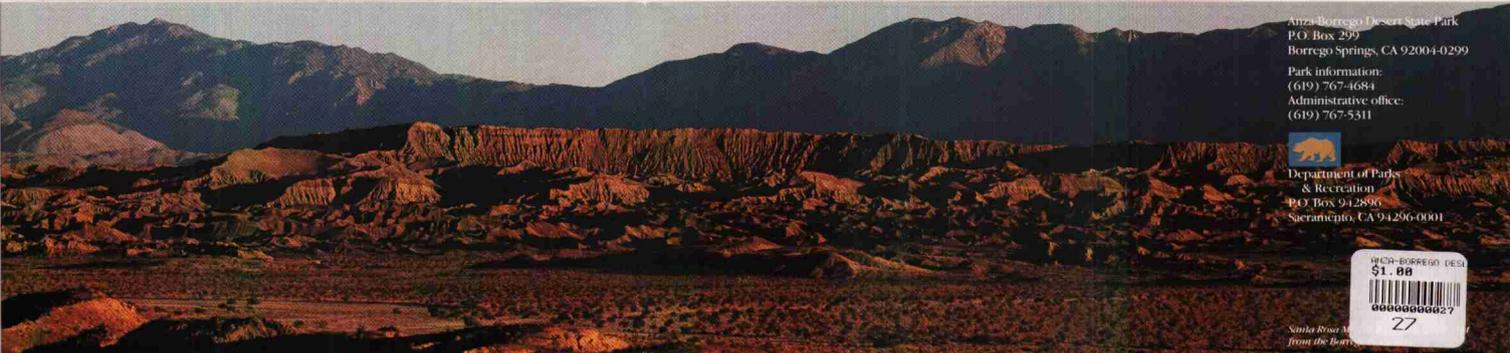


# Anza-Borrego Desert State Park



Anza-Borrego Desert State Park  
 P.O. Box 299  
 Borrego Springs, CA 92004-0299  
 Park information:  
 (619) 767-1684  
 Administrative office:  
 (619) 767-5311

Department of Parks & Recreation  
 P.O. Box 942896  
 Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



**T**o the first-time visitor, the space, the light and the silence of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park can be awesome. But the far horizons mean freedom; the clear light makes seeing an adventure, and the silence spells solitude and peace. Anza-Borrego, California's largest state park, is a treasury of wildlife and plants, and provides a refuge for the more than seventeen million people who live within a few hours' drive. The park's importance as a protected refuge becomes greater each year.

Today, from its underground visitor center to its highest pine-clad peaks, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park shines as a rich jewel of California. The diversity of life and terrain makes this 600,000-acre desert park one of the richest living museums in the country. Almost one million visitors each year enjoy the wildflowers, palm groves, open camping, and breathtaking vistas of Anza-Borrego.

Recent discoveries in the park include fossil mammoths, sites of early man, two new species of reptiles, and



Humans have been living in this desert for more than 10,000 years. Early cultures developed in a different environment from today's. The valleys were lush and well watered; the hills were heavily wooded. It is possible these earliest dwellers hunted camel and mammoth on these ancient savannas. More recent natives migrated to the Borrego Desert with advancements such as the bow and arrow, pottery, and highly developed religious ceremonies.



Explorers from the Spanish outposts entered the Anza-Borrego area to survey their new kingdom of Alta California. The first was Pedro Fages in 1772, followed by Juan Bautista de Anza in 1774. Anza blazed the first overland emigrant trail from Mexico when he brought 240 settlers and almost 1,000 head of livestock through Coyote Canyon on his way to found the village that would become San Francisco.

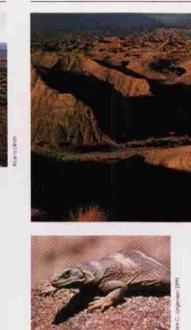
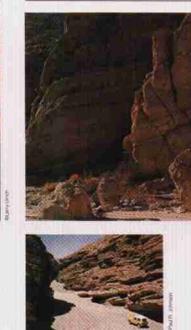
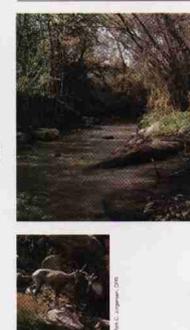
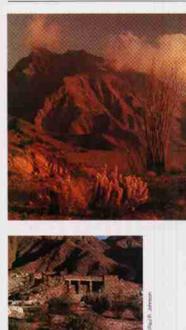


The rush for gold brought thousands of immigrants along the Southern Emigrant Trail. Change was rapid as the Butterfield Overland Stagecoach forged roadways through the desert on its way to San Francisco. Ranchers and prospectors staked land claims along the route and attempted to tame a savage land. Cattle operations developed and found the desert a difficult place in which to maintain forage and water. In 1933 the people of California set aside most of the Borrego Desert as a park for all people, forever.

a previously unknown grove of 200 elephant trees in the Santa Rosa Mountains. All that is known about Anza-Borrego is barely a scratch on the surface of the information that still lies hidden in the canyons, on the high ridges, and beneath the ancient sediments of this wilderness park. Much more remains to be discovered about this precious desert land.

In your exploration of the park, you will feel that sense of discovery, the excitement that comes from the possibility that you are walking where no other human has walked for decades or centuries. With your help, the integrity of Anza-Borrego will be protected and preserved for those yet to come. We hold in our hands the responsibility for passing on to those future generations the qualities we sought and found in the desert. Now go out into the desert and let the silence, light and space weave their spells for you.

## Points of Interest



### VISITOR CENTER

An excellent place to begin your park visit. Maps, books, brochures, exhibits on the desert environment, and a superb slide program will whet your appetite for enjoying one of the nation's largest state parks. The center is jointly operated by the park and the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, a volunteer group that helped raise much of the money to build the center.

Located 1.7 miles west of Borrego Springs on Palm Canyon Drive. Center open daily 9 AM to 5 PM, October through May. Open Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays 9 AM to 5 PM, June through September.

### BORREGO PALM CANYON

Located one mile from the Visitor Center, Palm Canyon Campground includes campsites for virtually every type of camper. Tent sites, trailer sites, and full hookups are available. Hot showers, toilets, shade ramadas, and tables are found here, as is a campfire center where programs conducted by rangers are offered on weekends from November to mid-May. Picnic sites and group camps are available.

An easy three-mile round-trip nature trail leads to a grove of native California fan palms. A free self-guided trail brochure is available to introduce visitors to the canyon and palm grove.

### COYOTE CANYON

Famous for its year-round stream and lush lifeline. The canyon is used by hikers, horseback riders, and those with sturdy four-wheel-drive vehicles. The roads are rough, but the hiking and riding trails are good and invite the visitor to explore the palm canyons and backcountry of this historic section of the Anza Trail. The historic trail can still be followed from Borrego Springs to the mountain town of Anza.

### FONT'S POINT

A commanding view of the Borrego Valley and Borrego Badlands. The prominent view point is reached by a sandy four-mile primitive road, which more often than not is soft and rutted and can be driven only in four-wheel-drive. Check the road conditions board at the Visitor Center. If you can get to Font's Point, it is well worth the effort. The view is one of the most breathtaking in all the southwest deserts.

### SPLIT MOUNTAIN

Ripped apart by numerous earthquakes and flash floods. You can often drive a passenger car to its entrance for the view from inside a mountain. Ancient flood plains have left their debris to be thrust upwards in Split Mountain. The rock, sand and silt spill down the canyon walls and eventually are transported by summer storms some twenty miles east to the Salton Sea. A walk or drive through the Split will open new worlds for the visitor and the terms "geology," "faults," and "erosion" will take on new meanings.

### MOUNTAIN PALM SPRINGS

A cluster of several groves of native California fan palms nestled in the canyons of the Tierra Blanca Mountains. Natural springs feed the lush palms and support interesting varieties of wildlife and rare plants. An easy hike from the dry camp will bring you into the quiet seclusion of one of the west's most interesting palm canyons.

### CARRIZO BADLANDS OVERLOOK

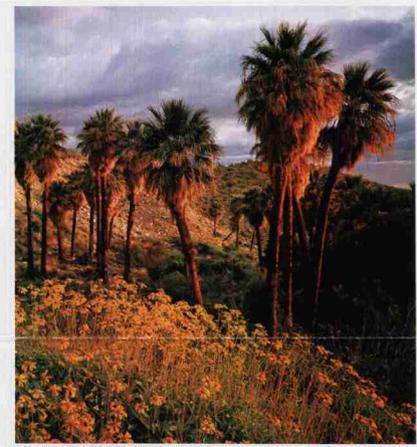
On County Highway S-2 just a few yards off the paved road. The eroded and twisted sediments below the viewpoint hold untold secrets of mastodons, sabertooths, zebras, and camels that roamed this region more than a million years ago. The savannas, streams, and lakes have vanished but the feeling of awe and mystery remains.

## Wildflowers

One of the most popular attractions in Anza-Borrego is the spring wildflower bloom. In some years, the desert floor is carpeted with colors—the yellow of dandelion and sunflowers, the white of dune primrose and chicory, the purple of sand verbena, and the blue of phacelia. The peak bloom is expected from late February until some time in April. The peak bloom progresses to the higher elevations in the park as the weeks of spring progress. If you arrive a little late in the season, head for upper elevation spots such as Blair Valley, Culp Valley, or Indian Gorge. If you have to choose one week to arrive for the bloom, early March would be your best bet. If you would like to be notified of the peak bloom period, please send a postcard, stamped and self-addressed, in an envelope addressed to:

WILDFLOWERS  
 Anza-Borrego Desert State Park  
 Box 299  
 Borrego Springs, CA 92004-0299

The wildflower notification card will be returned to you about two weeks prior to the expected peak bloom. Naturalists will monitor conditions in the field and will determine the time of the peak bloom so you can arrange to make your trip to see the wildflowers.



California Fan Palm with Desert Lotus in Foreground



### BORREGO VALLEY

Borrego Springs provides many services to the camper and other visitors. Gas stations, restaurants, markets, motels, RV parks, and a performing arts theater take the edge off roughing it in Anza-Borrego.



## Rules and Regulations

Park visitors are responsible for knowing the rules and regulations. Please remember, be a part of Anza-Borrego's future; help preserve the park's beauty by assuring that all those in your group follow the rules below.

### NATURAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES

All features are fully protected. Nothing may be removed from its place or disturbed. This includes rocks, plant material, reptiles, Indian artifacts, and fossils.

### VEHICLES

The established roadways in the park are Highways. All sections of the California Vehicle Code are enforced, including:

- All vehicles must be highway legal.
- All vehicles (including bicycles) must remain on the established roads.
- All drivers must possess a valid driver's license.

### CAMPFIRES

Fires on the ground are illegal. You may have a fire in a metal receptacle that completely contains the fire. Flames or smoke may not blacken or damage any feature. Fire debris must be taken with you. Gathering vegetation (dead or alive) is prohibited.

### FIREARMS

Firearms must be unloaded, inoperative, and in a case while in the park.

### DOGS

The desert is a dangerous place for your pet and it is recommended that you leave it at home. Dogs are allowed on roadways and in campgrounds. They are not allowed on any trails or in natural areas. Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet and under the immediate control of a person. At night, dogs must be kept in a tent or vehicle.

## Desert Safety

### EMERGENCY—CALL 911

Police  
 Fire  
 Medical

Know your physical limitations in the heat and rugged terrain. Summer temperatures can reach 125°.

Always carry plenty of water and drink it! It does you no good in your canteen. One gallon minimum per person per day is recommended and five gallons extra per vehicle.

Don't hike alone—use the buddy system.

Tell someone of your trip plans. Use maps. Detailed topographic maps of the entire park are available at the Visitor Center.

Start out with a well maintained vehicle. Carry extra water, shovel, tools, flares, and blankets. Check the road condition board at the Visitor Center before you start out.

If your vehicle breaks down—stay with it! It's much easier to find a vehicle than a wandering person. Should you find yourself in trouble, don't panic. If you've followed the above precautions, help will soon be on the way.

# Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

## Legend

- Major Roads and Highways
- Primitive Road
- Hiking Trail
- Historical Route
- Creek
- Perennial Stream
- Palms
- Ranger Station
- Campground
- Dry Camp
- Picnic Area
- Gas
- Pay Phone
- Food
- Groceries
- Lodging
- Medical Clinic



- ### State Historical Landmarks
- 1 First Child Monument
  - 2 Santa Catarina
  - 3 El Vado (Anza Camp)
  - 4 San Gregorio (Anza Camp)
  - 5 Los Puertecitos (Anza Camp)
  - 6 Peg Leg Smith Monument
  - 7 San Felipe Valley and Stage Station
  - 8 Butterfield Overland Mail Route
  - 9 Box Canyon
  - 10 Vallecito Stage Station
  - 11 Palm Spring

### Seasonal Closure

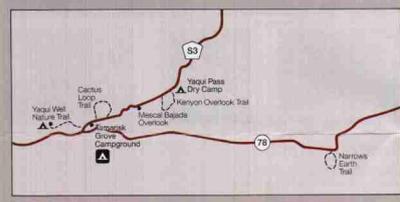
Coyote Canyon is closed to visitors June 16 through September 15 to allow bighorn sheep undisturbed use of the water.

## A Closer Look



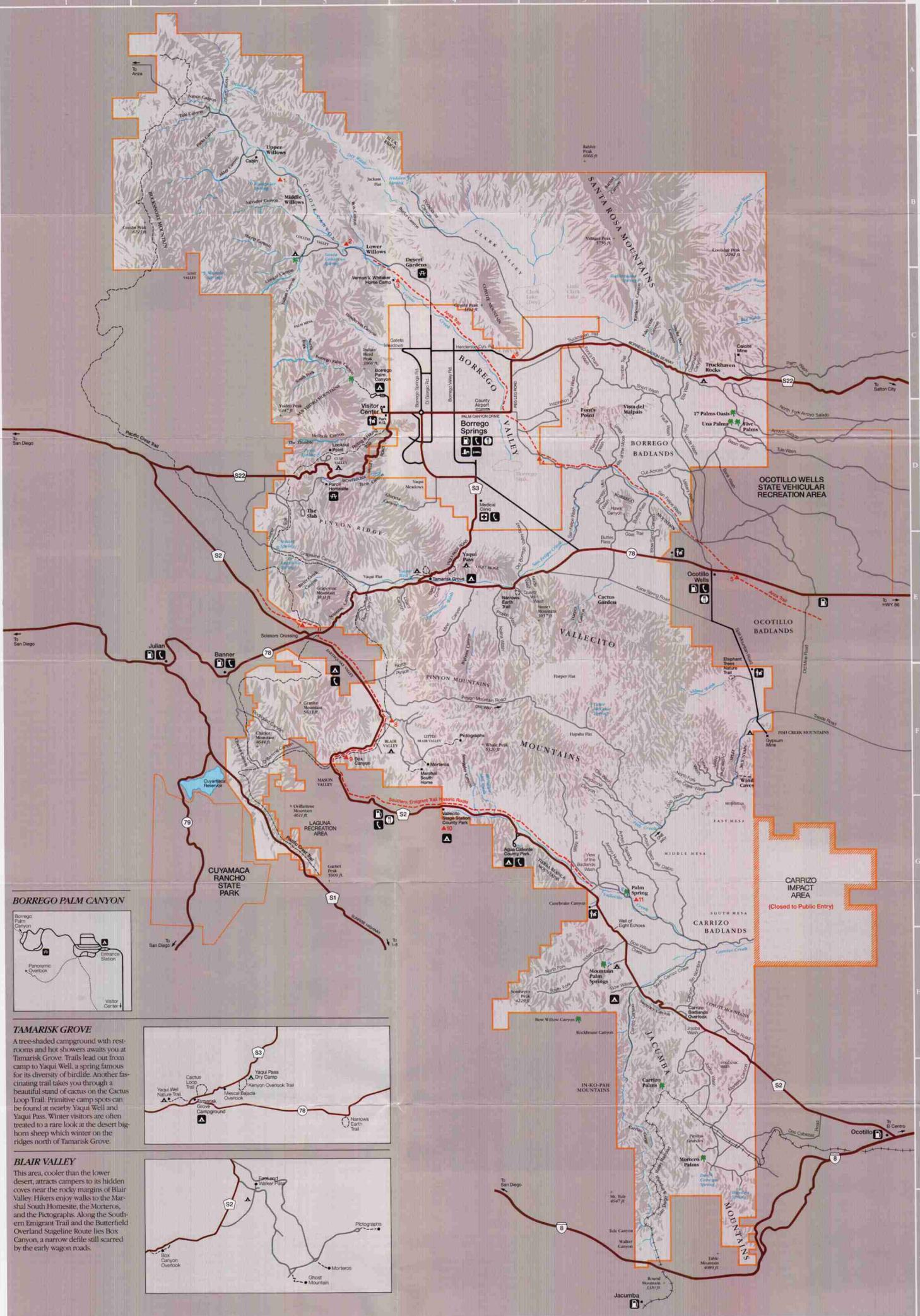
### TAMARISK GROVE

A tree-shaded campground with restrooms and hot showers awaits you at Tamarisk Grove. Trails lead out from camp to Yaqui Well, a spring famous for its diversity of birdlife. Another fascinating trail takes you through a beautiful stand of cactus on the Cactus Loop Trail. Primitive camp spots can be found at nearby Yaqui Well and Yaqui Pass. Winter visitors are often treated to a rare look at the desert big-horn sheep which winter on the ridges north of Tamarisk Grove.



### BLAIR VALLEY

This area, cooler than the lower desert, attracts campers to its hidden coves near the rocky margins of Blair Valley. Hikers enjoy walks to the Marsh South Homesite, the Morteros, and the Pictographs. Along the Southern Emigrant Trail and the Butterfield Overland Stage Line route lies Box Canyon, a narrow defile still scarred by the early wagon roads.



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