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# Little Chuckwalla Mountains

*Endangered Desert Legacy*



**Location:** The little Chuckwalla Mountains area is located in the Colorado Desert, in Riverside County, north/northwest of the town of Palo Verde and south/southwest of Blythe. The area is located north of the Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range and the Bradshaw Trail, South of Interstate 10, east of Graham Pass Road and the Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness, and west of Wiley's Well Road. This area is located to the north/northwest of the existing Little Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness.

**Management Agency:** Bureau of Land Management, Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office

**Description:** The Little Chuckwalla Mountains, cresting at 2,100 feet, are surrounded by a large, gently sloping bajada that is cut by a network of washes. Elevations range from about 400 feet to about 2,100 feet.

**Wildlife and Plants:** The area is habitat for the threatened desert tortoise (photo above), and other species of special concern, such as the American badger and the Mojave fringe-toed lizard. The area has been designated as critical habitat for the desert tortoise. The Department of Fish and Wildlife has also recognized this area as a wildlife migration corridor. A wildlife migration corridor is an area that connects wildlife populations that have been separated, due to human activities or structures. Corridors help avoid inbreeding and may help to re-establish populations that have been reduced or eliminated due to random events such as fire or disease.

The washes in the area contain many ecologically important ironwood groves that team with song birds. Several sensitive plants grow in the Little Chuckwalla area, including the pink fairy duster (photo above), sand evening primrose, Alverson's foxtail cactus, barrel cactus, and California snakeweed.

**Activities:** Many people come to this area to recreate and enjoy the beauty and solitude that this area has to offer, including equestrians, nature enthusiasts, bird watchers, wildflower viewers, photographers, and star gazers. This area is considered one of the top locations for stargazing in the low desert. Rockhounds frequent this area to collect petrified bark and wood, large geodes filled with bubbly chalcedony, black agate, nodules, perlite, and quartz crystals. Campers come to Wiley Well and Coon Hollow Campgrounds, both of which are located near this area. The Little Chuckwalla Wilderness also offers hiking/backpacking trails. The Bradshaw Trail, which abuts this area, is a 70-mile dirt road that is enjoyed by off-roaders, along with other nearby trails.

