

Title:

The Grand Canyon: Life In The Gorge

Word Count:

401

Summary:

An eagle swoops overhead, its vast wingspan silhouetted against the morning sun. A trained eye surveys the land below, anticipating any sudden movement.

Deep in the canyon beneath, the Colorado River runs its relentless course through Grand Canyon National Park, carved through the ages by this vein flowing through Arizona. As the sun climbs the morning sky, flooding the valley with light, the ground temperature rises and the creatures of the valley begin their daily quest ...

Keywords:

grand canyon, gran canyon, the grand canyon, grand canyon tours, grand canyon helicopter, las vegas

Article Body:

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Deep in the canyon beneath, the Colorado River runs its relentless course through Grand Canyon National Park, carved through the ages by this vein flowing through Arizona. As the sun climbs the morning sky, flooding the valley with light, the ground temperature rises and the creatures of the valley begin their daily quest for survival.

The immense scale of the Grand Canyon is difficult to comprehend. At its peak, the side walls plummet 1500 m (5000 ft) down to the river. At its broadest the canyon extends up to 29 km (18 mi) wide and overall the complex stretches over 446 km (227 mi).

The Grand Canyon is perhaps America's most recognisable landmark. The region is a magnet for tourists, attracting over 5 million visitors each year. Nobody fully appreciates the landscape until they have experienced it for themselves.

From the Colorado River, deep in the canyon floor, layer upon layer of rock becomes noticeable, stacked like pancakes, each one representing millions of

years of evolution. Tiers of lime and sandstone stand excavated by the river, wind and sands of time.

Above the canyon, the temperature in the plateau area ranges from one extreme to another. Down on the canyon floor, temperatures can exceed 100°F, though winter frosts are rare.

It's surprising to imagine anything living in this hot and arid land far from the river, but the valleys are bursting with life. Plants and animals cling precariously to the vertical cliff faces, every nook and cranny bustling with activity.

Deep on the valley floor, the creatures scurry around, living their own rat race. The park is home to a wide variety of animals including the unique Grand Canyon "pink" rattlesnake. Ringtails, beavers and chipmunks are all widespread. Hundreds of bird species have made their home in the park, as well as countless insects and arachnids.

The canyon communities have their own pecking orders. Here, in this parched and hostile land, the food chain provides a delicate balance between survival, or finishing as dinner for those in the hierarchy. The environment is uncompromising and evolution has chosen its few.

In the distance, the eagle glides effortlessly over the broad crevasse. A sudden change in direction and the predator is racing to the ground at speed. Moments later, an unfortunate rodent has become breakfast.