



On the edge of the Grand Canyon.

The Wave is one of the most visually stunning features of America's Southwest. Located at Coyote Buttes near the Arizona-Utah border, it lies around 5 km (3 mi) off the standard Hayduke Trail; but for those fortunate enough to obtain an advance permit, this standout highlight is a very worthy diversion. Nestled among sentinel-like conical domes, the Wave is a multicolored rock formation comprised of interconnected sandstone gullies. Its swirling strata and sweeping, eroded forms give the area a completely surrealistic feel—a bit like being transported by Mother Nature into a Salvador Dalí painting.

In the space of a little over 1,287 km (800 mi), the Hayduke Trail conjoins the wonders of the Colorado Plateau

in a way that no other experience can possibly equal—be it on trail, road, or river. It has long been one of the backpacking world's best-kept secrets, and due to its extreme nature, it is unlikely to ever receive the quantity of foot traffic seen on the country's more well-known long-distance hikes. And that untamed character seems in perfect alignment with the spirit of the man who inspired its creation, Edward Abbey: "In the first place you can't see anything from a car; you've got to get out of the goddamned contraption and walk, better yet crawl, on hands and knees, over the sandstone and through the thornbush and cactus. When traces of blood begin to mark your trail you'll see something, maybe" (Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*). ♦

GOOD TO KNOW

About the Trail

/ **DISTANCE** 1,307 km (812 mi)

/ **DURATION** 60 days approx.

/ **LEVEL** Very challenging

Start / Finish

📍 Arches National Park

📍 Zion National Park

Highest Point

Mount Ellen (3,512 m [11,522 ft])

Lowest Point

Grand Canyon (610 m [2,000 ft])

Season

March to May (spring) and September to November (autumn)

Conditions

During spring, snow will usually be encountered at high altitudes, and marginal water sources (e.g. seasonal streams) are more likely to have water. In autumn, there is little to no snow at altitude and intermittent water sources are less likely to be viable.

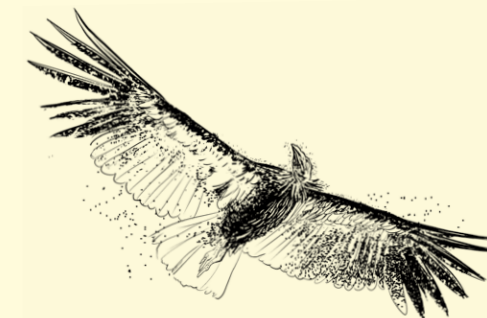
Permits

Hikers will need to obtain permits for all six national parks on the route. Owing to high demand, those interested in visiting the Wave at Coyote Buttes will likely need to organize a permit well in advance.

FLORA & FAUNA

The Return of the California Condor

The majestic California condor is North America's largest bird. Due to a combination of habitat destruction, lead poisoning, and hunting, by 1982 there were only 22 of them left in the wild. However, thanks to the efforts of the California Condor Restoration Project (part of the Peregrine Fund) based in Northern Arizona, the species has made an incredible comeback, and as of 2018, their population is over 500. Hayduke Trail hikers should keep an eye out for the condor around Vermillion Cliffs and the South Rim of the Grand Canyon.



HELPFUL HINTS

Hydration Preparation One of the primary challenges of hiking the Hayduke Trail is staying properly hydrated. This is where previous experience hiking in arid, off-trail terrain will prove invaluable. According to veteran Hayduke hiker Brian Tanzman: "There are many times when sources are so far apart that if you were counting on a source and it was dry you could be in a world of trouble. The experience factor comes into play by knowing beforehand your personal H₂O needs, the speed at which you hike, and most importantly, how to process all the up-to-date information you have about a given source, in order to determine whether or not water will actually be there."

BACKGROUND

Edward Abbey The Hayduke Trail is named after a character in Edward Abbey's novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. Abbey (1927 - 1989) was an essayist and novelist known for his passionate and often controversial views on environmental issues relating to America's Southwest. Apart from *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, his most notable work is the autobiographical classic *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness*.

