

Op Luang National Park

Op Luang is an amazing natural attraction comprising of both splendid natural charms as well as mysterious scenery. A zigzagging river flows in front of a picturesque gorge. Covering a total area of 553 square kilometres, the park covers areas in Chom Thong, Hot and Mae Chaem districts of Chiang Mai. It was declared the 68th national park of Thailand in 1991.

Geography

Op Luang National Park is located on the Thanon Thong Chai range which runs from north to south. The area consists of high, steep cliffs with a narrow passage or canyon, creating strong currents and powerful echoes. The mountain ranges were all formed by the same folding event in the Cretaceous and Triassic periods creating granite, granodiorite and Mitmatile granite.

Climate

The rainy season is from May to October. Winter is from November to January and summer is from February to April.



Flora and Fauna

Mixed deciduous, deciduous dipterocarp, evergreen and pine forests blanket the national park with various plants such as *Tectona grandis*, *Dipterocarpus alatus*, *Xylia xylocarpa*, *Hopea odorata*, *Toona ciliata*, *Azelia xylocarpa*, *Diospyros mollis*, *Terminalia alata* and *Lagerstroemia speciosa*.

The national park is home to wild animals such as Tiger, Sambar, Asiatic Black Bear, Southwest China Serow, Wild Boar, Northern Red Muntjac, Sunda Pangolin, Common Palm Civet and Phayre's Leaf-monkey.

Different birds have their habitat here including Vernal Hanging-parrots, White-rumped Shama, Scarlet Minivet, Woodpeckers, Greater Coucal, Hill Myna, Shikra, Red Junglefowl, Lineated Barbet, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Sooty-headed Bulbul and Puff-throated Babbler.

Attractions

◆ **Op Luang**, the Great Canyon, is located at the 17th kilometre of Highway 108. It covers the areas of Hot and Chom Thong district. It offers a



breathtaking view of the natural scenery of a steep river valley surrounded by scenic mountains and Teak or *Tectona grandis* forests.

◆ **Mae Bua Kham Waterfall**, originates from Huai Mae Bua Kham in Hang Dong sub-district.

◆ **Mae Chon Waterfall** originates from Huai Mae Chon Luang in Chom Thong. It is a large waterfall crashing down onto several rock formations below creating spectacular views of currents flowing like translucent fibers over cliffs and terrain.

◆ **Mae Tia Waterfall**, one of the beautiful waterfalls, is located in Chom Thong. It cascades from a 80 metres cliff onto the plain below. An interesting Prehistoric archaeological site was found near Op Luang.

◆ **Doi Pha Chang**. The granite rocky outcrop is 300 metres long and 49 metres high and is black in color. Its shape is like a gigantic seated elephant Doi Pha Chang.

◆ **Thep Phanom Hot Spring** is located in Mae Cham district, 14 kilometres from Op Luang.

◆ **Tong Cave** is an interesting limestone and granite cave.

◆ **Tu Pu Cave**, a small cave, offers a scenic view of stalagmites and stalactites.

◆ **Mae Cham River** originates from the mountain range in Mae Hong Son province. Its current is strong and it zigzags around the cliffs and along the valleys.

Getting There

■ Op Luang National Park is located 105 kilometres from Chiang Mai town along Highway 108 (Chiang Mai-Hot-Mae Saring)

