

Gary C Worrell

From: Worrell, Gary C. [Gary.Worrell@jhuapl.edu]
Sent: 20 November, 2005 17:26
To: gcw@igx.net
Subject: Postcard
Attachments: BarbaraButterfly.jpg; DesertOasis.jpg; DesertWaterfall.jpg; KayeKangarooRat.jpg; LesterLizard.jpg; JoshuaTreeParkMap.gif

Hello from the Joshua Tree National Park in South-Central California (the large green patch in the upper right of the Map).

The yellow line on the map is the driving path I took from San Diego. I went in at the North Entrance, at a town called "29 Palms." You may recognize the town name, there is a large Marine Base by the same name located there. I stopped at a McDonalds for breakfast, and you could hear the explosions from whatever it was the Marines were blowing up.

At first glance, it looks like the desert is surrounded by mountains. But closer inspection shows that the mountains are mostly just large piles of large rocks. Additionally, it's two-two-two deserts in one. The upper elevations (above 3000 feet) are part of the Mohave Desert, and the lower elevations to the East are part of the Colorado Desert.

Along the way I ran into Barbara, Kaye & Lester. Most desert animals are nocturnal, so they weren't standing around for me to see.

Near the Southern Exit is Cottonwood Springs (green flag on map). It's a trickle of water responsible for the Oasis (see picture). It was difficult to see the water, in most places it was below the dry riverbed. But, since the elevation was nearly 3000 feet, the water was naturally running downhill. If you follow the riverbed, it leads to a waterfall (see picture). You can see that not far from the bottom, the water sinks down again into the dry riverbed.

Cheers,
G.

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