History:** Archaeologists have found evidence of people living in Katmai from 9 to 7 thousand years ago. These Paleoartic people likely crossed into the Americas by crossing the land bridge or taking a boat over the Bering Strait.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including predators like brown bears, coyotes and humpback whales. There are also smaller creatures like beavers, red squirrels, mink and sea otters.

**Fun Fact:** The lifespan of a brown bear is 20 years, but the oldest one ever recorded was 35.

# Kenai Fjords National Park



Kenai Fjords National Park is located in south-central Alaska. The park is best known for its glaciers, aquatic wildlife and vast forests with diverse wildlife.

**What to do:** Visitors can hop aboard a boat tour to see a tidewater glacier, fish for salmon in fresh or saltwater and go flightseeing for an aerial view of Kenai Fjords.

**History:** There are plenty of species living in the park including brown bears hunting for fresh salmon, sea otters eating while floating on their backs and humpback whales--who are nearly 50 feet long.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including brown bears hunting for fresh salmon, sea otters eating while floating on their backs and humpback whales--who are nearly 50 feet long.

**Fun Fact:** A little over half of the Kenai Fjords park is covered in ice such as glaciers. These glaciers are formed through a process called firnification when snow becomes compact and hardened.

# Kobuk Valley National Park



Kobuk Valley National Park is located in northwestern Alaska. The park is best known for its large population of caribou, nearly 2 million acres of undeveloped land and sand dunes

**What to do:** Visitors can go backpacking through remote wilderness, raft down the Kobuk River, fish for salmon and make a trip out to the sand dunes.

**History:** Throughout the mid-1900s, arctic archaeologist J. Louis Giddings studied the parkland. He found that prehistoric people would strategically hunt at Onion Portage, a spot that allowed them to target the migrating caribou as they crossed the Kobuk River

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals including the wood frogs whose bodies completely shut down to get through the cold winter months, many migratory bird species like waterfowl, and fish like salmon and sheefish.

**Fun Fact:** Twice a year, caribou come running through the Kobuk River on their great migration. It is one of the last great migrations left.

# Lake Clark National Park



Lake Clark National Park is located in southwest Alaska. The park is best known for its rugged mountains, undisturbed wilderness and sparkling lakes and streams.

**What to do:** Visitors can canoe beside the mountains, watch brown bears following park protocol, fish for salmon and sockeye, take a raft down the rivers and spend the night at a backcountry cabin.

**History:** The Lake Clark parklands was home to the Dena'ina people. They call the area "Qizhjah Vena" and continue to hold many education, spiritual and artistic events at the park to pass their culture and traditions to future generations.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals including caribou using their hooves to dig through the snow for food, dall sheep resting on rocky slopes, wolves hunting for something like a snowshoe hare and lots of sockeye salmon.

**Fun Fact:** The handbuilt cabin of wilderness icon, Dick Proenneke, is available for tours for visitors to get a sense of the remoteness and beauty of the backcountry.

# Lassen Volcanic National Park



Lassen Volcanic National Park is located in northern California. The park is best known for its volcanoes, volcanic features, sprawling meadows and alpine lakes

**What to do:** Visitors can ski down the slopes in the winter months, check out the hydrothermal areas by touring Sulfur Works, fish in designated lakes and streams, kayak in the reflection of mountains and camp under the starry sky.

**History:** Four Native American groups have connections to the Lassen area including the Atsugewi, Yana, Yahi and Maidu. Though, because of the cold and snowy winter climate, these groups would migrate by season along with the deer they hunted.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including the snowshoe hare camouflaging in the snow, mountain lions hunting for deer at dusk and the Pacific treefrog singing in the meadows.

**Fun Fact:** There are four types of volcanoes: shield, plug dome, cinder cone and composite. Lassen Volcanic National Park has all of them.

# Mammoth Cave National Park



Mammoth Cave National Park is located in Kentucky. The park is best known for having the world's longest cave system, its biodiversity and the rivers

**What to do:** Visitors can go on on a ranger-led cave tour, kayak along the Green and Nolin Rivers, horseback backcountry trails and hike through forests.

**History:** Mammoth Cave was first discovered roughly 5,000 years ago by Prehistoric people who lived in the surrounding forests near rivers. Evidence suggests these people had explored more than 19 miles of cave.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including several bat species who live in Mammoth Cave. There are also raccoons living in the forests, bald eagles soaring the sky and several cave-adapted species of fish who do not have eyes or skin pigment—like the Indiana Eyeless Crayfish.

**Fun Fact:** Mammoth Cave is known as a “solution cave,” which is caused when acidic water dissolved limestone over long periods of time.

# Mesa Verde National Park



Mesa Verde National Park is located in southwest Colorado. The park is best known for its connection to the Ancestral Puebloans

**What to do:** Visitors can tour a cliff dwelling to learn where Ancestral Puebloans built their homes, check out the archaeological museum to see preserved artifacts and hike along the park's many trails to look for wildlife.

**History:** The Ancestral Puebloans lived in Mesa Verde from 600 to 1300 CE. The park has thousands of sites and artifacts

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including types of bats like the California myotis, rodents like the bushy-tailed woodrat and reptiles like the Northern tree lizard.

**Fun Fact:** Established as a National Park in 1906, it was the only one created to protect cultural sites rather than environmental features. Currently, there are 600 cliff dwellings and 4,000 protected archaeological sites in Mesa Verde.



# Mount Rainier National Park



Mount Rainier National Park is located in Washington. The park is best known for its namesake, Mount Rainier, an active volcano that erupted about 1,000 years ago.

**What to do:** Visitors can go hiking and look around at the park's wildflower meadows, go fishing at designated lakes, and in the winter, go for a sled or snowshoe hike in the snow.

**History:** The area has cultural and historical significance to six indigenous groups: Yakama, Cowlitz, Nisqually, Puyallup, Squaxin Island and Muckleshoot. Mount Rainier still has strong spiritual meaning and cultural significance to them.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including carnivores like the black bear, smaller creatures like the snowshoe hare and nearly 200 species of birds like the Northern Spotted owl.

**Fun Fact:** Since Mount Rainier is technically active but has erupted in a while, it is called a stratovolcano because it has episodes of activity.

# National Park of American Samoa



National Park of American Samoa is located in Pago Pago, American Samoa. It is best known for being the only National Park that is south of the Equator. It is also known for its lush rainforests and diverse coral reefs.

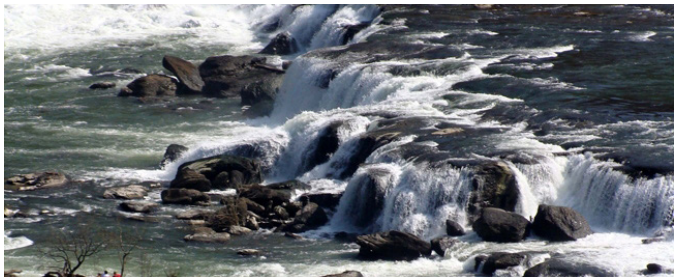
**What to do:** Visitors can snorkel to see the coral reefs, walk along sandy beaches and explore local villages to learn about Samoan culture.

**History:** The first people to arrive in Samoa about 3,000 years ago were Polynesians. The villagers are very tradition-oriented and have cultural traits known as Fa'asamoa

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including 35 species of native birds, nearly 1,000 species of reef fish and endangered marine life like sea turtles and humpback whales.

**Fun Fact:** There are some customs to keep in mind while visiting like to always ask villagers before using a beach and keeping quiet on Sundays.

# New River Gorge National Park



New River Gorge National Park is located in West Virginia, just north of Fayetteville. The park is the newest addition to the National Park system and has one of the world's oldest rivers and runs south to north, unlike most other rivers in North America.

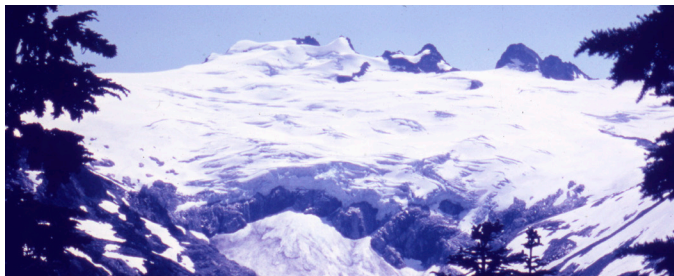
**What to do:** Visitors can fish on the many beaches, white water raft down rivers, climb up more than 1,600 routes and take scenic drives to view the gorge and New River running throughout the park.

**History:** The New River Gorge once was a major supplier of coal. Joseph Beury opened the first coal mine along the New River in 1872. His memorial still stands on park property.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including the Allegheny woodrat, a small rodent and threatened species. There are also 40 species of reptiles like the common map turtle and ringneck snakes.

**Fun Fact:** New River Gorge just recently earned a National Park status in December 2020.

# North Cascades National Park



North Cascades National Park is located in Washington near the Canadian border. The park is best known for its forests, waterfalls and rock formations shaped by glaciers millions of years ago.

**What to do:** Visitors can rent a kayak or canoe to explore the park's lakes, horseback ride through forests, and go fishing in the Skagit River for salmon and trout.

**History:** The North Cascade mountains separated groups of native people. They mapped passes in the mountains to use as trade routes with one another.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including grizzly bears, bald eagles fishing in the Skagit River, solitary and rarely seen gray wolves, and over 500 types of land insects like butterflies.

**Fun Fact:** North Cascades have a Sister Park arrangement with Peneda-Gerês National Park in Portugal. The parks were both formed by glaciers, working to maintain connections with groups who have cultural connections to the land and have international borders.

# Olympic National Park



Olympic National Park is located in Washington. The park is best known for having a variety of ecosystems including mountains, forests and coastline.

**What to do:** Visitors can climb up the park's mountains and rock formations, backpack through rainforest paths, go tidepooling to look for animals like mussels and go fishing in a few of the 600 lakes in Olympic.

**History:** There were eight tribes who called the Olympic Peninsula home before they had to cede their land to the U.S. government in the mid-1800s. They continue to hold a ceremony called "First Salmon," to honor and pay thanks to salmon—a staple food.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including black-tail deer feeding on grass, river otters swimming along the Pacific coast and several species of amphibians like the rough-skinned newt or red-legged frog.

**Fun Fact:** Olympic has many species of anadromous fish. The fish, such as salmon, migrate from freshwater to the salty ocean and back.

# Petrified Forest National Park



Petrified Forest National Park is located in northeastern Arizona. The park is best known for the Painted Desert and the Crystal Forest, which is made up of petrified, colorful tree deposits.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a guided tour in the Crystal Forest to learn about the trees, hike through the burnt-orange Painted Desert and hop in a car to take a scenic drive.

**History:** The Petrified Forest area was home to a large village called Puerco Pueblo--which likely had around 200 villagers in the 1300s.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including mammalian predators like coyotes and bobcats. There are also reptiles like vibrant collared lizards resting on the rocky terrain.

**Fun Fact:** Newspaper Rock, a site in the park, is petroglyphs from the ancestral Puebloans. Some of these markings are in reference to dates, migration routes, family symbols or have spiritual meanings.

# Pinnacles National Park



Pinnacles National Park is located in California. The park is best known for its rock formations, created by volcanic eruptions spanning millions of years. It also is home to a number of birds.

**What to do:** Visitors can bring some binoculars to look for birds, take a hike through the rock spires and go on a tour through the caves.

**History:** Groups like the Chalon Indians have strong ties to the parkland where many of their ancestors lived. Acorns were a staple in their diets, as well as animals like deer, elk and fish

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including bats sleeping in caves, California condors soaring in the sky and alligator lizards coming out of hiding on hot days.

**Fun Fact:** California Condors have a wingspan of 9.5 feet-- they are the largest bird in all of North America. These birds have been critically endangered for decades, so Pinnacles rangers tag and track them.

# Redwood National Park



Redwood National Park is located in northern California. The park is best known for its redwood forests--the tallest trees on Earth. Though, the park also has a coastline, prairies and a vast array of wildlife.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike through the towering forests, take a drive down the coast, go tidepooling to check out small ocean creatures and kayak down the park's rivers

**History:** This area of California was home to many different American Indian tribes before settlers arrived. They hunted deer and elk, fished, and gathered berries and nuts.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including marine life like harbor seals resting on rocks, humpback whales doing barrel rolls in the water and killer whales hunting for salmon.

**Fun Fact:** Members of indigenous groups like the Tolowa and Yurok tribes hold public and free dance demonstrations in the park.



# Rocky Mountain National Park



Rocky Mountain National Park is located in northern Colorado. The park is best known for the mountains themselves, the surrounding alpine terrain and the expansive hiking trails.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a scenic drive to check out high-altitude mountain views, hike along more than 350 miles of trails, spend a night camping under the stars and fish in the alpine lakes and streams.

**History:** Conservation efforts by people like Teddy Roosevelt led to President Woodrow Wilson signing the Rocky Mountain National Park Act in 1915.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including beavers constructing dams in ponds, mountain lions on a solitary hunt for food, nearly 300 bird species like the mountain chickadee and pikas—a small rabbit-like animal found at high elevations.

**Fun Fact:** Visitors can experience the harsh conditions of an alpine tundra ecosystem—which starts at around 11,000 feet elevation. There, few plants can grow amid the strong winds and cold temperatures.

# Saguaro National Park



Saguaro National Park is located in southern Arizona. The park is best known for its giant saguaro-- the largest species of cacti.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike through a cactus forest, go camping in the backcountry, look at preserved Native American rock art and drive out to the east side of the park for a prime sunset-watching spot.

**History:** The park is full of cultural resources, evidence of human activity, which help scientists and visitors learn about those who used to call this area home. There are prehistoric artifacts like rock art called petroglyphs, campsites, rock shelters and farmsteads throughout Saguaro

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including several species of birds like the vermilion flycatchers, desert tortoises eating plants like a pear cactus, and even amphibians like toads--who spend months at a time living underground.

**Fun Fact:** While the Saguaro is the star of the show, the park has 24 other species of cactus.

# Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park is located in California. The park is best known for its towering sequoia trees, canyons, wildlife and foothills.

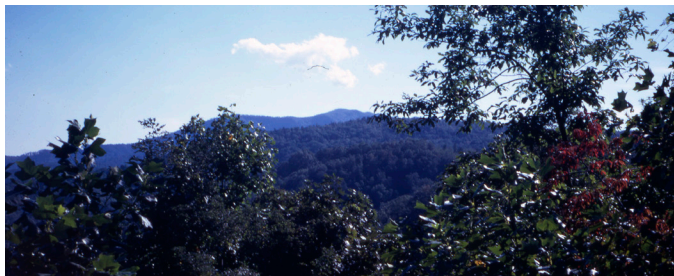
**What to do:** Visitors can hike through Sequoia Groves, horseback ride through the canyons, snowshoe in the winter and look for wildlife.

**History:** President Harrison signed Sequoia National Park to be the country's second national park in 1890. Fifty years later President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Kings Canyon to be a national park. Today, the two parks are run like one.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals including American black bears picking berries for a snack, beavers swimming in ponds and 17 bat species like the pallid bat.

**Fun Fact:** Sequoias, which have a distinct orange-brown color, can grow upwards of 8,000 feet and live to be over 3,000 years old. They are resilient and able to survive harsh conditions like forest fires and droughts better than other tree species.

# Shenandoah National Park



Shenandoah National Park is located in Virginia next to the Blue Ridge Mountains. The park is best known for its waterfalls, streams, backcountry forests and wildlife.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike along over 500 miles of trails, fish in the mountain streams and take a drive with some binoculars to check out the park's wildlife.

**History:** Different groups have lived in the mountains for nearly 10,000 years. American Indians would hunt, gather and set up villages on the low elevation areas.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including black bears hiding in the forests, 26 species of reptiles like timber rattlesnakes and coyotes out at night hunting for food.

**Fun Fact:** Before this area was turned into protected parkland, people would vacation in the early 1900s to the Skyland Resort. Remnants of the resort are still standing today, and they allow visitors a chance to learn about Shenandoah's history

# Theodore Roosevelt National Park



Theodore Roosevelt National Park is located in western North Dakota. The park is best known for its connection to a young Teddy Roosevelt, who would eventually become president and a conservationist advocate.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a scenic drive, cross-country ski in the winter, go horseback riding through the backcountry and hike around to look for wildlife.

**History:** When Roosevelt first visited the park in 1883 while in his 20s, it sparked his passion for environmentalism. Over the span of his presidency, he made 230 million acres of public land protected.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of animals living in the park including prairie dogs peeking out of the ground, herds of longhorn steers, elk grazing in the grasslands, and reptiles like the tiger salamander who thrive in the dry climate.

**Fun Fact:** The Elkhorn Ranch Unit was Teddy Roosevelt's home ranch. Visitors can drive out to the ranch to learn about his experiences.

# Virgin Islands National Park

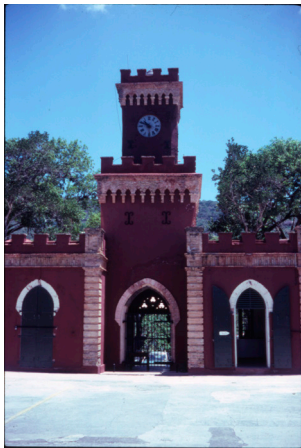
Virgin Islands National Park is located in the Virgin Islands on St. John island. The park is best known for its sparkling beaches, coral reefs, and connection to the Taino Indians and their culture.

**What to do:** Visitors can snorkel to get up close to the coral reefs, take a swim in the many beaches, or look at ruins to learn about the island's culture and history.

**History:** The Taino culture developed anywhere from 1,000 to 500 years ago. The park's visitor center stores preserved Taino artifacts, such as tools they used to harvest sugarcane.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including donkeys roaming the street, sea turtles nesting in the sand and nearly 150 bird species.

**Fun Fact:** Bats are the only mammal native to the St. John island. They eat pesky insects like mosquitoes and spread fruit seeds around the island.



# Voyageurs National Park



Voyageurs National Park is located in northern Minnesota. The park is best known for its various bodies of water that create water highways to navigate through the park.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a boat around the park, hike some of the paved paths to get a look at Voyageurs' wildlife, spend the night camping or even sleep in a boathouse.

**History:** Scientists believed that Paleo-Indians were the first people to inhabit the parkland nearly 10,000 years ago. Fishing was a crucial staple in these group's diets.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including beavers chewing on branches, gray wolves howling into the night, a bald eagle soaring in the sky and moose--the largest mammal in the park, weighing over 1,000 pounds.

**Fun Fact:** The highest point in the park are the granite cliffs, called the Grassy Bay Cliffs. The formation of this granite dates back to more than 2.5 billion years ago.

# White Sands National Park



White Sands National Park is located in New Mexico. The park is best known for its 275 square miles of gypsum dunefield--a type of sand landscape--as well as the wildlife living here in the Chihuahuan Desert.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a hike to check out some of the native plants and animals, take the 16-mile drive through the dunefield and camp in the desert.

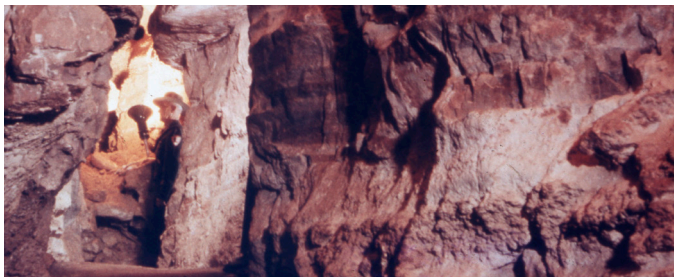
**History:** The White Sands area was once home to the Apache Indians. They were nomadic, which means they moved around to follow their food source. They lived in teepees as well as brush huts called wickiups.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including black-tailed jackrabbits trying to outrun coyotes, pocket gophers in their burrows and the desert box turtle hiding in the shrubbery on the outskirts of the desert.

**Fun Fact:** Scientists have found fossilized Paleo-Human footprints from over 10,000 years ago.



# Wind Cave National Park



Wind Cave National Park is located in southwest South Dakota. The park is best known for its sprawling prairies and grasslands that are home to bison, wildflowers and other wildlife.

**What to do:** Visitors can take a tour through Wind Cave itself, horseback ride over the prairies, grab some binoculars to go birding, bike through paths and camp in the backcountry.

**History:** Wind Cave has cultural and historical connections to over 20 tribes. These relationships are still around today, as the park consults them regarding issues and new programs.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including grazing bison, coyotes howling, prairie dogs in their burrows and gray-horned owls hanging in pine trees.

**Fun Fact:** Scientists have found hundreds of bones in Persistence Cave, another cave in the park. Some of these date back to over 10,000 years ago.

# Wrangell-St. Ellis National Park



Wrangell-St. Ellis National Park is located in Alaska. The park is best known for being the largest national park at 13.2 million acres. It has volcanoes, glaciers and a variety of different habitats

**What to do:** Visitors can float down backcountry rivers, climb up high mountain peaks, go looking for salmon in the Copper River and take a ranger-led tour.

**History:** There are four indigenous groups that have strong cultural and historical ties to the parkland. One of them, the Ahtna people, lived in campsites with members of their familial clan. They would leave for days or weeks at night to go hunting and gathering

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including Dall sheep grazing in the mountains, grizzly bears fishing for salmon and the Steller sea lion swimming in the ocean.

**Fun Fact:** Wrangell-St. Ellis is the same size as the country of Switzerland, Yosemite Park and Yellowstone Park combined.

# Yellowstone National Park



Yellowstone National Park is located in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. The park is best known for its unique hydrothermal properties like hot springs, geysers and mudpots--as well its wildlife, canyon and waterfalls.

**What to do:** Visitors can walk paved paths through thermal basins, watch bison and other wildlife through binoculars and hike trails all over the 2.2 million acres of park.

**History:** The Tukulika Indians lived in the park territory for thousands of years. They hunted bighorn sheep for meat, and their name roughly means "eaters of the mountain sheep."

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including badgers looking for a small rodent to snack on, black bears and river otters sitting near the water.

**Fun Fact:** Yellowstone had over 1,000 geysers erupt in 2011. Combined, the rest of the Earth's geyser eruptions totaled less than 500.

# Yosemite National Park



Yosemite National Park is located in central California, near the Nevada border. The park is best known for the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range, waterfalls, sprawling meadows and hold sequoia trees.

**What to do:** Visitors can hike over 700 miles of trails and up the mountains, paddling in Yosemite's clear blue lakes and fish for trout in streams.

**History:** Yosemite land was home to the Southern Sierra Miwok Indians. The Indian Village of Ahwahnee, located in the park, is a reconstruction of one of their villages.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep climbing up the mountains, a red fox trotting in the snow and Pacific Fishers--a carnivore who eats small rodents and lives in trees

**Fun Fact:** Yosemite is full of granite, which is a rock formed from lava that has cooled and crystallized over many years. Granite has a speckled "salt-and-pepper" look.

# Zion National Park



Zion National Park is located in southwest Utah. The park is best known for its red sandstone cliffs, diverse array of wildlife and blue, open skies.

**What to do:** Visitors can take watercraft and travel down the Virgin River, birdwatch for nearly 300 species and climb up Zion's 2,000-foot cliffs--if they're ready for a challenge.

**History:** In 300 B.C., groups of people lived in the park and began to grow crops of corn and squash. These groups are called Basketmakers because archaeologists have found evidence of several woven baskets.

**Wildlife:** There are plenty of species living in the park including collared lizards sunbathing on rocks, mountain lions hunting for food at night and bighorn sheep scaling down cliffs.

**Fun Fact:** Zion is home to five different species of yucca--a type of succulent. Yucca plants have a dependent relationship with yucca moths for food and pollination.