

2022/2023 > COMPLIMENTARY

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YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE PARKS

ACTIVITIES
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SEQUOIA & KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK

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WELCOME

Welcome to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Located in central California, the parks extend from the San Joaquin Valley foothills to the eastern crest of the Sierra Nevada. If trees could be kings, their royal realms would be in these two adjoining parks.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks testify to nature's size, beauty and diversity: They are home to immense mountains, rugged foothills, deep canyons, vast caverns and the world's largest trees. No matter the season, you'll find many fun activities in the parks!

The National Park Service (NPS), Delaware North at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia Parks Conservancy work together to ensure that your visit is memorable.

This *American Park Network* guide to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks is provided to help plan your visit and make the most of your park experience. It is made possible by the support of the sponsors whose messages appear inside. Enjoy your visit and come back again!



FUN FACTS

Established: Sequoia National Park was established in 1890. It was California's first national park and is America's second oldest (after Yellowstone). Kings Canyon National Park was established in 1940, incorporating the much smaller General Grant National Park, which was established in 1890.

Land Area: Sharing a common boundary, Sequoia and Kings Canyon measure 66 miles from north to south and 36 miles across at their widest point. Together, they cover 865,964 acres.

Lowest & Highest Elevations: The lowest elevation is 1,370 feet (in the Ash Mountain area) and the highest is 14,494 feet at the summit of Mount Whitney, the tallest peak in the contiguous 48 states.

Plants & Animals: There are more than 1,551 species of vascular plants and more than 317 known native vertebrate species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians.

Popular Sights: In Sequoia, see Crescent Meadow; the General Sherman Tree, Earth's largest living tree; and Moro Rock; all in Giant Forest, a magnificent sequoia grove. In Kings Canyon, see Kings River and the canyon that gives the park its name, the General Grant Grove of sequoia trees, and Panoramic Point with views of the Sierra Nevada.

Popular Activities: Free ranger-led walks and talks, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, photography, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are popular activities.

Hiking: There are more than 800 miles of marked trails. Nearly 97 percent of the parks is designated or managed as wilderness, accessible by foot or stock.

Camping & Lodging: Over 1,200 campsites and a variety of lodging accommodations are found in the parks.

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Cover: Giant Sequoia Trees/iStock



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QUESTIONS, GO TO
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WHAT'S NEW!

PARKS UNITE US



"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle."

-Plato

Growing up in an urban environment, the parks I was exposed to as a child were mostly concrete, with swings vs. hiking trails. Everything was familiar and everyone was from the neighborhood. My world was quite small. Things have changed a lot. We're all connected now in ways that would have seemed like science fiction in my childhood. Also, as a New Yorker, I'm exposed (IRL) to the most diverse group of people on earth. Ironically, I experience this same amazing diversity when visiting our nation's parks and public lands.

I remember one of my first business trips to a national park. It was a quick visit, with more time spent traveling than in the park. Fortunately, I set aside two hours to go for a hike. I selected a steep switchback trail for a good workout and great views, and ended up with a whole lot more. About half way up, I passed a small nook in a rock formation, where a group was sitting in the shadows, just a few steps off the trail. As I approached, they waved me over. It was an isolated spot, so I cautiously took a step forward. They asked me if I had water, not because they wanted some but because they hiked there regularly and brought extra. You see, this group knew from experience how easy it was to underestimate the physical demands of the trail and the dangers of becoming dehydrated. They shared that they always stopped to rest in the same shady spot on their way down, to make sure people on their way up had enough water

to continue on safely. I couldn't believe they actually carried extra pounds – literally gallons of water – just to give it away!

I quickly learned to call such people "trail angels," and that angels don't always appear as one might expect. Based on first impressions, this disheveled group, slightly hidden from view in an isolated spot, might seem more threat than salvation. With a snap judgement, it would have been easy to keep on walking, perhaps even quickening my pace. Fortunately, I took a leap of faith and, in return, received a lasting memory and had a valuable lesson reinforced. Simply put, we're all more similar than initially meets the eye. Technology has rendered the world a smaller place, but it also seems to be a more divided one. Parks create common ground, where it's easy to discover hidden powers that unite us. These magical places somehow compel total strangers to graciously share and be kind to others. Let's hold onto that wonderfully positive spirit derived from time spent in nature, and use it when we return home to better help each other, regardless of how different we may appear on the surface. By working together and embracing our differences, we're much better equipped to conquer the universal challenges we all face... together!

Founder & Editor-in-Chief

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Check First. Please be sure to check the park's website, ask a ranger or stop by a visitor center to find out about current conditions and regulations, as well as potential changes in operations.

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PLAN YOUR VISIT



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are located in Central California, approximately four to five hours from Los Angeles and San Francisco.

GETTING TO SEQUOIA

Car: Take Highway 99 to Visalia. From there, take Highway 198 east (36 miles) to the main park entrance. The 16 miles of road from the park entrance to Giant Forest includes 130 curves and 12 switchbacks.

Vehicles longer than 22 feet (6.7056 meters) are prohibited between Potwisha Campground and Giant Forest Museum in Sequoia National Park. Vehicles longer than 24 feet (7.3152 meters) are not advised between the Foothills Visitor Center and Potwisha Campground in Sequoia National Park.

Note: *Pay close attention to advisories, for your safety and the safety of others. The alternative: Take Highway 180 from Fresno to Grant Grove, then turn south on the Generals Highway, the main road through the parks.*

GETTING TO KINGS CANYON

Car: Take Highway 99 to Fresno. Then take Highway 180 east (about 53 miles) to the park entrance. The entrance to Kings Canyon is also the “back door” to Sequoia and is a straighter, less steep road than Highway 198. There are no east-west roads that cross the Sierra Nevada through Kings Canyon or Sequoia.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Air: The closest major airport is Fresno Yosemite International Airport (53 miles west of Kings Canyon).

Bus: Greyhound/Trailways serves Visalia and Fresno.

Train: Amtrak serves Hanford and Fresno (with bus connections to Visalia).

Car: Rental cars are available at airports and in Visalia and Fresno.

Shuttle: The Sequoia Shuttle offers free rides in the Giant Forest and Lodgepole areas from May 26 to September 11, 2022. At the time of this writing, winter shuttle information for 2022-2023 is not yet available. Masks may be required on park shuttles, depending on current regulations.

There are no in-park shuttles or public transportation from Sequoia National Park to Kings Canyon National Parks. If you arrive at Sequoia without a car, it is not possible to reach wilderness trailheads north of Wuksachi Lodge. The Big Trees shuttle is no longer in service. For more information, visit nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/parktransit.htm.

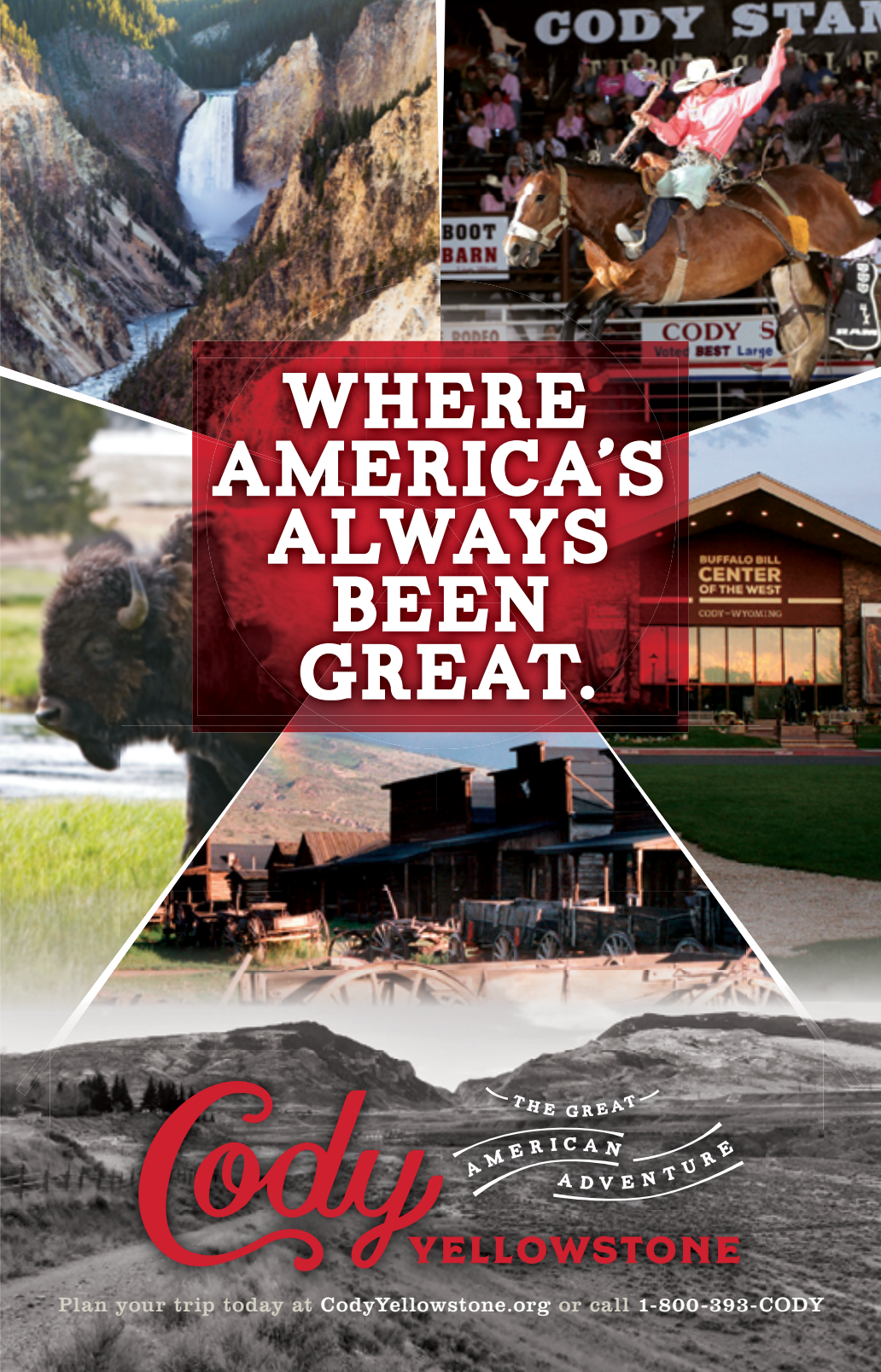
HOURS

In general, the parks are open year-round, 24 hours a day, but several areas and roads are closed in winter. Some closures are temporary, depending on snow. Tire chains or cables may be required. High-mountain trails are often snowbound until early July.

Note: *The roads to Cedar Grove, Mineral King, Moro Rock and Crystal Cave, and the highway that runs between Sequoia and Kings Canyon, close during winter. For updates, visit nps.gov/seki.*

ENTRANCE FEES

Entrance to the parks is \$35 per private, non-commercial vehicle or \$20 per person for pedestrians or cyclists for



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seven consecutive days. A fee for commercial vehicles is based on vehicle capacity. An annual pass for Sequoia and Kings Canyon is offered for \$70 and is good for one year from the month of purchase. Sequoia and Kings Canyon are among a select few national parks chosen to participate in a pilot program selling seven-day or annual entrance passes online. To buy your pass online, go to recreation.gov/sitepass/72471. For other fees and passes visit nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/fees.htm.

EVERY KID OUTDOORS


To help engage and create our next generation of park visitors, supporters, advocates and the Obama Administration in partnership with the Federal Land Management agencies launched the Every Kid Outdoors initiative. The immediate goal is to provide an opportunity for every fourth grade student across the country and their families to experience their federal public lands and waters in person and discover

our wildlife, resources, and history for free. All kids in the fourth grade have access to their own Every Kid Outdoors pass at everykidoutdoors.gov. This pass admits the pass owner and any accompanying passengers in a private noncommercial vehicle to the park. Obtain and print the pass by visiting everykidoutdoors.gov to present it at the park. The Every Kid Outdoors pass is valid until August 31, 2022.

WEATHER

Temperatures vary quite a bit due to elevation differences throughout the parks. Mid-summer temperatures at lower elevations fluctuate from the 70s to 100°F+ and temperatures at middle elevations range from the 50s to the high 70s. Winter usually brings plenty of snow, though temperatures seldom dip below 0°F.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Park activities and facilities that are fully accessible to visitors with disabilities are indicated by the  symbol. Many programs and facilities are fully accessible, or accessible

FEDERAL RECREATION LANDS PASSES

A federal recreation pass is helpful if you plan to visit many national parks, forests or other federal lands. For information, call (888) 275-8747 or visit store.usgs.gov/pass.

Type	Cost	Availability	Details
Annual Pass	\$80 \$20	General Public Seniors age 62+	This one-year pass is available on site, by phone or online (see above).
Senior Pass	\$80	U.S. residents age 62+	This lifetime pass is available on site, online or via mail order. ID required.
Military Pass	Free	U.S. military members and their dependents	This one-year pass is available on site. ID (CAC Card or DoD Form 1173) required.
Access Pass	Free	U.S. residents with permanent disabilities	This lifetime pass is available on site or via mail order. ID and documentation required.
Volunteer Pass	Free	250 cumulative volunteer service hours	Inquire locally to obtain information about this one-year pass.

with assistance. In winter, access is difficult because of snow and ice. Although some paths are cleared, visitors with disabilities may still need assistance.

Loaner copies of the park brochure in Braille are available at park visitor centers.

VISITOR CENTERS

When you arrive, stop at a visitor center to get an overview of the parks. Wilderness/backcountry permits, ranger-led program info, maps, books and other park literature are available. Visitor centers also have restrooms and water fountains. For more information, visit nps.gov/seki.

Cedar Grove Visitor Center in Kings Canyon is 0.25 miles west of Cedar Grove Village and 30 miles east of Grant Grove Village. Access is via Highway 180 on a 27-mile stretch of road in Sequoia National Forest. The visitor center is open Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.

Foothills Visitor Center is adjacent to Three Rivers on Highway 198, one mile north of Sequoia's Ash Mountain entrance. The center, open year-round, features exhibits on Sequoia's foothills ecosystem.

Giant Forest Museum is located in Giant Forest, 18 miles from the park entrance on Generals Highway. There are exhibits on giant sequoia ecology and the trees' relationship with man. The museum is open daily year-round and acts as a visitor center in winter when Lodgepole Visitor Center is closed.

Kings Canyon Visitor Center is in Grant Grove Village, three miles northeast of the Kings Canyon park entrance on Highway 180. The exhibits and movie are bilingual and address Kings Canyon, sequoia trees and the high country. Open daily year-round.

Lodgepole Visitor Center is 21 miles north of the park entrance in Sequoia and

two miles north of the General Sherman Tree. The center features exhibits on the area's scenic wonders, history, wildlife and geology. It is open daily in summer to mid-fall and closed in winter.

Mineral King Ranger Station is in Sequoia on the Mineral King Road, which junctions with Highway 198 in Three Rivers. It is located 25 miles southeast of Three Rivers. Trailers and RVs are prohibited on the road. The station is open during summer only, while the area is open summer to mid-fall, weather permitting.

VISITOR SERVICES

Banking Services: ATMs are available at Grant Grove, Cedar Grove, Lodgepole and Wuksachi Lodge. Other banking services are found in Reedley, Fresno, Visalia and Three Rivers.

Camping & Picnic Supplies: These are available in summer at markets at Lodgepole in Sequoia and Grant Grove and Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon.

Emergencies: Call **911** for emergency fire, medical or police assistance, or to report accidents or injuries. **First-aid facilities** are available at park headquarters, visitor centers and ranger stations. The closest hospital to Sequoia is in Visalia and to Kings Canyon is in Reedley.

Gift Shops: Shops are located at Wuksachi Lodge (year-round), Lodgepole (year-round), Grant Grove (year-round) and Cedar Grove (summer to mid-fall).

Lost & Found: Report to a ranger station or visitor center. Contact: Property Office, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Ash Mountain, Three Rivers, CA 93271; **(559) 565-3341**.

Pay Showers & Laundry: Showers are located at Lodgepole and Cedar

Grove in the parks and at Stony Creek in Sequoia National Forest. Coin-operated laundry is available at Cedar Grove, Lodgepole and Stony Creek. Open seasonally. Fees vary.

Pets & Kennels: There are kennels located in nearby Fresno and Visalia. Pets must at all times wear a leash no longer than 6 feet and are not allowed on park trails. Never leave pets in unattended vehicles or left tied.


Post Offices: Two post offices offer varied services in the parks. The post office at **Lodgepole Village** in Sequoia is open 24 hours, but isn't staffed. Located behind the Lodgepole Visitor Center and Market, it allows for letter-drop only—mail must have postage. The post office at **Grant Grove** in Kings Canyon—north of the visitor center and gift shop, in the same building as the market—is staffed, but hours vary. The lobby is open 24

hours for pre-postage letter-drop. Address visitor mail and backpackers' resupply packages to: c/o General Delivery, Kings Canyon NP, CA 93633. For more information, call **(559) 355-2499**.

Recycling: Markets and stores operated by Delaware North charge a 5-cent refundable deposit for recyclable containers. Recycling bins are available throughout the parks.

Religious Services: In summer, various services may be conducted. Check visitor centers, lodge front desks or local bulletin boards for schedules and locations.

Service Stations: Gasoline is not available in the parks. Get gas outside the parks or at Hume Lake (year-round) or Stony Creek (summer only) in the National Forest. For emergency services (lock outs, jump starts, out of gas) in Sequoia National Park, call **(559) 565-3195**.

 IMPORTANT NUMBERS	
General Park Information (24-hour recording)	(559) 565-3341 nps.gov/seki
Emergencies	911
Lodging Reservations/ Cancellations	(866) 807-3598
General Camping & Backpacking Information	(559) 565-3341
Wilderness/Backcountry Information	(559) 565-3766
Campground Reservations (summer use at Lodgepole, Dorst Creek, Potwisha & Buckeye Flat)	(877) 444-6777 recreation.gov
Cross-Country Ski & Snowshoe Information (Lodgepole Market)	(559) 565-3341
Special Services	(559) 565-3341
Lost & Found	(559) 565-3341
Road & Weather Information (recorded message)	(559) 565-3341

WHO'S WHO AT THE PARK



The following organizations ensure that the parks and public lands are protected and that your stay is enjoyable.

SEQUOIA & KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS)

Since its founding in 1916, the National Park Service has endeavored to preserve America's parklands for future generations. It is responsible for preserving and protecting the environmental and cultural values of our national parks, protecting the fish and wildlife therein, and providing for public use and enjoyment of the parks. For more information, contact the NPS by calling **(559) 565-3341** or visiting nps.gov/seki.

DELAWARE NORTH AT SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS

The official concessioner for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Delaware North operates facilities and offers services at Lodgepole, Wuksachi Lodge and Bear Paw High Sierra Camp (all in Sequoia National Park), and at Grant Grove Village—including John Muir Lodge and Grant Grove Cabins—and Cedar Grove Village (all in Kings Canyon National Park). Services offered include lodging, dining, markets, retail and rentals. For more information or to make reservations, contact Delaware North at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

by calling **(866) 807-3598** or visiting visitsequoiakingscanyon.com.

SEQUOIA PARKS CONSERVANCY

Founded in 1940, this nonprofit organization supports the educational, preservation and scientific activities in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. In addition to publishing the park newspaper, *The Visitor Guide*, it offers up-to-date seasonal information about the parks. The Conservancy sells books, maps and interpretive or educational items relating to the parks. The Conservancy also operates tours of Crystal Cave (see "Sights To See" chapter for more information), EdVentures (outdoor classes in the parks), and hire-a-naturalist services for commercial groups and families. The Conservancy likewise raises money for





projects that enhance the preservation, restoration and enjoyment of the parks. Contributions from the Conservancy have helped build accessible trails, document new species in park caves and support the Sequoia Field Institute. The Conservancy is committed to raising funds for other projects, including “Rangers in the Classroom,” to foster new environmental stewards in California’s Central Valley. For more information, call **(559) 561-4813** or visit **sequoiaparksconservancy.org**.

SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST

UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE (USFS)

The Sequoia National Forest, named for the world’s largest trees, celebrates the greatest concentration of giant sequoia groves in the world. Protected within the Giant Sequoia National Monument, these

groves and the areas around them are managed by the USFS for today and for future generations.

Visitors to the Giant Sequoia National Monument, a publicly owned treasure, will find not only majestic trees, but also diverse geologic formations, ecosystems, wildlife and lakes. For more information, call **(559) 784-1500** or visit **www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia**.

SEQUOIA-KINGS CANYON PARK SERVICES COMPANY (SKCPS)

SKCPS operates the Montecito Sequoia Lodge and the Stony Creek Lodge. Both facilities provide lodging and dining in the Giant Sequoia National Monument, located between Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon National Park. For reservations or for more information, call **(877) 828-1440** or visit **sequoia-kingscanyon.com**.

PARK REGULATIONS & SAFETY



You can make the most of your visit to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks by planning ahead and becoming acquainted with some simple precautions, all of which are designed to enhance your safety and enjoyment. Please review and observe the following park regulations and safety tips.

STAYING SAFE

- **Bears** can cause severe property damage while trying to get to people's food. Park regulations require proper storage of food to prevent bears from accessing it. Never leave food or scented items in cars. Store all food and anything with an odor (including toiletries) in bear-proof food-storage lockers where provided. Lodge guests must bring all items indoors. Keep a clean camp and deposit garbage in trash cans or dumpsters. Make loud noises to scare bears away.
- When **hiking** on wilderness/back-country trails, let someone know your itinerary. For more hiking safety tips, please see the "Walking & Hiking" chapter.
- Keep **valuables** with you.
- Be prepared for various **weather** conditions. Summer temperatures in the foothills often exceed 100°F, so wear sunscreen and a hat, carry plenty of water and hike in the early morning. Bring proper equipment (tire chains, clothing, flares, etc.) in winter.
- Be on the lookout for **mountain lions** (also known as cougars, pumas or panthers). If you encounter one, back away slowly, wave or shout. Do not run. If attacked, fight back! Children should be kept close by.
- Be careful where you step or reach because you may encounter the poisonous **western rattlesnake**, which is common below 7,000-foot elevations and is occasionally found at elevations as high as 11,000 feet. Snake bites, though rarely fatal, require a doctor's attention. If bitten, avoid moving—to prevent the spread of venom—and send for help immediately. Snakes are a native species and should not be disturbed.
- If you camp or hike in the foothills, use insect repellent and check your clothes frequently for **ticks**. Ticks can carry Lyme disease; if you are bitten, check for a rash at the bite and later for flu-like symptoms.
- **Do not touch or feed** ground squirrels or other rodents. They may carry disease.
- Learn to identify **poison oak**, which is widespread up to the 5,000-foot elevation. The low-growing plant has glossy leaves that grow in clusters of three. Follow the adage: "Leaves of three, let it be."
- **Giardiasis**, an intestinal disorder caused by the protozoan *Giardia lamblia*, can result from drinking water taken directly from streams and lakes. Always carry sufficient drinking water. If you haven't, you must purify water taken from streams and lakes by boiling it for three to five minutes, or by using an appropriately rated water filter.



PARK REGULATIONS

- **Bicycles** (including mountain bikes) are permitted only on paved roads and in campgrounds. They are prohibited on park trails or cross-country terrain.
- **Camp** only in designated campsites. To camp in the wilderness/backcountry, you must obtain a **wilderness permit**, which is available at permit stations.
- **Firearms** are allowed as long as the person is legally allowed to have the firearm. He or she must comply with federal firearms laws and the laws of the state in which the park is located. Discharging the weapon is not allowed.
- You can purchase wood at most concessioner markets. Gather only dead and downed wood (except giant sequoia wood) for **firewood**. Build fires only in established fire rings or fireplaces. No fires above 10,000 feet (9,000 in Sequoia west of the Great Western Divide).
- No **fireworks** are allowed in the park.
- **Hunting** is strictly prohibited.
- **Don't litter**. Pack out all that you packed in. Follow Leave No Trace principles.
- When **hiking**, always stay on the trails. Trail cutting tramples vegetation and promotes erosion.
- Always leash your **pet**. They are not allowed on trails, in public buildings or in the backcountry. Never leave them unattended. Service animals are allowed on trails and in public buildings. The nearest kennels are located in Fresno and Visalia and pet sitting is available in Three Rivers.
- **Swimming** is not recommended in the park's rivers, streams and waterfalls because they are very cold and deceptively fast and dangerous, especially in spring and early summer.
- **Vandalism** and the removal of rocks, plants or any natural feature, including sequoia cones, is prohibited. Everything has a role in the natural cycle of the park.
- Don't feed, chase or harass park **wildlife**. You are visiting their homes.

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NATIVE PEOPLES

Native peoples have traveled these mountains since prehistoric times. The most recent to inhabit the Kings Canyon area were the **Monache**, or Western Mono, a Paiute group that migrated over the Sierra Nevada from the Owens Valley and Mono Lake areas. They built semi-permanent homes that consisted of conical frames of willow poles covered with strips of cedar bark. The Monache, like many other Indian groups in the area, moved into and out of the mountains and forests seasonally. Their year-round villages were located in the lower elevations, close to the Kings and Kaweah Rivers.

Acorns were the staple food of these people. Bedrock mortars, arranged close together so that women could socialize as they worked, are visible at different points along the river between Cedar Grove and Bubbs Creek in Kings Canyon and at Hospital Rock in Sequoia. Acorn meal was baked into cakes or boiled into mush by putting hot stones into baskets filled with water and meal. The Monache supplemented their diet with numerous plants and game, including fish and deer.

In summer, the Monache traded with the **Paiutes**, who were still living in the **Owens Valley** on the far side of the mountains. A well-developed trail—which ran east of Bubbs Creek to the 11,823-foot-high Kearsarge Pass and then dropped sharply into the valley—served as one of the key trade routes between the tribes. They traded acorn meal, deer skins and arrow shafts made of tule reeds for the Paiutes' pine nuts, salt and obsidian (a volcanic glass used to make arrowheads and other stone tools). A little farther to the west of today's parks lived the numer-

ous groups of **Yokuts** Indians. **Foothill Yokuts** groups, such as the **Wukchumni** and the **Choynimni**, also used the areas within today's parks.

TRAPPERS & EXPLORERS

In search of a mission site, Spaniard **Gabriel Moraga** was the first European to enter the Kings River area in 1806. The party discovered a major river on January 6, the day of Epiphany, for which they christened it El Río de los Santos Reyes: The River of the Holy Kings (the three wise men who visited the infant Jesus). The name was later shortened to Kings River. (This is why Kings River and Kings Canyon are never spelled with apostrophes.)

Beginning in 1827, **American trappers** and explorers began to trickle through the lofty passes and deep valleys on both sides of the Sierra. It was the **Gold Rush of 1849**, however, that drew thousands of outsiders to California. These newcomers, searching for mineral wealth, began the exploration of the mountains.

The newcomers also brought smallpox and measles with them, which devastated native people living in the area. Many died during an epidemic in 1862. Some moved away, but some stayed in the San Joaquin Valley, where their descendants still live.

The first scientific exploration of the area was conducted in 1864. Harvard geology professor, **Josiah Dwight Whitney**, director of the newly formed California Geological Survey, sent a team of five men to map the region and identify its major features. Survey Field Director **William Brewer**, for whom Mount Brewer was named, led the group. Brewer named the highest peak "Mount Whitney" to honor his supervisor.

JOHN MUIR

In 1873, John Muir, the famous naturalist, visited Kings Canyon. Muir was impressed by its similarity to the terrain of Yosemite Valley. Before long, the pristine setting began to change. In the 1870s, ranchers grazed their cattle and sheep—"hooved locusts"—among the Big Trees, and sawmills were built.

Ironically, sequoia wood is brittle and breaks across the grain when it falls, so it was limited for use as timber. Nevertheless, the early loggers proceeded to chop down and carry away one-third of the ancient trees.

It's hard to believe that sequoias were cut down to make pencils and grape stakes in some early California vineyards. The number of Big Trees would have greatly decreased had it not been for mid-19th century conservationists. Among the leaders were John Muir, who chronicled the destruction of the sequoias at Converse Basin, and **George W. Stewart**, the editor of the *Visalia Delta*, who is called the "Father of Sequoia National Park."

In 1877, Muir climbed to the Converse Basin, six miles north of Grant Grove and once the home of the area's largest grouping of giant trees. Nearby, he found Hyde's sawmill, one of five in the area. It was "booming and moaning like a bad ghost," he recalled. Eventually, the loggers cut down most of the mature trees in the basin.

NATIONAL PARK STATUS

In 1878, George Stewart began writing editorials condemning the wholesale cutting of sequoias. In 1881, Muir and **U.S. Senator John F. Miller** of California joined Stewart in an effort to enact a bill to protect the trees. It died in committee and Muir turned his attention to protecting Yosemite.

Visalia residents continued the battle and eventually succeeded. On September 25, 1890, **President Benjamin Harrison** signed the bill that established Sequoia National

Park. It was America's second national park. A week later, Congress increased the park's size threefold and created General Grant National Park to protect Grant Grove. This uniquely American invention—the creation of national parks and forest reserves—signified the government's intentions to limit unrestrained exploitation of the land.

Stephen T. Mather, who later became the first director of the National Park Service, led further efforts to preserve the magnificent trees. **Congressman Frederick Gillett** and **Gilbert Grosvenor**, president of the National Geographic Society, became Mather's staunch allies. Gillett helped pass legislation to expand the park and Grosvenor's National Geographic Society provided the funds enabling the acquisition of nearly 2,000 acres of land. Sequoia National Park was expanded in 1926 to include Kern Canyon and Mount Whitney.

Forty-nine years after John Muir began to advocate for the creation of "one grand national park" that included Kings Canyon, his goal was finally realized. After a long and bitter debate, Kings Canyon National Park was established on March 4, 1940. The new park absorbed the tiny General Grant National Park and the sequoias within the boundaries were forever protected from logging.

As a World War II economic measure, Sequoia and Kings Canyon were managed jointly beginning in 1943, a successful policy that continues today.

In the 1960s, the area was once again threatened by developers. After intense debate, serious consideration of building dams in the upper Kings River watershed ended. Environmentalists also thwarted a park plan provided by the U.S. Forest Service. The steep, glacier-carved valley of Mineral King was added to Sequoia National Park in 1978 and the remote area remains protected today.

SIGHTS TO SEE



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are masterpieces created by nature. Here you can see the world's largest living organism or marvel at the wild Kings River. The following are just a few of the sights to see in the parks.

SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

CRESCENT MEADOW

John Muir is said to have called this lovely, grassy open area the "gem of the Sierra." It is located 1.5 miles east of the Moro Rock parking area. A hike on the trail around the meadow takes about an hour.

CRYSTAL CAVE

The parks protect more than 250 caves, but only Crystal Cave is open to the public. Formed of limestone that metamorphosed into marble, it is decorated with curtains of icicle-like stalactites and mounds of stalagmites. To reach it, you must drive to the end of the twisting, seven-mile Crystal Cave road heading west from the Generals Highway two miles south of the Giant Forest Museum. Trailers, RVs and buses are prohibited because the road is extremely narrow. From the parking area, it is a 15-minute hike down a steep path to the cave entrance. Sequoia Parks Conservancy offers daily 50-minute guided tours from Memorial Day Weekend to September. A jacket or sweater is recommended since it is about 50° F in the cave. For information, ask at any park visitor center or visit explorecrystalcave.com. Tickets are not sold at the cave, but they are required and are limited to 25 per tour. They may be purchased in advance at recreation.gov

or at the Lodgepole and Foothills visitor centers. Purchasing tickets online is recommended, as they can sell out, or check at a visitor center first thing in the morning.

GENERAL SHERMAN TREE

This gargantuan sequoia tree, while neither the tallest nor the widest, is considered the largest living tree in the world because of its volume. It weighs approximately 2.7 million pounds and it is believed to be approximately 2,200 years old. Its height is nearly 275 feet and its circumference at ground level is 102.6 feet. The diameter of its largest branch is 6.8 feet. Every year, it adds enough wood to make a 60-foot tree measuring one foot in diameter... and it's still growing! It was named in 1879 by James Wolverton, a pioneer cattleman who had served under General William Tecumseh Sherman in the Civil War. The tree is accessed from Wolverton Road, four miles north of the Giant Forest Museum along the Generals Highway.

GIANT FOREST

Named in 1875 by explorer and conservationist John Muir, Giant Forest is celebrated for its beautiful meadows and its sequoia grove, the park's most famous attraction. The first thing to do in Giant Forest is to go to the Giant Forest Museum, where exhibits and park rangers will help you understand the story of this beautiful grove. The cinnamon-colored Big Trees, members of the redwood family, may be seen today as Muir found them, "Giants grouped in pure temple groves,



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or arranged in colonnades along the sides of meadows.” The northern fringe of the grove is guarded by the General Sherman Tree. The 2-mile looping Congress Trail provides access to many of these trees.

HOSPITAL ROCK

Hospital Rock, about six miles northeast of the Foothills Visitor Center, was home to a subgroup of the Monache people until the 1870s. You can see pictographs as well as more than 15 grinding holes used by Monache women to grind acorns into flour, which was the staple of these American Indians’ diet.

MINERAL KING

On Highway 198, two miles before the park entrance, is a 25-mile winding road leading to Mineral King. Because of the narrow winding road, the drive takes approximately one and a half hours. The glacial valley,

added to Sequoia in 1978, was named by 19th-century prospectors searching for silver. To see Mineral King at a leisurely pace, it is best to stay at one of the two area campgrounds, Atwell Mill or Cold Springs. With over 10 different trails, Mineral King is a hiker’s heaven. Avalanches have mowed down trees on the valley floor, so lowlands are covered with wild meadows. Forests of Lodgepole pine, sequoias and white and red fir are at higher elevations. The rocky landscape is colorful: rusty-red shales, white marble and granite, and black metamorphic slate. Alpine trails begin at the 7,500-foot elevation and most climbs are steep. This road is closed in winter; it also prohibits RVs and trailers in any season.

MORO ROCK

Moro Rock is a large granite dome also found in the Giant Forest area. Common in the Sierra Nevada, domes are formed by

exfoliation, or the casting off in sheets of rock layers on otherwise unjointed granite. Outward expansion of the granite results in exfoliation. Taking the 0.25-mile trail, you can climb nearly 400 steep steps to the top of the barren rock (6,725-foot elevation). It offers an unparalleled view (especially at sunset) of the Great Western Divide and its verdant canyons. Watch out for lightning. The Moro Rock parking area is 1.5 miles from the Giant Forest Museum. The road may be closed in winter and/or at other times. Check at park visitor centers for more information.

THARP'S LOG

Hale Tharp, the first non-American Indian settler in the area, established a cattle ranch among the Big Trees. He also built a simple summer cabin from a fallen, fire-hollowed sequoia log in the 1860s. It is the oldest pioneer cabin remaining in the park. Muir called it "a noble den." The cabin is located in the Giant Forest area, a mile northeast of the Crescent Meadow parking lot.

KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK

BIG STUMP TRAIL

Near the entrance to Kings Canyon National Park, three miles southwest of Grant Grove Village, is Big Stump Basin Trail. The 1-mile loop trail reveals the remains of early logging. The Mark Twain Stump is all that's left of the 26-foot-wide, 1,700-year-old tree that took two men 13 days to cut down in 1891. Also, because sequoia wood decays slowly, piles of sawdust created more than a century ago still remain.

CEDAR GROVE & KINGS CANYON

Highway 180 ends 40 miles from the entrance to Kings Canyon National Park

in the famous Kings Canyon itself. Cedar Grove, nestled in a mile-deep section of Kings Canyon, is near two spectacular granite formations: Grand Sentinel at 8,518 feet in elevation and North Dome at 8,717 feet in elevation. The precipitous Grand Sentinel rises 3,500 feet above the canyon floor. The best place in the park to see these features is on the Zumwalt Meadow Trail.

GRANT GROVE & THE GENERAL GRANT TREE

Grant Grove is located one mile beyond the Kings Canyon Visitor Center on the west side of the road. From the parking area, a 0.3-mile loop trail leads to the General Grant Tree. The tree, which measures 268.1 feet tall and 107.5 feet around, was discovered by Joseph Hardin Thomas in 1862 and named by Lucretia P. Baker in 1867 to honor Ulysses S. Grant. While still a youngster at approximately 1,650 years old, the beautiful behemoth is the star attraction of a grove that features 2,000- to 3,000-year-old sequoias. The General Grant tree is called "The Nation's Christmas Tree" and the town of Sanger, California, hosts a special Yuletide celebration under its snow-laden branches every year.

KINGS CANYON & THE KINGS RIVER

"A rival to the Yosemite," wrote Muir, describing the glacial canyon of the South Fork of the mighty Kings River. It is an awe-some sight to behold the white water of this wild river as it rushes between steep canyon walls.

On the 30-mile drive along Highway 180 from Grant Grove to Cedar Grove,



MOUNT WHITNEY



Crowning the Sierra Nevada, majestic Mount Whitney stands 14,494 feet tall. It is the **tallest mountain in the contiguous United States**. You can see it only from the eastern reaches of the wilderness of Sequoia or from Highway 395, near Lone Pine, outside the parks. To reach Mount Whitney from western trailheads, backpackers take a 56- to 71-mile, multi-day trek, which requires a wilderness permit from the National Park Service. Call **(559) 565-3766** for more information. The journey from the eastern trailheads takes one to two days and requires a permit from the U.S. Forest Service, reachable at **(760) 873-2483**.

stop at Junction View Vista Point, where you can look down at the confluence of the Middle and South forks of the Kings River. These sections of river are designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers, preserved for their outstanding natural, cultural and recreational values.

Boating the Kings River is extremely hazardous. The South Fork is closed to all watercraft from the confluence of Bubbs Creek to the Kings Canyon National Park border.

Continuing from Junction View Vista Point, you enter the narrow, river-carved canyon of the South Fork at Horseshoe Bend, just before reaching Boyden Cave. This stretch of road is outside the parks in Sequoia National Forest.

A few miles past Boyden Cave, the canyon becomes much deeper and wider as you enter the glacial-carved section at Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon National Park. The road is generally closed from November to April.

PANORAMIC POINT

At Grant Grove Village, you can take a steep and narrow 2.5-mile road that snakes east to Panoramic Point. From the parking area, take the 0.25-mile trail to the 7,520-foot ridge. The view is a magnificent stretch of the High Sierra. You can see Hume Lake in Sequoia National Forest and, just beyond a low ridge behind the lake, Kings Canyon. No RVs or trailers are permitted.



For answers to all your questions,
go to **OhRanger.com**

THINGS TO DO



Throughout the year, you can enjoy numerous park activities from nature walks and horseback riding to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and scenic drives.

SPRING, SUMMER & FALL

Spring brings flowering redbud, buckeye and laurel to the foothills. Waterfalls and rivers are at their highest levels. Wispy fog often rolls through the forest canopy at this time. In the high country, ice and snow are just beginning to melt and the air is so thin and dry that the sky appears almost purple.

Summer is the busiest time of year in the parks for both people and animals. You'll find high-country meadows brimming with vibrant wildflowers throughout the season.

Fall is equally colorful, with oak, dogwood, aspen and other trees turning gold, scarlet and amber. The days are still warm, but the nights are cool—ideal for hiking and backpacking. Fall is typically quiet, yet one of the most beautiful seasons. Snow may fall any time from September to May, or even into June at higher elevations.

PARK PROGRAMS

NPS naturalists offer **talks, films, guided nature and history walks, and evening campfire programs** for adults and children. Programs may range from a star talk, during which you can enjoy the beauty of the Sierra night sky, to a giant sequoia walk at the General Sherman and General Grant trees. Consult the park bulletin boards or visit nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit for times and topics. In the winter, free snowshoe walks may be available.

OUTDOOR EDVENTURES

The Sequoia Field Institute sponsors a program of natural history field seminars called EdVentures. **Classes** are taught by knowledgeable instructors. Subjects include backpacking, creative arts, natural history and winter sports. Participants may be responsible for their own personal transportation, food, equipment or lodging. Custom programs and naturalist guides are also available. For more information, contact the Sequoia Parks Conservancy at 47050 Generals Hwy. #10, Three Rivers, CA 93271; pick up a catalog at any park visitor center; call **(559) 565-4251**; or visit sequoiaparksconservancy.org.

FISHING

Anglers can try their luck fishing in the parks' many lakes, streams and rivers. Anglers age 16 and older need a **California fishing license**, available for purchase at the Hume Lake Store. Tackle is available at Grant Grove, Lodgepole and Cedar Grove markets, and at numerous locations outside the parks.

State fishing regulations apply to all areas within the parks. The fishing season is open all year in the Kaweah drainage; for most of the remainder of the parks, the trout season is from the last Saturday in April through November 15. Check at visitor centers for specific regulations regarding open and closed waters for fishing.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Horses are available for **riding** at the Cedar Grove Pack Station and at Grant Grove Stables in Kings Canyon. The concession-

er-operated pack stations offer hourly, half-day and day rides, as well as extended overnight guided trips into the wilderness/backcountry.

The stables provide day rides only. The minimum age limit to ride may vary. Reservations are highly recommended. Availability depends on weather conditions. Call the **Cedar Grove Pack Station** at **(559) 565-3464** (summer) or **(559) 337-2413** (off season) and **Grant Grove Stables** in the summer at **(559) 335-9292**. For more information, visit [nps.gov/seki](https://www.nps.gov/seki).

WILDLIFE WATCHING

During the spring, summer and fall you can see many types of animals. In spring, the meadows filled with snow runoff become ponds for a chorus of frogs. The blue-gray scrub jay, which screeches at anything that moves, and the California towhee, which sings an accelerating series of high “teek” notes, are found at lower elevations.

The Steller’s jay, with a black head and blue body, is commonly seen flying through campgrounds and picnic areas at higher elevations. You will hear chipmunks and ground squirrels chatter and see them dash across the forest floor.

If you are lucky, you may even glimpse mule deer feeding at dusk, gray fox hunting in the foothills or possibly even bear lumbering through the forest. Please do not feed any wildlife.

WINTER

Entry roads are plowed and kept open from Highway 180 to Grant Grove and from Highway 198 to Wuksachi Lodge, weather permitting. The Generals High-

way between Wuksachi and Grant Grove may be closed during the winter. For updates, call **(559) 565-3341**. Roads to Cedar Grove in Kings Canyon and Mineral King in Sequoia are closed in winter. Tire chains may be required at any time of the year, but generally between October and June. Foothills and Kings Canyon visitor centers and Giant Forest Museum are open daily year-round. The Lodgepole and Cedar Grove visitor centers are closed during winter. Concession facilities are available at Wuksachi and Grant Grove year-round.

PARK PROGRAMS

Naturalist programs may be given on weekends during winter. For details, visit [nps.gov/seki](https://www.nps.gov/seki) or check park bulletin boards for dates and times.



Park rangers may also offer **snowshoe nature walks** on weekends for up to 20 people, weather conditions permitting. If you've never tried this invigorating activity, it's a great way to learn about the parks' winter transformation. It's easy to learn how to walk with snowshoes, which enable you to access areas where you'd otherwise sink up to your hips in snow. Walks average about two hours, cover one or two miles and are not recommended for children under 10. Snowshoes are provided. For more information, call **(559) 565-3341**.

WINTER SPORTS

From December to April, the parks may be covered in a mantle of snow four- to six-feet deep. When this happens, skis and snowshoes replace hiking boots.

Winter activities in the Giant Forest and Grant Grove areas include **cross-country skiing** and **snowshoeing**. There are approximately 70 miles of marked cross-country trails in the parks. Rental equipment (including snowshoes) are available for participants of all ages. For more information on cross-country skiing, sledding or snowshoeing in Grant Grove, please call **(559) 565-4307**; for Giant Forest, call **(559) 565-4480**. Kids may be able to sled and play in the snow-play areas near Big Stump, Columbine and Wolverton. *Note: Winter barbecuing is allowed in designated picnic areas only.*

The Sequoia Parks Conservancy operates the high-country **Pear Lake Winter Hut** for advanced wilderness/backcountry



SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS' DARK SKY FESTIVAL

The annual Dark Sky Festival at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks is traditionally a three-evening event designed to educate visitors about this important park resource. The festival features constellation tours, telescope viewings, solar observations, astronaut speakers, nature walks, photography presentations and much more. The event reminds us how special dark skies truly are, as they have become a rarity on our planet. With over half the world population living in urbanized areas, "light pollution"—the introduction of artificial light, either directly or indirectly, into the natural environment—is a mounting concern. Due mostly to sky glow (brightening of the night sky from human-caused light scattered in the atmosphere) and glare (the direct shining of light), even a small amount of light can impact human perception of the night sky,



natural landscape and other faint features of the night. As the human eye cannot fully dark-adapt, the more light there is at night the less we can see.

Set aside time to visit a national park or other remote location less affected by manmade light sources to get a feel for the intricate world over our heads. For information on the Dark Sky Festival, visit **sequoiaparksconservancy.org**.

cross-country skiers and snowshoers. The cabin can accommodate 10 people. Use of the facility, open from approximately mid-December to late April, is by reservation. The trail to the hut begins at Wolverton (2.5 miles south of Lodgepole) and from there it is a strenuous 6-mile overland trek. Contact: Sequoia Parks Conservancy, Attn: Pear Lake, 47050 Generals Hwy. #10, Three Rivers, CA 93271; or visit www.sequoiaparksconservancy.org/pearlakewinterhut.html for information and availability. Cooking utensils, a wood pellet-burning heater, propane-operated lanterns and a stove are provided.

Note: Guests must be prepared for avalanche conditions and pack in their own sleeping bags, propane, food and water purification supplies. Advanced wilderness/backcountry skills are required.

WILDLIFE WATCHING

In winter, **black bears** are in a deep sleep at higher elevations, but a few may be active at lower levels. **Mule deer** move to the valleys to forage and avoid the snow. The **white-tailed jackrabbit**—which is really a hare—and the **deer mouse** are primarily nocturnal, so you'll only see their tracks in the snow. You may spot **raccoons** on the prowl for food, or a **chickaree** looking for stored cones. The **Steller's jay**, the only western jay with a crest, and the **raven**, a raucous, glossy black bird, are other common winter inhabitants. Four little birds also flock together hunting for insects in the trees: the **mountain chickadee**, the **golden-crowned kinglet**, the **brown creeper** and the **red-breasted nuthatch**. **Coyotes** remain active. Do not feed the animals!

SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOURS: EDITOR'S PICKS

If time is limited, self-guiding walks are a great way to explore the parks in spring, summer and fall. Most have interpretive signs explaining the natural history of the area.

Hazelwood Nature Trail, Giant Forest is an easy, 1-mile loop hike that takes about one hour. The trail features excellent stands of giant sequoias. Trailside exhibits tell about the relationship of the trees to fire and to humans.

Cold Springs Nature Trail, Mineral King is a 1-mile, 45-minute walk that in summer shows off wildflowers and birds. From the east end of Cold Springs Campground, walk along the East Fork of the Kaweah River and under the leafy shade of cottonwoods and aspens. Exhibits point out native plant life, including red and white firs, gooseberry bushes, junipers and willows. The area is open through mid-fall, weather permitting.

Big Trees Trail is a 1.5-mile, one-hour loop nature trail that starts at the Giant Forest Museum and circles the lovely Round Meadow. Trailside exhibits explore the factors that make this area prime sequoia habitat. ♿

LODGING & DINING



A range of comfortable accommodations are available in and around Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Advance reservations for lodging are strongly recommended, especially during summer and holidays. All major credit cards and traveler's checks are accepted. In Sequoia and Kings Canyon, dining options range from deli and to-go items, perfect for picnicking, to sit-down dinners in dining rooms with stunning views of the park. Lodging and dining is also available outside the park. For information, contact these Chambers of Commerce:

- Sequoia Foothills: **(559) 561-3300**
- Exeter: **(559) 592-2919**
cityofexeter.com/chamberinfo
- Visalia: **(559) 734-5876**,
visaliachamber.org
- Sanger: **(559) 875-4575**, **sanger.org**
- Fresno: **(559) 495-4800**,
fresnochamber.com
- Central Sierra: **(559) 336-9076**,
centralsierrachamber.org
- Sequoia Tourism Council: **discoverthe-sequoias.com**.

SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

❁ **WUKSACHI LODGE** Guest rooms are located in three detached buildings near this beautiful cedar and stone lodge, with views of Mount Silliman and Silver Peak in the High Sierra. **Amenities** include 102 spacious guest rooms, full-service restaurant, cocktail lounge, retail and ski shop, special event facilities. Rooms have phones, flat screen TVs, private baths and more. Call **(866) 807-3598** or visit **visitsequoiakingscanyon.com/stay**.

THE PEAKS RESTAURANT has soaring glass windows, offering beautiful views of the mountains. The menu features American and regional Sierra alpine cuisine. Call **(559) 625-7700** or visit **visitsequoia.com**. ❁❁❁

BEARPAW HIGH SIERRA CAMP is closed for the 2022 season due to fire recovery and water infrastructure.

This wilderness/backcountry tent hotel typically accommodates up to 18 hikers and is located 11.5 miles from Crescent Meadow via the High Sierra Trail. The tents have wooden floors, canvas siding and two twin beds. Open from mid-June to mid-September, weather permitting. Reservations are required and are accepted by phone only, starting January 2. **Amenities** include bedding, towels, linens, home-style meals, showers and flush toilets. The camp provides family-style meals ❁❁❁ for guests during summer only. Call **(866) 807-3598** or visit **visitsequoiakingscanyon.com/stay**.

LODGEPOLE MARKET CENTER Here you'll find a grocery store and a newly renovated grill serving up burgers, sandwiches and salads. Open May to October. Visit **visitsequoia.com**. ❁❁❁

KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Lodging and dining are available in two locations in Kings Canyon National Park: **Grant Grove Village** lies within 1.5 miles round-trip walking distance of the Grant Grove of Giant Sequoias and the General Grant Tree. Here you'll find the Kings Canyon Visitor Center.



Cedar Grove provides a quieter setting and is located on the Kings River, deep in the heart of Kings Canyon. The Cedar Grove Visitor Center is open late May to early September and offers exhibits, books, maps and first aid.

GRANT GROVE CABINS 🌲 Nine of these historic, rustic cabins with private baths are open year-round. Twenty-four cabins and 17 tent cabins, with a central bathhouse, are available in summer.

Amenities include cabins that can accommodate up to four people in two double beds and six people in three double beds. One two-person “honeymoon” cabin is available. The village has a restaurant, gift shop, market and post office. Call **(866) 807-3598** or visit **visitsequoiakingscanyon.com/stay**.

JOHN MUIR LODGE 🌲 Located in Grant Grove Village, this lodge offers renovated rooms with mountain décor. Guests also have access to balconies with outdoor seating and a forest view. **Amenities** include the village gift shop, market and post office. Call **(866) 807-3598** or visit **visitsequoiakingscanyon.com/stay**. ♿

CEDAR GROVE LODGE 🌲 This small, quiet lodge in Cedar Grove Village offers motel rooms from early May to mid-October. **Amenities** include 18 standard hotel rooms and three additional rooms offering an outdoor patio near the river. Call **(866) 807-3598** or visit **visitsequoiakingscanyon.com/stay**

CEDAR GROVE SNACK BAR This counter-service restaurant, located in the lodge registration building, offers light meals and snacks, Visit **visitsequoia.com**. 🌲 🚗 📶

OUTSIDE THE PARKS

STONY CREEK LODGE Located in Sequoia National Forest on the Generals Highway between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, this quaint lodge offers 11 hotel rooms with private baths. It is open May through early October. The lodge, constructed of river rock and timber, also has a stone fireplace, gift shop, market, ATM and gas station. Call **(877) 828-1440** or visit **sequoia-kingscanyon.com**.

STONY CREEK LODGE RESTAURANT Enjoy casual dining and pizza inside or on the patio. 🌲 🚗 📶

MONTECITO SEQUOIA LODGE & SUMMER FAMILY CAMP 🌲 Located in Sequoia National Forest on Generals Highway, this award-winning family-oriented resort offers packages that include lodging, meals and activities. **Amenities** include lodge rooms and newly renovated suites and cabins with private baths. Winterized cabins have nearby bathhouses. Swimming pool. Buffet-style meals are included in the room rate. 🌲 🚗 📶 Call **(800) 227-9900**

WALKING & HIKING



Whether you're a casual day hiker, backpacker or determined mountaineer headed for the summit of Mount Whitney, there's a trail for you.

More than 800 miles of marked trails may be accessed from 25 trailheads across the parks. Trails below 10,000 feet are normally snow-free by midsummer. Please see the "Park Regulations & Safety" and "Camping" chapters for more details about obtaining wilderness/backcountry permits. For maps, trail conditions and other information, stop at any visitor center.

HIKING SAFETY TIPS

- **Don't overexert yourself** in the effort to view park sights. Several hikes, especially

in the high, thin air of the parks' wilderness/backcountry, can be quite challenging, especially for backpackers with heart or respiratory problems.

- To prevent **blisters**, the most common ailment on the trail, wear comfortable shoes or boots that suit your needs and the terrain. Likewise, choose outdoor socks that will protect your feet.
- **Leave a copy of your itinerary** with a reliable person. Include such details as the make, year and license plate of your car; the equipment you're bringing; your destination; the weather you anticipate; and when you plan to return.
- It's safest to **hike or camp with at least one companion**. If you'll be entering a remote area, your group should have a minimum of



KINGS CANYON TRAILS

Trail		Round-Trip	Difficulty
Trailhead	Description	Distance Time	Elevation Gain

GRANT GROVE AREA

General Grant Tree Trail <i>Grant Tree parking area</i>	Interpretive signs on this paved trail describe the forest features on this pleasant walk to the General Grant Tree. A pamphlet is available for a small charge at visitor centers. (Partial accessibility) ♿	0.3 mile 30 minutes	easy 50 feet
North Grove Loop <i>end of lower Grant Tree parking area</i>	Travel through groves of giant sequoia, sugar pine, white fir and dogwood. Sequoias thrive in the wet meadow and a large dead sequoia shows fire marks.	1.5 miles 1 hour	moderate 400 feet
Big Stump Trail <i>picnic area near Kings Canyon's Big Stump entrance</i>	The trail traverses an area cut for timber in the 1880s, when early lumberjacks threatened to eliminate giant sequoias. Huge sequoia stumps are still visible.	1 mile 1 hour	easy 300 feet
Park Ridge Trail <i>Panoramic Point parking area (2.5 miles east of Grant Grove Village. No vehicles in winter.)</i>	Walk south along the ridge for stunning vistas. On a clear day, you can see Hume Lake in Sequoia National Forest, San Joaquin Valley and Coast Range 100 miles away. Return via the dirt fire road or retrace your steps.	4.7 miles 3 hours	easy 200 feet
Sunset Trail <i>across the road from Grant Grove Visitor Center</i>	This trail provides views of forest, rocks, streams, two waterfalls and a lake. It also passes Viola Falls and the old park entrance near Camp Redwood.	6 miles 3.5 hours	fairly strenuous 1,400 feet

CEDAR GROVE AREA

Zumwalt Meadow <i>Zumwalt Meadow parking area, one mile before Roads End</i>	The trail provides scenic views of the meadow, which was named for D. K. Zumwalt, a railway attorney who was instrumental in saving the area. (Partial accessibility) ♿	1.5 miles 1 hour	easy 50 feet
Mist Falls-Paradise Valley Trail <i>Roads End short-term parking area</i>	This popular backpacking trail is named for its two main destinations. You can head back after reaching Mist Falls (4 miles) or continue on to Paradise Valley (6.5 miles).	9-13 miles 5-8 hours	moderately strenuous 1,500 feet

four people; this way, if one is hurt, another can stay with the injured party while the other two go for help. If you'll be going into an area that is unfamiliar to you, take along someone who knows the area or speak with those who do before you set out.

- **Lightning** can be a special danger during sudden summer storms. Hikers are warned against climbing to any heights, such as Moro Rock, if a storm is expected.
- **Snow and ice** may delay use of the higher wilderness/backcountry trails, and stream crossings may be hazardous into July or later. Occasional trail closures may occur due to fire activity.
- Review the equipment, supplies and skills that you'll need. Always remember to **carry extra food and water** in case of an emergency.
- Always maintain a safe distance of 100 yards minimum between your group and **wild animals**.

FUN FACTS



Q. ARE THERE ANY TRAILS THAT ARE OPEN YEAR-ROUND?

A. Yes. Many trails—including Marble Falls, Middle Fork, Ladybug and Garfield Grove—are open year-round. Autumn brings cooler temperatures for hiking and, in spring, the foothills are clothed in a glorious array of wildflowers. Ask at a park visitor center for up-to-date trail information.



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SEQUOIA TRAILS

Trail		Round-Trip	Difficulty
Trailhead	Description	Distance Time	Elevation Gain

GIANT FOREST AREA

Congress Trail <i>General Sherman Tree</i>	Popular paved loop through the heart of Giant Forest Grove and into Alta Plateau, home to the giant President, Chief Sequoyah, General Lee and McKinley trees.	2 miles 1.5 hours	easy 200 feet
Big Trees Trail <i>Giant Forest Museum or museum parking lot</i>	This self-guided paved trail is graded for accessibility. It circles Round Meadow and features trail-side exhibits about the sequoia habitat. ♿	1.5 miles 1 hour	easy 60 feet
Crescent Meadow/ Log Meadow Loop <i>Crescent Meadow parking lot / picnic area</i>	If you follow the signs for Tharp's Log, you will see meadows, giant sequoias, the park's oldest cabin, dense fir forest and wildflowers (when they are in season).	1.8 miles 2 hours	easy 200 feet
Moro Rock/Soldiers Trail Loop <i>Moro Rock</i>	Climb 400 steps up Moro Rock, a huge granite dome, for views of the Great Western Divide. Trail passes Roosevelt Tree, Triple Tree, Tunnel Log and historic Soldiers Camp.	4.6 miles 3 hours	moderately difficult 300 feet

MINERAL KING AREA

Hikers must drive to reach these trails. The drive over the 25-mile winding road, open late spring to early fall, takes about 1.5 hours from Highway 198 in Three Rivers. Hiking at this altitude, beginning at 7,500 feet, is strenuous.

Eagle Lake Trail <i>Eagle-Mosquito parking area</i>	Gentle incline becomes steep near Spring Creek, where great views can be had. At Eagle Sink Hole, where flowing water disappears into the ground, turn around or continue for 1.5 miles to Eagle Lake.	6.8 miles 4 hours	moderately difficult 2,170 feet
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CAMPING



Over 1,200 campsites—1,168 regular sites (1-6 people), 26 medium group sites (7-19 people) and 11 large group sites (20-50 people)—are located in the parks. Many campgrounds are near visitor centers, which offer interpretive exhibits and prompt first aid if needed. Several sites are shaded by evergreens in the thick conifer forests, while others lie in the oak and chaparral-covered foothills.

FACILITIES

Most campgrounds have tables, fire grills, bear-proof food storage boxes, drinking water, garbage cans and either flush or pit toilets. Parking for extra vehicles is available nearby. Showers may or may not be available to the visitors in the campgrounds, depending upon construction.

ACCESSIBILITY

A limited number of accessible campsites are available. For details about accessible facilities, visit nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm. Contact the nearest visitor center or call the park at **(559) 565-3341** for more information.

REGULATIONS

All food **must** be stored in bear-proof boxes where provided. Digging or leveling ground is not permitted. Wildlife and vegetation may not be disturbed. Pets must be leashed at all times. Only dead and downed wood may be used for fires. Bicycles and pets are not permitted on trails. Music should be audible only in your campsite. Check bulletin boards for quiet hours and further information.

RESERVATIONS

Individual campsites at Lodgepole, Potwisha and Buckeye Flat campgrounds may

be reserved in Sequoia National Park and at Sunset Campground in Kings Canyon National Park. Sites in Kings Canyon usually available by reservation are Sunset, Sentinel and Canyon View, and mid-sized group sites in Crystal Springs. To make reservations, please call **(877) 444-6777** or visit **recreation.gov**.

RESTRICTIONS

Camping is available on a first come, first-served basis at most sites and is limited to 14 days from mid-June to mid-September, with 30 days total per year. Most campgrounds permit a maximum of one vehicle, two tents and six people per campsite.

WILDERNESS/ BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

Backpackers and wilderness users can now make permit reservations for the quota season using **recreation.gov**. People can make reservations six months in advance of their desired entry date. There will be a limited number of walk-up permits available on a daily basis. Wilderness/backcountry camping permits are available on a quota system and cost \$15 per permit plus \$5 per person. **Bear-resistant food canisters** are strongly recommended in all areas and required in others. They are available for rent or purchase at concession markets or visitor centers throughout the park. For complete camping information, call **(559) 565-3341** or visit **nps.gov/seki-wildernesspermits**.

Note: There are closures due to the KNP Complex Wildfire. Wildfire impacts have

CAMPGROUNDS (ALL ARE NOW RESERVATION ONLY)

Campground	Months of Operation	Fee Per Night	Individual Sites	Group Sites	Reservations in Summer	Toilets	Drinking Water	Trailers and RVs	Showers	Camp Store
SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK										
Giant Forest/Lodgepole Area (Elevation 6,700')										
Dorst Creek	Closed 2021 due to hazardous trees	\$22-\$60	218	4	•	Flush	•	•		
Lodgepole	Summer	\$22	214		•	Flush	•	•	•	•
Foothills Area (Elevation 2,100' - 3,600')										
Buckeye Flat	Spring - Fall	\$22	28		•	Flush	•			
Potwisha	Year-round	\$22	42		•	Flush	•	•		
Mineral King Area (Elevation 6,550' - 7,500')										
Atwell Mill	Closed 2022 due to hazardous trees	\$12	21			Vault	•			
Cold Springs	Summer - Fall	\$22	40			Vault	•			
KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK										
Grant Grove Area (Elevation 6,500')										
Azalea	Year-round	\$22	110			Flush	•	•	•	•
Crystal Springs	May to September	\$22	36	14		Flush	•	•	•	•
Sunset	Summer	\$22-\$40	157	2		Flush	•	•	•	•
Cedar Grove Area (Elevation 4,600')										
Sheep Creek	Spring - Fall	\$22	111			Flush	•	•	•	•
Sentinel	April to mid-November	\$22	82		•	Flush	•	•	•	•
Canyon View	Summer	\$40-\$60		16		Flush	•		•	•
Moraine	Summer	\$22	121			Flush	•	•	•	•

For details about accessible facilities, please visit nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm.

created unsafe conditions in developed areas and in park wilderness. Many trailheads are closed to both entry and exit and are not reachable by vehicle. When planning your trip, be sure that all trailheads you plan to use are open. In Sequoia, the Lodgepole, Giant Forest, and Mineral King areas are closed, along with many foothills day-use trails. Overnight hiking opportunities in the Grant Grove area are extremely limited.

Self-register for wilderness permits for the Middle Fork Trail at Foothills Visitor Center just inside the Sequoia National Park entrance (not at the trailhead). Self-register for permits for South Fork Trails at the trailhead.

Park roads may close at any time due to unsafe conditions, especially during winter weather. Many park roads are in burned areas and are susceptible to debris flows.

RVS & TRAILERS

Most campgrounds permit recreational vehicles and trailers, but site size varies and many sites are not suitable for long RVs. Only a few sites can accommodate RVs and trailers longer than 30 feet. **Please be aware that the most direct route to your campground may not allow for more than a 22-foot length limit.** For information on RV camping outside of the parks, visit gocampingamerica.com.





Sequoia and Kings Canyon country has a rich assortment of plant and animal life. The rolling foothills are home to **California black oak**, **mariposa manzanita**, **chaparral pea** and **yucca**. Wildflowers, such as lupine, splash the hills with color in spring.

The mixed-conifer forest boasts the mighty **sequoia**, **incense cedar**, **various pines** and **white fir**. **Ferns**, **mosses** and **mushrooms** also flourish.

The high country is a land of lakes, meadows, open forest and bare granite. **Foxtail pine** and **white-bark pine** are two of the few trees that survive at these heights.

The park also teems with a variety of animal life, including **mountain lions**, **coyotes**, **weasels**, **badgers**, **mule deer** and **skunks**, several types of rodents (including **Douglas squirrels** and **yellow-bellied marmots**) and various **snakes** (including the 2-foot-long **rubber boa**, which looks like an overgrown earthworm).

The evergreen forests also provide a home for nearly 216 species of birds. The **Clark's nutcracker** is a light-gray, crow-like bird with black wings and tail. It feeds on the seeds found in pinecones, which it stashes in hiding places. Closely related to the blue jay, **Steller's jay** are also a common site.

MOUNTAIN LIONS



Mountain lions serve an important role in the park ecosystem because they prevent the overpopulation of deer and other small mammals. Generally, these big cats are calm, quiet and elusive. Sightings are rare, so if you spot one, consider yourself privileged!

A mountain lion attack is extremely unlikely. However, to increase your safety, follow these suggestions:

- Watch children closely. Never let them run ahead or lag behind on the trail. Talk to children about lions and teach them what to do if they meet one.

- Avoid hiking or walking alone.
- Store food per park regulations.
- Do not leave pets or pet food outside or in a vehicle and unattended, especially at night. Pets attract mountain lions into developed areas.
- Never approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kittens. Most lions will try to avoid a confrontation, so always give them a way to escape.
- Don't run. Stay calm. Hold your ground or back away slowly. Face the lion and stand upright. Do all you can to appear larger: Grab a stick, raise your arms, open your jacket and spread it as wide as you can above your head. And, if you have small children with you, pick them up.
- Wave your arms, shout and throw objects to convince the lion that you are not prey and may be dangerous.
- If attacked, fight back!



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†KOA Rewards campers who stay on Friday, September 9, 2022, get Saturday, September 10, 2022 for free at a participating KOA campground. Sites may be limited. Visit KOA.com for more information. Not valid with other discounts.

WATCHABLE WILDLIFE

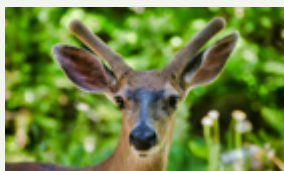


STELLER'S JAY

(*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

A close relative of the blue jay, the Steller's jay is the only crested jay found west of the Rocky Mountains. They live in flocks of 10 or more birds and are known for their varied vocalizations, the most common of which sounds exactly like an old-fashioned pump handle.

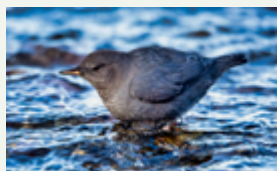
• **Weight** 3-5 oz. • **Size** 11-14 in. long • **Active** year-round



CALIFORNIA MULE DEER

(*Odocoileus hemionus*)

These deer are most active at dawn and dusk. Their large, mule-like ears are like a satellite dish, collecting noises and alerting them of danger. Mule deer are capable of moving with great speed over rough terrain by taking bounding leaps and landing on all fours simultaneously. • **Weight** 70-475 lbs. • **Size** 4-7.5 ft. long • **Active** year-round



AMERICAN DIPPER

(*Cinclus mexicanus*)

The dipper, or water ouzel, is a stocky, slate-gray bird with yellow feet. It sits on rocks in the middle of streams and bobs up and down, then dives into the water in search of insects or larvae. It catches prey by swimming or walking along stream bottoms. • **Weight** 1-3 oz.

• **Size** 6-8 in. long • **Active** year-round



BOBCAT (*Lynx rufus*)

This wide-faced feline is recognizable by the tufts of hair below its pointy, black-tipped ears and its stubby, or bobbed, tail. Bobcats travel extensively—territory can exceed 125 square miles—in search of prey, like rodents or deer. They are most active at twilight and dawn. •

Weight 8-24 lbs. • **Size** 20-35 in. long • **Active** year-round



CHICKAREE

(*Tamiasciurus douglasii*)

The chickaree, also known as the Douglas squirrel, primarily eats the seeds of coniferous trees, in addition to berries, mushrooms and even some birds' eggs. Chickarees hoard food in one location, discarding the scales of pinecones as they eat the seeds. A pile of scales can grow to nearly 40 inches across. • **Weight** 5-11 oz. • **Size** approx. 1 foot long • **Active** year-round



WESTERN RATTLESNAKE

(*Crotalus viridis*)

The sound of a rattle announces the presence of this venomous reptile. Heat-sensitive sensory organs on the sides of its head allow this viper to locate and strike prey with incredible accuracy. Adults eat small mammals, while juveniles prefer lizards and mice. • **Weight** 2-10 lbs.

• **Size** 16-64 in. long • **Active** spring through fall

SEQUOIA VS. REDWOOD: COMPARING TWO TREES

Fossil remains show that ancestors of the redwood family of trees grew worldwide at least 175 million years ago. The Ice Age, however, wiped out most of them. California is lucky enough to have two types of these unusual trees.

The **Giant Sequoia** (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), found in Sequoia and Kings Canyon, is also called “Sierra redwood” or the “Big Tree.” It has a column-like trunk, stout branches and fibrous, reddish-brown bark.

This stately evergreen is one of the oldest living trees on Earth. Because of ideal growing conditions (mild, wet winters and dry, warm summers), it is also one of the fastest-growing trees.

Its dense bark, sometimes two feet thick, is virtually impervious to brush fires and insect invasions.

Giant sequoias only grow naturally on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada. You'll find them in over 70 locations, including approximately 40 groves in Sequoia and Kings Canyon and three in Yosemite National Park. They also grow in Sequoia National Forest and a few other isolated spots. Of the world's 37 largest sequoias, 21 are giant sequoias growing in Sequoia and Kings Canyon.



The taller and more slender **California Coast Redwood** (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is more conifer-like in profile. It has a large base and reddish-brown bark. Coast redwoods often grow to be taller than sequoias. Redwoods can reach up to about 370 feet, while sequoias rarely top 300 feet.

The California coast redwoods naturally grow in a narrow band along the coast of California and Oregon, where fog provides moisture to the growing trees. They also need abundant winter rain and moderate year-round temperatures.

The world's first-, second-, third- and sixth-tallest trees are redwoods. They grow within a mile of each other on Redwood Creek along the northern California coast. You'll find them at Humboldt Redwoods State Park, Redwood National and State Parks, and Big Basin Redwoods State Park, all in California.



GIANT SEQUOIA

CALIFORNIA COAST REDWOOD

To 311 feet

Height

To 367.8 feet

To 3,200 years

Age

To 2,000 years

To 2.7 million lbs.

Weight

To 1.6 million lbs.

To 31 in. thick

Bark

To 12 in. thick

To 8 ft. diameter

Branches

To 5 ft. diameter

To 40 ft. diameter

Bases

To 22 ft. diameter

By seed only

Reproduce

By seed or root sprout

As large as oat flakes

Seed Size

As large as tomato seeds

Shaped like a chicken's egg

Cones

Shaped like a large olive

Small, overlapping, awl-shaped needles

Foliage

Single needles that fall off in sprays

BEARS



While their color may vary from black to cinnamon to blond, all bears found in the park are black bears (*Ursus americanus*). The typical adult male weighs about 250–300 pounds and adult females can weigh in at 150–200 pounds. When standing upright, an adult bear can be over 5 feet tall. Black bears are the largest Sierran predator, but only a small percentage of their natural diet is meat. They are omnivores, feeding mostly on plants and insects.

Bears are most active in spring and summer and, even if you don't catch a glimpse of one, you will likely find signs of them. Look for claw scratches on tree trunks, which indicate a place where a bear has marked its territory. You may also see bear tracks and droppings, or rocks they have moved while hunting for grubs.

Black bears have a keen sense of smell, are highly intelligent and excellent learners. They are opportunistic feeders and will seek out food wherever it can be easily found. You can stay safe in bear country and help keep bears wild and alive by fol-

lowing these food storage and safety tips.

FOOD STORAGE

Bears can cause severe property damage while trying to get to people's food. Park regulations require proper storage to prevent bears from having access to your food. "Food" is considered any item with a scent, including canned goods, bottles, drinks, soap, cosmetics, toiletries, trash, ice chests (even when empty) and unwashed food items or utensils.

- Never leave food or scented items in cars.
- Store all food and anything with an odor (including toiletries) in bear-proof food-storage lockers where provided.
- Keep a clean camp and deposit garbage in trash cans or dumpsters.
- When camping, hiking or picnicking, always keep food within arms reach and never leave it unattended.
- Always stay with your food and treat your food locker like a refrigerator—keep it closed unless you're actively putting food in or taking food out.
- When backpacking, use an approved bear-resistant food canister.

SAFETY TIPS

- If you see a bear in a developed area (like a campground or parking lot), make as much noise as possible by yelling or banging pots and pans together to scare it away. If you see a bear in the wild, stay at least 100 yards away and allow the bear to continue its natural behavior.
- Follow the speed limit. Cars are the most common human-related cause of black bear deaths in the park.
- For more information, visit [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov).

PRESERVATION



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are better protected, yet more endangered, than ever before.

They are protected by law, by the National Park Service (NPS) and by countless committed citizens. The parks are endangered by the environmental changes caused by visitors to the parks, as well as by the growth of nearby urban centers.

Threats to the park include **air pollution, pesticide drift, drought, global climate change** and **overcrowding**—all threaten the resources of the Sierra.

Ultimately, the fate of the parks will depend on the wisdom and foresight of everyone involved. Please do your part by respecting these valuable natural resources.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Fire management is a tool by which the parks are protected for future generations. For eons, lightning has ignited forest fires, which generally tend to burn in small areas. These recurrent fires used to occur naturally every three to 35 years. Fires can actually offer many benefits to forests. Not only does it eliminate forest floor debris and low-growing competitors, but the ashes also act as a natural fertilizer for new growth. Fire heats sequoia cones and dries out the cone scales, thus releasing seeds to germinate. It also creates openings in the canopy for sunlight to reach seedlings. In this way, sequoias have adapted and survived for thousands of years.

Until the mid-1960s, the NPS “conserved the scenery” with a policy of total fire suppression. Eventually, the NPS began to research and document the effects of fire on giant sequoia ecology. What they found was that the trees were not reproducing and that fire was necessary for the continued success of the giant sequoia.

In 1968, Sequoia and Kings Canyon instituted a three-pronged fire management plan that was unprecedented in NPS history. The plan called for carefully monitored and prescribed burns to remove logs and tons of other woody litter that accumulate in the forest. In doing so, the small prescribed burns would help prevent large destructive wildfires that explode into roaring infernos when the buildup is too great. The plan also encour-

FUN FACTS



Q. HOW IS POLLUTION AFFECTING SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON?

A. Sequoia and Kings Canyon suffer from one of the worst air-pollution problems of any national park! Pollution—particularly ozone—from the Central Valley and the Bay Area is carried into the mountains by warm winds. It challenges all of us to help reduce air pollution!

aged confined natural fires and lightning-caused forest fires to burn for the first time. Fire suppression was the third part of the plan, but with a focus of preventing fires from campgrounds, cigarettes and unwanted naturally caused blazes.

From 1968 through 1989, 156 prescribed burns and 410 natural fires were allowed to burn and clear out the underbrush in the parks. Over the past two decades, scientists have been measuring reproduction before and after the fires and are reporting remarkable regeneration.

If you see a fire in the forest, by all means report it. You may learn, though, that trained crews are actually monitoring the fire as part of the fire management plan.

LIVE LIGHT ON THE LAND

In 1903, only 450 people visited Sequoia and Kings Canyon. These days, the parks host as many as 2 million visitors per year. To protect these beautiful places, consider

using the free in-park Sequoia Shuttle during the busy summer season.

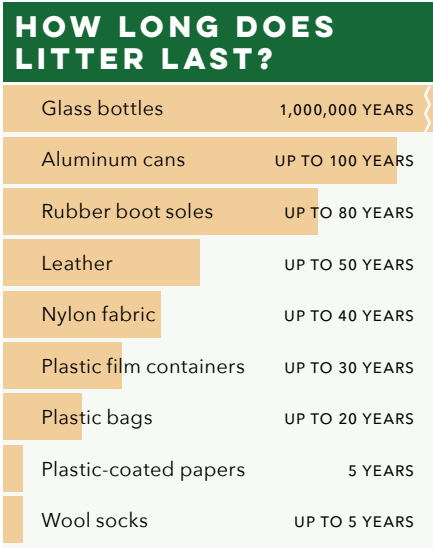
RECYCLING


As the parks’ concessioner, Delaware North at Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks accepts glass, aluminum and plastic materials at in-park markets for recycling. Markets charge a 5-cent deposit for each recyclable container they sell. They do not, however, give refunds for cans and bottles purchased outside the park. Nevertheless, they will accept containers for recycling. To continue the recycling efforts of the parks, Delaware North makes a point of using recycled paper whenever possible. Many items that are sold in the markets and gift shops are produced from recycled or environmentally friendly materials.

Delaware North plans to expand their recycling program to include aluminum, glass, cardboard, paper, newspaper, magazines, plastics and tin used in their operations and by employees living in the parks. These recyclable materials represent more than 25,000 pounds a month in the summer season. There is hope that these numbers will increase with additional contributions.

ECOTOURISM

You can become an ecotourist! To explore volunteer opportunities in the parks, log onto **volunteer.gov**. Enter “Sequoia and Kings Canyon” in the keyword box. Apply for volunteer opportunities online.





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PHOTOGRAPHY



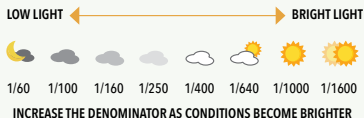
Just as large scale paintings and photographic surveys were once the catalyst for Congress to create the first national parks, photographs and videos created by today's visitors continue to inspire a passion for the preservation of these awe-inspiring places. Today more than ever, these wild and captivating environments offer us the much needed opportunity to reconnect with nature; places to recharge our metaphorical batteries. The following tips will help enhance your photography and video work both technically and aesthetically, and empower you to contribute to the ongoing visual preservation of the wildlife and landscapes of our national parks, and have fun doing it!

- **Timing is everything.** The best time to photograph is during the soft golden hours—at dusk and dawn—when the light is soft. When your shadow is longer than you are, you've got the best light!
- **Stay in the shallows.** To easily achieve the cinematic, blurred background look, move away from your subject matter and use your telephoto lens to zoom in and compress the image's foreground to background to create a shallow depth of field.
- **Go with the flow.** Fight the desire to constantly follow wildlife, and let the action naturally enter and exit your frame.
- **Framing.** Seek out natural framing elements—trees and branches, rock formations, knot holes—to add more layers to your image. Leave space around wildlife to frame them within their natural habitat.

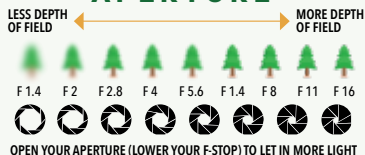
- **The eyes have it.** Change your perspective whenever possible to photograph at an intimate eye level with your subject. Place eyes in the power points (the intersection of rule of third guidelines) and keep them in sharp focus.
- **Use a monopod.** If you are using a heavy telephoto lens for photos or video, consider using a monopod to stabilize it (one can be attached to either the base of the camera or lens). Many hiking poles serve double duty and convert to monopods.
- **Do photo yoga.** Snap a few versions of a composition with a variety of perspectives, both vertical and horizontal. The best image is not likely the first one you take.
- **Shoot in burst mode.** Increase the probability that you'll capture a candid behavior, head position or unique angle of your subject by taking many pictures at once using your camera's burst mode.
- **Steady as you go.** Investing in a pan-and-tilt tripod head will allow you to move your camera smoothly on top of a tripod and avoid hand-held camera shake that will distract from your footage.

CHEAT SHEET

SHUTTER SPEED



APERTURE



ISO





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JUST FOR KIDS



There are several seasonal activities and programs you and your family can enjoy at Sequoia and Kings Canyon. Visit nps.gov/seki for more information.

BECOME A JUNIOR RANGER

Children ages 5 and up earn a badge by discovering nature and history and learning how to protect parks. Sign up at a visitor center. The program, also available nps.gov/kids/become-a-junior-ranger, allows kids to play games and learn about national parks.

GO HORSEBACK RIDING

Leave from either Grant Grove or Cedar Grove on a steed to view the ranges of Kings Canyon. For more information, call **(559) 335-9292** for Grant Grove; or call **(559) 565-3464** for Cedar Grove; or visit nps.gov/seki.

RIDE THE FREE IN-PARK SHUTTLE

In Sequoia National Park, in the summer, ride the in-park shuttle to a point away from your car, campsite or lodging, and enjoy a leisurely stroll back. Always carry a map, water and all the items you need to be comfortable and safe during your walk.

TAKE A SNOWSHOE WALK

While bears may be sleeping, the rest of Sequoia and Kings Canyon teems with animal life and activity during the winter months. Park rangers may lead snowshoe walks when conditions are right. These trips are not recommended for children younger than 10 years of age.

PARTICIPATE IN A CAMPFIRE PROGRAM

Listen to rangers, who come to campgrounds many nights during the summer to educate guests about the park's history, culture and wildlife.

TOUR THE DEPTHS OF CRYSTAL CAVE

Follow a naturalist's lead, venturing into the dark to learn about cave formations. Obtain tickets in advance, online at recreation.gov or check in the morning at the Foothills or Lodgepole visitor centers.

CREATE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Check visitor centers for books and games that will help children learn more about the park environment.

GO SLEDDING OR TUBING

In the winter, kids may be able to romp, stomp and fly down snow-covered hills on their sleds and inner tubes at designated snow-play areas in Big Stump, Columbine, Quail Flat, Big Meadows, Cherry Gap and Wolverton. Check with a visitor center for current weather conditions.

WALK WITH A PARK RANGER

Sequoia Parks Conservancy is offering tours, call **(559) 565-4251** or visit sequoiaparksconservancy.org/sequoiajourneys.html. For more information, contact a visitor center or visit nps.gov/seki.

A photograph of a person in a yellow shirt standing next to a massive sequoia tree trunk in a forest. The person is looking up at the tree. The tree trunk is very large and has a dark, hollowed-out section. The forest is filled with green trees and a fallen log in the foreground.

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IF YOU ONLY HAVE A DAY



Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks cover 865,964 acres. To maximize your experience, choose one region to explore. To help you plan your visit to the parks, first stop at a visitor center to get an overview, then decide whether you will visit **Mineral King, Foothills, Giant Forest, Grant Grove** or **Cedar Grove**.

GIANT FOREST

By visiting **Giant Forest**, you can see the famed Big Trees, including the **General Sherman Tree**. The big tree—a 15-minute walk along a steep paved trail with stairs from the main parking area—is more than 2,000 years old and has the distinction of being the largest living tree in the world. Accessible parking is adjacent to the Generals Highway.

The 1.5-mile, one-hour **Big Trees Trail**  features trailside exhibits and is fully accessible. The trail begins at the **Giant Forest Museum**, an interesting and informative stop before you begin your hike, featuring exhibits on Sequoia ecology.

In less than an hour, on a seasonal basis, you can drive the Moro Rock-Crescent Meadow Road. Stop at **Moro Rock**, a large granite dome; **Tunnel Log**, a fallen sequoia that you can drive through; and **Crescent Meadow**, a lovely mid-elevation meadow. Add 60 minutes to climb Moro Rock and 60 minutes to walk around the meadow.

GRANT GROVE

At **Grant Grove**, near the Kings Canyon entrance, you'll want ample time to see the

General Grant Tree. The General Grant is the second-largest giant sequoia on Earth. From the parking area, take a gently graded 0.3-mile, self-guiding trail that passes by other impressive giant sequoias, historic **Gamlin Cabin** and **Fallen Monarch Tree**, in which the cavalry guarding the park in the 1890s stabled their horses (partial accessibility).

CEDAR GROVE

If you decide to visit **Cedar Grove** in Kings Canyon, you will be treated to a lush place of tumbling waterfalls, meadows and miles of quiet trails. Half the excitement is the 1-hour drive getting there on Highway 180, which zigzags down into the canyon through Sequoia National Forest. Be sure to stop at **Junction View** on the way. Sheer canyon walls seem to close in around you as the wild South Fork of the Kings River surges over rapids far below.

Cedar Grove attractions include **North Dome**, which some say resembles Yosemite's Half Dome, noisy and powerful **Roaring River Falls** and scenic **Zumwalt Meadow**.

Roaring River Falls is less than a five-minute stroll from the parking area. During years of heavy runoff, the river pours through the gorge and over the falls with a tremendous roar. Even during the dry season the falls are impressive, thundering into a cold, green pool.

If you have an hour, walk around Zumwalt Meadow, a lovely meadow dotted with ponderosa pine. The striking rock formations of Grand Sentinel and North Dome rise protectively on opposite sides of the meadow.



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