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RAMSEY CANYON

by Janet Webb Farnsworth



Ramsey [Canyon](#) Preserve, ninety miles southeast of Tucson, [Arizona](#), near Sierra Vista, claims the title of "hummingbird capital of the United States." Up to fourteen species of hummers are included in the more than one hundred and fifty species of birds in the preserve, making this peaceful oasis one of the best bird watching spots in the world.

Part of The Nature Conservancy's international conservation program, Ramsey Canyon is renowned for its beauty and serenity. It is also an ecological crossroads where plants and wildlife from the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts mingle with those from the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Madre.



Coeur Deer in Ramsey Canyon.

Nestled deep in the Huachuca Mountains, one of Arizona's "sky islands," the preserve is home to southwestern rarities, including the ridge-nosed rattlesnake, lesser (Sanborn's) long-nosed bat, elegant trogon and white-eared hummingbirds.

Fed by year-round Ramsey Creek and protected by high canyon walls, the preserve provides a moist, cool environment for water-loving plants like sycamores, maples and columbines, with the cacti of the Sonoran desert always close by.

Wildlife viewing is the favorite activity of visitors. Coeur deer, coatis, mountain lion, and dozens of varieties of butterflies are only part of the wildlife indigenous to Ramsey Canyon. The Ramsey Canyon leopard frog exists only in Ramsey Canyon and several nearby sites in the Huachuca Mountains and foothills. Discovered in the late 1980's, it was declared as a species new to science in 1993. There are forty five mammal species and twenty species of reptiles and amphibians in and around the preserve.



Old homestead in the canyon.

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Hikers can follow Hamburg Trail along Ramsey Creek. It tops out at an overlook in the Coronado National Forest, then connects with other trails in the Miller Peak Wilderness Area. You can join a guided nature walk at 9:00 a.m. every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning from March through October. Many people come to simply enjoy the scenery and tranquillity of Ramsey Canyon, the nation's first National Natural [Landmark](#). Each season offers its own brand of beauty in the preserve. Spring brings blooming plants; summer, the deep green of the rainy season; and fall shows off magnificent colors. At five thousand five hundred feet elevation, winter snows can completely transform the canyon's beauty. Whatever season you choose, Ramsey Canyon is a welcome escape from the noise and distractions of everyday life.

Hours and Parking

Ramsey Canyon Preserve is open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily from March through October and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily from November through February. It is closed Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Years Day. Parking is limited to twenty three spaces, which are available on first come, first served basis. Vehicles over eighteen feet cannot be permitted since the last mile of road crosses a creek and turns into a narrow dirt lane not suitable for trailers or motor homes.

Admission

\$5 per person (good for seven days)
\$3 per person for Cochise County residents and The Nature Conservancy members
No charge for anyone under sixteen

Directions

To reach Ramsey Canyon Preserve, follow Highway 92 south from Sierra Vista for six miles and turn right on Ramsey Canyon Road. The preserve is at the road, four miles west of the highway.



Ramsey Canyon Preserve
The Nature Conservancy
Ramsey Canyon Preserve
27 Ramsey Canyon Road
Hereford, Arizona 85615
Ph 1-520-378-2785

Lodging

The Ramsey Canyon Inn Bed and Breakfast (six guest rooms, each with a private bath, and two separate housekeeping apartments, each with a fully equipped kitchen) is located adjacent to the preserve. [Click Here.](#) **(Rates, availability and reservation online)**

For the **Sierra Vista Area** [Click here.](#) **(Rates, availability and reservation on line)**

Dining

The closest dining to Ramsey Canyon Preserve is the Mesquite Tree Restaurant, located seven and one-tenths miles south of Sierra Vista on Highway 92 at the corner of Carr Canyon Road and Highway 92. The address is:
Mesquite Tree Restaurant
6398 South Highway 92
Hereford, Arizona 85615
Ph 1-520-378-2758

Other Attractions

Arizona Folklore Preserve
44 Ramsey Canyon Road,
Hereford, AZ 85615
1-520-378-6165 ([Reservations](#) required)
www.arizonafolklore.com

(Dolan Ellis, a former member of the New Christy Minstrels and the current official State Balladeer of Arizona, puts on a great show at 2:00 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday.)

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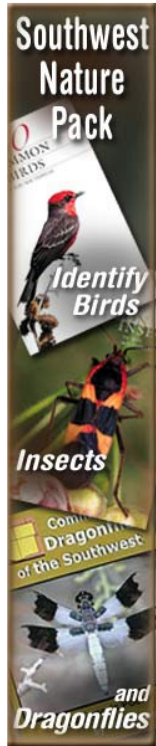
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