Welcome To Ocotillo Wells!

If you haven’t been here before, you’re going to love California’s #1 off-highway destination. OW has so much to offer that you can’t help but have the ride of your life here.

These are challenging times for OHV recreation and we encourage you to get involved. Stay informed and ask questions. Join an advocacy group. Voice concerns to your elected officials. Volunteer and be part of the solution. After all, these changes are going to affect you and your recreation for generations.

While you are enjoying Ocotillo Wells, stay safe. Follow the rules that govern OHV use. Please join us in looking after our beautiful desert home. I hope that your visit is filled with memorable adventures.

Kathy Dolinar
District Superintendent

Balancing Resources With Recreation

Ocotillo Wells SVRA offers you the best of both worlds. Home to unique natural resources, the park also contains action-packed terrain ideal for off-highway enthusiasts. With over 85,000 acres open for exploration and recreation, Ocotillo Wells balances amazing riding with the protection of a strikingly beautiful landscape.

The park offers various types of terrain - dirt roads and trails, sandy washes, narrow canyons, mud-hills, rocky slopes, dunes and more - inviting those with a passion for speed and adventure as well as beginners. From the adrenaline driven to relaxing families, Ocotillo Wells has something for everyone.

While you are here riding, we encourage you to take time to enjoy the other resources in our park. Ocotillo Wells is a surprising haven for wildlife perfectly adapted to this harsh landscape: home to scorpions, sidewinders, roadrunners, coyotes, burrowing owls and kangaroo rats, among others. Some gnarly plants also thrive here, like our namesake, the tall and eerie ocotillo, covered with spines (seen below).

While riding at Shell Reef, take a look beneath you and you’ll find fossilized shells over four million years old. Take a trip out to the Pumpkin Patch and be wowed by the power of erosion. Or head to the Gas Domes and check out bubbles rising up from deep beneath the surface of the earth.

Chances are you’ll be blown away by what you find here.

Why The Pros Love OW...

“Ocotillo Wells has incomparable ‘moon-like’ terrain making it truly an awesome experience! Great place to go out with family and friends to have some fun.”
Lance Coury

“Ocotillo Wells has literally helped shape my life and career as a Professional Freestyle Motocross rider. The unique close to home riding is second to none. This is an awesome place to bring the family, link up with some friends and simply get away.”
Ronnie Renner
Alcohol Beverages containing alcohol may only be possessed and consumed within established campsites. Do not carry alcohol while out riding or away from camp.

Weather The desert here is a land of extremes. Be prepared for quick swings in temperature, especially in winter. Intense winds are common and flash flood danger exists year-round. Seasoned “desert rats” wear layers of clothing. Always carry water and a map with you. Be aware of your environment at all times. See page 9 for more information.

Respect Plants & Animals Do not capture, disturb, harm, hunt, or harass wildlife. It is unlawful to ride over, burn, cut, disturb or remove trees and plants. Respect these living things and we can keep this park open and available forever.

Firearms It is unlawful to possess or discharge any weapons in the park. Nearby public lands maintained by the Bureau of Land Management are available for shooting. Contact the BLM or stop by the Discovery Center for info.

No Collecting Everything that you find in the park - rocks, artifacts, plants, animals, etc. - needs to stay in the park. Sadly, through the years, places like the Pumpkin Patch have shrunk due to collecting. If trash looks old, leave it where you found it. Historic “trash” tells archaeologists a lot about how this place was used in the past.

Park Radio Station Conditions and policies in the park can occasionally change. To keep updated, tune into the park’s informational radio station, AM 1620, Radio Rockotillo. We also broadcast current events, fun facts, and reminders about our programs.

Pets Keep all pets under direct control and on a leash no more than 6 feet long. Make sure your pet has ID tags on its collar. Never leave your pet unattended because it could become a meal for our local coyotes...or a casualty of an OHV. Each riding season, numerous pets are lost in OWSVRA.

Litter Nothing ruins our desert scenery like litter. Properly dispose of trash in the dumpsters provided by the park. Don’t forget to recycle.

Military Munitions During World War II, this area was a military training area. Potentially dangerous ordnance remains in Ocotillo Wells SVRA and nearby areas. If you come across any munitions, leave them there and contact a Park Ranger.

For More Info
Ocotillo Wells SVRA
5172 Highway 78, #10
Borrego Springs, CA 92004
(760) 767-5391
711 TTY relay service
Email: owinterpretation@parks.ca.gov

Accessibility California State Parks supports equal access. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the Discovery Center at (760) 767-5393 or 711 relay service. This publication can be made available in alternate formats. Contact ohvinfo@parks.ca.gov.

Who’s missing?

YOU ARE!
Become an OHV State Parks Volunteer!

Please contact Ranger Brittany Veater at (760) 767-0166 or visit parks.ca.gov under the "Jobs" tab.

BURNING PALLETS EQUALS FLAT TIRES!
When a pallet is burned, the nails remain.

With up to 180 nails per pallet, that’s 180 chances to get a flat tire!

No pallets at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

ACCESSIBILITY 

=+

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**Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area**

**Critical Info**

CALL 911. Ocotillo Wells Rangers provide 24-hour emergency services. The three nearest hospitals are: Pioneer Memorial in Brawley (760) 351-3333; Palomar Medical Center in Escondido (760) 739-3000; John F Kennedy Memorial in Indio (760) 347-6191. Stay safe while riding.
D.U.I. & Open Containers  
Laws that pertain to driving under the influence of alcohol and open containers on the highway are exactly the same as off the highway. Never drink and drive.

Registration  
All vehicles must be registered. A current license plate and/or OHV identification sticker must be clearly displayed on your vehicle. “Red Sticker” season runs from October 1 to May 31.

Speed  
The speed limit within 50 feet of campsites, people, or animals is 15 miles per hour. California’s basic speed law also applies: don’t drive faster than is safe for conditions.

Passengers  
You are prohibited from carrying passengers on three or four-wheeled ATVs unless the vehicle is specifically designed for both an operator and one passenger.

Whips & Flags  
To ensure that your ATV is visible, you must have a whip-pole, rod or antenna at least 8 feet up from the ground attached to your ATV. Within 10 inches of the top, there must be a solid orange or red flag.

Safety Equipment  
All ATV riders are required to wear a helmet, and OHV riders should wear proper protective apparel.

Lights  
Any OHV operated between sunset and sunrise must have one lighted white headlight and one lighted red taillight. Both lights must have a range of 200 feet.

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Boundary  
To the west, Ocotillo Wells SVRA borders Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. While it is open for street legal vehicles on designated trails, OHV use is strictly prohibited there. Do not cross the well-marked park boundary unless you are in a street legal vehicle travelling on an official route.

Riding East of Poleline Road & North of S-22 In Truckhaven  
When riding in these areas, you must stay on trails and roads only. You are prohibited from riding off-trail or creating new trails. These are not open riding areas. Park staff will be providing new signs to remind visitors of these restrictions and conducting enforcement as needed.

For Riders Under 18

Ages 14 - 17  
All riders ages 14 to 17 must possess an ATV Safety Certificate, or be under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, or other adult who has completed an ATV safety course AND has an ATV Safety Certificate in their possession.

Ages 13 and Under  
If you are age 13 or under, you MUST (1) Be under the direct supervision of an adult at all times, (2) Be able to reach and operate all of the vehicle controls, and (3) Have completed an ATV safety course or be under the direct supervision of an adult who has completed an ATV safety course AND has an ATV Safety Certificate in their possession.

Curfew  
If you are under 18, you cannot remain in the park between 10 PM and 6 AM unless you are with a parent, guardian or designated adult.

“What’s With The Fences?”

This is a common question from our visitors. Traveling through the park, you will notice areas which have been fenced off. These places have been set aside to protect fragile resources. We collect data as part of our resource management program that helps us to decide what areas are best suited for sustainable recreation. The fenced areas are given a rest or restored, while we use the opportunity to explain the value of what lies inside the fence. While you may think this is a sign of us attempting to close the park to riding, actually the opposite is true. We are managing a healthy balance to ensure that the park remains open for you to enjoy. Thank you for helping us keep these fenced areas special.
Pumpkin Patch
This remote field of round rocks is a popular destination in OW. Created long ago when the climate here was wet, then shaped through years of erosion, the Pumpkin Patch has sadly shrunk over the years due to collecting. Leave the “pumpkins” here so your grandchildren can take their grandchildren to see the “Patch.”

Shell Reef
Hard to believe, but about 4 million years ago, this desert was covered by a sea. At the top of Shell Reef one can see the proof: a five-foot thick layer of fossilized shells that projects at an angle. This hard “coquina” resists erosion so well it has preserved this ridge and a window to the past.

Devil’s Slide
The last nub of an ancient mountain, this outcrop was once the site of gold prospecting. Sometimes people report seeing ghostly lights here, usually at night after one of our rare rainstorms. Nowadays, the dark, decomposing rockface and nearby sands present a popular challenge for a variety of OHVs.

Discovery Center
This is your one-stop-shop for information about the area. Learn about our desert through the exhibits. Get some face time with our knowledgeable staff. Enjoy the accessible nature trail, shaded picnic area, and come by later for night programs in our slick new amphitheater. For a map, see top right.

Blowsand Hill
The strong winds that blow through our park have piled sand in this notch. The finest sand grains, being the lightest, are deposited on the top; the larger, heavier grains collect at the bottom. This is the largest concentration of sand at Ocotillo Wells SVRA and a popular, fun spot to ride.
Explore the Discovery Center

You’ll find ample parking and a shady deck as you pull up at the OWSVRA Discovery Center. Once inside, the diverse world of Ocotillo Wells opens up. Live animals mingle with stuffed ones. Geology, history, and ecology exhibits unmask the desert’s “dirty” secrets. At the center of it all is a huge 3-D map. Consider this your front-line information center: dispensing maps, weather reports, trail updates, OHV regulations, and more. Stop in for discoveries.

Outside, accessible cement walkways lead to ocotillo-inspired shade ramadas and the amphitheater, which hosts our weekly stargazing programs, as well as special events. You can even rest your seat on a giant horned lizard!

Gas Domes

Amazingly, this weird waterhole stays wet year-round. If that wasn’t strange enough, an almost constant stream of gas bubbles up through the muddy water. This “crown jewel” of Ocotillo Wells also offers views of the Salton Sea, a very salty, below sea-level lake accidentally created in 1905. How odd.

Barrel Springs

Here, sand holds water like a sponge, allowing thorny mesquite to grow, in turn providing food and shelter for many critters. Early prospectors dug a hole and placed a barrel in it to gather water, hence the name. Sometimes badgers are seen at Barrel Springs. That’s right, Ocotillo Wells has badgers!

Tule Spring

Following a subterranean fault line, water from the mountains trickles out here. It is named for the rare tule reeds that grow in the water. Obviously, Tule Spring is also popular with local wildlife, as you can see in this shot from a motion-activated camera. Check out more of these photos at our exhibits.

Clay Flats

This clay was deposited by the Colorado River millions of years ago. Later, until a few hundred years ago, a large freshwater lake periodically covered the valley to the east. Since then this has become a popular camping area. East of Puleline Road camping is limited and OHV travel is restricted to designated trails only.

Tectonic Gorge

This huge canyon and its accompanying badlands is one of the “sickest” terrains in Ocotillo Wells. Not only is this a popular place for riding, it was also the location for the series finale of *The X-Files*. But don’t count on seeing Scully or Mulder. The filmmakers blew up the set...then completely cleaned it up.
Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area

Destinations

Holmes Camp
Once the desert homestead of a local turkey rancher (who planted the shady tamarisk trees that still stand), today Holmes Camp is a popular camping location. The park is particularly proud that this site features two fully-accessible ADA campsites, as well as pay showers and much-needed shade.

Dusty
This steep hill is often used as a navigation point by those exploring the Truckhaven region. The peak of this unique hill is topped with a novelty phone booth. Nearby, one can find some intriguing pieces of “off-road folk art” including totem poles and a concrete motorcycle. What a trip!

The Cove
This secluded camping spot is set behind Blowsand Hill along the rocky slopes of Borrego Mountain. As such, it is a prime location for viewing large chuckwalla lizards. While it is now a popular camp, it was also a film site for movies, such as the recent “Into The Wild” and the older “The Desert Rats” about WWII in North Africa.

Soens Youth Track
Behind a fenced enclosure and lined with protective hay bales, the Youth Track provides a safe riding area for children to build their skill sets. It is for riders 12 and under on 70cc engines or less. This track is dedicated to Harold Soens, who worked tirelessly to open up the world of OHV to kids.

Denner ASI Track
The site of the ATV Safety Institute classes offered by Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Children or their accompanying adults must have an ATV Safety Certificate to ride in OW (see page 3 for more details). This facility was named in honor of Roy Denner, a champion of OHV recreation.

Page 6
Ocotillo Wells SVRA is committed to the principles of Tread Lightly. This simple, common sense framework is an excellent way to assure continued access to public lands for OHV recreation by respecting the places we all share.

- **Travel Responsibly**
- **Respect the Rights of Others**
- **Educate Yourself**
- **Avoid Sensitive Areas**
- **Do Your Part**

By following these guidelines, you are helping preserve OWSVRA. For more info, go to treadlightly.org.

**Coral Wash**
This astounding arch is found along Coral Wash, one of the drainage channels in the northern area of Ocotillo Wells SVRA known locally as “Truckhaven.” Driving up Coral Wash offers the challenge of a variety of technical OHV maneuvers as one winds through the narrow walls lined with prehistoric layers.

**Artesian Well**
In 1919, a massive derrick was built here to drill for oil, but hit geothermal water instead. The well was abandoned and has since become a local landmark. A plane fuselage holds water and recently palm trees were planted. Panels here, and elsewhere, detail the captivating search for “black gold” at Ocotillo Wells.

**Truckhaven 4X4 Area**
Here is one destination you will never forget. Just opened in March of 2011, there are 22 top-of-the-line obstacles awaiting the brave (or crazy). These colorfully-named obstacles offer a variety of challenges. Stop in and hone your winching and rock-crawling skills. Spectators are also most welcome.

**Old Hippie Commune**
This site was home to a counter-culture commune in the early 1970s (seen below in a historic photograph). Trailers, shacks, a cellar and even a bus housed the hippies and their families. Little remains here except the concrete foundations from the windmills used to generate electricity and pump water. Far-out man!

**The Anza Trail**
San Felipe Wash is the historic route of two epic expeditions led by the Spanish officer Anza in the 1770s. Anza guided about 200 settlers from Mexico to San Francisco Bay. Waysides detailing the experiences of these heroic explorers are positioned along the marked route and invite you to follow in their footsteps.
At the peak of the European struggle for empire in North America, Spain sent expeditions to settle the rich province of California to protect it from England, France, and Russia. Led by the very competent frontier officer Juan Bautista de Anza, this plan involved two parts. First, an exploration to find a route through the desert in 1774. Second, a trek along the new route leading some 200 settlers and soldiers to San Francisco Bay in 1775. These adventurous and very successful expeditions passed through the harsh waterless wilderness we now call Ocotillo Wells. Modern explorers can still follow Anza’s route through our park where signs explain the struggles and triumphs of his famous expeditions. For more details, stop by the Discovery Center.

It began with Jeeps left over from the Second World War. With the fighting finished, the military sold them cheap—$50 apiece on the docks. Soon a new recreation was born, as a motorized breed of desert explorers began coming to Ocotillo Wells and Truckhaven. Over the years, new designs were created and vehicles such as the Manx, Baja Bug, and sand rail made their appearance. As the technology improved and adapted to the rough conditions, our desert hosted some intense off-highway races like the epic Borrego Rough 100. These drew thousands of spectators and participants, including, as legend has it, Hollywood racing fan and “King of Cool,” Steve McQueen. As the popularity of off-roading increased, in 1971 the OHV Division of California State Parks was created with ongoing funding through the Chappie-Z’berg Law. In 1979, Ocotillo Wells became a State Vehicular Recreation Area with a focus on family-friendly opportunities and sustainable riding. We’d love to present more of this history, but so little has been recorded. We need your help. Please do so and we can celebrate this past together.

After the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Ocotillo Wells went from a sleepy backwater to a focal point of military training. Navy planes that had been occasionally using nearby Benson Dry Lake, now began bombing and strafing practice targets located all across the area. Soon Army and Marine units were practicing anti-aircraft artillery fire and combat maneuvers here as well. The conditions in the harsh and rugged deserts of southern California were perfect for conditioning American troops to fight against the Germans and Italians in the deserts of North Africa. Eventually, CalTech tested early rockets out here for the high-tech research programs of the US military. Potentially dangerous relics of this exciting past remain in Ocotillo Wells. If you find them, leave them!

The Past

The Anza Expeditions

The Hunt For Oil

Generations Of OHV History

Training For World War II

Let’s Write Our OWN History!

Ocotillo Wells was a birthplace of off-highway recreation.

To tell this story we need your help!

Please consider sharing your stories, photos, souvenirs, newspapers, old gear, antique equipment, or anything related to this exciting history with us. We can bring this past to life.

For more information, stop by the Discovery Center or call us at 760-765-5743.
**What Makes A Desert?**

No doubt, Ocotillo Wells is a true desert. Deserts are described as areas that get less than 10 inches of rain per year, have hot summers, and have ecosystems that are limited by water. With an average yearly rainfall of less than 4 inches and summer temperatures that can peak above 120 degrees, this place obviously fits the mold.

We have the mountains to the west to thank for these conditions. As storms from the Pacific hit the peaks, they cool down and subsequently drop most of their rain up there instead of down here. This “rain shadow” effect makes sure that Ocotillo Wells has one of the driest (and gnarliest) landscapes on the planet.

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**Flash Floods**

While we definitely don’t have much water here at Ocotillo Wells, every once in a great while, the tables turn. When summer storms come up from the Sea of Cortez through Mexico instead of from the Pacific Ocean, there are few mountains to get in the way. These southern monsoons have no “rain shadow” to worry about so they can dump massive quantities of rain on our park.

You’d think the thirsty desert would soak this up, but the hard packed surface is no sponge and the water runs into the normally dry washes. Picking up speed and volume, the rainfall is soon transformed into a flash flood: a rushing torrent of incredible, violent power (seen below). To see an example of what this can do, check out the beat-up flash flood car at the Discovery Center. Wow!

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**Spring Flowers Go “BOOM”**

Beneath Ocotillo Wells, hidden between the sand and rocks, a multitude of tiny seeds awaits spring. Given a few good rains and the right mix of temperatures, you best call the bomb squad - because the desert is about to explode in color. This mind-blowing event can turn the barren desert into a virtual garden in a few weeks flat. Among these vibrant flowers are the purple sand verbena and the proud desert lily, whose stalk rises tall above its tentacle-like leaves (seen right). To learn more about these amazingly-adapted plants, grab our free Wildflower Guide.

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**Flat-Tailed Horned Lizards**

One of the best adapted critters to call our desert home is the flat-tailed horned lizard. As you can easily see in the photo above, this little guy is perfectly camouflaged for the sandy soils of Ocotillo Wells. Like other reptiles, they also love the blazing sun and summer heat that can easily kill us. Because horned lizards (sometimes known as “horny toads”) are so calm, it is easy to pick up and handle them. This relaxed nature also leads some people to take these reptiles home, imagining they will be a perfect pet. Sadly, most captured lizards soon die, because their captors do not realize these unusual reptiles are very picky eaters. Most species of horned lizards only eat one particular species of ant! Across America, these laid-back lizards are becoming alarmingly rare. If you are lucky enough to see one, take a picture and leave the cute little critter behind so future visitors to Ocotillo Wells can continue to enjoy flat-tailed horned lizards and their “chill” attitude years from now.

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**Highs & Lows in the Rain Shadow**

![Graph showing average highs and lows in the rain shadow.](image)

**Average Highs**

- January: 69°F
- February: 92°F
- March: 98°F
- April: 100°F
- May: 101°F
- June: 101°F
- July: 100°F
- August: 99°F
- September: 95°F
- October: 89°F
- November: 79°F
- December: 67°F

**Average Lows**

- January: 52°F
- February: 51°F
- March: 47°F
- April: 40°F
- May: 38°F
- June: 36°F
- July: 36°F
- August: 34°F
- September: 32°F
- October: 29°F
- November: 24°F
- December: 21°F

**Average Rainfall**

- January: 0.69”
- February: 0.31”
- March: 0.00”
- April: 0.31”
- May: 0.00”
- June: 0.00”
- July: 0.26”
- August: 0.14”
- September: 0.55”
- October: 0.03”
- November: 0.03”
- December: 0.00”

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**Don't let this be you!**

![Picture of a flash flood car at the Discovery Center.](image)
Off-Highway Adventure Tour Series

If you really want to get to know Ocotillo Wells, nothing beats this tour series. Led by our fearless Park Naturalists, these 4-hour tours are offered Fridays and Saturdays. For our 3rd season of these tours, you’ll see some new additions to the “tried & true” favorites: • Coral Wash • Geology of OW • Desert Habitats • Bugs & Flowers • Oil in Ocotillo Wells • Full Moon over OW • Colorful Characters • Water in the Desert • Creepy Crawlers @ Night

Check with us for the exact dates and times of these in-depth desert adventures.

Geocaching

Geocaching is a high-tech, global treasure hunt. It uses the Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite network that relays coordinates to tell you where you are. This same technology that helps you navigate your car also allows geocachers to hide a “geocache” (usually a small box) for others to find. Inside a geocache there may be a few trinkets or some local info, but there is always a logbook to sign. Most geocachers will also log their finds on a website, most likely geocaching.com, and can get pretty passionate about their hobby.

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has embraced this recreation. Our park now hosts over 300 private geocaches. As if that wasn’t enough, Ocotillo Wells also creates over 100 additional caches every January for our “Roughneck Rendezvous” - a massive, multi-day event. These caches focus on our awesome desert and its quality OHV recreation. January 28-29, 2012 will be our 3rd annual Roughneck Rendezvous. Once again this exceptional experience includes food vendors, entertainment, raffle prizes, and loads of fun for the whole family. Join us for some epic adventures.

Friends of Ocotillo Wells

Founded in 2008, the Friends of Ocotillo Wells is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting Ocotillo Wells SVRA. The Friends help provide a variety of programs and resources for this unique riding area. Want to be a part? Just log on to www.friendsofocotillowells.com.

Trading Cards

Our park is certainly in the big leagues. So what better way to celebrate our desert all-stars than with trading cards. Ocotillo Wells SVRA offers more than 150 unique cards featuring our MVPs from the animal, plant, geologic, historic, and OHV leagues. Some are hidden in geocaches, some waiting “on deck” at the Discovery Center, others available at mobile exhibits or on tours, and new ones are always coming off the bench. Collect the whole set!

Guides At Your Fingertips

Since you can’t comfortably carry one of our Park Naturalists around in your glove compartment, we offer five Desert Guides to visitors. Pick up these free booklets from the Discovery Center or one of our Traveling Exhibits and you’ll be able to show off your knowledge of the birds, mammals, reptiles, bugs and wildflowers of Ocotillo Wells. Next thing you know, you’ll be one smart “desert rat.”
Adventure On The Go
Get ready to investigate one of the many curiosities of OW during this interactive program designed for kids ages 7-12. Each Sunday, you will find us set-up at a featured destination complete with a hands-on activity illustrating a fascinating aspect of our park. Activities take approximately 15 minutes.

Coffee With The Naturalist
This is your chance to hang out with a Park Naturalist! Plan your day’s trail rides, inquire about the weather, learn about what’s new in the park, and find out what exciting programs are being offered throughout the weekend at Ocotillo Wells. Bring your questions and your mug for a free cup of fresh-brewed coffee before you head out into California’s #1 off-highway destination.

Desert Animal Extravaganza
An up-close and personal look into the lives of some of Ocotillo Wells’ year-round residents! From lizards to snakes, badgers to coyotes, tarantulas to bugs - OW has its share of amazing creatures. Be sure you see the live, glow-in-the-dark scorpion and then grab your very own scorpion tattoo as a souvenir.

Skulls, Skins, Tracks & Scat
Do you want to know what animals have been poking around your campsite at night? Check out our Skulls, Skins, Tracks & Scat exhibit to discover the amazing wildlife that calls Ocotillo Wells home. And don’t forget to test your scat knowledge by playing the hit trivia game “Who’s Scat is That?” You might be the lucky winner of the highly prestigious “Golden Scat” award.

Gnarly Beasts Of The Past
What is the gnarliest beast to ever call Ocotillo Wells home? Imagine a time when massive mammoths and ancient camels were hunted by hungry saber-tooth cats. Picture a shark the size of a bus chasing walruses through the sea above Shell Reef. Discover these and other mega-critters at the Gnarly Beasts of the Past exhibit.

Talking Bubbles @ Gas Dome
Join us at this bubbling mudpot, the rugged “crown jewel” of our park, for an interesting intro to this unique geological feature. You will find us set up to unravel the fascinating facts about the area. Nothing quite brings out the domes are so darn gassy.

Talking Pumpkins @ Pumpkin Patch
This fun-filled exhibit helps you discover the secrets behind this collection of well-rounded rocks. From “seeds” to “pumpkins,” you will find us set up to illustrate how this surreal feature was formed. While you’re there, polish your rock identification skills by playing a trivia game and become a true OW “Rock Star.”

Junior Rangers
Calling all kids! Discover the amazing geology, history, wildlife, and other secrets of the desert at your favorite off-highway park and earn a sweet Junior Ranger badge through our Junior Ranger programs located at the Ocotillo Wells Discovery Center.

Stargazing
If you haven’t looked at the stars over Ocotillo Wells SVRA, you are missing half the park! The night skies here are some of the best in southern California. Join us at our Amphitheater located near the Discovery Center for an incredible look at our dark side, the night sky. Our Park Astronomers will amaze you with views of the Milky Way, distant galaxies, nebulae, stars and planets through our 11-inch telescope. You will revel in close-ups of the Moon’s craters and lunar seas. Wear warm clothing, bring a mug, and enjoy hot chocolate at this wonderful family event. Indoor activities will take place inside the Discovery Center in the event of inclement weather. Come lay your eyes on some stellar skies, dudes!

What’s up at O “Dub”? Tune into... AM 1620 Rock-o-tillo!
We would like to remind visitors about the policies for riding in both the new Truckhaven addition north of S-22 and the area east of Poleline Road. Travel in these areas is restricted to roads and trails only. Much of these two areas is actually federal or state land which Ocotillo Wells SVRA is allowed to manage, so this policy is essential for continued OHV access here. These two parcels are not open riding areas and this policy will be enforced. Following Tread Lightly principles in these places will also help ensure future OHV use in them. Please enjoy these interesting and fun areas responsibly!

**General Plan Update**

Ocotillo Wells SVRA really needs your help. We are in the process of developing a new General Plan that will set the direction of your park for the next generation. It is critical to the future of this amazing place that you be a part of creating this driving document. With your input, together we can chart the course of Ocotillo Wells SVRA and make sure the places and activities you love will be available here, at your park, many years from now.

**Your OHV Funds At Work**

Ocotillo Wells SVRA has made numerous improvements over the last few years. These projects are designed to better serve you, our visitors, so we thought you’d like to see how the funds are being utilized.

- **8 New Restrooms in New Areas**
- **7817 Acres Added on OWSVRA’s Northern End**
- **More Shade, Tables & Fire Rings for Campsites**
- **A Variety of Publications, Including this Guide**
- **Improved Trail Signage & Grading**
- **Discovery Center & Amphitheater**
- **Free ATV Safety Classes for Kids**
- **An Improved Park Map**
- **The Amazing Truckhaven 4x4 Training Area**

We know you’ll enjoy these new additions to California’s #1 OHV destination. Let us know what else you’d like in your park.

**Riding in Truckhaven & East of Poleline Road**

In March 2011, Ocotillo Wells SVRA was proud to unveil a new adrenaline-fueled addition: the Truckhaven 4X4 Training Area. It consists of 22 colorfully named obstacles spread across 30 acres in the northern section of our park. Built out of heavy equipment tires, logs, concrete tubes, boulders and more (sealed together with Shotcrete and good old-fashioned dirt), these obstacles are ranked in three difficulty ratings. This one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art destination is the result of a dynamic partnership between State Parks, Tierra del Sol Jeep Club, and W.E. Rock. The materials used were donated by a variety of stakeholders, and the course was designed to protect the area’s desert flavor. Recent additions include a vehicle-free, shaded observation area with picnic tables to watch the action, plus restrooms. For your own safety, ATVs and motorcycles are prohibited from the area. Check it out.

**Coming Events For 2011-2012**

- **Thanksgiving Weekend** Nov 23 - Nov 27
- **Christmas - New Year’s Holiday Week** Dec 26 - Jan 2
- **CORVA Truck Challenge** Jan 21 - Jan 22
- **“Roughneck Rendezvous” OW’s Geocaching Event** Jan 28 - Jan 29
- **“Geology Daze @ OW” Presidents Day Weekend** Feb 18 - Feb 20
- **Tierra del Sol Jeep Club Desert Safari** Mar 2 - Mar 3
- **“Hot Stars & Heavenly Bodies” Astronomical Nights @ OW** Mar 23 - Mar 24
- **Easter Holiday Weekend** Apr 6 - Apr 8