

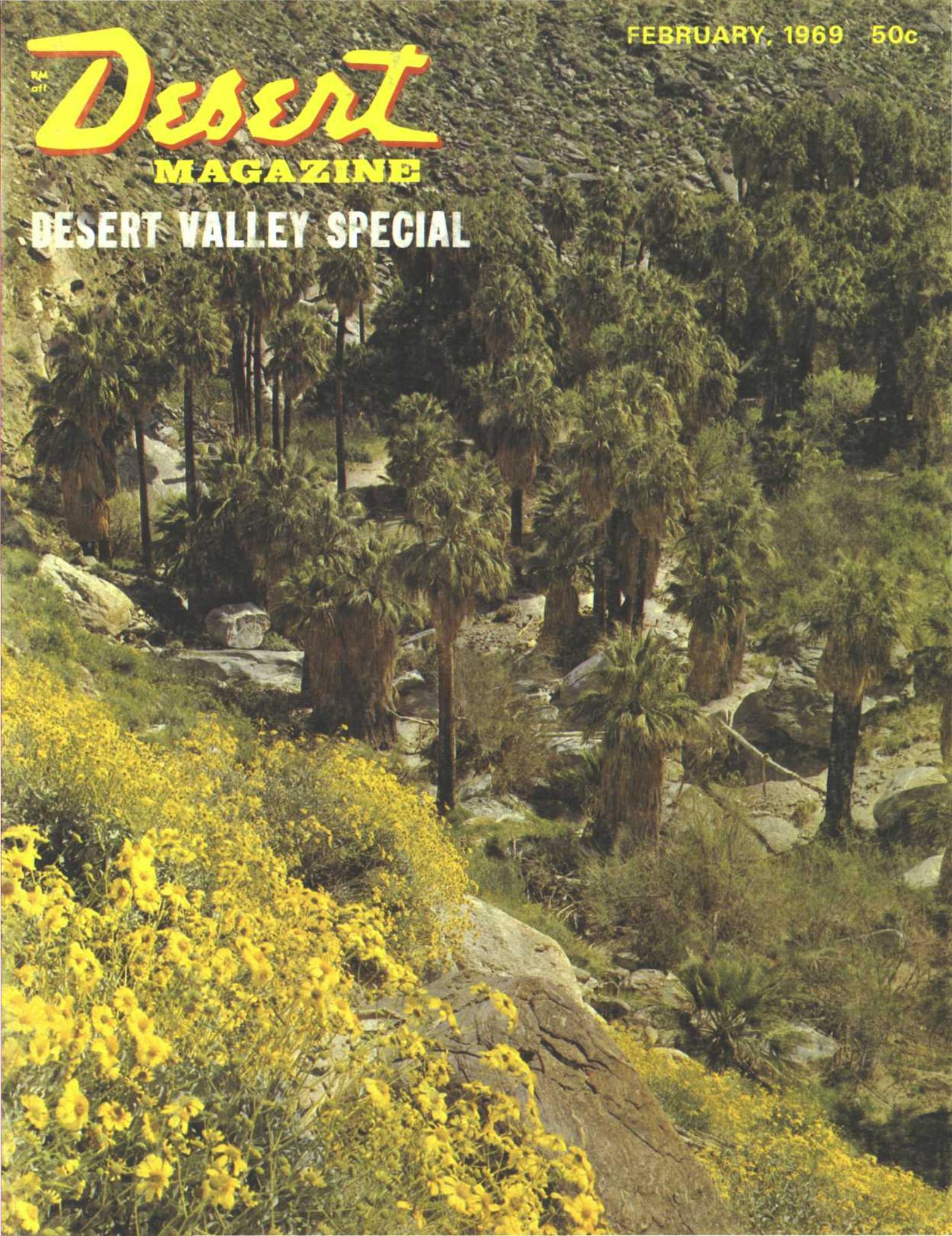
FEBRUARY, 1969 50c

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# Desert

**MAGAZINE**

**DESERT VALLEY SPECIAL**

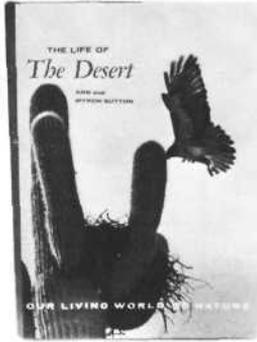


# DESERT MAGAZINE BOOK SHOP

**ANZA-BORREGO DESERT GUIDE** by Horace Parker. Second edition of this well-illustrated and documented book is enlarged considerably. Tops among guidebooks, it is equally recommended for research material in an area that was crossed by Anza, Kit Carson, the Mormon Battalion, '49ers, Railroad Survey parties, Pegleg Smith, the Jackass Mail, Butterfield Stage, and today's adventurous tourists. 139 pages, cardboard cover, \$2.95.

**COOKING AND CAMPING ON THE DESERT** by Choral Pepper. Also useful in your own back yard. Contains chapter by Jack Pepper on driving and surviving in back country. Recipes are named for ghost towns and lost mines and suggest places to go and things to do. Hardcover, \$3.95.

**GHOST TOWNS AND MINING CAMPS OF CALIFORNIA** by Remi Nadeau. The only good, hardcover book on the California ghost towns. We recommend it highly. \$5.95.



## THE LIFE OF THE DESERT

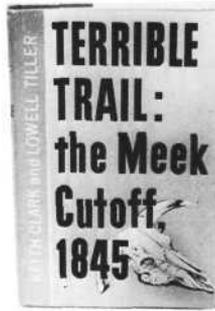
By ANN AND MYRON SUTTON

Published in cooperation with the World Book Encyclopedia this beautifully illustrated volume covers life on the desert from all aspects, including plants and animals and how they survive. Also similarities among North American desert regions. Profusely illustrated with four-color photographs, large format, slick paper, hardcover, 231 pages.

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**FANTASIES OF GOLD** by E. B. Sayles. During his search for archeological finds for more than 30 years, the author was exposed to the rumors and legends of lost gold and treasures. After his retirement as curator of the Arizona State Museum, he classified and delved into these still unsolved mysteries. An interesting and informative book on lost bonanzas and legends, many of which have never been published. Hardcover, well illustrated, 135 pages, \$6.50.

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** by the Editors of Sunset Books. An illustrated guide to Southern California, this is another in Sunset Books series. It presents in capsule form most of the interesting places to visit in the Southland. Heavy paperback, 8 x 11 format, 128 pages, \$1.95.



## TERRIBLE TRAIL OF THE MEEK CUTOFF

By KEITH CLARKE and LOWELL TILLER

A dramatic account of the members of the Meek immigrant train whose suffering and deaths surpassed even that of the Donner Pass tragedy. The book also sheds new light on the Blue Bucket lost gold mystery which the Meek party found during their tragic trek through Oregon. Illustrated with photographs and maps, hardcover, 243 pages.

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**SUN, SAND AND SOLITUDE** by Randall Henderson. For more than 50 years Randall Henderson has traveled across the deserts of the West until today he is known as the voice and prophet of this region of mystery, solitude and beauty. Founder of Desert Magazine in 1931, he has devoted his life to understanding the great outdoors. His second and latest book is a culmination of his experiences, thoughts and philosophy. Hardcover, deluxe format, deckle-edged paper, 16 pages full color, excellent illustrations, \$7.95.

**METAL DETECTOR HANDBOOK** by Art Lassagne, 2nd edition. Includes history, operating techniques, interpretation of signals, and Directory of Manufacturers. One of the most complete handbooks of its kind. Paperback, 65 pages. \$3.00.

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**THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH** by Donald Chidsey. A well written and colorful account of how the discovery of gold in 1848 changed the lives of many thousands of people. The author presents this historic era through profiles of the men and women who participated in the adventures and struggles of the times. Hardcover, excellent artist illustrations, 208 pages, \$3.95.

**GHOSTS OF THE GOLD RUSH** by George Koenig. To really enjoy a trip through California's Mother Lode Country one should have a knowledge of the historical background and a guide to places to see. This travel and historical guide gives this information in a concise and interesting manner. Paperback, illustrated, 72 pages, \$1.95.

**EXPLORING DEATH VALLEY** by Ruth Kirk. Good photos and maps with time estimates from place to place and geology, natural history and human interest information included. Paperback, \$1.95.



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**BEACHES OF BAJA** by Walt Wheelock. The author has personally explored the beautiful beaches of Baja, which, unlike those of Upper California, are uncluttered and uncrowded. He tells how to reach the beaches and what type of transportation is needed. A companion book to Gerhard and Gulick's Lower California Guide Book. Paperback, illustrated, 72 pages, \$1.95.

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**WILLIAM KNYVETT**

PUBLISHER

**JACK PEPPER**

EDITOR

MARK SMITH  
Advertising Manager

ELTA SHIVELY  
Executive Secretary

MARVEL BARRETT  
Business

LLOYD SHIVELY  
Circulation

CHORAL PEPPER  
Travel Feature Editor

JACK DELANEY  
Staff Writer

BILL BRYAN  
Back Country Editor

---

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### FEBRUARY COLOR PHOTOS

Front Cover: Ancient Washingtonian Palms are found in the many picturesque canyons at the bottom of the San Jacinto Mountains near Palm Desert and Palm Springs. Yellow Brittle Bush provides a contrast in the photo by David Muench, Santa Barbara, Calif. Page 30: Majestic date palms grow both in large cultivated fields and in canyons in Coachella Valley, the nation's largest producer of the 8000-year-old fruit—photo by Jack Pepper.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## DESERT SOLITAIRE

By Edward Abbey

"The desert is atonal, cruel, neither romantic nor classical, motionless and emotionless at one and the same time . . . Like death? Perhaps. And perhaps that is why life nowhere appears so brave, so bright, so full of oracle and miracles as in the desert."

This is one of the many moving passages in this new book by Edward Abbey, novelist and poet. The author first learned to love the desert when he spent several seasons in isolated areas by himself as a park ranger. This is the story of his sojourn, and, while it creates the true feeling of the desert, it is also an introspective book—the observations of a man who left the world behind to think about man and his endeavors.

There are mountain men, there are men of the sea, and there are desert rats. "I am a desert rat," he states, "But why? And why . . . is the desert more alluring, more baffling, more fascinating than either the mountains or the sea?" In his book he describes his everyday experiences and then tells why he is a desert rat—and how he finds happiness in desert solitaire. Author of three novels, Abbey lives in Arizona. Hardcover, 269 pages, \$5.95.

## THE WEEKEND GOLD MINER

By A. H. Ryan

Once a life-time occupation of prospectors and miners, the search for gold today is becoming as popular a hobby as gem collecting and bottle hunting. Every Saturday hundreds of "weekend prospectors" leave their homes and head for the mountains and deserts in search of "color".

The color may only be the evening sunset, but it entices families to get out under the open sky—and many times it pays for the weekend outing with money to spare.

Dr. A. H. Ryan, an electronic physicist, was bitten by the gold bug several years ago while on a fishing trip with his family. Since then he devotes his spare time to his new hobby.

*The Weekend Gold Miner*, which he describes as "A Handbook for Amateur Sourdoughs," is written clearly and has all the information needed for amateur prospectors. Even if you do not plan to seek gold, it is an interesting explanation on how and where gold is found, how it is separated from other material and how it is tested—so you can be an armchair authority. Paperback, 40 pages, \$1.50.

## ROCKS, GEMS AND MINERALS

By the Editors of  
*Gems and Minerals Magazine*

This is a combination handbook and directory that serves both as an introduction for the beginner and a useful source and guide for the experienced rockhound. Compiled from the 30-year files of *Gems and Minerals*, and *The Mineralogist*, the volume covers every facet of the popular hobby.

It is not a textbook, although enough technical information is given to permit readers to make judgments. It contains how-to-do information so a novice can get started in gem cutting, jewelry making, or mineral collecting, and, at the same time contains facts for the more advanced rockhound in a concise and comprehensive report.

The 17 chapters are complete within themselves, making research easy, so the reader can select at random the fields in which he is interested. Each chapter is well illustrated, especially those showing how to cut and polish gemstones.

Chapters include How To Get Started, Favorite Localities, Gem Cutting, Tumbling, Jewelry Making, Field Recognition of Gems and Minerals, Field Trips and Collecting Minerals. A chapter on Other Things to Do With Rocks illustrates ways of making mosaic pictures and many other displays for both inside and outside the home. Two important chapters are the Federation Directory and the Directory of Suppliers and Services.

Large format, profusely illustrated, color cover, 192 pages, heavy paperback, \$2.00.

# A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

Within California's four southern counties are majestic mountains covered with forests and snow-capped peaks, lakes and rivers—and the mysterious Colorado Desert.

From San Geronio Peak, rising 11,485 feet into the sky, to the Salton Sea, 248 below sea level, and from the "high desert" of San Bernardino County to the Anza-Borrego State Park in Imperial and San Diego counties, the land is rich in history and modern-day adventure.

This Special Issue is devoted to those areas, and to the Coachella Valley of Riverside County, where scenic Highway 111 winds through smog-free communities and date and citrus groves. Each winter season thousands of people every week leave the northern rain and snow to enjoy the sun and warmth of the Colorado Desert.

Location of the areas covered by articles in this issue are marked on the map on Pages 22 and 23, along with hundreds of other places of interest. On Page 34 there is a schedule of when and where the wildflowers bloom.

We hope you enjoy this edition, and the many exciting issues we have planned for 1969. And when you come to the Coachella Valley be sure to stop by our Desert Magazine Book Shop and Information Center. We are open six days a week, but closed on Sundays. Happy exploring.

*William Kuyf*

BOOKS



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## RIVERSIDE COUNTY'S

# NATIONAL DATE FESTIVAL

**F**EATURING SUCH attractions as the Arabian Nights Pageant and camel and ostrich races, this year's famed National Date Festival will be held in Indio, California February 14 through 23.

By taking its theme from the tantalizing tales told by Scheherazade the National Date Festival has grown from a modest county fair into one of the nation's most unusual expositions. The usual theme, which is characterized in many ways, recognizes the origin of dates from the nations of the Near East.

Most spectacular feature of the National Date Festival is the colorful Arabian Nights Pageant which is presented free each evening from a mammoth stage fashioned after an ancient Arabian Village.

Beautiful costuming and lighting created for the Arabian Nights Pageant help to enhance the performance of some 150 amateur singers and dancers in the musical extravaganza. Queen Schehera-

zade, a living counterpart to the legendary beauty and wit of old Bagdad, reigns over the National Date Festival with nine lovely princesses in the Queen Scheherazade Court of Beauty.

Comical camel and ostrich races are staged daily with the National Horse Show which is one of the nation's leading equestrian events. A large and diverse gem and mineral show, showings of desert paintings in the fine arts department and a varied collection of desert dry arrangements in the floriculture section are other attractions.

Dates and citrus are shown in displays which use such themes as: Aladdin's Lamp, Sinbad's Ship, Genies, flying carpets and other motifs from the delightful Arabian Nights fantasies.

For all of its romantic and exciting reproduction of fabled old Arabia, the National Date Festival retains the traditional features of a county fair, including a large Junior Fair and Livestock Show.

A costumed street parade through downtown Indio highlights Date Festival activities on George Washington's birthday.

National Date Festival grounds are on Highway 111 in Indio, about 125 miles from downtown Los Angeles, central San Fernando Valley and most of Orange County.

It should be borne in mind that daytime temperatures at Indio will range up to the high 80s but it normally starts cooling about 5 p.m. and wraps are desirable for viewing the Arabian Nights pageant.

Overnight accommodations are at a premium in and around Indio during the National Date Festival so reservations should be made as early as possible. Listings of hotels, motels and trailer parks taking overnight guests are available through the Indio Chamber of Commerce, Arabia Street and Highway 111, Indio, California 92201. □



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# SAGA OF THE SPADEFoot TOAD

by K. L. Boynton

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**F**OR A FELLOW with a thin moist skin that loses water fast by evaporation, the desert is the LAST place to be. But that corpulent opportunist, the Spadefoot Toad, has made himself right at home in the arid Southwest, mainly by capitalizing on the handicaps that beset him right and left. In fact, so good are his adaptations to this parched and rugged land, he doesn't give a croak for the worst the desert can do.

Frogs and toads belong to the amphibian animal group because they are "two-lifers," spending part of their lives on land, but tied to a partial life in the water. Not only are the adults bedevilled by having a hide that cannot keep the vital body fluids from evaporating, the youngsters must begin life and spend their early developing days in a fluid medium. All of which is why most frogs and toads stick around water courses or

cool and humid woods or gardens, and why the big shouting spring choruses and egg-laying bees are held in marshes and ponds and along slow-moving streams.

The hatching tadpoles spend their early days as fishlike creatures in the water, breathing by gills. Gradually they develop legs and potential lungs, eventually reaching the point of change where they come ashore as froglets or toadlets to breathe by lungs. Their hopping days must be spent close to the sources of moisture, for not only is their thin skin a moisture-loser, it is also a moisture taker-upper. Body fluid balance is maintained this way, since toads and frogs are not given to drinking. Furthermore, the thin moist hide is part of the breathing department, helping the lungs bring in oxygen needed to run the frog or toad concern.

With a set up like this it would seem the Spadefoot in the desert is definitely

in the wrong pew, but the fact is that 7 of the 8 or 9 species in North America live only in the arid lands of the Southwest; Arizona, New Mexico, California, Texas—all having various and sundry kinds.

Up front in the Spadefoot is noise making machinery second to none. Bringing up the rear is excavating machinery, fast and efficient, and in between a body with surprising physiological tricks. Add to this a pre-adaptation for standing high temperatures, and built-in tactics evolved under hot, arid conditions, and you have a combination the desert can't beat.

On the inner side of each hind foot is a wedge or sickle-shaped spade, a sharp edged digging tool with a hard bony core. Set at an angle and worked by tremendous leg and back muscles attached to rugged pelvic bones, these two spades make even hard soil fly, flinging it up-

ward and over the Spadefoot, who disappears downwards in surprisingly short time.

In burrows made this way, or in second hand holes of kangaroo rats or others of the digging gentry, the Spadefoot spends the day, coming out to stuff himself on insects and other arthropods in the cool darkness. Avoiding the heat by burrowing is a good survival trick, for the temperature even a few inches down is much lower. (For example, somebody made a test in the Sahara, finding the surface temperatures 140° F., while down less than 10 inches the temperature remained 89-91° F. throughout the day.)

Winter finds the Spadefoot deeply buried, with the entrance plugged up. Head down, feet held under him, he's barely alive, so low geared are his body processes. In the high summer heat and dryness, the Spadefoot retires into the ground again, estivating in a lighter sleep than hibernation. Here it is the thin skin is a tremendous plus, for it can absorb moisture from the surrounding soil, albeit there only in minute quantities. Run by hormones from the pituitary, this moisture-absorbing quality of the skin helps keep the Spadefoot plump and ready for business when conditions upstairs improve, and he can come forth again.

The Spadefoot has another ace while in the hole—namely a kidney-bladder arrangement designed to conserve and re-use water already in the body. Various parts of the kidneys work over the blood supply coming in, removing body waste materials, and returning most of the water to the circulatory system in standard fashion. Additionally, however, in the Spadefoots, production of urine slows down in periods of dryness for further conservation of water. The animal's wastes are secreted in a less toxic form than in many vertebrates, and the body itself has greater tolerance of high concentrations of these wastes. The bladder, too, serves as an extra water storage area, being big and extensible, so also do parts of the lymph system, and all this liquid can be gradually absorbed. The supply is allocated neatly in the Spadefoot under adverse conditions, too, so that the vital parts such as brain and heart are constantly well supplied.

With all this going for him, the Spadefoot keeps in operating condition during

the long period underground. And it is well that he does, because the first good rain acts like Gabriel's trumpet.

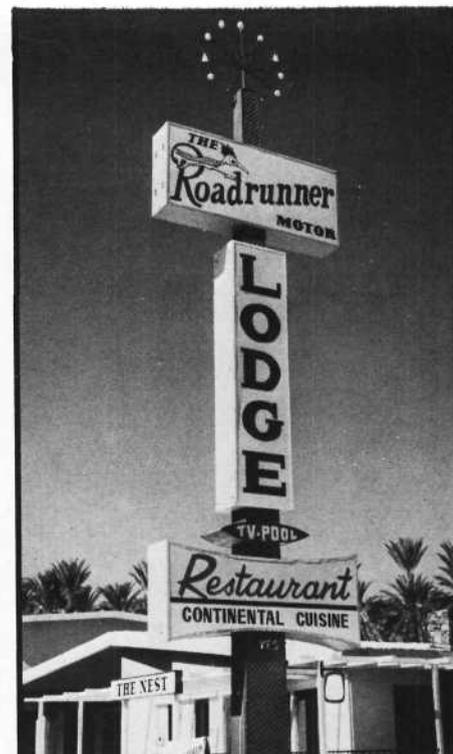
Out come the Spadefoots, the males hotfooting it to the first temporary rain pools. Here they set up a collective hoot and holler with their famous noise making machinery (air shunted back and forth between their lungs and closed mouth make their vocal cords vibrate and the racket is enhanced by resonating sacs) that can be heard for some two miles even by human ears. Naturally enough, lady Spadefoots are not deaf, and in no time at all, a hoe-down is underway.

Now the thing is that these shallow desert rain pools are not going to last very long, and if the Spadefoot population is going to be kept up, there can't be any fooling around. Desert evolved, both males and females are in ripe breeding condition, needing only the rain for stimulation. Eggs are laid fast and embryo development commences at once. In the few cool hours after laying, the early touchy stages are completed, so that with the coming of day and rising heat in the pool, the Spadefoot eggs have reached a stage that can better stand temperature strain.

The eggs not only hatch in record time (about two days compared to a week or so in other species) the tadpoles themselves develop faster than those of ordinary frogs and toads, and with luck the batch is through with its pre-adult stage in around three weeks.

But the temporary pools are getting shallower each day, drying up more and more and in the terrible race against time and the desert, the tadpoles themselves have developed behavior that helps keep up the species. Swimming and working their tails together, they beat up the bottom of the pool, stirring up food-bearing debris, making small hollows which deepen the remaining water, adding oxygen by water movement.

Fast developing as they are, the Spadefoot tadpoles have to go through the allotted metamorphosis, and the inexorable desert will not wait. Sometimes the race is lost; the last of the moisture fades away, and the tadpoles die. But often enough, the big race is won. Ashore come hundreds of young Spadefoots at last, to hop off confidently into the big desert, wherein they know just exactly how to make a home. □



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## JOSHUA TREE MONUMENT'S

# LOST HORSE VALLEY

by Sandra L. Keith

**I**N CALIFORNIA'S Riverside County where the Mojave and Colorado deserts quietly slip together, there are 870 square miles set aside as a national monument. Named after a tree that is actually a member of the lily family, the monument's altitudes range from 1000 feet at the eastern end to nearly 6000 feet in the Little San Bernardino Mountains. Within its boundaries the landscape changes from a monochromatic brown to one of blue and gold and green.

Approximately 150 miles east of Los Angeles, this particular piece of desert is the Joshua Tree National Monument. Here the balance of nature lies undisturbed, for within this carefully protected preserve no living or dead wood may be gathered, no plant or animal life removed, nor any natural object defaced. For miles in any direction the landscape remains essentially as it has for thousands of years, since before the White Man came and be-

fore the Chemehuevi and Serrano Indians were digging for food in this arid, beige earth.

The monument contains seven free campgrounds, and though not all of the campgrounds provide individual picnic tables they do possess campsite fireplaces and sanitary facilities. During the winter and spring months rangers conduct walks, trips, and fireside talks. Though the days may be warm and sunny for hiking, the nights can be chilly if not outright cold, so be sure to bring warm clothing and a good supply of groceries as well as your own firewood and water.

Joshua Tree National Monument is divided into several areas, and within the area known as Lost Horse Valley there are many intriguing sights. The most spectacular are the boulder mountains. Here the desert floor is woven with maze upon maze of skyscraping boulders and

high rocks. Within the Hidden Valley campgrounds the campsites themselves are tucked here and there against the granite outcroppings.

Hidden Valley is a completely enclosed valley and old-timers say it was used many years ago as a cattle rustlers' hideout. The rock mountains appear impregnable, but looking closer you'll discover a small brown sign pointing to a nearly hidden trail.

Once inside this wall of stones, the trail splits into a walkway and a crawlway. If you're feeling adventurous take the crawlway; it is a stoop-shouldered, slow-paced shuffle up and under some unbelievably massive monoliths, holding all the thrills and excitement of Tom Sawyer's cave.

The natural features along this Hidden Valley trail are marked by signs. You'll see specimens of the rich and varied flora scattered across the monument. Many of





*Hidden Valley campgrounds in the Joshua Tree National Monument is a maze of giant boulders and rocks. A favorite climbing and hiking area for children and adults, the site has a panoramic view of the valley. Joshua Trees and desert flowers dot the landscape. It is open throughout the year.*

the plants have unique titles, such as the flowering Saltbush, Mormon Tea, Blackbrush, Squaw Waterweed, Desert Peachbush, and Paper Bag Bush which may still hold its miniature onionskin-like seed bags upon its dry brown limbs.

And here is the magnificent Joshua Tree. The *yucca brevifolia* is a member of the lily family. It does not bloom every year and does not branch unless the terminal bud is killed; a job done either by the yucca-boring beetle or by the greenish-white flowers that bloom in large, dense clusters in April and May. When these buds have finished flowering the stem branches off in a new direction, giving an angular and erratic shape to the tree.

Of the varied cacti stabbing the rocks and sand, one of the most beautiful is the Cholla. It is a plant containing a myriad of long, slender white thorns tipped with yellow. Even without the sun shining

upon them they are lovely, but when sunlit they glow, basking in a translucent halo of light reflected upon their spines.

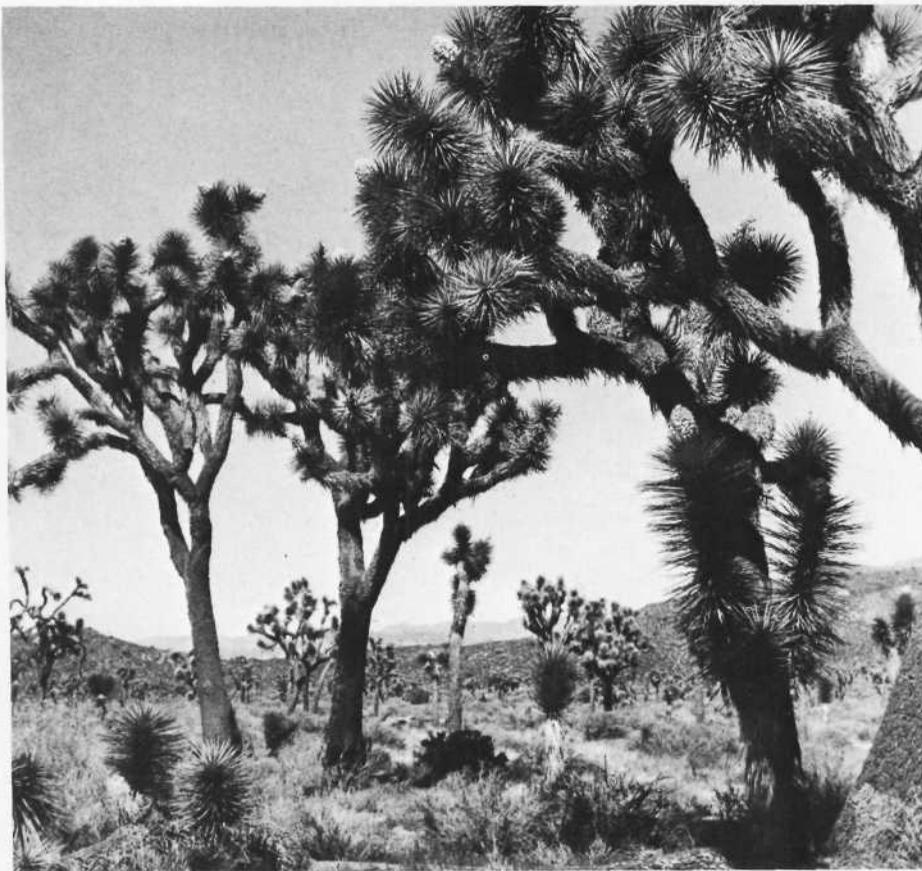
Another cactus is the Beaver Tail, which is easy to identify, as it looks exactly as its name implies. Though it appears to have no spines this cactus has sharp, nearly invisible spicules that can easily and painfully penetrate your skin, and because of their minute size they are tediously difficult to remove — as any parent who has ever tried to pull them from a child's hand can vouch for.

You will find delight in the Goldenbush with its golden flowerheads flooding the surrounding rocks. Lip Fern, small and delicate, grow under the lip of the rocks where rainwater collects and the sun's powerful rays cannot penetrate. Bright patches of light green, black, and chartreuse lichen cling against boulders, breaking them down and turning them into soil.

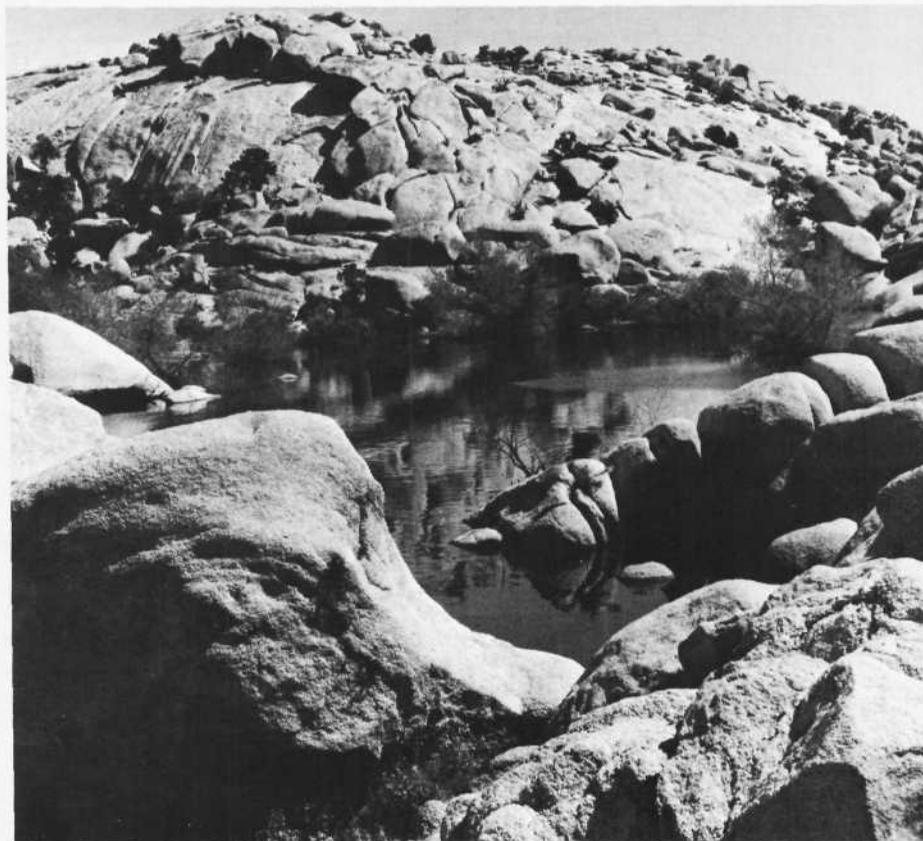
The trail passes a Wood Rat home, built in a long and thin rock crevice. Often called a pack rat, he builds his nest of Joshua Tree spines, sticks, stones, cactus joints, and rubbish. The visible portion here is Mr. Woodrat's front porch, for the real nest is usually underground where there is more security.

In a land where the wind can be fierce and the thunderstorms, though infrequent, often violent, boulders have been carved into strange and unusual shapes. It takes little imagination to recognize many familiar objects hidden upon these stone mountains, and along this trail you'll find an "Ox" and a "Trojan"—both marked by signs.

The last jog of the Hidden Valley trail winds up through a rocky gorge where the wind screams in and around the boulders. Perhaps you'll have the impression of a gigantic blizzard raging around



*The Joshua Tree was named by the Mormon pioneers who thought the outstretched branches of the plants resembled arms and the trees themselves gave the appearance of the prophet, Joshua.*



*Barker Dam forms a pool of water and reflects the clouds of the desert sky. It's a hidden oasis within the Joshua Tree National Monument. Indians used the springs within the Monument as did later prospectors and even cattle rustlers.*

the next corner, but it is only one more sleight of hand at which the desert is so very good.

The Cap Rock-Salton View Road is easily accessible within Lost Horse Valley, and just a short distance off this asphalt highway lies a weathered stone monument upon which the crudely carved words have all but disappeared. This is the bleak grave of Johnny Lang, an old prospector who was supposed to have hidden a fortune in raw gold somewhere within Lost Horse Valley. It is said he marked his hidden treasure with small stones, and supposedly much of the gold remains buried. But in a land already studded with millions of small rocks, where does one begin looking for buried treasure? And, remember, it is a criminal offense to dig in the area.

It isn't far now to Salton View. The road snakes along the mountain, wiggles up and up and then suddenly stops. Here on the edge of a mountain is a parking lot, and it is just a short way up a slope to the observation platform. From this altitude of 5,185 feet the dusty brown world below appears as a gigantic relief map; a vast sweep encompassing the entire Coachella Valley.

The panorama creeps in from the far left, 30 miles distant and 241 feet below sea level. From this small, gray speck on the horizon known as the Salton Sea, the sweep glides across and up, resting for a moment on the 10,000-foot escarpment of San Jacinto Peak, a chocolate cone sifted with snow; then your eyes slip to the far right and the 11,000-foot San Gorgonio Mountain, Southern California's highest peak, yet so far away it shows no more of itself than a whipped-cream dome glistening in the sun.

Over this whole sweep lies a thin, purple-beige haze. Yet what is lost in color is gained in scope, and standing here in the enveloping stillness you will realize that men who seek the deserts discover the quiet limits of the world.

Lost Horse Valley boasts other interesting places too. Some are rather out-of-the-way spots and require a sturdy pair of hiking shoes, such as the trip to Barker Dam. If you stay in the Hidden Valley campgrounds you'll have a mile and a half to walk. So head northeast toward that long, unbroken wall of rock, follow the thin and dusty one-lane road, and it will eventually narrow into a footpath which

will take you into a maze of rocks. The path creeps along, hot where the sun hits full face and cool in the shady and narrow crevices where monolithic boulders leave barely enough room to squeeze through.

In the springtime following a good wet winter, Barker Dam is beautiful. Nestled within these gigantic quartz-monzonite boulders, it is a large pool of water reflecting a sapphire sky and the happy chartreuse of new leaves upon the trees and the dark shadows of the granite giants.

Most of the mammals within the monument are either secretive or nocturnal. Yet you will undoubtedly spot the small antelope ground squirrel—even on the hottest days—playing hide and seek amidst these granite outcroppings. Squawking, splashing ducks may race across the water while dozens of lizards scurry along the warm rocks. Twilight may have already brought what appeared to be a ghostly mirage—coyotes skirting your campground; or perhaps your evening campfire has reflected the shadowy shape of a kangaroo rat lurking about the fire's orange edges. And though some of the animals in the desert have adapted to life so well that they can go all year without taking a drink, there are still those to whom this dam means survival.

Threading your way back along the same trail which brought you to Barker Dam, you'll discover another narrow pathway branching off to the right. This leads to Indian petroglyphs.

Lying inside a hollow, cave-like outcropping, the designs themselves are intriguing even though they have been vandalized and are now painted over with bright colors. These crude signs were chiseled here either by the Serrano or Chemehuevi Indians, both speaking the Shoshone dialects. Their exact age is unknown and what the oddly-shaped forms mean is still a secret, for these petroglyphs have never been deciphered.

Joshua Tree National Monument hides many other secrets. So climb the highest monolith you can find—and be prepared to blink unbelievably at what you survey from the top. It is a circular panorama—miles and miles of rock-bound mountains beating upon the edge of infinity's door; an inspiring technicolor of blue and gold and green splashed across this timeless desert canvas. □

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# San Sebastian Marsh

by George Leetch

I STARED in astonishment when I first saw it. There in front of me ran a clear little brook, gurgling quietly as it flowed into a placid pond the size of a backyard swimming pool. Emerald green thickets of salt cedar and mesquite grew with tropical lushness along the river bottom or festooned the steep bank on either side.

Schools of tiny fish, resisting the pull of the steady current, darted swiftly from one eddy to another, occasionally plunging into the protective shade of verdant patches of floating moss or duckweed.

Farther out in the stream bed, where a carrizo jungle screened the water, I could hear the raucous call of a bittern as it stalked about on its unseen business. A covey of ducks exploded from a smaller pond upstream, possibly startled by a read-tailed hawk which had swung into view.

This was San Sebastian Marsh! Nothing so unusual about it, really. Nothing except that it was right, smack dab in the middle of one of the world's hottest,

driest deserts! I was standing under the brilliant blue bowl of cloudless desert sky which curves up from the west out of Borrego Springs, sweeping over the cactus-studded Fish Creek Mountains and finally closes the horizon east of the Salton Sea.

Across the sand dunes to the north I could hear a truck shift its gears as it hauled a load of alfalfa along Highway 78. A scant 4 miles to the east, traffic was speeding along busy California State Highway 86 which borders the Salton Sea. Yet here I was, seemingly as isolated as if I were on the surface of the moon, and before me was one of the desert's secret places, rarely visited and little known.

When I first came to live in the Borrego Desert I had heard vague tales of a swampy area out among the sand dunes. It was said to be in the vicinity of Harper's Well which is on the old Kane Springs route of travel and was a popular watering spot in the days of the cattle drives from Warner's Ranch to the Imperial Valley. Other than these sketchy references that it was "somewhere out there on the desert" I could get little information as to the actual location of the marsh.

It wasn't until several months later, while I was reading an account of Captain Juan Bautista de Anza's California expeditions by Herbert Eugene Bolton, that I again came across the name San Sebastian and it was here that I got a real clue as to its whereabouts.

According to the well-kept diaries of Father Pedro Font, a Spanish priest who accompanied Anza on his historic trek across the desert, the oasis of San Sebastian played a critical role in the success of the explorer's efforts which eventually resulted in the founding of the city of San Francisco.

Captain Anza was the first great trail blazer across the interior of Alta California. It was during the tense period of the last half of the 18th century. The Spanish conquest of the new world was in full swing. Baja California had been colonized and Cabrillo and others had explored the upper California coastline. The great interior region of Alta California however, remained a mystery. In fact, it was believed by many that upper California was actually a huge island and had no access by land.

Emergency threatened the Spanish colonies when Russia started to extend her settlements from Alaska down the Pacific Coast. In brief, the great need of New California was far better transportation. The sea voyage from Mexico to the Pacific Coast was long and fraught with danger. The ships were inadequate and supply lines by sea were unpredictable.

Anza was one of the first to suggest a land route from Mexico to Alta California. He received his inspiration from the tales of Indians who lived on the Colorado River. They had heard of white men to the west who traveled up and down the ocean.



*The author looks down the marsh toward the Fish Creek Mountains. Along this arroyo in 1774 Captain Juan Bautista de Anza headed toward the Pacific Ocean. He was guided by an Indian, Sebastian Tarabel, after whom the oasis was named.*

*At the junction of Carrizo Creek and San Felipe Wash, the amount of water in San Sebastian Marsh varies with the season of the year and the amount of mountain runoff. Good camping areas are on the banks above the marsh. It once was an oasis for Indians and today is a source of water for desert animals.*



As if in answer to Anza's prayers, appeared Sebastian Tarabal, an Indian who had fled across the mountains from the Mission San Gabriel. Sebastian had traveled southeastward over the mountains, descended Coyote Canyon, threaded his way through the Borrego Valley and continued across the forbidding California desert to arrive in Sonora, Mexico shortly before Anza set forth. Learning of the Indian's arrival, Anza secured him as a guide for the long and unknown journey that he was about to undertake.

Few episodes of American history have been so thoroughly documented as were the Anza expeditions. So vivid and accurate were the records kept that the whole route can be retraced from day to day, camp to camp. Dependable water holes became matters of life or death. The fate of over 200 colonists who were under the leadership of Anza, rested on the guidance and memory of the Indian, Sebastian.

As Anza's caravan struggled across the desert west of the Colorado River, the scarcity of water became increasingly serious. Time after time the anticipated water holes were found to be dry or insufficient for the needs of the colonists and their animals.

By the time the weary expedition had reached the vicinity of what is now Plaster City they were forced to make a dry camp for the third day in a row. If water wasn't soon supplied the venture would perish. Sebastian, however, insisted that water would be encountered during the next day's travel. On the strength of this prospect, the pioneers managed to struggle another day's journey over the desert between Superstition Mountain to the east and the Fish Creek Mountains to the west.

Sebastian's word proved good and the exhausted caravan reached the promised water that afternoon. The joy and relief of the party was unlimited and the water site was christened "San Sebastian" in an expression of gratitude to the Indian guide. Father Font, Anza's faithful companion and chronicler of the historic march, wrote in detail of their arrival at the oasis and of the events that took place there.

The bedraggled caravan reached San Sebastian spring at half-past three in the afternoon of December 13, 1774. The desert was suffering a spell of icy cold and the surrounding mountains were com-

pletely covered with snow. Eight cattle and one mule froze to death that night. They had gorged themselves with water and the bitter cold killed them.

A small village of Indians was encountered at the marsh and Father Font describes their wretched, emaciated condition. It was only after repeated overtures of good will from the Spaniards that the Indians would draw near the encampment.

Anza's party camped at what is today known as Harper's Well, four miles west of Kane Springs and Highway 86. Two miles past Harper's Well is the marsh which was named after the Indian guide. The hardy company spent several days in this area, resting and refreshing themselves before pushing on to open a route to the Pacific Ocean.

San Sebastian Marsh is formed by the confluence of San Felipe Wash and Carrizo Creek. The water is an underground river for many miles as it drains down from the mountains to the west. At a point where the topography reaches better than 100 feet below sea level, the water surges to the surface, creating ponds and a small stream.



*Thickets of salt cedar mark the edges of San Sebastian Marsh in San Felipe Creek. The dense growth in the center of the photograph conceals the water. The unusual water oasis is near Harper's Well. It is only accessible by back country vehicles.*

This would be a splendid area to set aside for an historical landmark in commemoration of the vital role it played in early California history. Not only is the region of historical significance, but it has the added attraction of being a refuge and haven for wildlife. Coyote, fox, bobcats and many smaller creatures enjoy the protection of its isolation. Birds, attracted by the water, are in abundance and several varieties of small fish are to be found in the marsh.

Today the historic area is a forgotten nook, tucked away in the heart of the desert, yet within sight and sound of two busy state highways. Occasionally a jeep or sandbuggy wanders in to San Sebastian but usually only by accident. It's not an easy spot to find. The old Kane Springs road, which provides the best means of access, has not been maintained for many years and the barrancas and ravines are at the mercy of the summer thunder storms.

But for someone who has sufficient determination and a proper vehicle, San Sebastian Marsh is still there, much the same as it was when Anza's famous expedition gave thanks for the life-saving water. □

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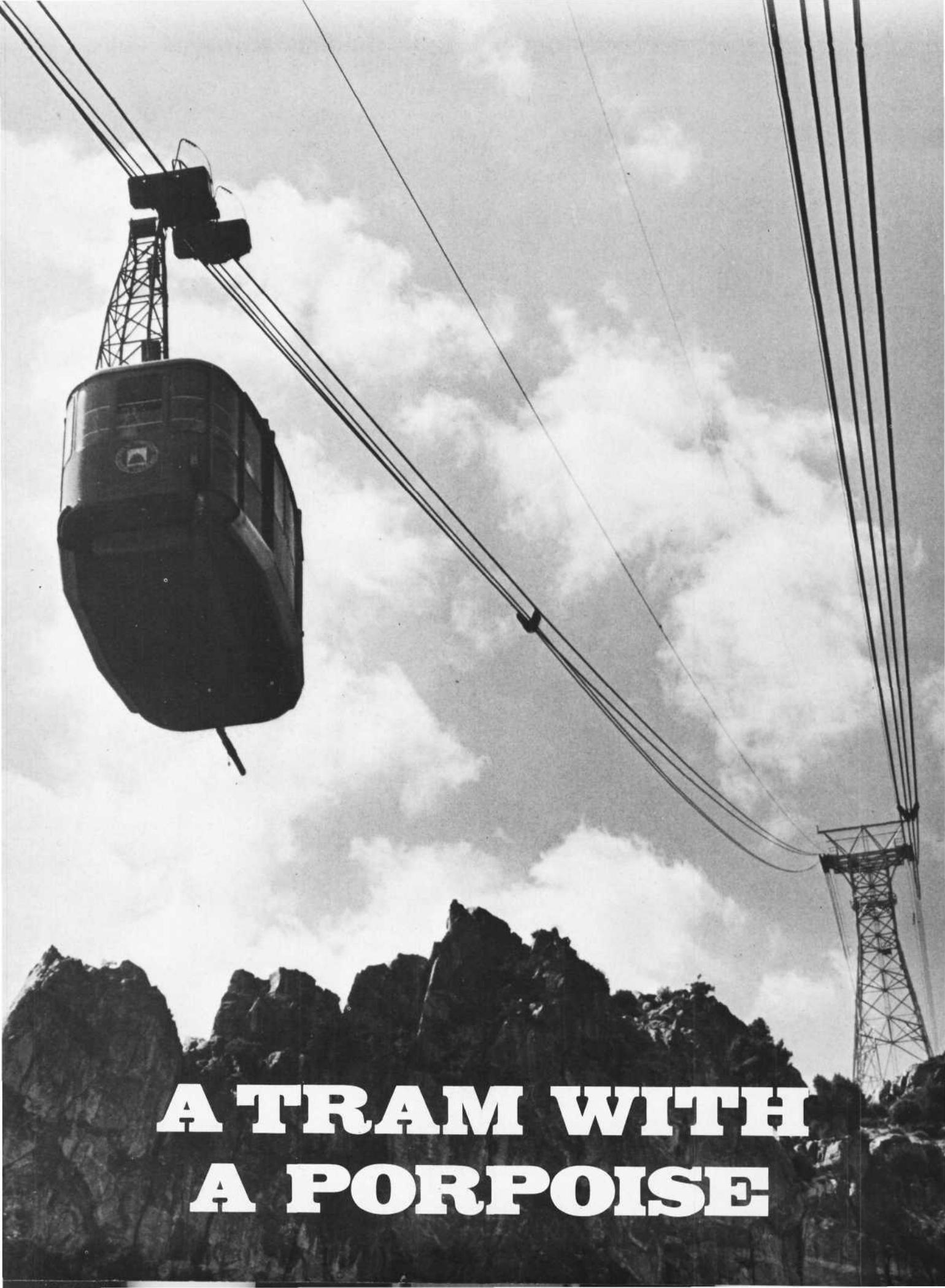


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by Mary Lehto

**F**AMILY FUN and adventure are the keynotes of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and Tramway Animal Park. In just one day, you can ride the largest passenger-carrying aerial tramway in the world, hike along pine-shaded mountain trails, dine in a beautiful Alpine Restaurant with a panoramic view of Coachella Valley—all at the Top of the Tram, some 8516 feet above sea level.

You can pet tame deer, see cockatoos roller skate, and watch dolphins play and perform in the pool at the Tram's Valley Station.

Dolphins in the desert? No, it's not an illusion. Buttons and Beau are live dolphins, who live, play and perform in the 10-foot deep pool at the Tramway Animal Park. There are also seals and pelicans, and even a penguin to entertain the young and young-at-heart.

During the regular performances held in the show arena, brilliantly plumaged South American macaws show off their extensive repertoire of acts such as riding the high wire on a bicycle without a net, slipping out of a ball and chain, or talking on the telephone. Suzie, the show-off chimpanzee, gets in the act, as do macaques and various species of monkeys.

Entrance to this all-new Tramway attraction is from the second level obser-

vation terrace at the Valley Station of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. For a nominal fee, visitors enter the petting arbor, where tame deer, black and silver African pygmy goats, Himalayan goats, and Angora sheep wander freely.

From the petting arbor, visitors walk down a gentle slope to the show arena where a grandstand seating more than 400 people is nestled against the base of a granite cliff. Shows featuring the trained birds, monkeys, dolphins and seals are performed daily, with new acts being added frequently.

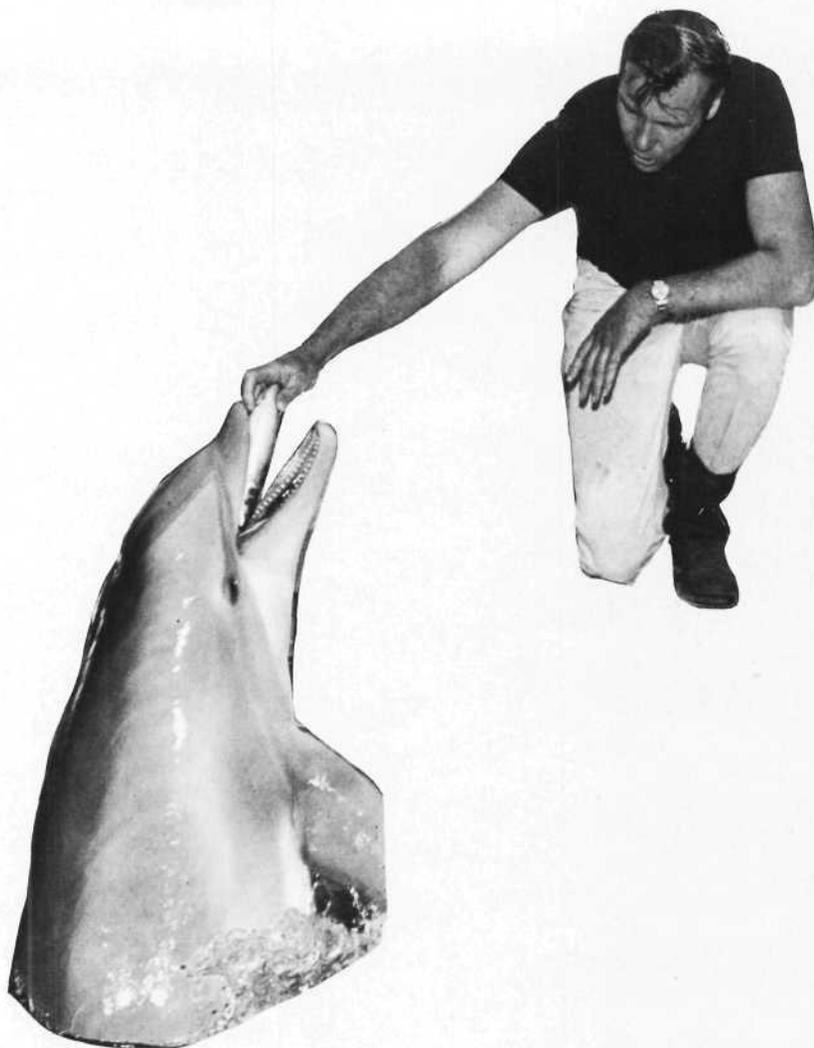
Tramway Animal Park is owned and operated by Animal Behavior Laboratories of Los Angeles, on 10 acres of land leased from the Mt. San Jacinto Winter Park Authority—the governing body of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. A large portion is fenced off for a herd of reindeer, brought in by Bob Jeffries,

owner and manager of Animal Behavior Laboratories. These reindeer roam throughout Chino Canyon. Some of them are always within sight of the Valley Station waiting room or can be seen by passengers on the cable cars as they start the 2½-mile trip up the canyon.

The show animals and birds are trained by a revolutionary method called Operant Conditioning. This method was developed by Dr. B. F. Skinner of Harvard University and psychologists say as a result of using this new method, scientists are able to demonstrate above average and complex behaviour not previously thought possible in birds and animals.

Visitors can enter the park and watch the shows, leave for lunch or a snack and a ride on the Tram, and then return to the park again, without extra charge.

The Palm Springs Aerial Tramway is now in its sixth year of operation. Long





*Curious reindeer watch as you watch them in their new canyon home.*



*In the petting arbor children and animals meet on a common ground.*



*Suzie, the show-off chimpanzee, gets a disconnect from a macaw.*

a dream of a young electrical engineer named Francis F. Crocker, the Tram became a reality with the help of O. Earl Coffman and many other dedicated Palm Springs residents. It is controlled by the Mt. San Jacinto Winter Park Authority, a public agency and public corporation of the State of California which was created by an act passed in 1945.

Construction of the \$8.1 million Tramway was begun early in 1961 with funds raised through the private sale of revenue bonds. It was soon labeled "the eighth engineering wonder of the world" because of the construction challenge presented by the rugged granite cliffs of Chino Canyon. Helicopters proved to be the answer and the whirly-birds flew more than 20,000 missions during the two years of construction, hauling in men and materials.

Today riders on the two 80-passenger cable cars can still see the iron stakes, which held the 20 by 20-foot landing pads for the helicopters, protruding from rugged crags and outcroppings completely inaccessible by man on foot.

The dangerous mission was completed without any fatalities or permanent injuries.

The Tramway cable length is approximately 2½ miles, with the vertical rise 5875 feet—more than one mile. The counter-balanced cable cars travel between the Valley Station, at 2643 feet above sea level, to the Mountain Station, 8516 feet above. On the way they pass five steel towers, the first being 214 feet high, the equivalent of a 21-story building. The combined weight of steel in the five towers totals 263 tons. The towers support four steel track cables, as well as the four hauling cables, two auxiliary cables and a communications cable between the Valley and Mountain Stations. During the summer of last year, the four hauling cables were replaced and a complete five-year overhaul and inspection was concluded.

The Tramway facilities include a gift shop, snack bar and cocktail lounge at the Valley Station. The Mountain Station, which is the doorway to the 13,000-acre Mt. San Jacinto State Park, is complete with Alpine Restaurant, gift and apparel shops, cocktail bar, and a magnificent view of Coachella Valley. A thermal sidewalk, which is always free of snow in the winter months, leads down to Long

Valley. There, temperatures are always at least 40° cooler than on the desert floor. In the summer, there are 54 miles of hiking trails and 11 campgrounds open to adventurous outdoorsmen. In the winter, a warming hut near the Ranger Station in Long Valley, offers snow equipment, such as toboggans, sleds and snow discs for rent.

In the 18-minute ride from the valley to the Mountain Station, four complete geological life zones—the equivalent to life changes observable on a motor trip from Sonora, Mexico, to the Arctic Circle in Alaska, can be seen.

At the lower level, in the Sonoran Zone, are found desert vegetation, such as Whipple yucca and creosote, and on the lower floor, sycamore, cottonwood and wild grape. Desert bighorn sheep are frequently seen. The terrain is mostly metamorphic rock.

In the Upper Sonoran and Lower Transitional Zones, scrub oaks and mountain mahogany, some wild lilac and wild apricot and manzanita is found. Rock formations are granite, much broken up and intruded by lighter and darker bands and blocks. The bands and blocks are quartz

and feldspar and iron minerals. Animals such as deer, mountain lion, fox, bobcat and mountain sheep are found at this level.

Chaparral, pinyon pine, juniper and scattered coulter or big cone pine and white fir are found in the next observable life zone, Lower and Upper Transitional. The granite core of Mt. San Jacinto is now much in evidence. It is not volcanic in origin, but rather is granite batholith, formed when great masses of granite solidified below the earth's surface and then were forced upward to form the mountain. The animal life is the same as lower in the canyon, with the addition of the California gray squirrel.

In the Upper Transitional Zone, yellow and big cone pine trees, pinyon pines and scattered lodge pole pine and white fir are found. Animal life is the same. Although there once were black and grizzly bears in this region, they vanished from these mountains in the 1890s.

For the geology student, there is much to see and study, and for families there is always much to do at the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and Tramway Animal Park. □

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# Berdoo Canyon Gold

by Donald R. Hoff

IN THE Little San Bernardino Mountains a few miles north of Indio, California, lies an ancient river channel composed of cemented gravel which contains an undetermined amount of placer gold. Its location is known—at least two men have taken gold from it—and it lies within a hundred feet of a good dirt road. Yet for over 30 years its hidden wealth has remained undisturbed by the hand of man because of the peculiar circumstances which have prevented its being exploited.

I have kept the story quiet for the past five years since I first learned of its location first-hand from one of the two men who have taken gold from it; mostly because I wanted to find some way of obtaining it for myself. I was unsuccessful in numerous attempts. So, having gone on to other things, I leave the story to anyone with enough ingenuity to succeed where I have failed.

I first heard about the Berdoo Canyon gold from a man I will call John Mason, since the old gentleman is still alive and wouldn't appreciate being deluged by inquiries from hundreds of eager lost mine hunters. Besides, it can be found quite easily from the map which accompanies this story, so his real name doesn't matter.

The story begins in the early 1930s when John Mason, a machinist, was looking for a job in Southern California. Hearing about possible employment opportunities on the Colorado River Aqueduct project he secured employment as a machinist on the project. For two years he lived and worked at Berdoo Camp, the base camp for the drilling and blasting crews of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District, which were assigned to

complete the Berdoo Canyon section of the Aqueduct.

The concrete foundations of Berdoo Camp still lie in the sun on the hills overlooking Berdoo Canyon; mute evidence that a small army of men once lived and worked there.

The Colorado River Aqueduct was built to bring Colorado River water to the City of Los Angeles. It runs roughly east and west across the southern slopes of the Little San Bernardino Mountains, north of Indio. The general plan of construction in this hilly section was to drill a large portal or adit northerly for a distance to the aqueduct line. Then, drilling and blasting crews would cut their way east and west simultaneously until they joined similar crews working toward them from other portals along the aqueduct. Then, after the aqueduct was completed, the portals were to be preserved as entryways to gain access to the aqueduct if it became necessary to do repair or maintenance work on the waterway.

Both Berdoo Canyon and its eastern counterpart, Fargo Canyon, were chosen as drilling sites for adits in that area. Huge piles of broken rock and rubble still lie in large dumps near the portal entrances in both canyons. According to Mason, all the portals were driven in solid rock to give maximum overhead support, so that it was not necessary to give them a concrete lining as was done with the aqueduct itself to give it a smooth-flowing surface to carry water.

As they drilled in, a curious circumstance developed in the Berdoo Canyon adit a short distance from the entrance.

What had started to be solid rock at the portal entrance suddenly changed to what looked like an old stream channel 10 to 16 feet wide, composed of cemented gravel. Because of a constant threat of a cave-in, this area was shored on both sides and on the top with wooden retaining walls. After this was done, the drilling and blasting crews resumed their work of drilling through solid rock until they reached the aqueduct line.

During some of his leisure hours, John Mason would wander through the Berdoo Canyon adit to see how the work was progressing. It was on one of these walks he became curious about what lay behind the wooden walls that kept the cemented gravel from caving in on that section near the portal entrance. At one point, the shoring was far enough from the side wall of gravel to permit him to squeeze through and collect a small bag of gravel which he later panned to see if it contained any gold. Much to his surprise, a bright crescent of coarse gold showed in the angle of his gold pan. Succeeding pannings of gravel samples from behind the wall indicated the presence of a rich deposit of gold.

Thereafter, John Mason made nightly visits behind the wooden shoring to his private gold mine, collecting bags of gravel which he brought out and later panned during some of his off-hours, netting him considerable coarse gold which he collected in jars.

One night, while he was behind the wood shoring collecting more bags of gold-laden gravel, the condition of the gravel looked as though someone else had also been digging into it. However, as he

emerged from behind the shoring carrying his bags of rich gravel, he almost ran into another project employee. After comparing notes, each learned that the other had been secretly collecting gravel nightly from the same spot. Thereafter, the two men made nightly forays together to the rich gravel behind the wood shoring in the portal until their duties called them to work elsewhere on the project.

There, in a nutshell, is the story of Berdoo Canyon gold. It is still there, behind the shoring in the Berdoo Canyon adit of the Colorado River Aqueduct. Some old-timers love to spin yarns about lost gold and silver strikes, many of which may be fabrications without an ounce of truth in them, and this may



*Entrance to the Colorado River Aqueduct water system is behind barbed wire. It is a criminal offense to trespass on the property, but author believes the placer gold may be found in public land outside the restricted area.*



*Berdoo Canyon Camp in 1936 when it was the Riverside County construction site for the Colorado River Aqueduct. Only shells of the buildings remain today. See map on Page 22 for location of Berdoo Canyon.*

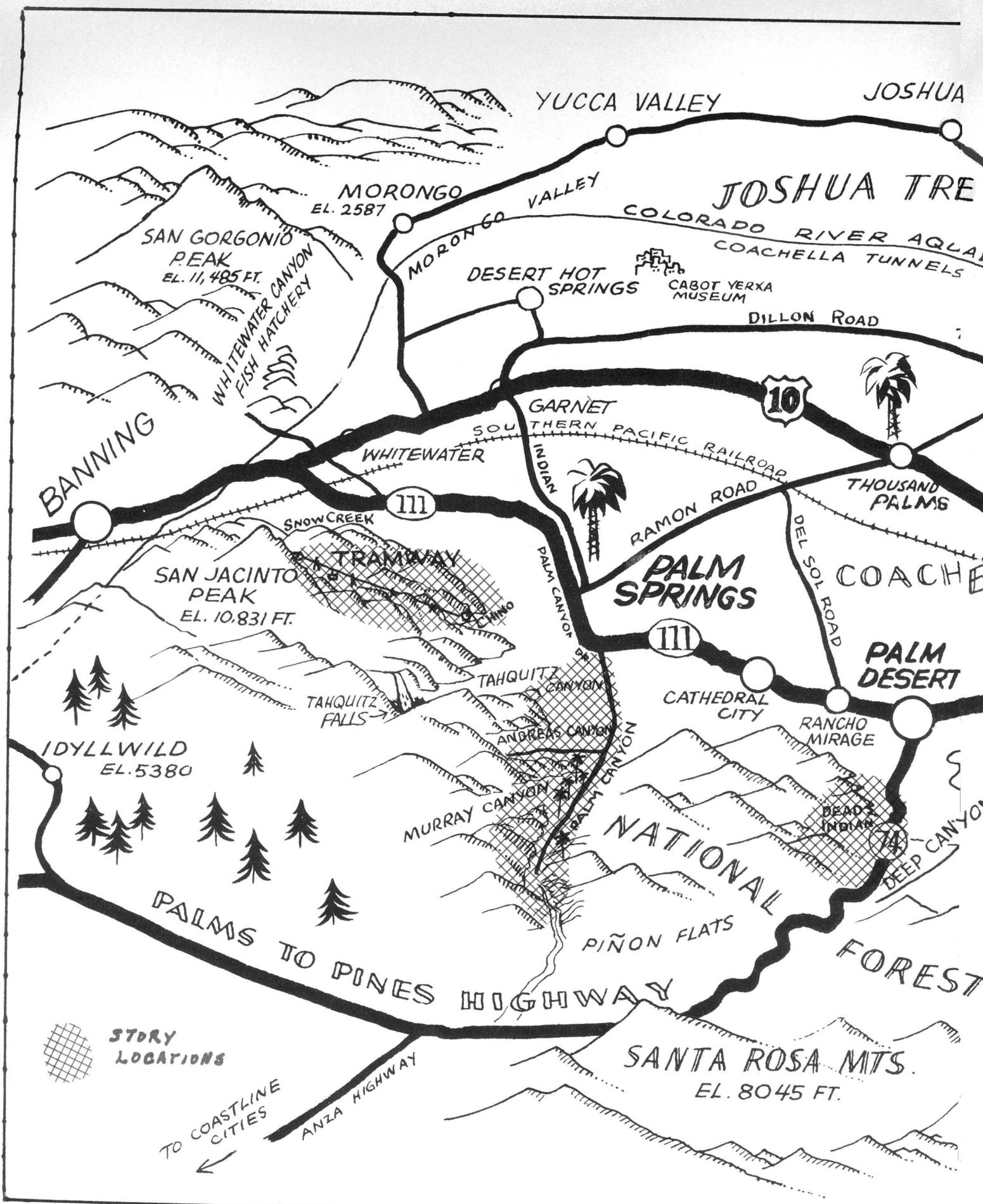
*Steel doors bar entrance to the portal behind which two employees working on the water project are supposed to have removed placer gold from the project diggings.*



account for the fact that most lost mines stay lost.

Was John Mason's gold gravel story such a fabrication? One thing lends credence and validity to his story. On page 155 of the History and First Annual Report of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District, the following notation appears: "A short distance east of the Berdoo adit an old canyon filled with cemented gravel was crossed."

It would be a simple matter to work this rich placer gold deposit. It is easily accessible, on ground level, and one can drive any ordinary vehicle to within a hundred feet of it.



YUCCA VALLEY

JOSHUA

MORONGO  
EL. 2587

MORONGO VALLEY

JOSHUA TREE

SAN GORONIO  
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10

WHITEWATER

111

RAMON ROAD

THOUSAND  
PALMS

SAN JACINTO  
PEAK  
EL. 10,831 FT.

SNOWCREEK  
TRAMWAY

PALM  
SPRINGS

COACHE

111

PALM  
DESERT

IDYLLWILD  
EL. 5380

TAHQUITZ  
FALLS

TAHQUITZ CANYON  
ANDREAS CANYON  
PALM CANYON

CATHEDRAL  
CITY

RANCHO  
MIRAGE

PALMS TO PINES HIGHWAY

MURRAY CANYON

NATIONAL  
PIÑON FLATS

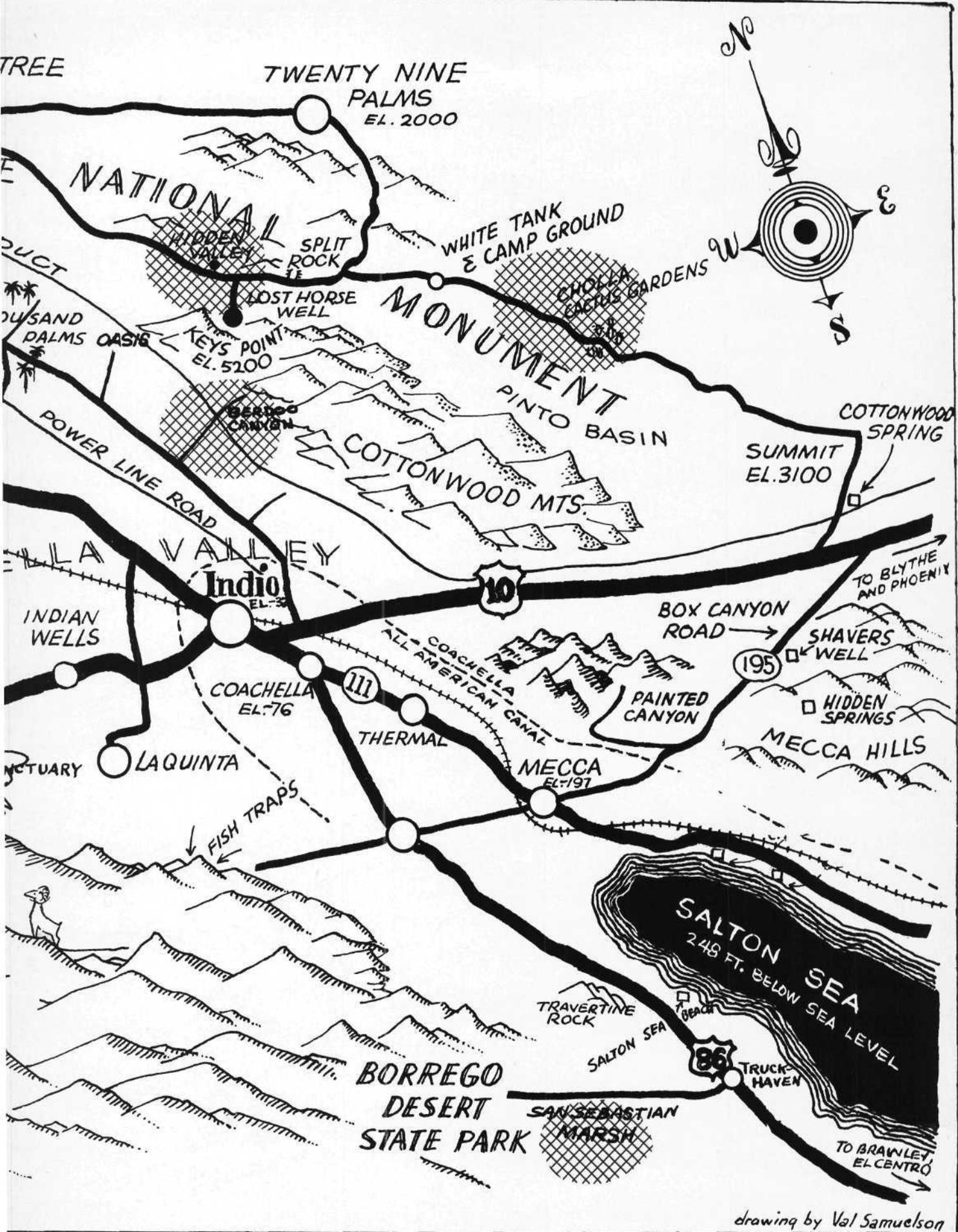
DEAD INDIAN  
DEEP CANYON

STORY  
LOCATIONS

TO COASTLINE  
CITIES

ANZA HIGHWAY

SANTA ROSA MTS.  
EL. 8045 FT.



drawing by Val Samuelson

# Ancient

# Lake Cahuilla

by Helen Walker

SOME 10 TO 15 million years ago a great upheaval changed the face of the Colorado Desert. A split along California's San Andreas fault broke a portion of the west coast of Mexico away from the mother continent and formed what is now Baja California. Into this void rushed the waters of the Pacific Ocean, surging northward and covering a part of the Colorado Desert.

This inland sea extended as far north as San Geronio Pass, less than 100 miles south of Los Angeles. It was called the Sea of Cortez by the early Spanish explorers and later was named the Gulf of California.

However, as millions of years passed the land continued to change its contour and eventually a natural dam bridged its

way across the sea, cutting off the northern section from what is the present day Gulf of California. Deprived of its salt water source, the northern section finally disappeared as a result of leakage and evaporation, leaving only an arid wasteland. Stretching a distance of nearly 100 miles and measuring a depth of close to 1000 feet, this basin is the Salton Sink or Cahuilla Basin.

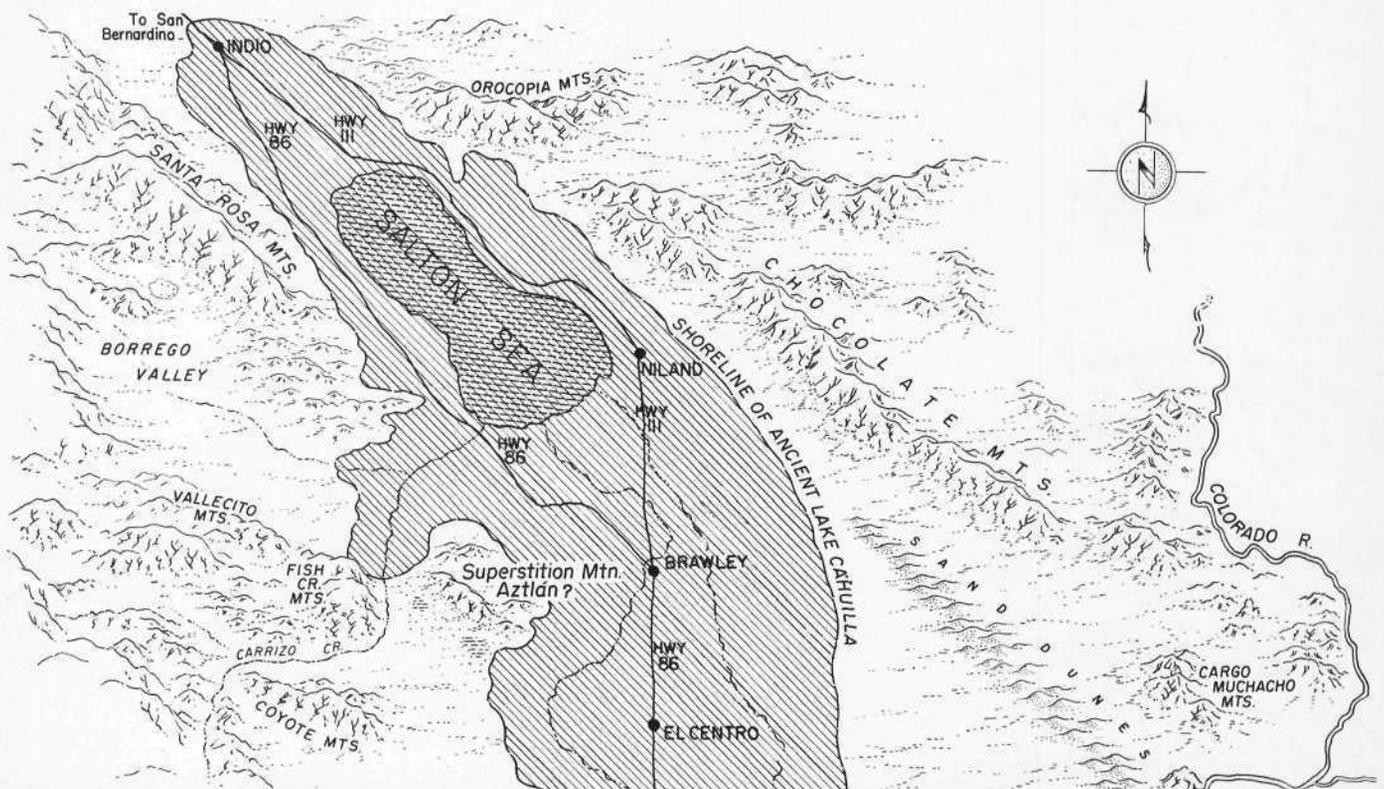
Again, millions of years passed, and the restless Colorado River made another shift of its course, this time abandoning the Gulf of California outlet, moving northward so fresh water flowed into the Salton Sink. This change of the Colorado River path occurred numerous times during the geological time scale.

During one of these course switches

Lake Cahuilla was created, probably between 900 A.D. and 1400 A.D. It remained a lake around which ancient Indians lived until it, too, became dry as a result of evaporation and another switch of the Colorado River. It was a much deeper lake and covered many more miles than the present day Salton Sea.

After the disappearance of Lake Cahuilla the Salton Sink was an arid basin until 1905 when once again the then turbulent Colorado River changed its course during a heavy flood, broke through its man-made banks and poured into the basin, creating what today is the Salton Sea.

This last rampage of the Colorado destroyed part of the Southern Pacific Railroad which promptly dumped tons of



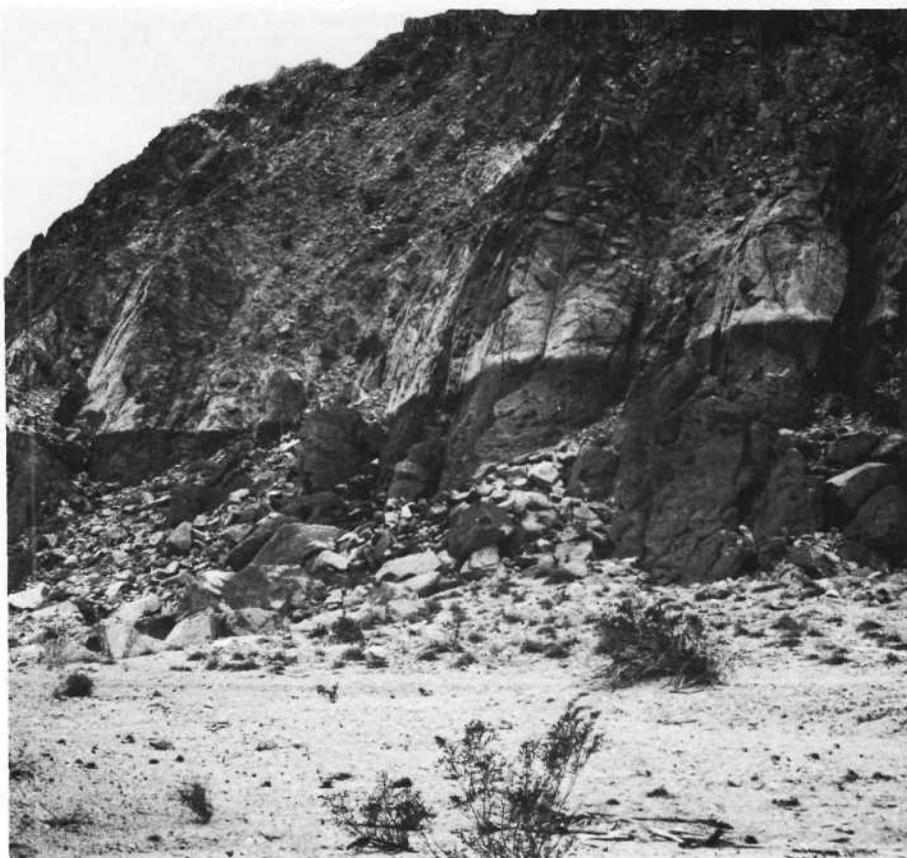
rocks across the path of the river, finally putting the wandering waters back into the main channel. Today the Salton Sea is fed only by water from irrigation of the Coachella Valley and has no outlet. Plans are underway to alleviate this problem, otherwise the salt content will eventually kill the fish and silt will once again turn the Salton Sea into an arid basin.

When the area was first discovered by Spanish explorers, in the early 1500s, it was a desert sink. During this dry spell, and for many years to come, it was the home of the peaceful Cahuilla Indians. They found living pleasant in the deep cleft canyons. A ground cover of thick mesquite grew in the damp sands of the canyon floors. Water was available to both the Indians and the small game they hunted. The rabbits and antelope fell victim to their arrows and traps. The beans from the mesquite were pounded into a paste, and cooked for additional food.

Today, along the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains western exposure, you can see the ancient water marks left by Lake Cahuilla. On the mound of boulders, which were submerged during the life of the lake, you will discover a calcareous material, known as tufa. It still holds the remains of many fossils and shells that were present during the sea invasions. An award for climbing the angular boulders is the possibility of finding the Indian petroglyphs that were scratched into the surface, arrowheads and potsherds.

Directly below the mound of rock, and in no particular pattern, are rock circles. It has not been determined just what was the purpose of these circular piles. Some authorities say they were used as fish traps, others claim they were ceremonial pits, foundations for houses or storage huts. Still others say the rings were used for blinds while hunting.

To obtain a glimpse into the geological and historic past of this part of the Colorado Desert take Highway 86 south of Indio (which is reached by the San Bernardino Freeway) toward Brawley. Approximately 20 miles south is Travertine Rock. From here south can be seen the ancient shoreline of Lake Cahuilla on the Santa Rosa Mountains. The area provides ample space for exploring the many washes and camping during your weekend outing. □



*The ancient shoreline of Lake Cahuilla can be seen from La Quinta to below Travertine Rock along the cliffs of the Santa Rosa Mountains. Several good gravel roads will take explorers to the mountain base but watch for sandy areas.*

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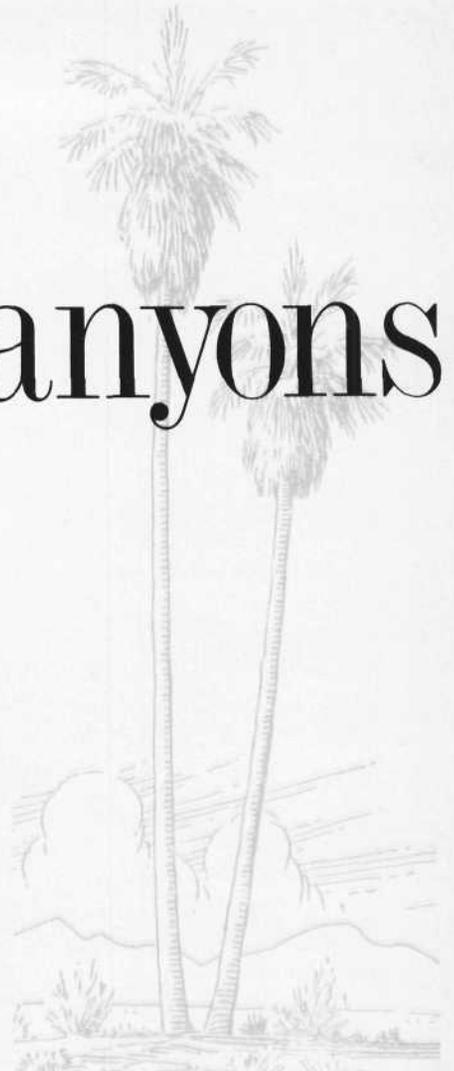
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# Wild Palm Canyons



*Canyons around Palm Springs and Palm Desert abound in the native Washingtonia filifera palm trees and are a favorite site for hikers, picnickers and sightseers. This is Palm Canyon.*



**L**EAVING THE barren San Bernardino Freeway (Interstate 10) a few miles north of Palm Springs, Highway 111 enters the famous resort city and for 30 miles passes through other verdant communities along an oasis of palm trees, citrus groves, date shops, golf courses and other scenic attractions until it rejoins the freeway at Indio.

This unique part of the Coachella Valley is nestled between the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa mountains on the west and the Little San Bernardino Mountains on the east, both rising thousands of feet above the sea-level highway.

Although they appear bleak and desolate from Highway 111, the San Jacinto Mountains have dozens of canyons, many fed by underground springs which are the life source for the wild Washingtonian Palms, clustered among the rock formations. Most of these wild palm canyons can be reached by passenger car—and a short scenic stroll. A few are listed here. Also see locations on map on Page 22.

The greatest concentration of wild palms is in the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa mountains adjacent to Palm Springs and Palm Desert. With the cooperation of the Agua Caliente band of the Mission Indians, there are access roads and picnicking facilities in lower Palm and Andreas canyons. This area is open from October 15 to May 15. Admission charge is 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children. The collected fees go to the Indian tribal fund for maintaining the area.

### PALM CANYON

Largest of the wild palm oases, Palm Canyon has approximately 3000 native trees along a 7-mile sector of the lower gorge growing along the banks of a stream which rises in springs in the mountains and gradually disappears in the desert sand. There is a parking area and a little Indian trading post. There are good trails winding among the palms, many of which are 60 feet high and are an estimated 300 years old.

### ANDREAS CANYON

Here is a place to picnic among cottonwood, sycamore and native palms. Stream orchids grow in shallow water along the stream where you can rest in the shade. There are Indian mortars and petroglyphs in the caves. Near the trees is also a cave bearing the smoke charrings of ancient Indian fires.

### MURRAY CANYON

Murray Canyon, another of the Palm Canyon tributaries, has a creek lined with palms and a flowing stream part of the year. There is an unimproved trail which follows the floor of the canyon but it is recommended only for the more rugged hikers.

### WEST FORK CANYON

The West and East Fork canyons of Palm Canyon are also only for the more rugged hikers. Clothing resistant to cats-claw and other thorny shrubs should be worn. It affords a magnificent panorama of Coachella Valley and the tops of other palms.

### FERN CANYON

Fern Canyon, sometimes known as Dripping Springs Creek, is a tributary which takes off on the east side of the south Palm Canyon Drive just below The Bench. This is also the home of the native palm and near the upper trees is a

gorgeous bank of maidenhair ferns—green only when there has been generous seasonal rain to provide ample water.

### TAHQUITZ CANYON

Remarkable Tahquitz Canyon is a mile and a quarter south of Ramon Road along the base of the San Jacinto Mountains. Although on Indian land it is not within the reservation, so the season schedule and admission fee of Palm Canyon and its tributaries do not apply to this area, open throughout the year.

Park your car on Ramon Road west of Palm Canyon Drive and a short walk will

Continued on Page 36

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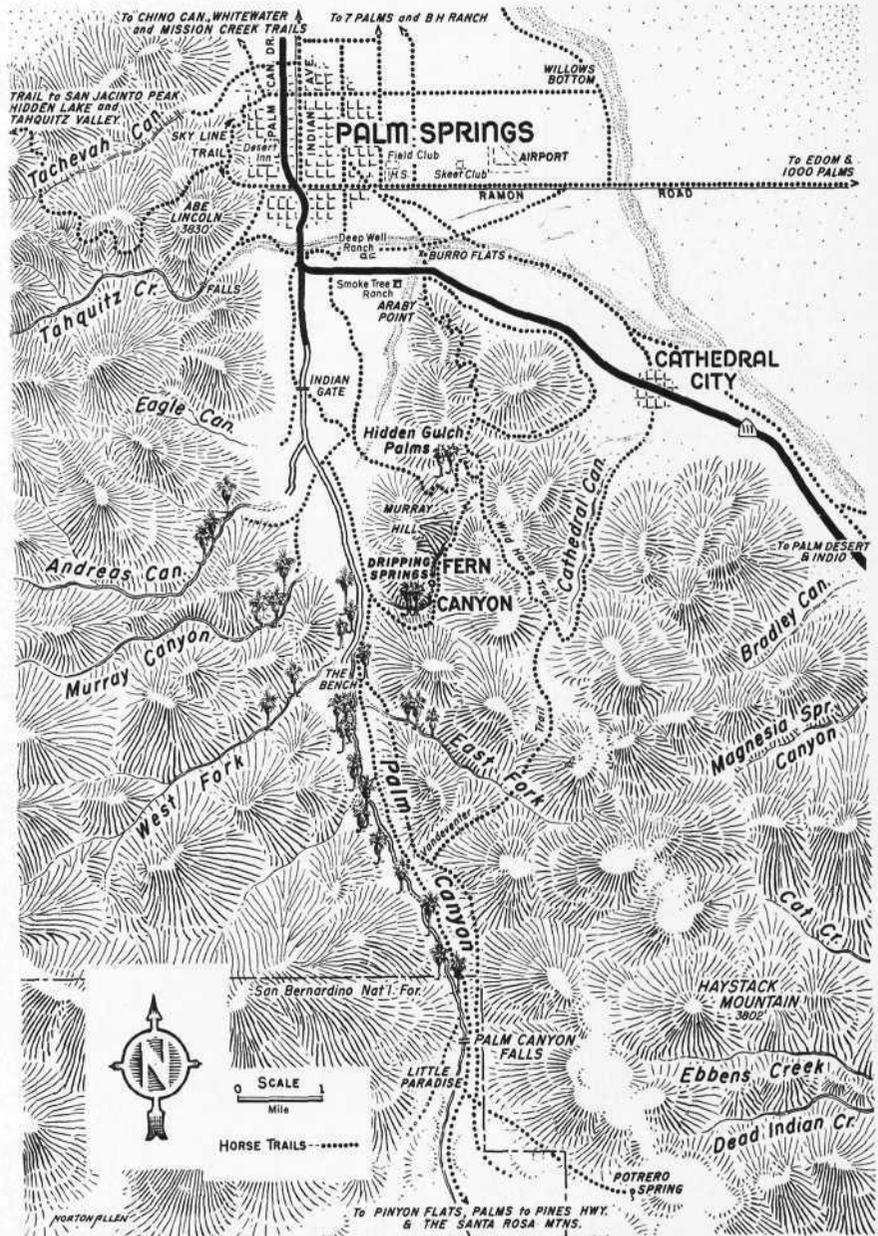


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Largest concentration of native palm trees in Southern California is in Palm Canyon, only a short ride from Palm Springs. More than 3000 of the majestic Washingtonia filifera line the stream beds of the San Jacinto Mountain canyons.



# Fear The Teddy Bear Cholla

by Ann Showalter

**F**ROM A DISTANCE the furry-looking Teddy Bear Cholla seems to be simply another desert plant struggling for survival in a hostile environment. Only upon closer inspection does the unwary traveler discover the reasons behind this cholla's more infamous name—the Jumping Cactus.

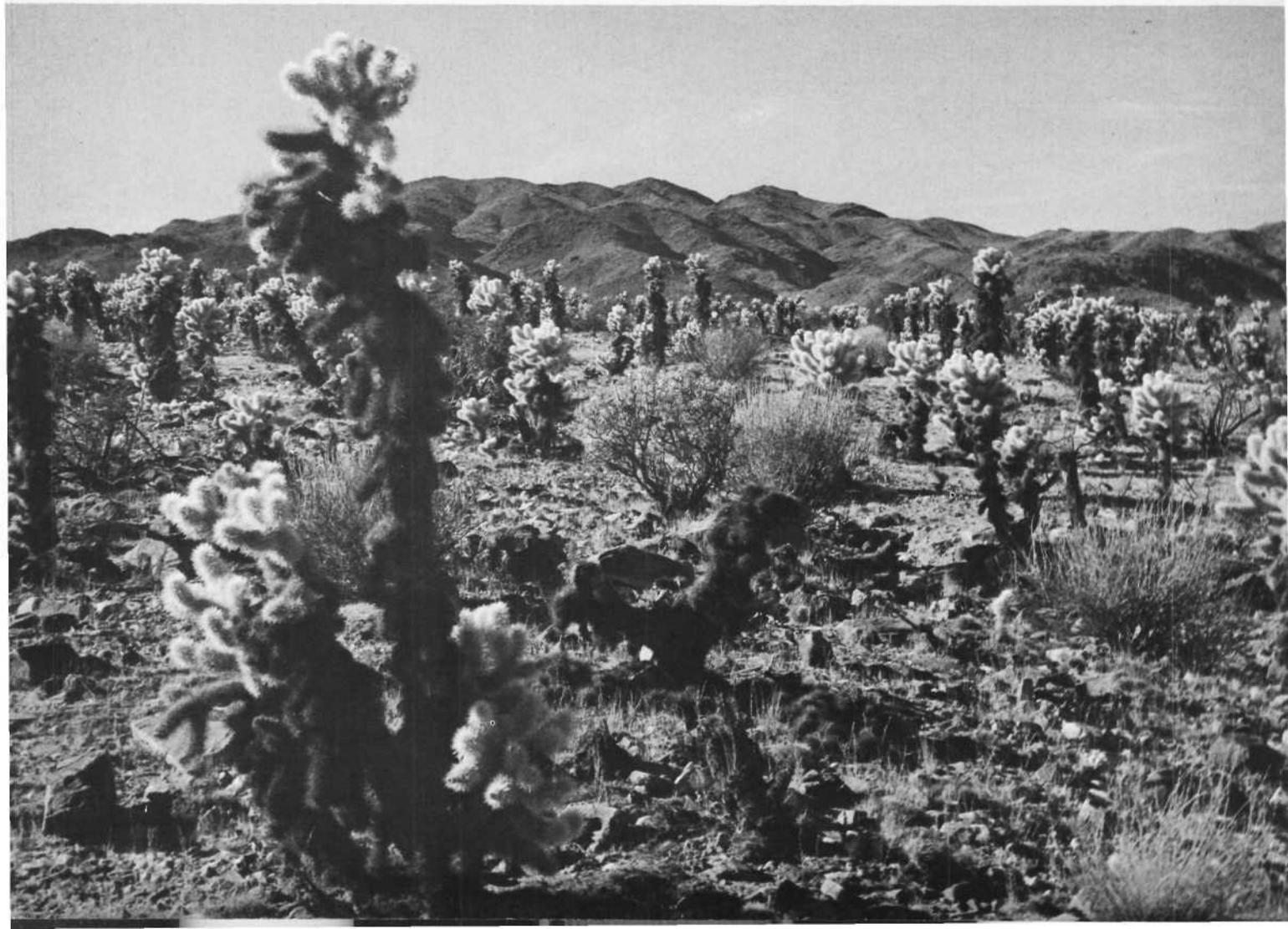
Any soft material, including flesh, which brushes against this cactus is immediately penetrated by its insidiously barbed spines. Although Jumping Cholla has no actual means of propulsion, there

sometimes seems to be no other explanation for its unwelcome and often painful presence on clothing or skin. Usually pliers or some similar tool must be used to pull the spines free. It is possible for a spine which has broken off in flesh to travel through the body for months before it emerges at a spot far distant from the point of entry.

Cholla (pronounced choy-ya) is a Mexican name given to cactus of the *Opuntia* genus which have jointed cylindrical stems and branches. Various

species of cholla are found throughout the deserts of the southwestern United States and in Mexico. Jumping Cholla (*Opuntia Bigelovii*) grows erect, usually two to five feet tall. It is easily recognized by its abundant cluster of silvery, spiny stems topping a dark trunk and old base branches. The inconspicuous lavender-streaked yellow blossoms appear in late April or early May. Inch-long spines are covered by a papery sheath which can be pulled off easily to expose the wicked barbs. The cylindrical segments of the

Photos by Bill Showalter



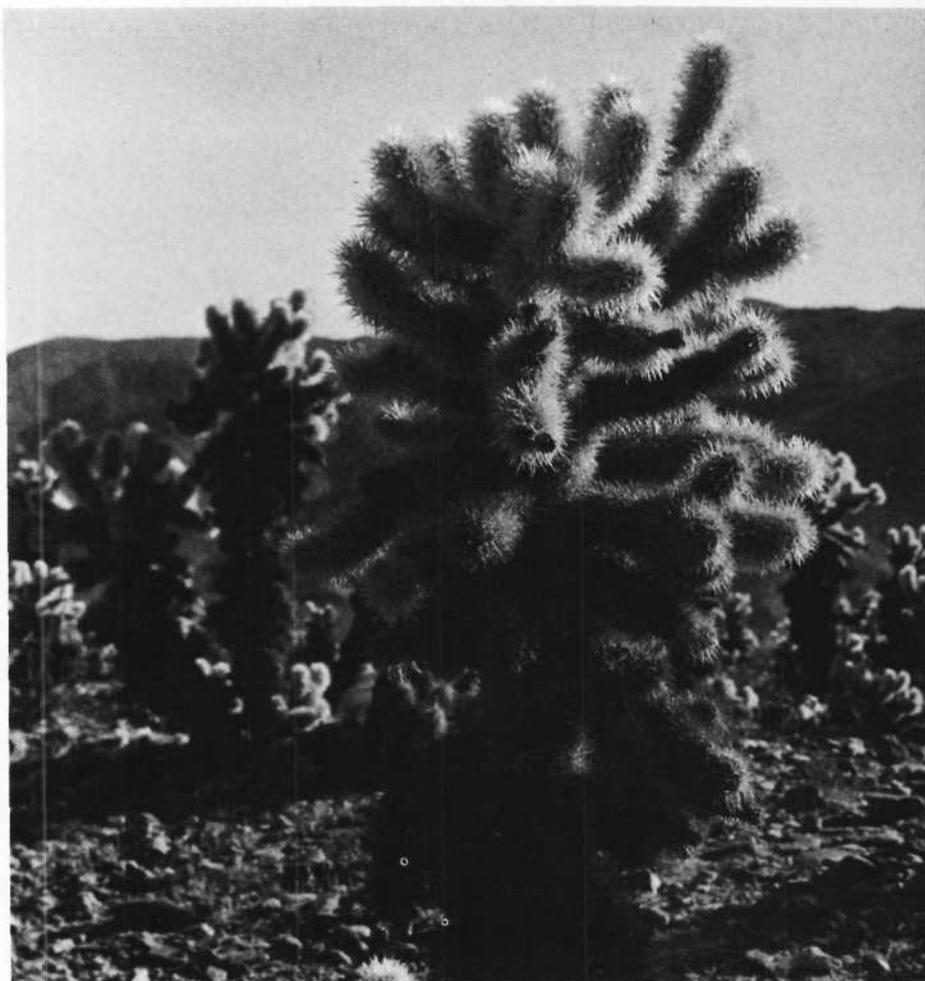
upper branches detach readily and litter the ground near the parent plant. Many of these segments take root, thereby forming dense stands which sometimes cover large areas.

A striking colony of Jumping Cholla is located in Southern California's Joshua Tree National Monument. Eighteen miles southeast of the Twentynine Palms Visitor Center the paved road passes through Cholla Cactus Garden. Here, as if some ambitious gardener had been hard at work, acres of Jumping Cactus spring from the floor of the monument's Pinto Basin. The cactus thrives in the sandy soil, infrequent rainfall and broiling temperatures of the basin. A self-guiding natural history trail winds through a section of Cholla Garden, providing a perfect opportunity for visitors to become better acquainted with this fascinating cactus and other plant life of the region.

Jumping Cholla is kinder to certain animals than to man. The fierce armament of these plants is used advantageously by the industrious Wood Rat. This tidy rodent is better known by the name of pack or trade rat. He lines his runways and covers his underground burrows with bits of cholla as protection against such natural enemies as coyotes and ring-tails. Mounds of earth covered with spiny cholla segments are scattered throughout Cholla Cactus Garden. The inhabitants of these prickly homes are seldom seen by daylight, but scurry around after dark gathering food or carrying about objects which interest them. It is amazing how these remarkable animals are able to carry pieces of cholla and even scamper around on this dangerous plant without harm.

Cactus Wrens also find shelter at Cholla Garden. They build their nests among the spiny branches and as added protection line the nest entrance with spines. Even this formidable fortification does not hinder lizards, crickets, and small snakes from setting up housekeeping in the abandoned nests.

Jumping Cholla has overcome the adverse conditions of desert existence and flourishes where most other plants would die. Its fearful armament of spines is merely a protective device against man and beast who would steal its precious moisture. If the plant's ferocity can be overlooked, there is much to respect and admire about the notorious Jumping Cactus. □



*Base branches of the Teddy Bear Cholla die, providing a contrast between the dark trunk and the silvery upper branches. The "jumping cactus" may grow as high as eight feet.*



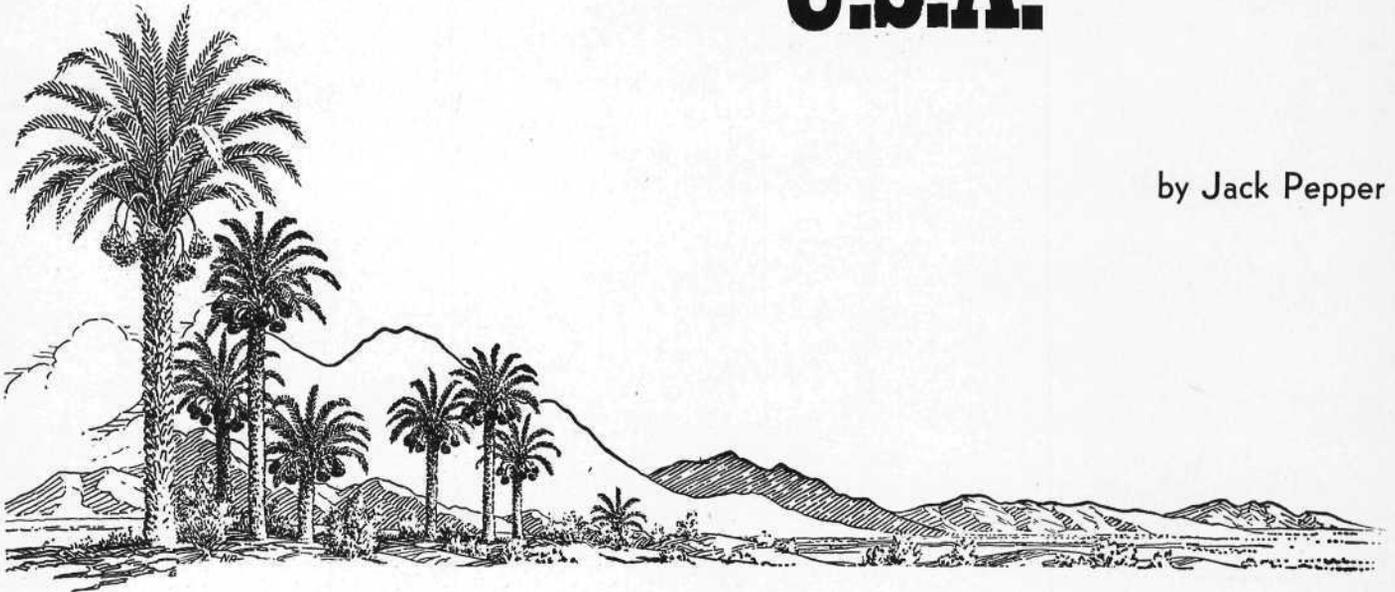
*The Wood Rat family uses the spiny cholla segments as a protection against their natural enemies, but this precaution often does not keep snakes from entering the burrow to devour the rodent's young.*



# Dateline . . .

## U.S.A.

by Jack Pepper



**A**DAM AND EVE didn't have a date with an apple—they had a date with a date.

To substantiate this theory scholars say there is little knowledge the apple was growing in the Garden of Eden, but there is definite recorded evidence the fruit from the date palm was very much a sweet delight. The words "sweet" and "date" are identical, suggesting that by the time writing was invented the date was already known.

"Since that mythical source, the Garden of Eden in which mankind, supposedly originated is presumed to represent some part of the rich and fertile territory between the Euphrates and the Tigris where flourished three of the most renowned kingdoms of antiquity, Chaldea, Assyria and Babylonia (modern Iraq) we may assume that the date palm was already growing in that legendary paradise to which Adam and Eve were introduced; and that its cultivation eventually began somewhere in that region."

The above quotation is from a book, *Your Desert and Mine* by Nina Paul Shumway, scholar and author, whose father, William L. Paul devoted his life

to bringing cultivated dates to Coachella Valley in Riverside County.

Although the first date offshoots were not introduced into Southern California until 1912, today the area grows more than 90 percent of all dates in the United States from 220,000 healthy palms that produce in excess of 48 million pounds of fruit annually.

So when you are tasting any one of the many different types of dates, remember you are eating the same fruit that not only was enjoyed but venerated by people more than 8000 years ago—and that's really dating us back into antiquity! Today, as then, the date is one of the most nutritional foods known to man. A camel can exist on dates and water alone. Not being a camel, I prefer date milk shakes, which are a complete meal—and not too high in calories.

As stated previously, date palm offshoots and the start of the commercial date business in Coachella Valley did not begin until around 1912 when the first offshoots were brought from Algeria by Paul Popenoe. Other abortive attempts were made several years before, but 1912

is the accepted date for Coachella Valley dates.

Evidently when the date was "created" thousands of years ago there were no deserts in Southern California since there were no date trees of any major amount here when the white man came. The beautiful palm, *Washingtonia filifera* grew wild, but it is not a date palm.

The Spanish missionaries brought some date palm seeds with them to Mexico and to Baja California which accounts for a few date trees being found there and around San Diego where the padres also established missions, but these dates were not cultivated and were of a poor quality.

But let's go back once more to the Garden of Eden. One version of the creation of the date says: "When God had shaped Adam's body with His hands, a little of the earth which He had used stuck to His fingers. He rolled it between His hands, making from it the trunk of the Palm." The date is held to be the only fruit which has the same taste on earth as it has in heaven. At the time of the Saviour's birth, it is said that the labor pangs of Mary were assuaged by the eating of soft ripe dates.

The date was a source of life long be-

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fore Christianity. The birth of Apollo is supposed to have taken place on the Isle of Delos under a palm tree where his mother, Leto, had gone for the delivery of this child of Zeus, according to the late Ed Ainsworth, in his book, *Beckoning Desert*. Also from Ainsworth's book:

"There is among the trees, one tree which is blessed as is the Muslim among men: It is the Palm . . .," says the Mohammedans. "Honor your Uncle, the Palm. He was created from the earth left over after the creation of Adam. He resembles man by his erect position and height. The Palm has two sexes, and the female must be pollinated. The Palm is covered with fiber, analogous to the hair of man. Cut off his head, and the Palm dies, like a man. If his heart is exposed to too great a strain, he dies. If the leaves are cut off, others cannot grow in the same place; no more can man grow new members . . ."

Babylonia is believed to have grown dates 8000 years ago. The fruit has been found in the tombs of the early Egyptians. Evidence of man's reliance on dates as a basic food thousands of years before

Christ has been found. Grecians valued the date palm for religious purposes and the Romans adopted it as an emblem of victory. To the Hebrews it was a symbol of immortality and the Arabs saw in the date palm a similarity between it and man; to our ancestors it was a symbol of life itself. The Assyrians practiced cross-fertilization for a thousand years before European man realized that plants, as well as other organisms, have sex, according to Nina Paul Shumway.

Although accomplished with modern means, cross-fertilization of the date palm is the only way of propagation today, just as it was thousands of years ago. Each tree is either a female or male and since the female blossoms have no odor and therefore do not attract bees, fertilization must be done by hand. (Wind will cause some pollinating, but only in a haphazard manner, and certainly not as selective.) A date orchard can be compared to a harem, since there is usually only one male tree to 48 female species per acre. Unlike the masters of a harem, however, date trees enjoy a longer span of life as they live to be hundreds of years old.



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*Although the first cultivated date farms were not started until 1912 with imported offshoots from Algeria, Coachella Valley today grows more dates than any other area in the world. Dates were a basic food more than 8000 years ago.*

The scientific name of the date palm is *Phoenix dactylifera*. The mythological definition of "phoenix" is "rising from the ashes after fire," and date growers say a date palm must "have its feet in the water and its head in the fires of heaven." To keep the "feet" of the palm in water, growers use thousands of gallons of water from the All American canal system—an amount equivalent to 120 inches of rainfall per year. The desert sun provides the "fires of heaven."

After the dates are pollinated and before the November picking season starts they are covered with brown paper to protect them from wind and rain. And date palms cannot be hurried. It usually takes 5 to 10 years for an offshoot to develop a root system of its own before it can be removed from its parent and planted.

It is then an additional eight to ten years before it starts bearing.

Although there are more than 100 different kinds of dates, they generally fall into two classifications: bread date and the soft date. The bread date, such as the Deglet Noor, can stand more handling, whereas the soft date is more fragile. Date shops are glad to furnish samples so your taste buds can decide your choice.

Regardless of the variety, however, they are one of the most healthful and nutritional foods in the world. A pound of dates contains twice the food value of an equal amount of meat and three times that of fish. So to keep healthy and treat yourself to a delicious food do what your ancestors did 8000 years ago—have a date with a date! □



*After the female dates are pollinated they are covered with strong brown paper wrappings to protect them from the wind and rain. When ripe the dates are picked from the palms and processed for shipment throughout the United States.*



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# California Desert Wildflowers

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	<p><i>Wildflower seeds lay dormant until they are brought to life by rain. Sometimes the rain is too heavy and sometimes too light—and sometimes not at all. Heavy winds and unseasonal cold also have an adverse affect on the blooming periods of desert flowers, so this schedule is subject to change. In general, however, you will find colorful flowers in the desert areas during the periods outlined.</i></p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> poppies, phacelia, coreopsis, desert aster, gilia, primrose.</p> <p><b>ANZA/BORREGO (higher elevation)</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> Anza, Julian, Warner Springs.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> poppies, buttercups, lupine, penstemons, mallows.</p> <p><b>MORONGO/YUCCA VALLEY</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> along Twentynine Palms Hwy., Old Woman Springs.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> encelia, poppies, blazing star, yucca, joshua.</p> <p><b>DEATH VALLEY (2000-4000 foot elevation)</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> Panamints.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> paintbrush, desert rue, lupine.</p> <p><b>JOSHUA TREE/EAST MOJAVE</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> along Hwy. 66 from Barstow to Needles, Joshua Monument.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> desert sunflower, sage, asters, poppies, verbena, yucca, joshua.</p> <p><b>DEATH VALLEY (above 4500 feet)</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> High Panamints.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> wildrose, golden rabbitbrush, Panamint daisies, mariposa, lupine.</p> <p><b>OWENS VALLEY</b></p> <p><b>Best Areas:</b> Lone Pine, Alabama Hills.</p> <p><b>Dominant Species:</b> gilia, phacelia, daisies.</p>	
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**WILD PALM CANYONS**  
Continued from Page 26

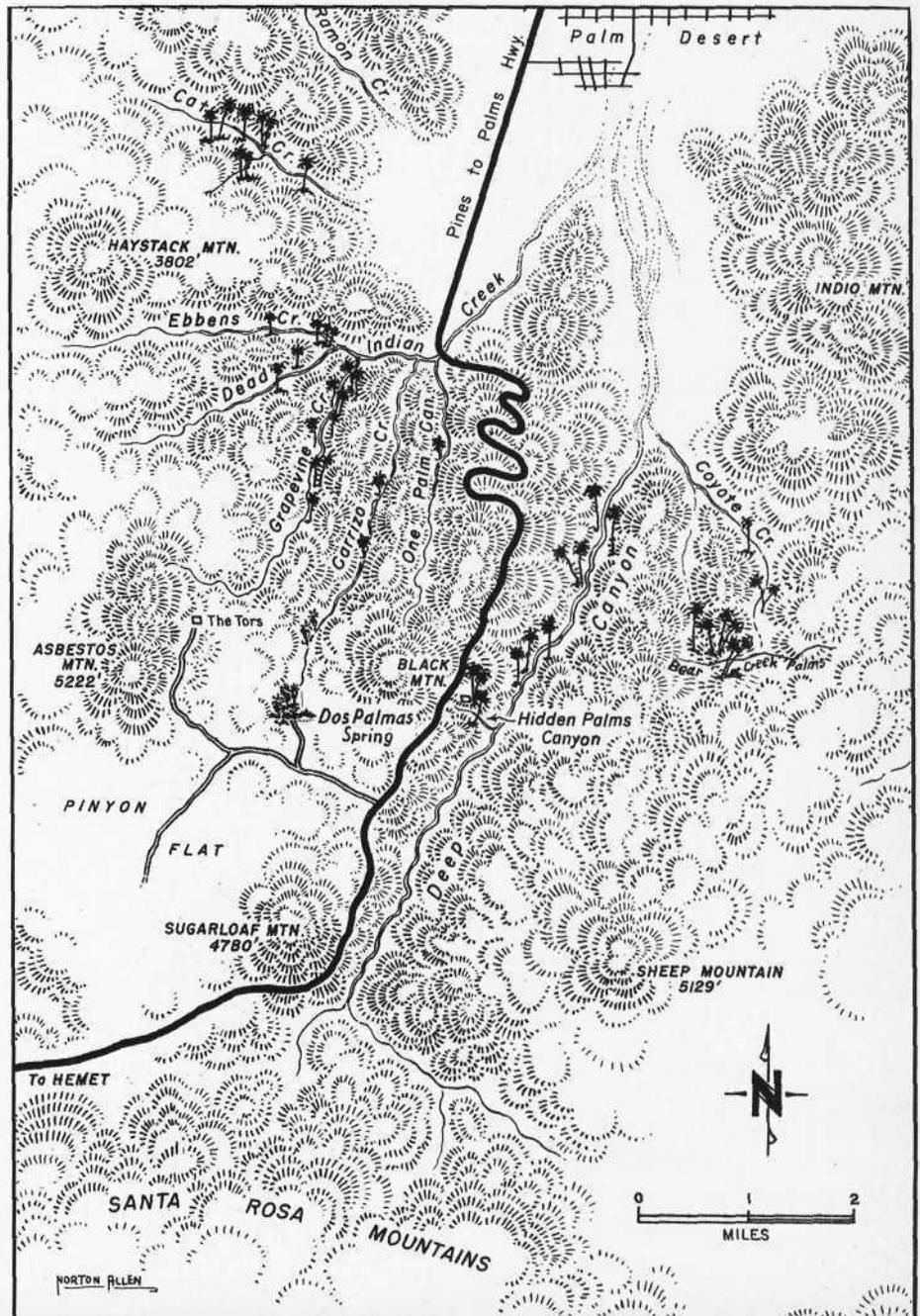
take you to a spectacular 60-foot waterfall. Because of its natural beauty this area was used as the site for the motion picture, *Lost Horizon*. It was named for a mythological evil spirit of the Cahuilla Indians who is represented by a cannibal and believed to live in the San Jacinto Mountains and periodically causes celestial disturbances. Hikers are warned climbing above the falls is dangerous—the rocks are slick and treacherously loose.

Park your car by the first bridge on Highway 74 just before it starts winding its way up the slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains. A half mile upstream from the bridge (the arroyo is dry) is a pretty palm oasis. Here the arroyo forks; a brisk climb to the right leads to Ebbens Creek and a hike to the left takes you to Dead Indian. Both have palms and during the early morning and late evening you can occasionally see bighorn sheep.

**CANYONS NEAR PALM DESERT**

Palm Desert has its share of wild palm canyons. The most accessible is Dead In-

Other tributaries of lower Dead Indian are Grapevine and Carrizo Creeks which drain the Santa Rosa Mountains on the south. These also have wild palms. □



# CACTUS SLIM

by Frank Taylor

IT HAS BEEN almost 35 years since Slim Moorten of Palm Springs decided to hitch his wagon to a cactus—and he has never looked back. Slim and his attractive wife, Pat, now preside over one of the most enchanting gardens to be found anywhere — Moorten's Desertland Gardens almost in the heart of the famous desert spa.

The Moorten home is the center of a cactus paradise with over 1000 varieties. Rare succulents from Africa, plants from the Gobi Desert of China, South Ameri-

Instead of the hospital, Slim went to Cottonwood Springs, a remote part of the desert east of Indio, California where he lived by prospecting. Once he was cured, Slim decided he liked the desert and has remained there ever since.

He has made countless trips to Baja California in search of rare plants and is considered an authority on the subject of cactus and other desert vegetation. The Moorten gardens represent the dedicated efforts of 35 years to gather and preserve



can giants many feet tall, and mini cactus from Canada grow side by side along quiet nature trails.

Both Moortens are internationally known experts on the spiny plants. They have discovered at least two new varieties and will soon have one named after them in a scientific journal. As landscape artists, the Moortens have been asked by Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Lily Pons to create desert yards around their estates. The late Walt Disney was a favorite customer and the Moortens furnished a number of items for Disneyland.

Cactus was the last thing Slim thought of in the late 1920s when he found employment as an actor in silent films. He appeared in dozens of movies as a character actor and seemed destined for stardom as a comedian when he was told by a doctor he had T.B. "You had better go to the hospital and wait to die," the doctors told him.

a living museum of wildlife and cactus in one location.

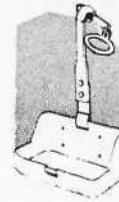
The gardens are part of the itinerary of Palm Springs school children and college classes come from the Los Angeles area to study the plants. One of the first wagons used to bring visitors to Palm Springs from the Whitewater train station is on display along with mining relics and parts of emigrant tools and utensils.

The canteen collection the Moortens have amassed from the far corners of the globe and the basket display of Indian weaving are other examples of the wide spectrum of interest the gardens have for all visitors. It is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is 50¢ per person. They are located at 1725 S. Palm Canyon Drive. The tours are self-guiding and last about one hour. If they have time, the Moortens might join you on a personally conducted tour part of the way. □



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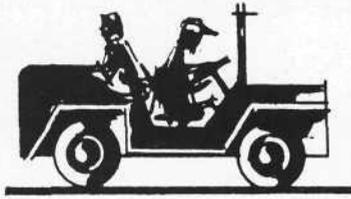
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# BACK COUNTRY

## FOUR WHEEL CHATTER

The 37 four-wheel-drive clubs and dune buggy organizations who participated in Operation Cleanup of the Imperial County Sand Dunes area will receive special conservation awards from DESERT Magazine. See this section for official reaction and recognition.

Don't send any more M-38 manuals to George Groom in Warlingham, England. We received a letter from him saying he has a manual and will keep us briefed on jeeping in England.

The first "Bug-in" was a smash success with more than 4000 spectators watching the 250 vehicles compete for prizes. The Volkswagen oriented show had dune buggies, busses, sedans and dragsters participating in slalom and drag races. See calendar for second event.

The Glamis get-together at the sand dunes in Imperial County was also something to see. There were at least 6000 people and 3000 buggies and four-wheel-drive vehicles there. Officers of the Imperial County sheriff's office said they had no problems.

I do think, however, some of these people who are just learning how to drive the sand dunes should take it a little easier. I saw quite a few people driving around who showed a total lack of knowledge of how to drive the sand, especially when topping a dune with a sharp drop on the other side. There were several accidents, all of which could have been avoided.

I am getting more and more rumbles from readers who charge there is—to say the least — misunderstanding about cash awards and contingency prizes in competition events. Most sponsors spell out the cash awards and then the contingency prizes, but some do not, and this causes the confusion and bad feelings. If you have any comments or suggestions relative to the matter send them to me, c/o Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.

We regret to announce the untimely death of a good friend and long-time supporter of the four-wheel-drive movement. Barney Nelson, of Yakima, Washington, passed away on December 14. He was a member of the Yakima Ridgerunners and a charter member of the Pacific Northwest Jeep Association and the National Four Wheel Drive Association. No one has worked more diligently for the benefit of his fellow man in the field of back country recreation than has Barney Nelson. We extend our sincere condolences to his widow, Rita.

The Las Vegas Mint 400 Race will be held March 24 through 26. It's a two-day race of four 50-mile tracks each day.

Brian Chuchua's Four Wheel Drive Center has a new supplement to their catalogue showing the interchange for Spicer ring and pinions with the prices. Address is P. O. Box 301, Fullerton, Calif. 92632.

There's a new organization called Buggy Service of America, P.O. Box 213, Paramount, Calif. 90723. I am told they provide insurance and other services which have not previously been available.

The Tucson Jeep Club has changed its name to Tucson Four Wheelers. They have an excellent club paper. Write to them at P.O. Box 4127, Tucson, Ariz. 85717.

Welcome new four-wheel-drive clubs: Rock Ramblers 4 Wheel Drive Club, Folsom, Calif; Hi-Landers 4 Wheel Drive Club, Roseville, Calif; Delta Nomads 4WD Club, Pittsburg, Calif., and Shackle Krackers 4WD Club, San Jose, Calif.

Don't forget the National Date Festival here in Indio, February 14 through 23. Lots of camping space available.

## Officials Praise 4WD Club Projects

From time to time Desert Magazine receives letters from readers asking us why we cannot "do something about those wild four-wheel-drive and dune buggy people who race up and down the hills and destroy the back country."

To which we reply there are a few nuts driving back country vehicles—just like there are crazy drivers and litter bugs racing along our freeways in passenger cars.

Although less than 10 percent of back country vehicle owners in California belong to organized clubs, the clubs are making excellent progress toward education of back country neophytes and in the fields of conservation and clean-up campaigns.

For those readers who think all back country vehicle explorers are destructive, we print the following:

### Imperial County Board of Supervisors Commend 4WD and Dune Buggy Organizations

WHEREAS, the Imperial Valley Sand Dunes comprise 138,000 acres of the finest recreational area of the Southwest; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the Imperial County Board of Supervisors, the California State Department of Beaches and Parks has reserved the Sand Dune Areas for public parks so that various types of healthful family recreations and sports may be enjoyed not only by Imperial County residents, but also by desert enthusiasts from all over California and from other States; and

WHEREAS, thousands of drivers of jeep and dune buggy vehicles regularly engage in organized and casual use of the Imperial Valley Sand Dunes for family and club activities; and

WHEREAS, some of these desert enthusiasts voluntarily gave their time and efforts to "Operation Clean Sweep" in which they cleaned trash and debris from the desert and from

# TRAVEL

by Bill Bryan

70 miles of paved and unimproved roads in the vicinity:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the members of the Imperial County Board of Supervisors do hereby resolve that the members of the 44 Jeep Clubs and 30 Dune Buggy Organizations of the Southern Area of the California Four-Wheel-Drive Clubs be commended publicly for their efforts to preserve our desert playgrounds in a clean and unlit-tered state:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County of Imperial extend every hospitality and co-operation to these desert enthusiasts at any time they desire to engage in recreational activities in the Imperial Valley Sand Dunes:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this Resolution be provided to the San Fernando Valley Vagabonds 4WD Club who co-ordinated the clean-up activities of the Jeep Clubs, and the Imperial Valley Dune Buggy Association, which co-ordinated the work of the dune buggy organizations to distribute to all participating organizations.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Supervisor Williams, seconded by Supervisor Kilgore and carried on the affirmative roll call vote of Supervisor Dowe, Kilgore, Boley, Williams and Langley.

## Charles Erickson California Assn. of 4WD Clubs

We had the opportunity to view your Association's activities, both in the dunes and on the beach, over the Labor Day weekend; and would like to take this opportunity to thank your organization for a job well done.

We were particularly impressed with the management of your events; the safe, considerate driving of your members, both in the dunes and on the congested beach; and with the cleanliness in which the area was left. As you know, the local dune use organizations work very hard keeping the dunes and beach clean and safe, and appreciate your effort as much as we do.

Would you please extend to each of your members Pismo State Beach and the Department's deep appreciation for providing this area with a safe, pleasureable holiday.

ALFRED P. SALZGEBER,  
Assistant Superintendent  
District 5, California  
Division of Beaches and Parks.

## Charles Erickson California Assn. of 4WD Clubs

Your name was given to me as being the Rally Chairman for the recent Labor Day, Four-Wheeler Meet. As it would be impossible for me to contact all of the members and par-

ticipants in the recent meet, I would like to ask you to convey my feelings to all of the clubs and members by newsletter, or however you communicate with each other.

It's a pleasure to have clubs of your caliber come to our area and enjoy yourselves at our beaches, dunes, and in our cities. We relax our traffic enforcement to some extent, by allowing the jeeps and buggies to drive on some of our streets without the headers closed and some of them unlicensed. I was very impressed by the conduct of all of the Club members that I had contact with. Our agency did not issue a citation, and no accident occurred in the City, because someone took advantage of our laxity.

At times we were converged upon by renegade clubs and individuals who come here expressly to raise Cain and give Law Enforcement a bad time. These types are not welcome here and are sent on their way as quickly as possible. This class of clubs and individuals give all clubs a bad reputation.

I firmly believe that as long as organizations such as yours are run properly, the rules enforced by the members, you make our job in Law Enforcement easier and more pleasant. When you come to our area we don't have to maintain a constant watch over you to insure compliance of the laws.

Again, I ask that you extend my gratitude and appreciation to all of the clubs for their exceptionally good conduct and behavior while visiting our City. You can always rest assured that you and your clubs will be welcome to our area anytime you desire to return. We look forward to seeing you again.

BILLY J. ALLISON,  
Chief of Police  
City of Grover, Calif.

## Dick Myers California Assn. of 4WD Clubs

I want to express my personal thanks and commendation for the outstanding effort put forth by yourself and the many people with the California Association of 4WD Clubs in cleaning up the Imperial Sand Dunes.

While we are working diligently in a program of litter prevention and cleanup, it is only through the dedicated action which your recent project exemplifies that the job of keeping your public lands clean can be accomplished.

Please extend my thanks, Dick, to the many people who worked with you on this worthwhile venture. Thanks for helping Johnny Horizon remind Americans that this land is your land, keep it clean.

J. R. PENNY,  
State Director,  
Bureau of Land Management.

# Calendar of Western Events

FEBRUARY 1 & 2, PROSPECTORS PARADISE sponsored by Orange Coast Mineral and Lapidary Society, Junior Exhibits Building, Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa, Calif. For details write Marshall Tinsley, 1111 Lake Avenue, Huntington Beach, Calif. 92646.

FEBRUARY 1-9, NINTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS of the Santa Cruz Valley Art Association, Tubac, Arizona. Works of professional and amateur painters, sculpturers and craftsmen. Free admission.

FEBRUARY 8 & 9, CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF 4WD CLUBS annual convention, Fresno, Calif.

FEBRUARY 14-16, TUCSON GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY'S 15th annual show, Tucson, Arizona Fairgrounds, camping for self-contained units. Exhibits, demonstrations, lectures, etc. Admission 75c.

FEBRUARY 20-22, SCOTTSDALE ROCK CLUB'S 4th annual show, Fashion Square, Scottsdale, Arizona. For details write Cliff Bruce, 8720 E. Jackrabbit Rd., Scottsdale, Ariz.

FEBRUARY 22 & 23, ROCKHOUND HOLIDAY SHOW sponsored by the Arrowhead Mineralogical Society, Alpha Lyman School, across street from the San Bernardino County Museum, 18890 Orange, Bloomington, Calif. Specimens of rare and unusual minerals on display, educational exhibits, lapidary work, etc. Parking and admission free.

**STATE ROCKS WANTED**  
The Des Plaines, Illinois Valley Geological Society will hold their annual rock show May 3 and 4. They have asked any interested rock club to furnish a rock of the club's state for display in the show which drew 12,000 people last year. Send specimen to F. J. McCauley, P. O. Box 163, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068.

FEBRUARY 22 & 23, GEM FAIR—SAN FERNANDO VALLEY presented by the Associated Gem & Mineral Societies of the San Fernando Valley Area. Devonshire Downs Fairgrounds, 18000 Devonshire, Northridge, Calif. Displays, dealers, camping and demonstrations.

FEBRUARY 21-March 2, IMPERIAL VALLEY GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY'S 22nd annual show at the California Mid-Winter Fair, Imperial, Calif. For details write Robert W. Wright, 770 Olive St., Apt 2, El Centro, Calif. 92243.

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 2, NATIONAL FOUR WHEEL DRIVE GRAND PRIX, Riverside, Calif. Write P. O. Box 301, Fullerton, Calif.

MARCH 7-9, PHOENIX GEM AND MINERAL SHOW featuring "A Salute to the Bola Tie." North Exhibit Hall, State Fair Grounds, Phoenix, Ariz.

MARCH 15 & 16, SECOND NATIONAL BUG-IN EXHIBITION and racing of dune buggies. Write P. O. Box 1617, Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626.

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# Strictly from a Woman's Viewpoint

When Granny Daniels arrived in this country from Wales, she had little enough to pass on to her children. She left the heritage of her wisdom and a few choice recipes. One of the favorite recipes of our family and all our friends that have been lucky enough to taste it, is a cookie, straight from Wales.

## GRANNY STONE CAKE

- 1 cup raisins or currants
- 3 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2 tablespoons lard or shortening

Mix shortening with flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Add eggs and enough water to make stiff dough. Roll out thin (about 1/8 to 1/4 inch). Cook in ungreased skillet, turning *once*.

Granny made them large enough to fill the skillet, but we cut them cookie size. Eat them hot from the skillet, or cold with butter on them.

DOROTHY S. WILLIS,  
Olympia, Washington.

\* \* \*

## SHIPWRECK CASSEROLE

- 1 layer of lean ground round—press into a baking dish and add:
- 1 layer raw diced onions
- 1 layer raw sliced celery
- 1 layer cooked macaroni or spaghetti
- 1 layer undrained red kidney beans
- 1 can undiluted tomato soup

Do not stir. Cover and bake in 325 degree oven for one hour. Let stand 10 minutes.

MRS. JAY E. FORBES,  
Julesburg, Colorado.

## BERDOO CANYON GOLD

Continued from Page 21

Unfortunately, after the aqueduct was completed, a steel-plate door was placed at the entrance to the Berdoo Canyon portal, thus barring entry to all. The portal and ground through which it passes are the property of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District, and it is a criminal offense for anyone trespassing or tampering with their property.

However, if you are a true lost mine hunter and prospector you will not let the fact of private ownership of this golden bonanza keep you from trying to locate signs of the ancient river channel *in other areas away from the aqueduct property*. Such channels have been known to run for considerable distances, and they are sometimes exposed in more than one spot along their course.

It is a generally accepted fact among mining men that coarseness of placer gold particles is a good indicator of how far they have been carried from their source. Since placer gold is secondary in origin, having been deposited and carried along in stream channels by water at some point in the distant past where a gold-bearing outcrop was exposed and eroded, the finer the gold, the farther it has been carried from its original source. In the case of John Mason's Berdoo Canyon gold, much of it was of the coarse variety, indicating that its source is probably not too far distant.

Should some prospector locate John Mason's ancient river channel some distance away from the Berdoo adit, it should be a fairly easy task to trace it to its source—providing Mother Nature has not covered it in one of the frequent flash floods which characterize the desert regions.

Another fact supports the existence of placer gold in the area. According to John Mason, during the construction of the aqueduct in the area, two men were seen working a placer claim some distance up Berdoo Canyon to the east. No one knows exactly how much gold they took out, but several shipments were made to the mint.

The gold is there somewhere, still lying undisturbed as it has been for untold centuries, awaiting discovery by someone with enough imagination and determination to solve the puzzle. □

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# LETTERS to and from the Editor . . .

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope.

## Rock Still Stands . . .

Your November Death Valley Issue was very interesting and inspired me to take my wife, 8-year-old son, dog and tent trailer to the '49er Encampment. We signed up for a membership and will certainly return next year.

The main reason I am writing is to reassure your readers (Letters, Dec., 1968) that Mushroom Rock still stands in all its volcanic majesty—also Ubehebe Crater has not been filled in nor the Devil's Golf Course sold to Morton or Leslie. Hoping everyone has a better Christmas knowing Mushroom Rock still stands.

WILLIAM CHALLONER,  
Charter Oak, Calif.

## Join A Club . . .

My wife and I purchased a Ford Bronco a few months ago. Since that time we've discovered the pleasure of a 4WD vehicle. Do you know of any 4WD clubs in the San Jose area open to all 4WDs? Any information you could give us would be appreciated. Thank you.

CLYDE CAMPBELL,  
Morgan Hill, Calif.

*Editor's Note: Write to San Jose Mountain Goats, P.O. Box 3362, San Jose, Calif. 95116. For others wanting similar information, Desert Magazine will be glad to supply names of back country clubs.*

## Coyote Capers . . .

Re your Coyote Canyon article in the December issue:

Oh, fie on you who'd build a road,  
Who'd lay a slab through wildlife's lair,  
In Big Horn's, Runner's Jack's abode;  
Replacing tracks with concrete there.  
Speeding steel may have its place,  
Between big cities, out in space,  
But in the desert, peace you'll bring,  
By letting nature do its "thing."

MAL CITRON,  
Westminster, Calif.

Your December editorial regarding the proposed highway through Coyote Canyon in Anza-Borrego State Park really struck home. I have made the four-wheel-drive trip through Coyote Canyon many times and the area is one of my favorite desert camping sites.

The needless destruction of this beautiful wilderness area would not only jeopardize the abundant wildlife of Coyote Canyon, but would also deprive thousands of visitors to Anza-Borrego State Park of the unique opportunity to enjoy camping along a desert stream in an area unsullied my man's intrusions.

BILL SHOWALTER,  
Colton, Calif.



## Closed Mines . . .

In regard to your article on Cerro Gordo in the Jan. 1968 issue entitled "Death Valley Ghost Town Guide," we would like to inform you that Cerro Gordo is no longer open to the public, much to our disappointment after coming so far only to be greeted by this sign. We took this photo just a couple of months ago.

Also in the Nov. 1968 issue was an article entitled "An Old Fort Road," telling about Kokoweef Peak (15 miles north of Kelso). We also found that the Crystal Cave (owned originally by Earl M. Dorr) is closed to the public. We drove to the old cabin to get permission from two men who have leased some of the ground to go to the mine, but were told it was closed to the public and anyone trespassing would be "shot at."

We'd appreciate it very much if in the future when publishing articles on mining towns you would inform the readers as to whether one may visit it or not. I'm sure no one wants to be "shot at."

We enjoy the Desert Magazine and read it from cover to cover and consider it "The" Magazine.

MR. & MRS. HARRY LIVESAY,  
San Jacinto, Calif.

*Editor's Note: During the past year many mines that were not operating and open to the public have been re-claimed and are now closed. The Cerro Gordo was open when we published the January 1968 article. Henceforth, however, we will be doubly cautious in checking on the status of mines, just as we did in the January, 1969 issue, Mysterious Cargo Muchachos.*

## Gone With The Wind . . .

I am writing to inquire if there has been any article or information appearing in Desert Magazine or if you have any information or knowledge of a "wind machine" which I remember seeing many years ago along the road through San Gorgonio Pass. Is it still there? What happened to it? Who built it? Does anyone know?

JOHN W. MARCHILDON,  
Phoenix, Arizona.

*Editor's Note: In 1926, an inventor named Dew Oliver erected a giant Rube Goldberg machine in Whitewater. The wind entered one end and was magnified 12 times under pressure. Although Oliver's machine actually work as he promised, he became involved in legal matters and the venture was abandoned. Later the machine was scrapped.*

## Old Flickers . . .

Your picture in the January issue of the old store buildings in Manhattan, Nevada, brings back memories. Every Thursday night the "circuit rider" projectionist with his portable screen, projector and stock of year-old films came to town. The building was hardly "remodeled into a movie theater." It was just available and used as was one night a week. Patronage was always poor for various reasons, such as lack of money and not many kids in town.

There was a store down below town and over a low saddle to the south that had a beautiful gold bug scales in a place of honor on the counter. Maybe Mr. Florin knows what became of that relic of better days.

JOHN SOUTHWORTH,  
Burbank, California.

## Keep America Clean . . .

Please! Can't you use your influence to save our desert and countryside from the wanton and thoughtless destruction from the plague of jeeps, dune buggies and motorcycles. Everywhere you go each lovely surface is being scarred by these idiots on wheels. Vehicles belong on roads and highway—not over public and private lands.

Red Rock Canyon, once a quite colorful section is now a noisy and rutted area. These devastators use the areas most accessible which are those near highways. The majority of the people are being deprived of beauty by a few maniacs on wheels.

CLYDE BRUNO,  
Encino, California.

*Editor's Note: Desert Magazine agrees with Reader Bruno about the "maniacs on wheels." However, only a very small percentage of back country vehicle explorers are in this category. It's always the few who spoil it for the many. For more on this subject see Back Country Travel in this issue.*

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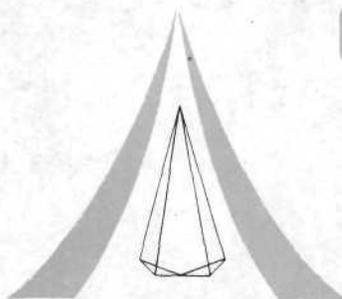
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