



SMOKIES GUIDE

The official newspaper of Great Smoky Mountains National Park • Fall 2020

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Stephanie Kyriazis, Deputy Chief
of Resource Education

Words with a Ranger

I help people learn about the park through community outreach, resource protection campaigns, and media projects—from signs and brochures to web content and film. I supervise the park's visitor service, interpretation, and education staff and work alongside other division chiefs on the Park Management Team. I also serve as the park liaison with Great Smoky Mountains Association.

I spent much of my early career in the National Park Service as an
Words with a Ranger continues on page 5

Park Adapts to Pandemic Year

COVID-19 creates challenges for park resource managers

The park closure in March to slow the spread of COVID-19 meant many visitors were left with trips canceled or plans postponed. But this measure also created significant delays for National Park Service (NPS) staff charged with completing a range of critical resource management projects. Now, months after most operations have resumed, park staff are reckoning with what the long-term consequences of these delays may be in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Most springs, park vegetation management crews monitor and treat hemlock trees for hemlock woolly adelgid and begin control measures for invasive plants like coltsfoot and garlic mustard. But according to Supervisory Forester Kristine Johnson, crews this year missed out on about a third of their hemlock

monitoring, fell behind on treatment, and lost valuable time in the effort to control exotic plants. Johnson emphasized that, if unchecked coltsfoot and garlic mustard release their seeds in the spring, years of work can be lost: "If you miss one plant, you're going to be going back to that same site for ten years because the seeds are viable in the soil for that long." Some coltsfoot unfortunately did go to seed before it could be contained, but Johnson and her staff were still able to pull around 10,000 garlic mustard plants that had not yet opened. "Because this year had a cool, wet spring, we were able to catch them in early May," said Johnson. "We were lucky this year in that respect."

Wildlife crews were also unable to remove their typical quota of wild hogs
Park management story continues on page 4

Be #SmokiesSafe

- Delay your trip if you are sick
- Avoid crowded areas
- Maintain social distancing 6 ft. away from others
- Restrooms may be closed, so come prepared
- Wash your hands
- Send only one or two members of your party into visitor centers

Visit
[nps.gov/grsm/
planyourvisit/
conditions.htm](https://nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/conditions.htm)
to plan your trip

OUR PARK
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



GreatSmoky
MountainsNPS



GreatSmokyNPS
and SmokiesRoadsNPS



GreatSmokyNPS

COVID-19

Following guidance from the White House, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local public health authorities, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is increasing access to include additional campgrounds and picnic areas. The National Park Service is working service wide with federal, state, and local public health authorities to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and is using a phased approach to increase recreational access.

Check nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/conditions.htm for the latest updates on open facilities and access. All openings are based on available staffing. Temporary closures may occur on short notice.

Camping in the national park

The National Park Service maintains developed campgrounds at nine locations in the park. Only Cades Cove and Smokemont are open in winter. There are no showers or hookups other than

circuits for special medical uses at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont.

Campsite reservations are *required* at Abrams Creek, Balsam Mountain, Big Creek, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Deep Creek campgrounds. Reservations are recommended to ensure availability at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont, but credit card payments may be processed on site at those locations. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance. Make your reservation at recreation.gov or call 877.444.6777.

Site occupancy is limited to six people and two vehicles (a trailer = one vehicle). The maximum stay is 14 days. Special campsites for larger groups will remain closed.

The list below shows number of sites, elevations, nightly fees, and maximum RV lengths. For more information, visit nps.gov/grsm.

- **Abrams Creek** 16 sites, elev. 1,125', closes Oct. 18, \$17.50, 12' trailers
- **Balsam Mountain** 42 sites, elev. 5,310', closes Oct. 4, \$17.50, 30' RVs
- **Big Creek** 12 sites, elev. 1,700', closes Nov. 1, \$17.50, tents only
- **Cades Cove** 159 sites, elev. 1,807', open year-round, \$21-\$25, 35'-40' RVs
- **Cataloochee** 27 sites, elev. 2,610', closes Nov. 1, \$25, 31' RVs
- **Cosby** 157 sites, elev. 2,459', closes Oct. 31, \$17.50, 25' RVs
- **Deep Creek** 92 sites, elev. 1,800', closes Nov. 1, \$25, 26' RVs
- **Elkmont** 220 sites, elev. 2,150', closes Nov. 1, \$21-\$27, 32'-35' RVs
- **Smokemont** 142 sites, elev. 2,198', open year-round, \$21-\$25, 35'-40' RVs
- **Look Rock** *closed in 2020*

Firewood

To prevent the spread of destructive insect pests, the NPS has banned outside firewood from entering the park unless it is USDA- or state-certified heat-treated wood. Campers may gather dead and down wood in the park for campfires. Certified wood may be purchased in and around the park.

Bicycling

Most park roads are too narrow and heavily traveled by automobiles for safe or enjoyable bicycling. Helmets are required by law for persons age 16 and under and strongly recommended for all bicyclists.

On Wednesdays from June 17 to September 30, 2020, only bicycles and pedestrians are allowed on Cades Cove Loop Road. Bicycles may be rented at the Cades Cove Campground store.

Bicycles are permitted on park roads but prohibited on trails except Gatlinburg, Oconaluftee River, and lower Deep Creek/Indian Creek.

Accommodations

- **LeConte Lodge** (accessible by trail only) provides the only lodging in the park. 865.429.5704 or lecontelodge.com
- **Bryson City** 800.867.9246 or greatsmokies.com
- **Cherokee** 828.788.0034 or cherokeesmokies.com
- **Fontana** 800.849.2258 or fontanavillage.com
- **Gatlinburg** 800.588.1817 or gatlinburg.com
- **Maggie Valley** 800.624.4431 or maggievalley.org
- **Pigeon Forge** 800.251.9100 or mypigeonforge.com
- **Sevierville** 888.766.5948 or visitsevierville.com

- **Townsend** 800.525.6834 or smokymountains.org

Pets in the park

Pets are allowed in frontcountry campgrounds and beside roads as long as they are restrained at all times. Pets are not allowed on park trails, except for Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails. Dogs on these trails must be kept in control on a leash no longer than six feet.

Special events

Postponed until 2021

- Music of the Mountains: Sugarlands Visitor Center (September)
- Mountain Life Festival: Oconaluftee Visitor Center (September)
- Festival of Christmas Past: Sugarlands Visitor Center (December)
- Holiday Homecoming: Oconaluftee Visitor Center (December)

For rent

The Spence Cabin at Elkmont can be rented for daytime events at recreation.gov. The Appalachian Clubhouse remains closed.

Visitor centers

Hours are subject to change.

Fall hours of operation are:
Oconaluftee, Sugarlands, and Cades Cove: 9–5 Sept.–Nov., 9–4:30 in Dec.
Clingmans Dome: 10–5 Sept.–Nov.

Picnic areas

Picnic areas are open at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Chimneys, Collins Creek, Cosby, Deep Creek, Greenbrier, Heintooga, Look Rock, and Metcalf Bottoms. See map on page 12 for locations. Picnic pavilions may be reserved for \$12.50–\$60 at recreation.gov.



MOVING ROCKS HARMS AQUATIC LIFE.

SMOKIES GUIDE

Smokies Guide is produced four times per year by Great Smoky Mountains Association and Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

nps.gov/grsm
SmokiesInformation.org

Publication dates:
Spring: mid-March
Summer: early June
Autumn: mid-Sept.
Winter: mid-Dec.

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Other services

There are no gas stations, showers, or restaurants in the national park.

Park weather

• **Spring** - March has the most changeable weather; snow can fall on any day, especially at the higher elevations. Backpackers are often caught off guard when a sunny day in the 70s°F is followed by a wet, bitterly cold one. By mid-to late April, the weather is milder.

• **Summer** - By mid-June, heat, haze, and humidity are the norm. Most precipitation occurs as afternoon thunderstorms.

• **Autumn** - In mid-September, a pattern of warm, sunny days and crisp, clear nights often begins. However, cool, rainy days also occur. Snow may fall at the higher elevations in November.

• **Winter** - Days during this

fickle season can be sunny and 65°F or snowy with highs in the 20s. At the low elevations, snows of 1" or more occur 3–5 times per year. At Newfound Gap, 69" fall on average. Lows of -20°F are possible at the higher elevations.

Fishing

Fishing is permitted year-round in the park, and a Tennessee or North Carolina fishing license is required. Either state license is valid throughout the park, and no trout stamp is required. Fishing with bait is prohibited in the park. A special permit is required for the Cherokee Reservation and Gatlinburg. Licenses are available in nearby towns.

A free fishing map with a complete list of all park fishing regulations is available at visitor centers.

Camping in the backcountry

Camping can be an exciting adventure for persons properly equipped and informed. To facilitate this activity, the NPS maintains more than 800 miles of trails and more than 100 backcountry campsites and shelters throughout the park. One of the greatest challenges for backcountry campers is deciding where to go. Here are some tools to help.

1. Get the map. Go online to view the park's official trail map (nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/maps.htm), which shows all park trails, campsites, and shelters. Park rules and regulations are also listed here. You can purchase the printed version of the trail map for \$1 at any park visitor center or by calling 865.436.7318 x226 or shopping online at SmokiesInformation.org.

2. Plan your trip. Call or stop by the park's backcountry office (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for trip planning help. The office is located in Sugarlands Visitor Center, two miles south of Gatlinburg on U.S. 441. 865.436.1297.

3. Get a permit. Make your reservation and obtain your permit through the backcountry office at Sugarlands Visitor Center (by phone or in person) or online at smokiespermits.nps.gov.

Reservations and permits are

required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. The cost is \$4 per person per night. Reservations may be made up to 30 days in advance.

Fall hikers should be prepared for a range of conditions. Always carry an ample supply of water, food, and sun protection to avoid dehydration, heat, and hyponatremia—the result of inadequate sodium and electrolyte levels.

Reduce the risk of hypothermia in cool, rainy conditions with layered clothing and rain gear. Stay dry.

See page 9 for more trip essentials.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Observe wildlife rules...
but with people!



Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



Stay home when sick.



Stay 6 feet away from other people.



If you sneeze or cough, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.



Avoid touching your face.



Still don't use slower friends as bear bait.

Gatlinburg, TN elev. 1,462'

Mt. Le Conte elev. 6,593'

	AVG. HIGH	LOW	PRECIP.	AVG. HIGH	LOW	PRECIP.
Jan.	49°	27°	4.0"	36°	18°	6.7"
Feb.	53°	28°	4.1"	37°	19°	5.6"
March	62°	35°	5.5"	44°	25°	7.0"
April	71°	42°	4.5"	52°	31°	6.7"
May	77°	50°	5.7"	58°	39°	8.0"
June	82°	58°	5.8"	64°	47°	8.7"
July	85°	62°	6.3"	67°	50°	9.0"
Aug.	84°	61°	5.3"	67°	49°	7.6"
Sept.	79°	55°	4.7"	62°	44°	7.2"
Oct.	70°	43°	2.9"	55°	35°	4.7"
Nov.	60°	34°	3.4"	46°	27°	6.8"
Dec.	51°	28°	4.6"	38°	20°	6.4"

These temperature and precipitation averages are based on data for the last 20 years. Temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit. An average of over 84" (7 feet) of precipitation falls on the higher elevations of the Smokies. On Mt. Le Conte, an average of 82.8" of snow falls per year.

Driving distances and estimated times

Cherokee, NC to:

Gatlinburg: 34 miles (1 hour)
Cades Cove: 58 miles (2 hours)
Newfound Gap: 18 miles (½ hour)
Clingmans Dome: 25 miles (¾ hour)
Cataloochee: 39 miles (1½ hours)
Deep Creek: 14 miles (½ hour)

Gatlinburg, TN to:

Cherokee: 34 miles (1 hour)
Cades Cove: 27 miles (1 hour)
Newfound Gap: 16 miles (½ hour)
Clingmans Dome: 23 miles (¾ hour)
Cataloochee: 65 miles (2½ hours)
Greenbrier Cove: 6 miles (¼ hour)
Deep Creek: 48 miles (1½ hours)

Townsend, TN to:

Cades Cove: 9 miles (¼ hour)
Newfound Gap: 34 miles (1¼ hours)
Gatlinburg: 22 miles (¾ hour)
Cherokee: 52 miles (1½ hours)
Look Rock: 18 miles (½ hour)
Cataloochee: 87 miles (3 hours)

due to the closure. “We missed some really important time out in the field trying to keep the hog population as low as possible,” said Wildlife Biologist Bill Stiver. Hogs spread disease, prey on native wildlife, and negatively impact native vegetation, soil, and water quality. Monitoring of elk movement, vegetation consumption, and calving lapsed, too. Elk Biologist Joseph Yarkovich said staff typically locate every elk that has a radio collar one time per month, and that data informs long-term survival and population trend analysis. But during the closure, elk roamed unmonitored for

nearly two months, making them difficult to locate once staff returned.

COVID-19 restrictions impacted park resource managers beyond the Smokies as well. Grace Carpenter, an NPS natural sounds and night skies biologist, said her projects will likely be postponed a year due to travel restrictions. This may delay management decisions in other parks, since Carpenter is unable to collect data at those locations. Here in the Smokies, Carpenter works with air quality biologists to track aircraft near the park. With this data, she hopes to estimate

the noise level produced by aircraft at a given location and potentially model how much quieter the park was during the closure due to reduced air travel.

Other resources affected include the park archives, which have not been physically accessible to researchers and the public since March. “We don’t actually have the capacity to disinfect exposed collections,” said Curator Baird Todd, citing preservation issues as a concern. Instead, archive staff are continuing their routine preservation measures and prioritizing access through the digitization of their records. “We

are doing everything we can to make the collection as accessible as possible despite all the limitations,” said Todd.

Park resources are continuously threatened by a host of environmental factors including pollution, climate change, and the spread of invasive species. Although a virus like COVID-19 does not directly impact these resources, it does affect those who work to preserve them—and poses a new challenge to meet the NPS mission of preserving the Smokies’ natural and cultural resources unimpaired for this and future generations.

Superintendent Cash Launches Smokies Hikes for Healing

A new initiative this fall offers a series of hikes designed to facilitate intimate conversations about racism with Smokies Superintendent Cassius Cash. While on the trail, individuals are encouraged to share experiences, ask questions, and connect with one another within the refuge of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Launched in July by Superintendent Cash with the support of Great Smoky Mountains Association, the initiative

builds on awareness raised by the recent wave of antiracism demonstrations in response to the high-profile deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery among others.

The first group hit the trail on August 13 with more hikes scheduled to follow throughout late summer and fall on both the Tennessee and North Carolina sides of the park. Each hike is free of cost and limited to a small number of participants to allow everyone to engage in the discussion and limit the risks of COVID-19 transmission.

Cash envisions that hikers will form a unique bond with one another surrounded by the beauty of the Smokies. “I think the only way that we can heal is through conversation,” said Cash. “It is my hope that these 80 people will continue to have



Masked participants gather for the first Smokies Hikes for Healing event—a park initiative supporting conversations about racism on the trail. *Image courtesy of NPS.*

these conversations. And these conversations take quite a bit of self-awareness and self-reflection.” The long-term goal is to support lasting change beyond the trailhead when participants take lessons learned at Smokies Hikes for Healing events back to their communities.

Hikers are selected to ensure a

diverse range of experiences and backgrounds, and exact times, trail locations, and other details are shared only with participants out of respect for the privacy of each group. To learn more about the program or find information about how to host your own hike for healing, visit smokieshikesforhealing.org.

*“In learning about our past,
we open the doors to our future.”*
~ Cassius Cash, Superintendent



**SMOKIES
HIKES for
HEALING**

Conversations about racism
with Superintendent Cash

Words with a Ranger continued from page 1
 education specialist, and I still have a special passion for sharing national parks with young people. These days, I spend a lot of time in meetings, which I actually enjoy—hearing different perspectives from my colleagues, learning from their expertise, and contributing to collaborative processes. But I also enjoy getting out in the field and interacting with park visitors, hearing their stories, and seeing them get excited about the Smokies.

Since I was a little girl, I've loved math and science and being outside. In graduate school, I started my ranger career as a geology intern at Bryce Canyon, where I split my time between leading rock-themed hikes for the public, putting together a resource kit for the other interpretive rangers, and conducting field work with local geologists (specializing in everything from microfossils to dinosaur bones). As I worked at different national parks, I came to love the interdisciplinary nature of the job—mingling art, science, and history with contemporary relevance.

I just arrived in the Smokies in mid-July, so I'm still figuring out what I'll be focusing on first as the deputy chief of resource education. The park attracts millions of visitors each year, so I'm interested in designing visitor service elements—from signage and digital materials to the physical layout of spaces—that will help all those folks find their way, learn about the park, and tread lightly while having a safe and enjoyable experience.

I look forward to learning more about Smokies history and ecosystems. I am especially excited to get to know the many communities—large and small—near the park and work with park partners. The Smokies are a biologically diverse region; being within a day's drive of a majority of the US population means the park is rich in human diversity as well.

I hope everyone who comes to experience the Smokies returns home with new ideas about how to be a great steward of the land and the stories in their corner of the world as well.

In one of the most significant pieces of public-lands legislation in decades, the recently passed Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) will direct \$9.5 billion over the next five years from US oil and gas leases to address substantial maintenance backlogs across the National Park Service (NPS). Great Smoky Mountains National Park visitors will benefit from needed repairs to park roads, trails, and infrastructure.

“The park currently has over \$200 million in maintenance needs to care for its aging infrastructure,” said Deputy Superintendent Clay Jordan. “While deferred maintenance is spread across thousands of physical assets, more than 80 percent of the repairs needed are associated with the park's road system.” There are nearly 400 miles of roads, 6 tunnels, and 146 bridges requiring regular

maintenance in the park, which includes elevations ranging from 800 to 6,600 feet.

Thirteen water and wastewater facilities in the Smokies built between 1940 and 1960 will also need to be replaced after years of short-term repairs. According to Deputy Superintendent Jordan, the total cost to replace these structures is more than \$41 million—a sum park managers have determined is well worth paying to ensure campgrounds, picnic areas, and visitor centers remain functional in the most-visited national park in the United States.

The NPS will prioritize the most urgent deferred maintenance projects and present them to Congress this fall for funding in the 2021 fiscal year—a critical first step in the years-long process of nearly halving the \$20 billion maintenance backlog across the national park system as a whole.



Roads, tunnels, and bridges within the park will benefit from Great American Outdoors Act funding. *Image by Bill Lea.*

Soil Sampling Reveals Smokies' Ancient Fire History

University of Tennessee geography professor Sally P. Horn has spent the last several years digging up evidence of forest fires in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

After the devastating Chimney Tops II fire of 2016, “people started thinking about fire occurrence in the park,” said Horn. To find historical evidence of fires, scientists first look for fire scarring on trees. “But the trees in the park are not very old,” Horn explained. “Tree ring records of fire only go back 200 to 300 years, and you really want to have a much larger context than that.”

That's where soil sampling comes in. “Through charcoal found in soil, we can go back thousands of years using radiocarbon dating,” said Horn. “Our oldest fire dates go back 10,000 years. We have a very long history of fire in what, today, is Great Smoky Mountains National Park—and we're learning all of that by digging holes in the ground.”

It's through this soil coring method that Horn and her associates have found evidence of fire in places previously thought to be safe from burning. “People tend to think that fires only occur in dry pine forests,” said Horn. “For the most part, we do not see trees with fire scars in moist cove forests, but if we dig into the soil and take it back to the lab, we very often find charcoal. Fires may start in dry areas, but they spread. And in times of drought and drier climate, they really just don't stop.”

While the conclusions of this research are still forthcoming, Horn says this data may provide valuable insight into what the region can expect over the next 20 to 50 years as the climate shifts. “From this data, we know that, in very dry conditions, we might expect to see fires in unexpected places—and this might help forest managers prepare for that.”

Fall and Winter Facility Closures

Just as deciduous trees start dropping their leaves in the fall to get ready for winter, the National Park Service prepares for winter by closing down some of its higher-elevation and more remote facilities.

Roads: Note that all park roads, including Newfound Gap Road (U.S. 441), may close temporarily for snow or other inclement weather at any time.

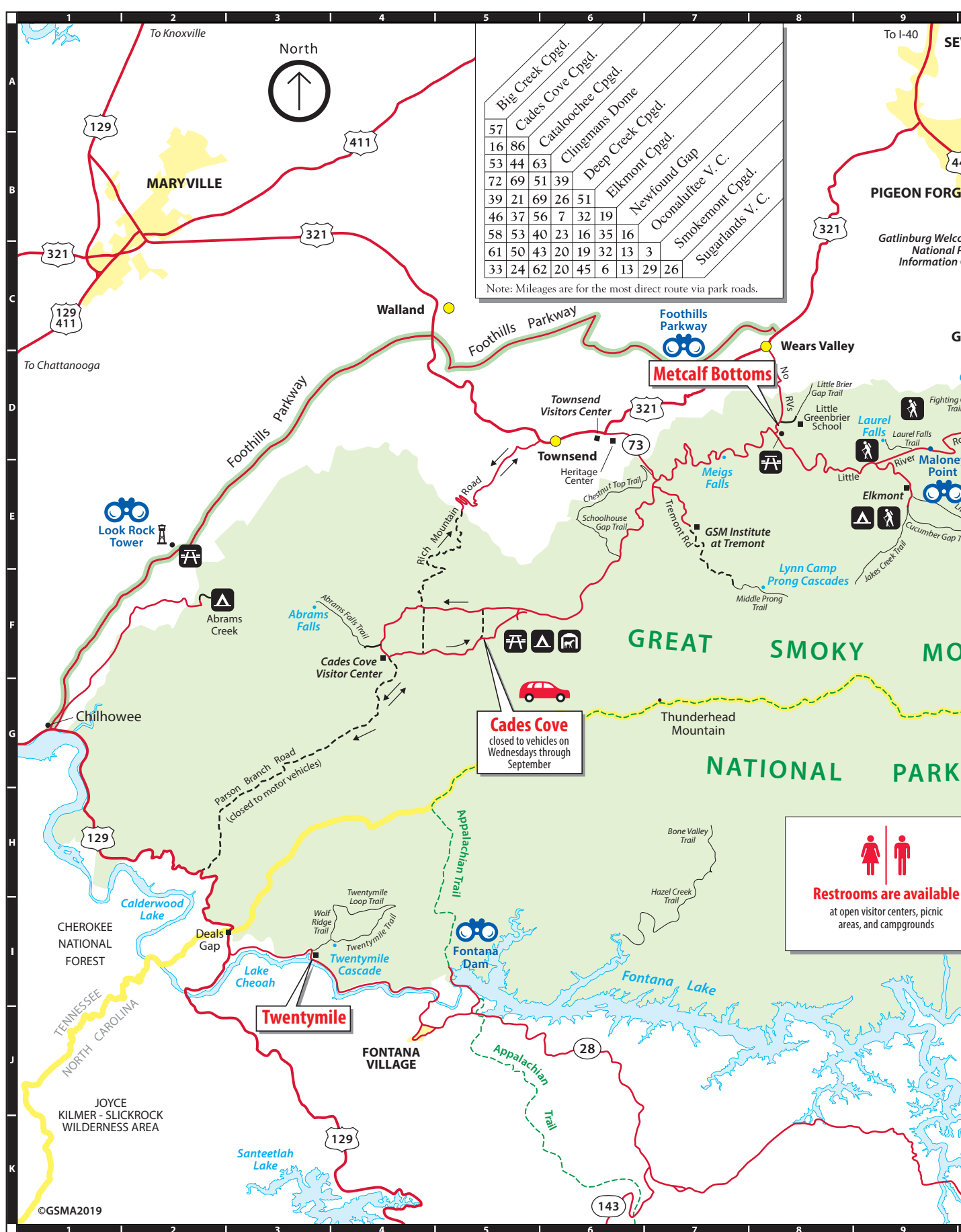
- Clingmans Dome Road closes November 30
- Forge Creek Road (in Cades Cove) closes October 31
- Heintooga/Round Bottom Road closes November 1
- Heintooga Ridge Road closes November 1
- Little Greenbrier Road (to Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse) closed
- Parson Branch Road (in Cades Cove) is closed due to hazardous trees
- Rich Mountain Road (in Cades Cove) closes November 9
- Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail closes November 30
- Straight Fork Road closes November 1

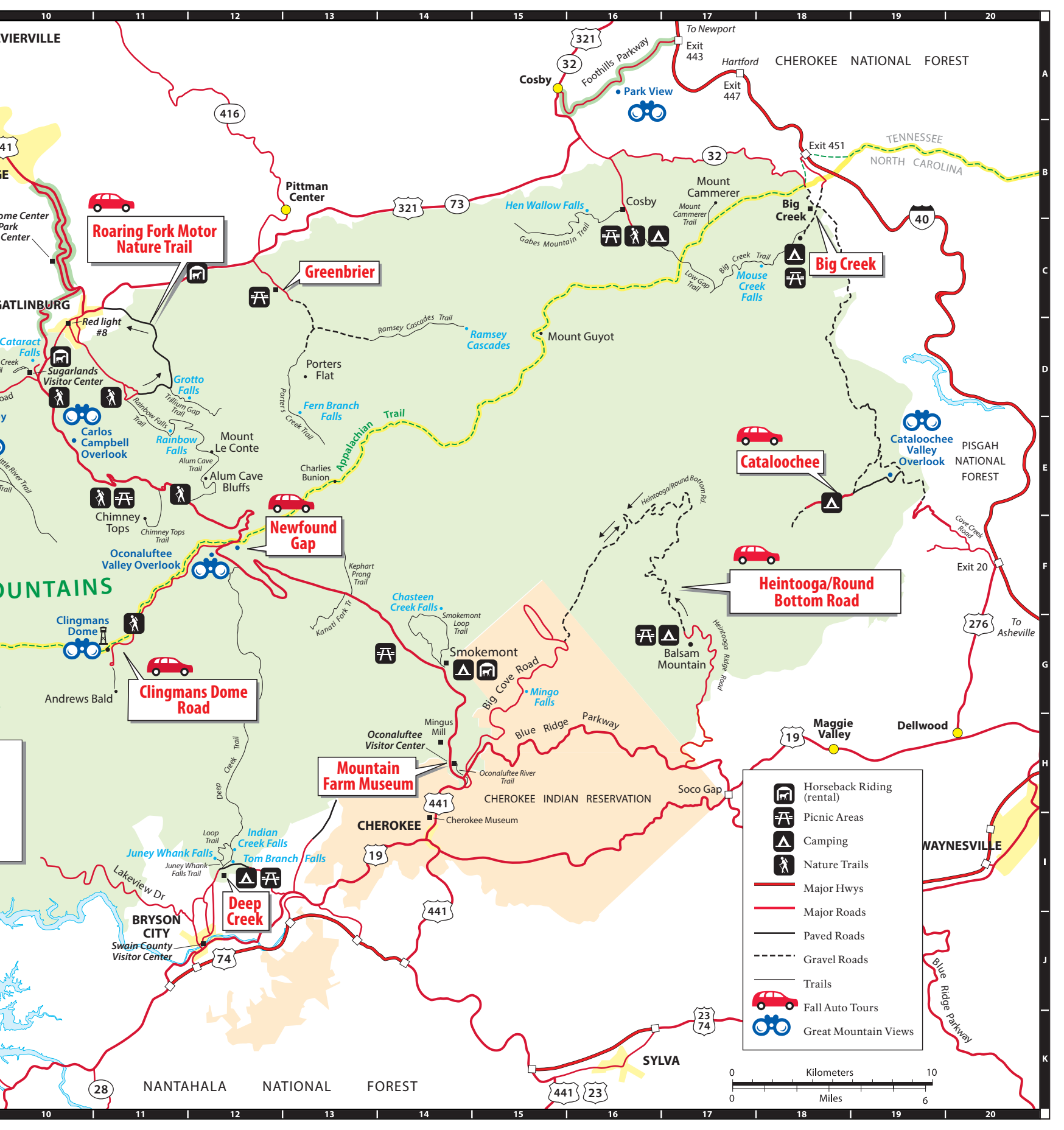
Hiking Trails: All hiking trails are open in winter. However, some trailheads will be inaccessible to motor vehicles because of seasonal road closures. Walking on seasonally closed roads is permitted unless snow plowing or construction work is underway.

Grist Mills: Cable Mill (in Cades Cove) and Mingus Mill operate daily through October 31 and Friday through Sunday in November.

Riding Stables: Cades Cove open through December 5
Smokemont open through November 1 (may extend season)
Smoky Mountain closed
Sugarlands open through November 28

Lodging: LeConte Lodge open through November 20





Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail

Greenbrier

Big Creek

Cataloochee

Heintooga/Round Bottom Road

Clingmans Dome Road

Mountain Farm Museum

Deep Creek

- Horseback Riding (rental)
- Picnic Areas
- Camping
- Nature Trails
- Major Hwys
- Major Roads
- Paved Roads
- Gravel Roads
- Trails
- Fall Auto Tours
- Great Mountain Views



Food in the Park: Pack It In, Pack It Up, Pack It Out

Never leave unsecured food or trash out of eyesight or unattended.



There's nothing like tucking into a tasty meal after a long day in the mountains. But even a little unsecured food can create big problems for wildlife and encourage a dangerous cycle of dependence and aggressive behavior requiring intervention. It is our shared responsibility to make sure human food is always appropriately stored and packed out to keep Smokies wildlife wild and thriving.

In picnic areas and campgrounds

Before you set out for the trail, follow these tips so you're well prepared to enjoy the outdoors and leave no trace:

- Place food in a secure vehicle if

available or in a provided food storage locker. (**Do NOT** leave food in an unattended tent, backpack, or cooler.)

- If storing food in a vehicle, store it in the trunk and make sure all windows are completely closed.
- Keep a clean camp by disposing of trash regularly and washing dirty dishes immediately.
- Dispose of waste water at provided utility sinks in restroom buildings or at campground dump stations.

In the backcountry

- Pack foods that are compact, high-calorie, and lacking in strong odors.
- Carry food and garbage in sealable

plastic bags to contain crumbs and odors.

- Use food-storage cables (available at all backcountry campsites and shelters) to keep food, cookware, toiletries, and anything with a scent safely away from wildlife.
- Pack out all food and scraps (including apple cores and banana peels) until you can find an appropriate trash receptacle.

Do NOT attempt to burn ANY food items, foil, wrappers, tea bags, or coffee grounds in a fire ring. Burning anything other than dead wood is prohibited.

For animals with a keen sense of smell, anything with an odor can draw attention.

The following items should always be stored securely:

- Food items and coolers
- Food wrappers and trash
- Drinks, cans, and bottles
 - Soaps, cosmetics, toiletries, and toothpaste
 - Sunscreen, hand sanitizer, and bug repellent
- Cookware and fuel



Illustration by Emma DuFort

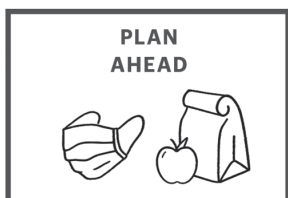
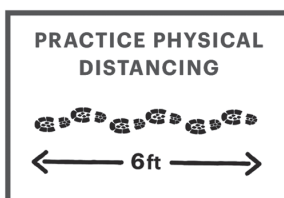
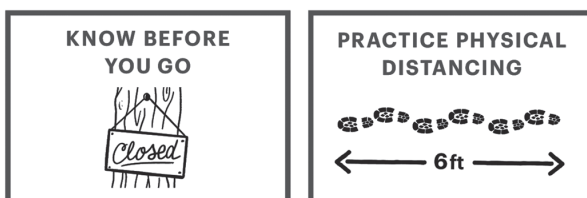


Setting Out for the Mountains...Safely

It is your responsibility to be safe and to know and obey park rules. You can find information and rules at visitor centers, trailhead bulletin boards, and the park website at [nps.gov/grsm](https://www.nps.gov/grsm).

#RecreateResponsibly

This fall it has never been more important to recreate responsibly in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Before you head out, familiarize yourself with these simple reminders from the #RecreateResponsibly campaign to stay safe and help create an inclusive outdoors for everyone in the Smokies.



Graphic courtesy of recreateresponsibly.org

BASIC PACK LIST

- Water, a water filter, tablets, or the ability to boil water
- Food, including plenty of snacks
- Extra layers (base layer, jacket, socks) for changing conditions
- Sun protection with sunscreen, sunglasses, and/or a hat
- Rain gear
- Pack cover to keep what you are carrying dry (ziplocks inside your pack can do this too)
- Map and compass and the knowledge of how to use them
- Shelter in the form of a tent or tarp
- Flashlight or headlamp and batteries
- Fire starter with a lighter, strike stick, and something to light
- Knife or multi-tool for a variety of uses
- First aid kit with all the essentials to care for common accidents
- Permit for camping overnight (provide itinerary so the NPS knows where to begin looking for you in an emergency)

BE MINDFUL OF:

- Lightning
- High winds
- Rapid changes in weather
- Wildlife including elk and black bears
- Poison ivy and brambles
- Slippery logs, rocks, and leaves
- Water crossings (Water can rise quickly, and rocks and logs near water are often very slippery; closely supervise children around all water.)
- Drones are banned on all National Park Service property, including the Smokies.
- Campfires are permitted only within fire rings. Use only firewood purchased at campgrounds; imported wood contains dangerous and invasive pests. Do not put food or trash in fire rings.
- Pets are prohibited on all trails (except Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails) to protect wildlife. Pets must be kept on a leash at all times in campgrounds, picnic areas, and along roads. Service animals that have been individually trained to perform specific tasks for the benefit of persons with disabilities are allowed in all visitor use areas.
- Metal detector use is prohibited.
- Take only pictures. It is illegal to take any natural features including flowers, seeds, rocks, antlers, or historical artifacts or to disturb soils, rocks, or vegetation. Limited collection of some fish, berries, nuts, and mushrooms is permitted.
- Pack out all trash and leave no trace to help protect the Smokies.

IF YOU LOVE THE SMOKIES

Join the park's partners in helping to protect this place for ourselves and future generations

Great Smoky Mountains National Park depends on four primary nonprofit partners as well as 2,800 park volunteers to help its staff meet the needs of 12.5 million visitors and manage 522,000 acres of resources.

Great Smoky Mountains Association

Since 1953, the nonprofit Great Smoky Mountains Association has supported the educational, scientific, and historical preservation efforts of the park by operating the park's official bookstores, publishing books and other media about the park's natural and cultural resources, and supporting park programs. Over the years, GSMA has contributed more than \$46 million to assist with living history demonstrations, save hemlock trees, fund natural resource education internships, construct visitor centers and the Collections Preservation Center, and much more.



Association members receive a number of benefits to keep them informed about special events in the park and issues affecting the Smokies:

- Subscription to the biannual full-color magazine *Smokies Life*
- Digital access to this award-winning park newspaper and Smokies LIVE e-newsletter
- 15–20% discount on books, music, gifts, and products at park visitor centers and at GSMA's web store
- 10% (or more) discount at 500+ additional nonprofit public lands partner stores
- Access to member-exclusive group hikes, backpacking excursions, and educational sessions
- Invitation to GSMA's Members Weekend

Join today by visiting SmokiesInformation.org or call us at 888.898.9102, ext. 257.

Friends of the Smokies

Friends of the Smokies assists the National Park Service in its mission to preserve and protect Great Smoky Mountains National Park by raising funds and public awareness and providing volunteers for needed projects.

Since it was founded in 1993, supporters of Friends have contributed more than \$70 million to meet park needs.

Examples of programs and projects include:

- Rehabilitation of the most impacted trails through Trails Forever
- Forest conservation and wildlife management
- Real-time webcams and air quality monitoring
- Facility improvements and visitor amenities
- Historic structures rehabilitation
- Cultural experiences and special events
- Search and rescue program support and equipment
- K–12 educational programs

Programs like Parks as Classrooms, which serves approximately 20,000 students every year, provide educational experiences that help foster a love for nature and inform the next generation of park supporters. A new digital learning space at Smokieees.org invites students to explore nature-related activities, be entertained through music, art, and stories, and escape through observation of the natural world.

Friends' commitment to preservation includes support for restoring and maintaining historic log homes, barns, outbuildings, churches, schools, and gristmills. Become a Friend by visiting FriendsOfTheSmokies.org. For information about memberships and planned giving, email info@friendsofthesmokies.org or call 800.845.5665.



Discover Life in America

The Smokies have long been renowned for their rich variety of life. Knowing what creatures reside here helps the National Park Service better protect the Smokies against threats like air pollution, wildfire, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and climate change.

Discover Life in America is the nonprofit partner that was launched in 1998 to manage the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI), an effort to identify and learn about every variety of plant and animal in the park. The organization works with leading biologists from around the globe to conduct this massive inventory.

Volunteers and interns become 'citizen scientists' who help with DLiA's work. These participants get an insider's look at the park, as well as firsthand knowledge of biology, field science, and laboratory practices. Funding comes from donations by individuals and institutions.

To date, DLiA has helped add more than 10,000 species to the inventory of life in the park, including over 1,000 species completely new to science! Today there are more than 20,000 different kinds of organisms known to the park with new discoveries happening every



day. You can support DLiA by attending the Salamander Ball on Wheels fundraising event October 15, 2020. Learn more at DLiA.org or by calling 865.430.4757.

Tremont

Born out of a need for residential education programs in the park, Great Smoky Mountains

Institute at Tremont has offered student and adult programs that promote a connection to nature for more than 50 years. Up to 6,000 students and adults annually attend workshops, camps, and school programs at the institute that are designed to promote curiosity and inspire learning.

Adult workshops include hiking, backpacking, community science, professional and teacher development, photography, and a naturalist certification program. Summer camps provide youth and their families opportunities to spend six to 11 days exploring the national park and its wonders. Fees include meals, lodging, and most equipment.

Call 865.448.6709 or visit GSMIT.org for program dates and information and to learn how you can support life-changing learning experiences in the Smokies!

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

GSMA MEMBERSHIPS

Get Rooted in the Smokies!

GSMA memberships are available in both individual- and family-level packages.

- Acorn (youth) \$15
- Buckeye \$35/ \$50 family
- Chestnut \$100/ \$125 family
- Dogwood \$200/ \$300 family
- Hemlock (lifetime) \$1,000/ \$1500 family
- Lookout League Business Memberships \$250–\$1,000

SIGN ME UP!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email (for e-newsletter) _____

Phone # _____

Please include your check with this form.
Mail to: GSMA, P.O. Box 130,
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Reds

Leaves turn red when the green chlorophyll breaks down and reveals the reds created by leaves that have been converted into anthocyanins. The process is triggered by the shortening length of days and cooling temperatures, which signal trees to prepare for winter dormancy.

Red leaves

witch hobble (early September)

dogwood
(late September)

sourwood
(early October)

black gum
(early October)

red maple
(late October)

scarlet oak
(early November)

Red and/or gold leaves
sassafras (late September)

sweetgum (October)

sugar maple (late October)

Colors of Fall

Yellows and Golds

Leaves turn yellow as trees stop producing green chlorophyll late in the summer. As chlorophyll breaks down, it reveals the yellow pigments carotin and xanthophyll, which were present all along but masked by the green.

Clear yellow leaves

black birch
(October)

tulip tree
(late September)

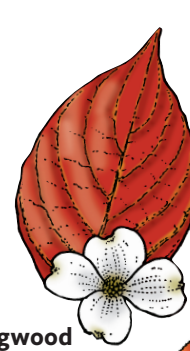
yellow birch
(early October)



black birch

witch
hobble

dogwood



sourwood

black gum

red
maple

scarlet
oak

sassafras

sweetgum

sugar
maple

mockernut
hickory

American
beech

yellow
birch

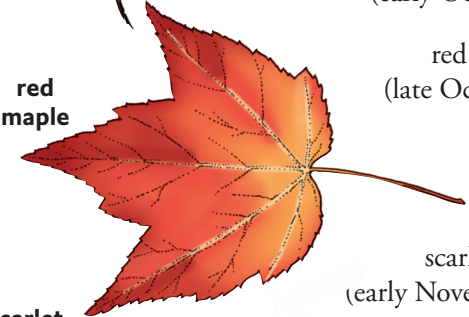
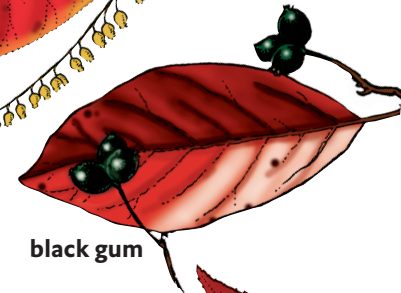
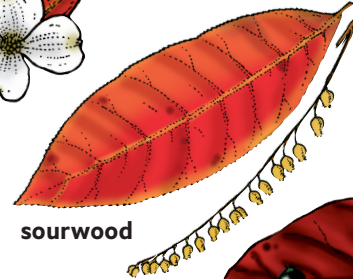
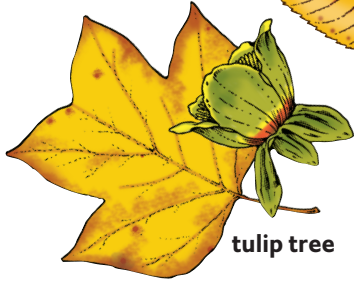
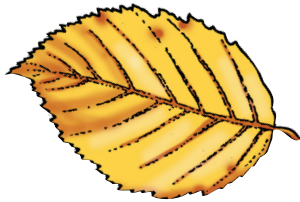
tulip tree

Bronze yellow leaves

American beech
(early October)

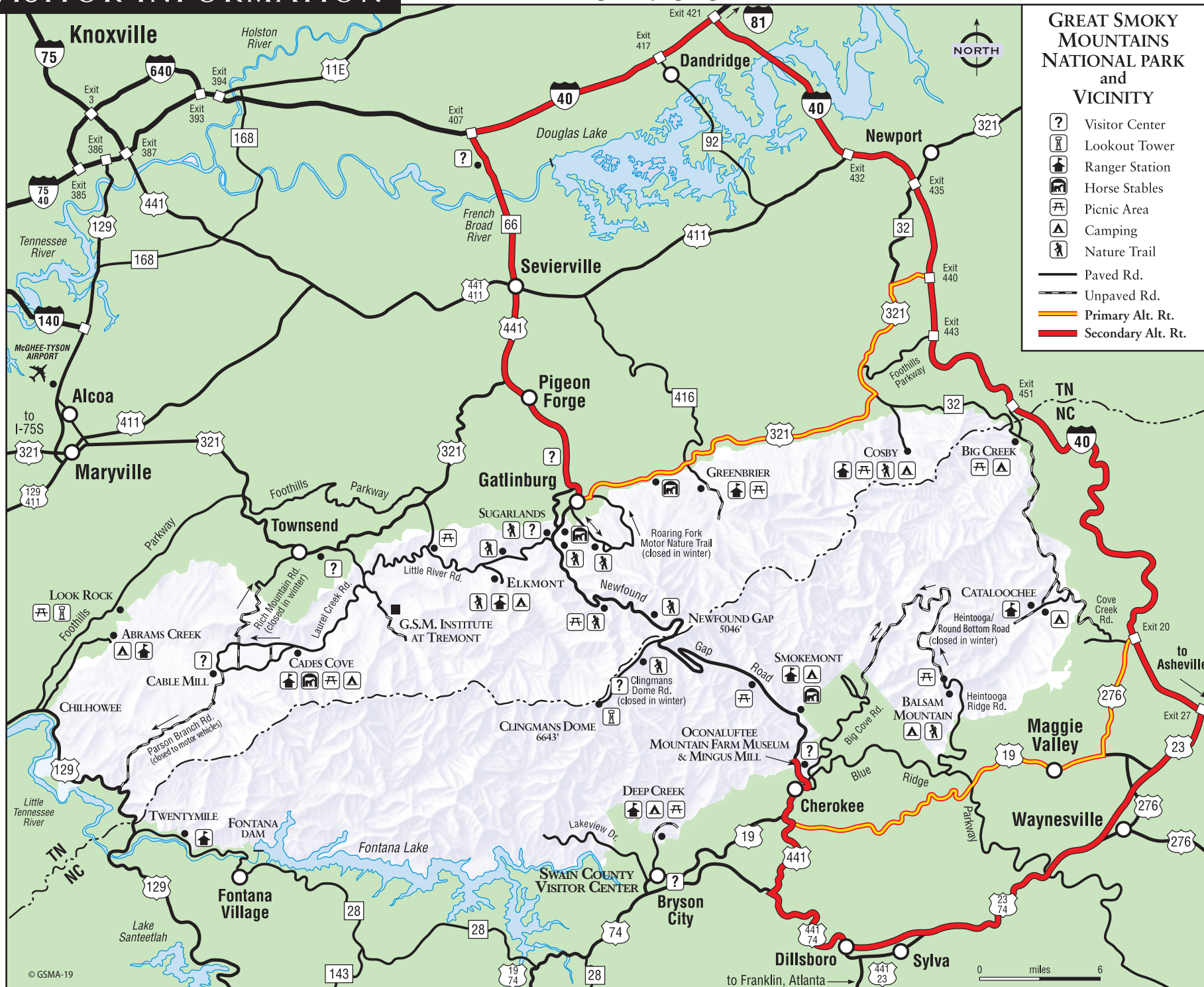
Golden yellow leaves

hickories (late October)



VISITOR INFORMATION

For more information, go to nps.gov/grsm



GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK and VICINITY

- Visitor Center
- Lookout Tower
- Ranger Station
- Horse Stables
- Picnic Area
- Camping
- Nature Trail
- Paved Rd.
- Unpaved Rd.
- Primary Alt. Rt.
- Secondary Alt. Rt.

Information

General park info:
865.436.1200 • nps.gov/grsm
Backcountry information:
865.436.1297
smokiespermits.nps.gov
To order maps and guides:
865.436.7318, ext. 226
SmokiesInformation.org

Emergencies

For emergencies after hours:
Park Headquarters
865.436.9171
Cherokee Police
828.497.4131
Gatlinburg Police
865.436.5181

Hospitals

Le Conte/Sevier County
865.446.7000
Middle Creek Rd.,
Sevierville, TN
Blount Memorial
865.983.7211
U.S. 321, Maryville, TN

Haywood County

828.456.7311
Waynesville, NC
Swain County
828.488.2155
Bryson City, NC

All-access

Restrooms at park visitor centers (Cades Cove, Oconaluftee and Sugarlands) are fully accessible. Sugarlands Valley all-access nature trail is on Newfound Gap Road just south of Sugarlands Visitor Center.

Avoid the fine

Picking or digging plants is prohibited in the park. Persons feeding wildlife are subject to a \$5,000 fine. Pets are only permitted on the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails, which allow dogs on a leash.