



The Petrified Forest

Step back in time! Cimb to the 200-foot high mesa top, which was once the bottom of an ancient flood plain. Approximately 135 to 155 million years ago, trees up to 100 feet tall were uprooted and buried in mud during periods of flooding.

Groundwater permeated the buried trees over millions of years. Because they were in an oxygen-free environment, the trees did not decay. Instead, through a complex geologic process, silica solution in the groundwater replaced organic material in the tree, leaving the cell structure intact. Due to erosion, this fallen forest of petrified trees is now exposed.

The beautiful and varied colors of petrified wood are caused by the presence of other minerals that entered the wood during the petrifying process. Iron oxides produce orange, red, and yellow, while manganese oxides create blues, blacks, and purples.

Park Guidelines

Please observe these park regulations to ensure a safe and pleasant visit.

Fires – Campfires may be built in specified areas. Most developed campsites provide fire pits and barbecue grills. Firewood is not generally available in state parks. Picnickers and campers should bring appropriate fuel. Gathering firewood or kindling in the park is strictly prohibited.

Pets – Pets are allowed at Escalante, but should be on a maximum 6-foot leash. Service animals are the only animals admitted into park buildings. Do not leave pets unattended. Please promptly clean up after pets.

Plants and Animals – All plants, animals, minerals, fossils, and other natural features in state parks are protected. It is unlawful to remove, alter, or destroy them.

Fireworks – Unless authorized by the park manager, explosives, fireworks, and firecrackers are prohibited.

Vandalism – Please help keep our parks beautiful. It is unlawful to mutilate or deface any natural or constructed feature. Do not carve on rocks.

Speed Limit – The speed limit on state park roads is 15 mph. The campground speed limit is 5 mph.

Wastewater – It is unlawful to dump or drain wastewater from campers or trailers onto the ground. A sanitary disposal station is provided for registered campers.

Quiet Hours – 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Generator Hours – 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Generators may run at two-hour on/off intervals.

Your park fees provide for the care, protection, and enhancement of this park.

Park Location:

The park is located 1 mile west of the town of Escalante on Utah State Route 12.

Operating Hours:

Summer: 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Winter: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Address Inquiries To:

Escalante Petrified Forest State Park

710 N. Reservoir Road

Escalante, UT 84726-0350

435-826-4466

or

Utah State Parks and Recreation

P.O. Box 146001

Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6001

801-538-7220, 877-UT-PARKS

stateparks.utah.gov

For Reservations:

800-322-3770

utahstateparks.reserveamerica.com

Utah State Parks Mission:

To enhance the quality of life by preserving and providing natural, cultural, and recreational resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Information contained in this brochure was accurate at the time of printing. Policies, facilities, fees, hours, and regulations, etc., change as mandated. For updated information please contact the park.

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Escalante Petrified Forest State Park



STATE PARK

ESCALANTE PETRIFIED FOREST

Escalante Petrified Forest State Park is located in beautiful southern Utah, just 44 miles east of Bryce Canyon National Park. Hike along park nature trails through a petrified forest and camp along the shores of Wide Hollow Reservoir. At the visitor center, examine petrified wood and fossilized dinosaur bones.

Park History

Escalante Petrified Forest State Park was established in 1963 to preserve and protect the unique natural resources of the area for the enjoyment and education of visitors. Wide Hollow Reservoir was constructed in 1954 and renovated in 2010. Its water is used by the town of Escalante for irrigation. A portion of reservoir shoreline was added to the park in 1972.

Plants and Animals

Explore the desert environment, which is typical of the Upper Sonoran Life Zone. Pinyon and juniper dot the landscape; stands of cottonwood grace the reservoir's shoreline. Many species of wildflowers share the park with small rodents, lizards, waterfowl, birds, deer, and coyotes. Escalante Petrified Forest State Park is listed in the Utah Wildlife Viewing Guide as one of the few wetland bird viewing sites in southern Utah.

Things To Do

Two established trails wind through vast deposits of some of the most beautiful petrified wood found anywhere, with some pieces measuring nearly five feet long! Please wear sturdy walking shoes and sunscreen, and carry plenty of drinking water.

Petrified Forest Trail: This 1-mile loop is a moderate to strenuous hike, which climbs 200 feet to the top of the mesa behind the visitor center.

Trail of Sleeping Rainbows: This .75-mile extension off the 1-mile Petrified Forest Trail has the highest concentrations of petrified wood in the park. The trail is very strenuous. Use extreme caution.

Please do not remove any petrified wood from the park.

Visitors who remove petrified wood are breaking the law. They may also be taking an additional risk—some say stolen wood is cursed by ancient spirits and brings nothing but bad luck.

Wide Hollow Reservoir offers great fishing for rainbow trout, largemouth bass, and bluegill. Take a swim or lounge on sunny shores, and watch for many species of raptors, songbirds, and waterfowl.

Camp and picnic in a modern, 22-unit campground complete with tables, firepits, barbecue grills, culinary water, restrooms with hot showers, and a sanitary disposal station. A group campsite is also available.



Sightseeing

Escalante and the surrounding area are veritable wonderlands of scenic beauty. From your base camp at the state park, you can explore the high-mountain lakes and forests of Boulder Mountain, remote canyons of the Escalante River, and slickrock desert country of the famous Hole-in-the-Rock crossing at Lake Powell. Plan a visit to nearby Anasazi State Park Museum in Boulder.



Reservations

Individual campsites can be reserved a minimum of two days in advance of arrival date and up to 16 weeks in advance from park checkout date. Group-use reservations may be made up to 11 months in advance. Reservations are always recommended, and may be made by calling 800-322-3770 or visiting our website at stateparks.utah.gov.

