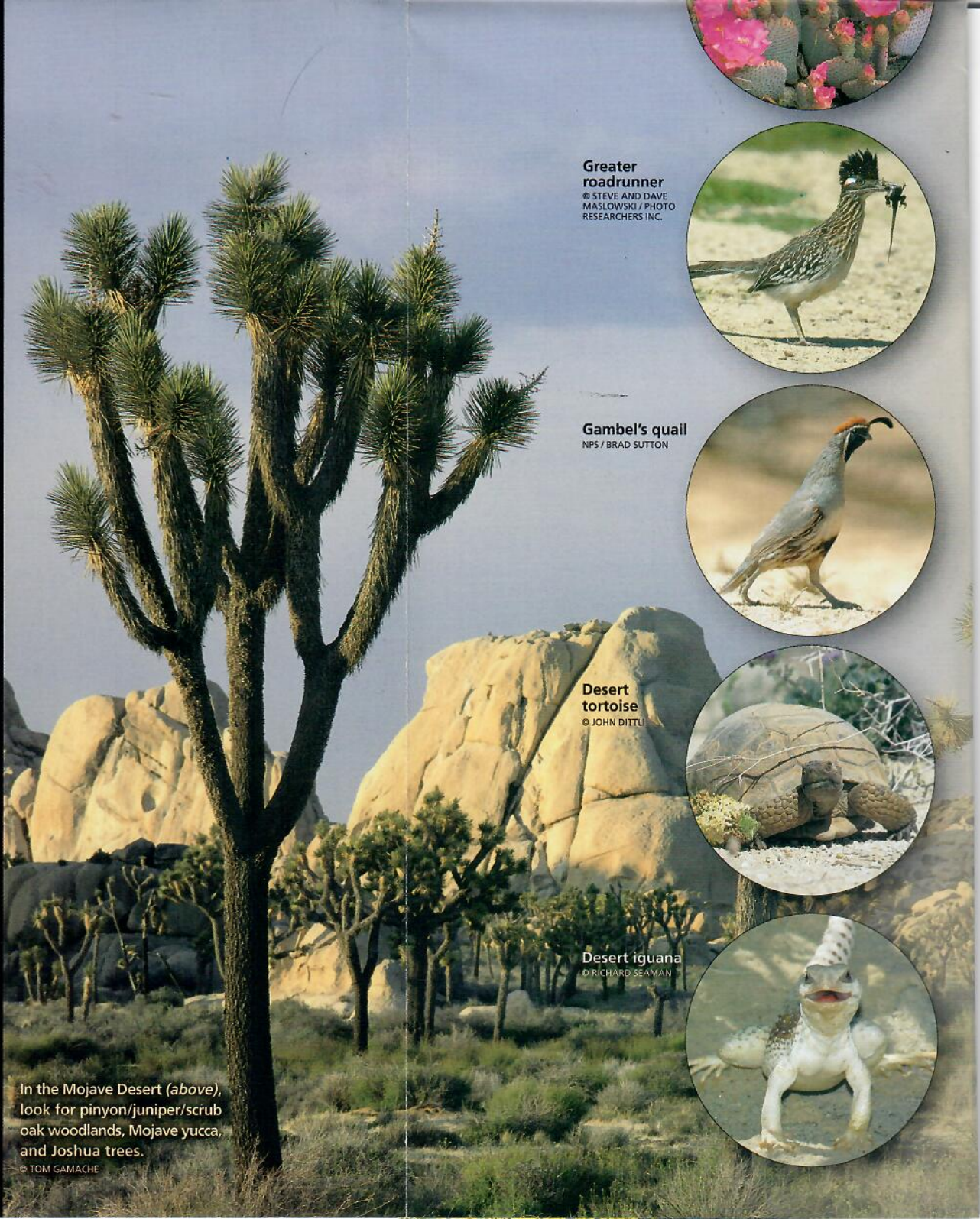


Joshua Tree



In the Mojave Desert (above), look for pinyon/juniper/scrub oak woodlands, Mojave yucca, and Joshua trees.

© TOM GAMACHE

Greater roadrunner
© STEVE AND DAVE MASLOWSKI / PHOTO RESEARCHERS INC.



Gambel's quail
NPS / BRAD SUTTON



Desert tortoise
© JOHN DITTL



Desert iguana
© RICHARD SEAMAN





National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Joshua Tree National Park
California

VARIED YET VULNERABLE

The desert has much to teach us about the marvels of adaptation. Relentless sun, little water, and summer temperatures over 100°F can make a forbidding world for non-desert dwellers. Yet hundreds of species conserve moisture and beat the heat in fascinating ways.

Hardy as these plants and animals are, their world is fragile. In the 1930s Minerva Hoyt, a community activist and desert-lover, recognized the threats from humans. She saw beauty in the spiny plants and slithery creatures where others did not. She persuaded President Franklin D. Roosevelt to proclaim Joshua Tree National Monument in 1936. In 1994, as part of the California Desert Protection Act, Congress renamed the area Joshua Tree National Park. Thanks to the efforts of Hoyt and others, this park protects 792,510 acres—more than 80 percent of it managed as wilderness—where the Mojave and Colorado deserts converge.

THE TRANSITION ZONE Deserts don't have firm boundaries, and much of the park lies in the overlap between the Colorado and Mojave deserts. This transition zone has a wealth of biological diversity and is home to species characteristic of each desert ecosystem. Below are some residents:

Bighorn sheep

© FRANK BALTHIS



Chuckwalla

© FRANK BALTHIS



Cactus wren

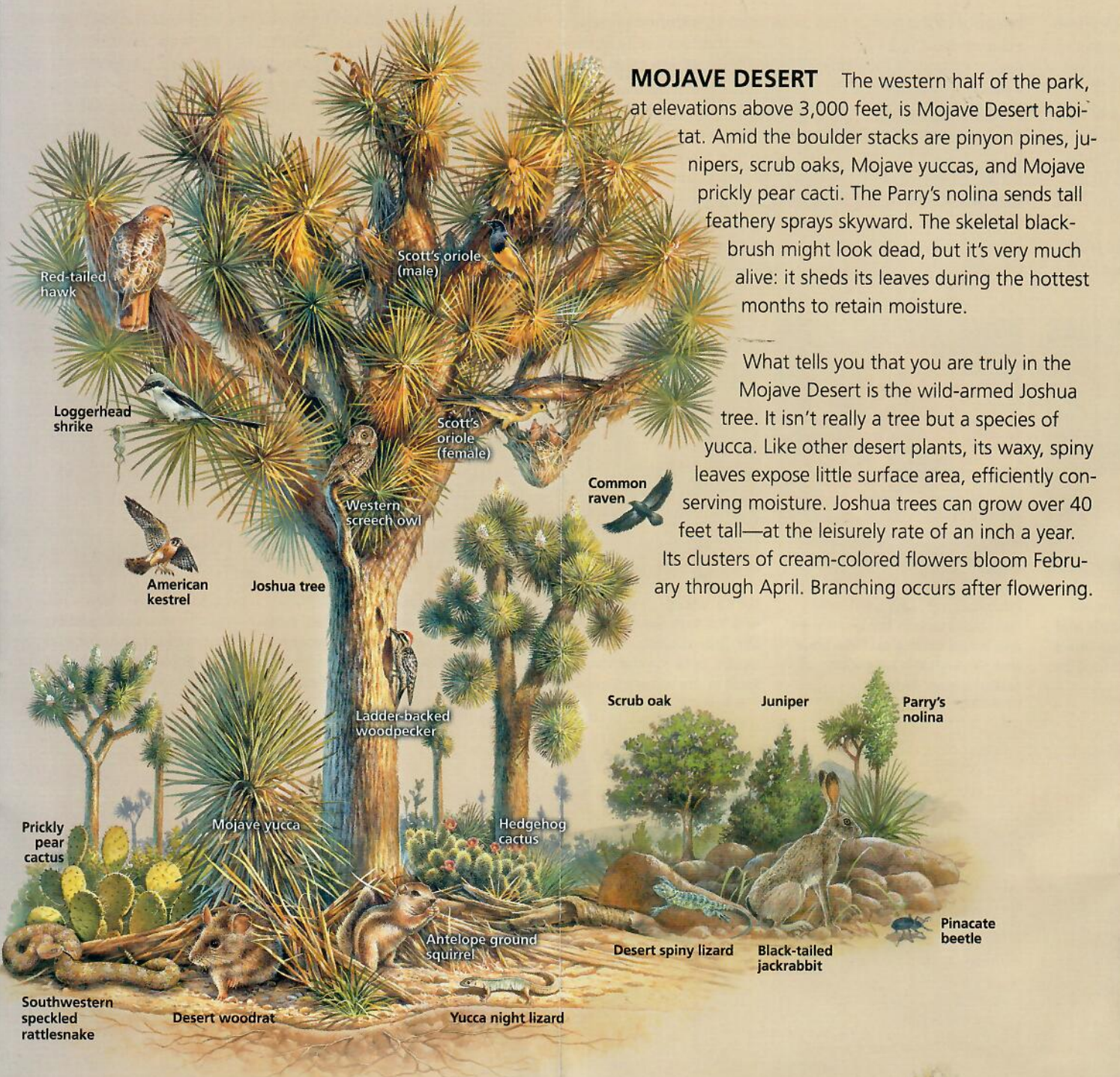
© FRANK BALTHIS



Beavertail cactus

© JOHN DITTLI





MOJAVE DESERT The western half of the park, at elevations above 3,000 feet, is Mojave Desert habitat. Amid the boulder stacks are pinyon pines, junipers, scrub oaks, Mojave yuccas, and Mojave prickly pear cacti. The Parry's nolina sends tall feathery sprays skyward. The skeletal blackbrush might look dead, but it's very much alive: it sheds its leaves during the hottest months to retain moisture.

What tells you that you are truly in the Mojave Desert is the wild-armed Joshua tree. It isn't really a tree but a species of yucca. Like other desert plants, its waxy, spiny leaves expose little surface area, efficiently conserving moisture. Joshua trees can grow over 40 feet tall—at the leisurely rate of an inch a year. Its clusters of cream-colored flowers bloom February through April. Branching occurs after flowering.

Red-tailed hawk

Scott's oriole (male)

Loggerhead shrike

Scott's oriole (female)

American kestrel

Joshua tree

Western screech owl

Common raven

Ladder-backed woodpecker

Scrub oak

Juniper

Parry's nolina

Prickly pear cactus

Mojave yucca

Hedgehog cactus

Southwestern speckled rattlesnake

Desert woodrat

Antelope ground squirrel

Desert spiny lizard

Black-tailed jackrabbit

Pinacate beetle

Yucca night lizard

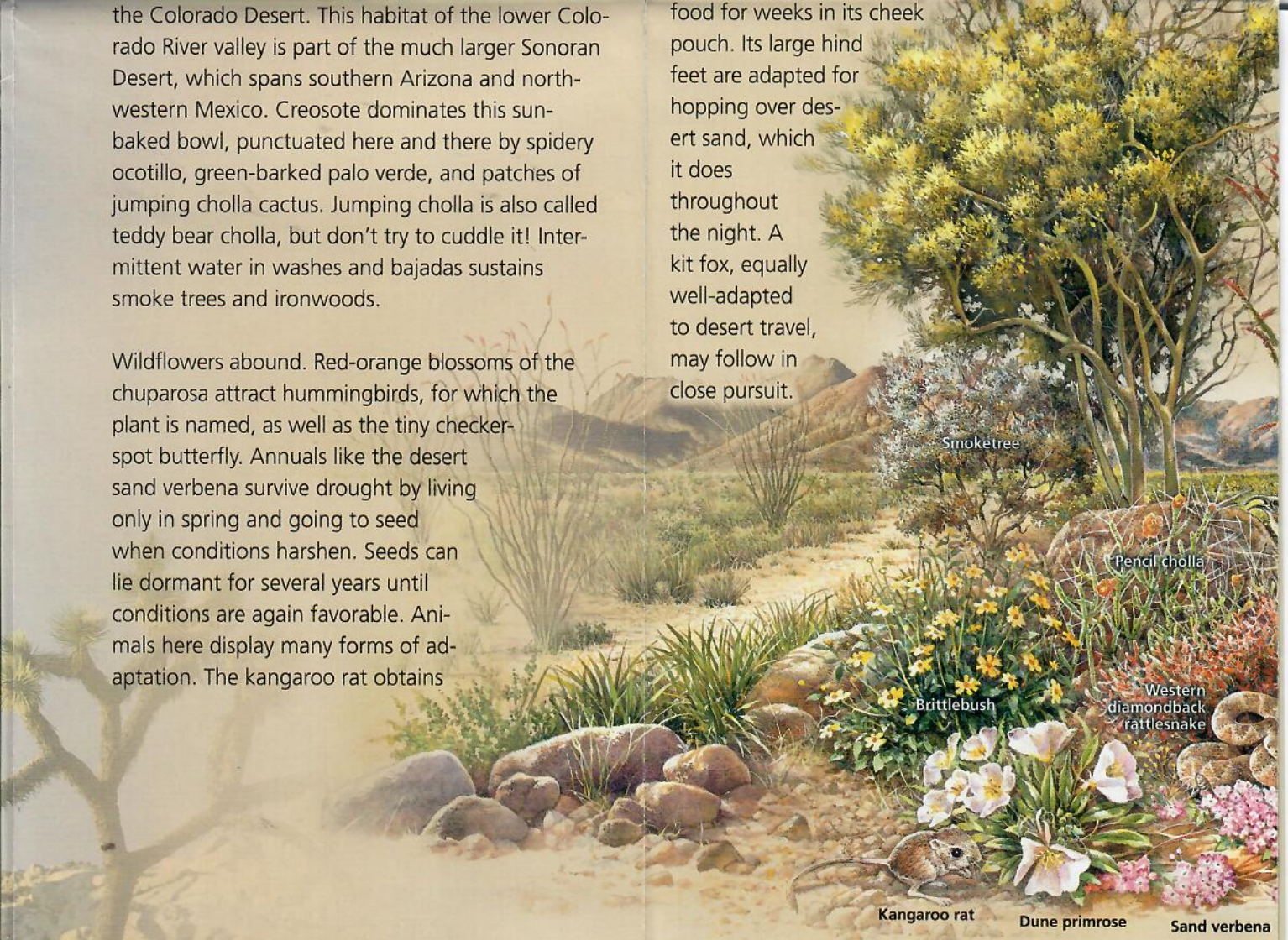
COLORADO DESERT The eastern half of the park, below 3,000 feet above sea level, lies within

water from the food it eats—seeds, leaves, stems, and insects. It can store

the Colorado Desert. This habitat of the lower Colorado River valley is part of the much larger Sonoran Desert, which spans southern Arizona and northwestern Mexico. Creosote dominates this sun-baked bowl, punctuated here and there by spidery ocotillo, green-barked palo verde, and patches of jumping cholla cactus. Jumping cholla is also called teddy bear cholla, but don't try to cuddle it! Intermittent water in washes and bajadas sustains smoke trees and ironwoods.

Wildflowers abound. Red-orange blossoms of the chuparosa attract hummingbirds, for which the plant is named, as well as the tiny checker-spot butterfly. Annuals like the desert sand verbena survive drought by living only in spring and going to seed when conditions harshen. Seeds can lie dormant for several years until conditions are again favorable. Animals here display many forms of adaptation. The kangaroo rat obtains

food for weeks in its cheek pouch. Its large hind feet are adapted for hopping over desert sand, which it does throughout the night. A kit fox, equally well-adapted to desert travel, may follow in close pursuit.



Smoketree
Pencil cholla
Brittlebush
Western diamondback rattlesnake
Kangaroo rat
Dune primrose
Sand verbena

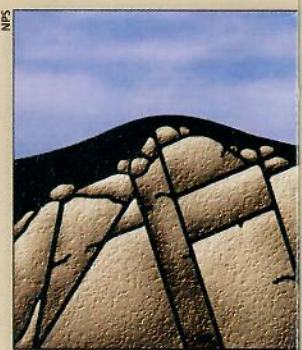
WHO PILED UP ALL THOSE ROCKS?

Roads and trails lead you through a jumble of stacked boulders where you can use your imagination to see unlikely shapes.

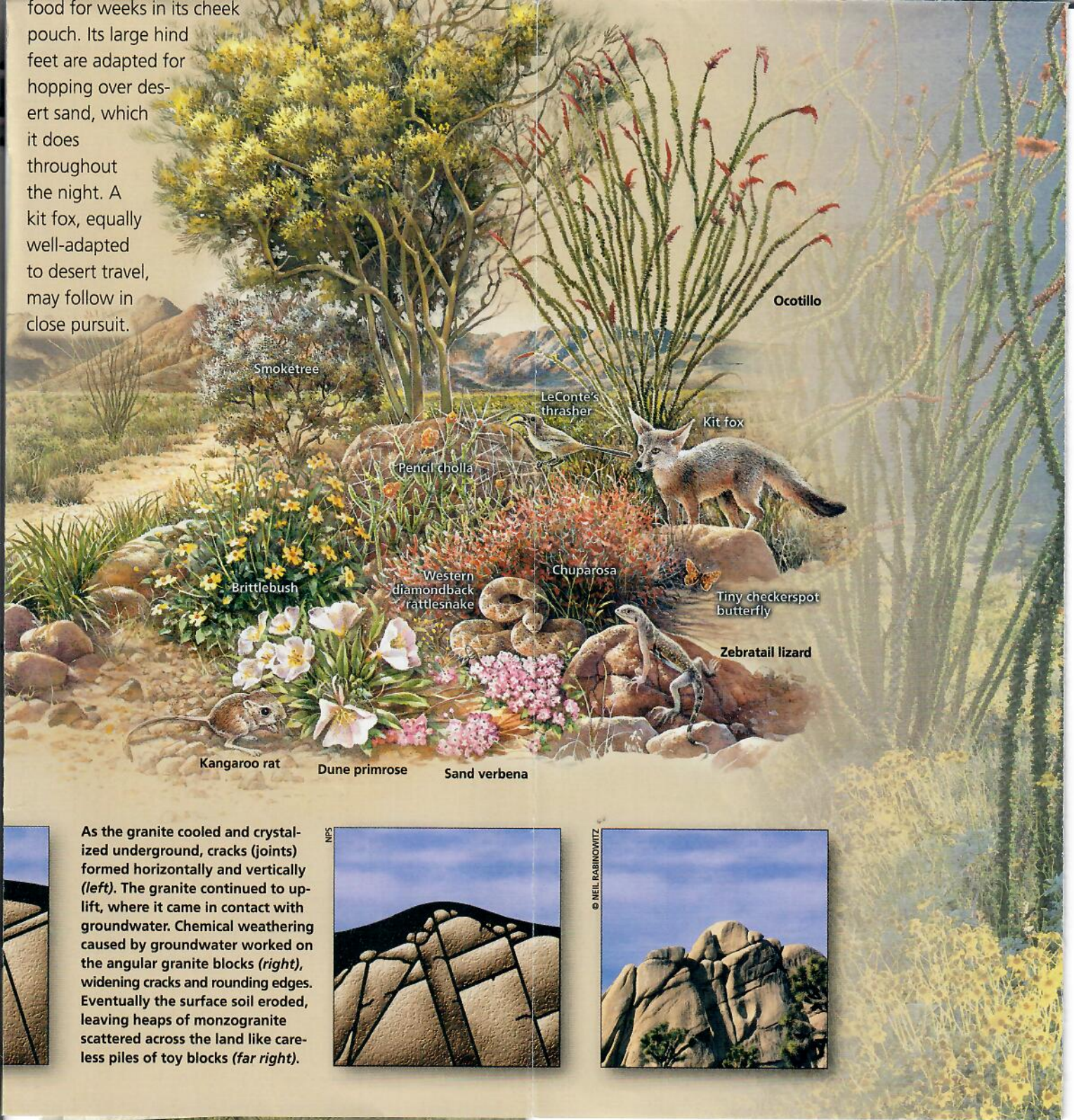
The rock piles began underground eons ago as a result of volcanic activity. Magma—in this case a molten form of the rock called monzogranite—rose from deep within the Earth. As it rose, it intruded the overlying rock, the Pinto gneiss formation.



As the granite cooled and crystallized underground, cracks (joints) formed horizontally and vertically (*left*). The granite continued to uplift, where it came in contact with groundwater. Chemical weathering caused by groundwater worked on the angular granite blocks (*right*), widening cracks and rounding edges. Eventually the surface soil eroded, leaving heaps of monzogranite scattered across the land like careless piles of toy blocks (*far right*).



food for weeks in its cheek pouch. Its large hind feet are adapted for hopping over desert sand, which it does throughout the night. A kit fox, equally well-adapted to desert travel, may follow in close pursuit.



Smoketree

LeConte's thrasher

Ocotillo

Kit fox

Pencil cholla

Brittlebush

Western diamondback rattlesnake

Chuparosa

Tiny checkerspot butterfly

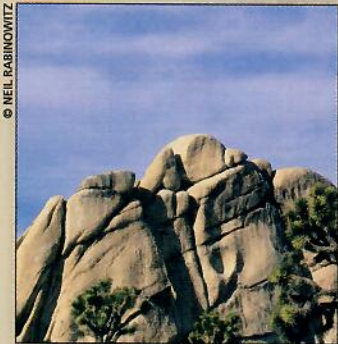
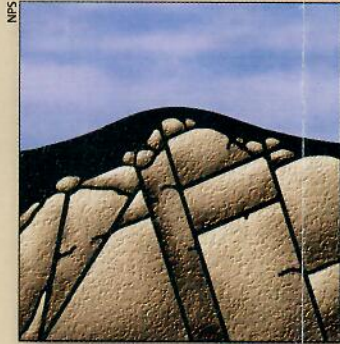
Zebra-tail lizard

Kangaroo rat

Dune primrose

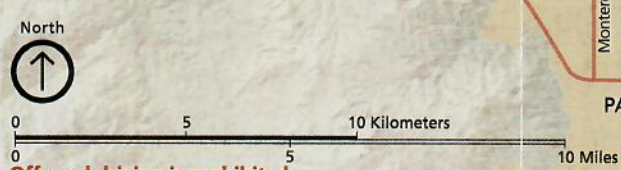
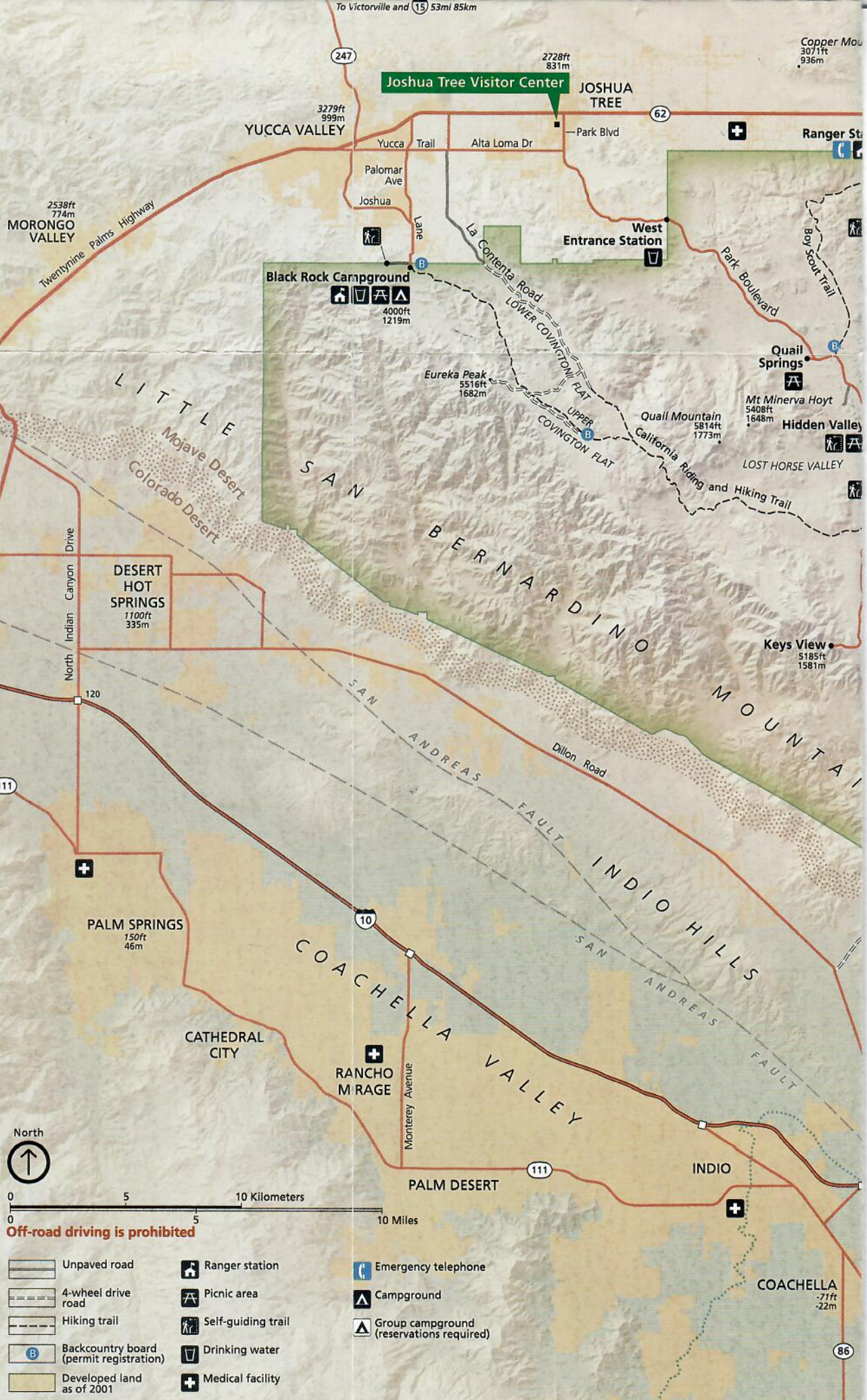
Sand verbena

As the granite cooled and crystallized underground, cracks (joints) formed horizontally and vertically (*left*). The granite continued to uplift, where it came in contact with groundwater. Chemical weathering caused by groundwater worked on the angular granite blocks (*right*), widening cracks and rounding edges. Eventually the surface soil eroded, leaving heaps of monzogranite scattered across the land like careless piles of toy blocks (*far right*).



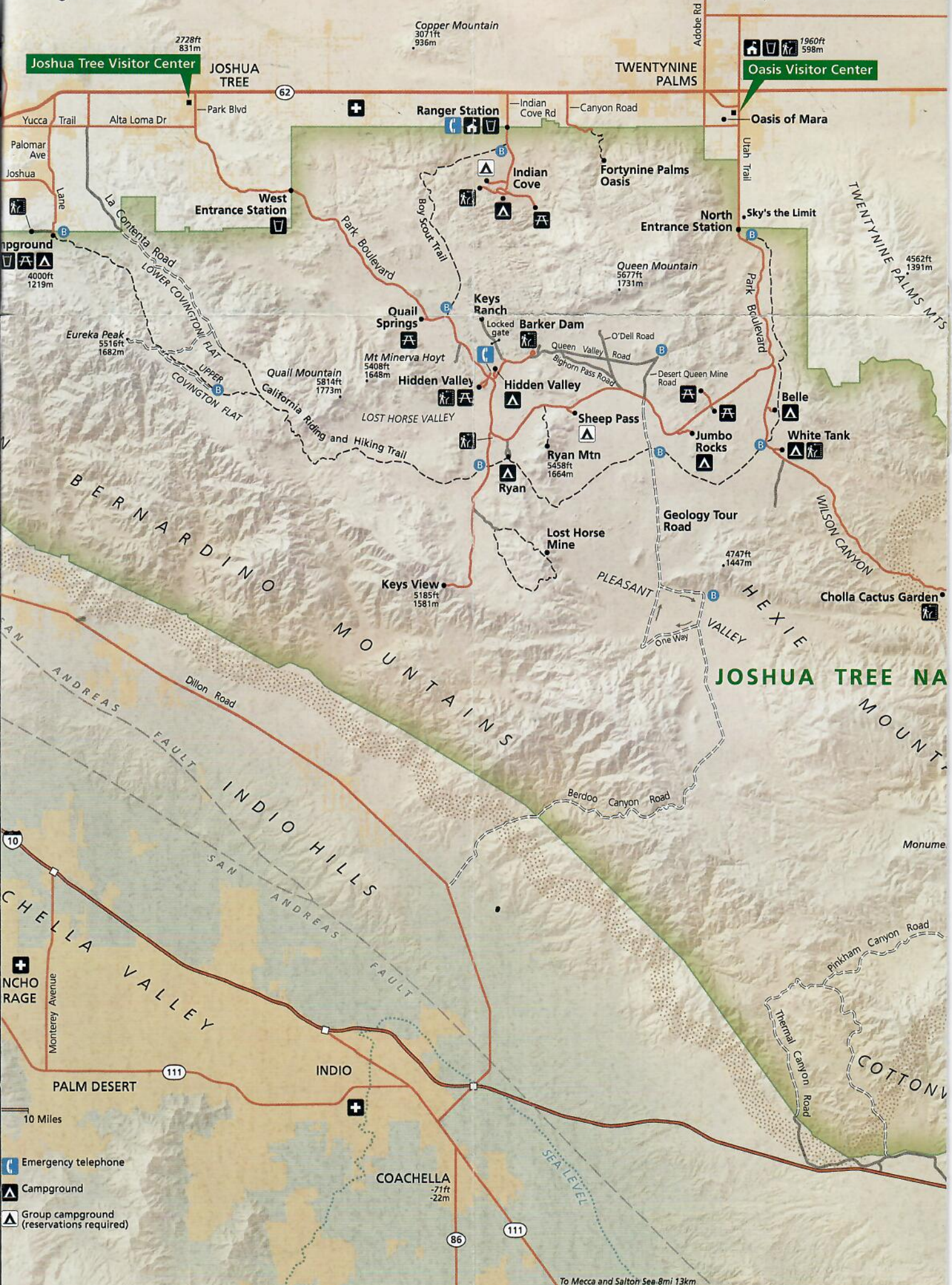
© NEIL RABINOWITZ

Explore Joshua Tree



Off-road driving is prohibited

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------|--|--|
| | Unpaved road | | Ranger station | | Emergency telephone |
| | 4-wheel drive road | | Picnic area | | Campground |
| | Hiking trail | | Self-guiding trail | | Group campground (reservations required) |
| | Backcountry board (permit registration) | | Drinking water | | |
| | Developed land as of 2001 | | Medical facility | | |



Joshua Tree Visitor Center

Oasis Visitor Center

JOSHUA TREE

TWENTYNINE PALMS

Oasis of Mara

Ranger Station

West Entrance Station

North Entrance Station

Quail Springs

Keys Ranch

Hidden Valley

Sheep Pass

Jumbo Rocks

White Tank

Keys View

Geology Tour Road

JOSHUA TREE NA

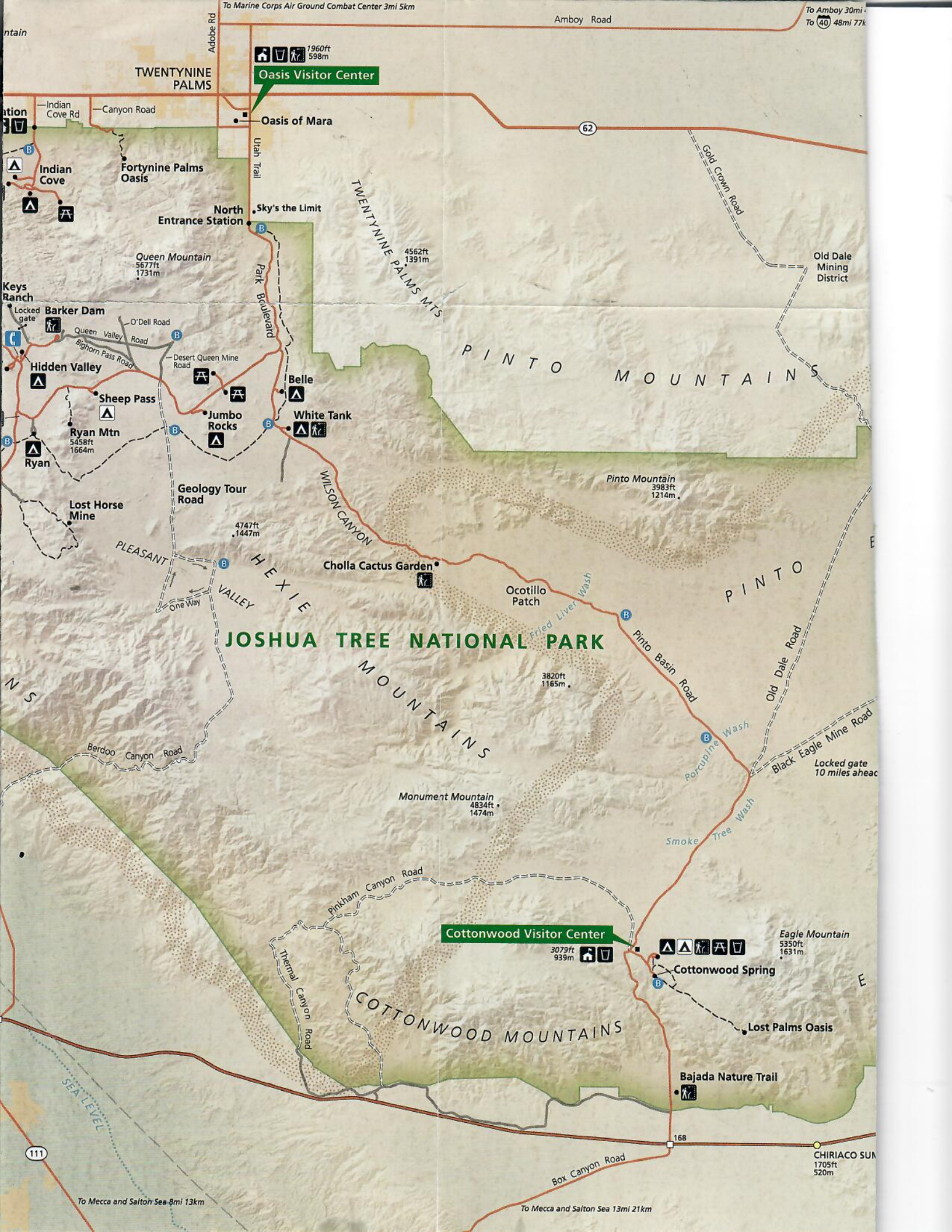
- Emergency telephone
- Campground
- Group campground (reservations required)

10 Miles

COACHELLA

86

111



Oasis Visitor Center
1960ft
598m

Oasis of Mara

North Entrance Station

Queen Mountain
5677ft
1731m

Barker Dam

Hidden Valley

Sheep Pass

Ryan Mtn
5458ft
1664m

Geology Tour Road

4747ft
1447m

HEXIE MOUNTAINS

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

HEXIE MOUNTAINS

HEXIE MOUNTAINS

HEXIE MOUNTAINS

Monument Mountain
4834ft
1474m

Monument Mountain
4834ft
1474m

Pinkham Canyon Road

Cottonwood Visitor Center
3079ft
939m

COTTONWOOD MOUNTAINS

COTTONWOOD MOUNTAINS

COTTONWOOD MOUNTAINS

COTTONWOOD MOUNTAINS

COTTONWOOD MOUNTAINS

Pinto Mountain
3983ft
1214m

Ocotillo Patch

Pinto Basin Road

Porcupine Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Smoke Tree Wash

Old Dale Mining District

Eagle Mountain
5350ft
1631m

Lost Palms Oasis

Bajada Nature Trail

CHIRIACO SUN
1705ft
520m

111

62

168

To Amboy 30mi
To 40 48mi 77k

To Mecca and Salton Sea 8mi 13km

To Mecca and Salton Sea 13mi 21km

Adobe Rd

Amboy Road

TWENTYNINE PALMS

Indian Cove Rd

Indian Cove

Keys Ranch

Hidden Valley

Ryan

Lost Horse Mine

NS

Berdoo Canyon Road

SEA LEVEL

TWENTYNINE PALMS MTS

PINTO MOUNTAINS

WILSON CANYON

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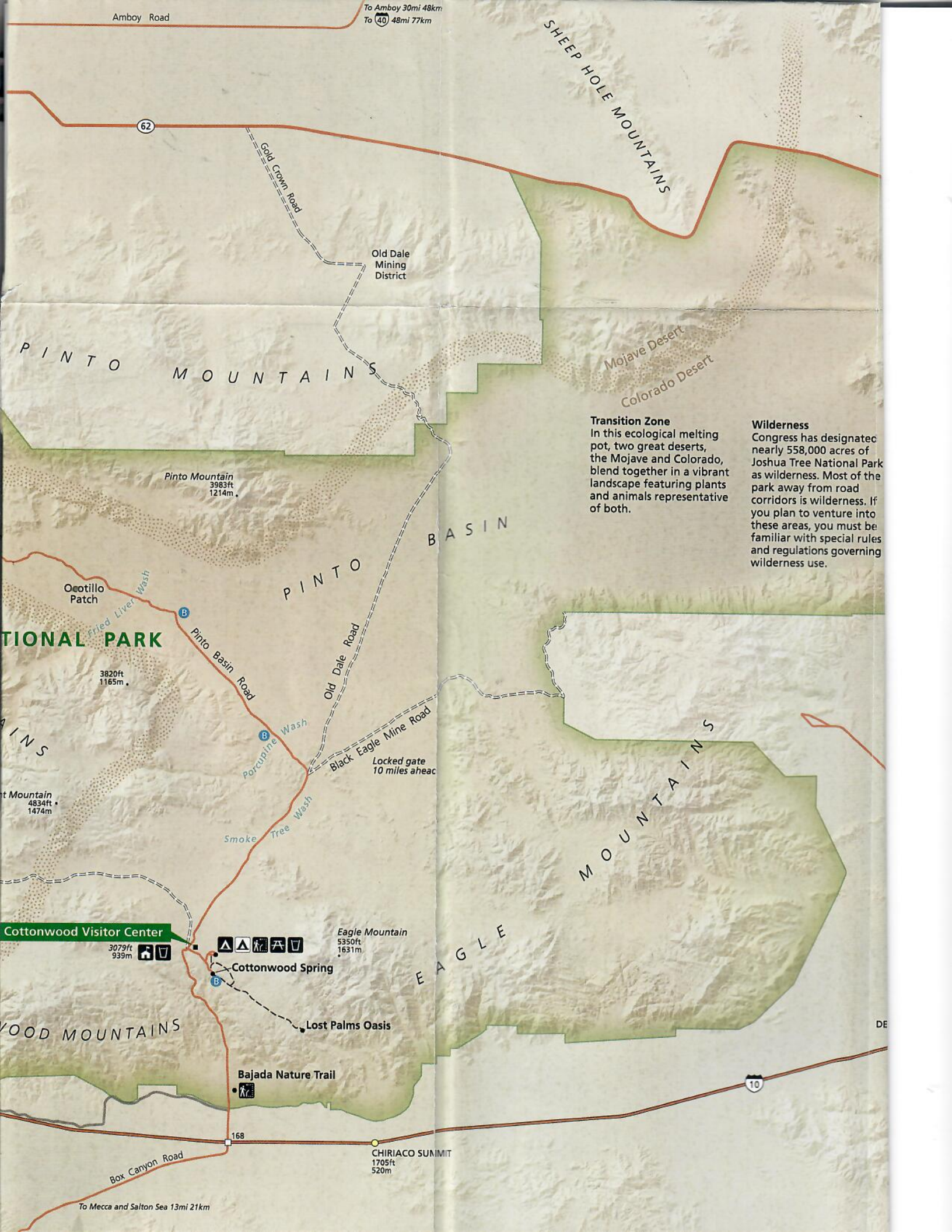
SEA LEVEL

Adobe Rd

Amboy Road

TWENTYNINE PALMS

Indian Cove Rd



Transition Zone

In this ecological melting pot, two great deserts, the Mojave and Colorado, blend together in a vibrant landscape featuring plants and animals representative of both.

Wilderness

Congress has designated nearly 558,000 acres of Joshua Tree National Park as wilderness. Most of the park away from road corridors is wilderness. If you plan to venture into these areas, you must be familiar with special rules and regulations governing wilderness use.

62

Gold Crown Road

Old Dale Mining District

PINTO MOUNTAINS

SHEEP HOLE MOUNTAINS

Mojave Desert
Colorado Desert

Pinto Mountain
3983ft
1214m

BASIN

Ocotillo Patch

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

3820ft
1165m

PINTO

Pinto Basin Road

Old Dale Road

Porcupine Wash

Black Eagle Mine Road

Locked gate
10 miles ahead

Smoke Tree Wash

AIN S

nt Mountain
4834ft
1474m

EAGLE MOUNTAINS

Cottonwood Visitor Center

3079ft
939m

Icons for trail, viewpoint, and other features

Eagle Mountain
5350ft
1631m

Cottonwood Spring

Lost Palms Oasis

WOOD MOUNTAINS

Bajada Nature Trail

10

Box Canyon Road

168

CHIRIACO SUMMIT
1705ft
520m

SHEEP HOLE MOUNTAINS

Mojave Desert
Colorado Desert

Transition Zone
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Aqua Peak
4415ft
1346m

COXCOMB MOUNTAINS

2957ft
902m

536ft
163m

SIN

GLE

MOUNTAINS

906ft
276m
DESERT CENTER

Kaiser Road

62

To Parker
60mi 96km

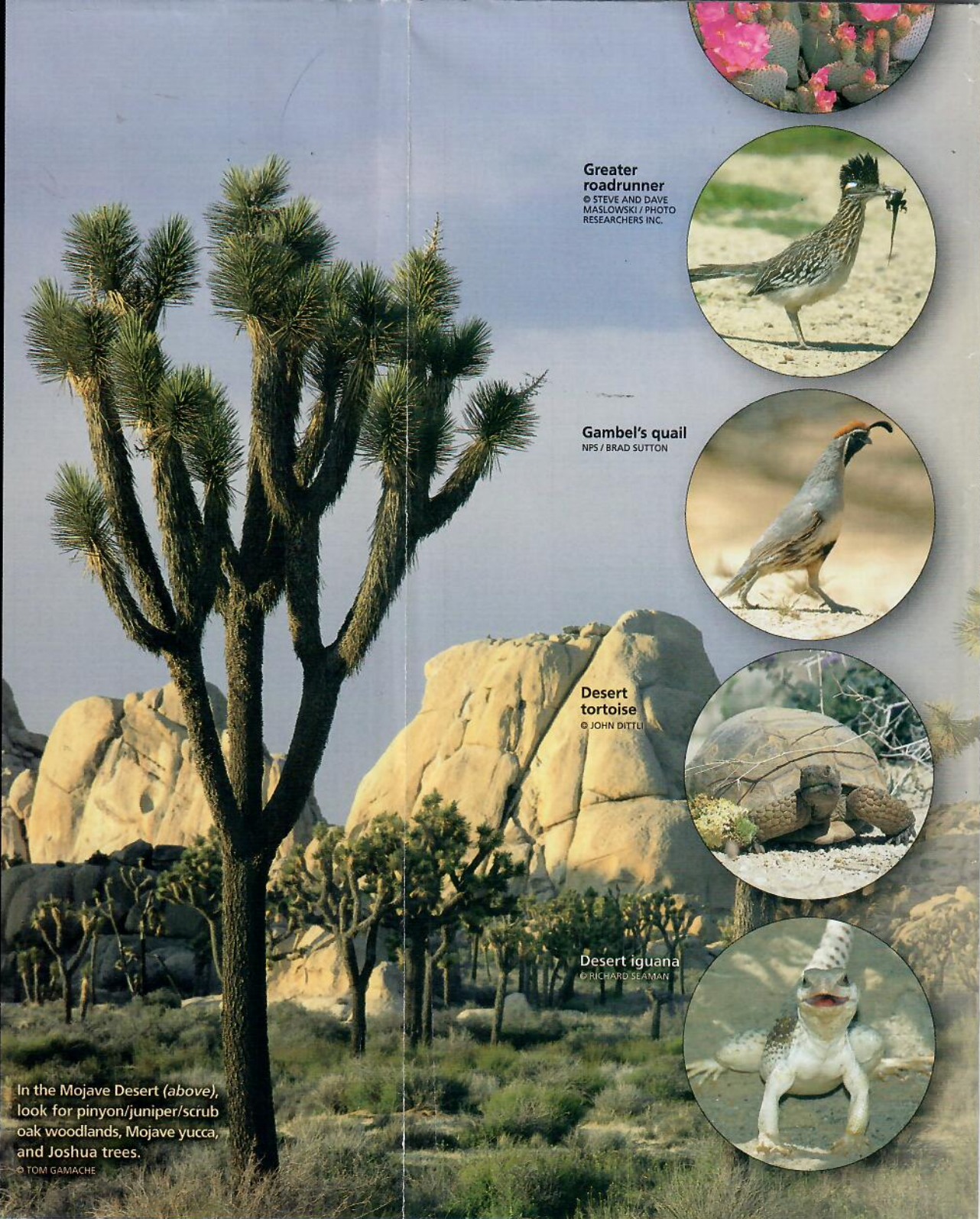
177

10

To Blythe
35mi 56km

192

Joshua Tree



In the Mojave Desert (above), look for pinyon/juniper/scrub oak woodlands, Mojave yucca, and Joshua trees.

© TOM GAMACHE



Greater roadrunner

© STEVE AND DAVE MASLOWSKI / PHOTO RESEARCHERS INC.



Gambel's quail

NPS / BRAD SUTTON



Desert tortoise

© JOHN DITTEL



Desert iguana

© RICHARD SEAMAN

