

SEARCH
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places

Hike Utah's National Parks and Monuments

Utah's Big-5 National Parks, State Parks and Monuments provide exciting opportunities to hike easy to challenging trails among the spectacular hoodoos, canyons and arches in this region, with the additional rewards of experiencing rich geologic history and ancient cultures. Adventure activities and educational experiences like informative ranger-led talks and star-gazing can be added to hiking itineraries, and comfortable lodgings, good food and a wide range of hiker-support services are located conveniently near trailheads.



Send us updates, images and resources

ABOUT THE AREA

Some of the most fascinating and awe-inspiring landscapes are found in the southwestern corner of Utah. Geologic features including towering cliffs, canyons, colorful spires and natural arches showcase what happens when time and water interact with sandstone. Pictographs and petroglyphs, mesas, buttes, and spires, rivers, streams, and ephemeral pools, all add up to the otherworldly-wonder and

SCHEDULE AN ACTIVITY

What type of activity?
☒ Trip

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beauty of these areas. A story spanning millions of years written in the rock and carved through the sediment that was laid down, pushed up, and eroded away; water, wind, and gravity carving monuments and sculptures along the way.

This unique desert landscape is also a haven for wildlife and unique plant communities adapted to this barren, arid environment. Some plants survive by lying dormant as seeds below ground until favorable conditions arrive; others, like cacti and yuccas, have large root networks and small, spiny leaves to reduce water loss; and yet others survive by growing only around natural springs and seeps. Even the soil here has adapted to the demands of the climate. Biological soil is a living crust covering the ground that is made up of **cyanobacteria** – what used to be called blue-green algae – and mosses, lichens, bacteria, and fungi. This living carpet is vital to the survival of the desert ecosystem, converting nitrogen from the air to a form other plant can utilize. In addition, there are many animals living on these lands that are well-adapted to the stresses of the harsh desert environment. Although seldom seen, species ranging from lizards and snakes to deer and coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats, and bats.

There is also a rich human legacy in the desert southwest for those interested in the cultures of some of the earliest residents of North America. These lands have been host to visitors and inhabitants since the end of the last ice age 10,000 years ago. Nomadic hunter-gatherers passed through what is now the area of the park, the few telltales signs of their passage found in the rock-art dotted on the outcroppings and walls. Later, ancestral Puebloans (also known as the Anasazi) lived and grew crops here until around 1,300 C.E., and Ute, Paiute and Navajo peoples still live in the area today as well as descendants of the early Mormon pioneers.

Visitors have the opportunity to explore this landscape on well-defined trails as well as to amp up the excitement with activities like star-gazing, rock climbing, wading through the "Narrows" or canyoning with a guide, and to experience learning opportunities through ranger-led geology talks.

Suitable Activities: Day Hiking

Seasons: March, April, September, October

Weather: [View weather forecast](#)

Difficulty: Moderate/Strenuous

-- Pick a committee --

☐ Course lecture or field trip

-- Pick a course --

☐ Seminar or clinic

-- Pick a committee --

■ = required field


Start Date ■

June 16, 2023


End Date

Enter date...


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Land Manager: [Land Manager Varies](#)

Parking Permit Required: National Park Entrance Fee

Recommended Party Size: 12

Maximum Party Size: 12

Maximum Route/Place Capacity: 12

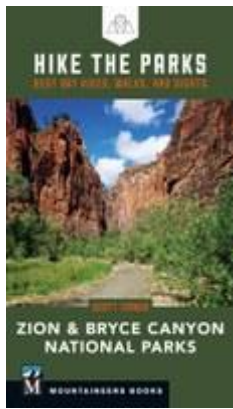
- Map
- Activities
- Trip Reports
- Titles
- Resources

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

There are no activities scheduled at this location.

recommended

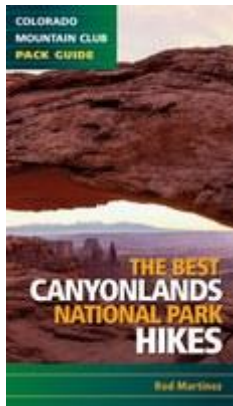
READING



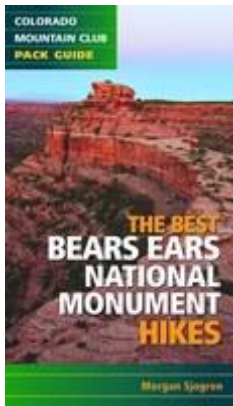
Hike the Parks: Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks
by Scott Turner.
\$16.95



100 Classic Hikes: Utah
by Julie Trevelyan.
\$22.95



The Best Canyonlands National Park Hikes
by Rob Martinez.
\$12.95



The Best Bears Ears National Monument Hikes
by Morgan Sjogren and Morgan Sjogren.
\$16.95

