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High Snorkeling Fatalities Push USVI National Park to Second Most Dangerous in America

Study finds Virgin Islands National Park has 10 deaths per 1 million visits, urges caution for snorkelers

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Trunk Bay in St. John is part of the Virgin Islands National Park. Drownings were reported at the popular beach in 2018, 2021, 2022 and 2024. By. GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. Virgin Islands National Park has been ranked as the second most dangerous national park in the United States, with 10 deaths per 1 million visits, according to a study conducted by Triumph Law, P.C. The study scrutinized fatality rates in 153 popular national parks across America over an 11-year period from 2013 to 2023.

The study found that every 11 days, a hiker dies in a national park, and human factors cause 19 out of 20 deaths, with nature being responsible for only one in 1.6 million visitors per year. The data highlighted that every 29 hours, someone dies in an American national park, predominantly due to human-related incidents.

Personal injury lawyers from Triumph Law, P.C. are urging families to exercise caution when visiting the Virgin Islands National Park this summer. The park, despite the stunning beauty its several sites, has seen a high rate of fatalities, particularly among snorkelers and divers. Drownings were reported at Trunk Bay in St. John, which is part of the Virgin Islands National Park, in [2018](#), [2021](#), [2022](#) and [2024](#).

The study from Triumph Law, P.C. analyzed data from the US National Park Service, revealing that Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona is the most dangerous national park in the country. The Virgin Islands National Park, with 33 deaths since 2013, follows closely, averaging three fatalities per year.

The Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, which runs along the border of New York and Pennsylvania, ranks third with six deaths per million visits. Other parks listed in the top ten most dangerous include Colorado National Monument, Big Bend National Park, and Denali National Park & Preserve.

In contrast, the study also identified the safest national parks. The Lincoln Memorial and Thomas Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC, were ranked as the safest, with extremely low fatality rates. The Statue of Liberty National Monument in New York also ranked high for safety.

The analysis revealed worrying patterns, with Yosemite National Park in California and the Grand Canyon in Arizona having the highest number of hiking-related deaths. Older hikers, particularly those over 55, were found to be the most vulnerable. The leading cause of death in national parks is suicide, followed by motor vehicle crashes and drowning.

Robert Carichoff, a personal injury lawyer at Triumph Law, P.C., commented on the findings, emphasizing that most deaths in national parks are avoidable. He highlighted the need for better signage and supervision from park administrations and urged visitors to take extra precautions in dangerous areas.

The study was conducted by Triumph Law, P.C., a leading personal injury law firm based in Sacramento, California. The firm analyzed data from the US National Park Service and visitor statistics to determine the rates of fatalities per million visits and identify trends and patterns in park-related deaths.

For more information, visit [Triumph Law, P.C.](#).

First, mortality data was collected from the US National Park Service's website. This provided a breakdown of all reported deaths in US parks. Data was filtered to provide information on deaths from January 2013 to December 2023. The total number of recreational visitors for each park between 2013 and 2023 was collected from the National Park Service. The number of fatalities was compared to the total number of visits to each park during the same time period to obtain a rate of fatalities per 1 million visits. Parks with fewer than 1 million visits in total between 2013-2023 were excluded from the ranking to prevent outliers from skewing the final results. However, all the data related to causes of death, the age and gender of victims cover all national parks, regardless of their visitor counts.

