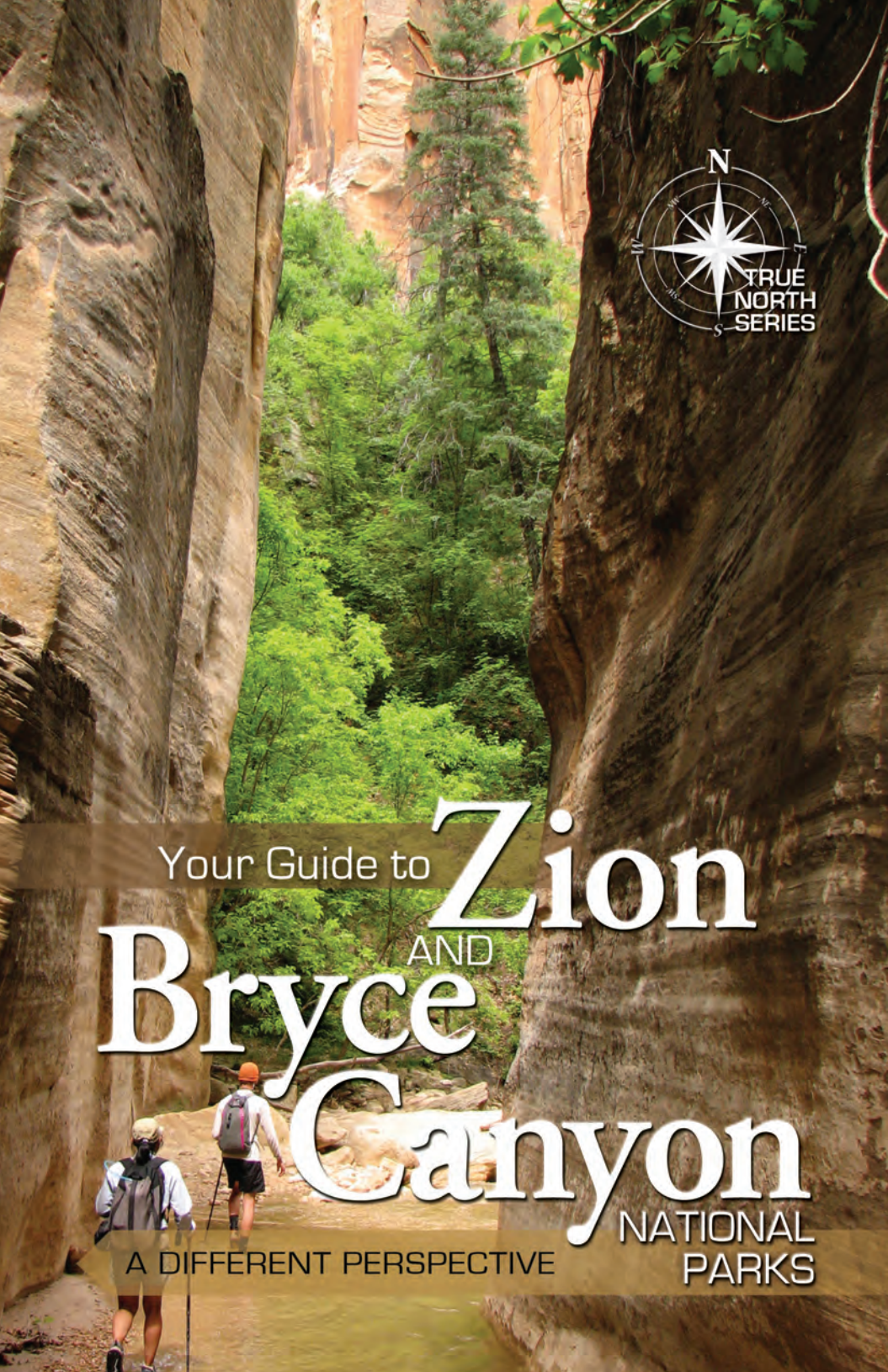




Your Guide to **Zion**
AND
Bryce
Canyon
NATIONAL
PARKS

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE



**THE TRUE NORTH SERIES:
YOUR GUIDE TO ZION AND BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARKS**

First printing: May 2010

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About This True North Guide



Bryce



Zion



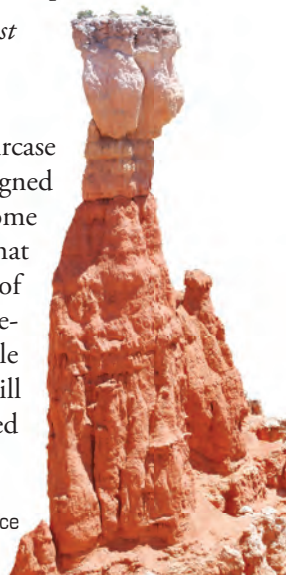
Gray fox

There are numerous books and guides written to help people understand Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks. The vast majority of the interpretive literature available on these areas is based on evolutionary theory. The uniqueness of this *True North Guide* is in its perspective. *True North Guides* are written with three purposes in mind:

- ▶ *To provide an understanding of what the visitor actually sees from the major overlooks and stops along the way.*
- ▶ *To provide an overview of the Grand Staircase and associated parks from a creationist's perspective and compare it to the evolutionary interpretation.*
- ▶ *To show that what is observed in the Grand Staircase is best explained by the creation/Flood interpretation.*

WHERE TO BEGIN

Whether this is your first or 20th visit to the Grand Staircase region of south central Utah, this *True North Guide* is designed to help you get the most from your visit. It first provides some help in planning your trip and then an explanation of what you will see when you arrive. The large fold-outs for each of the overlooks and viewpoints in both parks present both site-specific information plus additional things to look for while visiting the Grand Staircase area. A summary of what you will find in sections two through eleven of this guide is provided in the following table.



Hoodoo, Bryce

QUICK REFERENCE

2	PERSPECTIVE <i>page 14</i>	Presents an explanation of why Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks are important from a biblical perspective.
3	HOW TO SEE THE CANYONS <i>page 18</i>	Provides the information on services and amenities in and around the parks, which will help you make the best use of your time.
4	WHAT EVIDENCE WILL YOU SEE? <i>page 26</i>	Summarizes some of the data seen at the parks that supports the biblical model. It will introduce you to ten evidences worthy of investigating as you consider the significance of the parks.
5 & 6	EXAMINE EVERYTHING CAREFULLY <i>Zion page 30</i> <i>Bryce page 74</i>	Contains a three-page foldout of all the major overlooks in both parks. Introductions include a suggested itinerary for visiting each park based on your available time. Each foldout offers a brief explanation of what is seen from the overlook with references to other sections for more in-depth information.
7	UNDERSTANDING THE GRAND STAIRCASE <i>page 134</i>	Provides some background for understanding not only what is seen here, but also the way in which it is interpreted. The section presents a foundation for the <i>Geology</i> , <i>Fossil</i> , and <i>Ecology</i> sections.
8	GEOLOGY <i>page 138</i>	Provides more detailed information on the geology observed at the parks than what is given on each overlook foldout.
9	FOSSILS <i>page 152</i>	Discusses general aspects of fossilization and offers more detailed information regarding fossils found in and around the parks.
10	ECOLOGY <i>page 156</i>	Provides more detailed information regarding the plants and animals inhabiting the parks than what is given on each overlook foldout.
11	HISTORY <i>page 162</i>	Offers a brief historical background of man's activities in and around the parks.

WHAT THIS GUIDE IS AND IS NOT

This *True North Guide* is not meant to be a technical publication, but presents the information in a way that a person with little or even no technical background can understand. Doing this requires the use of some terms that may be unfamiliar to the first-time visitor. Therefore, a glossary is included to provide definitions for many of these terms (see page 168).

Although the *True North Guide* was current when written, things do change and therefore it is not designed to replace the maps and information supplied by the National Park Service. When entering the park, we encourage you to obtain Zion National Park Service's *Zion Map & Guide* and the *Backcountry Planner*, and Bryce Canyon National Park Service's *The Hoodoo* newspaper. Further information may be obtained from the National Park Service's Internet

Zion: www.nps.gov/zion

Bryce: www.nps.gov/brca

sites at: www.nps.gov/zion for Zion National Park and www.nps.gov/brca for Bryce Canyon National Park.

It is also not our intent to provide a complete list of lodging and amenities in and around the parks and other sites. Although we do list a few for your convenience, their listing does not imply any endorsement of their services or facilities. The National Park Service's internet site maintains a more comprehensive listing, along with most of the logistics necessary to visit the parks.



SAFETY TIPS

The Grand Staircase is an awesome place, but it can also be a dangerous place. In order to enjoy your time in the area, it is imperative you follow several safety rules.

- ▶ The most obvious is not getting too close to cliffs or venturing out past the guardrails on overlooks or along the rim. People fall and are injured or killed every year.
- ▶ Watch carefully for rattlesnakes and scorpions, especially down in Zion Canyon. Also, poison ivy grows in a few places in Zion.
- ▶ Carry more than enough water to keep yourself hydrated. (It is easy to underestimate and someone else may need some as well.) Most medical emergencies in this arid environment are related to dehydration.
- ▶ Use caution in all narrow canyons, which are subject to flash floods, often from unseen storms miles away.
- ▶ Do not remain on an isolated overlook, or under an isolated tree, during a lightning storm. Move to a more protected area until the storm passes.
- ▶ Don't throw rocks over the rim. There are people down there!



- ▶ In National Parks, pets must be on a leash and under physical control at all times. Pets are not allowed in public building or on trails, except the Pa'rus Trail in Zion National Park.

For emergency services, phone 911. For non-emergency health care, there is a clinic in Springdale just outside Zion National Park (435-772-3226) and both a hospital and clinic in Panguitch about 20 miles northwest of Bryce Canyon National Park (Hospital: 435-676-8811, Clinic: 435-676-2411).

STEWARDSHIP

The National Parks are places of beauty and wonder. With so many visitors each year, being good stewards of the earth, as the Bible says, is a necessity. By following National Park Service rules, we help preserve its beauty for others.

- ▶ Do not litter. In fact, should you find litter, please pick it up and deposit it where it belongs. Help keep our parks beautiful for the generations to come.
- ▶ Stay on the trails to protect fragile vegetation and reduce erosion.
- ▶ Don't deface the park by scratching your name on rocks, tree trunks, or park facilities. (Doing so carries a hefty fine.)
- ▶ Do not feed the animals. Not only is it dangerous for you, but "human food" can cause them sickness and malnutrition — and it is against the law.

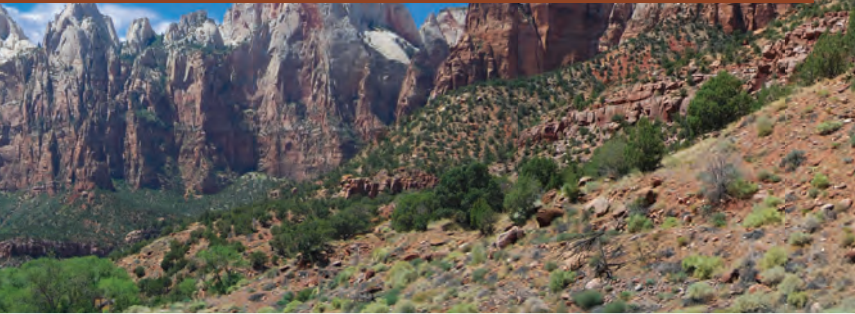
If you take only pictures and leave only footprints, others will enjoy their stay more because you left no trace of your visit behind. As President Theodore Roosevelt said, "Leave it as it is."



The Human History Museum is the first shuttle stop after the visitor center. At this stop, you can see beautiful Zion Canyon photography and learn about the history of the park in a 20-minute orientation film. Exhibits include information on the ancestral Puebloans (Anasazi), the Southern Paiutes who came after them, and the Mormon pioneers. Information on park plants, animals, and ecology is displayed. The landscape outside of the museum is practically a museum in itself.

FAST FACTS

- > Dinosaur tracks are found nearby.
- > The skyline to the west is only a thin divide.
- > Narrow, vertically-walled valleys indicate rapid erosion by a lot of water.
- > The datura flower is pollinated at night by the sphinx moth.



The Zion Human History Museum has many interesting artifacts from the Native Americans who first settled this region.



Question: Where is the tallest single vertical rise in the park?

A. West Temple,
7,810 feet above sea level and the
highest point in southeastern Zion

B. Vertical walls,
indicating a rapid
erosional process

C. Oak Creek Canyon,
site of late 1800's diversion ditch
and dinosaur tracks

D. Altar of Sacrifice,
7,505 feet above sea level, with
iron oxide stains streaming down
from the top

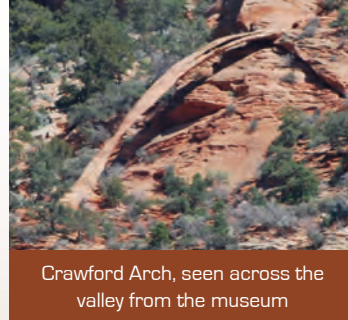
HUMAN HISTORY MUSEUM

GEOLOGY: From the backside of the museum, two miles to the west, Zion's West Temple (A) rises majestically 3,800 feet from the valley floor. This is the greatest single vertical rise in the park. Notice the Altar of Sacrifice (D), named for the blood-red iron stains streaking down its surface.

To the west-northwest, the peaks of the Towers of the Virgin frame the skyline. Interestingly, this skyline is only a ridge with similar, mostly dry, vertically walled canyons on the other side. Many side canyons in Zion have small headwaters and are often dry. Such narrow, vertical-walled canyons are evidence of young, rapidly incised canyons,⁴ eroded by lots of water (see page 144).

In front of the museum, a park sign points out an amazing free-standing arch (pictured above) seen high on Bridge Mountain across the canyon. This is the Crawford Arch. Arches like these are signs of a young landscape (see page 147).

HISTORY: Up Oak Creek Canyon (C), below the Towers of the Virgin, are the remains of a pioneer diversion ditch built by the



Crawford Arch, seen across the
valley from the museum

Mormons to irrigate orchards and crops in the late 1800s. Flats like this have been good locations not only for the pioneers, but also for the Paiutes and the Anasazi who came before them (see page 162). With water and a long growing season, Zion Canyon provided fertile ground for needed crops.

FOSSILS: In the canyon behind the museum, as well as near the trail to The Subway, dinosaur tracks have been discovered (but are very difficult to find as they are not well documented). Dinosaur tracks occur by the millions all over the world. Trackways of several prints from the same dinosaur are nearly always headed in a straight line, indicating that they were likely fleeing something. Dinosaur tracks can be explained by the creatures fleeing the Flood on sediments briefly exposed due to a local drop in sea level⁵ (see page 155).

ECOLOGY: Cacti have the ability to expand their stems to store water when it is available. Also, cacti, agaves, and yuccas amazingly can grow "rain roots" within hours of the soil getting soaked. These fine-haired shallow roots take advantage of thunderstorm water but die back in times of drought.



Dinosaur tracks

E. Landslide debris,
probably from post-flood slides

F. Beehives,
6,904 feet above sea level,
top of the Navajo Sandstone

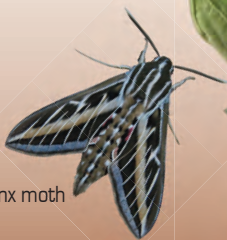


ELEVATION 3,993 feet



Sacred datura, also known as jimson weed or moonflower, is found growing throughout the canyon. This poisonous plant has fragrant, white to violet, trumpet-shaped flowers, which open at night and wither by mid-morning. They are pollinated at night by the sphinx moth and other insects.

Used ceremonially and medicinally by Native Americans, even the "right" dose of a datura with stronger than average poison can cause death. Just touching this beautiful plant can cause a nasty rash. So, be careful!!



Sphinx moth

