

ADVENTURE 10

Rock Climbing Cliffs on Ibx Hardpan

GPS N 38.971257 - W 113.380361

Accessible by: Family Car, Four-Wheel Drive, ATV, Foot

Desert playas (hard clay surfaced basins) dot the floor of the Great Basin. An impervious layer of clay underlies the playa hence the name hardpan. Playas fill with water following desert storms. They are rendered impassible when wet. Ibx Hardpan is 50 miles west of Delta in the southern Tule Valley south of US 6&50. The area is becoming world-famous among rock climbing and aviation enthusiasts. The huge cliff composing the Ibx Crag has companion boulders and cliffs in the immediate area.



Fossil Mountain Rockhounding Site

GPS N 38.87583 - W 113.46861

Accessible by: SUV, Four-Wheel Drive, ATV

World-famous Fossil Mountain lies in western Millard County located at the southern end of the Confusion Range. Early Ordovician fossil-bearing rock from six distinct rock formations roughly 485 to 470 million years old are to be found: the House Limestone, Fillmore Formation, Wah Wah Limestone, Juab Limestone, Kanosh Shale, and Lehman Limestone. Invertebrate fossil specimens to be found include: brachiopods, bryozoans, cephalopods, conodonts, corals, echinoderms, gastropods, graptolites, ostracods (bivalved crustacean), pelecypods, trilobites, and sponges; perhaps the most diverse accumulation of fossils in one small area anywhere. Fossil Mountain lies to the west of the road passing through Blind Valley.

Crystal Peak Rockhounding Site

GPS N 38.791712 W 113.598697

Accessible by: SUV, Four-Wheel Drive, ATV

Crystal Peak in the Wah Wah Mountains is a result of a volcanic eruption from a nearby caldera around 35 million years ago. Nearly 1,000 feet of the Tunnel Spring Tuff is visible many miles away as its startling white color varies from that of the surrounding landscape. Quartz crystals and other rocks and minerals are embedded in the tuff. Pumice is present in the formation. Eroded holes in the face of the mountain attest to the forces of nature sculpting the peak by removing the softer pumice. Nearby in the Burbank Hills are Devonian to Permian carbonate rocks, named after Margie Burbank Clay, the wife of local Judge E. W. Clay. Fossils include fusulinacea (fossil shells which can have either one or multiple chambers, some quite elaborate) and stromatoporoids (fossilized sponges).

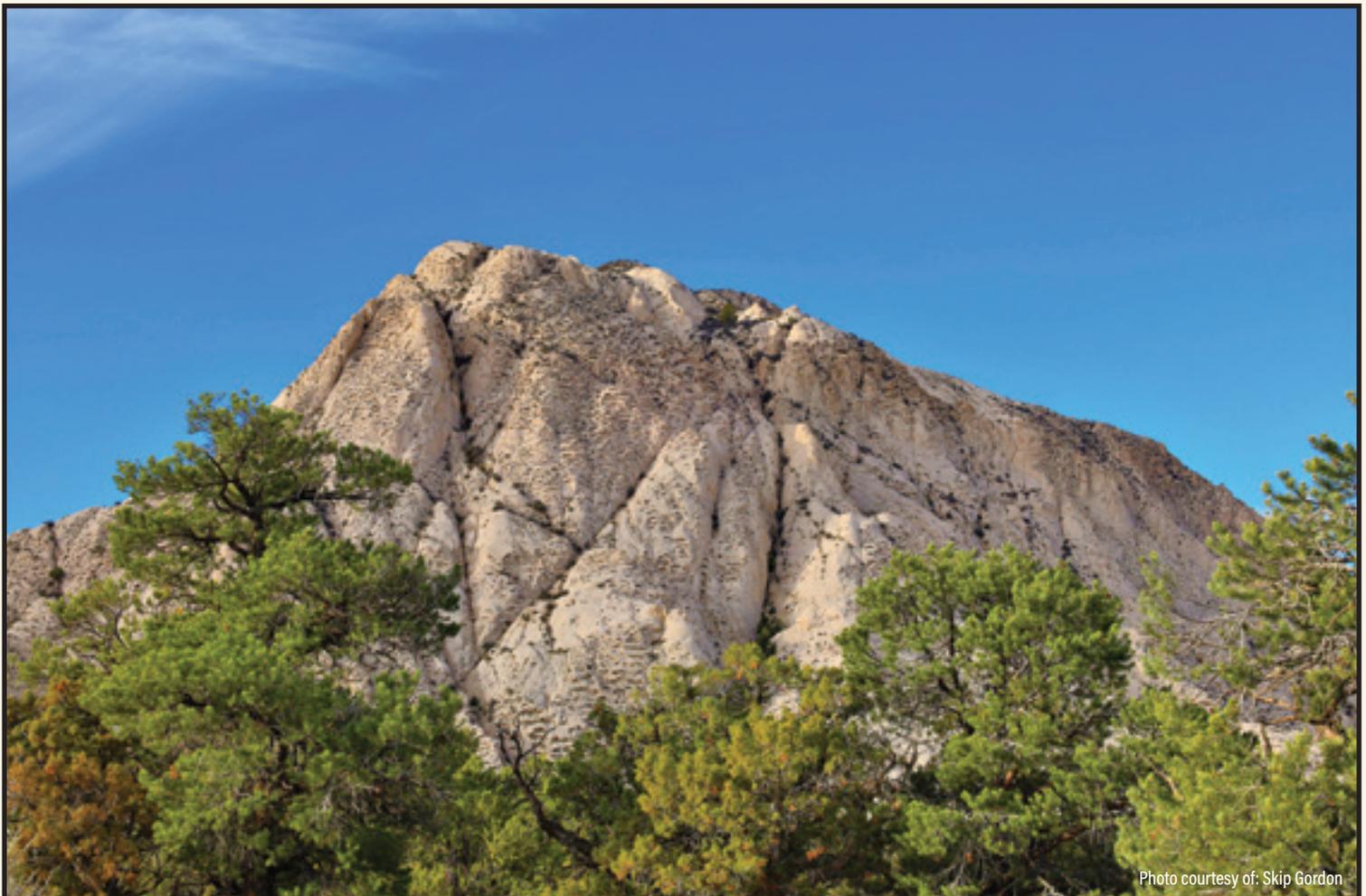
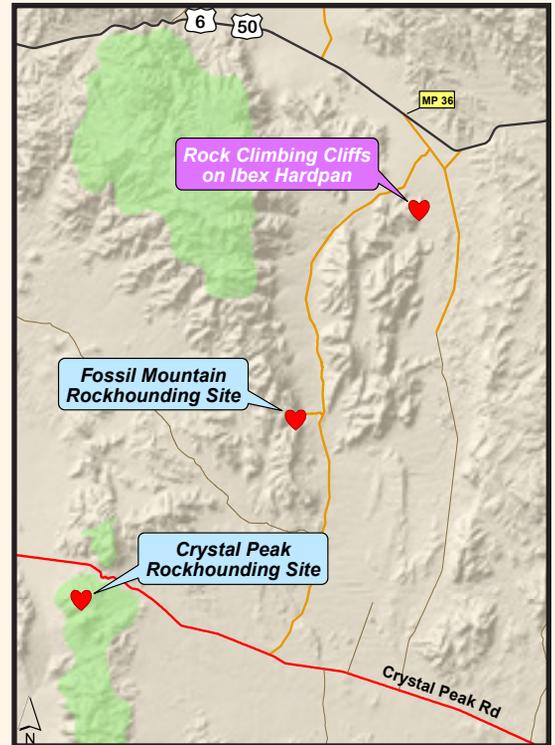


Photo courtesy of: Skip Gordon



Photo courtesy of: Kyla Overson

Wild Horse Viewing on the West Desert

Accessible by: Family Car, Four-Wheel Drive, ATV, Foot

Wild horses still run free on Millard County's west desert. Over 500 free roaming mustangs live on approximately 500,000 acres of public lands. In 1971, the United States Congress passed the Wild Free-Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act declaring these animals as "living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West" protecting them from capture, harassment, branding, or death.

The BLM manages four Herd Management Areas (HMAs) in the county. Wild horses are sometimes best viewed in the Swasey HMA located approximately 50 miles west of Delta at the base of Swasey Mountain. The Middle Pond, fed via a pipeline from Swasey Spring, is the primary water source for horses on the east side of the mountain. Bring a pair of field glasses and scan the flats towards the base of the mountains north and south of the Middle Pond. Best time for viewing is late afternoon as horses travel to and from the pond for a drink. Other HMAs providing viewing opportunities are the Conger HMA, near Skunk Spring, and the Confusion HMA, located north of Cowboy Pass in the Confusion Mountains.

