

2014

Death Valley and the Desert Southwest



Before it became a national park, most people who came to Death Valley were miners hoping to get rich. Leadfield was one such town, where many people came based on fraudulent advertising of the great copper and lead to be found. In April 1926, 1749 lots were laid out to form the town. By August 1926 a post office opened to support about 300 residents. By February 1927 the post office closed and the town largely shut down. Not much remains today except for a handful of corrugated metal buildings that have a view of the colorful mountains. (3/21/2013, Titus Canyon Road, Death Valley National Park, CA)





Desert Iguana

Although many people think of deserts as lifeless, the reality is they have a lot of wildlife that has adapted to the harsh conditions. The desert iguana seen here was living at the edge of some sand dunes. These large lizards have bodies 10-16 inches long, and a tail typically about 1.5 times the length of the body.

(3/18/2013, Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes, Death Valley National Park, CA)

February 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	March S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	Valentine's Day	15
16	Presidents' Day	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	



Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes

About 1% of Death Valley is covered with sand dunes, and the Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes are the most popular for visitors as they are the easiest to get to. These are actually some of the smaller sand dunes, with the deepest ones being 130-140 feet deep. The winds constantly rebuild the sand dunes, so despite the huge number of visitors leaving foot prints, the winds keep reshaping the dunes, removing the foot prints and leaving textures of its own.

(3/19/2013, Death Valley National Park, CA)

March 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	April S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Daylight Savings starts						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	St. Patrick's Day	18	19	Spring (9:57 am PDT)	21	22
23	24					
30	31	25	26	27	28	29



Red Hoodoos

Although Bryce Canyon contains the best known collection of hoodoos in Utah, that is not the only place they are found. Nearby Red Canyon contains a concentration of deep red formations not commonly found in Bryce.
 (9/3/2013, Pink Ledges Trail, Red Canyon, Dixie National Forest, UT)

April 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	May S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	April Fools' Day				
6	7	1	2	3	4	5
13	14	8	9	10	11	12
		Tax Day				
20	21	15	16	17	18	19
Easter Sunday						
27	28	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



Butterflies

With the many colorful rock formations in Utah, it can be easy to overlook the small things. These two butterflies (top & bottom) were in a mirror formation on these yellow flowers in front of some textured red rocks that caught my eye.
(9/12/2013, Goosenecks Overlook, Capitol Reef National Park, UT)

May 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	June S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
					1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mother's Day						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Memorial Day					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Vivid Mountains

Death Valley is surrounded by mountains, many of which contain vivid colors. My eye is especially drawn to the patches of green and yellow on some of the mountain sides.
 (3/21/2013, Titus Canyon Road, Death Valley National Park, CA)

June 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Father's Day 15	16	17	18	19	20	Summer (3:51 am PDT) 21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30				May S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

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Toadstools

Most of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument is accessible only by dirt road, and the roads are largely impassible following thunderstorms. The set of formations called the Toadstools, however, are accessible from a short hike just off of the paved highway.

(9/5/2013, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, UT)

July 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				Independence Day	
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



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Yellow-bellied Marmot

With much of the park above 10,000 feet, the summer is short and cool at Cedar Breaks National Monument. This yellow-bellied marmot was making use of the warm sun on the rocks while he had the chance.

(9/2/2013, Chessmen Ridge Overlook @ 10,460' elevation, Cedar Breaks National Monument, UT)

August 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24						
31	25	26	27	28	29	30



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Sand Pipe

Given its name, you would expect Kodachrome Basin State Park to be best known for its vivid colors. The reality, however, is that mid-day the colors in much of the park are rather muted compared to many of the other parks in Utah. What does stand out at Kodachrome Basin is its collection of sand pipes, the chimney-like formations that were formed by sediments pushing up through ancient springs. As you near sundown, however, the muted reds of mid-day combine with the red sunlight to make the more vivid reds much of Utah is known for.

(9/17/2013, Kodachrome Basin State Park, UT)

September 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	Labor Day					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	Fall (7:29 pm PDT)	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				October S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



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East Mitten

Monument Valley is filled with rock spires called monuments, many of which have been given names. Two are named West Mitten and East Mitten (seen here), as they look like mittens (with thumb on the left and the 4 fingers on the right).

(9/17/2013, Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, AZ)

October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	November S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	Halloween	31





View from Sunset Point

We visited Utah during one of the wetter monsoon seasons in recent history, and all the clouds from the thunderstorms meant we didn't see many sunsets. The weather was cooperative, however, on the evening I visited Sunset Point, as some holes in the clouds allowed patches of sunlight to break through the clouds.
 (9/15/2013, Sunset Point, Capitol Reef National Park, UT)

December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Winter (3:03 pm PST)				Christmas Day		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			January S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



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Sunset following a day of thunder storms.
(9/5/2013, Old Paria Town Road, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, UT)