



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Communications
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

202-208-6843 phone
www.nps.gov

Grand Canyon News Release

Release Date: July 1, 2026

Contact: Grand Canyon Office of Communications

Grand Canyon seeks public assistance identifying visitor involved in damage to Hopi headpiece

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – Grand Canyon National Park law enforcement rangers are asking for the public’s help identifying an individual involved in damage to a Hopi headpiece inside Desert View Watchtower on Wednesday, June 17.



Damaged Hopi headpiece / NPS Photo

The incident occurred sometime between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the ground floor of the watchtower, near the fireplace. According to witnesses, a male visitor climbed onto historic handcrafted furniture near the fireplace to take a photo. The furniture tipped beneath him, and the individual reached out to steady himself, striking the Hopi headpiece and causing it to fall. The headpiece broke in two places and was damaged in three others.

After the fall, park staff assisted the visitor with a first aid kit. The visitor and an adult woman believed to be his daughter left the Watchtower shortly afterward, before law enforcement rangers were notified or able to identify them.

The male visitor is described as a Caucasian-American man in his 60s or 70s, approximately 6 feet tall, with a slender build, white or gray hair, clean shaven, and wearing cargo shorts. The woman with him is described as a Caucasian-American woman in her late 30s to 40s, approximately 5 feet 5 inches tall, with an average build and dark hair below shoulder length.

The damaged headpiece, created by Hopi artist Fred Kabotie, has been secured by Grand Canyon National Park museum staff.

Anyone who may have witnessed the incident, recognizes the individuals described, or has information that could help identify them is asked to contact Grand Canyon National Park law enforcement at GRCA_Information@nps.gov. The NPS asks that anyone with information contact investigators directly and not post names or personal information in public comments or on social media platforms.

Desert View Watchtower is one of Grand Canyon National Park’s most significant historic and cultural spaces. Visitors are reminded not to climb, sit or stand on historic furnishings, railings, walls or other protected features. These actions can damage irreplaceable park resources and create safety hazards for visitors and staff.

-NPS-

About the National Park Service. Established in 1916, the National Park Service preserves America’s most treasured natural and cultural places for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of current and future generations. Learn more at nps.gov.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.