

Death Valley National Park

By Meg Leonard

Death Valley got its name from pioneers. A group was stranded in this area during the winter of 1849-1850. They all thought they would die in this valley. They were rescued by two scouts from their group. As far as anyone knows, only one member of the group actually died in Death Valley. Still, the name stuck. Today this area is a national park. Death Valley National Park is in two states, California and Nevada.



Death Valley has many extremes. It has some of the most extreme weather on the planet Earth. The average yearly rainfall is less than two inches. In some years, no rain has fallen at all! The temperatures in summer can reach more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit. It can stay this hot for many days in a row. The elevation is also extreme. Parts of Death Valley are below sea level. The lowest point in the United States is in Death Valley. It is 282 feet below sea level. It is called Badwater Basin. A few miles away is Telescope Peak. Its elevation is 11,049 feet above sea level!

Visitors may be surprised to learn that wildflowers sometimes bloom in Death Valley. The weather conditions must be just right in order for flowers to bloom. If rain falls a little at a time, the sun is warm, and the winds are not too strong, then flowers may bloom. They will bloom in early spring. The best time of year for most people to visit Death Valley is the winter. However, visitors from all over the world come here all year long. During the summer, the extreme heat can be very dangerous. People have died because they haven't been prepared for the heat. You need to bring plenty of water during any time of year if you are visiting Death Valley. This will keep you safe as you experience some of nature's extremes.

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Questions

- _____ 1. Where is Death Valley National Park?
- A. Arizona
 - B. Nevada
 - C. California
 - D. both B and C
- _____ 2. Who named Death Valley?
- A. newspaper reporters
 - B. Native Americans
 - C. no one knows
 - D. pioneers who got lost here
- _____ 3. What word can be used to describe Death Valley?
- A. normal
 - B. extreme
 - C. common
 - D. average

Name _____



Date _____

_____ 4. What surprising sight might you find in Death Valley?

- A. wildflowers
- B. seashells
- C. skeletons
- D. sand

_____ 5. When is the best time to visit Death Valley?

- A. summer
- B. spring
- C. winter
- D. fall

6. List some of the extremes at Death Valley.

Write a journal entry from the point of view of one of the pioneers from the group that named Death Valley.

Write a paragraph that describes safety measures you would need to take on a trip to Death Valley.

Name _____



Date _____

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