

## Ravens in the Mojave

Ravens are a large black bird that lives throughout the world. The Raven is a member of the crow family, though they differ from crows in the size and shape of their beaks and tail feathers. Ravens are 22 to 27 inches in length and have wingspans up to 51 inches. Their weights vary from 1.5 to 3.6 pounds. Lifespan can be up to 40 years, but averages about 10–15 years in the wild. As a species, ravens have exceptionally high intelligence.

Ravens are very opportunistic hunters and have a flexible palate. They feed on a wide assortment of fruits, grains, insects, small animals, roadkill and even trash. Ravens are everywhere in the Mojave Desert.



Fifty years ago these large birds were relatively uncommon in this area. When people started to settle here, they introduced new sources of food and water including artificial ponds, irrigation systems, unsecured dumpsters, landfills, and other waste products attractive to ravens.

## Population soars

Booming desert communities also offer ravens plenty of places to nest such as billboards, telephone poles, bridges and buildings. As a result, raven populations are soaring, perhaps as much as 700% in the West Mojave Desert over the past 25 years. Ravens are a year-round resident of the Mojave with few natural predators and are protected from hunting by law due to its international migratory status.

Ravens especially like to prey on the desert tortoise. Ravens attack young tortoise before their shells harden enough to protect them and their slow lumbering movement makes them easy pickings. As a result, the desert tortoise population continues to decline.

## What you can do

- **Place trash in tightly secured containers—both garbage cans & dumpsters.**
- **Don't litter.**
- **Don't deposit trash at illegal dump sites.**
- **Don't water lawns and plants excessively; avoid puddles and run-off.**

## Dispersed Camping

Camping on public lands away from developed recreation facilities is referred to as "dispersed camping". Most of the remainder of public lands in California are open to dispersed camping, as long as such use does not conflict with other authorized uses or occurs in areas posted "closed to camping," or in some way adversely affects wildlife species or natural resources.

Dispersed camping is allowed on public lands in California for a period not to exceed 14 days within any period of 28 consecutive days. The 28 day period begins when a camper initially occupies a specific location on public lands. The 14 day limit may be reached either through a number of separate visits or through 14 days of continuous overnight occupation during the 28 day period. After the 14th day of occupation, the camper must move outside of a 25 mile radius of the previous location until the 29th day since the initial occupation. The purpose of this special rule is to prevent damage to sensitive resources caused by continual use of any particular areas. In addition, campers must not leave any personal property unattended for more than 10 days.

# Ravens

in the Mojave Desert  
*Invasion of the  
Tortoise Snatchers*



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

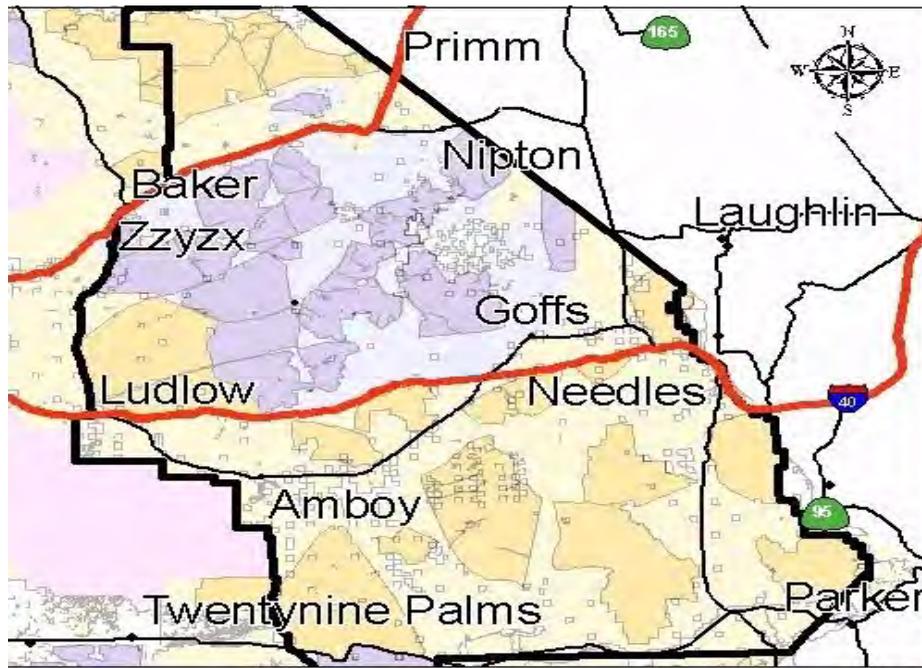
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### OHV Use

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 open routes of travel

**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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In Case of Emergencies Contact the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC) at (888)233-6518 or call 9-1-1.