

Collector's Journal

A SERVICE OF COLLECTORS ALLIANCE

2014 Great Sand Dunes National Park Quarter - Colorado

Twenty-Fourth in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection

Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado is featured on the fourth America the Beautiful Quarter issued in 2014. It is also the 24th coin in the overall collection. The year's set will be completed with the coin for Everglades National Park in Florida in late 2014.

The America the Beautiful Quarters series was authorized by the America's Beautiful National Parks Quarter Dollar Coin Act that was passed by Congress in 2008 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on December 23, 2008.

According to the legislation, the America the Beautiful Quarters are to honor a National Park or other national site in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five overseas U.S. territories. The series started in 2010 with the release of the first five coins. Five additional coins are issued each year, in the order in which the featured sites were first placed under federal protection.

All America the Beautiful Quarters are issued in strictly limited editions. The minting period is limited to about 10 weeks, after which the design is retired and can not be used again. Each coin is struck for circulation at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints. The two distinct coins are identified by a small "P" (Philadelphia) or "D" (Denver) mint mark under "In God We Trust."

Great Sand Dunes National Park in southern Colorado is one of the nation's newest National Parks. Although the area was set aside as a National Monument in 1932, it was not established as a National Park until 2004. The only newer National Park is Pinnacles in California, which was established in 2013. In addition to the National Park, the adjoining Great Sand Dunes National Preserve includes about 42,000 acres of forest wilderness.



The park and preserve includes a tremendous diversity of landscapes, from grasslands and wetlands to forests and mountain peaks reaching 13,000 feet high. It is the sand dunes, though, that give the park its name and that serve as its centerpiece. The main dunefield, which covers more than 19,000 acres, features the tallest sand dunes in North America. The highest dunes are Star Dune at 750 feet and High Dune at 650 feet. Popular activities at the park include sandboarding and sand sledding on the dunes, as well as playing in Medano Creek at the base of the dunefield.

The reverse of the 2014 Great Sand Dunes National Park Quarter shows a father and son at Medano Creek, with sand dunes and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the background. The design illustrates a great variety of ecosystems within the park.

As well as the design on the coin, the U.S. Mint prepared six other prospective designs for the Great Sand Dunes National Park Quarter. Each showed a different view of the sand dunes and the surrounding landscape, and two included people walking on the dunes and leaving a trail of footprints.

The Great Sand Dunes National Park Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in August 2014.

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