

Bryce Canyon is not really a canyon. But its amphitheaters looked like a canyon to the people who named it.



The Beginning of Bryce



Looking out into an **amphitheater** at Bryce Canyon is amazing. Located high on the

Colorado Plateau, the rippling red rock towers and limestone cliffs look like an artist carved them. Trails take visitors past evergreen trees and waterfalls. When the sky is clear, you can see land miles away during the day and thousands of stars at night. Visiting Bryce Canyon is like visiting another world!

The First People

People roamed the area around Bryce Canyon as early as 12,000 years ago. The Numa, sometimes called the Paiute, first arrived in about 1200 CE. Some live in the region today. The park's wavy rock pillars, called hoodoos, are part of the Numa mythology. The Numa believe the pillars are spirits that overused the land's resources. As punishment, Coyote, a trickster god, turned the spirits into rock.

Science and Settlements

The first European Americans reached Bryce Canyon in the 19th century. Some of these explorers were scientists **surveying** the region. Others were Mormon scouts looking for a place to build a settlement. The park earned its current name during this time. Ebenezer Bryce, a Mormon settler, built a road into the park's main amphitheater. Because of this road, the amphitheater was called Bryce Canyon.

A Timeline of Bryce Canyon National Park

10,000 BCE

Native Americans start living in the area.

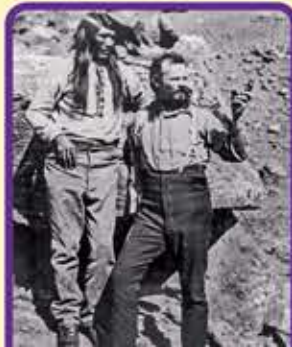


1850s

Mormon scouts explore the area looking for possible settlement locations.

1872

A scientific expedition explores the region as part of a survey of the Colorado Plateau.



1916

Magazine articles from railroad companies and the U.S. Forest Service describe the area's natural beauty.

1923

President Warren G. Harding declares Bryce Canyon a national monument.

1928

Bryce Canyon becomes a national park.



Today

Bryce Canyon National Park is one of Utah's most popular parks.

THE BIG TRUTH!

National Parks Field Guide: Bryce Canyon

Here are a few of the hundreds of fascinating animals you may see in the park.

Great Basin rattlesnake

Scientific name: *Crotalus viridis lutosus*

Habitat: Rocky areas, slopes, canyons

Diet: Small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds

Fact: This snake is venomous. Its venom, or poison, enters its prey through the snake's hollow fangs.



North American porcupine

Scientific name: *Erethizon dorsatum*

Habitat: Forests, grasslands, rocky areas

Diet: Plant parts, including berries, seeds, leaves, roots, and stems

Fact: One porcupine has about 30,000 spines, called quills.



Pronghorn antelope

Scientific name: *Antilocapra americana*

Habitat: Meadows and other open areas

Diet: Shrubs such as sagebrush

Fact: Pronghorns are the second-fastest land animal on earth. Only cheetahs are faster.



Peregrine falcon

Scientific name: *Falco peregrinus anatum*

Habitat: Forests, high rocky areas

Diet: Birds such as ducks and pigeons

Fact: Male peregrines use their expert flying skills to attract mates.



Southwestern willow flycatcher

Scientific name: *Empidonax traillii extimus*

Habitat: Near rivers and streams

Diet: Flying and crawling insects

Fact: This endangered species darts from its perch to catch flying insects in midair.



Mule deer

Scientific name: *Odocoileus hemionus*

Habitat: Forests and open, rocky areas

Diet: Grasses, leaves, flowers, fruits

Fact: When mule deer run, they leap, landing on and pushing off with all four feet at once.

