



# Mesa Verde

The official newspaper  
of Mesa Verde National Park

Summer/Fall 2007

## TICKETS ARE REQUIRED TO ENTER CLIFF PALACE, LONG HOUSE, OR BALCONY HOUSE



### FAR VIEW VISITOR CENTER

**This should be your first stop for information and tour tickets, located 15 miles (25km) from the park entrance. Tickets for Cliff Palace, Balcony House, and Long House (\$3.00 per person, per tour) can only be purchased here.\***

Open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. May 27 to October 13, 2007

Although you can easily fill your day with self-guided options, please keep in mind that **tour tickets are required to enter Cliff Palace, Long House, and Balcony House.**

\*Note: Tickets can also be purchased at Morefield Ranger Station 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. from May 27 to August 12, 2007.

### Planning Your Park Visit

#### If you have four hours...

- Far View Visitor Center (15 miles from park entrance) for information and orientation.
- Chapin Mesa Museum and self-guided tour of Spruce Tree House or Mesa Top Loop Road (6-mile loop).

#### If you have one day...

- Far View Visitor Center to purchase tickets (\$3.00 each) to Cliff Palace or Balcony House.
- Cliff Palace Loop Road (If you plan to visit Cliff Palace or Balcony House, *be sure you have your tickets first.*)
- Chapin Mesa Museum, self-guided tour of Spruce Tree House and drive the Mesa Top Loop Road (6-mile loop).
- Far View Sites Complex.

#### If you have one day (alternative)...

- Far View Visitor Center to purchase tickets (\$3.00 each) to visit Long House on Wetherill Mesa.
- Wetherill Mesa Road, scenic 12-mile drive.
- Tram service to cliff dwelling overlooks (If you plan to visit Long House, *be sure you have your tickets first.*)
- Self-guided tour of Step House and hiking trails to mesa top sites.

#### If you have two days or more (one day activities plus)...

- Far View Visitor Center to purchase tickets to Cliff Palace, Balcony House and Long House. (Tickets can be purchased at the Far View Visitor Center up to two days in advance.)
- One or more of Mesa Verde's hiking trails.

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Tune your radio to AM1610 for current park information.

## Superintendent's Welcome

Welcome to Mesa Verde National Park! Your Park! On June 29, 2006, Mesa Verde National Park celebrated its 100th year as the first cultural national park. Through collaboration with formal and informal partners, Mesa Verde reinvigorated its interpretive and educational programs, and generated new and lasting partnerships with organizations and volunteers. The Centennial Celebration energized the park's surrounding communities and connected them to Mesa Verde through art, history, archeology, cultural demonstrations, interpretation, education, and volunteerism.

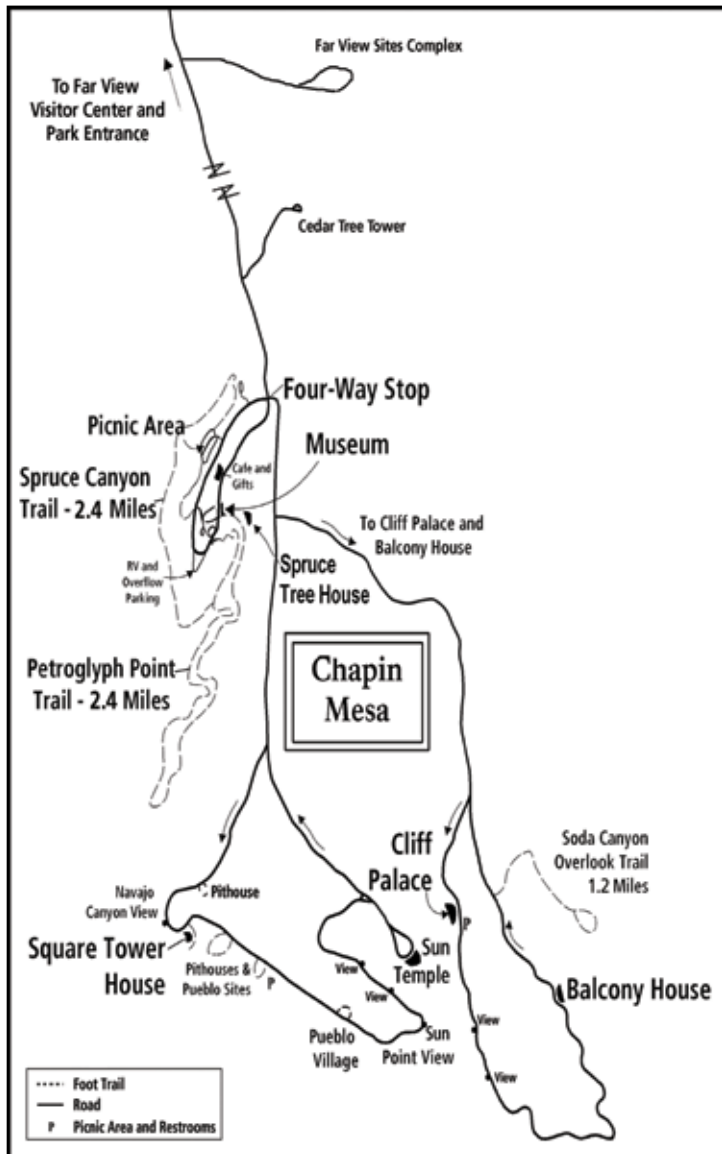
Now, as the National Park Service prepares for its 100th birthday in 2016, Mesa Verde National Park is moving into its second century. We are working on several projects -- from road repairs to an International Junior Ranger Program and Sister Parks Program involving Mesa Verde, Paquimé and Monte Albán, in Mexico, and Caracol in Belize. I would also encourage you to visit [nps.gov/2016](http://nps.gov/2016) to learn more about the National Park Service Centennial Initiative.

Thank you for coming to visit this amazing World Heritage Site. I hope you have a safe and enjoyable visit.

Larry T. Wiese, Superintendent

# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Chapin Mesa Self-Guided Activities (No Ticket Required)



### CHAPIN MESA ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

*Artifacts of the Ancestral Puebloans*  
Information, exhibits, and bookstore. A 25-minute video is shown every half hour. The museum is a 5-mile (8km), 15-minute drive from the Far View Visitor Center. Hiking trails to Petroglyph Point and Spruce Canyon begin at the museum. Restrooms, restaurant, gift shop, post office, and picnic area nearby. *Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour.*

•**May 27 to October 13, 2007**

Open 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

•**October 14 to November 10, 2007**

Open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



### SPRUCE TREE HOUSE

*Mesa Verde's Best-Preserved Cliff Dwelling*

A 100ft (30m) descent and ascent on a winding path. Total walking distance is 1/2-mile (1km) round trip. Trail begins at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Rangers are on site to answer questions. *Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour.*

•**May 27 to September 3, 2007**

Open 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

•**September 4 to October 13, 2007**

Open 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

•**October 14 to November 10, 2007**

Open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



### CEDAR TREE TOWER

*Mesa Top Tower and Kiva*  
Ancestral Puebloan tower and kiva complex is located adjacent to the road. Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset. *Allow 5 minutes.*

### MESA TOP LOOP ROAD

*Auto Tour - 700 Years of Mesa Verde History*



A 6-mile (10km) driving tour with short, paved trails. Twelve easily-accessible sites, including surface dwellings and cliff dwelling overlooks. Highlights include Square Tower House, Sun Point Overlook, and views of Cliff Palace from Sun Point and Sun Temple stops. Overlooks are also found on the 6-mile (10km) Cliff Palace Loop Road. Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset. *Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour.*



### FAR VIEW SITES COMPLEX

*Five Mesa Top Villages & Far View Reservoir*  
Far View House plus four other villages and a dry reservoir on a level 3/4-mile (1.2km) unpaved trail. Four miles (6.4km) north of the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset. *Allow 45 minutes.*

### Be Safe: Know The Rules of the Park

By observing the rules of the park, you can have a safe and enjoyable visit plus help preserve Mesa Verde's fragile archeological sites and natural ecosystems.

•Consider your physical health BEFORE hiking or going on tours. Carry and DRINK plenty of water.

•Please do not sit, stand, climb, or lean on fragile archeological structures.

•Pets must be physically restrained at all times. They are not allowed on trails, in archeological sites, or in buildings. Pets can be walked along paved roads, in parking lots, and

at the campground. Leaving pets unattended or tied to any object within the park is prohibited.

•Feeding, capturing, or teasing wildlife is prohibited and can be dangerous.

# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Food, Shopping, Guided Bus Tours, and Lodging

Concessions at Mesa Verde National Park are managed by ARAMARK/Mesa Verde Company, an authorized concessionaire of the National Park Service. They provide lodging, retail shops, food services, campground, and half-day guided bus tours. P.O. Box 277, Mancos, CO 81328, (800) 449-2288, (970) 529-4442 locally, or visit and book on-line at [www.visitmesaverde.com](http://www.visitmesaverde.com).



**Mesa Verde Gives Back at Far View Terrace!**

**10% OFF Clothing**

All Sustainable/Recycled Clothing

Please present coupon at purchase and only one coupon per family. EXPIRES: Oct. 14, 2007

**Mesa Verde Gives Back at Far View Terrace!**

**10% OFF Full Buffet**

Our Sustainable Full Buffet

Please present coupon at purchase and only one coupon per family. EXPIRES: Oct. 14, 2007



# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Half-Day Guided Bus Tours



National Park Service rangers lead visitors on a half-day learning journey and share current understanding and interpretation of the culture, architecture, and archeology of the Ancestral Puebloan people. The tours start with the earliest pit houses and include a tour of Cliff Palace, the largest cliff dwelling in America. Enjoy a bus ride in comfort to the park's most fascinating sites. Your ranger will lead you on short hikes to sites and vantage points for spectacular photos. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the Far View Visitor Center (ARAMARK desk), Far View Lodge, Far View Terrace tour desk, or Morefield Campground. Available May 5 to October 13, 2007. Tours depart daily from Far View Terrace at 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.



## Ranger-Guided Programs

From May 27 to September 3, these programs are offered daily to park visitors. Please ask at the Far View Visitor Center for more information about these enjoyable experiences. (For cliff dwelling tours, see page 8)



### Far View Sites Walk (No ticket required)

This easy to moderate, one-mile (1.6km) walk explores life on the mesa top. The walk begins at Far View House adjacent to the Far View Sites parking area, one mile south of the Visitor Center, at 5:00 p.m. daily. Program is free.



### Evening Programs (No ticket required)

In 1907, archeologist Jesse Fewkes began offering the first evening campfire talks in the history of the National Park Service outside of Spruce Tree House. Each evening from May 27 to September 3, enjoy free, 45-minute presentations at 9:00 p.m. by rangers (weather permitting) in the Morefield Amphitheater at the end of the road in Morefield Campground. Bring a flashlight. Program is free.



### Twilight Tours (Ticket required)

Explore Cliff Palace on a 1.5 hour tour as the sun begins to set, and experience North America's largest cliff dwelling in a whole new way. Tours are led by a park ranger or from the viewpoint of a character from Mesa Verde's past. These intimate tours are limited to 20 participants. Tour begins at 7:00 p.m. daily. Tickets are \$10 per person, and available ONLY at the Museum Bookstore.

## Morefield Campground



Nestled in a grove of Gambel oak trees four miles inside the park entrance, Morefield Campground has tent, RV, and group sites, each with picnic tables and barbeque grills. Don't have camping gear? Then try base camping. A base camp provides a tent, cots, and other camping equipment. Registration and information is available at the camp store. Groceries, firewood, gasoline, showers, and a coin-operated laundromat are conveniently located nearby. Tickets for guided bus tours are also available. Open May 10 to October 14, 2007.

Camp Store/Registration	7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Laundry/Shower	24 hours
Gas Station	Pay at pump, 24 hours
Knife Edge Café	7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. (closes Sept. 9)

### Post Office

Want to send a postcard home with a Mesa Verde postmark? Then drop by the historic Mesa Verde Post Office. This full-service post office, located near the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Beginning October 29, 2007, the post office is open Monday to Friday, only.



# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Year of the Raptor

Observing birds of prey was exceptionally good in Mesa Verde during 2006. Spring surveys in and around the park found high species diversity and numbers in the unburned pinyon-juniper woodlands, but none or very few owls in burned lands or areas filling up with developments. This points to the increasing ecological value of the intact old-growth forests inside the national park. By summer, we had found many young of the year. The most common species were long-eared owl, northern saw-whet owl, and great horned owl. The rare species we observed were the northern pygmy-owl, western screech-owl, flammulated owl, and Mexican spotted owl. Young of the year were evident in many park areas into the summer, but special treats for visitors were the family of great horned owls that raised three young in Cliff Palace and the spotted owl that roosted all day in Spruce Tree House on July 20.

Another great find took place on June 16 when park staff found a nest with two young of the rare northern goshawk in a remote canyon. It is only the park's second nesting record for this inhabitant of dense conifer forests. Other regularly observed raptors in the park are the golden eagle, peregrine falcon, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, and northern harrier.



Mexican spotted owl at Spruce Tree House

## Hiking Trails

Hiking in Mesa Verde National Park is restricted and allowed only on designated trails. Visitors may not enter cliff dwellings unless accompanied by a uniformed park ranger.

### Petroglyph Point Loop Trail 2.4 miles (3.9km) loop



Begins from the Spruce Tree House Trail, and continues below the edge of the plateau to a petroglyph panel, makes a climb to the top of the mesa, and returns via the rim to the museum. This trail also provides views of Spruce and Navajo Canyons. Gate access to the trail is only available when Spruce Tree House is open. Trail guide is available.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AT THE TRAILHEAD OR MUSEUM DESK.

### Knife Edge Trail 2.0 miles (3.2km), round-trip



The trail follows the old road alignment from the northwest corner of Morefield Campground towards the Montezuma Valley Overlook. This trail provides good views of Montezuma Valley and is an excellent place to watch sunsets and see wildlife. Trail guide is available.

### Spruce Canyon Trail 2.4 miles (3.9km) loop



Begins from the Spruce Tree House Trail and follows the bottom of Spruce Tree Canyon, turns up Spruce Canyon, and returns to the museum via the picnic area. Gate access to this trail is only available when Spruce Tree House is open.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AT THE TRAILHEAD OR MUSEUM DESK

### Additional Trails

•**Soda Canyon Overlook Trail** 1.2 miles (1.9km), round-trip  
Begins one mile north of the Balcony House parking area along the Cliff Palace Loop Road. The trail is an easy walk to the canyon edge and offers views of Balcony House and sites along Soda Canyon.

•**Prater Ridge Trail** 7.8 miles (12.6km) to complete both loops  
Begins on the west end of Morefield Campground. The trail ascends the east side of Prater Ridge for 1.1 miles (1.8km), and follows a loop around the top of the ridge, returning via the same 1.1 mile (1.8km) route. For a shorter hike, follow only the north loop (5.8 miles/9.3km) or south loop (4.6 miles/7.4km). Changes in the landscape and views of the surrounding area are highlights of this trail.

•**Point Lookout Trail** 2.2 miles (3.5km), round-trip  
Begins on the north side of the Morefield Campground Amphitheater parking lot. The trail switchbacks up the back side of Point Lookout and follows the top of the mesa. This trail provides excellent views of both Montezuma and Mancos valleys, as well as the surrounding countryside.

# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Mesa Verde Museum Association

Supporting education, interpretation, and research at Mesa Verde National Park since 1930

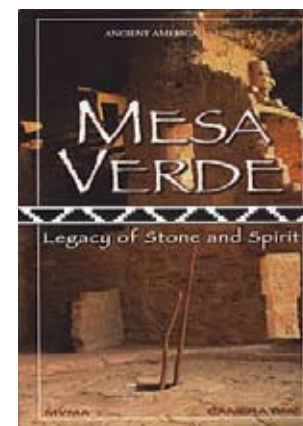
The Association provides educational and interpretive material to visitors of Mesa Verde National Park through an active publishing program and the operation of retail bookstores in the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, the Far View Visitor Center, the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez, and online at [www.mesaverde.org](http://www.mesaverde.org).

You can be a part of the effort to preserve Mesa Verde National Park for future generations by becoming an Association Member. Membership and retail sales allow the Museum Association to support educational, research, and interpretive programs in Mesa Verde National Park. For information on membership, visit any of the sales outlets or call 1-800-305-6053.

Ten-percent discount for new Junior Rangers! Present your Junior Ranger badge and completed activity sheet at the register.



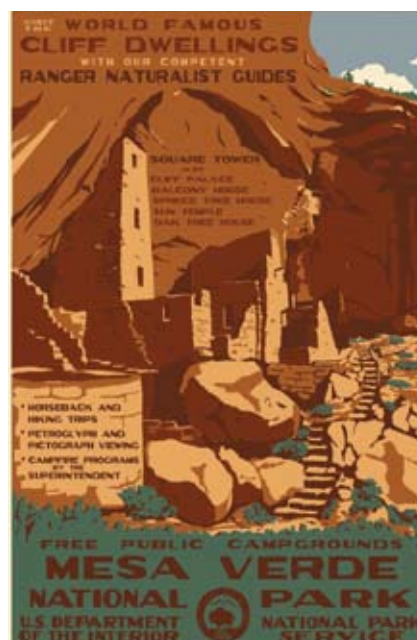
A 360 degree, panoramic virtual tour on CD allows you to visually explore on your computer areas of Cliff Palace, Balcony House, Long House, and Spruce Tree House that are not open to the public. \$16.95



Discover the fascinating story of Ancient America and the pueblo builders who made this remote, high plateau their home so long ago. Shown in the museum. Available VHS (\$14.99), PAL (\$16.99), and DVD (\$15.99).



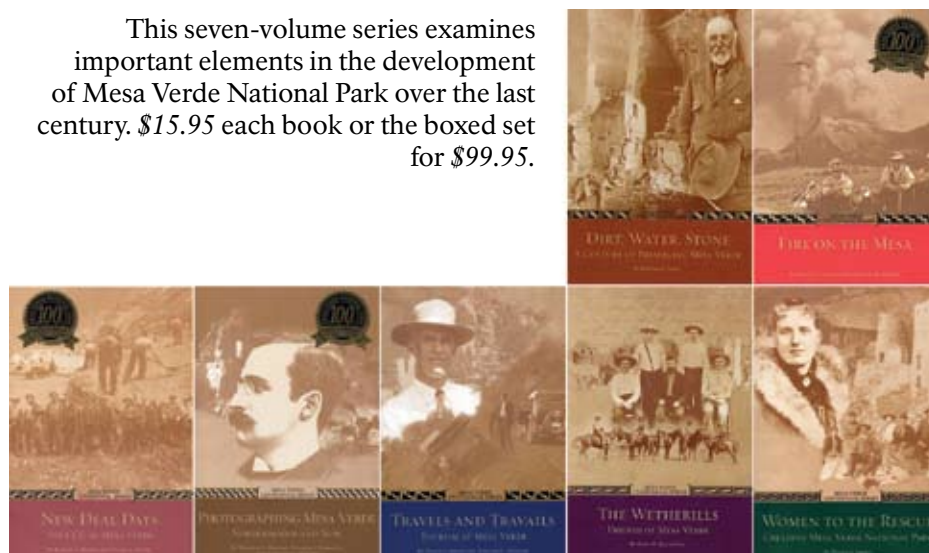
In 2006, Mesa Verde National Park celebrated its first century as a national park. To commemorate this milestone, and as a timeless tribute to one of the world's great archeological treasures, the Mesa Verde Museum Association has published a compendium of documents, photos, and essays tracing 100 years of Mesa Verde history. Paper \$21.99



Display the history and wonder of Mesa Verde through this historic reproduction serigraph! The Works Progress Administration (WPA) printed thousands of posters through its Federal Arts Project during the 1930s and 1940s.

WPA-style posters include the Department of Interior logo (1906) \$40. Postcards and notecards with this graphic are also available.

This seven-volume series examines important elements in the development of Mesa Verde National Park over the last century. \$15.95 each book or the boxed set for \$99.95.



Mesa Verde Museum Association

**10% Off**

Coupon is good for 10% discount on all regularly priced items.

Redeemable at the Chapin Mesa Museum & Far View Visitor Center Bookstores.

Expiration Date: 10/31/2007

## Wetherill Mesa Self-Guided Activities (No Ticket Required)

Tram service begins at the Wetherill Mesa Kiosk, located at the end of a 12-mile (19km), 45-minute drive from the Far View Visitor Center. *Long House ticket holders will be seated first*, then tram service is offered on a space-available basis. For your safety, please do not ride bicycles on the Wetherill Mesa Road or walk on the tram road. Snacks are available for purchase at the Kiosk from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Road to Wetherill open 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Open May 27 to September 3, 2007.



### STEP HOUSE

*Pithouse, Petroglyphs and Cliff Dwelling*  
A 100ft (30m) descent and ascent on a winding path. Total walking distance 3/4-mile (1.2km) round-trip. Trail begins near the Wetherill Mesa kiosk. Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour.



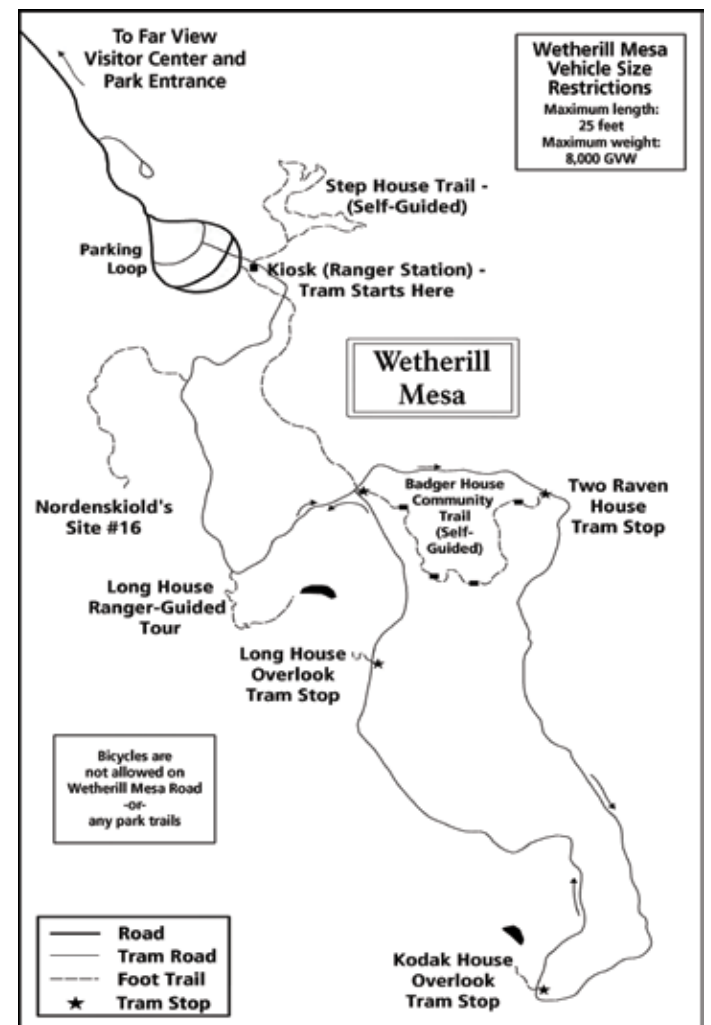
### NORDENSKIOLD #16 TRAIL

*Trail to Cliff Dwelling Overlook*  
Moderate, 1-mile (1.6km) round-trip gravel path through burned area, gently climbs to an overlook of Nordenskiold #16 cliff dwelling. Allow 1 hour.



### BADGER HOUSE TRAIL

*Trail to Four Mesa Top Sites*  
The 2.5 mile (4km) trail to Badger House Community surface sites begins at Wetherill Mesa Kiosk. Combination gravel and paved trail. If you prefer, take the tram to or from the Badger House tram stop and shorten the trail to 1.5 miles. Allow 45 minutes to 1 hour.



## Become a Junior Ranger!

Hey, kids! Become a Junior Ranger and have fun while learning about Mesa Verde National Park. Becoming a Junior Ranger is a great way to explore your national parks while learning how you can help take care of them for the future. Just pick up a Junior Ranger activity sheet, for ages 4 to 12, at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum or Far View Visitor Center. As you visit the park, complete the activities for your age group. When you are finished, turn it in at the museum or visitor center to earn a Mesa Verde Junior Ranger badge. From May 27 to August 12, 2007, booklets can also be turned in at the Morefield Ranger Station from 5:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.



### Road Advisory

- Gasoline is only available in Morefield Village; please plan accordingly.
- Falling rocks, road construction, and temporary delays could be encountered throughout the park.

### Emergencies

- Contact a park ranger or call 911.



# Mesa Verde Visitor Guide

## Visitor Activities: May 27 to November 10, 2007

### Ranger-Guided Tours (Ticket Required)

You must be accompanied by a park ranger to enter alcove sites. The tours are strenuous. During periods of high visitation (such as Memorial Day Weekend), you might be required to choose only one tour per day between Cliff Palace and Balcony House. Long House can be visited in the same day as one of the above-mentioned sites. Tickets cost \$3.00 per person, all ages, per tour.



### CLIFF PALACE

#### Mesa Verde's Largest Cliff Dwelling

This one-hour tour involves descending uneven stone steps and climbing five, 8-10ft (2.6-3m) ladders on a 100ft (30m) vertical climb. Total walking distance is about 1/4-mile (400m), round-trip. The tour begins at Cliff Palace Overlook, an 8-mile (13km), 20-minute drive from the Visitor Center.

- May 27 to September 3, 2007  
9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., every half hour
- September 4 to October 13, 2007  
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every half hour
- October 14 to November 10, 2007  
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., every hour



Cliff Palace entrance trail (left) and exit trail (above).

### BALCONY HOUSE

#### Adventurous Cliff Dwelling Tour

This one-hour tour involves climbing a 32 ft. ladder, crawling through a 12ft.-long tunnel, and climbing up a 60ft (20m) open rock face with two 10ft (3m) ladders to exit the site. The tour begins at the Balcony House parking area, a 10-mile (16km), 25-minute drive from the Visitor Center.

- May 27 to September 3, 2007  
9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., every half hour
- September 4 to October 13, 2007  
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., every hour



Balcony House entrance ladder.



Balcony House tunnel (left) and exit trail (above).

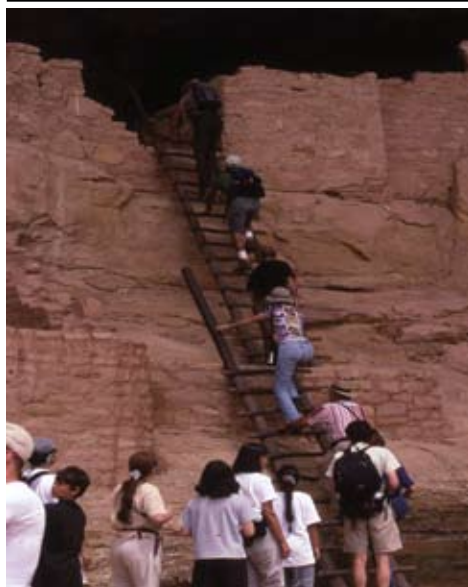


### LONG HOUSE on Wetherill Mesa

#### Mesa Verde's Most In-Depth Tour

Starting with a tram ride to and from the trailhead, this 90-minute tour involves climbing two 15ft (4.5m) ladders within the site. The round trip hike is 3/4 mile (1.2 km), with a 130ft (40m) gain in elevation upon exiting. Tour begins at the Wetherill Mesa information kiosk, a 12-mile (19km) drive from the Visitor Center. Allow 45 minutes for this drive. *Vehicles over 25-feet (8m) long are prohibited on this road.*

- May 27 to September 3, 2007  
10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 3 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.



Long House entrance trail.



Long House great kiva.