Bryce Canyon

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bryce Canyon National Park

Backcountry Hiking

Hiking at Bryce

Bryce Canyon is best known for its hoodoos—intricately-carved rock spires left standing by erosion. Hoodoos are best experienced from our day-hiking trails, which offer an up-close and intimate look at these beautiful and bizarre rock formations. Day-hiking trails are relatively short, moderately difficult, and very popular.

If you've come to hike among the hoodoos, be sure to take a day hike. Check your Hoodoo newspaper for day-hiking information. Bryce Canyon's backcountry trails offer forests and meadows, stunning views of distant cliffs, solitude, but fewer hoodoos. Backcountry camping is permitted only in designated backcountry campsites.

Backcountry Trails

The Riggs Spring Loop is an 8.6-mile (13.9 km) loop which begins and ends at the Rainbow/Yovimpa Point parking lot. Either the Yovimpa or Rainbow Point trailhead may be used to access this loop.

The Under-the-Rim Trail is approximately 22.9 miles (36.9 km) from Bryce Point to Rainbow Point. Three connecting trails intersect the Under-the-Rim Trail at Swamp Canyon, Whiteman Bench and Agua Canyon trailheads.

In summer months, the Bryce Canyon Shuttle provides optional transportation to and from Sunrise, Sunset, Inspiration, and Bryce Points, but does not serve the southern end of the park. You must provide your own transportation to/from those locations. At the time of publication the Rainbow Point Tour is available (when the shuttle system is operating) to transport hikers to/from Rainbow Point. However, this service may be discontinued at any time without notice - inquire at the Visitor Center. Please note that hitchhiking is not allowed in Bryce Canyon National Park.

The Under-the-Rim Trail may be broken into sections as follows:

Trail sections	distance (one-way)	elevation change
• Bryce Point to Swamp Canyon T.H. (Steep descent past the Hat Shop)	11.6 mi / 18.7 km	1294 ft / 394 m
• Swamp Canyon T.H. to Whiteman T.H. (Hike through plant communities)	3.6 mi / 5.8 km	848 ft / 259 m
• Whiteman T.H. to Agua Canyon T.H. (Interesting geology and good birding)	7.0 mi / 11.3 km	1460 ft/ 445 m
• Agua Canyon T.H. to Rainbow Point (Hike across hogbacks; good views)	7.9 mi / 12.7 km	1365 ft / 416 m

T.H. = Trailhead

Water in the Backcountry

We recommend you carry at least one gallon (4 liters) of water per person per day into the backcountry. Water sources are intermittent and unreliable.

Water from backcountry sources must be purified by boiling (10 minutes), filtering, or iodine treatment.

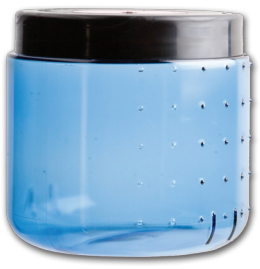
Please check at the visitor center for the most current information on water availability.

You MAY find water at the following locations:

- Yellow Creek (near all campsites)
- Sheep Creek (near campsite)
- Iron Spring (trail near campsite)*
- Riggs Spring (inside log fence area)
- Yovimpa Spring (below Yovimpa Pass campsite)

** Note: Water in Iron Spring has substantial sediment and metallic taste.*

Bears and Other Wildlife



Bryce Canyon is home to many wildlife species, including predatory mammals such as Mountain Lions, Coyotes, and Black Bears. In addition, squirrels and other small mammals may be encountered along the trail or attracted to your campsite. Following proper storage techniques for food and other scented items is *your* responsibility. Also, it is important to remember that feeding or harassing wildlife in the park is a violation of federal law (36 CFR 1002.2).

Due to the presence of Black Bears within Bryce Canyon National Park, use of bear-resistant food canisters on overnight backcountry hikes is strongly recommended. Hikers who choose not to use a canister are still required to follow safe food storage practices. However, please note that during periods of high bear activity, the park may, at its discretion and without prior notice, *require* use of bear-resistant canisters for all overnight hikes into the backcountry. Bear-resistant canisters are available for loan, free of charge, at the Visitor Center.

- **Store all food, deodorants, toothpaste, sunscreen, or anything else with an odor in the canister.**
- **Store any food scraps in a sealed air-tight container.**
- **Never cook, store food and food scraps, or keep scented items in your tent. Do not sleep in the clothes you were wearing as you prepared your meal.**
- **REPORT ALL BEAR AND MOUNTAIN LION SIGHTINGS TO THE VISITOR CENTER INFORMATION DESK!**

Backcountry Guidelines

Permits.....A Backcountry Permit is required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. Permits may be purchased at the visitor center from 9 a.m. until 90 minutes before closing.

Water.....Carry plenty of water and check water availability with a ranger at the visitor center before you leave. Purify all water from backcountry sources.

Hygiene.....Wash dishes and bathe at least 100 feet (30 m) from water sources, trails and campsites. Collect and bag food scraps and pack out as trash.

Waste.....Dig "catholes" 6 to 8 inches (15 cm) deep at least 200 feet (60 m) away from water, trails and campsites to bury human waste. Pack out all trash and any you find that has been left by others. Pack out toilet paper in zip-type bags.

Fires.....NO OPEN FIRES are allowed in the backcountry. Camp stoves are permitted.

Safety.....Carry a detailed topographic map, compass, extra clothing, food and water, rain gear, hat and sunscreen. Check the weather forecast prior to departure. Always let a friend or family member know your plans.

Travel.....Prevent unnecessary and unsightly erosion — stay on designated trails. Shortcutting trail switchbacks is illegal and also dangerous.

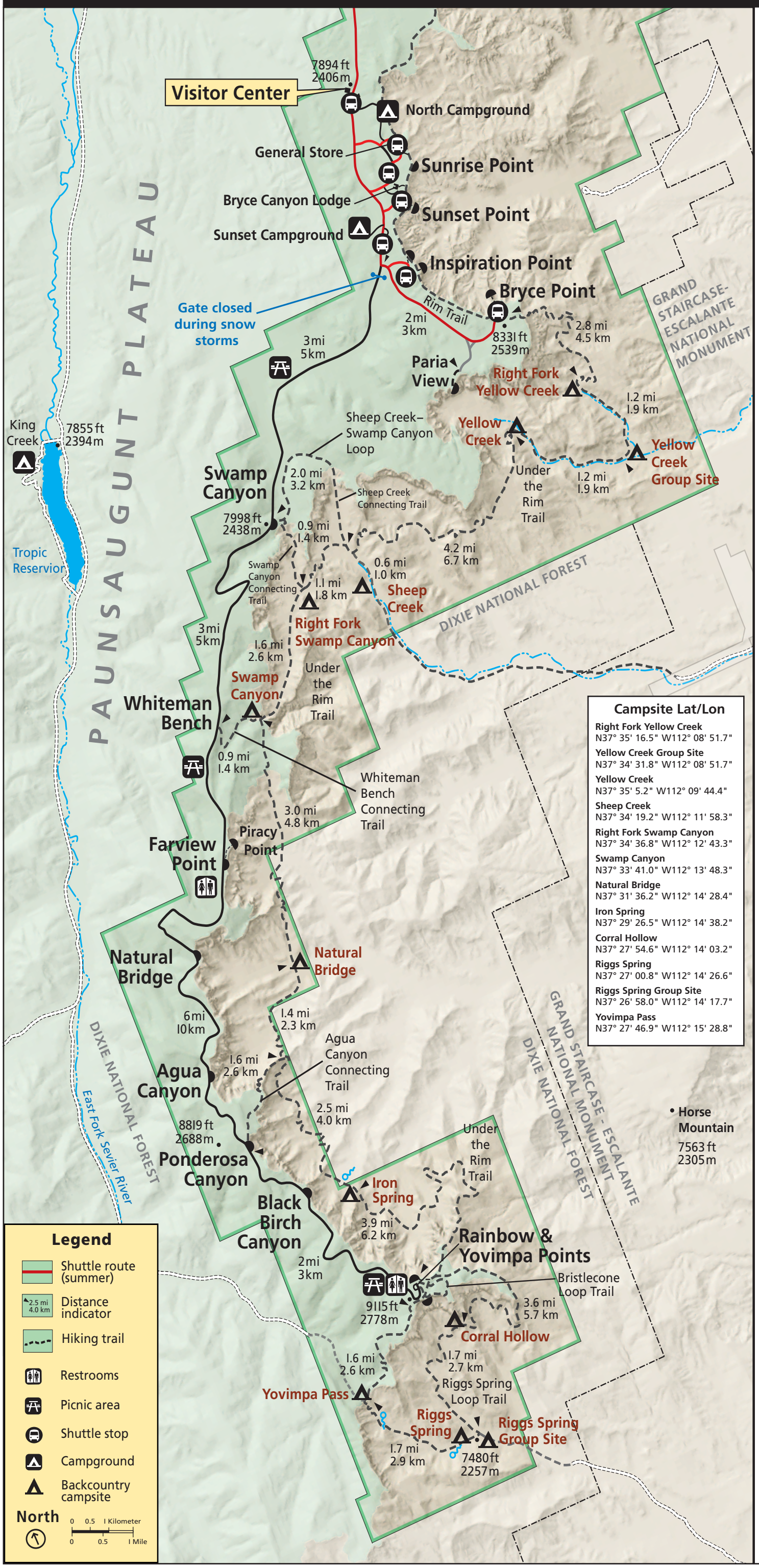
Camping.....Camp only in designated sites as reserved on your backcountry permit. Leave no trace of your visit.

Groups.....Backcountry campsites are limited to 6 people per regular site, and 15 people per group site.

Cell Phones.....Wireless communication in the backcountry may work in some areas, but should not be relied upon.

Immediately report emergencies and resource violations to a ranger, call 911 or 435-676-2411.

Bryce Canyon's Backcountry



Campsite Lat/Lon

Right Fork Yellow Creek
N37° 35' 16.5" W112° 08' 51.7"

Yellow Creek Group Site
N37° 34' 31.8" W112° 08' 51.7"

Yellow Creek
N37° 35' 5.2" W112° 09' 44.4"

Sheep Creek
N37° 34' 19.2" W112° 11' 58.3"

Right Fork Swamp Canyon
N37° 34' 36.8" W112° 12' 43.3"

Swamp Canyon
N37° 33' 41.0" W112° 13' 48.3"

Natural Bridge
N37° 31' 36.2" W112° 14' 28.4"

Iron Spring
N37° 29' 26.5" W112° 14' 38.2"

Corral Hollow
N37° 27' 54.6" W112° 14' 03.2"

Riggs Spring
N37° 27' 00.8" W112° 14' 26.6"

Riggs Spring Group Site
N37° 26' 58.0" W112° 14' 17.7"

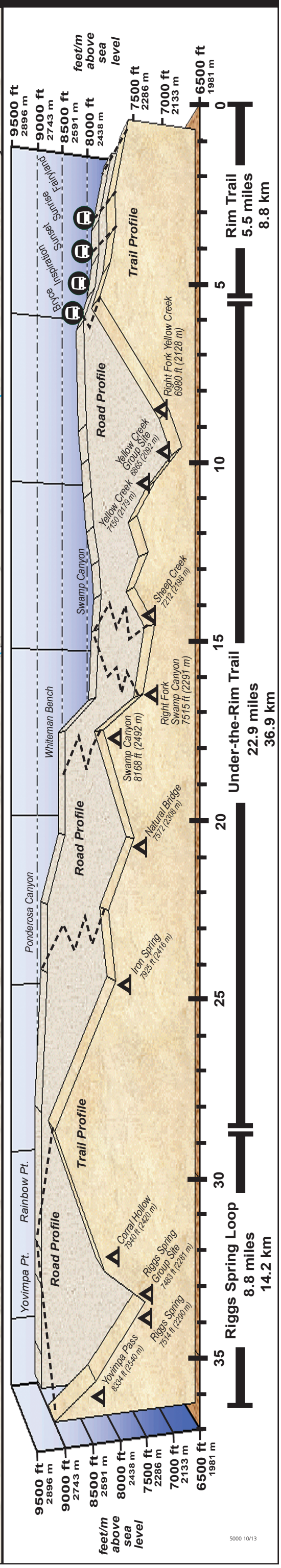
Yovimpa Pass
N37° 27' 46.9" W112° 15' 28.8"

Legend

- Shuttle route (summer)
- Distance indicator (2.5 mi 4.0 km)
- Hiking trail
- Restrooms
- Picnic area
- Shuttle stop
- Campground
- Backcountry campsite

North

0 0.5 1 Kilometer
0 0.5 1 Mile



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