

## Safety Tips

- Wear proper clothing. Even in summer, carry a flashlight and light jacket in case you are caught out after nightfall. Wear good walking shoes or hiking shoes.
- Carry plenty of water, up to a gallon (about four liters) per person per day when performing strenuous activity in hot weather. Also, bring a high energy snack.
- It is best to hike with at least one other person. If you go alone, always leave word as to where you are going, what time you are leaving and what time you expect to return.
- Please don't disturb wildlife. There are rattlesnakes in this part of the country, but they won't bother you if you don't bother them.
- If you become lost, stay in one place. You will conserve your energy and make it easier for searchers to find you.
- In case of accident or lost person, notify the nearest New Mexico State Police office, they will then notify a search and rescue field coordinator 505/ 287-4141.
- Know your limitations; don't attempt climbs or hikes that you don't have the ability, equipment, or time to accomplish. Do not climb on cliffs unless you are an experienced rock climber.

Bureau of Land Management  
Rio Puerco Field Office  
100 Sun Ave. NE  
Pan American Bldg., Suite 330  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109  
505/761-8700  
or  
El Malpais Ranger Station  
505/280-2918  
or  
[www.blm.gov/new-mexico](http://www.blm.gov/new-mexico)



**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

# Narrows Rim

El Malpais  
National Conservation Area



**W**ithin the El Malpais National Conservation Area lies the Narrows. It is named for the 3-mile narrow corridor that developed when lava flowed close to the base of a 500-foot sandstone mesa. Most of the lava observed is from McCarty's crater, and at approximately 1500 years old, it is the youngest flow in the area.

The trailhead and parking area for the Narrows Rim Trail are located at the south end of the Narrows Picnic Area, which is 21 miles south of I-40 on NM 117. The trail is approximately 4.5 miles (nine miles round trip) along the rim of the mesa.

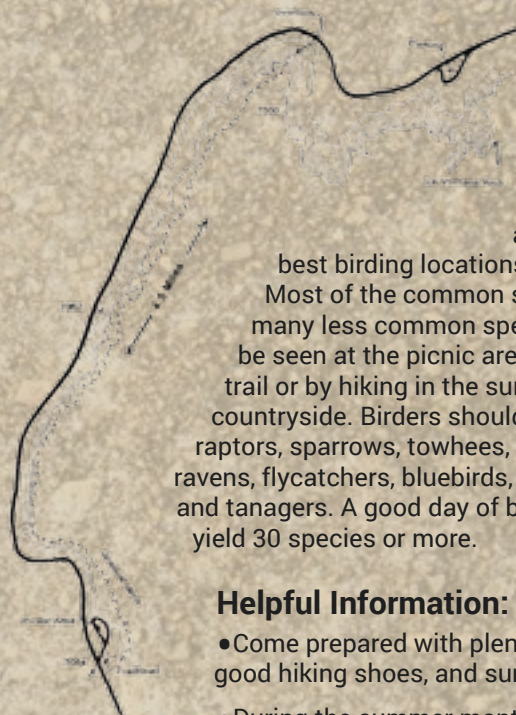
Narrows Rim Trail gives hikers the opportunity to witness geologic processes thousands of years apart. Stroll along the ancient mesa top and view the much younger lava flows below. This remarkable scenery of the lava beds and surrounding countryside ends with a picturesque view of La Ventana Natural Arch.



*The views from the narrows rim are spectacular to say the least. Going to the far end, a distance of 4.5 miles, will result in excellent vistas.*

Abundant in the spring and summer, a variety of wildflowers can be found along this trail. Ponderosa pine, pinon/juniper woodland, and a variety of oak and shrub species line the path and provide shady spots for a rest and to enjoy the views.

Lucky hikers might see one or some of the many species of wildlife of the area. Mule Deer, Elk, Bobcat, and Black Bear have been spotted on the trail. To the careful eye, tracks and droppings can reveal the other creatures that use this trail. Rabbits, squirrels, birds, chipmunks and lizards are plentiful.



The varied vegetation and habitats make the Narrows Rim Trail and surrounding area one of the

best birding locations at El Malpais. Most of the common species, and many less common species, can be seen at the picnic area, along the trail or by hiking in the surrounding countryside. Birders should expect to see raptors, sparrows, towhees, woodpeckers, ravens, flycatchers, bluebirds, jays, warblers and tanagers. A good day of birding should yield 30 species or more.

### Helpful Information:

- Come prepared with plenty of water, good hiking shoes, and sunscreen.
- During the summer months, thunderstorms build quickly and lightning is often present.
- The trail is located on the very top of a mesa, so it is recommended that hikers head back or move to a lower elevation as soon as a storm starts moving in.
- The altitude of this hike is over 7,000 feet, so for those who are not yet acclimated to the elevation, it's a good idea to allow plenty of time for rest stops.
- Pets are permitted on the trail but are required to be on a leash.
- This is a designated Wilderness area and is not open to bicycles.

Check in with the Ranger Station, nine miles south of I-40 on NM 117, for more information on this hike as well as other great hiking opportunities within El Malpais. **For hours of operation please call or see website.**



*The El Malpais Ranger Station.*