

Collector's Journal

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2013 Great Basin National Park Quarter - Nevada

Eighteenth in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection

The third 2013 America the Beautiful Quarter honors Great Basin National Park in eastern Nevada. It followed the coins for White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire and Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial in Ohio, and it will be followed by Great Basin National Park in Nevada and Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Maryland to complete the series for 2013.

The America the Beautiful Quarters series highlights National Parks and other national sites of "natural or historic significance" in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five overseas U.S. territories. Five coins are issued each year, and each coin is limited to a minting period of about 10 weeks.

The obverse of the coin includes the original portrait of George Washington by sculptor John Flanagan that first appeared on the Quarter in 1932. Also on the obverse is the mint mark under "In God We Trust": "P" (Philadelphia Mint) or "D" (Denver Mint). The reverse features a unique, one-time-only design illustrating the featured site.

Great Basin National Park was established in 1922 and is the only National Park located entirely within Nevada. It park covers more than 77,000 acres and includes Wheeler Peak, which at 13,063 feet is one of the highest points in the state and is the location of the only glacier in Nevada.

Great Basin is especially notable for its groves of bristlecone pine trees, some of which are up to 5,000 years old and are among the world's oldest trees. Other popular attractions include Lehman Caves (one of the most beautiful and intricate cave systems in the Western United States), Lexington Arch (one the largest limestone arches in the region), numerous streams and springs, ancient cave drawing created about 1,000 years ago, and wildlife such as mountain lions, elk, coyotes, and golden eagles.



The park is also renowned for its incredible beauty and diverse landscapes, from hot desert valleys to soaring mountain ranges. More than a dozen hiking trails take visitors to all the major sights. Many people also enjoy the solitude and the legendary dark night skies.

The coin features a single bristlecone pine. The trees grow at higher elevations in exposed rocky terrain, and they can reach heights of up to 60 feet. Many trees are distorted from the effects of wind, snow, and ice. An exceptionally slow-growing tree, the bristlecone pine produces inch-long needles and three-inch-long cones with delicate bristles. The oldest-known tree in the park was more than 4,900 years old when it was removed from Wheeler Peak in 1964.

In addition to the design that appears on the coin, three other designs were also under consideration. All three also featured bristlecone pines in the design. Two showed a gnarled tree in the foreground with different views of the park's mountainous landscape in the background. The third depicted a tree and a longhorn sheep to represent the park's wildlife.

The Great Basin National Park Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in June 2013.

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