

# Chihuahuan Desert

## Largest Desert In North America



**Chihuahuan Desert - the largest desert in North America covering more than 200,000 square miles. Most of it lies south of the international border. In the U.S. it extends into parts of New Mexico, Texas and sections of southeastern Arizona. Its minimum elevation is above 1,000 feet, but the vast majority of this desert lies at elevations between 3,500 and 5,000 feet.**

**Winter temperatures are cool, and summer temperatures are extremely hot. Most of the area receives less than 10 inches of rainfall yearly .While some winter rain falls, most precipitation occurs during the summer months.**

**This desert covers such a large area that it is difficult to characterize its geology, but limestone and calcareous soils are common.**



**Like the Great Basin Desert, this is a shrub desert, but the biological diversity of perennial plant life is relatively low. Yuccas and agaves, growing with grasses and often Creosote Bushes, give this desert its characteristic appearance.**

**Prickly-pears and Mormon Tea are also contribute prevalent. Tarbush is sometimes a dominant shrub. Honey Mesquite grows along washes and playas. White-thorn Acacia, Allthorn and Ocotillo are other large, conspicuous plants of the Chihuahuan Desert.**

**Approximate DesertUSA Boundaries: Bordered on the west by Arizona's U.S. Route 191, on the north by Interstate 40, on the east by Texas' U.S. Route 385, and south to the Mexican border.**



**The Mexican Gray Wolf, also known as the Lobo, is a subspecies of the gray wolf native to southeastern Arizona, southern New Mexico and northern Mexico. They are still found in the Chihuahuan Desert. To prevent their extinction, in 1976 the United States and Mexico worked together to capture all remaining wild lobos. Captive-bred wolves were released back into the wild beginning with just eleven in 1998. As of 2021, there are 186 wild Mexican wolves, and 350 in captive breeding programs. The negative impact of poaching has become an issue.**