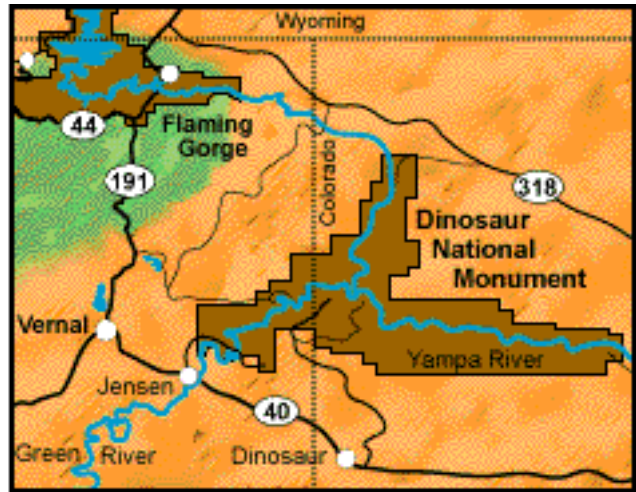




Dinosaur National Monument

Dinosaur National Monument has two identities. It was originally established as a national monument to protect an area that was one of the most productive sources of dinosaur bones in the world. This original area, the **Quarry Area** , contains a quarry with some 1,600 exposed bones from 11 different dinosaur species. Near the quarry is a short nature hike, a pleasant scenic drive, Indian petroglyphs, and the preserved cabin of a female homesteader.



Dinosaur National Monument was later expanded to include 300 square miles of great, high desert canyon country through which the Green and Yampa Rivers flow. This area, the **Canyon Country** , offers good scenery and some hiking and white water rafting opportunities. You'll want to spend some time in each.

Dinosaur National Monument straddles the Utah/Colorado border towards the northeast corner of Utah. About 25% of the park, including the entire quarry area, lies in Utah. The bulk of the canyon country lies in Colorado. The nearest substantial town on the Utah side is Vernal, 20 miles away from the quarry entrance.

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Exploring the Park

The park can be thought of as encompassing two separate areas -- the [Quarry Area](#) and the [Canyon Country](#).

[map to come]

The Quarry Area

The Quarry

The quarry consists of an angular wall of sandstone in which are embedded thousands of fossilized dinosaur bones. The rock holding the bones has been painstakingly scraped away so that the bones stand in relief. The quarry is so concentrated that there are some nearly full skeletons and many "piles" of bones. The quarry itself is covered by a glass and steel structure. Though very interesting the quarry is small and will only occupy a few hours of your time at most. Attached to the quarry is a visitor center with displays, books and the like.

Scenic Drive

Past the quarry is a pleasant 10 mile long scenic drive (Cub Creek Road) that winds along the attractive jagged cliffs of Split Mountain and along the meandering Green River and Cub Creek. Cub Creek Road passes some interesting rock formations and good Indian petroglyphs. At the end of drive is the cabin of Josie Morris, who farmed and raised livestock alone on her small homestead during the early part of this century. The cabin is set beneath sheer sandstone cliffs in a pleasant wooded area. You can picnic here or at Placer Point Picnic Area near the Green River.

A small pamphlet entitled "Tour of the Tilted Rocks" identifies points of interest along the scenic drive. One can be picked up at the Quarry or at a roadside box just past the quarry.

Hiking Trails

There are two short hiking trails along the scenic drive in the Quarry Area.

	<u>Difficulty</u>	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Elev. Change</u>	<u>Time</u>
Sound of Silence	Mod-Diff.	3 mi. loop	_____ ft.	1-3/4 hrs.

The Sound of Silence nature trail loop begins 2 miles past the quarry. It climbs up a wash to some fine panoramas of the area and descends over slickrock. (The trail is not very well marked so you'd be advised to pick up a trail guide at the visitor center.)

Desert Voices	Easy	1-1/2 mi. loop	_____ ft.	1-1/2 hrs.
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The Desert Voices Loop Trail begins opposite the entrance to Split Mountain Campground and makes a loop through lower portions of the Split Mountains. It has trail signs made by kids for kids.

The Canyon Country

The Canyon Country is a much larger area of the park. Its beautiful, deep canyons were carved by the Green and Yampa rivers over hundreds of thousands of years. The rivers offer good white water rafting.

Harper's Corner

The canyon country area is most easily seen from Harper's Corner Scenic Drive. The scenic drive starts at Hwy 40 -- 38 miles east of Vernal. The monument's main Visitor Center is located here. Harper's Corner Scenic Drive winds north 31 miles to the Harpers Corner lookout. Along the way are several picnic areas and other lookouts over the canyons carved by the Green and Yampa Rivers.

At mile 25 of the drive a rough dirt road branches to the left for Echo Park. The 13 mile rough dirt road descends to a wonderful lookout over the confluence of the Green and Yampa rivers.

A few short hikes can be made from points along Harper's Corner Scenic Drive.

- At the Plug Hat Butte picnic area (Mile 4) is an easy 1/2 mile nature hike through dry pinyon pine and juniper woodland.
- At Island Point Overlook (Mile 26), the Ruple Point Trail follows an abandoned road to a point overlooking Split Mountain Canyon and the Green River. The round trip distance is 8 miles.
- At the end of the drive at Harpers Corner, a trail leads one mile further on to a point overlooking Whirlpool Canyon and the Green and Yampa Rivers.

Other Areas

The other access points to the Canyon Country serve mainly as put in or take out points for river runners. Each has a primitive campground. (See [Camping](#).) At the Gates of Lodore is a 1-1/2 mile trail (roundtrip) along the river to a superb view of the canyon entrance.

Adventurous hikers may wish to set out on their own in the monument. Rangers can suggest possible routes and provide information on current conditions and sources of water.

River Running

The Green and Yampa Rivers provide good opportunities for white water rafting through beautiful canyons. Your opportunities for both single- and multi-day trips on both rivers are described below.

The Green River

The Green River travels 49 miles from the Gates of Lodore to Split Mountain Campground in the Quarry Area of the park. Its season generally runs from mid-May to mid-September. There are four put-in and takeout points along the way:

- Gates of Lodore (Mile 0)
- Echo Park at the confluence with the Yampa River (Mile 19)
- Ruple Ranch (Mile 36)
- Rainbow Park (Mile 41)

These effectively break the river into the four runnable sections described below.

Canyon of Lodore

The Canyon of Lodore runs 19 miles to Echo Park. It contains the best rapids on the river, including Disaster falls, Triplet Falls and Hell's Half Mile -- all Class 3 rapids.

Whirlpool Canyon

At the confluence the river widens and picks up speed as it heads west 17 miles through Whirlpool Canyon to Ruple Ranch. This section contains good, though less frequent rapids.

Island Park

At Ruple Ranch the river widens and slows, and gently meanders 5 miles through the Island Park area to Rainbow Park.

Split Mountain Canyon

The river enters Split Mountain Canyon and picks up speed through a series of Class 3 rapids -- Moonshine, SOB, Schoolboy and Inglesby. Eight miles later is the takeout point at Split Mountain Campground in the quarry area of the monument. This section is a popular single-day trip.

The Yampa River

The Yampa River enters the monument at Deerlodge Park and runs 45 miles to the confluence with the Green River at Echo Park. Along its entire length is pretty, deep canyon scenery. The river is mostly flat, though swift. It has a few Class 3 rapids and a great Class 4 rapid -- Warm Springs -- which features one of the 10 biggest drops in the country. The season on the Yampa runs from mid-May to early July, with the greatest flows in May and early June.

River Outfitters

Outfitters in Vernal offer several different river running options. The most popular are single day trips on the Green River through Split Mountain Canyon. Multi-day trips of 3-4 days through the other sections of the rivers are also available.

Adrift Adventures	Box 192 - Jensen	800-824-0150
adventure Bound		800-423-4668
ARTA River Trips	24000 Casa Loma - Groveland, CA	800-323-2782
Colorado River/Trail Expeditions	5058 S. 300 West - Salt Lake City	800-253-7328
Diamond River Outfitters		800-829-6508
Dinosaur Expeditions	540 E. Main St. - Vernal	800-345-7238
Eagle Outdoor Sports		801-451-7238
Hatch River Expeditions	55 E. Main St. - Vernal	800-342-8243
Holiday River Expeditions	544 E. 3900 South - Salt Lake City	800-624-6323
Moki Mac River Expeditions	6006 S. 1300 East - Salt Lake City	800-284-7280
OARS		209-736-4677
Peak River Expeditions	2295 W. Sugar Factory Rd. - W. Jordan	801-561-2424
River Runners Transport/Rentals	126 S. 1500 West - Vernal	800-930-7238
White Water Canoe Co.	2675 65th Ave. - Greeley, CO	800-624-6323

Experienced parties can run the river without a guide. Permits are required and should be obtained well in advance of your planned trip. For information, contact: Dinosaur National Monument, River Unit, Box 210, Dinosaur, CO 81610; 970-374-2468.

Select [Dinosaur-Publications](#) for a list of books covering river running in and near Dinosaur National Monument

Camping

Camping in Dinosaur National Monument

- Split Mountain Campground is located on a turnoff 3 miles past the quarry. It sits attractively along the Green River beneath the reddish-orange cliff walls of the Split Mountains. From 4/1 to 9/30 it is opened for group camping only and reservations are required. In winter, the campground is opened without water for individuals for free. Vault toilets; elev. 4,800 ft.
- Green River Campground is located 6 miles past the quarry. It also sits along the Green River, though more out in the open. 88 sites; drinking water; modern restrooms; elev. 4,800 ft.; 4/15 - 9/30; first-come, first-serve; \$12.
- Echo Park Campground is located above the confluence of the Green and Yampa Rivers in a great setting. It is accessible from a rough dirt road (Echo Park Road) that intersects the Harpers Corner Scenic Drive at Mile 25. Echo Park Road is recommended only for high clearance cars and trucks and is impassable when wet. Drinking water is available in summer. 8 sites; drinking water; vault toilets; elev. ____ ft.; open May-Sep.; first-come, first-serve; \$6.
- Rainbow Park Campground is located along the north side of the Green River in the Island Park area. It is accessible on dirt roads that are not passable when wet. 2 sites; NO drinking water; vault toilets; elev. 5,000 ft.; open all year; first-come, first-serve; no fee.
- Gates of Lodore campground is located near the northern boundary of the monument along the Green River. It is accessible from the north on a dirt road from Hwy 318. Drinking water is available in summer. 17 sites; drinking water; vault toilets; elev. _____ ft.; open Apr-Oct; first-come, first-serve; \$6.
- Deerlodge Park is located near the easternmost reach of the monument along the Yampa River. It is accessible from a paved road that intersects Hwy 40. 8 sites; NO drinking water; vault toilets; elev. _____ ft.; open all year; first-come, first-serve; no fee.

Backcountry Camping is allowed anywhere in the monument by permit. Permits can be obtained for free from Monument Headquarters, the quarry visitor center or from any of the ranger stations about the park.

Private Campgrounds

There are several private campgrounds along Hwy. 40 south of the park and in Vernal, 20 miles west of the park.

South of Park

Dinosaur National Monument Camping

Dinosaur Village

East Hwy. 40 - Jensen

435-789-5552 32 sites

In Vernal

Campground Dina

930 N. Vernal Ave.

800-245-2148 100 sites

Fossil Valley R.V.

999 W. Hwy. 40

888-789-6450 34 sites

Vernal KOA

2.5 mi W. of Hwy. 40/191

800-KOA-7574 55 sites

Western Heritage RV Park

271 S. 500 East

435-789-3324 32 sites

Lodging

There is no lodging or dining within the monument itself. There are a few small motels and restaurants in the towns south and east of the monument. Your options are described below.

Vernal

Vernal is an attractive midsize town located at the junction of Hwys. 40 and 191. It is 38 miles west of the Monument Headquarters and 20 miles west of the quarry area. It offers a decent selection of motels as well as numerous small restaurants, cafes and fast food joints. See Vernal -Lodging/Dining for more information.

Dinosaur, CO

Dinosaur, CO is a tiny town surrounded by ranchland on Hwy 40 a couple miles west of the Monument Headquarters. It has a gas station, small grocery store, a few cafes and a small motel.

list to come

Craig, CO

list to come

Rangely, CO

list to come

Practicalities



GETTING THERE

By Car or RV

Dinosaur National Monument straddles the Utah-Colorado border near the northeast corner of Utah. The largest town in the area is Vernal, which is 20 miles west of the park. You'll need a car or RV to explore the park.

By Plane

Skywest Airlines (800-453-9417) provides daily air service to Vernal from Salt Lake City.

Rental Cars

Rental cars are available in Vernal from:

Avis Rent-a-Car		800-331-1212
Showalter Ford	100 E. Main St.	435-789-3818



WHEN TO GO/CLIMATE

Dinosaur is best visited in late spring or late summer when temperatures are moderate and visitors fewer. Snow begins to fall in earnest by November blocking access to the Harpers Corner area, and usually stays down into May.



PARK DETAILS

The quarry is open daily 8 to 7, Memorial Day to Labor Day, and 8 to 4:30 the rest of the year. It is closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. There is an entrance fee of \$5 per car, but no charge for those with a National Park Pass.

The headquarters visitor center located on the road to Harper's Corner is open every day 8 to 4:30, Memorial Day to Labor Day, and Mon.- Fri. the rest of the year. Both the quarry and visitor center are closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years.



USEFUL ADDRESSES & PHONE #'S

Dinosaur National Monument	Hwy 40; Box 4545 - Dinosaur, CO	970-374-3000
Dinosaur Nat. Mon. - Quarry Visitor Center		435-789-2115
Dinosaurland Travel Region	25 E. Main St.	800-477-5558
Northeastern Utah Visitor's Center	235 E. Main St.	435-789-7894
Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area	Box 279	435-784-3445
Ashley National Forest	355 N. Vernal Ave.	435-789-1181
BLM - Vernal District Office	170 S. 500 East	435-789-1362
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	152 E. 100 North	435-789-3103



MISCELLANY

See Vernal-Miscellany for information on equipment supply stores, bookstores, religious services, etc.

Publications

Presented below are publications that provide coverage of Dinosaur National Monument and nearby areas. Publications are listed alphabetically under the following categories.

- General
- Hiking
- River Running
- 4wd Adventuring
- Camping

General

- **Dinosaur: The Story Behind the Scenery -- Allen Hagwood**

Overview of the dinosaurs, excavations and geology of Dinosaur National Monument with lots of color photos. (48 pages; KC Publications; 1990)

- **This is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and its Magic Rivers - Wallace Stegner**

Information on the history, geology, flora, fauna, peoples and rivers in Dinosaur National Monument. (128 pages; Roberts Rinehart, Inc.; 1985)

Hiking

- **Dinosaur National Monument Map -- Trails Illustrated**

High quality plasticized map of Dinosaur National Monument showing hiking trails, roads and points of interest. (Scale: 1:78,125; Map #220)

- **Hiking Utah -- Dave Hall and Ann Seifert**



Descriptions of 80 hikes throughout Utah from beginner to advanced. Black & white photos and maps. (245 pages; Falcon Press; 1996; \$12)

[Order now from:](https://www.amazon.com)
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amazon.com

River Running

- **Dinosaur River Guide** -- Laura Evans & Buzz Belknap

Covers the Green River and Yampa Rivers in Dinosaur National Monument. Also provides coverage of the Green River south of Flaming Gorge. Waterproof. (64 pages; Westwater Books; 1973; \$16.95; 4-6 weeks delivery)

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amazon.com

- **River Runner's Guide to Dinosaur National Monument** -- P. Hayes & G. Simmons

Descriptions of the Green River from Flaming Gorge through Dinosaur National Monument and the Yampa River through the monument. (78 pages; Powell Society; 1973)

- **River Runners' Guide to Utah and Adjacent Areas** -- Gary Nichols



A comprehensive guide to Utah's major and minor rivers with color photos and maps. (168 pages; Univ. of Utah Press; 1986 - 2nd ed.; \$10.46)

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- **Rivers of the Southwest** -- Fletcher Anderson and Ann Hopkinson

River running information to major and minor rivers in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. (139 pages; Pruett Publishing; 1987; out-of-print)

[Out-of-Print Order:](#)
BOOKS, MUSIC & MORE
amazon.com

4wd Adventuring

- **Utah Byways: Backcountry Drives for the Whole Family** -- Tony Huegel



Descriptions with maps of 60 routes throughout Utah.
(176 pages; Post Company; 1996; \$13.50)

[Order now from:](#)
BOOKS, MUSIC & MORE
amazon.com

Camping

- **Utah & Nevada Camping** -- Gayen/Tom Wharton and Deke Castleman



Comprehensive guide to campgrounds in Utah and Nevada. Provides all the information you need. Note, however, a fair amount of details change in a year's time.
(380 pages; Foghorn Outdoors; 1997; \$15.16)

[Order now from:](#)
BOOKS, MUSIC & MORE
amazon.com