

Collector's Journal

A Service of Collectors Alliance

2012 Denali National Park and Preserve Quarter - Alaska

Fifteenth in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection

The fifth and final America the Beautiful Quarter issued in 2012 honors Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska. This was also the 15th coin in the overall series, which started in 2010 and includes five different coins each year. By the time the series ends, a National Park or other national site will have been featured from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five overseas U.S. territories.

The America the Beautiful series will continue in 2013 with five additional coins: White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire, Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial in Ohio, Great Basin National Park in Nebraska, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Maryland, and Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota.

The minting period for each America the Beautiful Quarter is only about 10 weeks. Once the minting period for a particular coin is over, it can never be struck again, regardless of demand or popularity. The vast majority of coins are released into circulation, leaving just a tiny fraction in original Brilliant Uncirculated condition.

Each America the Beautiful Quarter is struck in uncirculated quality at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints. The two different coins are identified by a small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark under "In God We Trust."

Denali National Park and Preserve is located in southern Alaska. The park is more than six million acres of unspoiled wilderness, making it larger than the state of New Jersey and the third-largest of all National Parks. The only road entrance to the park is about 240 miles north of Anchorage and 120 miles south of Fairbanks. Despite its remoteness, Denali National Park and Preserve attracts about 375,000 visitors each year.

The park was established in 1917 as Mount McKinley National Park; it adopted its present name in 1980. In the local Native



American language, "Denali" means "high one" in reference to the surrounding mountains.

Denali is renowned for its spectacular scenery – from low-elevation taiga forests to high alpine tundra, snowy mountains, and dramatic glaciers. It also includes Mount McKinley, which is the tallest mountain in North America at 20,320 feet. Wildlife is abundant, including grizzly and black bears, moose, caribou, Dall sheep, lynx, beavers, and wolves.

The reverse of the 2012 Denali National Park and Preserve Quarter features a male Dall sheep in the foreground with Mount McKinley in the background. Dall sheep are native to Alaska and northwestern Canada. Sure-footed climbers, they seldom venture far from rugged rocky outcrops, allowing them to escape quickly from predators such as wolves and bears. Male sheep have large curled horns, while females have shorter horns.

The United States Mint prepared five prospective designs for the Denali National Park and Preserve Quarter. All five designs featured various images of Mount McKinley in the background, and three additional designs also included Dall sheep in the foreground. The final design had a hiker instead of a Dall sheep in the foreground.

The Denali National Park and Preserve Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in November 2012.

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