



**Arches of the
Sandflats Area**

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ARCHES OF THE SAND FLATS RECREATION AREA

The Sand Flats Recreation Area has been a popular fun spot for years. The famous Slickrock Bike Trail attracts motorcyclists, mountain bikers and hikers. When I started exploring the area on foot a few years ago, I knew of only a few arches. These were ones reported by Fran and Terby Barnes and Chris Moore in their excellent books. (See the bibliography at the end of this book for a list of their books.) My goal was to find these few arches. While fulfilling this goal, which took about five years, I found several unreported spans, making a total of 40 arches in the area. This book includes all the arches that I feel would be of interest to hikers and bikers. I am sure there are other arches out there, and I hope you will find some for yourself and report them to me. Happy hunting!

Seasons for hiking are best in the spring and fall, but during the winter clear days, you can access many of the trails, but be careful for ice and snow on the rocky sections, as I have slipped several times.

To use the road log, begin at the junction of Millcreek Drive and Sand Flats Road in Moab, Utah.

New to this book are GPS waypoints for most of the arches and major trail junctions. This makes most of these arches easier to find.

The arches are rated according to the difficulty of hike required to get to them.

Here are the ratings and their meanings:

E-1 Roadside view or easy walk

E-2 Easy hike of 1-2 miles roundtrip

M-1 Medium hike that may be steep in places, 1-2 miles roundtrip

M-2 Medium hike, 2-3 miles roundtrip

D-1 Difficult hike, steep and strenuous, 2-4 miles roundtrip

D-2 Difficult hike that is very steep in places, 3-6 miles roundtrip

DEDICATION

I want to thank Chris Moore, Fran and Terby Barnes and my husband Sam Allen for their help on this book. I would also like to acknowledge four hiking friends who went with me hunting for arches- Julie Green, Terri Jensen, Nedra Curtis and Charlotte Hurley. Thank you for sticking with me.

This book is dedicated to my father, Paul O. Manning, who passed away in 2001.

ROAD LOG

- 0.0 Junction of Millcreek Drive and Sand Flats Road
- 0.7 Gate on the left, route to Perforated View Arch
- 1.4 Fee Booth Arch on the left
- 1.6 Sand Flats fee booth, park near here and take Hell's Revenge Trail to access Windsong Arch, since other route is often closed.
- 2.0 One route to Drumstick, Pocket, Low and Sunset Arches on the right
- 2.2 Slickrock Bike Trail and route to Resting and Dad's Arches on the left
- 2.5 Roadside Arch on the left
- 2.6 Campsite Cluster D, route to Wolf, Camera, November and March Arches, on the right. Other hiking route for Drumstick, Pocket, Low and Sunset Arches.
- 3.0 Route to New Arch on the left
- 3.45 Campsite Cluster E and route for Little Eagle I, Pepper and Little Eagle II Arches, on the right
- 4.2 Route to Sand Flats Triple Arches on the right
- 4.25 Campsite Cluster G and H, route to Sunshine Arch, on the right
- 4.4 Grasshopper Arch on the left
- 4.8 Campsite K and route to Mini-white Bridge on the left
- 5.75 Route to Toadstool, Fun House Ridge and Otho Arches on the right
- 6.7 Route to Far Rim Arch on the left
- 8.4 Parking for Porcupine Rim Trail and Arch, on the right
- 8.6 View of Backleg Arch on the left
- 8.7 Parking for Backleg Arch on the right
- 8.9 Balcony View Arch on the left
- 9.15 Duck Arch view on the right
- 11.8 Fairview Arch view on the right, trail to Mudcastle Arch
- 13.5 Pine Arch on the left
Roadside Arch on the right

PERFORATED VIEW ARCH

E-2

At on the road log .7 miles, park by the gate on the left side of the road. Go under the gate. This is private property, but people walk this area all the time without problems. Be sure to respect the property and stay off any equipment you may find. Do not go past the signs indicating Private Land. Walk on the old roadbed for .1 mile then climb up into the whitish colored rocks on your right to the arch. Across the road from the parking area for this arch is the entrance to the city dump. If you take the road below the dumb, you can see a large line of sandstone fins, and on one of them there are three sheep and one long snake petroglyph carved into the desert varnish.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 119/109 31 525 Arch 38 34 159/109 31 628



FEE BOOTH ARCH

E-1

Drive 1.4 miles on the road log. Look to your left for the arch in the rise by the road. If you come to the fee booth, you have gone too far. Park in the area provided for the Hell's Revenge Trail then follow the road back to find the arch.

GPS 38 34 582/109 31 528





WINDSONG ARCH

M-1

Park in the small area near the fee booth where Hell's Revenge Trail begins. Walk the trail until you reach the dirt road. Follow the road through the fence line and turn towards the rim. Look for some dinosaur tracks on the edge of the rim. Follow the road .2 miles to a junction at the bottom of the hill. If you turn right, you will see Weird Arch. To find Windsong Arch, stay straight until you come to a wash about .1 mile from the junction. The arch is between the two fins, on the left side.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 533/109 31 363 Arch 38 34 957/109 31 945



WEIRD ARCH

M-1

Follow the directions to Windsong Arch. Go through the fence line and turn right at the junction at the top of the hill. This is the road used by emergency vehicles. Go .1 mile to a view of the arch. Hike over to the arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 549/109 31 478 Arch 38 34 875/109 31 674



RESTING ARCH

E-2

Park in the Slickrock Bike Trail parking lot, and hike the practice loop for .33 mile to where the loop goes off to the viewpoint. Resting arch is to the east of Bike Bridge.

GPS Arch 38 35 126/109 31 109



BIKE BRIDGE

E-2

From the Slickrock Bike Trail parking lot, hike .33 mile. Following the arrows will bring you to this small bridge.

GPS Arch 38 35.121/109 31.117



DAD'S ARCH

E-2

From Resting Arch, continue on the practice loop 2 mile until just before it turns north. Turn southeast instead and around a leaning rock. The arch is only 500 feet from the trail at this point.

GPS Turn off Slickrock Trail 38 35 265/109 30 952 Arch 38 35 231/109 30 938



PIE ARCH

D-2

Park at the Slickrock Trail and hike the main bike trail to where it overlooks the river. This arch is right on the trail. This is the longest hike in the book. I hiked cross country to it, but it is easier to find from the bike trail.



ROADSIDE ARCH #1

E-1

Drive past the Slickrock Trail 2.5 miles on the road log. Park in the area provided at the side of the road. This arch is in the rocks to the left and visible from the road.

GPS Arch 38 34 943/109 30 956



NOVEMBER ARCH

M-1

Drive 2.6 miles on the road log to Campsite Cluster D, and park in the last camping spot where a closed road goes south. Walk this road to a wash that leads to the rocks on the right (west). Hike towards those rocks and climb on top. This arch is on the summit of the dome.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 744/109 30 956



WOLF ARCH

M-1

From November Arch, continue over the top of the fin towards the west. Wolf Arch is on the other side of November Arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 747/109 31 010



CAMERA ARCH

M-1

Climb down the fin west of Wolf Arch and toward the Slickrock Trail parking lot. Look south and up to see Camera Arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 741/109 31 001 Best photo shot 38 34 740/109 30 998



MARCH ARCH

M-1

Go back to November Arch and down the rocks to the field on the south. Follow west along the edge of the rocks. Look for a rock jutting out from the fin and directly in line with the power poles. March Arch is in this rock.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 570/109 31 002



ITSY BITSY ARCH

M-1

From March Arch, go south to where you can ascend the rocks. Go over the first fin and turn south. This arch is on the side of one of the fins on the way to Drumstick Arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 31 836 Arch 38 34 240/109 30 690



DRUMSTICK ARCH

M-2

This arch is difficult to see going south, so you may go past it. I find it easier to look for it on the way back from Pocket Arch. After visiting Itsy Bitsy Arch, hike across the fins. Keep looking back north. Drumstick Arch is on the side of a fin, in a canyon with a lot of trees.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 149/109 30 685



SUNSET ARCH

M-2

From Drumstick Arch, go back towards the rocks on the east and look on the top of a rounded prominence. From the east side, you can see light through the arch. I found this platform arch at the time of winter sunset, when the sun was shining through the opening. GPS Parking Spot- same as Drumstick Arch







The arches above and on the next page are on the way to Drumstick Arch and can be used as waypoints to make sure you are taking the correct route.



POCKET ARCH

M-2

There are two ways to go to Pocket Arch. I found it by hiking the closed road .42 miles from Campsite Cluster D south to where the road turns west. Hike across the rocks and fins to the rim of Millcreek Canyon. Don't go too far west, or you will come to some deep canyons that are hard to cross. I found Low Arch first, then hiked east to a view of Pocket. You can cross over and into the canyon and make your way underneath the arch. The other route is from the parking spot at 2.0 on the road log, climbing up to the power line, and across the fins to where you can cross over to the highest fin on the east. Follow this fin to a view of the arch from above. I found it difficult to access the bottom of the arch this way, but it is possible with care.

This is one of the best arches in this book and was discovered by Fran and Terby Barnes.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 149/109 39 685



TRIPLE PLATFORM ARCH

M-1

From Campsite Cluster D, hike the closed road south to where it turns west. Go across the rocks. Go south and look for a small mound of rocks to the west. This arch is hard to locate from this direction. It is best seen coming back from Low Arch. It consists of three legs, all platform arches.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 343/109 30 388



LOW ARCH

M-2

From Campsite Cluster D, hike the closed road south for .42 miles until the road turns west. Go south across the rocks until you can see the rim of Millcreek Canyon. Low Arch is up on a mound of rock in view of the canyon. It is best seen from below.

This arch is another one that Fran and Terby Barnes found and is one of my favorites.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 832/109 30 836 Arch 38 34 042/109 30 164



NEW ARCH

M-1

Drive 3.0 miles on the road and park. Walk through the fence line and hike .5 miles northeast towards the rocks on the Fins and Things Trail. You can see the alcove this arch is in from a distance. In order to see the light opening, you need to climb up the rocks or go in between the arch and the large fin.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 969/109 30 439 Arch 38 35 366/109 32 533



LITTLE EAGLE ARCH #1

E-2

There is some confusion as to which of two arches is the original Little Eagle Arch. I have named them #1 and #2. #1 is closest to the parking spot.

Drive the road 3.4 miles to Campsite Cluster D and park where the Fins and Things Trail begins. It is possible to drive to where you can see this arch, but the trail is really rough and hiking is easier.

Walk on the trail south and up onto the sandstone fins. Look south in a group of rocks to see the arch. You can get on top of the arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 799/109 29 967 Arch 38 34 653/109 29 785



PEPPER ARCH

M-1

From Little Eagle Arch #1, continue southeast on the trail until you get to the WSA boundary. Hike southeast until you come to a deep canyon. The arch is on the east wall of this canyon and best viewed from the west side. I have not gone into the canyon, so I don't know if it is accessible that way.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 799/109 29 967 Arch 38 34 425/109 29 469



LITTLE EAGLE ARCH #2 OR DOVE ARCH

M-1

This small opening is located on the rise west of Pepper Arch. The rock on top of the opening looks like a perching bird. I have renamed it Dove Arch for convenience. The arch can be seen from a distance.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 799/109 29 967 Arch 38 34 366/109 29 581





CLIFFHANDLE ARCH

M-1

From Little Eagle Arch #2, you can see into Millcreek Canyon to the south. Walk closer to the rim and look to the southeast for a view of Cliffhandle Arch. The arch can be reached by hiking down Millcreek Canyon from Otho Arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 799/109 29 967 View of arch 38 34 331/109 29 503



SAND FLATS TRIPLE ARCHES

E-2

Drive 4.2 miles to where a rough 4WD road turns right. Park and hike the road to the top of the hill. Turn south. Sand Flats Triple #1 is right by the road just before the first junction. Turn back north at the junction and just before the road goes downhill. Sand Flats #2 and #3 are a short distance west from this point, close together in the rocks.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 991/109 29 198 Arch #1 38 34 886/109 29 175

Arch #2-3 38 34 857/109 29 212







SUNSHINE ARCH

M-1

Drive 4.25 miles on the main road and park at Campsite G or H. Go through the campsite and follow the road south. Go .12 miles and turn right at the junction. The other road goes up to the main road. When you come to the caves, drop down into the wash and follow it south. Bypass the narrow area by following a trail leading towards several large rocks. At .53 mile you should be able to see the arch high on the side of the middle fin, which is the third fin from the left. The best view of Sunshine Arch is at .8 miles. There is also a small opening south of the arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 969/109 29 096 Arch 38 34 601/109 28 716



GRASSHOPPER ARCH

E-1

You can see this arch from the main road at 4.4 miles. It is northeast and high in the cliff. It is also possible to get under the arch by parking in the campground on the left and following the wash that runs next to the road.

GPS From the road 38 34 857 109 29 212

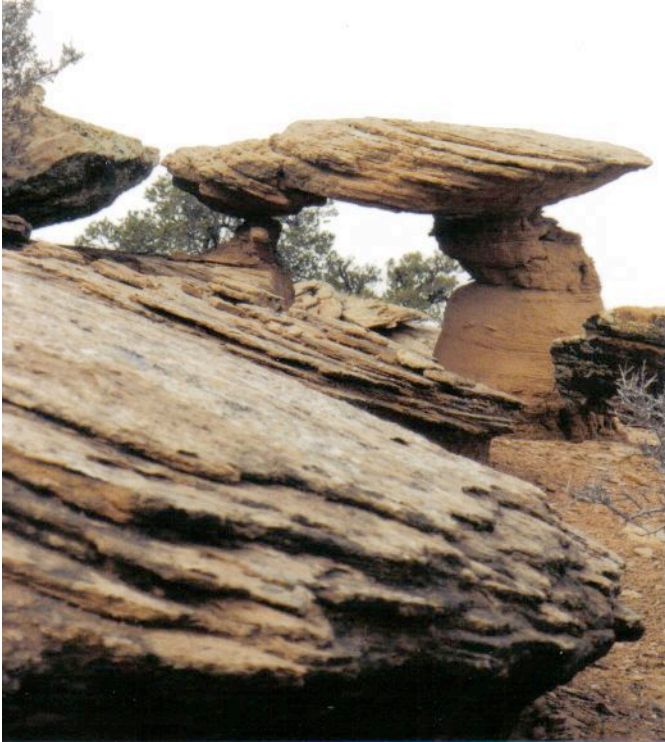


TOADSTOOL ARCH

M-1

Drive 5.95 miles on the Sand Flats road. Turn right onto a 4WD road and drive to just before the WSA boundary. There is a nice parking spot there. If you have a car, it is best to walk the whole road. Hike .1 mile to view the arch on the slope to the west. You can climb up to the arch.

GPS Turn off Sand Flats Road 38 35 366/109 30 533 Arch 38 34 118/109 27 505



FUN HOUSE RIDGE ARCH

M-2

Continue past Toadstool Arch on the road for .5 mile until you get to the rim of Millcreek Canyon. Hike west around the large sandstone mound and down onto the rim. Go down into the large drainage and turn north, climbing the rocks and following the washes. You can see the arch from the top of the ridge. Hike over to it.

GPS Turn off Sand Flats Road 38 35 366/109 30 533 Arch 38 34 053/109 27 959



OTHO NATURAL BRIDGE

D-2

From Fun House Ridge Arch, go west and down the slickrock into the canyon to the west. Work your way into the large wash and past the steep dryfall. Good route finding skills are useful. There's really only one way into Millcreek Canyon. Once into the main canyon, hike downstream for .5 mile. Cross the creek and look for a large side canyon to the south. If you pass a small arch (Rubble Arch), you have gone too far. The canyon you want is the largest one in the area. Hike up canyon for .5 miles. Otho Bridge is at the head of the canyon.

Hiking downstream from Otho Bridge makes a long day hike. It is best if you have a vehicle at the mouth of Millcreek Canyon. There are several arches down canyon, including Cliffhandle Arch, which can be viewed from above. (See page ?)

Otho Bridge is the largest arch in this book, and the hike to it is the best one for adventure and scenic value.

GPS Turn off Sand Flats Road 38 35 366/109 30 533 Canyon with arch 38 34 053
109 27 959







This is a view from the trail to Otho Arch, which is my favorite of all the arches in the Sandflats area and the one most worth the effort to find.

FAR RIM ARCH

D-1

Drive 6.7 miles to a 4WD on the left. This is the Porcupine Rim Trail. Drive or walk the trail as far as feasible. There is a large sand hill that can be difficult to ascend, so I suggest hiking the rest of the way. At the bottom of the hill, there is a wash. Follow this wash west until you can get up onto the bench to the north. The arch is visible in .5 mile. The whole round trip to the arch is around 5 miles.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 600/109 26 732 Arch 38 35 051/109 25 759



PORCUPINE RIM ARCH

E-2

Drive 8.4 miles on the road and park in the area near the outdoor toilet. Hike on that side of the road south and down and around the cliffs. Stay high. Porcupine Rim Arch is .3 miles from the parking area, close up against the cliffs.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 887/109 25 007 Arch 38 34 687/109 25 268



BACKLEG ARCH

E-1 (view)

E-2 (if hiked)

Drive 8.6 on the Sand Flats Road. The arch is high in the rocks west of the road.
Park off the road on the left and hike up the slope to the arch.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 980/109 26 487 Arch 38 34 867/109 24 678



BALCONY VIEW ARCH

E-1 (view)

E-2 (if hiked)

Drive 8.7 on the Sand Flats Road and look up into the rocks for a view of this arch. Park at the parking spot on the left and hike up into the arch.

GPS Parking spot to view arch 38 34 980/109 25 487





DUCK ARCH

E-1

Drive 9.15 miles on the Sand Flats Road and look southeast across the deep canyon for a cliffwall arch in the shape of a duck's head.

View 38 34 779/109 24 358



MUDCASTLE ARCH

E-2

This newly discovered arch is one of the nicest finds in the area. My friend Julie Green spotted it while we were trying to find a way down the canyon from Fairview Arch.

Drive 11.8 miles on the Sand Flats Road and park. Hike south on the closed road for .3 mile, staying close to the rocks. Go through a small cut and look for the arch on the other side.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 856/109 22 100 Arch 38 34 621/109 22 158



FAIRVIEW ARCH

E-2

From the parking spot for Mud Castle Arch, this arch is high in the cliff to the south. You can get a closer view on the way to Mud Castle Arch. It is located .15 mile from the parking spot.

GPS Parking spot 38 34 856/109 22 100 Arch 38 34 687/109 22 109

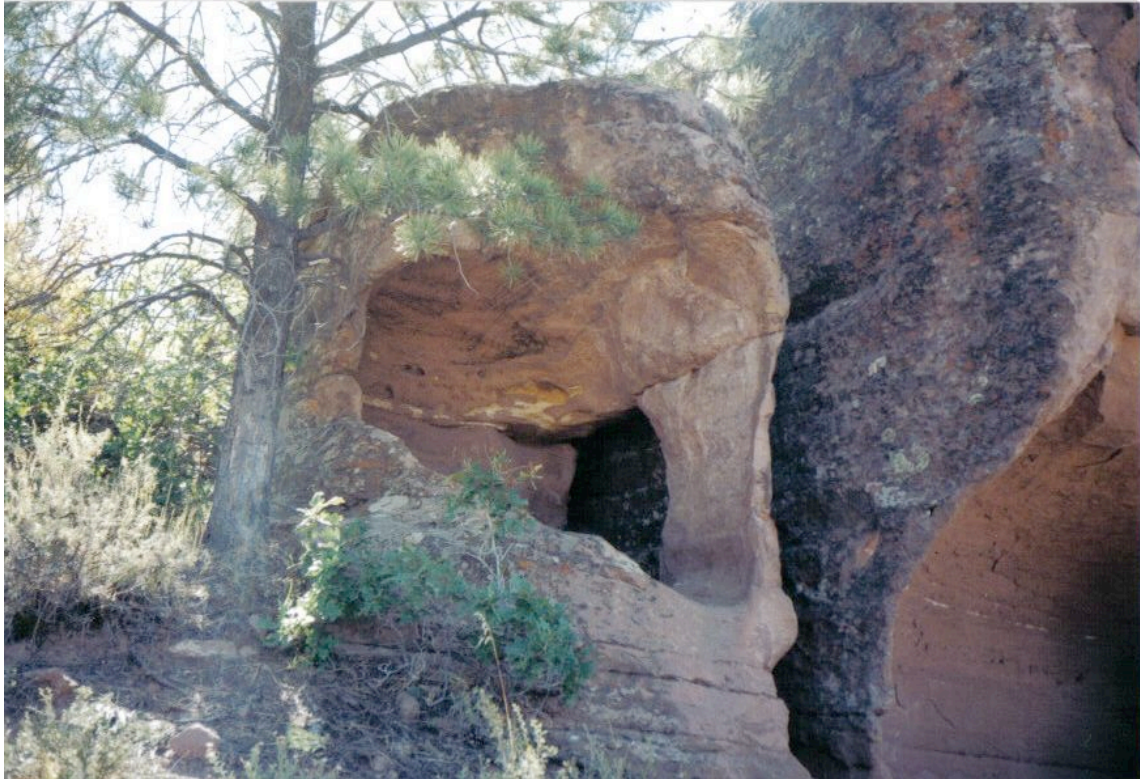


PINE ARCH

E-1

Drive 13.5 miles on the Sand Flats Road and park. The arch is on the left side of the road among the trees.

GPS Arch 38 33 869/109 21 125

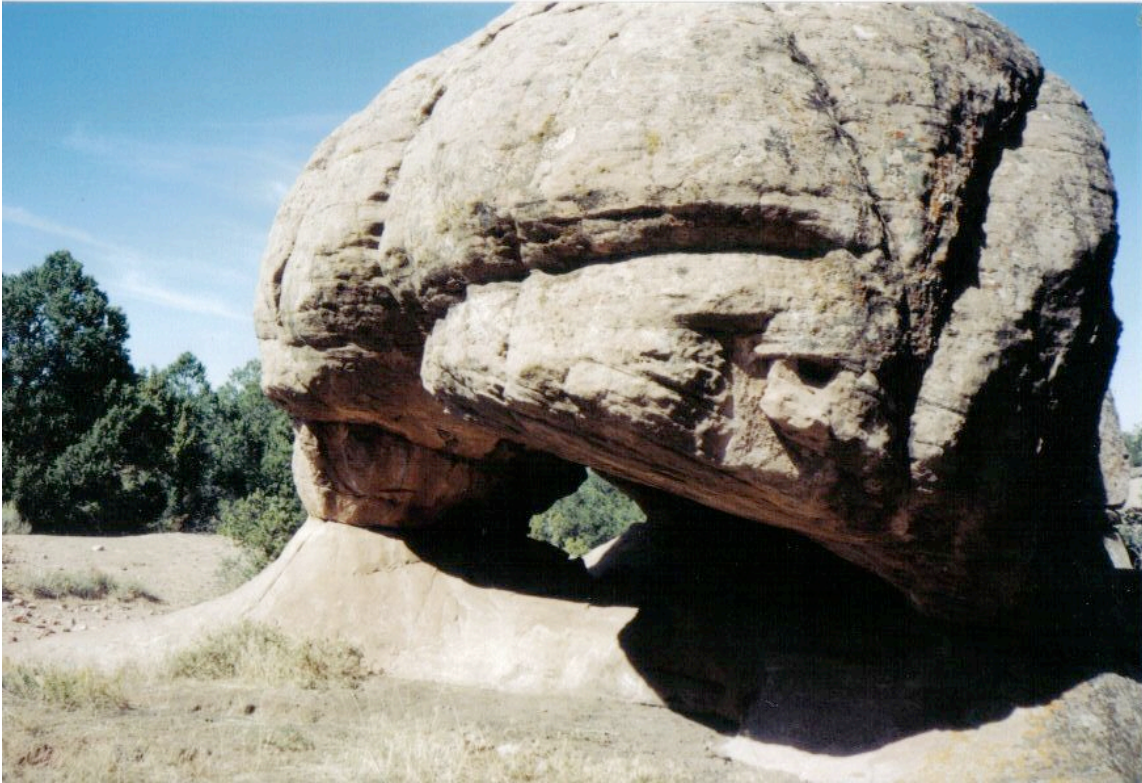


ROADSIDE ARCH #2

E-1

This arch is past Pine Arch and just off the road to the right as you turn towards the mountains.

Parking Spot and Arch 38 33 291/109 21 452



Continue on the road until you come to the junction with the LaSal Loop Road. During the summer, I recommend driving the complete loop road to Castle Valley and continuing along the river road back to Moab.

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