

At first glance the Mojave Desert seems to have little in the way of wildlife, actually home to large, diverse populations. Desert animals have adapted to their environment, and each fills an important niche in this harsh and forbidding ecosystem.

Some animals live only in the Mojave Desert, and are classified as *endemic* species. Some animals live throughout all the southwestern desert areas and some are merely passing through during annual migrations. Regardless, whether they live permanently in the Mojave, stay only seasonally or fly through, all these species have adapted to the extreme climate of cold, heat and lack of water.



The **Desert Bighorn Sheep** (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) occurs in the desert Southwest regions of the United States and in the northern regions of Mexico. Characteristics and

behavior of Desert Bighorn Sheep generally follow those of other Bighorn Sheep, except for adaptation to the lack of water in the desert: bighorn sheep can go for extended periods of time without drinking water.

The **Mule Deer** (*Odocoileus hemionus*) is the deer of the Mojave Desert. Its name is derived from its large mule-like ears.



Mule deer prefer "edge" habitats where the trees meet the grass, and they

tend to move up or down elevations seeking preferred foods. Mule deer rarely travel far from water or forage, and tend to bed down within easy walking distance of both. Young mule deer tend to forage together in family groups while bucks tend to travel alone.



The **Bobcat** (*Lynx rufus*) is of the cat family. The Bobcat is an adaptable predator that inhabits, desert, as well as urban edge environments. It persists in much of its original range and populations are healthy. Though the Bobcat prefers rabbits and hares, it will hunt anything from insects and small rodents to deer. Prey selection depends on location and habitat, season, and abundance. Like most cats, the Bobcat is territorial and largely solitary.



The **coyote** (*Canis latrans*), also known as the *prairie wolf*, are found throughout North and Central America. Unlike its cousin the grey wolf, which is Eurasian in origin, the coyote evolved in

North America, alongside the Dire Wolf. Coyotes typically grow to 30–34 inches in length and on average, weigh from 15–46 pounds



Mojave Green Rattle Snake

(*Crotalus scutulatus*) is a venomous pitviper, found in the Mojave. It is perhaps best known for its potent venom which is both a neurotoxin and hemotoxin.



Horned lizards

(*Phrynosoma*) is popularly called a "**horned toad**," "horny toad", or "horned frog," but it is neither a toad

nor a frog. The popular names come from the lizard's rounded body and blunt snout, which make it resemble a toad or frog. The spines on its back and sides are made from modified scales, whereas the horns on the heads are true horns.



The **desert tortoise** (*Gopherus agassizii*) is a species of tortoise native to the Mojave desert and Sonoran deserts. This tortoise may attain a length of 10 to 14 inches with males being slightly larger than females. Their

shells are high-domed, and greenish-tan to dark brown in color. Desert tortoises can grow from 4–6" in height and weigh 8–15 lb. The front limbs have heavy, claw-like scales and are flattened for digging. Back legs are stumpy.



The **Red-tailed Hawk** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) is a medium-sized bird of prey. A male Red-tailed Hawk may weigh from 1.5 to 3.5 pounds and measure 18 to

22 in, while a female can weigh between 2 and 4.4 pounds and measure Body size, 18 to 26 in. Wingspan, is about 20 to 26 in. in length.



The **Turkey Vulture**, (*Cathartes aura*), is found throughout most of the Americas. With a wingspan of 68–72 in and an average weight of (3.1 lb), the Turkey Vulture is a large bird.

It has a purplish-red head and neck; and a short, hooked, ivory-colored beak.



Gambel's Quail, named after William Gambel. The males are grey with rust colored feathers on their wings and the top of their head which is edged in white. Their stomach's are a dull yellow with a large black spot of feathers on their underbelly. The females are smaller and their coloring,

although similar, is not as bright. They both have top-knots of a single feather. The plume of a male is larger than that of a female

MOJAVE DESERT WILDLIFE



Antelope Ground Squirrel
Desert water is a very precious.

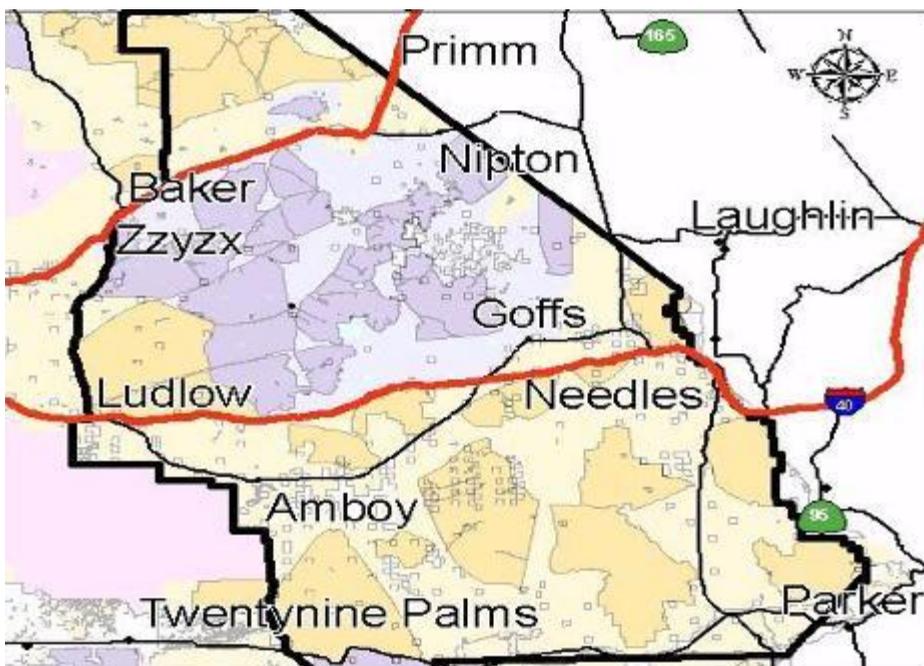
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OHV Use

Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) provide fun, entertainment, and discovery. However, many of the desert's most attractive and fragile resources can be destroyed if vehicle access is not properly controlled. Resources, cultural and natural, can be unintentionally damaged or destroyed by uncontrolled vehicle use. We all have the responsibility for the proper use of vehicles, so please remember to TREAD LIGHTLY on public and private lands. Stay on designated routes of travel only.

NO CROSS COUNTRY TRAVEL

Please Be Advised

Military explosives can be found most anywhere in the desert. Large areas of the desert were and still are used for bombing ranges and maneuvers by the U.S. Armed Forces. There may be unexploded devices that can cause serious bodily injury or death if handled. Report any such devices to the Federal Interagency Communications Center toll free at (888) 233-6518 or call 911.

The Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center borders the western edge of the Needles Field Office Area of responsibility. This is a live bombing range. DO NOT enter the bombing range!

Desert Safety

- Summer temperatures routinely exceed 110° Fahrenheit. Each year people are lost, injured, and sometimes die while visiting desert areas. Take precautions to prevent finding yourself in an emergency situation.
- Always tell someone your plans, or leave a visible note on the dash of your vehicle with your expected route, destination, and time of return. Stick to your itinerary.
- Carry plenty of water. Drink at least a gallon per day.
- Take food or snacks. In the heat, you may not feel hungry, but your body needs nourishment.
- Never go alone.
- Take a good map and compass.
- Carry a first aid kit, signal mirror, flashlight and matches.
- Take a CB radio or cellular phone.
- Wear sunscreen and sunglasses.

- Dress in light colored, loose fitting clothes. Long-sleeves, long pants, a hat, and sturdy shoes will help protect you from the sun, coarse volcanic material, and sharp, spiny vegetation.



- Bring a jacket with you, as evening temperatures may drop 30 degrees or more.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition. Check your tires, spare tire, jack, lug wrench, and fluid levels. Always start with a full tank of gas and try not to let it fall below half a tank before filling up again.
- If you are stranded, stay with your vehicle. Don't panic. Your vehicle is easier to spot than a person walking. Lift your hood. Attempt to signal for help using a mirror or by using newspapers to make an X on the ground.
- Watch for snakes, spiders, and scorpions among the rocks.



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