

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK



2024
4/30 - 5/3



Top Left - The Colorado River Rapids from Mohave Point

Mohave Point is only accessible via the red route of the free National Park Service shuttle. The red route stops multiple times before reaching the final stop, Hermit's Rest, but only runs from March 1 to November 30 due to winter weather at the South Rim.. This viewpoint is one of the most popular in the park for both sunrise and sunset as well as offering a unique view of the mighty rapids of the Colorado River without hiking below the rim.

Middle - Duck on a Rock Viewpoint

This unique rock formation is a fairly popular viewpoint for many visitors that enter the park from the east side through from Cameron, Ariz. The aptly named duck-shaped rock can only be reached by car as the free shuttle service doesn't travel that far east.



Bottom Left - Kaibab Trail to the North Rim

From much of the Grand Canyon Village and Mather Point area you can see a dramatic part of the canyon where the world famous Kaibab Trail connects the North and South Rim with over 20 miles of difficult hiking conditions and over a mile in elevation gain.

Bottom Right - Small Bird Hiding in a Pinyon Pine

The Grand Canyon is home to many different species of bird, some birds like Raven and Canyon Wren are very commonly seen throughout the park and country but the park is also home to many very at-risk species like Mexican Spotted Owl and the parks most well-known endangered species, the California Condor.



Importance of Equines in the Grand Canyon

If you are one of the few people who travel below the rim using the Kaibab or Bright Angel Trail, your chances of encountering a Horse, Donkey or Burrow are high.

These animals were integral in the creation of much of the trails, so remember when met by a group of Horses, Donkeys or Burros, they have the right of way. Still to this day equines serve as the best option to maintain trails and bring visitors into the canyon without hiking.

The line of horses seen in the photos were on their way up from Phantom Ranch using the South Kaibab Trail, carrying soil used to preform maintenance on the heavily traveled trails. The National Park Service offers many different opportunities to travel the canyon on horseback or with a mule, giving riders a unique chance to see the park in the same way the first visitors did.





A Glimse of the San Francisco Peaks

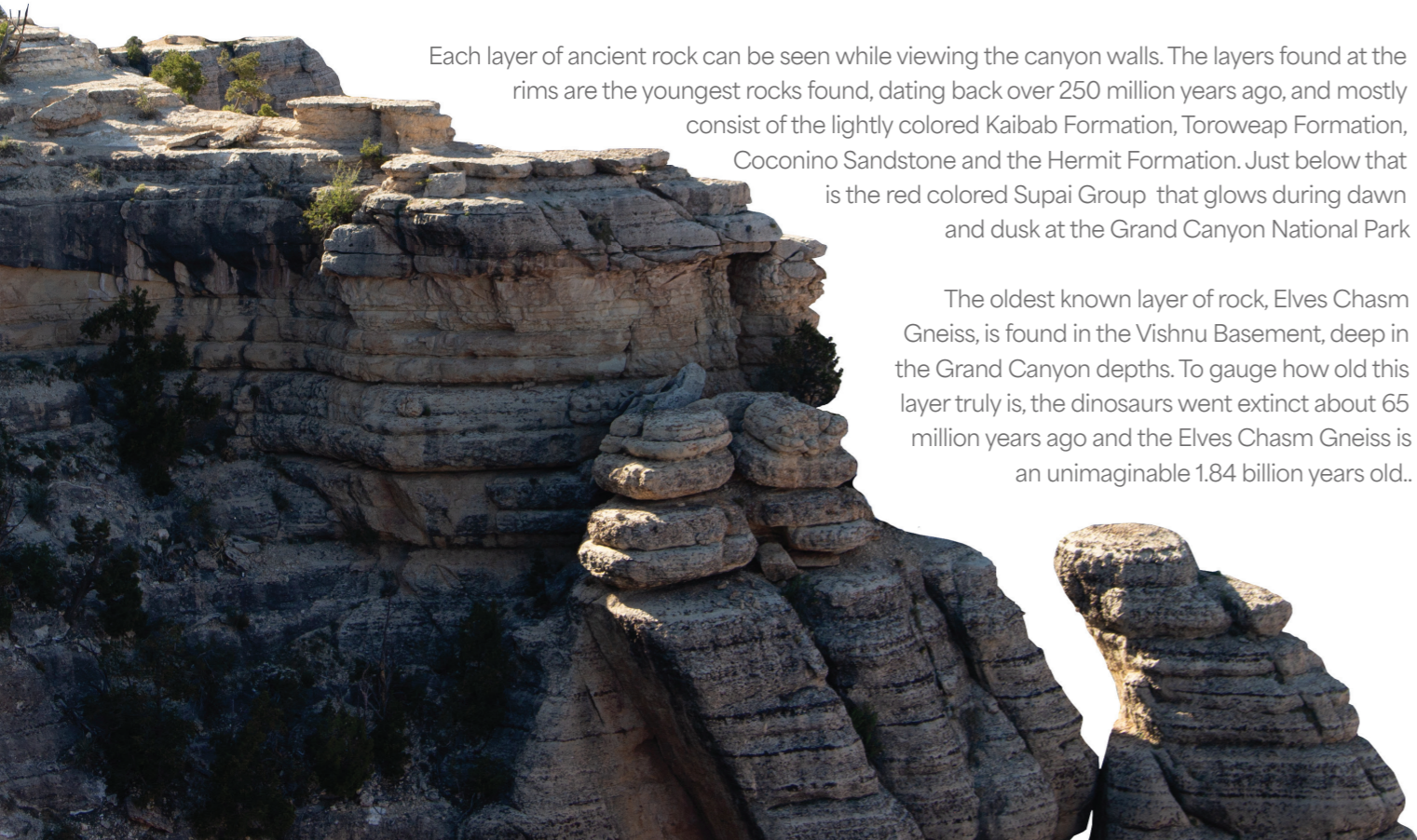
Lots of time at the Grand Canyon South Rim is spent looking down into the canyon depths, facing the North Rim. But at just a few elevated points in the park, the San Francisco Mountain Range can be seen on the horizon, around 60 miles south of the park. This range sits just north of Flagstaff, Ariz. and is home to the highest point in the state of Arizona, Humphrey's Peak, which sits at just over 12,600 feet above sea level. The photo above was taken from Desert View Watchtower Viewpoint facing South.

Over a Billion Years of Geologic History

Some of the oldest rocks found in the Grand Canyon have been dated back to 1.8 billion years in the past, when the southwest was covered in water. The mighty Colorado River has only been forming the canyon for the past six million years but with each inch of prehistoric rock eroded leads to a better understanding of Earth geologic history.

Each layer of ancient rock can be seen while viewing the canyon walls. The layers found at the rims are the youngest rocks found, dating back over 250 million years ago, and mostly consist of the lightly colored Kaibab Formation, Toroweap Formation, Coconino Sandstone and the Hermit Formation. Just below that is the red colored Supai Group that glows during dawn and dusk at the Grand Canyon National Park

The oldest known layer of rock, Elves Chasm Gneiss, is found in the Vishnu Basement, deep in the Grand Canyon depths. To gauge how old this layer truly is, the dinosaurs went extinct about 65 million years ago and the Elves Chasm Gneiss is an unimaginable 1.84 billion years old..



Top Right - North American Elk (*Cervus canadensis*)

Like all wildlife in the Grand Canyon, do not approach Elk. Be especially careful and aware when around Elk as they are the parks most dangerous animal.

Middle Right - Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma californica*)

Grand Canyon is home to three species of jay; Steller's jay, Pinyon jay and the Western scrub jay. Steller's jays are found in the thick Ponderosa Pine Forest of the North Rim while Pinyon and Western Scrub-jays are seen around the South Rim or in side the canyon.

Bottom Right - Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

Black-headed Grosbeak are found in the Grand Canyon and all over the American West. They are known for thier emphatic whistle that many consider to be some of the best of all birds.

Top Left - Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*)

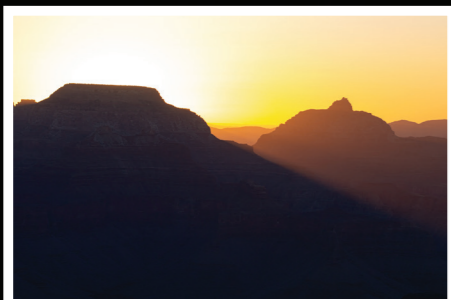
Mule deer are common in most of West and are one of the most traveled mammals found within the park. These deer roam in the high elevations of both the North and South Rim all the way down to the Tonto Plateau, hundreds of feet into the canyon.

Bottom Left - Rock Squirrel (*Spermophilus variegatus*)

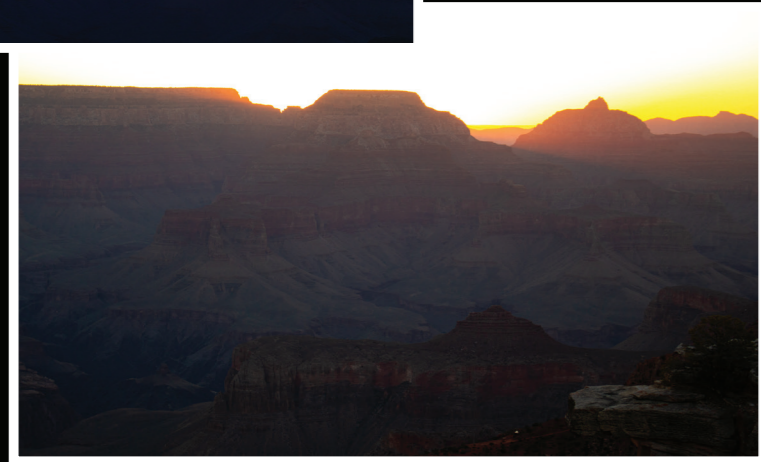
Rock Squirrels are the most friendly animal in the Grand Canyon but are responsible for the most visits to the parks clinic per year. These squirrels will bite visitors and can carry dangerous diseases like rabes.



After Hours at The Grand Canyon



Some of the best views in Grand Canyon National Park are only seen when after the sun sets. As an International Dark Sky Park, the Grand Canyon offers a vastly different night sky viewing experience than most are accustomed to. Once the sun sets a whole new world becomes visible.



The state of Arizona is home to only 19 dark sky communities which include cities like Sedona and Cottonwood as well as parks and monuments such as Chiricahua National Monument and Petrified Forest National Park.

Constellations are visible year round at the canyon as weather and the moon phase permits. To maximize the experience, be sure to use red light at night and give time for your eyes to acclimate to the dark.

Four Viewpoints to Watch The Sunrise & Sunset

Desert View Watchtower

Desert View is farthest stop east on the rim road. This viewpoint offers special views of the canyon during sunset but is best visited for sunrise.

Hopi Point

Accessible via the park shuttles Red Route that ends at Hermit's Rest. Hopi Point is most popular for sunset but is often visited for sunrise too.

Mather Point

A five minute walk from the main Visitors Center that offers a vast view down the canyon and that are great for both sunrise and sunset.

Yaki Point

Yaki point is lesser-traveled due to only being accessible by traveling on the park shuttles Orange Route and offers views of the South Kaibab Trail.



