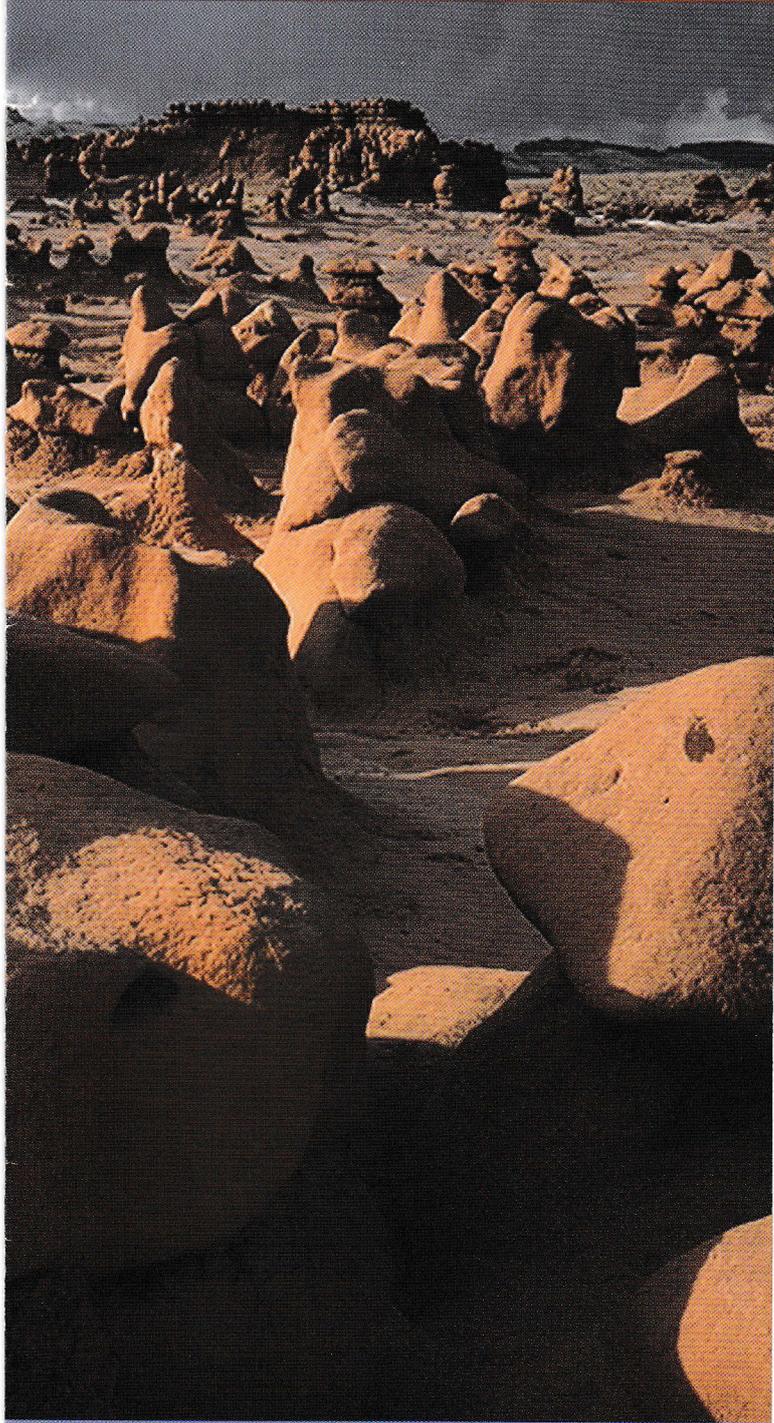


Utah State Parks

GOBLIN VALLEY



Goblin Valley

From deposits laid approximately 170 million years ago by a vast inland sea, Goblin Valley State Park has been sculpted by forces of nature such as uplift and erosion by wind and water. Today, results of these geologic forces are witnessed in the stone gnomes inhabiting the valley. These uniquely shaped goblins lure visitors to join them in their desert playground.

Goblin Valley State Park is located in Emery County between Green River and Hanksville. Follow Highway 24 to Temple Mountain Junction (mile post 136), and proceed 12 miles southwest to the park.

Story of Goblin Valley

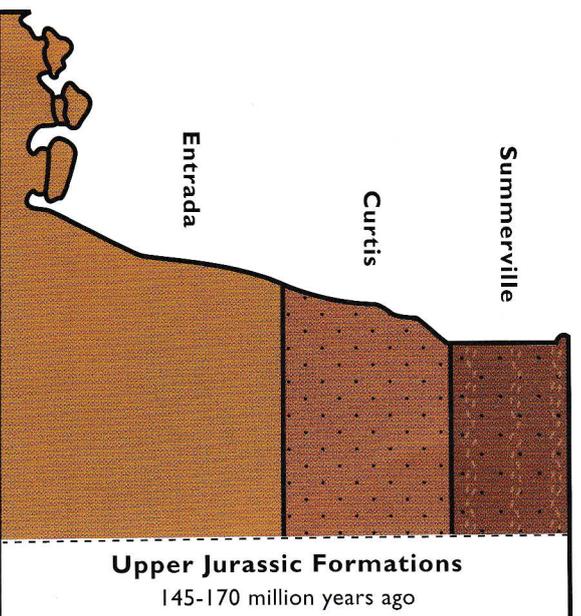
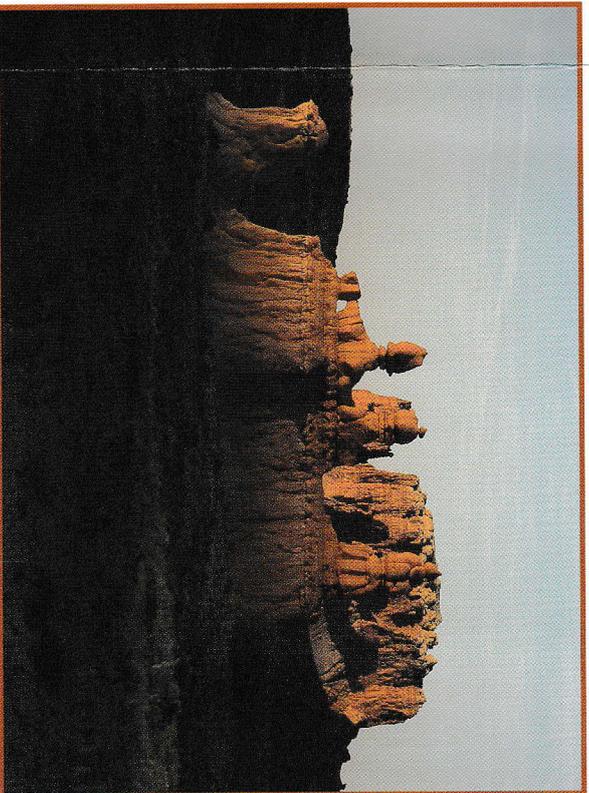
Cowboys searching for cattle were among the first to discover secluded Goblin Valley. Then in the late 1920s, Arthur Chaffin, owner/operator of the Hite Ferry, and two companions were searching for an alternative route between Green River and Caineville. They came to a vantage point about one mile west of Goblin Valley and were awed by what they saw — five buttes and a valley of strange-shaped rock formations surrounded by a wall of eroded cliffs. In 1949 Chaffin returned to the area he called Mushroom Valley. He spent several days exploring the mysterious valley and photographing its scores of intricately eroded creatures.

Publicity attracted visitors to the valley despite its remoteness. In 1954 it was proposed that Goblin Valley be protected from vandalism. The state of Utah later acquired the property and established Goblin Valley State Reserve. It was officially designated a state park on August 24, 1964.

Geology

The wonderful stone shapes of Goblin Valley result from millions of years of geologic history. The goblins are made of Entrada sandstone, which consist of debris eroded from former highlands and redeposited here on a tidal flat (alternating layers of sandstone, siltstone and shale). The goblins show evidence of being near an ancient sea with 1) the ebb and flow of tides, 2) tidal channels that directed currents back to the sea and 3) coastal sand dunes.

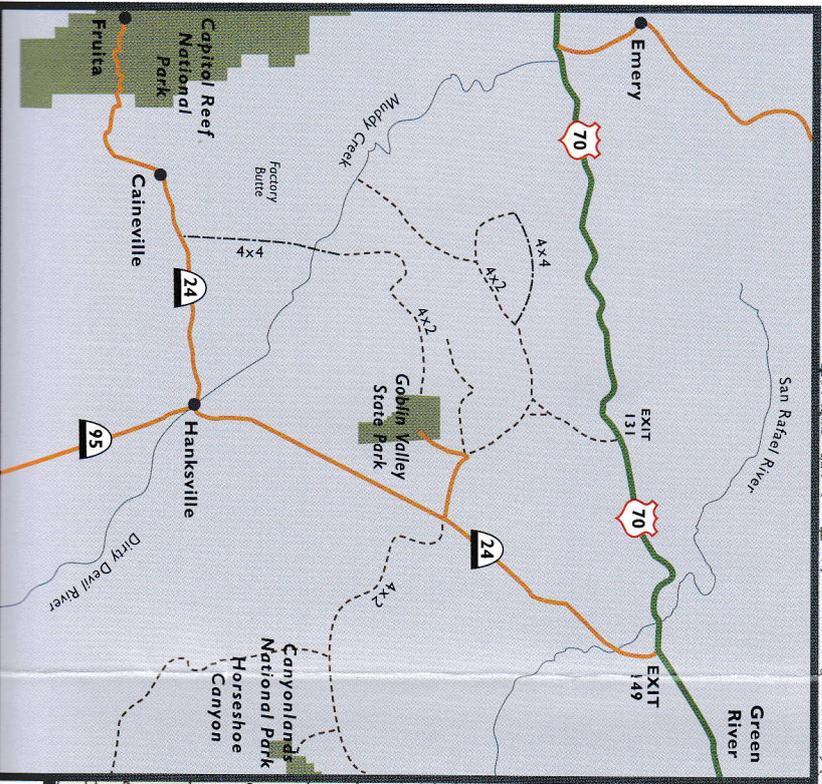
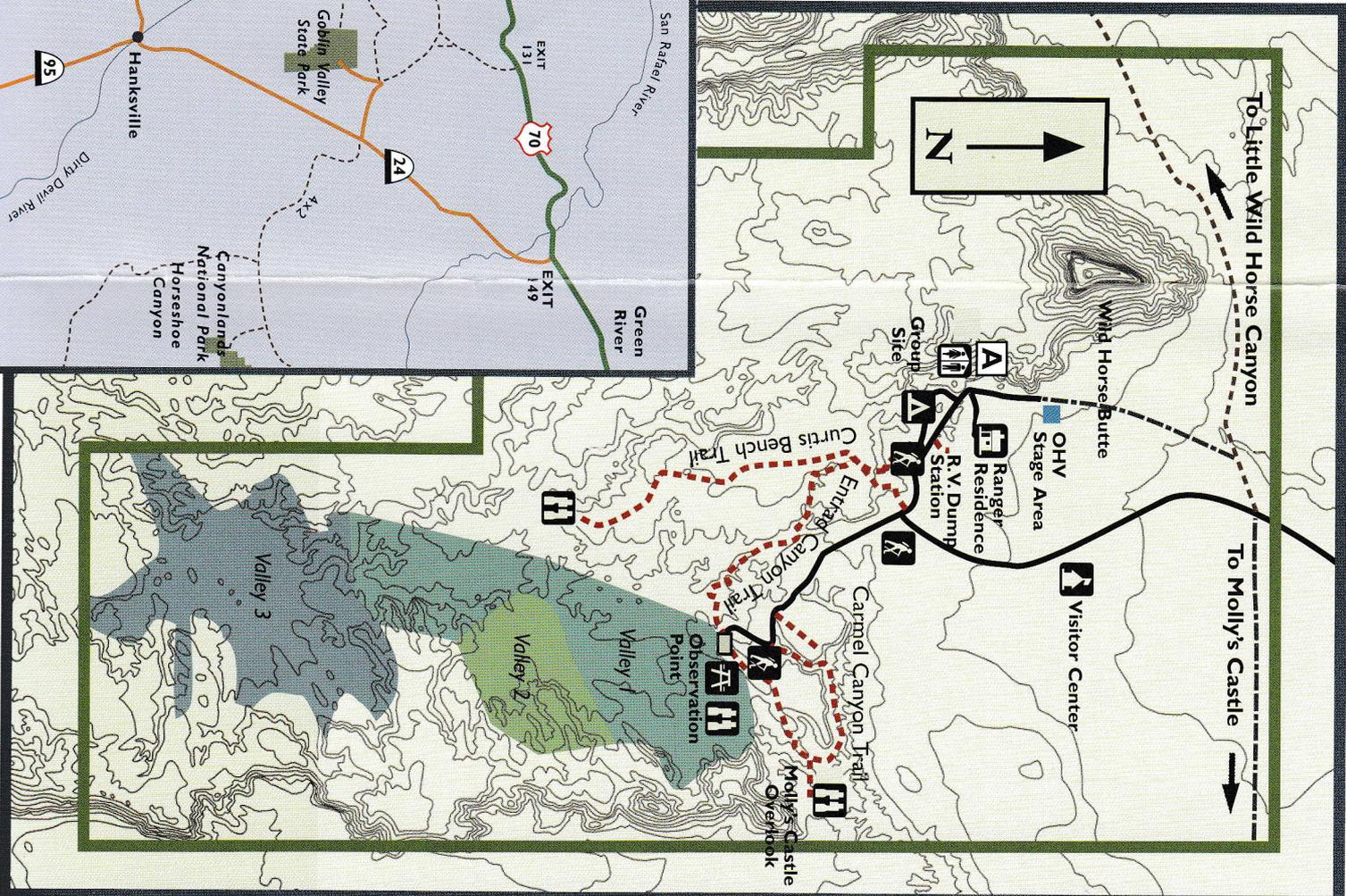
Joint or fracture patterns within the Entrada's sandstone beds create initial zones of weakness. The unweathered joints intersect to form sharp edges and corners with greater surface-area-to-volume ratios than the faces. As a result, the edges weather more quickly, producing spherical-shaped goblins.



Plants and Animals

Map Legend

- Picnic Area
- Campground
- Ranger Residence
- Viewpoint
- Trail Head
- Visitor Center
- Restrooms
- Amphitheater
- OHV Road
- Graded Gravel
- Paved Roads



can endure blowing sand and hot, dry surface conditions. Vegetation and wildlife exist on a limited supply of water in this arid desert environment. Plants have adapted by reducing the size of their leaves, as smaller leaves lose less water through transpiration. Some plants have a waxy coating on their leaves, which also reduces water loss. Visitors will likely encounter Mormon tea (joint fir), Russian thistle, Indian ricegrass and various cacti. Nearby, at slightly higher elevations, are juniper and piñon pine.

Animals often must travel many miles to find water or wait for thunderstorms to provide moisture. Most animals in the area are nocturnal, venturing out only in the cooler evenings to hunt and forage for food. Some animals get water from the food they eat and go for weeks without a drink of water: jack rabbits, scorpions, kangaroo rats, pronghorn, kit foxes, midget faded rattlesnake and coyotes are found within and near the park.

Desert animals have only a slight edge on the harsh environment in which they live. Chasing or harassing them uses up precious reserves they cannot afford to lose. Please respect their home, and do not disrupt their tenuous struggle for existence.

